STAYING, MOVING, OR LEAVING: EXPLORING HOW AUTHENTIC
LEADERSHIP, SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE,
AND ATTRIBUTES OF TRUST AND EFFICACY
AFFECT TEACHER LONGEVITY

A Dissertation presented to
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Doctor of Education

By
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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

STAYING, MOVING, OR LEAVING: EXPLORING HOW AUTHENTIC
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AND EFFICACY AFFECT TEACHER LONGEVITY

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank my wife, Rebekah Drace, and my two daughters, Audrey and Emma, for encouraging me through this process. I am grateful the sacrifice of time you gave up in order for me to accomplish this goal. You encouraged me to continue on even when my will waned. I am very proud to be called your father. I love you all very much.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to better understand how a principal with authentic leadership qualities, who builds a strong school culture based on trust and efficacy, affects teacher retention. A sampling of 16 secondary teachers participated in individual interviews. The interview questions were structured, and follow-up questions were asked based on the participants' responses. Notes were taken during the interviews to gather information about the participants that was not revealed through their responses.

The questions focused on the participants' teaching careers and the paths they took to become a teacher. The questions were also designed to explore one of three teacher paths. The first was a stayer, or a teacher who chose to stay in the same position for more than five years. The second was a mover, or a teacher who was in search of a more compatible teaching environment and left one school to find another. The third was a leaver, or a teacher who decided within the first five years of teaching to leave the profession in pursuit of a different career path.

The findings revealed that an authentic leader, who built a school culture based on trust and efficacy, had an impact on teachers when it came to their decisions to either stay, move, or leave. The responses from the teachers led the researcher to gain insight into the importance of a strong school culture and climate built on trust with a leader who has authentic leadership traits when it comes to teacher retention.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The education of students is the most important task students, parents, politicians, community civic and social leaders, as well as business and industry leaders face as we advance in the 21st Century (Fudge, 2017). Preparation of students for postsecondary education, training, or military service is the foundation of student preparation for life beyond completion of high school. Administrators, as well as teachers, must evaluate both the capacity and ability to deliver instruction to demonstrate the value they have as the true foundation of the educational experience for students.

A rising problem threatening the continued success of the American educational experience is the ability to retain teachers. Stein and Stein wrote, “there is a positive correlation...between the quality of classroom instruction and academic success” (2017, p. 161). Keeping and retaining these quality educators is causing increased concerns for administrators, school boards, parents, and the community (Moller, Moller & Schmidt, 2015/16; Swanson, 2012). The pull away from the teaching profession has never been greater as young and old teachers explore varied opportunities outside education and teaching (Swanson, 2012).

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) of 2014 estimated that 15.8% or over 531,000 teachers left the teaching profession or moved to another school district. In a cryptic effort to label this trend, the report labels these individuals as either movers or leavers. Approximately 51% of the public-school teachers leaving education in the 2012-13 school year reported that their workload was better

in their new jobs than in teaching. Also, 53% of the movers or leavers reported that working conditions in their new job improved over what they experienced when they were teaching (NCES, 2014). According to the (NCES, 2014), in the five years between 2009 and 2013, which are the last recorded years, 529,200 teachers left the profession.

Working conditions were a commonly reported reason for why teachers decided to leave teaching. Working conditions is a broad sweeping reason for leaving the profession and it can be tied to varied specific shortcomings in the work environment. Some of the commonly reported reasons stated by teachers included retention, burnout, climate, relationships with colleagues and administrators, and the absence of leaders who value relationships and honesty (Hallam, et al. 2012; Hughes, 2012; Song & Mustafa, 2015).

School climate is influenced by key factors, which include, but are not limited to, relationships between faculty and school leaders. Another important factor in the development of a school climate is strong values, creating the foundation for the development and promotion of school norms (Drago-Severson, 2012). School climate permits individuals and groups to establish and promote personal and professional growth for teachers and teams within the school building. The need for a positive school climate is reflected by studies (Collie et al.; 2012; Taylor & Janice, 2013) seeking to determine factors that influence teacher retention and form the basis for answering the question: Why do teachers continue to instruct? Positive school climate and the positive relationships within this form of school climate are founded upon two important attributes: trust and efficacy.

Critical attributes, such as trust and efficacy, have proven to be of significant importance when understanding teachers and the reasons given for remaining in the profession (He, Ye, Christopher, Christopher & Tangredi, 2015; Taylor, Janice, 2013; Van Maele, Dimitri, Mieke & Van Houtte, 2014). These positive attributes were reflected by Van Maele and Van Houtte (2014) in their research on stopping teacher burnout through trust, which can “act as a relational buffer to teacher burnout... and individuals working in a group characterized by collective trust are likely to develop trust themselves” (p. 110).

As a topic, school leadership is considered both for its depth and breadth when it comes to determining what makes schools effective. Also, the importance of the influence of leadership theory on overall school operations cannot be overstated. Leaders must nurture, grow, and enhance individual and corporate trust and efficacy within the school environment. For instance, authentic leadership describes the need for individuals who are self-aware of the personal life story that encourages and fosters reflective awareness in those who follow the leader (Hionjosa, Amanda, McCauley, Randolph-Seng & Gardner, 2013).

Also, authentic leadership has a strong component for the building of trust between the leader and followers, which enhances collaborative relationships within the organization (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May, 2004). A third major component of authentic leadership is the influence strong moral or ethical foundations have on building individual and corporate integrity. Trust, as an underpinning for school climate, promotes retention and provides effective resistance for the impact of teacher burnout. The characteristics of authentic leadership exhibited by the principal

provide a strong reflection of the kind of effective school leadership needed to meet student, parents, teacher, and community needs today (Bird, James, Murray, Wang & Watson, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are the foundation of student success in school. Educational relationships and the delivery of instruction form the basis for efforts proven to increase learning and decrease behavioral issues (Clayton, Cook, Grady, Long & Renshaw 2017). When a teacher leaves a role as an educator, schools reenter the process required to rehire, reincorporate, and retrain an instructor, having an adverse effect on overall instruction and learning. Well-established and intentioned relationships developed between students and teachers promote a strong culture that fosters effective teacher-student relationships. This, in turn, results in increased student success and furtherance of students meeting graduation goals, expectations, and entrance into postsecondary education and training (Bairle, John P., Donohue, Baker, Weaver & Henrich, 2011).

Johnson, Kraft and Papay (2012) stated,

the specific elements of the work environment that matter the most to teachers are not narrowly conceived working conditions such as clean and well-maintained facilities or access to modern instructional technology. Instead, it is the social conditions—the school’s culture, the principal’s leadership, and relationships among colleagues—that predominate in predicting teachers’ job satisfaction and career plans. More important, providing a supportive context in which teachers can work appears to contribute to improved student

achievement. We found that favorable conditions of work predict higher rates of student academic growth. (p. 2)

A school culture devoid of necessary leadership characteristics, which promote a positive school climate, will result in teacher attrition and reduction of environmental trust and efficacy. Teachers will cease to care, cease to take risks, and isolate from one another (Ware, Herbert W. & Kitsantas, 2011). The school culture containing a high level of trust exhibits the following attributes: risk-taking during instruction, strong social bonds promoting relational strength in the school culture, and foundational structures to promote and attain continued professional growth by teachers (Routman, 2012; Tschannen-Moran, Megan & Gareis, 2015). Without trust, communication stops between teachers and leadership. Isolation expands between people, classrooms, departments, and campuses. Another victim of this type of environment is the end of collaboration between staff as educational ideas stop and the school climate is hurt due to the lack of educational connectedness between teachers and leaders (Daly, Moolenaar, Liou, Tuytens & Fresno, 2015).

School leaders who do not exhibit attributes that foster a school culture with strong trust and efficacy find themselves unable to produce teacher retention in the school setting. Instead, these leaders see an increase in the development of a negative school climate with a tendency to tear apart teachers and kill trust and efficacy in all settings (Fox, Gong & Attoh, 2015). Gardner, Coglsier, Davis and Dickens (2011) validated the need for leaders to use authentic leadership styles to promote positive school environments; however, these researchers also identified the need for effective environments to exhibit high degrees of trust and the building blocks of efficacy.

The problem is a school culture devoid of necessary leadership characteristics will result in teacher attrition and reduction of environmental trust and efficacy. This study will explore leadership characteristics teachers deem important to teacher retention and success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gather perspectives and experiences of experienced teachers in one of the following categories: (1) those who have stayed in education because of a strong school culture (school culture defined as one that promotes trust and efficacy and where the leadership exhibit strong tendency towards authentic leadership); (2) those who have transferred to another school setting in order to find a stronger school culture; and (3) those who left education altogether because there was an absence of a quality school culture.

Research Questions

These research questions explored the perspectives and experiences of teachers. The research questions were designed to engage the teachers to determine if school culture (defined as one that promotes trust and efficacy and where the leadership exhibit strong tendency towards authentic leadership) were contributing factors that promoted staying in the educational setting currently experienced, moving to another educational setting, or leaving the profession entirely. The researcher wanted to discover if these three specific, controllable components of school culture, for instance the development of trust between the staff, the development of efficacy within the school climate, and the leader's exhibited characteristics of authentic

leadership, were substantial factors in teacher retention and turnover in the field of education.

The following questions were used to direct this study:

1. How does school culture and climate influence teachers' decisions to either stay in a school, move to a different school, or leave education?
2. How did the attributes of efficacy and trust influence teachers to stay, move, or leave a school or education?
3. What attributes of Authentic Leadership factored into a teacher's decisions to remain or leave a school or the profession?

Limitations and Assumptions

The scope of this study was limited to the Midwestern United States. The teachers who participated in this research were from a variety of school districts in a mid-western state: rural, suburban, and urban. Limitations to this research are as follows:

1. The participants were gathered through word of mouth initiated by the researcher.
2. There were a limited sample size totaling 16 participants.
3. The possibility of volunteer bias was present based on the personal relationships between the researcher and participants.
4. The memory of participants reflecting on real life experiences.

These factors and others could have limited the accuracy of gathered information based on the candor of those interviewed.

Definitions of Key Terms

For this study, the following terms were defined:

Attrition. A reduction in numbers, when teachers choose to leave the profession of teaching (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

Authentic Leader. “One who is self-aware, humble, always seeking improvement, aware of those being led and looks out for the welfare of others; fosters high degrees of trust by building an ethical and moral framework; and is committed to organizational success within the construct of social values” (Gardner, Coglisier, Davis & Dickens 2011, p. 1122).

Burn out. “Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a sense of reduced personal accomplishment” (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2014, p. 95).

Culture. “The shared assumptions, rituals, values, climate, and behaviors within organizations, are critical because they define how teachers interact with one another and their students” (Stearns, Banerjee, Mickelsen & Moller, 2014, p. 56).

Efficacy. “Belief that teachers can positively affect the learning of students” (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993, p. 355).

Leavers. Teachers who leave the teaching profession to explore different career paths.

Movers. “Teachers who are in search of a more compatible teaching environment, leave one school to find another” (Olson & Anderson, 2007, p.5).

Principal. The leader or headmaster in a public-school setting. Principals oversee scheduling, curriculum, personnel, budgeting, and other day-to-day activities necessary for a school to function.

School Climate. “The quality and character of school life...based on patterns of people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures” (Drago-Severson, 2012, p.3).

Secondary School. A school, especially a high school, coming after elementary school, including Grades 6-12 in any configuration.

Servant Leadership. Servant leaders have strengths in listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Greenleaf, 1970).

Stayers. “Teachers who choose to stay in their teaching position for longer than five years” (Olson & Anderson, 2007, p.6)

Transformational Leadership. An effort to satisfy followers’ needs and to move followers to a higher level of work performance and organizational involvement by displaying respect and encouraging participation (Burns, 1978).

Transactional Leadership. Gives followers something they want in exchange for something the leader wants (Burns, 1978).

Trust. “A state in which individuals and groups are willing to make themselves vulnerable to others and to take risks with confidence that others will respond to the own actions in positive ways that is, with benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty and openness” (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2015, p. 97).

Summary

Teacher retention and quality of education depend on the capacity of the school environment to promote unity and risk-taking to improve the educational operations of instruction, behavior, and extra-curricular activities. The school culture and climate must also establish traits of efficacy and trust to build a safe and open atmosphere. These two traits allow teachers to both grow and fail in order become improved educators. This fosters the belief they are an integral part in the educational process of the school for all instructors.

Though leadership theories are numerous and diverse with many positive attributes within each one, authentic leadership has its foundation in ancient Greek philosophy and thought. The etymology of authentic leadership is grounded in being genuine (Avolio et al. 2004; Duignan, Patrick, 2014; Fox, et al. 2015), allowing for individuals to remain true to personal beliefs. The authentic leader who leads from deep personal or moral values develops trust in staff as well as encourages diverse viewpoints capable of encouraging and developing collaboration. There are no perfect leadership theories; however, for this study, the traits of authentic leadership aid in finding some of the reasons for the retention of teachers and the creation of a positive learning atmosphere.

Chapter Two of this study will contain the review of literature related to school climate and culture, trust and efficacy, and leadership theories with a focus on authentic leadership. Chapter Three will contain the research and design methodology, along with problem and purpose overview, research questions, and population and data collection. It will also include the instrumentation, data analysis,

and the summary. Chapter Four will include findings and interpretation of the study, and Chapter Five will present the summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A crisis-like issue is building requiring administrators, school boards, and community leaders to address the growing loss of teachers in the classroom as well as stemming the tide to keep qualified teachers in the profession. “With over 10% of public-school teachers leaving the profession after one year and an additional 12% leaving after two years of teaching, there is a growing need to understand contributors to staff turnover” (O’Brennan, Pas & Bradshaw, 2017, pg. 165). Administrators and schools are experiencing increased pressure to maintain consistency in the professional teaching workforce.

Broman and Dowling (2008) conducted a meta-analytic review of research on teacher retention. Their findings revealed the important role the school administrator has in retention of teachers. These findings lay the groundwork for the importance of collaboration between school principals and teachers in promoting professional networks both through inter-district and intra-district programs. Broman and Dowling’s data helped to establish a framework of administrative support, including helping teachers become familiar with the school environment and showing teachers the ropes with discipline, curriculum, and instruction.

Daniel Sass, Seal, and Martin (2011) revealed many stressors hindering teacher retention. Also, they offered creative methods to combat and decrease stressors in order to foster teacher retention in the profession. Borman and Dowling (2008) found the “work environment plays an important role in attrition” (p.401). Van Maele and Van Houtte’s (2014) study identified three important factors that are key

reasons why teachers face burnout, which ends the teaching careers. First, there is a decline in teacher's sense of personal accomplishment within the profession. Second, they reported a sense of depersonalization between the teacher and school leaders. Finally, they reported a reduction of professional accomplishment.

From these studies, there is a need to focus on fundamental reasons teachers state a desire to remain in the profession of education. Multiple aspects of the educational system vie for and against teacher retention. School leaders and teachers cannot control many of the issues influencing the educational setting: class size, salary, socio-economic factors of families the students come from, and the structure and make-up of the physical environment where learning occurs.

School leaders and teachers would do well to keep their effort focused on things that can be influenced or cultivated. For instance, promoting the character traits of successful teachers, promoting best practices of school leadership, and establishing school climates reflective of data verified student achievement. Each of these opportunities in a school setting contributes significantly to the success of educators in producing competent and successful students. They are also necessary components of studying why teachers anchor themselves in the profession of teaching.

Job satisfaction and retention are established markers for retaining professionals in a career (Bolman & Deal, 2008). The definition of job satisfaction, as provided in the research of Song and Mustafa (2015), is "individuals positive and/or negative attitudes and feelings toward her/her profession" (p. 359). Teachers report many reasons they remain in or leave the teaching profession. Song and Mustafa also reported that one the main reasons teachers leave the profession is because of

undependable, unskilled, and inconsistent administrators. In contrast, their research also concluded that administrators who support teachers “can reduce teacher stress...while reducing turnover rates” (p.361).

Teacher turnover rates result in a direct negative effect on student achievement, as reflected in the research of Van Maele and Van Houtte (2015). Price (2012) documented that “supportive and cohesive leaders strongly predict teacher commitment levels. Commitment levels translate into teachers remaining in the profession of teaching” (p. 48). It is important to keep the perspective that teachers desire to see all of their students learn. Reeves (2016) focused attention on effective teachers as the most crucial element in a student’s success.

Reeves (2016) stated that “while leaders say that they trust and respect teachers, institutional and individual actions speak louder than words” (p. 24). The principal-teacher relationship is strongly connected to creating a positive school environment. Reeves’ work suggested that identifying important keys to teacher burnout and promoting retention can provide hope for teachers to remain in the classroom and improve student achievement.

The first key to increasing teacher retention identified in the literature focuses on the school climate. The success with which teachers and administrators nurture and develop school climate draws educators to remain in the teaching profession (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2011). Within the school climate, the second key is the establishment of two vital values that exercise strong influence on the climate of the school: trust and efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015; Ware & Kitsantas, 2011). When these values are shared, retention and combatting burnout is more

successful for teachers and administrators. These values in the school environment counter all pressures that express beliefs teachers are not able to achieve success in the classroom. The third, and final, key is identifying shared values and traits exhibited by leadership, or the theories school leaders use in managing the school climate. Incorporating mutual values and beliefs with all staff allow leaders to promote trust, efficacy, positive climate, and intrinsic value for combatting burnout (Song & Mustafa, 2015).

School Climate and Culture

The first key to nurturing teacher retention and encouraging professional growth in the teaching profession is the school climate. Price (2012) wrote that the atmosphere of the school includes two primary relationships: teacher-to-teacher interactions and the teacher-to-principal relationship. A definition of school climate including these components was shared by Drago-Severson (2012) who stated, “the quality and character of school life...based on patterns of people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures” (pg. 3). The methods and means by which a school leader promotes these aspects of school climate is integral to fostering a climate of value capable of enhancing teacher retention in today’s schools.

The foundation of the school environment is influenced strongly by the quality of teachers offering courses within its buildings and the relationships that make up the staff responsible for delivery of instruction and the curriculum. Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2011) shared that the perceptions of school climate are a key predictor of teachers’ sense of stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction. In

viewing this research, it was important not to lose perspective on the antithesis of the previous conclusion. These researchers also stated, “principal’s ability to seek input in decision making ... was a significant predictor of professional commitment” (p.1035) to the school.

Perceptions of schools can either aid in building a positive school culture or it can go to great lengths to destroy it. Goals and values are foundational to the process of developing and establishing school climate. Burke, Paul, Schucauson, Buchanan, Luveire and Prescott (2013) shared findings that reflect on the teaching profession and why teachers stay in the field. This research points to 31 factors that reflect staff culture and the climate of the school. School climate is vital to the retention of teachers and individual teachers’ commitment to the career they have chosen. The study included Collegial Support as the third most important factor in assessing teacher retention.

Previously shared research about the importance of efficacy and trust as key components to teacher retention also factor into developing and establishing a climate within the school building, which promotes healthy experiences for and between staff (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2011; VanMaele & VanHoutte, 2014). Trust and efficacy are important values used by the individual in the process of attaining self-actualization; however, the organization also has a strong influence on the perception of climate that teachers experience where they work. Burke’s (2013) study reflected the importance student involvement and engagement had in their learning and teachers’ perceptions of a positive professional experience. According to the author’s results, this is the number one factor in teacher retention.

Chappelear and Price (2012) suggested the principal's role in student engagement and achievement demonstrates the importance of a strong leader in the development of a positive learning environment and creating a place where teachers want to remain in the profession. The researchers stated, "the main implication of this study is the results suggest a relationship does exist between teachers' perceptions of principals monitoring student progress and student achievement" (p. 14). When the administrator is an active participant in student learning, the effectiveness of the school climate is vastly improved.

Shamir and Lapidot (2003) provided research showing that faculty trust played an important role in the character of an organization. VanMaele and VanHoutte (2015) also stated, "within organizations, trust is likely to become a collective group phenomenon due to social information" (p. 99). When creating an atmosphere for teacher retention as part of the school climate, faculty trust is an important component for increasing teacher retention according to the research. Working together to create a cooperative environment and atmosphere of trust takes the commitment of an academic leader along with the teaching staff. This cooperative working relationship also should reflect a commitment toward teaching itself, which is vital to the establishment of a positive school environment (Price, 2012).

Another aspect of the school climate necessary to increase teacher retention was teaching structures in the school setting. One of the most important relationships for teacher retention is that of teacher-to-teacher interpersonal relations. Staff, for this definition, includes teachers and the building leadership team. Having positive

attitudes among the school staff promotes stronger school environment. Supportive administrators go a long way in creating stronger collective relationships between staff in all positions.

Price (2012) found that collective relationships and administrative support influence the ability of teachers to retain an effective professional commitment to teaching. Studies revealed that the strong mutual support between teachers and principals can promote teacher retention even in contexts where student and teacher characteristics predict turnover (Boyd et al. 2011).

Research revealed that relationships between teachers and the principal must also foster collaboration. Collie, Shapka and Perry (2012) concluded that teachers who report greater collaboration may experience better relationships with other teachers and a more enjoyable and supportive work environment. Research also revealed that relationships built on collaboration make organizational commitment stronger and longer lasting.

Dragos-Severson (2012) reflected that shared values of the school community include student achievement, teacher collaboration and professional development, a positive school environment, and professional teacher support, resulting in retention. Within the successful school climate, there are two factors identified by research that enhance teacher retention. As stated previously, those factors are the presence of trust and efficacy (Easley, 2007). What follows is a more detailed review of these two important components.

Trust and Efficacy

The second focus required to retain teachers in the profession is trust and efficacy in all relationships within the school, especially the teacher-to-teacher and teacher-to-administrator relationships. Trust, as defined in Van Maele and Van Hotte (2015), stated trust that slows burnout includes “a state in which individuals and groups are willing to make themselves vulnerable to others and to take risks with confidence that others will respond to the own actions in positive ways that is, with benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty and openness” (p. 97). There are five factors listed in the definition, which are necessary to reduce uncertainty in teacher-to-teacher relationships and teacher-to-administrator relationships.

Trust, as applied in the classroom, results in teachers educating students and students achieving advancement in their studies. Both are vital components for believing one has a vibrant career in education. Competence and openness were reflected by Routman (2012) when he stated, “when the principal has built a solid foundation of trust...teachers welcome principals into their classrooms...to strengthen their teaching” (p.57).

Trust nurtures openness and competence necessary for success in the classroom by students and teachers. Trust, as discussed by Price (2012), revealed the need to promote cohesion, commitment, and satisfaction within the teacher-principal relationship to ensure success in student achievement. A commitment in this level of trust translated into levels of reliability in the teacher-to-teacher, teacher-to-student, and teacher-to-administrator relationships.

Honesty was another factor identified by research as necessary for promoting teacher retention. Honesty is primary to the development of trust, as well as vital to continued development of growth between teachers, students, and principals. Through many studies, such as Boyce and Bowers (2018), principals were identified as important to the facilitation of professional personas and effective classroom management. Included in the research is the need to develop substantial trust in teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and teacher-to-administrator relationships.

Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) stated, “When principals demonstrate the ability to get the job done, whatever that job might entail, teachers are more inclined to put trust in the principal” (p.70). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis further stated the results of their study demonstrated “leadership behaviors of the principal contributors to faculty trust in the principal” (p. 82).

Faculty trust in the principal is directly related to student achievement and it is also related to important elements of school climate (Drago-Severson, 2012). Honesty fosters relationships and teachers learn to trust the principal, which, in turn, builds collaboration and effective communication in the school environment. Blase and Blase (2006) stated, “collaboration is successful when principals build trust in their schools, because trust, in turn, serves as a foundation for open, honest and reflective professional dialogue” (p. 140). The research reveals the culture of a school is the thermometer for educational success. Teachers and students alike need to sense an environment of trust in the school setting.

Bryk and Schneider (2003) stated “[r]elationships of trust are a necessary ingredient of effective collaboration, which serves to support the culture” (p. 43),

especially when developing advancement of curriculum in the school setting. Hoerr (2014) concluded that “authority doesn’t come from a title, degree, or position, it comes because others believe in us and trust us. They know we care, and they know we listen” (p.87).

Collaboration between teachers and school principals also leads to strengthening attitudes of success within the school (Price, 2012). Price continued, saying, “one way to improve learning in schools is to focus on improving the relationships between principals and their staff that produce satisfied and committed, and therefore, more effective teachers. The benefits from trust and affective ties are central in this relationship” (p.69). When leaders and teachers depend on each other, mutual trust is present and applied.

Reeves (2016) shared that mistakes made by principals, where there is trust, can lead to forgiveness, “but a breach of trust, matters large and small, can devastate the ability of leaders to collaborate effectively with colleagues and execute the plans necessary for success” (p. 23). True trust is a reflection of leadership and teacher commitment to the profession where participants are free of a strong desire for self-promotion or advancement.

VanMaele and VanHoutte, (2014) concluded “an educational policy on trust building to inhibit teacher burnout is worth the effort. Such a policy might contribute, in the long run, to teacher retention” (p. 110). The presence of individual and corporate trust fosters a buffer between burnout and the advancement of professional careers within the school environment (VanMaele & VanHoutte 2014). Trust is a characteristic that multiple studies demonstrated as important in the attitude of

teachers, students, and administrators and that has a positive effect on teacher contentment in the classroom (Price, 2012; Routman, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis; VanMale & Van Houtte 2014).

Ultimately, trust is a foundational factor for why teachers want to stay in the classroom. True teacher satisfaction encompasses all factors of trust as defined above. Development of trust must include collegial relationships, strong work ethic, and defined and productive principal leadership. Teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and teacher-to-principal relationships impact the presence of trust and how it influences the form and function of the school environment. (O'Brennan, Pas & Bradshaw, 2017).

Trust within a healthy organization, especially a school, reflects teachers' attitudes toward the perception of one's capacity to make a difference in the school environment. When trust is visible within a school and promotes teacher retention, another vital component is evident: efficacy. Efficacy develops within the school environment and is best groomed and nurtured. Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) defined efficacy as being within the framework of beliefs teachers have regarding the positive effect they create on learning and their students. The researchers further wrote that this is an important component of teacher effectiveness.

Supervision enhances teacher efficacy and results in greater student achievement in the classroom. Reasons for student learning include teacher commitment, school focus, and leadership. Student success in learning requires efficacy as a factor (Reeves 2016). Reeves goes on to state, "efficacy is a bone-deep

belief that our work makes a difference...we matter in the lives of the students” (pg. 72).

“Across nearly all grade levels, studies have shown that the experience of burnout is related to low levels of self-efficacy to motivate and instruct” (O’Brennan, Pas & Bradshaw, 2017, p. 166). Walker and Slear (2011) compiled a list of eleven characteristics or behaviors that influence strong teacher efficacy in the classroom. These important characteristics are communication, consideration, discipline, empowering staff, flexibility, influence with supervisors, inspiring group purpose, modeling instructional expectations, monitoring and evaluating instruction, providing contingent rewards, and situational awareness. One of the major findings in this study demonstrated that the greatest amount of efficacy was fostered when school environments modeled instructional expectations. Hipp (1997) wrote, “if a strong sense of efficacy motivates teachers to higher levels of competence and success, then an increased focus on this teacher attribute is critical” (p. 45).

A second principal behavior tied to strong efficacy is communication. Walker and Slear (2011) stated, “[t]eachers consistently reported that communication about school issues was valued and led to enhanced efficacy in their work” (p. 57). Principals foster efficacy in professional relationships through informal interactions between themselves and staff.

Barnett and McCormick (2004) revealed that, “principals can take actions in their work with teachers to enhance and promote teacher efficacy, [f]rom daily interactions between principals and teachers, to teachers’ perceptions of the principal’s concern for each of them as individuals, many principal behaviors can

have an impact on teacher effectiveness and teacher's confidence in their ability" (pg. 407).

These ideals promote efficacy and are often recognized as being a strong cause for teachers staying in the profession of education Easley, (2006). Further research supported the disadvantage experienced when teachers sense low self-efficacy in their instruction, student relationships, and the school environment. This results in diminished retention in the teaching profession (Martin, Sass & Schmitt, 2012). Self-efficacy is either nurtured through engagement between teachers and administrators or diminished by a lack of connection within building staff.

O'Brennan, Pas and Bradshaw (2017) found staff who felt they belonged in their school communities and communicated a sense of connection to their principals had a higher sense of worth and gained the confidence to promote a difference in the school. The perceived quality of the school climate is a strong factor in the perception of trust and efficacy. The presence of trust and efficacy produces a positive, learning culture tied to positive perceptions of how a principal leads the school environment. The positive perceptions provide indications of leadership traits and methods producing a desire for educators to not only stay in the profession but remain with the same school on a permanent basis.

Leadership Traits and Theories

Leaders who foster trust and efficacy in the staff (Fox, Gong & Attoh, 2015; Wilson, M., 2014) lead to a more positive school environment (Petty, Fitchett, & O'Connor, 2012; Reeves, D. 2016). Much of the current research demonstrates that a principal's leadership style and skills impact a variety of teacher characteristics, from

job satisfaction and efficacy to engagement levels and academic emphasis (Allen, Gregsby & Peters, 2015).

Many common leadership theories are identified in educational leadership. Some of the most common are transformational (Burns, 1978), transactional (Burns 1978), and servant (Greenleaf 1977) leadership. The individuals that prescribe to these styles of leadership vary as widely as the schools for which they work and the staff with whom they serve. The definition of leadership also is multifaceted; yet Northouse (2010) focused leadership down to “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). The process is the place where leadership theories exhibit the greatest impact.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership can be described as “the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower” (Northouse, 2010, p. 172). Downton (1973) coined the term Transformational Leader and Burns (1978) thrust it to the forefront in his work entitled Leadership.

Hauserman and Stick (2013) divided Transformational Leadership into four components, including:

- (1) *Idealized influence*: consisting of visibility, rapport, and accountability;
- (2) *Individual consideration*: consisting of collaboration, listening, and consistency;
- (3) *Inspirational motivation*: consisting of demonstrating support and teamwork; and

(4) *Intellectual stimulation*: challenging the status quo, problem solver, and being open about decision making (p. 196).

In the educational realm, *Transformational Leaders* pay attention to the teachers and their goals and wants while aiding them in growth and development (Northhouse, 2010). Northhouse continued by discussing how decision-making is shifted from the sole responsibility of the leader to a shared responsibility with administrators and teachers creating a positive learning culture where teachers, students, and administrators are part of the growth process.

The ability to be a visionary is also a trait found in *Transformational Leadership*. The popular term change agent is connected to the research on the development of a *Transformational Leader*. “Transformational leaders sought new ways to doing things and were less likely to support the status quo,” said Hauserman and Stick (2013, p. 188). One of the points discussed by Hauserman and Stick was the strength of visionary planning within the transformational leadership theory.

Efflesburg, Solga and Gurt, (2014) related the importance of ethical behavior in the follower of a transformational leader. While *Transformational Leadership* emphasizes components of trust and understanding with and by teachers, Efflesburg et al. (2014) brought up the question of whether a follower or teacher who willing engages in unethical actions or behavior for the good or perceived good of the organization or school can impact the sustainability and/or advancement of Transformational Leadership (Efflesurg et al. 2014). Predictions are not always possible or reliable when trying to ascertain the actions or choices followers utilize; however, the line of moral demarcation needs to be evident within the leadership to

ensure the prioritization of ethical response, levels of student success, and the capacity to promote teacher retention.

Transactional Leadership

Northouse (2010) contrasted transactional leadership with transformational leadership when he stated, “transactional leadership differs from transformational leadership in that the transactional leader does not individualize the needs of the subordinates or focus on their personal development” (pg. 181). Northouse divided transactional leadership into two characteristics: contingent reward and management-by-exception.

The contingent reward characteristic revealed transactional leaders are “task-oriented and focus on clarifying employees’ roles and task requirements by providing specific rewards and punishments based on performance outcomes” (Cote, 2017, p. 53). This aspect of transactional leadership tends to affect an individual’s capacity to identify with co-workers. The transactional leader does not emit the appearance of self-sacrifice, as does the transformational leader, and the self-sacrifice of the transformational leader is more likely to unite and motivate workers for the good of the organization (Ruggieri & Abbate, 2013). On the other hand, the transactional leader negotiates to motivate workers to complete the required task (Northouse, 2010).

The other primary characteristic identified for transactional leadership was management-by-exception. This characteristic produces the critical guidance of the transactional leader. The desire to experience fulfillment in the workplace and life determine the necessity for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in individuals and

groups (Hetland & Jorn 2011). The findings of this studies revealed management-by-exception is incapable of promoting and supporting the three most vital psychological needs required to establish success in the workplace. “Leadership that thwarts basic need fulfillment of autonomy, competence and relatedness is a potential risk” (Hetland, 2011, p. 518).

Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership was introduced by Greenleaf (1970) and promoted the leader’s dominant intention to serve the people being lead. Greenleaf identified ten distinct traits attributed to the servant leader style of leadership. These attributes include, but are not limited to, listening, empathy, foresight, and commitment to both the growth of the people and the community (Sun, P. 2013). In light of these traits, the servant leader exercises several of the same attributes transformational leaders exhibit; however, these leaders “possess the intent of transforming those served to grow personally and professionally, becoming more autonomous, and increase the likelihood of becoming servants themselves” (Black, 2010, p.446).

The identified attributes coincide with other research revealing important leadership traits teachers respond well to and which cause some teachers to identify them as important to the reason they stay in the profession (Hughes, 2012). Servant leadership provides strong connection to efficacy and trust, and Black’s (2010) study concluded servant leadership is a strong indicator of a growing and collaborative school climate. These researchers stated, “the principal can influence positively the school’s climate” (p. 443).

Servant leadership also requires a strong trust component, which is of vital importance in teacher retention. As stated previously, trust paves the way for stronger teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and teacher-to-administrator relationships. Research shows trust is “[a] basic building block of relationship development between the leader and all other stakeholders. It is the foundational block for the culture of an organization. Trust allows for workers in an organization to be able to make mistakes, and at the same time, to know that such mistakes are learning experiences for the organization” (Shaw & Newton, 2014, p.102).

Liu (2017) wrote about the excessive dependence of followers on the purveyor of servant leadership. She also related how the study revealed certain leadership traits were attributed to the servant leader style; however, they were more appropriately attributed as one choosing service as a rightful place to meet the needs of subordinates (Liu, 2017).

Authentic Leadership

The theory of authentic leadership proposes various positive attributes also included in other leadership theories. George, Sims, McLean, and Mayer’s (2007) research revealed authentic leadership has a strong commitment to specific moral/ethical traits. Fox, Gong and Attoh (2015) found “authentic leadership to be a root construct that forms the basis for what then constitutes other theories and forms of positive leadership” (p. 3). The research was confirmed as Kahn (2017) stated authentic leadership “has four main measurable constructs: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balance processing” (p. 296).

Two pressing questions emerged in Duignan's (2014) research. These questions are important considerations for administrators in the educational setting: "How should leaders in education decide what is important? And How will they know what is morally right" (pg. 153). The authentic leader, defined by teachers' perceptions through Duignan's (2014) compilation of research, stated teachers expect "their leader to be maximizing the acceptance of organizational and personal responsibility for action, outcomes and mistakes: to be non-manipulating of subordinates; to demonstrate a salience of self over role" (pg. 156).

The phrase salience of self over role describes the authentic leader. These types of leaders understand their attributes and are guided by a sense of their authenticity. Bolman and Deal (2008) wrote about successful leaders and stated, "[t]hey know what they stand for and what they want and communicate their vision with clarity" (p. 436). Bolman and Deal go on to state "[l]eaders need to be deeply reflective and dramatically explicit about core values and beliefs" (p. 437). Authentic leaders know how to apply their life experiences and journeys to their leadership and their leadership style.

George, et al. (2007) wrote "[a]uthentic leaders do not see the themselves as victims throughout the hardships of life but use those hardships as experiences to form and to give meaning to their lives" (p. 132). These statements reflect an attitude and structure that authentic leaders commit to exhibit. George, et al. (2007) wrote authentic leaders understand their inner values and useful life lessons to create effective advancement, as documented in their research, a strong self-awareness that was described as one of the most important attributes of a successful leader.

The ability to use life experiences helps create another important characteristic of authentic leadership: being self-aware. George, et al. (2007) wrote “[k]nowing their authentic selves requires the courage and honesty to open up and examine their experiences. As they do so, leaders become more humane and willing to be vulnerable” (p. 134). Self-awareness “involves reflecting on self, life and relationships but it requires us to respond” (pg. 158) with actions that reflect what was learned through self-awareness, as shared by the research of Duigan (2014).

Being transparent with the people a leader supervises and develops creates the “teachers’ organizational identification with the school” (Fox, Gong & Atttoh, 2015, pg. 5). This type of identification “builds credibility and win the respect and trust of followers by encouraging diverse viewpoints and building networks of collaborative relationships” (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, & Luthans, 2004, pg. 806). Being transparent and able to share vulnerabilities with followers promotes growth and one’s positive influence on others as a leader Avolio et. al (2004).

The internalized moral perspective construct of authentic leadership contains four key moral virtues linked to school leaders. Wilson (2014) wrote:

School leaders must also have the best interests of other stakeholders at heart, especially those of their teaching staff. Such interests can be conceptualized regarding safeguarding rights, promoting responsibility in the exercise of those rights, and creating a climate of mutual respect. It can be argued that four key moral virtues associated with leadership have a particular importance to safeguarding and promoting the best interests of others: justice, care, harmony or concord and courage. (p. 487)

Moral virtues lead to strong values of trust. Fox, Gong & Atttoh, (2015) wrote about the strength hope and trust bring to the leader/follower relationship and identify the strengths of authentic leadership. Fox, et al. (2015) ranked the following of primary importance in the development of trust: obtaining personal credibility. These virtues reflect the needs in the development of a positive school environment and the promotion of teacher retention.

Kahn (2017) wrote “[t]rust is so paramount that it is considered essential within the authentic leadership paradigm” (pg. 296). The presence of trust between colleagues and supervisors produces strong job satisfaction and a strong capacity for individuals and groups to be positive members of the organization, create a strong team, and are key to the organization increasing the overall performance of its purposes (Kahn, 2017).

The value of authentic leadership can be summed up in this way: “The principal-teacher relationship impacts the overall learning culture of the school” (Fox, Gong & Atttoh, 2015, p. 12). The individuals and groups understand the importance of the learning culture. The focus of the school leader is the advancement of the professional providing curriculum and instruction. Both the leader and the follower have a clear understanding of the importance of promoting the individual and the abilities brought to the table as an employee.

Leadership, in any profession, is indispensable in promoting advancement and growth in the work environment. There are many theories and leadership paradigms and theories that have been studied and explored to decide which is the best for an educational setting. Avci (2015) said it well when speaking about

educational leadership, stating, “Leadership styles for school principals are one of the most important issues which has been emphasized and investigated especially in recent times” (Avci, 2015, p. 2760).

Transformational leadership is one of the most commonly identified leadership theories in the educational realm. As a leadership style, it is a motivational method of leadership (Burns, 1978) and it promotes collaboration in the decision-making process. This leadership style has also been linked to effective application when intellectual stimulation and a high desire by the follower to please the leader is important Allen et al. (2015). Transformational leaders shape new ways of completing tasks and this can be shown to lead to school improvements. For instance, Hauserman and Stick (2013) wrote, “transactional leadership skills were foundational to the development of transformational leadership skills.” (p. 188).

Transactional leadership is best identified through concepts like work and reward. The transactional leader is a leadership style operating with strict controls for the follower (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). It has been identified as a management-by-exception style of leadership, which uses negative reinforcement to gain the desired outcomes, a style of leadership not conducive to the present study (Cote, 2017). Cote concluded transactional characteristics forms of reward and punishment fail to promote relationships between leaders and workers.

Servant leadership shares many positive components that reflect the importance of teacher retention and student success; however, it was not determined to fulfill the full purpose of this study and, therefore, was left out of the present study. Two strong components were reviewed and kept in mind by the researcher. First,

there was the ability to listen in a non-judgmental manner and the capacity of the leader to assess the situation before acting.

The second was the presence of a strong sense of empathy (Black, 2010). The literature review also reviewed Greenleaf's (1977) exploration of this leadership theory through the practice of ethical leadership and true identification of individuals and groups with the company or organization they serve. Again, there was deficiency with this theory, so it was not chosen for the present study.

After a comprehensive review of authentic leadership, this style of leadership was chosen for the present study. Authentic leadership is characterized as the use of a strong moral compass with the "pattern of leadership behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective" Fox et al. (2015).

Authentic leadership has the foundational constructs of other leadership styles, such as transformational and servant leadership styles (Wilson, 2013); however, it has strengths that made it a more comprehensive choice for the present study. Wilson advocated authentic leadership for its strong ethics and its capacity to pair ethics with a dynamic sense of responsibility and presence.

Summary

The present literature review contains research on important aspects of leadership traits that promote trust and efficacy, develop the strength of the school climate, and promote teacher retention in the profession. There are important aspects of education teachers and educational leaders must influence: school climate, efficacy, trust, and the leadership attributes of the principal.

The work climate of people is important to the impact on retention and extension of services provided by the professional Collie, Shapka, & Perry (2012). From retail business to service industries to education, the climate created within a work environment is of critical importance to the retention of employees. In education, especially, staff burnout must be reduced to serve the needs of students, parents, the community, and our business and industry partners. A climate of connectivity between staff and administration is vital to this process and achievement of stable learning environments. The learning environment is more than the physical school. The spinal cord of our schools is the strength of the developed relationships within the school: teacher-to-student; teacher-to-teacher; and teacher-to-administrator O'Brennan, et al. (2017).

Throughout the literature, trust and efficacy were demonstrated as a vital attribute in the school environment to foster growth and promote retention (Easley, 2007; Price, 2012; Van Maele & Van Houte 2014). Fox et al. (2015) shared that “trust rules your ability to get things done. Trust rules your team’s cohesiveness. Trust rules your organization's innovativeness and performance..., Trust rules just about everything you do” (p. 11).

Efficacy was revealed to be important in deterring teachers from leaving the profession. O'Brennan et al. (2017) stated, “[a]cross nearly all grade levels, studies have shown that the experience of burnout is related to low levels of self-efficacy” (p.166). Thus, research showed growing efficacy collectively promoted school advancement removing limitations and showing school leaders and colleagues, “that teachers in a given school make an educational difference to their students over and

above the educational impact of their homes and communities” (Donohoo, 2018, p. 323).

Open communication between principals and teachers, along with benevolence and integrity, fosters trust between all parties in the educational setting and are foundational for the use of authentic leadership Fox et al. (2015).

Components of authentic leadership, Walumbwa et al. (2008), promote organization and structure needs, making authentic leadership a good fit for the present study related to teacher retention.

The upcoming chapters after the literature review include Chapter Three, which gives an outline of the research, including the methods by which the participants were chosen. It will also describe how the data are collected and evaluated. The data will then be shared with the results of the data analysis and research findings in Chapter Four. Chapter Five will conclude with summaries of the findings and limitations experienced in the research. This chapter will also include the implications for further research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Classrooms are in a crisis as many teachers leave the profession within a few years of entering this career (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Student success seems to balance somewhere on the spectrum of perceptions, experience, character traits, the presence of burnout, and failing interactions with administrators. The way schools and administrators respond to these issues determines the success teachers experience and promotes longevity in the profession.

Teachers play a primary role in the education of students and affect long-lasting and cumulative advancement of academic achievement (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Discovering what it takes to impact the retention of teachers at a time when exiting education is more prevalent than perseverance is the challenge. Rising numbers of teachers leaving education challenge schools and put strain on teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and teacher-to-administrator relationships, the foundation of education.

The present and persistent conundrum is education advancing while the profession deals with increased teacher shortages. A fact that must be addressed is teachers are either motivated to remain in the profession or schools suffer as they decide to search for other types of employment, sometimes with as little as one or two years of teaching. The motivation for school districts to retain quality educators is extremely important, now and for future sustainability of the profession. School leaders must examine factors important to teachers staying in the profession and

develop plans necessary for nurturing and promoting control of the school environment to lead teachers to stay in education.

Several factors play a part in voluntary teacher attrition. These factors include salary, student demographics, school physical plant, and class sizes. Factors, such as these, are seldom controlled by the building staff or building-level principal; yet some very important practices require attention to affect and improve the overall school climate. A strong program promoting trust and efficacy is primary. Strong implementation of an authentic leadership style of management also raises expectations for teacher retention. Finally, the capacity of the building-level leadership team to design and sustain a workplace environment conducive to student and teacher success also promotes stronger retention in education (Fox, Gong & Attoh, 2015; Hughes, 2012).

Problem and Purpose Overview

No one is fooled into believing there are guarantees available to ensure teachers stay in the profession of education. Teachers, parents, schools, administrators, and the communities in which schools are located know there is an inherent risk of teacher attrition, especially within the first two to three years an individual is employed as a teacher. No one reason exists to explain why teachers leave education; however, much of the research points at leadership and the climate that teachers work in as primary deterrents to retention.

When effective leadership and positive school climate and culture are absent, there seems to be a greater likelihood that new teachers, as well as seasoned teachers, will leave the profession of education (Drago-Severson, 2012; Price, 2012). Johnson,

Kraft and Papay (2012) stated, “Schools and students pay a price when early-career teachers leave their high-need schools after two or three years, just when they have acquired valuable teaching experience” (pg. 3).

There is an increasing need to fully comprehend the reasons teachers leave education or determine the causes of burnout threatening the persistence of those employed as teachers. Burnout and premature exits from the profession are easily traced to a single incident of inter- or intra-personal conflict, the exaggeration of a non-imperative issue perceived as important to the teacher, or an out-of-balance perception of the state of the school community.

Administrators must learn, according to O’Brennan, Pas and Bradshaw (2017), to address and improve relationships between staff members, change the perceptions of efficacy in the school environment, develop increased levels of trust in the teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and teacher-to-administrator trust within the school, and develop leadership management traits that curb burnout and promote teacher retention.

The study sought to understand the positive impact leadership and school climate and culture in a secondary school have on improving teacher retention. By examining authentic leadership traits, especially those that foster trust and efficacy in the school climate, the administrator should be able to promote collaboration and staff connectedness in the school environment. Knowledge gained through this study provided insight to teachers, administrators, and schools regarding the importance of creating effective use of trust and efficacy to develop leadership within teacher groups, individuals, and between teachers and administrators.

One of the goals of an authentic leader is to prioritize the creation of a school climate where teacher growth is the foundation of advancing student achievement and success. As Johnson, Kraft and Papay (2012) stated, “it is the social conditions—the school’s culture, the principal’s leadership, and relationships among colleagues—that predominate in predicting teachers’ job satisfaction and career plans (p. 2).

Research Questions

The research questions below guided this study.

1. How did climate and school culture influence teachers’ decisions to either stay in a school, move to a different school, or leave education?
2. How did the attributes of efficacy and trust influence teachers to stay, move, or leave a school or education?
3. What attributes of Authentic Leadership factored into a teacher’s decisions to remain or leave a school or the profession?

Population and Sample

The population for the present study was selected because they either taught or are currently teaching in a Missouri public secondary school. The participants are all licensed in the State of Missouri. The participants identified with one of the three self-reporting categories: (1) those who chose to stay in a school and education for more than 5 years (stayers), (2) those who chose to move from a current position to another position in a different building (movers), or (3) those who chose to leave the teaching profession (leavers). A total of five to six in each category of participants were selected through a volunteer-based selection process from each of the three designated categories. The population was selected from those who have current or

experience as teachers in a certified area of education in the State of Missouri. The selected individuals taught no less than three years in a secondary school within the State of Missouri.

Sampling Procedures

The researcher chose to utilize sampling strategies defined as the snowball or chain processes (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell the snowball or chain process “[i]dentifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information-rich” (p. 127). The identification process consisted of at least 16 teachers who could be identified as belonging to one of the three previously identified categories (subsequently identified by a nickname such as stayers, movers, or leavers).

Snowballing occurred after known participants shared other educators that would identify with one of the three categories of stayers, movers, or leavers. A total of 16 teachers were identified and utilized in the present study. To participate in the study, these teachers needed to have taught in a secondary school on a full-time basis for three years or more in the State of Missouri. No substitute or non-certified staff members were chosen as a participant in this study. The teachers hailed from a variety of core curriculum backgrounds. No teachers were chosen as participants from the researcher’s school of employment, helping to curb any bias that might be present.

The participants were walked through the designated informed consent process, and paperwork was obtained to document the agreement to participate in the

study. Also, the participants were provided the researcher's purpose for the study and a copy of the research questions.

The researcher was categorized as a qualitative interviewer, as identified by Hatch (2002). The interviewer used open-ended questions to "encourage informants to explain their unique perspectives on the issues at hand" (Hatch, 2002, p. 23). Hatch expanded the role of the qualitative interviewer, characterizing this individual as someone who will "listen intently for special language and other clues that reveal meaning structures informants use to understand their worlds" (p. 23). The researcher gave information about the nature of data collection as part of the semi-structured interviews.

All interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim. A copy of the transcriptions was filed with the data results to ensure the capacity to duplicate the study. Field notes collected during the interviews allowed the researcher to observe and record body language and other non-verbal data. Teachers shared their experiences regarding the teaching profession during their interviews. Perspectives of educational life, including school climate, as well as assessing levels of trust and efficacy present or absent in the school climate, were also recorded.

The interviews generated information about leadership traits, focusing on those traits associated with the authentic leadership style. Data collected led the researcher to determine if these leadership traits, or a lack thereof, influenced teachers' self-placement as a stayer, mover, or leaver, the options given to them during the interview process.

Research Design

The present study was a qualitative design study with a phenomenological assumption. Creswell (2007) defined a phenomenological study as “the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon” (p. 57). The researcher framed the research on the constructivist paradigm, with an epistemological focus. Hatch (2002) described this as constructing knowledge between the participant and the researcher to develop and expand reasonable conclusions.

Hatch (2002) further wrote that the importance of reflexivity, or “the process of personally and academically reflecting on lived experiences in ways that reveal deep connections between the writer and his or her subject” (p. 11), is vital to one’s understanding of the information obtained in the interview. The present study placed strong emphasis on the commonalities derived from the interview of the participants during the present study.

The researcher gathered commonalities reflected in shared experiences of teachers regarding school climates and paid particular attention to reflections of trust and efficacy in the participant responses. The researcher explored commonalities and shared experiences of the participants regarding the perception of building-level leadership character traits as they related to the authentic leadership style. Summary conclusions of participants’ responses drew together data gathered in various phases of the process.

Data Collection and Instrument

The present study utilized, as the primary tool for gathering evidence, multiple interviews with teachers having a variety of years in teaching. All participants had completed at least five full years of classroom teaching experience. Since the researcher was interested in different characteristics of stayers, movers, and leavers, the goal was to obtain consistent themes (Hatch, 2002) revealed in the research by the interview process. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for maintenance and accuracy.

The researcher explored teacher experiences by having the participants describe professional experiences as a teacher. The researcher focused on participant individual and shared experiences during the time serving as a teacher. The researcher sought examples of teachers' views on the importance of school climate, trust between staff members, and leadership. Also, perceptions of the impact efficacy shared between teachers and leadership was reviewed. Participants were asked to assess the specific quality of how the building-level leaders interacted with teachers, as measured by the qualities of an authentic leader.

The researcher utilized a specific process for interviews, described by Seidman (2006), which included three parts for each interview. The first part of the process was to explore the actual experiences of the participant, professional and personal, in education. This information allowed the interviewer to establish a summary of the individual's background that shaped practices and understandings of education.

The second step, as shared by Seidman (2006), included ascertaining how participant experiences related to the purpose of the study. By reconstructing what participants know and the practices used in teaching, the researcher was able to conclude relevant perceptions teachers develop as a result of the experiences obtained during instruction. The findings helped determine the benefit of building-level leadership management styles, the climate of the school where participants worked, the perceptions of trust and efficacy perceived to exist in the school environment, and how these perceptions work together to create a reason to stay or leave the profession.

The final part of the interview connected the information obtained in the first two parts of the process. Exploring how the character of leaders affect the school climate allowed the researcher to conclude what led teachers to stay in education and the present building environment where participants taught. It also allowed the researcher to draw some conclusions as to why some teachers move to different environments in search of leadership traits that enhance school climate especially related to one's perception of efficacy and trust. Finally, the researcher was able to determine some of the reasons teachers choose to leave schools and the profession altogether. Responses helped the researcher to identify emerging patterns for clarifying the meaning of the information that was shared.

Data Analysis

Discovering emergent themes that existed was a goal of the researcher in the data collection process and in the analysis of the data. The researcher chose to employ the process of triangulation to help with determining patterns of similarities in data collected (Hatch, 2002). This consisted of interview transcripts, field notes,

values, and attitudes. This strategy was employed throughout the study when dividing data into categories to ensure reliability and validity of the researched phenomena.

“Member checking” (Hatch, 2002, p. 188) was also applied, allowing the interviewees to review the written transcripts, which increases reliability and credibility of the information collected.

Collecting and organizing the data was the first step in using the data collected to conclude. The interviews were organized into the three categories of participation used in the study: stayers, movers, and leavers. In the next step, the researcher synthesized data. Creswell (2009) wrote of the importance of this step as the researcher’s way “to reflect on its overall meaning” (p. 185).

Creswell (2009) also stated that discovering tone and exploring perceptions allows the researcher to conclude what the participants are trying to communicate. Discovery reveals themes and reoccurring phrases or patterns as these components begin to emerge. The researcher organized these patterns together, as Creswell (2009) and Mertens (2005) advocate.

Phenomenological research, or the rich process of analyzing themes, completed the process as Creswell (2009) recommended. Grouping data by significant statements allows the researcher to synthesize specific meaning from the data. The coding process follows the previous step in Creswell’s (2009) linear approach to data analysis. In part, coding consists of organizing material by chunking the information into meaningful data.

Creswell (2009) recommended that a fifth step be used to obtain a narrative from the interviews, revealing themes and sub-themes reflecting connectedness

throughout the entire study. As a final step, the researcher interprets the data that has been collected. Creswell (2009) charged the researcher with concluding whether the findings confirmed past information found in literature or created new questions to be explored.

The procedures used in these steps to organize data for analysis and interpretation allows the researcher to obtain themes and assemble the meanings those themes. This gives validity from the participants' information. The constructivist paradigm provides understanding between two parties supporting rich dialogue and engagement (Hatch, 2002). The dialogue and engagement created the capacity to triangulate data to promote the development of themes supporting valid reasoning resulting in quality assurance (Creswell, 2009).

Quality Assurance

The documented steps shared above set the foundation required to obtain validity; however, the researcher must maintain procedures to promote and ensure accuracy. Creswell (2009) warned “qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of findings by employing certain procedures” (p. 190). Creswell (2009) also laid out several important procedures to aid with establishing validity. To this end, the researcher engaged the following precautions to ensure validity.

Triangulation of data included interviews of the participants. These interviews were analyzed, and data were categorized with like information into themes. The researcher then used what Creswell (2009) called member checking to substantiate

findings described as “taking the themes back to the participants and determine whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (pg. 191).

Another validation method used was to dissect the shared experiences of the participants to construct themes from multiple perspectives. Another strategy utilized by the researcher was to be as forthright as possible regarding potential bias. Creswell (2009) wrote, “[g]ood qualitative research contains comments by the researcher about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background, such as gender, culture, history and socioeconomic origin” (pg. 192).

A final strategy utilized by the researcher was the use of a peer de-briefer (Creswell, 2009). The importance of the final method used in the present study was summarized by Creswell (2009) when he stated that conclusions are best made “involving an interpretation beyond the researcher and invested in another person” (pg. 192).

Summary

The primary purpose of the present study was exploring why teachers choose to either stay in the teaching profession, move from one to school, or leave teaching, and how these choices relate to school climate, trust, and efficacy and the attributes of authentic leaders. Also, the present study sought to establish the impact felt when there was an absence of authentic leadership traits within the school culture, for instance, where there was little to no trust or efficacy, and whether this would cause teachers to request a move of schools or leave the profession entirely.

The present study organized structured interviews of teachers into three distinct categories: those teachers characterized as stayers in a school at least five

years, those characterized as movers who left a school, or those characterized as leavers who are no longer in education. The interviews conducted sought to gain rich, first-hand experiences to enable the researcher to paint a verbal picture of experiences within the schools where these teachers are employed. The data collected was coded to identify shared, or similar, experiences of the teachers interviewed. Themes emerged, and these were used to answer the research questions as presented. The chapters to follow will contain the findings of the research and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This qualitative study focused on school leadership, school culture, and trust and efficacy to understand how they impact teacher longevity. This study sought to examine how the culture of public secondary schools, built on trust and efficacy, or a lack of, along with the characteristics of Authentic leadership, made an impact on teachers' decisions to either, stay in the teaching profession, move to another school, or leave teaching in a public school because of a culture missing the above components. The participants who participated identify with one of the three categories, stayers, movers, or leavers, and were interviewed face-to-face.

The overall guiding questions of this study were seeking to discover if a school culture with trust and efficacy under the leadership of an administrator with Authentic leadership traits impacted teachers' decisions to remain in the public school teaching profession and, conversely, if there was a negative impact on teacher longevity because of a lack of trust and efficacy in the school culture and the administrator lacked Authentic Leadership traits. To help in answering the larger question, this study used the following research questions:

1. How did climate and school culture influence teachers' decisions to either stay in a school, move to a different school, or leave education?
2. How did the attributes of efficacy and trust influence teachers to stay, move, or leave a school or education?
3. What attributes of Authentic Leadership factored into a teacher's decisions to remain or leave a school or the profession?

Participants

A total of 16 participants volunteered to participate in this study. The participants were all public-school teachers in a secondary level for at least 5 years of their professional careers. All the participants were interviewed individually. There were 4 males and 12 females interviewed. There were 6 participants in the stayer group, 5 participants in the mover group, and 5 in the leaver group. There was a mix between rural and urban teachers in all groups and they were all located in the midwest of the United States of America.

Data Analysis

Each of the 16 interviews were begun by asking about their career path in education, followed by their passion and attitude for teaching. They were all asked ten questions, which were prepared with various follow-up questions to further explore perspectives and experiences.

Stayers

Sam was a teacher who began in rural Missouri and is finishing up his career in a suburb of a metropolitan area. Sandy began her career in a suburb of a large metropolitan area and moved and is finishing her career in another suburb. Sara was in the science industry and was content and began teaching in her current school and has stayed there her entire career. Sabrina came from the military and had a desire to teach. She has also been in only one school her entire career. Sally had different experiences in different schools in the same district. Shelly also came from a profession outside of public education. She has spent the last 12 years in the same building.

Name	Content Area	Total number of years in Education	Number of years in current district
Sam	Debate	25	12
Sandy	Science	24	16
Sara	Science	14	14
Sabrina	Social Sciences	14	14
Sally	English	25	25
Shelly	English	18	12

Movers

Mark began in a rural district and moved to another rural district in a different part of the state. Mary had a profession outside of education before she became a teacher. She moved from her first school in the suburbs to an urban school. Madi began her career in education in an urban setting, moved several times and currently teaches in a suburban school. Mike began his career in a rural district and moved to another rural district in another part of the state. Maya began teaching in a suburban district and moved to another suburban district.

Name	Content Area	Total Number in Education	Number of years in previous location or locations	Number of years at current district
Mark	Social Studies	9.5	3.5	6
Mary	English Language arts	6	4	2
Madi	English Language arts	23	20	3
Mike	Social Studies	10	5	5
Maya	English Language Arts	10	6	4

Leavers

Lacy began her teaching career in a rural setting and left public education to teach at the university level. Larry began teaching in the suburbs and left public education to teach private music lessons. Luke began his teaching career in a rural district and moved to a different part of the country and became a realtor. Lane began teaching in a suburban district and left for family reasons. She is currently a full-time mother. Lori began in a rural district and is currently a real estate agent and staying home with her family.

Name	Content Area	Number of years in Education	Number of years per district	Current position	Number of years in current position
Lacy	Family and consumer science	17	9/8	Professor	5
Larry	Social Studies	7	7	Private Music Teacher	1
Luke	Social Studies	9	9	Realty	6
Lane	English Language Arts	4	4	Stay at Home Mom	3
Lori	Social Studies	7	7	Realty/Stay at home Mom	6

Interview data will be presented by question. Data from the “stayers” will be presented first. These teachers were all in the one building for at least 12 years. Next answers from the “movers” who stayed in education but moved two or more times will be outlined. Finally, data from the “leavers” will be given. Leavers are former teachers who have left K-12 education.

Career Path

The first question about career path revealed five of the six stayers were in another career besides education before they began teaching. Sam shared he began his career by teaching at a college in a small town but spent the majority of his time as a secondary teacher. Sandy and Sara were in the science field and neither felt satisfied with their career choice before discovering teaching. They both shared that teaching was a career they were so glad they found. Sabrina stated, “the first class I took on education, I thought this is it. I mean I don’t know why it took me so long to get that

point.” Shelly shared that after exploring other jobs after college, she wanted to teach. She moved from another city in the plains to the current job she has now. The demographics of a diverse population drew her to the current school.

Participants were asked a follow-up question to the first. The follow-up asked about their passion for teaching. All 6 of the stayers shared the common belief: that they enjoyed teaching teens and wanted to share what they knew about their subject matter. There were statements about loving and believing in the educational process. Sam and Sara both shared they loved teaching and Sara stated, “there are so many needs to be there for consistent leadership and kindness and helping teenagers figure out how to function in the world with one another.” This quote sums up the common belief from the teachers that have stayed: *students are their focus*.

The movers are still working as teachers but have chosen to move schools within the last six years. There are a variety of reasons the movers moved. Mark began teaching as an ISS and psychology teacher. When he moved schools, he began teaching health and physical education along with social studies. He was inspired by specific teachers who taught with “passion and inspired me to teach.” There were several other teachers who inspired a desire that Mark also wanted to share with his students.

Mary is an English teacher. She has taught in three different schools and is currently teaching middle school. She graduated from the school in the community she began teaching in. She stated, “I can’t think of another thing I would rather do. I love spending time with kids. I love watching them develop and grow, and then graduate and come back”.

Madi has moved to several schools. The first move was because the school she was at was a charter and it closed. She has had two other major moves that led her to her current school. She shared the reason she stayed in education through the years is because she really enjoys what she does. She likes the classroom and teaching. Her passion is for the students and the positive relationships she develops that are “helping them to be better people.”

Mike began teaching because he really enjoyed the content of history, but it became more than just teaching the content. Mike said, “it slowly became just the positive student relationships that I’ve been able to build”. He enjoys seeing his past students and the conversations they still have.

Maya became a teacher because she came from a family of teachers. Maya reflected that her passion for teaching that comes from,

just wanting to help kids and not necessarily with English and for them to be better writers, but just to help them be better people and to just let them know that somebody is there for them, and somebody will help them. I think that is what keeps me teaching is, you know, the kids and wanting to be there with them.

The movers did share a common passion that they have for students, *wanting them to be successful and achieve something in their lives.*

The leavers are former teachers who left the profession. There were several different jobs that these teachers pursued after education, but three of the five had a common reason about why they left. It stemmed from administrative and principal

leadership and how they, as teachers, were received and viewed as educators and teachers.

Lacy shared she played teacher growing up, so she always wanted to be a teacher. She spent the majority of her time as a teacher in the high school setting. She did realize she wanted to take her teaching to higher education.

Larry explained he knew he wanted to be in education, and he chose history to be his field of study. He stated, “you have to love kids...and you want to play a significant role in shaping who they are as people. If you don’t have a heart for children, you can’t be a teacher.” He continued to share very passionately his desire to help his students contribute to society and become better people.

Luke wanted to be at school when he grew up because it was better than being at home. He brought this experience to the classroom where he wanted the kids to enjoy being at school. He wanted to connect to students and help them realize education means something.

Lane reflected on her beginning path in teaching as what inspired her to work with kids. She wanted them to learn, and she really enjoyed being with the students. She really liked teaching English and her noted “passion lie in working with my kids.”

Lori also shared one reason she got into education was her dad, who was a teacher. She was undecided about her next stage in life. but she enjoyed history so she thought that would be the route she would choose for her career. She reflects that her goal was never “to be like a textbook...I wasn’t in it for the content, I enjoyed

working with the kid's aspect of it." Similar to the stayers and movers, the leavers all wanted to make a difference for their students.

Building Culture and Climate

The second question asked participants to describe the culture and climate of the school they were teaching in. All six stayers, except Shelly, interviewed, had experienced multiple principals. Shelly's relationship with administration and her principal are not viewed as positive and nurturing. The culture in her school is considered competitive with no clear intentions. The culture has a selfish motivation, and the teachers seem to be out for themselves. There was an overall sense that the culture of the building was both initiated and perpetuated by the administration of the building and led by the principal. The school culture was not created by relationships between faculty and administration. Shelly shares the culture seemed to be more self-centered and "selfish, it is for more of a personal gain than for the betterment of the community."

The description of the culture and climate of a school reflected an important aspect in the other five stayers having successful teaching careers. The experiences shared were rich and shed light on the dedication of these teachers to their students and their careers. Sara found her one and only school through a job fair. She shared her experience at her school has been amazing and her co-workers are wonderful. They have been supportive in both her professional and personal life. Sandy expressed there,

is a clear focus on teaching and learning...the administrators recognize that teachers are the people doing the hands-on work...I feel they are here to help

us. From being unafraid to teach and make mistakes and grow as teachers to allowing teachers to find who they really are as teachers.

The culture created by Sam's principal was "he allows good teachers to be left alone...he mentors people." Sally shared that keeping a positive and growing culture can be difficult and it can be easier to slide down the negative side if it is allowed and not addressed. Sabrina shared when the administration demonstrates true caring, "it sets the tone for the building." Sandy revealed that at this time in her career, happiness is more important and the strong culture at her school promotes this. Sam was forthcoming that when leaders create and promote a growth culture, "it holds a lot more weight than pay and the student make-up of the building." Culture was important to these teachers, and it promoted a climate where teaching and learning were important. Relationships with their principals and administration were positive and were important to their teaching success.

The movers shared their experiences with multiple principals and administrative teams. Mark noted the principal at his previous school had not created a community-type culture. It seemed to be a culture, as he described it, as micromanaging and a "gotcha" climate. The principal was "not the best at fostering trust within the school. I didn't feel like I could go to him with any concerns." The principal at his new and current position is very open, and communication is natural. "It doesn't matter what your concerns, whether it is students, teacher, other administrators, personal issues, you know, it feels like a real community here where they truly care about their students and faculty, too." He also stated his current

principal takes time to think about his answer. Mark stated he felt the principal really wanted to solve problems.

Mary shared the administrator in her first school was organized, but it led to what she describes as a rigid environment. Communication was also a major issue. She believes she and administration never felt aligned with each other about what needed to happen. Mary then moved to another district, which has also proven to have some issues. She went there under leadership that lasted only a year and was positive. In the current year, the new principal left in the middle of the year, so the culture and climate are not very good. There “has been a revolving door of administrators” where there is a feeling leadership and philosophies change so often, you cannot get into a routine. She left one position wanting a change for another school with issues of its own.

The experiences Madi shared seem to mimic Mary’s experiences of revolving principals. This had a very negative impact on the culture of her first school. Her viewpoint was “with consistency, you have a lot more positive culture.” Mary believes controlling issues of discipline is very important to building positive culture and climate. Several of her past administrators seemed to demonstrate, by their comments and actions, teachers caused students to behave inappropriately. Madi shared some comparisons between those principals at her previous schools and her current one. She stated, “I don’t have an underlying stress of what today is going to look like. There is a sense of pride here, it is definitely different.” There is an understanding from students that they want to graduate. Madi believes students “step up to the culture and climate of the school, and that is very present” at her current

school. She believes her current school is built on a foundation of success for students to achieve.

Mike began by commenting the culture at his previous school was determined by teachers, not the administration and principal. The culture became so negative, by the last year he was there, that he was just collecting a paycheck. The administration struggled with leading and not being able to implement the policies they wanted to implement. The principal could have been stronger, but he just became a people pleaser. The leadership at Mike's current school operates with well-developed protocols such as PLC. He was originally going to stay at his new school for about 2 years because of the distance from his home, but he stated this about the principal. He

created this positive energy throughout the building. Anytime you needed to stop into his room and have any type of conversation, him or the assistant, like they were there for you. They were going to do their best to answer any question you had, handle any situation you weren't sure how to do...and I just hadn't really gotten that before.

Mike decided to stay with this current school.

Maya began by comparing the two schools she has worked at, and they really ended up being about the same. There was an autonomy at her first school that she liked, but it did not really work with her colleagues. The culture at her first school was centered on the needs of the students and not the teachers. "I think the teachers understand students need their teachers more" at her first school. This made for a satisfying, yet draining, atmosphere. The culture is hard to identify at her current school. She really did not seem to be able to identify what the culture was at either

school. Maya was mainly focused on what happened inside her classroom and not the school as a whole.

The movers wanted to talk about the school culture and the differences between one school and another. The first four were able to identify differences between the cultures and climate of the schools and what made the second school better than the first. They seemed to be focused on the leadership and what leaders did to create a school with a more positive culture and climate for education.

The leavers had a wide variety of experiences and identified both hurt and challenges as they moved on from teaching in the secondary public schools. Not all left because of administration. Two made professional changes for personal reasons, and the other three left education because of a change in leadership at their schools that prevented them from being the teachers they wanted to be or could have been.

Lacy began by reminiscing about the schools where she taught through the years, identifying the culture of the buildings. She talked about a principal who provided little thank you's with treats and staff lunches. She fondly remembered this principal as being out among the staff and students and knowing their names. This principal left and was replaced by a principal Lacy describes as the reason she left education. She did not explain in detail the leadership changes other than to say "there was a lack of trust with little support toward the teachers. This was both professional and personal."

Luke began by describing the culture as cliquy. Luke suggested the teachers perceived to be in the "in-crowd" received the attention from the administration. Luke specifically stated,

the bad culture was perpetuated by the administration. People who were hired had connections with administration, both at the building and district level, and this served to be a negative component of leadership in this building. Luke described leadership “as very passive and, you know, everything that happened just kind of happened.” The leadership seemed to push this agenda or that agenda with no specific plan.

Lane thought the culture and climate were stressful because of parents and the community, not necessarily because of the leadership. She did share her belief in the positive community with the school. She did not communicate thoughts about any specific principal and their role in the culture or climate of the school.

Lori began with an abrupt answer to the question about the culture and climate in her former school by stating

the culture and climate was never good at the school I taught at. There was conflict between administration and teachers from discipline discrepancies to no trust. The principal would talk about other teachers and staff in front of other teachers. Teachers seemed to be secondary to the leadership of the district.

She specifically shared if teachers shared issues, they would “get stuck in a closet somewhere.” This killed the morale within not just the building, but also the entire district, by her accounts.

Larry described the culture of his past school as positive. He used the word strong with each of the principals he experienced through his years of teaching. He

stressed that a focus on students learning and teachers being supported contributed to why he thought the culture was positive.

There was an obvious disconnect between the leavers and their administration for the three participants who left under hurtful conditions. There was a sense they were not wanted by administration and it seemed to permeate the buildings they worked in.

Collaboration

The third question asked the participants to share the opportunities teachers had to collaborate with colleagues, both teacher-to-teacher and teacher-to-administration. Through the interviews, responses indicated a correlation between strong and consistent collaboration and strong culture and leadership. All the stayers described a time dedicated to professional collaboration. This was geared toward data review and professional learning communities. Sam specifically spoke about common plan times within his department, which enabled professional and casual conversations. These conversations would also carry over into their common lunch times, which enhanced their opportunities to unite within their collaboration time. Sam touched on teacher-to-administration collaboration through casual conversations in the halls and through discussions during the times after observations and walk-throughs. Sam stated,

Administrative collaboration led to an understanding about how learning can look different on a daily basis, which gives him the classroom authority to teach in ways where there seems to be chaos but there is genuine teaching and learning occurring.

Sandy reflected that after multiple decades in the classroom, she wanted “collaboration to be about building and working together to develop something new rather than just sharing information.” Collaboration time is promoted within her school. The collaboration time between her and the principal is limited just because of time. When there is interaction between her and the principal, it is through electronic communication and feedback. She stated it is “valuable and it is appreciated.” She went on to disclose that the principal feedback is “extremely important...if any administrator in this building came into my room and did a walk-through and gave me feedback and I wanted to go talk about it, I could. I know I could.”

Sabrina elaborated on the notion that collaboration makes you a better teacher. This is not only within her own department but also cross-curricular, where it is important to have honest, open discussions about teaching and strategies. Collaboration with the administration is more specific and not as widespread. Sabrina sees her administration as those individuals that can help make her better, from academics to communicating with parents. Being able to “collaborate with administration is just as important as with colleagues.”

Sally had similar thoughts regarding collaboration. When she suggested working with teachers and administration, especially within her department, was positive and was viewed as valuable time when they discussed teaching. The “collegial collaboration was positive throughout her entire school, from faculty meetings to academics.”

Sally had several principals through her tenure as a teacher and chose to speak about a specific instance of collaboration with administration. Her second principal

initiated purposeful book studies to provide rationale for certain changes. That principal was easy to speak with and open to what teachers had to say. This principal valued face-to-face conversations, and had a profound influence on Sally's teaching because of the time she spent with her. The other principal Sally mentioned seemed to have the opposite effect. He was hard to find and very indecisive. He was a nice person but, from Sally's perception, had a hard time leading.

Shelly spoke about how collaboration was expected between the teachers with a specific, designated time set but few expectations. Although the teachers went through the motions, the principal did not seem to have any follow through with leading the designated collaboration time. Shelly compared collaboration differences between teachers and administration as "less of a personal growth and more of a discipline type collaboration." There was not much collaboration between the administration and teachers to become better educators. The teachers were more prone to speak with each other about challenges than go to their principal. There was a tendency, Sally stated, "to lean on each other more than we would ever administration."

This question delved deeper into school culture through collaboration. There seemed to be an overwhelming consensus that collaboration occurred between teachers, both planned and unplanned, and was beneficial to the teachers in their careers. There was collaboration for both academic and social reasons and it was important for the teachers to experience this collaboration in their teaching.

The collaboration between administration and teachers was very different in the experiences of these teachers. All but one of the stayers have multiple principals,

each with their own strengths and weaknesses regarding teacher-administrator collaboration. The principals who seemed to create a culture of collaboration, for growth purposes, were communicators and were identified as leaders whom teachers wanted to go to for help in the classroom for learning and growth purposes. The principals who created a culture of either isolation between themselves and the teachers or non-involvement with the faculty seemed to create a culture of division.

The movers reflected on collaboration and shared why it was important, even though they left one location in search of something different in teaching. Mark described the reason he left his first school was because of isolation. He never had opportunities to collaborate with other teachers and teach classes he was qualified to teach. He never spoke with the principal unless a specific issue came up. He shared he received very little guidance as a new teacher at his first school. His second school, which is where he is currently teaching, has more purposeful collaboration, both with departmental colleagues and administration. Teachers were given common plan times and were encouraged to collaborate amongst colleagues, and not just about educational topics. Mark also stated the administration has an open-door policy, especially “to meet after our evaluations and their observations,” if teachers wanted to meet for growth purposes.

Mary focused on the district collaboration provided on a weekly basis. There was a sense of day-to-day collaboration, which came naturally. There were conversations about her students and challenges they were having. Between administrative staff, there was not good communication in her first school. There seemed to be a disconnect. Mary shared that collaboration was random. There was

high turnover among the teachers and she perceived this is a main reason collaboration was missing between leadership and teachers. Teachers attempted to bond to get through the current rough patches. She described it as “just to survive.”

Madi experienced closures of schools, and her moving was not always voluntary. Madi talks energetically about how her first district was family oriented and her colleagues practiced collaboration. The second district was full of mistrust and was compartmentalized and there was very little collaboration among colleagues. The administration was approachable and easy to work with yet they were unable to solve the lack of mistrust between the staff.

Madi combined her experiences in her first two districts with very brief anecdotes and jumped from the brief discussion about collaboration in previous districts to her current district. Madi really enjoys her current department. She is adjusting to this high school and getting to know others. Her collaboration with her administration is very positive. She stated, “as far as what I need and the support to know that if anything were to happen, I feel like I would be supported here and not left high and dry.” She went on to say that “the collaboration is more through conversations and being able to identify as supportive of teachers.”

Mike shared that in his first school, collaboration between teachers was built in, but there were very few discussions between teachers, even though time was provided. The collaboration between administration and teachers in his first location was sporadic and nonexistent. Mike stated, “they led faculty meetings and went over a handful of things on PD days if we had the time, but there was not true collaboration that I really ever got.” He left for his current school, where organized

collaboration was present and positive. He stated, “teachers were really enjoying it and it worked well. We were doing a lot of great things, and the positive community was there.” It was diminished because of the district’s decision to not have professional learning communities. This decision has been a struggle for administration and teachers to adjust to.

Maya spoke briefly about building relationships with teachers and the importance within a school. She shared about administrator-to-teacher collaboration in both schools where she taught. Maya perceived teacher-administrator collaboration was built around the observations and felt “fear of the observations so much that it makes it difficult for there to really be this team with the administrators and teachers and I don’t know how to fix that.” She wanted to have more relationship building so when administrators came into classes it was not threatening. She wants to converse with administration, but that has not occurred in either building she has taught.

The movers reflected on the perseverance, or lack of, collegial collaboration and administrative collaboration at the schools where they taught. There was a focus on departmental colleagues, while administrative collaboration was secondary, yet they understood the role administration played in creating this atmosphere of collaboration. The movers, especially discussing collaboration, did not always find positive experiences, even when they moved to other locations.

Lacy described collaboration with her colleagues by saying it was critical to her educational growth. She had been in several schools where collegial collaboration was left up to the departments. There were some schools where collaboration was

natural and others where it was forced. When it came to her last school, collaboration within her department kept her teaching, despite a non-supportive administration.

Larry described collaboration as a strong building focus but noted his department was collaborating before it was a focus of the building. He described the collaboration with colleagues as “a helpful, sharing culture. As time went on, more and more of the school became like that as well.” He shared that collaboration with administration as very easy and open. He stated:

It was always open and honest communication. I felt like the feedback that we got from the administrators being in the classroom was appropriate and helpful. I never felt like administrators were coming in my room to catch me. I felt like they were there generally to help to influence my instruction in a positive way for kids.

Luke spoke about collaboration. There was casual collaboration between members of the same department, but in the weekly meetings “they wanted you know the PE teacher needed to collaborate with the English Department and everybody did because you were told to, but it really didn’t make a lot of sense.” Luke continued to explain the amount of work it took for cross-collaboration, saying “it became a meeting to just have a meeting.” Luke described collaboration with administration was, as “tense most of the time.” Luke continued to explain his perception of teacher cliques and how those close to the principal were viewed as the successful teachers and those that did not belong did not receive feedback and administrative reviews. This question continued to aggravate the hurt that Luke experienced while he taught.

Lane shared about the positive teacher-to-teacher collaboration. She explained it was almost a daily event through casual conversations and after school, as well. The relationships between most of her departmental colleagues led to social gatherings after school hours. She stated that even though she left education these relationships were still important to her. Lane's collaboration with her administrator ebbed and flowed. She was a new teacher and was searching for specific feedback that she felt was missing but, overall, "I was able to go to and talk to about things when there were tough situations or even good situations."

Lori's comments about collaboration were succinct. She did have four departmental colleagues she was able to develop a relationship with, and they got along well. Collaboration with administration was not positive, and she stated, "there was very little trust. I think we realized quickly that we needed to keep our mouths shut and keep our head down." Lori also reflected that the lack of administrative collaboration with the teachers was very difficult on new teachers. They were looking for guidance, and it was difficult to come by.

The leavers continued to share their experiences and, with this group, they continued to reflect on their unique experiences. Two of five leavers shared that administration and leadership had nothing to do with their departure from education. The reflections of Larry and Lane contained a fondness for teaching they would always have.

Support

The fourth interview question dealt with how teachers were or were not supported. The purpose of this question was to seek a different aspect of the school culture.

Sam began to share about a specific instance with one of his principals he identified as someone who supported teachers in and outside the classroom. The principal supported the teacher with a parent issue. Sam believed support by administration is not always curricular based. It is behind the scenes when support seems to be a daily occurrence.

Sandy stated that with the three principals she has had, there was never a time she can recall when there was no support. There was a time when she addressed discipline differences between principals. She was able to converse with the principal and there was resolution. Even through this issue, she felt supported. The culture of support was brought up, and Sandy spoke about how this gave her confidence to address other concerns with the principals. There was an overall culture that led to collegial discussion.

Sara continued talking about support, which she said is needed to make the classroom and instruction run smoothly. "There are a lot of different types of support that go on in an educational setting, and I think it is a combination of all those that keep me content in this profession." Sara reinforced this answer by discussing administration support for classroom supplies to an atmosphere of co-workers' support to supporting all kids in the educational process. Sara shared the two most critical types of support needed are help with the behavior of a student and supplies

needed in the classroom. She actually reflected that through her time at her high school, there had not been a time where she did not feel supported.

Sabrina continued the support conversation and shared the most important thing to feeling supported is to be recognized for doing something right or working hard to see students learn. She stated, “as a teacher who wants to educate and help students grow,” you can get by with lack of support, but when you hear you are wanted and see the administrative presence, it makes you want to continue and be a better educator.

Sally reflected on a specific example from her 25 years of teaching when one of her principals had to guide the building through a change to block scheduling. The support was positive and purposeful. There were opportunities to observe other schools who already had block scheduling and time given to collaborate with teachers to discuss and create lesson designs for block scheduling. The idea of support by administration “is having a presence in the building, in both the classroom and halls.”

Shelly has had very different experiences whereby the presence of administration was less than positive and purposeful. There was one specific experience that demonstrated a lack of support and that was between teachers working through issues in departments. There were a few supported teachers, but they seemed to be pitted against the others. There was the sense, when it came to parents and working with them, that administration would support the teacher if there was an issue or problem. Other than parents, there was an overall feeling of non-support.

The idea of support was identified as important to the overall sense of teacher well-being and growth. Support seems to be demonstrated by administration just by

being present and acknowledging the work teachers are doing. Administrators also demonstrate support by making sure the teachers are equipped with basic needs to make daily instruction operate smoothly. Support is part of the created culture that might not be recognizable on a daily basis, but teachers know when they need to be supported in their day-to-day operations and need to know it will be present.

The movers shared their experiences with support, framing it through their educational experiences. Mark began his reflection by saying he was “not supported, he [the principal] said you don’t have it and I’m what is it? He couldn’t explain it to me and ended up sending me a journal article.” He spoke about a lack of guidance from administrators on how to improve.

He then jumped to his current school, where the administration “will give me feedback on their observations on what to do, how to improve...they would give us emails on how to improve through research, and ideas, you know support us.” Mark continued to explain that he was teaching new grades and subjects, and the principal would help through observations and conversations. He thought one of the most important ways his principal supported him was by following through with what was needed and doing what he said he was going to do.

Mary began sharing about her first school and how very supportive the teachers were, more so than administration. In her current school, there is a perception about the administration’s lack of knowledge about what is going on in the classrooms. The current evaluations did not happen throughout the year.

Madi explained that previous schools were connected in their departments and felt supported by their colleagues but not by administration. There was a disconnect

between administration and support in her first three districts. Her current school was an adjustment to the departments and how they work. She was impressed by how other people would support her from other departments and speak to her about her teaching. Madi did not correlate the concept of support with administration. She looked at it as collegial support.

Mike's recall of support focused more on administration, and he correlated support to evaluations. His first school used a new evaluation tool he felt was not used to help or grow teachers. It was used to catch teachers not teaching well or not doing what they were supposed to. It was not used to build teachers' prowess with teaching skills. Mike stated, "evaluations were constructed with incomplete classroom information. This reflected a poor method of supporting teachers." His next school used the same evaluative tool but used it fairly. The "principal would give typed feedback that was appropriate and helpful in instruction."

Maya began by sharing that her experiences with administrators were not very nurturing because it was just part of their profession. She explained, "part of their job as an administrator is to help teachers, particularly their first 5-year teachers so they can grow and become what they can be. And I don't think we do that." She went on to say, "if you want teachers to stay, grow, and be better, then you've got to help them be better." Maya did not really share or compare her different locations but did expound on her point by saying, "a principal who conducted observations that were meaningful, be present and seen around the building, would be a principal who would be supportive."

The leavers were distinctly forthcoming about support and what was missing during their time as educators. Lacy worked with multiple leaders, and she recalled in her first building that the principal was accessible and able to discuss teaching and learning. This principal not only knew what was going on in the classroom but also knew what was going on in the personal lives of the staff.

The principal who led to her leaving education was the complete opposite. “He seemed to use conversations that were held in private against you as a weakness in teaching.” Lacy went on to share “that if there were conflicts with students, instead of helping the situation, he would treat the teachers as the problems and not hold the students accountable for their actions.” There were little to no personal connections between the staff and principal. Lacy left public high school education defeated and bewildered. In her last year, she describes the principal “as a dictator with little creative freedom in teaching.”

Larry began his thoughts about support with discipline and how teachers were supported when holding students accountable. He mentioned that not communicating with teachers about accountability and discipline can cause issues with teachers. He explained by saying, “this is what we are going to do, and here is why we have to do it, and you know x,y,z and just let the teacher know that you’ve got their back.” Larry went on to say this would “go a long way to making sure the teacher feels like they are supported.”

Luke spoke about support regarding schedules. He saw a lack of support when his classes were changed without discussion. He continued to share that he was the only person who could teach college level courses. His request to discuss the change,

from his point of view, “was met with indifference and generic answers without being specific.” Luke continued to reflect that the Principals Advisory Committee did not function as a supportive group. They “just went through the motions when discussing change during professional learning time.” He explained the perception that “all decisions were made behind closed doors.”

Lane saw support as administration helping with classroom support and parents. She focused on getting help when needed from administration. She did get collegial support through casual conversations, but she mainly focused on classroom support, both with parents and students. She said, “as the years went on, I did not feel I needed administrative support for these challenges, and I turned to my co-teachers.”

Lori reflected on not receiving much support and focused on evaluations and “how administrative feedback was not constructive and demanding a certain type of teaching.” There was no autonomy within the classroom. Lori’s perception was that if the “evaluation process was questioned, there would be job threatening consequences.” Lori said that sounds extreme, but “veteran teachers of 20 plus years experienced losing their jobs or getting reassigned to another building.” Lori stated, “as a department, we decided we were not going to make a fuss.”

The leavers echoed several experiences about support with administration, which were part of the reason they left education. Support is a trait of a culture and climate in a building, which reflects teachers’ attitudes toward leadership and how it is demonstrated toward the building staff. As from previous questions, support or the lack thereof was not a reason why some teachers left the teaching profession.

Trust

The focus of the fifth interview question was to explore trust. Participants were asked to describe how and when they felt trusted and how this was evident in the school culture. Sam shared a memory of developing trust between himself and an administrator. He admitted, “I first did not trust his administrator because of past negative interactions.” Because the principal took time to support Sam’s debate program and autonomy to teach, “trust was kindled and lasted through our collegial years.”

Sandy began this part of the interview by volunteering the importance of trust. Trust “is really close to the top, before, I mentioned several times that being allowed to make mistakes and how important that is. Well, you can’t do that if you don’t have trust. It is probably at the top.” There was a change during the discussion of trust. When “trust is evident in the relationship between teachers and administration, it has a positive effect between teachers and students.”

This was also shared by Sara, who reflected on how the students trust the teacher. The “students are willing to take on more frustration in educational growth when they trust the teacher. They are going to come to class, ready to learn and the teacher is prepared to teach.” Sara stated, “this is strong by-product of when teachers feel trusted to run their classroom by administration.” She went on to explain how “being supported, encouraged, and trusted by administration propels me to teach and the administration knows education is occurring in my classroom.”

Sara continued to expound on trust in the school culture by sharing a personal experience when administration and her colleagues all supported her through a very

tough personal time outside the school setting. When administration steps outside the educational setting to help, it is “the highest level of trust you can have.”

Sabrina reflected on her time of growth through trust as a teacher. “There is not a feeling of “gotcha” when they walk into the classroom.” Administration trusts her and they let her be herself in the classroom. She also added to other participants’ beliefs about being able to try and fail in the classroom. They are helping her improve and grow; they care about her. There is “not I’m your boss and I want you to do it this way, it’s like let’s work together.” Sabrina went on to share when you walk through the halls, you can just see and hear people talking how there is strong positive affection for her administration.

Sally continued with the concept “that trust is earned through responsibilities.” She was given tasks and responsibilities with department funds and scheduling, which, in turn, allowed her to feel trusted. Sally then went in a different direction about trust. Through her tenure as a teacher, she experienced several administrators and could identify the leadership style that killed trust in the school culture. “Leadership with top down mandates and designated structure that took away teachers’ freedom to teach stifled trust between teachers and administration. This school culture, under this principal, led to multiple teachers leaving during his tenure.”

The experiences Sally had with different leadership styles and “the different results cultural trust had on a school reiterated the importance of trust and nurturing and growing it within the school.” Sally tied trust into being valued as a teacher. “If you value me, you will trust me to do what I need to in the classroom and the

opposite is true. If my principal does not expect trust, then it becomes very difficult to do the things teachers need to do.”

Shelly’s experience with trust and a culture of trust was not evident in her school. She does feel trust from her colleagues because of the lack of integrity between the department members. This is not true of the building as a whole, however. She mentioned this before, but the “culture of competitiveness in the building kills the relational trust between me, administration and most of my colleagues.”

The importance of trust as a key aspect of culture in a school has some common threads but is also varied in the experiences of these six participants. There was a common theme about trust in the classroom and the reflection on letting teachers be a part of the community through leadership experiences and casual conversations about education and teaching. Trust within the culture of a school does affect the education of the students. Trust is passed down from teacher to student in the classroom. There is an overall relational attitude between teachers and administration that can stretch outside the school walls, which promotes trust and inclusion within the school community.

Exploring trust with teachers that moved went in some unique yet similar directions. Mark experienced a lack of trust toward the administrator he had before he moved to his second school. He did not expound or seem to want to explore this. He could not identify when he experienced trust in his second school. Mark stated, “it was more of a community, kind of like a family at the second school where you just felt like you could talk with anyone, administrators or teachers about issues you had.”

He went on to explain he did not have a reason not to trust administration since he was so comfortable at his new school.

Mary felt a sense of trust from some of the administrative team but not others. Mary's experiences with moving seem to be different from the others. Mary experienced a lack of trust in her current building more than her first. She explained, "the principal is not addressing the few teachers who are struggling specifically with help or strategies; she just tells all teachers to change instruction." She went on to state

schools that do not trust their staffs and they are looking for a way to start documenting who they need or get rid of, or basically just saying we don't trust you as a teacher so we need to see what you do every minute of the day. She went on to share, "rules and procedures change rapidly and there is not consultation with teachers." She also noted that students are being affected because of this leadership.

Madi's experience with trust, in her previous school, was represented through her personal work with students. They left her alone while she was teaching, and she considered this a form of trust. There was a "general trust but not to a high degree." She reflected on trust in her previous building and said it was not part of the culture. She stated, "you just couldn't really trust what was said to actually be true all the time because it changed." Madi compared that trust culture to her current building. She shared, "I could not put my finger on it specifically, but I knew I was perceived as trustworthy." Madi had a difficult time identifying examples of trust within her new

building. She did feel morals, truth, and ownership of the administrative staff were part of her current school.

Mike experienced trust in his previous school because he was helping with new technology. There was a change in his third year, however, and the trust faded as he worked less on the new project. He began to see mistrust between administration, teachers, and himself. That mistrust grew among the teachers themselves. This was the time he made the decision to leave that school and search for another one.

When he interviewed for a position in his current school, he remembered they asked what he was interested in and how he wanted to be part of the staff. Trust was almost immediate. He stated, “the trust is there top to bottom, superintendent to a 1st year teacher, they can come and ask me to do anything...I feel like for the most part our administration trusts 98% of our teachers and our teachers trust our administration.” Mike went on to speak about how solving challenges is a discussion. The administration does not ignore it, and there is a desire to repair the issues.

Maya began the discussion about trust by sharing about her colleagues and how they trusted her from the very beginning. Maya rarely to never experienced trust from administration at her previous schools. Maya stated, I trusted them generally, just generally, not to any high degree or anything.” She continues to explain about trust not being part of the school culture “because you just couldn’t never really trust was said to actually be true all the time because it changed.”

This has not been her experience at her current school. Maya went on to share about how a trusting culture helps with teaching. She stated, “it makes you happier, for sure.” She went on to state that trust leads to respect, which is very important in

wanting to do a good job. Even though her current school does not reflect trust, she wants to be there for the students.

The five leavers' experiences with trust mimicked the answers of the other participants. Lacy's experiences with trust focused on two principals in the last building she taught in. The first principal always had her best interest in mind and they "were truly there to help me and what I said wasn't going to be used against me in any way, but it was going to be more of how can we help you." The last principal she worked under and before she left teaching led to the situation where

I don't talk, I don't say anything because I am afraid whatever I say might get used against me in some way or another. I mean I was tenured at that point, but still it was just if they wanted you gone, you were going to be gone.

She described the relationship she had as "formal isolation." The principal suggested "I move to another district where I could know the kids better." Lacy did not want to move her family, and this suggestion from her principal led to her leaving education altogether.

Larry did not leave education because of a lack of trust. He talked about trusting the administration and knowing they wanted him to become a better teacher. He wanted them to do observations and walk-throughs in his classroom. Larry talked about how his principal would speak with him about improvements and the trust was so deep, he knew he was not gathering information to use against the teachers in the future. It was simply to help the teachers get better or to help them understand perspectives of administration.

Luke experienced serious problems with trust toward the end of his career. He talked about a basic lack of trust in the building. He recounted, “the trust between teachers and principals occurred when new initiatives were introduced. There were programs and goals to help students graduate.” They dealt with how to grade, homework, and lesson plans. The initiatives seemed to fade, and other ones would appear. Luke said, “I am not sure the research behind the initiatives, and the constant change flamed the fire of mistrust.” He and other teachers felt the initiatives were “like quasi-experiments from some sort of paper or something...there are 6-8 of these different types of things that they did.” Luke felt like they were just half-hearted initiatives with few achievable goals.

Lane went straight to an example of trust that had to do with helping a struggling student. She knew she could turn to her principal and was not worried about it. She spoke about being unsure about what the trust line was and who did and did not trust administration. She overwhelmingly believes trust was part of the school culture. There was open communication when issues arose. Through this question, Lane could not completely grasp how trust fit into her time as a teacher there. She used the phrases “I do not know” and “I’m not sure” in several instances.

Lori recalled, very quickly, a time in her first year of teaching when she felt trusted as an educator. Her first administrator listened and supported her through issues and challenges. The principal would help with parents, and she felt he was 100% trustworthy. It was a feeling she had that she did not need to worry with this principal. Her last principal, however, she had no connection with. “You felt you were being scrutinized and the principal would say negative statements about my

colleagues during a conversation.” This made her feel insecure because “if he was doing this with me, was he talking about me to my colleagues?” She did not feel positive around him. Lori never talked about not trusting him; rather, she seemed to feel insecure.

The leavers could either identify trust as something they experienced or something the principal did or did not exhibit in some way. There were specific traits identified both for principals that were trusted and for those that were not. Trust was a hard concept to identify for some.

Efficacy

Interview question number six explored the culture of a school when it comes to efficacy and the belief that teachers do make a positive difference in all of their students’ lives. Sam shared this as a part of the teaching rollercoaster. Some days “you feel like you make no difference and then what happens is someone, a student, someone shows you the difference you did make and that gets you through.” Sam continued to share, “there are times where I am not sure I am doing anything right then I see success in a student and yes, there is a difference being made in that student’s life.” Sam added to his thoughts by stating, “the culture of the school is always for kids to grow, leadership expresses this not always easy for some students but this is the goal that all kids grow in some way.”

Sandy thinks this is right below trust but stated, “why would you be doing this job if you didn’t think you were making a difference everyday”? Sandy added that efficacy is not just educational growth but social and emotional growth as well.

Sara began her response about efficacy by stating, “teachers have a huge impact; I think that teachers are truly the frontline to helping children.” Sara further shared

feeling safe and supported in my job allows me to give positive responses.

When I walk into my building, I feel good, it is a home away from home...I like it and that gives me a comfort level to have, to care about my students.

Sabrina echoed some of the same observations as Sara. She explained it is why she teaches. With the demographics of her school, “our kids need more than a teacher sometimes, you know, so yes, it is very, very, very important and that is why I teach.” She went on to elaborate on her feelings about efficacy by stating, “if you don’t have that strong belief then you shouldn’t be a teacher.” Administration helped through the training of different programs that help the school, but the ultimate position she sees in her school culture of efficacy is that “we’re going to be the best teachers we can be.”

Sally continued with very similar thoughts and experiences about efficacy in her school’s culture. She states:

So that is why we go into the classroom. I mean content aside, state assessment aside, ACT aside, it is what I do for kids on a daily basis in the classroom. I got this kid and I got that kid, and I got this one over here... That is a lot of pressure, I think efficacy is really important.

Sally also experienced efficacy through a different lens. The administration brought students into the decision-making process in order to give them a voice, which created value in the students’ minds.

Shelly lit up when she began her thoughts about efficacy by stating:

I know I make a difference, and I know that I will always try, and for any other benefit that I want the kids to know that somebody cares and somebody believe in then...I do it because I hopefully giving them skills that they will use later on to not have to depend or rely on anything else. But that is what drives me as far as every day going into the classroom and talking to every student is that I have never given up on one student.

The consensus with the teachers in the staying category throughout the discussion of efficacy was you have to have it to be an educator who makes a difference in the lives of all students and makes deposits in their lives to use after graduation.

Efficacy with teachers that were movers was just as important as it was to stayers. There were different perspectives, but everyone held the belief that you can make a difference in students' lives. Mark began by talking about creating a safe environment for his students and enjoying the classes he teaches. He develops trust with his students, and this makes teaching more rewarding. He also shared about taking risks in teaching like using different techniques and strategies, and the students responded when there was trust between them and the teacher. Mark did share that this did not seem to be part of the overall culture in his first school. Efficacy was not something mentioned or discussed. He thought most teachers had this innate belief they could help change the lives of students, but it was not demonstrated throughout the school or on a regular basis.

Mark's perception of his second school was that it is different. This was a place where teachers discussed the difference they were making in the lives of students. He observed this through conversations between teachers and administrators.

Mary shared that her classroom is like an oasis. Students are safe and they trust her. Because of this classroom environment, students are learning. Her first school did not seem to have the same atmosphere that her classroom did. She stated when she went to her current school, she had "an ambition and my drive to continuously improve at this, like there is a lot of room for creating results in the classroom." Mary went on to share about not knowing what students are dealing with or going through in their own lives, but they would know, coming into her room, there is consistency and they know what to expect.

Madi also began by talking about trust and noted that when students would come to class, they knew the consistency they would get. This helped her educate all her students. She did not spend a lot of time on efficacy and thought all teachers should have this. It was just part of teaching. She said she did take this belief with her from one school to the next, even if the overall school did not seem to portray efficacy.

Mike continued the discussion with trust as well. Mike focused on engagement and having meaningful conversations with his students about topics other than education. Being involved in what the students did outside the classroom built his belief in and efficacy with his students.

He did not talk about his first school and efficacy, but at his current school, there were obvious examples of his colleagues demonstrating efficacy. He shared about hallway discussions between teachers and students that built trust and efficacy along with a climate that promoted this. He stated, “you know when it goes from the principal being positive...and making the climate enjoyable for them to want to come to work and the teachers then take that to the next level, and they do the same thing with kids.” Mike shared that efficacy includes not just the classroom but the cafeteria, hallway, and extracurricular activities. There is a focus on students as human beings.

Maya echoed the importance of efficacy and stated, “it doesn’t matter what you are teaching. I think you want to help them.” She does not feel efficacy is the same at her current school as it was at her previous school. The school she left was full of educators with efficacy, wanting to help students. She commented that there were more students who needed her at her first school than there are at her current school.

Maya commented that the need of the students for the teachers makes her feel like she is doing her job more. She stated efficacy is important to the culture of the school because students can tell if teachers do not care. Maya ended this part of our conversation with this statement about not having a culture of caring and efficacy: “if you don’t have that understanding factor, then I think that affects the teachers that you are working with. It affects the kids. It affects their attitudes.”

The leavers agreed that educators should demonstrate efficacy and noted it should be in their heart. Lacy recalled wanting the students to be successful out of school. She hoped she made a difference in their lives. Lacy was only at one school

with two principals. She did not recognize efficacy as being different between the principals regarding the culture the principals manifested. Lacy did share about her being the advisor to student council, and she just kept teaching and having them do little things for the teachers. She thought this was the right choice to make, even though the morale was very low. She did not want the morale to change her belief in teaching her students and doing what was right.

Larry quickly stated:

we spend more time with kids, than parents do often. We know a lot of our kids...parents are working several jobs, kids go home, and they are alone until 8 or 9 p.m. so we are in many cases, the only adult influences that they have in their lives consistently. They crave the structure that we provide for them... they need it, they appreciate it. We are setting them up for the rest of their lives in the things that we teach them and the skills that we build with them.

Larry continued to share that teachers not only teach the content but should shape a child's life as a learner. He believes teachers cannot be replaced. He thought the culture of the building he left was very much kids first.

Luke added to this part of the discussion by remembering all his past students and how he still stays in touch with many of them. This was his answer to efficacy and how he made a difference in his students' lives. Luke would concentrate on making a difference in students, one at a time. Luke shared what frustrated him was the culture in his school, which seemed to be teachers and administrators picking and choosing who they wanted to help. His perception of this was the students knew this and it negatively affected the culture of the school.

Lane reflected on hoping she made a difference in at least one student's life. She stated, "my goal was to help everyone in some capacity, I feel like everyone had that mindset and that goal, and everybody wanted to make a difference and that is what everyone worked towards." Lane continued to share that even though administration was not positive, this was something she had control over and worked toward. She helped with tutoring, taking an interest in their lives and just allowing her room to be a safe place after school. When a teacher is involved with the students, it motivates them in the classroom.

Lori explained she always tried to make a connection with the students. Lori was honest and noted that as the culture of the building declined it seemed people became more cynical; making connections with the students became harder and less and less important to her. She conceded the administration gave efficacy lip service, but it was all superficial. It was Lori's perception that students recognized it was not genuine. Not only did most teachers not trust the administration, neither did the students.

The leavers, for the most part, reflected on the possibilities teaching could bring with efficacy. Efficacy was something that most of them had and used in their classrooms to make a difference, even though outside their classrooms seemed like drudgery. Larry was very passionate, and it is clear he misses the classroom, teaching, and the building he left.

Principal Relationship

The seventh interview question began by bringing focus to the participants' thoughts on the relationship between themselves and the administration, specifically

the head principal. Sam spoke about the relationships he has had with his principals and the trust within those relationships. He shared that his principal has extreme interest in the well-being of the students. He is striving for excellence.

Sandy spoke about the relationships with her administrator through specific events. Within the classroom, the positive relationships principals have with students also grows teacher relationships. The reliability and relationships led her to recommended readings, which grew her classroom to improve the learning environment.

Sara restated the same viewpoint as Sam by expressing she does view the principal as a boss. She views herself and the principal as a team. Sara wants to be at work and stated, “I am blessed and lucky in life”. Sabrina spoke about the three principals she has had. The first one was nice and politically savvy, but there was not trust. The second principal was a good person but more to himself. There was not a special feeling toward teachers in the building that made her want to come to work. The third principal was personable and did things for the teachers. She reflected on how kindness seems to have brought people together. “When mistakes are made, I learn from them with the direction of this administrator.”

Sally had multiple principals through her years and, first and foremost, respected the position, “personal differences aside, differences on individual issues, or individual philosophies aside, that person is always the principal, right?” She did share that her 2nd principal really did validate that she was a valued member of the team.

Shelly shared her personal background about relationships with her principal. She stated, “I never want to interact with leadership other than on a level where you know I have a basic question.” She further explained she does not trust her principal; she is more likely to develop relationships with colleagues. She feels she is viewed as a favorite by her principal but does not like this perception.

Shelly does view herself as a filter between her principal and her department. She sees him as a faux leader with his own perceived power. When Shelly does go to her principal to speak about concerns or challenges in her department, “it is just a matter of hoping that I can express what they need to express without retribution.”

The movers reflected on previous and current principals and the relationship differences between them. Moving between schools is not always going to produce different results in relationships. The discussions supported that relationships can be worse and the situation in a different school can be just as bad as the one you left.

Mark reflected about the principal he had before he left his first building. His perceptions were he “was just there to watch me.” Mark went on to share “he didn’t help me, you know, to be a better teacher.” He also recalled only 2 observations in two years. There were derogatory comments but no affirmations about his teaching.

Mark shared that his principal at his current school was affirming. He was approachable and Mark stated, “if I had concerns, I wasn’t scared to go and talk with him...I can talk about personal things and any school concerns.”

Mary continued with this part of the conversation by reflecting on how her principal used loyalty and the idea of loyalty as leverage. He did not understand why teachers wanted to leave to discover other opportunities, yet Mary left to explore

different experiences in New York for one year. She returned to Kansas City and another district that had problems in leadership. Mary had strained relationships with two principals that led the school. She went on to share about the inability to discuss curricular concerns or strategies and communicate with the staff. The second principal left in the middle of the year because of similar issues, and Mary and the staff finished out the year without a principal. She has thought about leaving, but she is tied to her students and the positive difference she feels she is making in their lives.

Madi had some ups and down with principals in her first two districts. She described two of them as very approachable. She would communicate with staff and encouraged conversations. The reason Madi moved from her first district was school closures. The first principal of her second district was supportive of teachers and demonstrated a desire for them to be successful. The two principals she had after that did not demonstrate the same qualities as previous administrators. There was a lack of control and communication.

Madi's last principal was confrontational and used threats to try to manipulate the teachers. Madi stated that her personality was like "you this or else, and so it was like fear." She went on to share that there was very little trust. The principal used conversations from teachers against others. Madi shared she was promoted because of the perception she could get things done. Madi stated the principal "had teachers running scared."

Madi was willing to wait for the unknown in another principal because she did not want to follow her to another school. She left and is currently at a school where leadership is teacher and student focused and leaders want teachers to be successful.

She has just finished her third year at her current school and shared she has found a place she can be a part of. The principal has created a culture and desire for teachers to develop a relationship with him. He encourages conversations between the staff and himself.

Mike began by reminiscing about the social part of his principal's leadership that he would eventually move away from. He went on to reflect that there was no educational leadership. He was not present in the classroom and conversations were few and far apart. Mike's principal after he moved districts was about communication, specifically communicating about what she saw in the classroom as well as casual conversations in the hall. She seemed never to be too busy for teachers. She also strived to be personable and not always discussing work. She knew the teachers personally. Mike stated the principal "wanted you to feel comfortable with just being able to just talk in general, by all means she is going to be there."

Maya shared that her relationship with her first principal was professional and that is where it stopped. The principal allowed her to feel valued and heard. There was not a time when she felt like they were friends, but "I think I have to feel comfortable enough to talk with him without feeling like you are being judged." Maya felt like that at her first school.

After moving to her current school, she has not developed a close relationship in the four years she has been there. It is strictly professional. She shares it might be how she is as a teacher. Maya shared that her current principal wants to prepare the students and do what is right. In both schools, she has found that administration seems to trust the teachers and the jobs they do.

The movers demonstrated that relationships with principals look different. Even though relationships are professional or personal, there need to be relationships with communication and an ear to hear. It is also important for teachers to be heard and trusted to do their jobs.

Three out of the five leavers did not experience relationships and communication between administration and teachers. This, combined with other with experiences between them and their principal, led to their leaving education.

Lacy had excellent experiences with principals and other administrators until the last two years of teaching. The first principals were approachable and had visions for the direction of their schools. They were interested in the teachers and the needs they had. Lacy went on to share the principal under whom she grew as a teacher the most was described by her as “extremely supportive.”

The principal that led the building Lacy’s last two years had some challenges that concerned her and were reasons she is not in education today. Lacy’s perceptions began with casual conversations and developed through ongoing professional interactions. He was described as very insecure and questioned teachers if he was being a good principal. He was inquiring if the staff liked him. Lacy explained she did not know how to really interact or communicate with him. He became more and more authoritative as the next year moved on, which led Lacy to decide she was leaving education. Lacy did not expound on his authoritative nature, just that it is what caused her to leave.

Larry’s experiences were different from Lacy’s as both principals he worked with were very supportive. Their leadership styles were different but effective. Larry

stated about his first principal, “I felt like he had an open door. I never had an issue going to talk to him, but he was much more of the quiet type...you do not need to know what your superiors are thinking all the time, which is ok.”

The principal he had before he left teaching had a big personality. He empowered teachers and changed the culture of the building. There was a trust and a directness that was very respected by Larry and the other teachers. Larry completed his thoughts with this statement, “I just felt he believed in me as a teacher and he cared about me as his employee and that I wasn’t part of a revolving door.”

Luke had two extremely different leaders and shared his comparisons of both. He reflected on his first principal as someone that communicated, was doing a good job, and did not micromanage him as a teacher. He would complete observations and gave feedback that was useful. Luke went on to share when the new principal arrived after his first principal left, the teacher-principal relationship was not the same.

The new principal was perceived as a micromanager and gave specific types of instructions he wanted to see and how instruction should be carried out. Luke and other teachers thought he would follow different instructional fads every couple of years.

Lane primarily recalled the principal that led to her leaving education. She had a good principal but nothing specific she wanted to share about their educational relationships. Lane went on to share about how her last principal gave little feedback to her educational growth. This led to her not developing a professional relationship. She also explained that there was a lack of trust. Lane worked with him for four years and she stated, “ I feel like I did not know him very well, I feel like there was a sense

of I'm not sure what he is thinking or he wants to do with this or kind of where his minds at." She did believe he wanted the students to be successful, but his leadership did not lead to handling tough situations or handling other issues. Lane explained and shared there was an educational void within his leadership.

Lori also shared about her principal she had toward the end of her teaching career. She explained there really was not a relationship with her principal. There were very few conversations about her teaching in the classroom because either he would not come into the classroom much or, when he did, he would compare teachers and share negative attributes with her. Lori reiterated that the students seem to know there was little direction coming from the principal. Her perception was the students thought he was a fake.

The leavers relived some of their experiences through our conversations. Two of the leavers seemed to have good relationships with their principals and were happy teaching, but family dynamics caused them to leave education. The other three conversations really did reflect the frustrations and hurts left by their principals and the results of poor leadership.

Leadership Style

The eighth interview question focused the participants toward more specific identifiable leadership styles and the traits they observed in their principals. Sam described his principal as having a strong vision for the entire building as well as the individual staff members, which caused him to be valued. There was a sense of caring and striving for excellence. He stated, "if you have a good one, you better stick with

them as long as you can, you feel really strong about a man, you've got to stick with them."

Sandy has had three principals in her last 17 years, and she shared they have all been reliable. The current principal has listening skills, and teachers have been able to share concerns. The principal has leadership boldness and knowledge of educational growth. This led him to encourage her to read specific books she would never have read, which allowed her to expand her classroom. She concluded by stating with a strong opinion

get out of your office and walk the halls. Just hang out and see what the teachers have to say. When they pop by your office and want to talk to you about something, even if the principal is exhausted and has a jillion other things to accomplish, greet them with a smile and say "come on in", because that is how you build relationships.

Sara has had three principals in her 13 years and states they were all strong and caring in their own ways. Her first principal was outgoing, and the second was extremely data-driven and structured and "was heavier handed in the management style." They all could build relationships and were not afraid to face issues head on. She then listed traits of her current principal, which were loyal, kind, reliable, hard-working, and trustworthy.

Sabrina also listed traits the principal possessed, which included generous, team mentality, good communicator, and personable. She said, "I much rather have a kind administrator who cares about me but is soft on discipline than somebody who rules me as a Kaiser." There is an open-door policy in her view, and she can go and

discuss concerns that she might have or disagreements. This type of leadership, according to Sabrina, gives her a desire to stay where she is.

Sally began recalling principals' traits by sharing about the two who most positively influenced her throughout her career. She identified the ability to listen and valuing and involving teachers, recognizing that as a principal and school leader, he did not have all the answers. This allowed for collaboration, or he would actually find the answer and answer the questions later. He was honest. His weakness, perhaps, was "maybe not knowing an answer making sure he would follow up on something he didn't know" with the teachers. Sally also explained her principal would "solicit input and was very willing to listen," which demonstrated leadership in his weakness.

Shelly stated that her principal's traits began with a lack of consistency but did exhibit high expectations. She did say he was transparent, but his traits were like a "sleight of hand, you do not know what is accurate or what is real or not." She could not readily answer if his traits overcame his weaknesses because there were so many blurred lines.

The movers, again, shared about their multiple principals and compared the traits experienced in their own circumstances. They reflected on their answers and gave honest experiences. Mark began by quickly stating, "there was no trust in my first principal at my first school." He took his time before he answered and then shared about his authoritarian style of leadership. There were statements about his way or the highway. Mark also used the term micromanager. "He was not a reward, no reward principal, just a no reward type." Mark shared, "I really thought about

getting out of education after this experience but I really thought teaching is what I was supposed to do.”

His second school and principal began the healing process and was described as trusting, encouraging, and compassionate. Mark also shared that his principal was honest about not having or knowing all the answers. Mark states, “he understands his faults and that he doesn’t know everything...because no one is perfect.” Mark spent several minutes sharing how he respects the principal for knowing his shortcomings and working to improve them to be a better leader. Through these shortcomings, he promoted learning for not just the students but himself and the teachers as well.

Mary shared her experiences with her first principal as very stern and organized. He was very closed off and not transparent. Mary then moved to another district in the same area she lived, and the leadership was described as bizarre. The principal would not communicate and stayed to herself. She was perceived as racist in a very diverse school. She was also described as unresponsive when addressed about concerns.

There was a follow-up question about the principal’s strengths overcoming their weaknesses. Mary’s first principal did have strengths to overcome weaknesses. He made it difficult to trust just because he would not communicate, but, on the whole, his longevity was to be respected. Mary’s second principal did not have strengths to overcome her weaknesses. She was a manager and not a leader. She would get caught up in the minutia and could not prioritize.

Madi jumped on the description of two of her earlier principals as bullying and micromanaging, describing one of them as a strong disciplinarian but that carried

over to the teachers. She suggested he was not a leader. Madi then compared those experiences with her current principal. She stated,

I think he has a great personality. He has empathy for others. He seems to be more a team player. He is a leader, one of intelligence and he is grateful.

Grateful, thankful and appreciative...appreciative of your service and commitment and support, he is supportive.

Madi reflected that her previous principal just did not appear to trust the staff, which caused the staff to reciprocate those feelings toward her. Madi said she is happy to be where she is at now.

Mike shared about the principal before the current principal as someone who had a desire to lead but not the skills. Mike stated, "he became a person of the students and seemed to listen to them more than the teachers. If the teachers came to him with an issue, he would not address it. He did not have the skill to motivate."

Mike thought he could have been a good leader if given the help. He just did not have the respect from most teachers because of the way he tried to implement change.

Mike then compared his previous principal with this current principal. He began his description of the current principal as very motivating. She shared a vision and a path to get the staff where she wanted them to be. She wanted to focus on increasing attendance. This is what Mike stated about her introduction of this goal,

because instead of just saying this is the way we need to do it because this will happen in just a one-hour meeting, it is explaining it to us and showing us you know this is where we can get and it has clearly worked. And she said I don't

know that this is going to happen, but I know that this is the trend with other districts.

Maya began feeling nurtured at her first school. She was given opportunities to grow and be heard. She perceived things changed when she turned down the common core committee. There came some judgmental feelings, and she felt lost within the same school where she had previously felt nurtured because of her choice to not be on a committee. She then went on to explain how the principals observations were not helpful. There was not a negative tone, just very superficial comments.

Maya shared other traits about her principal, like communicative and listened. She went on to describe her principal at her current school, and she began with the term respectful. He wants people to have a voice, but he is not authoritative, which leads to some assistant principals taking advantage of situations. "There are many different 'voices' in her current school. They are not all unified, so it is a confusing and stressful environment." Maya believes if her second principal would be more authoritative with the other members of leadership, it would not be so stressful.

The movers continued to reflect on new situations compared to old. Some of them continued to confirm the idea that a move is not always good, but others stressed they could not have stayed in their previous schools and remained in education.

Three leavers were very forthright about sharing traits of past principals, indicating that these traits were instrumental in their decisions to leave education. Lacy was at three schools within 17 years, and she began to discuss the traits of her second principal. She described him as personable and relatable. He was

understanding of the teachers in both their educational and personal lives. He was also fun and created a safe environment in which to teach. There was a strong sense of trust and efficacy with her first two principals. Lacy went on to describe her last principal and began by describing him as insecure. She believes this led to his authoritarian leadership style.

He had very little focus on the big picture and the path he wanted to take the school. The attitude toward family and personal life is really what finally led me to leave education. He wanted teaching to be everything and did not leave room for family when needs arose.

Lacy went on to describe his attitude toward personal issues. She shared about multiple times she had emergencies with her children, and her principal was very inflexible and portrayed an attitude of indifference. Lacy felt her principal targeted people he did not think were dedicated to the school. She perceived there was a strong absence of trust her last two years. She wanted to stay for the students and the relationships she had built with them but was unable to stay with the leadership in place.

Lacy shared it came down to a discussion with her husband, and she stated, “I was not going back there under any circumstances.” There was obvious hurt when she was sharing about the situation in her last school. She tried to use other words to describe the situation and she just stopped.

Larry began to share about the two principals he had during his time at the one high school where he worked. He stated his first principal was friendly and calculated, meaning he had a plan and direction to lead the school. He was an open

communicator. The second principal Larry had was also a very good communicator. He was described as a “shepherd...I always felt like he was leading from among and not from above...like he was in it with us and not outside of it looking at us.” His leadership led to the principal feeling like a friend, which Larry emphasized by stating, “and we trusted him.” He was able to discuss personal events and he felt he was understood and heard. Larry concluded by stating

“if you want to build a strong school culture where teacher and administrators feel like they are playing together and that everyone had your best interest at heart, feeling like you have that personal relationship with your superior, it’s important.”

Luke’s viewed his principal as self-serving. This was demonstrated very quickly through what he said and how he said it. His perception was they were “more concerned with likeability than results...the biggest thing I always saw was they were always looking for the next big thing in their lives.” The traits were viewed as outcomes, such as not having research to back up changes and proposals. Luke’s perceptions were the principal was not goal-oriented to help students but self-centered to help his own future.

Lane had a difficult time identifying traits of her only principal. She reflected on what she would like to have seen. She shared she did not know her principal very well, even though he was there all four years of her teaching. He did not interact with the teachers or students very much. She would have liked him to be more visible and have a presence in the building along with collaboration and giving more feedback.

Lane would have liked to know what he thinks and what he thought about her teaching and ELA. He was just an observer.

Lori had relationships with her principals, but they both were lacking in leadership abilities. She focused on her last principal the most by identifying him as passive-aggressive with his leadership style. He was non-confrontational with little direction of academic programs. He was a bad communicator with little transparency in his educational plans. Lori went on to share he did not understand the student body compared to where he came from. He was closed-minded when teachers and others tried to help him understand the school culture.

Desired Traits of a Principal

Interview question nine continued to explore traits that teachers would want in a principal. There is overlap between what they want and what they experience because these participants were all stayers for a strong reason of leadership and the qualities they possessed. The importance of the principal having traits they saw as important also coincided with traits they would want to see.

Sam was passionate with his answer. His facial expression and body language changed when he answered with this:

the most important things the principal can do is to let teachers know that they are valued, and they truly care about them, not only as a teacher but as a person and that they...because I've always said that no matter what your job is, it is a fact that people who are happy at their job, are more productive.

Obviously we are in an educational setting where you know we are not going to get a lot of perks, you know bonuses and things like that, so what a

principal has to do is you have to make them feel like you know they are important and what they do is important, and take a lot of interest in them, even in them as a person.

Sandy continued with her own passionate response of “trust, having a relationship with your principal. Because you don’t have trust, with somebody unless you have some kind of a positive relationship with them, so that is probably most important.” She continued to list work ethic, capacity to form relationships, ability to learn, and decision-making as important traits for a principal to possess.

Sandy also explained the importance of being reflective and able to receive information, not just be reactive. She wanted to be allowed to make mistakes without feeling administration is out to get you. She went on to share that if any of these were absent from her principals at this location for the last 16 years, she would have left and done something different. She had been through experiences where a principal during her first year of teaching in another school did not value her and even told her to find something else to do because she was not good enough.

Sara started her list with the importance of being socially present. She followed that up by wanting the principal to be socially present, which includes being a good relationship builder, someone who is not afraid to go toward conflict in order to deter larger issues in the future. She wrapped the list up with trust, loyalty, and kindness. Her second principal helped her through a very difficult personal time, during which the traits he portrayed were some of the traits she viewed as extremely important.

Sabrina began with knowledgeable about their job and willing to fight for teachers, which includes wanting the principal to say something is wrong when it is. She went on to state that trust and efficacy are not just important; they are reasons to stay. Sabrina had a hard time envisioning her school without trust and efficacy. She has built the trust relationship, and if administration and the trust culture left, she shared she would be leaving.

Sally also listed first the valuing of teachers. Along with that, a principal must be a good listener and communicator, trusting teachers and their professional judgment along with passion for the teachers, students, and education. The principals she had that reflected and personified what she would want in a principal made it “worthwhile because these are the principals that every day let me know I was doing what I was supposed to be...I was meant to be doing and I was doing it well.”

Sally also reminisced that early in her career she had a principal that valued the time spent with teachers and students. He would deliver paychecks to the teachers and interact with the students, and she ended this question with “man...this is what it should be.”

Shelly did not seem to have any instances where the traits she would want in a principal actually happened or occurred on a regular basis. She just listed her dream traits in a principal without much elaboration. She began with integrity then followed with knowledge, communication skills, compassion, and transparency. She also would like to see high expectations for the entire staff.

The movers seemed to compile their list based on different experiences from multiple administrators. Each of the buildings had a variety of principals and cultures.

Mark immediately went to his current principal and answered the question about dream traits of a principal, and he stated, “kind of the same ones that the principal has right now, encouraging, trusting, compassionate, and enthusiasm.” He added self-reflecting as the conversation progressed with this topic. He then contrasted these traits to his previous principal, who seemed to have an agenda that did not include the voice of teachers. He did not have a helping spirit or focus on having teachers improve or help them grow.

Mary was quick to answer savvy. She went on to explain what savvy included, which is a principal who is “decisive, intelligent, and a strong communicator. Someone who puts kids and team above self. So, like he is able to dissociate personal or political gain from the goals of the organization as a whole.” Mary also continued to explain that if these traits were present, it would create trust. She identified other traits such as honesty and how a leader leads creates trust. She shared how honesty and communication fit together, which includes deciding what to share and not share based on need and how it affects people if very important.

Mary contrasted these traits to someone who is not designed to lead, such as a principal she feels smarter than, such as when they have poor judgement and try to hide the judgement by taking a school down an unclear path. She wants a principal to stay and grow, just not leave and abandon.

Madi echoed Mary by sharing intelligence and resourceful as very important. She would want the principal to stand for what they believe in with a backbone or be authoritative. She also shared that trust or trustworthiness are in her top five. Madi went on to state if “you have trust, and you have everything that the principal can

give you in order to be an asset to the kids you are going to teach, otherwise, it is time for you to move on.” Madi went on to reflect about these traits and how important they are for teachers to remain at a school.

Mike mentioned communication as his first trait along with availability to communicate. These traits are going to foster the culture that gets things accomplished. Trustworthiness was next and he stated, “if they just can’t trust you then they are not going to work for you, and it is not going to be positive.” Being a listener who is open for discussion and open-minded to what the teachers have to share is also important to Mike. A principal should be a leader who views everyone as important within the school, from the custodians to the cafeteria workers to the paras. This creates a culture in the building of success and trust.

Maya began by saying a principal should be a person who interacts with the teachers and students. She then expounded on how this is an important part of communication. Teachers and students can communicate because they have interacted with the principal in the halls and classrooms. The mutual respect between teachers and principal creates trust. Maya went on to state about principals,

I think trust is all of this because if you respect them you trust them, if they are present and they are around, you trust them because you are not threatened by them. If you have one voice of communication, they you trust that what they say is what I need to be doing. And if I am able to come to you to give my ideas, then I obviously trust you. I think trust is right up there with respect. Maya is still searching for the right fit with her new school. She reflects that the day-to-day aspects are easier.

There are shared traits from the movers they would like to see in a principal. Some of them have found the traits they need, and others are still searching for the traits they want. There are reasons for what they want and what they are searching for, and these reasons were personal and very necessary.

The leavers were also very tied to the traits they desired to see in a principal. The traits were obviously missing because it led to them leaving the teaching profession. Lacy began by sharing a type of leadership style, which is being an authentic leader. She stated, “an authentic leader, to me the first thing that comes to mind is one of those who doesn’t view themselves as a leader. You know what I mean? Like more of a humble leader. Somebody that leads by example.” She went on to talk about trust and having a desire to create an environment that is trustworthy. She does not see a leader as someone who creates resentment by teachers toward the principal. She stated, “if they are afraid of you, that is not leadership.”

Larry was very reflective with this question and said he wants a principal who is always learning and understanding the mind of a teacher. He wants them to be present in the halls, at games, and in the classroom. Larry wants a strong sense of communication where the principal speaks to students and staff. He went on to share about trust if

you feel like your principal has your best interest at heart and that they believe that you have the best interest of the building and communicates that part, yeah feeling trusted, and I feel like a lot of those other things would help to build trust. I mean trust is the keystone of any relationship, whether is a

personal relationship or professional. If you trusted them, you always feel like you are walking on eggshells and not doing your best job.

Luke began with listening to all staff and being supportive. He went on to share what this looks like, which is helping in the classroom and being supportive of what teachers do. He stated, “if just a simple honest communication would go a long way” to helping teachers feel supported. Luke was suspicious about creating trust because he has not experienced this, especially with his last principal. He would want trust to be present, but if teachers are not given a voice with initiatives and future goals, he is not sure if trust could be nurtured.

Lane began with someone that is personable and approachable. She continued by explaining this looks like having open and trusting conversations and it not becoming an issue. This also looks like a principal “who cares about their staff and students without question.” Lane would also want someone who is fair and clear-minded and wants to help students. She went on to explain this cannot happen without trust. You cannot build relationships and “cannot have a successful school without trust. You know between student and teacher without that trust it is hard to go anywhere so I think the same would apply for a principal.” Lori began with being open and honest.

Open and honest dialogue in any relationship, in any sort of working relationship, school or not school whatever, I think you need that and that’s why I look at the administration and I feel like I could come to them with any type of concerns and say this is the problem I’m having, you know.

Lori went on to share about trustworthiness. According to Lori, you must have leadership you want to work for. She went on to list caring and experienced and gave the example about feeling honestly cared for by your principal, both educationally and personally. Lori views experience as someone who can remember what it was like to teach. Teachers who know principals have experience in the classroom want to follow their leadership.

Final Reason or Reasons

The final interview question asked why the participants either stayed, moved, or left education. There was a follow-up question about what they might have learned through their decisions. Sam was confident that he wanted to make a difference in students' lives and to teach them the skills that came with debate. That being said, his administration fosters this through their many skill and attitudes. Sam was speaking about his current principal retiring, paused, and stated this about administration, "is you know they care so much about you as a staff member, that's really important." This was shared from the heart and was reflective of his career. Sandy stated with an obvious and content smile,

because I enjoy it. I enjoy being with people. Maybe it goes back to relationships being valued in this building. It is a fun way to work with people every day, and the people around here make you feel important, and may you feel like you are doing good work and that makes you feel good about yourself and I think if you feel good about yourself then you like where you are.

She went on to say the relationships and the way principals lead are related to how she feels about her job. She had a principal tell her that his job was to keep teachers happy, and if the teachers were happy, they would take care of the students.

Sara answered this question with deep thought. She did think about leaving for more money, but she said, “when it all came down to it, it wasn’t worth it. The family I have here and the community...I like coming to work.” She did not expound on this, but she was leaning back in her chair and, appearing very content, left her final answer at that.

Sabrina stated that relationships also kept her where she is today. The relationships and trust in both the principals and her colleagues in her department are what keep her teaching at her current school. She reiterated that if this changed, “I have enough on my resume’ that I’d be like, I am out of here.”

Sally retired after 25 years, so she was reflective before she stated “I love teaching...I love being in the classroom. I love working with teenagers. I love my content.” She said, “I was taught by certain principals on how to speak, treat, and be kind to people through my years of teaching.” She was very insightful through the interview process.

Shelly, who was a stayer despite her views of her principal as not positive, talked about her strength as a teacher and not wanting to leave. She stated, “there are so many good teachers that have left here and the only people that are hurt by it are the students, and that is 100% how I see.” As Shelly stated very passionately, she was committed to staying and wanting to make her school better. She said the strong relationships with the students is what keeps her there.

The movers gave some personal and reflective reasons why they moved schools. Some also shared why they sought to stay in the teaching profession and not leave altogether. Mark began with saying, “I left because the principal was not supportive and communicative with me about his desired changes to subjects being taught.” The past experiences between Mark and the principal led to his perception there was no plan, on the principal’s part, to improve communication between Mark and himself. There was no communication between him and the principal, and there seemed to be no common ground to be found between the two of them. Mark said, “you have to learn about leaders’ personal agendas and learn from the mistakes made.” He wanted to stay in education because he wanted to teach students and felt he made positive relationships with students, even the students who continued to make poor choices.

Mary wanted other experiences and could only find them if she moved. When she moved back from out of state, working with her past principal was not going to be a good choice. Her current school is not the perfect match, and what she has learned from the leadership there is preparing for her next move, if needed. She has learned how to change policies and procedures if needed by observing the mistakes of her current administration. She has learned that listening to teachers is very important. She has learned to build trust through collaboration and develop relationships between staff.

Madi said if she had stayed, she would be out of education. She felt trapped at her previous school and was not growing. She was extremely unhappy. She did not want her life ruined and she did not see another way out. She wanted to give the

students what they needed but was unable to in her previous situation. She learned there are schools that have what she needs and that have a focus on developing teachers and what they need to teach. She has found that in her current location.

Mike moved because he was unsure about his own future at the school he left. Looking at the past, he could have stayed there because of the students and he knew the town and had relationships there. It was where he grew up. He also was not sure what else was out there, so staying was an option even though he was miserable under that leadership.

Mike has found a school and community that has welcomed him. Even though the district leadership makes decisions he does not like, the building relationships with his principal and teachers are why he stays at his current school. “I have learned to be flexible and understand how I can navigate changes even though I do not agree with them.” Mike does not want to leave the students behind again, so he adjusts and moves on.

Maya shared that the ups and downs at her first school were partially problems with leadership but also a change within her department. She did not have a positive connection with the new principal like she had with the previous. Maya continued to grapple with deciding if teaching was what she wanted to continue to pursue. She shared that if the department would not have changed, she would have really considered staying at her first school. She stated, “what keeps you there at one building is the relationships you have with your teachers, your colleagues and the administrators, I just didn’t have that anymore.” Maya is still searching for a school she feels comfortable in and how she fits within that school. At the current school,

she likes the people she works with, but she is still searching for the trust, culture, and respect.

The three leavers who left on bad relational terms were hurt in some way from their experiences in teaching at a public secondary school. Some of their answers were brief, but some were deep and honest.

Lacy reflected that “if principals would remember where they came from as teachers. This would hopefully spark them with methods and traits on how to work with teachers.” She found another career, but leaving her high school teaching had its difficulties.

Larry left education to pursue a job as a full-time voice teacher. Teaching at the high school and teaching voice became very hard on his family. He learned doing both was not going to happen. He stated that he “agonized and agonized over every decision I make like that.” He is continuing to teach, which he enjoys, and is able to see his family and kids. Larry has good memories of teaching high school history, and it is a never say never attitude he keeps on the back burner.

Luke, on the other hand, left because he did not want to face the end by being fired. He stated he could not get along with administration, so they equally agreed that he leave. He was vocal about what he disagreed with, and administration had a difficult time listening to his opinions. If it were not for the principal, he would have stayed. Luke stated, “I enjoyed the students and I felt I was making a difference in their lives.” He learned from this situation how to be better prepared as a new teacher to work through conflict with principals and how to focus on teaching. Luke’s level

of hurt was extreme because of the relationship with his principal, which is why he left education. He could not see himself teaching anymore.

Lane left because of her desire to raise a family and stay home to do this. She said she would possibly go back to teaching again in the public schools but, for now, she is very happy. She would want to take her students' issues home at night, and she shared she would want to learn how to not do this. The emotional issues students shared took a toll on her. She enjoyed her colleagues and her principal, and they were not the reasons she left teaching.

Lori wanted to better prepare her students for life after graduation and not focus so much on just getting students graduated. Other than all the other leadership issues she had with her principal, she felt the philosophy of education did not coincide with hers. She did reflect that if the leadership traits of her principal were different and the traits promoted her teaching, she might have stayed in education. It would have made leaving more difficult.

The movers and leavers shared reasons why they moved or left. They all did not change their locations or careers because of principals. The movers and leavers that did leave because of principals shares some real events and experiences and said if the principals and administration would have been different, their decisions might have been different.

Summary

The study focused on three categories of educators, stayers, movers and leavers. The purpose of the research was to focus on the impacts of school culture and climate, trust and efficacy authentic leadership traits on retention of teachers. Using

qualitative analysis, data was collected through individual interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Chapter Five includes the summary of findings, discussion, implication for practice and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The people who are called to teach are devoted to their craft and genuinely want to help affect students and prepare them for their future. The culture and climate teachers work in is extremely important. The person who is charged with helping ensure the culture and climate in which teachers want to perform their art is school administration, specifically the principal. Literature revealed schools where teachers want to stay and teach recognize the “importance of a school leader creating school structures [and] school leaders place a priority on teaches working together.” (Poulos, Culberston, Piazza, & D’Entremont, 2014, pp 29-30).

Teachers link support by administration and principals as studied by Donald Boyd, Grossman, Ing, and Lankford, and others (2011), as fundamental to influencing teachers’ aims to longevity in the classroom. They go on to share “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 working condition” (p. 307). The importance of school leadership extends directly to “impacting student learning through their influence of school staff and structures...support for administrators has the potential to influence a host of working conditions (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, & Lankford, 2011). Through their findings in their teacher retention study, nearly half of all respondents shared the “most important factor influencing their decision to leave their schools...identified dissatisfaction with the administration as the most important factor” (p. 327).

Emergent Themes

The researcher, throughout this study, continuously analyzed data to reveal themes. The interviews were analyzed and questions were reviewed to help in making the time with the participants relevant to their specific accounts. There were four recurring themes throughout the interviews. They were the strong desire to teach, the importance of culture, the common attribute of trust between leadership and teachers, and the identifying of key aspects of leadership that lead to the dynamic of valuing teachers and the work they do.

Desire to Teach

All three groups and every participant interviewed stated they wanted to teach, and it was important to them. There were two leavers, Larry and Lane, who, even though they left education to pursue other aspects of their lives, wanted to teach teenage students and prepare them for life. They both traveled a more successful path with administration, yet they left teaching. The school culture and administration were not the reasons Larry and Lane left education to change careers.

The other leavers, who decided to pursue other jobs, left teaching because of their poor administrative-teacher relationships. They expressed their hurt about leaving the profession of teaching. Luke reflected on his connection to his students and teaching. It was his connection that led him to remain a teacher, even though the rotation of ineffective administrators through his 9 years of teaching was emotionally devastating.

The movers were all dedicated to the profession and, even though they moved from one building to another, some more than once, their pursuit to find a location in

which they could teach with support remained their driving force to stay in education. Mark was determined to teach and was willing to drive long distances to find the district and leadership that would nurture his teaching. Mark shared his passion was flamed by other teachers who demonstrated the love for teaching. He needed to continue teaching to demonstrate to himself that his career choice was purposeful.

The strong desire to teach and influence the students was easily demonstrated by the teachers who wanted to stay or actually moved to find something better. The surprise teacher who embodied the essence and soul of teaching was Shelly. She had explored leaving for other schools, but her students and teaching kept her anchored. The lapses in leadership were not enough to cause her to leave education and teaching. She stated, “there are so many good teachers who have left here and the only people that are hurt by it are the students and that is 100% how I see it. If I can in some way make a difference.” Sally demonstrated her extreme passion for students by reflecting on teaching and how teaching her content creates a bond between her and the students.

Teachers’ collective and individual efficacy impacted the mental statement of their dedication to teaching. Sam and Sandy each had a very strong connection to efficacy and how they were making educational as well as social differences in the lives of their students. Madi and Mike specifically mentioned that their success in teaching was a mindset that all students entering their classroom could and would learn. The leavers Lori and Lacy had strong responses that they did miss the impact they had on students’ lives.

Teaching Culture

Teachers who identified with having a strong sense of school culture and climate looped back to this topic numerous times throughout the discussions. The majority of the stayers, especially Shelly and Sandy, had solid reasons and experiences why culture and climate are important. They listed experiences such as focus on teaching and learning, culture as an emphasis of helping teachers, and continuous sense of value in the art of teaching. The importance of strong culture was interlaced with overall positive atmosphere and geared toward open and trustworthy conversations.

Shelly continued to share the missing components of culture, but her experiences do not coincide with the rest of the stayers. The characteristics discussed were school conditions she desired to have, but she had not experienced them through her teaching career. Shelly's perception of intimidation by her administration and fears kept her in a school where the teaching culture was described as toxic.

The theme of culture and teaching climate from the movers seemed to begin with the circumstances Shelly had experienced, but they decided to move. The movers found schools with stronger teacher-supported cultures where they could grow and teach. They describe cultures that feel like communities, and Mark disclosed, "problem solving and open face to face communication as strong markers for the culture I want to move into." Mary and Madi put a strong emphasis on longevity from administration, which, from their experiences, resulted in good administration. Overall, the movers found that administration who trusted teachers to do their jobs created a positive culture.

The leavers also valued a teaching culture that would have kept them in education and teaching. These teachers echoed what the other teachers experienced as the need for a strong culture. They wanted to see a school culture with honest and open communication from a leader who would create a culture of mutual respect for teachers and the work they do. Three of the 5 leavers did not experience these characteristics within their school culture along with a perception toward derogation and favoritism between staff and school leadership.

Trust between Teachers and Administration

The belief from all the teachers in the three categories of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers reflected on the importance of relationships between teachers and administrators that are built on trust within the school setting. Trust resonated through many answers to the questions throughout the conversations. The question about trust opened up a plethora of reflections but was also a factor when collaboration within the school was shared.

The five stayers, who have maintained their careers in their current school, experienced multiple layers of trust. The first layer seems to be that of professional conversations and feedback about classroom instruction. Sandy repeatedly mentioned not fearing the gotcha environment and trusting the value the teachers were providing the students in the classroom. Sam continued along those thoughts by not feeling micro-managed, which was very important to him when it comes to trust. Sally went a step further, sharing about the work it takes for administration to build trust. “Trust gives the teachers a voice.” She went on to explain about the process of building trust

and teachers' needs in the classroom. Trust was extremely important to Shelly, but this was an absent experience in her current location.

The movers were the group in which trust was rare to find yet important enough to spawn their search for better a school. Newfound trust was a common thread within their new locations. The three categories of teachers, despite experiences, identified trust as an integral aspect by the principal. The movers, such as Mark, found "trust in my new school and how this transformed me from a teacher who wanted to stop teaching to someone who found new life in my profession." Mike spoke about how his trust in his new school created an obvious reflection on how it was missing from the school he left. Maya reported that she did not distrust her principal at her first school, but "the lack of communication created a lack of trust in between teachers and relationships with my students."

Lacy, Luke, and Lori all left with strong experiences of a trustless culture in their buildings. They saw this as an impediment to the continuation of their teaching careers. The expressions on Lacy's and Lori's faces reflected trust was something they missed and wished they had experienced within their teaching experiences. Luke needed to find solace in another profession because of the mistrust within his school when he left teaching.

Valuing Teachers

There were many different ways the participants described traits they thought were important in school administration. They were certain traits that brought about the feeling of being valued as a person and as a professional. These traits resonated throughout the conversations. Listening was a common identifier as well as

communication, which 11 identified as playing an important part in bringing value to the culture of a school and value to teaching.

The stayers, such as Sandy, were definitive when they responded with communication and listening as important. She continued that these, along with other traits, created the essence of being valued as a teacher. Sabrina shared “when the principal is willing to go all out for the teachers, this creates a sense teacher are wanted and needed and valued.”

The movers echoed the importance of teachers being valued as educators. Mark shared that the difference between his first administrator and his current administrator was “alarming” when it came to being valued. The administrator at his new school was nurturing and supportive, which led to him feeling like he was not micro-managed but was valued as an employee and teacher of the school. Three other movers contrasted old and new principals to clarify the differences they experienced when moving schools. They included how the culture of trust created a positive ideology towards teachers’ longevity within the same school. Trust and longevity were considered vital to feeling valued as an educator.

The three leavers who stopped teaching because of leadership consistently shared what they wished they experienced from their principals. Using words like “resentment” and “afraid” were traits they experienced. These experiences were the opposite of being valued and were not present in their last years of teaching. Lane voiced specifically “value comes from a leader who is approachable and willing to have meaningful conversations.” Luke and Lori both discussed administrators who

were self-serving, which diminished the value teachers held in the classroom. It did not allow for honest dialogue about classroom instruction.

To summarize, these were not the only experiences teachers reflected about but were consistent within their discussions. The integrity with which the responses were shared was evident through the steadfast responses to the questions. Despite the different paths and locations of the teachers, their stories were harmonious in experiences.

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to thoughtfully listen to teachers about their experiences regarding retention within teaching. I listened to teachers who have stayed in education, teachers who have moved from building to building, and teachers who have left education. The research set out to identify how culture and climate, trust and efficacy, and leadership with authentic traits were reasons why teachers stayed, moved, or left education.

The Influence of Culture and Climate

The researcher spoke with 16 secondary teachers who shared different yet very similar experiences during their educational journeys. The culture and climate, according to all 16 teachers, played an important role in their longevity or brevity, depending on which category they were in. The findings support the importance of school culture and climate for teachers. The interviews and discussions also revealed that the lack of a positive and nurturing culture was a reason, in part, why teachers seek a different school or leave education altogether. The variety of perspectives and experiences on culture and climate are grounded in experiences of the teachers.

The research about teacher retention regarding school culture and climate reflects their importance within the school atmosphere and building. Culture was defined by Stearns, Banerjee, Mickelsen and Moller (2014) as “the shared assumptions, rituals, values, climate, and behaviors within organizations, are critical because they define how teachers interact with one another and their students” (p. 54). Drago-Severson (2012) described climate as “the quality and character of school life...based on patterns of people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures” (p. 3). These definitions were accurate throughout the literature reviewed.

The first common thread in the literature was how school climate and culture was developed and created and how teachers are respected and valued within those climates and cultures as researched by Collie, et.al (2011) and Paul, Schucauson, Buchanan, Luveire and Prescott (2013). Previous research on collaboration reflects how it is needed for a strong school culture and climate. Price (2012), Boyd et al. (2011), and Collie, et.al (2012) found strong findings from their research about teacher satisfaction in school culture and climate and teacher interaction and collaboration. Other research revealed teachers also value trust within a school culture and climate. Shamir and Lapidot (2003) along with VanMaele and VanHoutte (2015) shared that trust is a vital characteristic of a strong school culture and climate. The findings through this study supported the previous literature.

Throughout the conversations with the Stayers, the educational climate and culture of school was described as supportive, reflective, educational, collaborative, and teacher-focused. Sandy shared about the culture and climate that “pay is

important but at this stage in my career, happiness is more important.” She went on to reflect on the culture and climate that kept her in her current school. Sandy also stated, “I have opportunities to be creative and come up with new ways and teach new things.”

Sam included culture as important, both from colleagues and administration. Strong culture is important in the success of teachers, which leads them to want to stay. Sarah also said the school culture, which creates a comfortable and accepting experience for teachers and students, produces a climate that causes her to stay in her current school. Sabrina continued sharing about the importance of culture in schools by reflecting on the fact that the administrative staff and her colleagues care. Caring was described as listening, teaching, and kindness, and these create an overall culture in which she wants to stay and continuing teaching.

Sally echoed the importance of climate and culture by rendering the importance of letting teachers find themselves and guide them when needed. She stated, “it doesn’t take much to turn a climate south, I think it takes a lot to build a positive climate and culture.” Shelly stated it was the culture that kept her there, but it was not because it was positive but built on fear. She wanted to leave, but she feared the retaliation if she tried to move schools and was not successful.

The movers echoed the importance of culture and climate when it came to finding a new school to relocate to. All five of the movers searched for a culture where they could grow as educators and teach students without being micro-managed or judged. Mark shared that his new and current school has a culture built by the administration that listened. He built “a real community, cares about students and

faculty...he listens to find out answers.” Mark said these characteristics create the culture and climate that he was seeking.

Mary described her first educational experience with school culture as mixed. Communication was poor, yet she described the culture as methodical and with expectations. Mary did not change schools because of school culture but to explore other job opportunities. The school she landed at did not reflect the culture or climate she was searching for either, but she has decided to stay because of the students. She shared that a climate and culture with poor leadership makes the job of teaching very difficult. At the time of the interview and discussion, Mary had not made plans to move schools again.

Madi had several moves along her educational path. Some were because of school closing and some were voluntary. Madi shared she adapted to different styles of culture within schools, but her main reflection fell on her current school. She commented on the passion for teachers and students and high expectations for both. Madi included that the culture between her and her colleagues, along with principals, would keep her at her current school until she retired.

Mike moved from a culture and climate of negativity, weak leadership, and self-centeredness to a culture with positive leadership and a principal who was communicative with the teachers. The evaluations were productive and beneficial to teachers. Mike was going through leadership change at his new school and was adjusting to some changes, but the climate and culture created by his administration was making those adjustments easier.

Maya did not find her past school culture bad, but at the time she wanted to explore a different school. There were no red flags with the culture or climate, just an overwhelming amount of work with little collegial interaction. The school Maya moved to provide the collegial interaction and support she needed.

The three leavers who left, in part, because of the climate and culture strongly voiced their desire to have leaders and/or colleagues who were supportive. The conversations produced emotions in which they did not want to leave education, but the climate was described as toxic, controlling, cliquey, and self-serving.

Lacy's experiences included administrators "who broke trust by speaking about issues of certain teachers with other teachers in the building." This created a dire situation when it comes to trusting the principal. Collaboration was also absent between the teachers and administration. Teachers tended to focus inward with just a few colleagues instead of outward with the school because of the absence of trust.

Lori's experiences were tense, and she chose not to ask questions or discuss observations because of the lack of trust. Luke shared about the perceived secret agendas with administration, which fed the flame of anti-trust. Luke also shared the perceived practice of favoritism and the collegial divisions it caused.

Larry and Lane were the two outliers and, even though they chose to leave teaching and education in the traditional sense, they both considered being teachers in another occupation. Their descriptions of culture demonstrated how strong and important it is in a successful school. Larry and Lane both described how leadership was strong and it created a teacher-first culture. Larry spoke about how leadership

followed through with what they said they would do and empowered teachers to believe in themselves.

The findings regarding the importance of school culture and climate and the importance it plays in the longevity of teachers was strong. The agreement between the participants and previous literature supported the importance of culture and climate in schools. Dragos-Severson (2012) and Easley (2006) shared research on culture and climate, noting is agreement about the importance of culture and climate and the different qualities found. Despite the category the teachers were in, culture and climate were found to be highly important to the success of teachers and the decisions they make to either stay in education or leave the profession. The participants were clear and decisive in their responses about the need for a strong culture and climate within school and the consequences when they are tarnished.

Importance of Trust and Efficacy in Teacher Retention

The 16 teachers had a combined total of 232 years in teaching. Throughout the interview process, every teacher valued trust as an aspect in relationships within the profession of education and teaching. The descriptive examples of the importance of trust were described as necessary, imperative, foundational, everything, glue, gradual, and dynamic. Efficacy was described by the participants as inherent, required, purposeful, important, and strong belief. Efficacy is defined as a belief that teachers, individually or collectively, can positively affect the learning of students (Hoy and Woolfolk).

The literature presented supports the importance of trust and efficacy in the retention of teachers. There were many attributes found in schools in which

leadership fostered the growth of trust and efficacy in schools. Routman (2012) and Price (2012) both shared the importance of trust and, specifically, cohesion and community between faculty and administration, which is a strong contributor to trust and efficacy in the schools. Boyce and Bowers (2018) shared the importance of honesty within the school setting, which is a necessary trait for the growth of trust.

Collaboration is also a building block for trust and efficacy. Blasé and Blasé (2006) and Bryk and Schneider (2003) reflected on the importance of collaboration between all staff. This collaboration builds strong results in the classroom, which, in turn, build trust and efficacy. Price (2012) also was a strong proponent of collaboration as a factor for collective efficacy among teachers. The findings from the participants in this study reflect the findings in past research.

The importance of trust and efficacy, from the experiences of the stayers, was viewed as something natural. Sam reflected about trust as the process leadership demonstrates through time. He said it is based on experiences and reactions through the daily interactions between teachers and leadership. Efficacy is a belief that grows because of trust.

Sandy shared that “trust comes from an understanding of teacher’s personal lives along with professional. There is a balance between work and home and when this relationship is present, trust grows.” She also believed “efficacy was something a teacher should have naturally and know they are impactful to all students who come into their classroom.” Sarah described both as impacting each other.

Efficacy is what drives a teacher and when there is trust, it is manifested in many ways. Sabrina reflected that efficacy is more than academic. It is emotional and

social. It is part of the package of preparing students for post-graduation. She believes trust is the necessary ingredient to help efficacy grow.

Sally thought that trust itself was more practical and shared about actions between the principal and teachers. Trust was reflected by Sally as it occurs naturally in everyday situations and how they were handled. “It is just a natural part of quality school culture.” Sally went on to say there is a huge value in being able to trust leadership and colleagues when it comes to being a teacher. Sally continued to share about efficacy and was very distinct, “efficacy is why we go into the classroom.” She did not expound on this; it was matter of fact. She also shared with a strong voice, “the reason I am successful in the classroom is I am allowed to make a difference.”

Once again, Shelly came from the point of view of longing to experience trust within her school. She believed even though she had a belief system, which included strong efficacy, it was difficult, on challenging days, to remember how she was making a difference in the lives of students. The efficacy that was reflected in Shelly was evident because of the drive and persistence she portrayed in her longevity.

The movers had different points of view about efficacy. Three of them viewed it as inherent and something that could not be taken away, despite circumstances. All five of the movers thought trust was important in their search for different schools in which to put down roots. Mark was determined to stay in education, and he needed to find a school that trusted him as an educator and promoted efficacy as a belief system. He echoed that efficacy is manifested as passion and drive for student success. Trust is manifested in actions and consistent demonstration of doing what you say you are going to do.

Mary shared that, within her classroom, efficacy and trust between her and her students is strong. She reflected on her classroom and knew that small events of belief can change her students. Mary's movement between schools has a common denominator. She focuses on the trust, efficacy, and teaching, which consistently happen in her classroom. Her moving from one school to another was not all because of the overall experiences in a school as a whole but what difference she could make in the lives of students. Trust did allow her to focus on what occurred in the classroom and drive her to have strong efficacy within her teaching.

Madi demonstrated some difficulty identifying trust from her previous school but said it was definitely evident in her current school. She sees trust as reflected in truth and ownership of teachers and leaders. Mike also sees trust as something tangible. He viewed trust as discussions and encouragement. These two concepts were what he experienced after he moved, and they developed into a relationship between the principal and himself that he did not think about; it was just natural.

Efficacy, in Mike's experiences, is the manifestation of learning between the teacher and student. He continued by saying it is the "educational relationships in the classroom and what teaching and learning are." He was very passionate about this.

Maya believed trust also manifests itself in the culture of a school by responsibilities earned and how teachers are viewed. She discovered moving schools does not always guarantee this will happen. Even though she has changed school districts, trust is hard to experience. She went on to say that she can "take her belief and desire to teach and help students learn in any classroom she is in." Maya shared her heart and believes efficacy is what good teachers are made of.

The 3 leavers who left education because of difficult relationships with their district all rallied around individual efficacy. They believed the time spent teaching students and understanding the personal background was important. Luke answered this question along with Laci and Lori that if efficacy was not one of the top ideals in the teacher's daily goals, they could not be a good teacher. This was coming from teachers who were lost to the profession because of administration and the lack of leadership abilities. Larry and Lane were the two leavers who changed careers because of personal choice, yet they took the efficacy they believed in as teachers to their new careers. The importance of trust and efficacy within a teacher's career is needed as a foundational pillar.

The research and the participants agree on the importance of trust and efficacy when discussing the retention of teachers. Within all three categories of stayers, movers, and leavers, trust was shared as a top priority of teachers. Price (2012) wrote about the importance of trust to establish cohesion, commitment, and satisfaction in teaching, and this level of trust was reflected in the participants' responses. Both the stayers and the movers shared the satisfaction between their colleagues and leadership as two important reasons they were still in education.

These two relationships fuel the atmosphere of trust and efficacy in the classroom and the school. The research found in Boyce and Bowers (2018) reflected this by finding principals were acknowledged as important to the growth of professional personas and effective classroom operations such as efficacy. The stayers emphasized that trust takes time to develop, and Hoerr (2014) shared that authority and the growth of trust is not found in a title or position; it is found when

people believe and listen to others. This takes time and work as teachers need trust to work together and foster trust, which was identified in the research of Byrk and Schneider (2003).

The leavers, as shared in the findings, longed for trust and collective efficacy within the buildings they taught in. Reeves (2016) shared the importance of trust in teaching and noted that when it is absent or diminished, the effects on teachers and their careers can be devastating. O'Brennan, Pas and Bradshaw (2017) concluded that trust and efficacy in multiple relationships affect the school climate in either a positive or negative fashion, which can lead to teachers leaving. They went on to write about burnout and the effects that it has on teacher retention and efficacy itself. Even though three leavers did not give into these feelings, they did share it made efficacy much more difficult to maintain.

Authentic Leadership Traits and Teacher Retention

Authentic leadership, as described by Kahn (2017), “has four main measurable constructs: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balance processing” (p. 296). Duignan (2014) wrote that the overall good of teachers and students over self is a key component of authentic leadership. The balance processing is when a principal can include teachers in valued communication with decision-making. Self-awareness includes the ability to know strengths and weaknesses in order to make decisions. The ability to grow and sustain principal-teacher relationships through evaluations and simple conversations is extremely important with teachers. The component of a strong moral perspective is how trust, efficacy, and educational relationships flourish. These four main

components of authentic leadership help create the principal teachers desire to have as a leader.

The participants' experiences through their various educational journeys support previous research about authentic leadership and how those traits or constructs help the retention of public school teachers. The stayers' identifiable traits of their current principal and vision of a perfect principal were very similar.

Sam shared empathetic, having a vision, trust in the teachers, listens, and makes them a part of the school educational process. Sam shared "the successful principal I have had through the years included most or all of these traits." He also wanted to add caring as a trait he found important.

Sandy began with trust as one of her top traits. She stated, "my current principal has a strong work ethic along the ability to form relationships and make informed and collaborative decisions." She summed up her description as someone who is reflective and able to make pro-active decisions.

Sarah went on to share some very similar experiences and traits of her principals. She reflected on the relationships her successful principals have demonstrated, such as relationship builder, visionary, trustworthy, loyal to his teachers, and reliable and kind.

Sandy added personal trust. She stated, "I mean the type of trust you can share outside stressors with and have bad lessons and he does not make you feel like a failure." These traits, she described, are the practices of the principals she has worked with during her career and is why she stayed at her current school and did not leave.

Sabrina spoke to her experiences with the two principals she has worked with. She spoke about having a team mentality, being able to communicate, trust, and kind. Sabrina said her principals “are 100 percent why I stay in teaching and at the one and only building I have and will ever work in.” She went on to share, “I have built enough trust between my principal and me. There is never a gotcha moment. If this ever changed, I would be out of here, but I do not think that well ever happen.”

Sally began with communication and relationships with teachers that are professional. She reflected on principals “who trust teachers and create an atmosphere of trust, both for the teachers and students. They’ve got to be passionate about their jobs, not just biding their time.” She concluded by saying, “principals who let me know I was doing a good job influenced me to be a good teacher.”

Shelly’s number one trait was integrity. She then went on to list “communication skills, compassion, transparency, and trust.” Shelly has not experienced these traits but has stayed in her teaching position because she said, “I am stronger, I can overcome what I have to deal with. If I can in some way make a difference and find ways to adapt, it makes me stronger. It shows who fears integrity and who embraces it. It allows teachers to either gravitate to me or leave me alone. This is how I make it.”

The movers compared the traits of the principals they left and the ones they found. Not surprisingly, the traits they desired in an academic leader were the ones they did not experience. Mark began with trusting, encouraging, and compassionate. He went on to share, “someone who knows their own faults and doesn’t act like they know everything” He said the importance of owning faults leads to not just brushing

problems away; “they see an issue and something is his fault then he will take ownership of it and try to fix it.” Trust was important to Mark because he felt betrayed in his first school. Creating trust at his current school took time to nurture and grow. His new principal helped him rebuild trust and confidence so he could develop into the teacher he wanted to be.

Mary began immediately with a strong communicator and someone who puts kids and teachers above self. “He is able to dissociate personal or political gain for the goals of the school as a whole.” She added these “attributes would engender trust between myself and the principal. When a principal is honest, it leads to developing trust in between you.” Mary’s current school was without an administrator, so these characteristics and traits are what she hopes the district finds in the next principal.

Madi began by describing a principal who “would stand for what they believe in.” She went on to say, “trustworthiness in the teachers.” She reflected that trustworthiness would be in her top traits she would want to see and does see in her current principal. She went on to list intelligent and resourceful as important. She shared you know now “if you have the support, you have the trust, and you have everything that principal can give you in order to be an asset to the kids, you are going to teach. Otherwise, it is time for you to move on.”

Mike began with having an optimistic outlook with strong communication. He went on to say, “trustworthiness, you’ve got to be...if they can’t trust you then they are not going to work for you, and it is not going to be positive. Communication and trustworthiness are my top two.” He continued his list with listener and integrity. He

shared that these characteristics describe his current principal and that is why he stayed.

Maya said she would want a principal that is nurturing. She also does not want a principal who is ego-centered. Maya wanted someone who leads with integrity and strength. These are what she missed and to a certain extent is still missing from her current principal.

Three leavers also shared the traits of a principal as someone they wish they experienced or wanted for their last principal. Two of the leavers, Larry and Lane, shared what they experienced when they left. Lacy began with humility and someone that does not view themselves as an authoritarian. She went on to say, “biggest key is the trust and environment that they establish.” She wanted someone to lead by example when it came to relationships between teachers and the principal.

Larry began with master teacher. “A principal who is always looking into research and being in the mind of a teacher, looking at new strategies.” Outgoing and communicative were also on the list. He went on to share this about trust: “because when the principal has your best interest at heart, trust needs to be built.” He completed his list with fairness to both students and teachers. “Students sense bias or discriminatory feelings, you can’t be an effective leader without fairness.”

Luke started his list with “someone who can listen, to both old and new teachers, if they could do this, they would be good at their jobs.” He continued with honest communication that includes giving teachers a voice. “If trust is important, then you need to give teachers a voice.” Luke shared the entire administrative-teacher

relationship he experienced as dirty. The lack of relationship he had with his principal was why Luke left education.

Lane wanted to stay at home but while she was teaching, her principal needed to be more visible and active in helping her learn to teach. She would want a principal with more of a presence. She also “wanted him to collaborate with us. He would come to meetings and observe. I think collaborating with us would have been really cool and important.” She did mention that trust and collaboration take communication.

Lori reflected on traits and shared open and honest.

“open and honest dialogue in any relationship, in any sort of working relationship, school not school, whatever, I think you need that...not feel like you are belittled or you know made to feel like a child, that’s a big one, open and honest.”

Lori continued with traits such as caring and experienced, “you know you want somebody who is sympathetic to what is going on in your personal life.” As she thought about the question, she mentioned the reason teachers work hard is because they trust the principal. “We’re not in it for the money. It’s not like we’re pulling 6 figures and so, you know, you could look past all this stuff.” “Trust was not present in the school culture I left but it would have been great if it was.”

Reflecting on the literature and the responses from the participants, there is agreement. From transparency, self-awareness, morality, and balanced processing, these authentic traits shared through the participants were communication with teachers, teacher-administrative collaboration, ability to listen and admit to challenges

and mistakes, trustworthiness, and the desire for principals to be active in the daily grind of the school. Bolman and Deal (year) wrote, “[l]eaders need to be deeply reflective and dramatically explicit about core values and beliefs” (p. 437).

George et al. (2007) wrote “[k]nowing their authentic selves requires the courage and honesty to open up and examine their experiences. As they do so, leaders become more humane and willing to be vulnerable” (p. 134). Even though the participants did not mention vulnerability as an important trait, it allows for other traits like not being self-centered and not wanting personal gain from their position.

Wilson (2014) wrote “justice, care, harmony or concord and courage” are the important constructs or the moral attribute of Authentic leaders. These constructs are parallel to the principal attributes collected from the participants, such as integrity, trustworthy, putting others before self, listener, communicator, and some who is kind.

Research Questions Answered

This study sought to identify attributes of culture and climate, trust and efficacy, and authentic leadership and what roles they play in the retention of teachers. Since teaching is becoming an occupation with dwindling interest, the researcher focused on concepts that can be developed, controlled, or created by principals. This qualitative research set out to discover reasons teachers either stay, move to other schools, or leave teaching altogether.

Culture and Climate as it Relates to Teacher Longevity

Research question one asked how school culture and climate influence teachers' decisions to either stay in a school, move to a different school, or leave education. The results of the study indicate culture and climate are important to teachers and do affect retention.

The following descriptors are from stayers who shared the importance of culture and climate. Culture and climate should be supportive, reflective, educational, collaborative, and teacher-focused. It is the educational and school culture that brings satisfaction. It was shared by 5 of the 6 stayers that culture and climate were major reasons they stayed in their current schools. Sabrina reflected on a culture of caring that contained kindness, listening, and focused teaching. The culture where both administration and other teachers work and purposely collaborate creates a desire to stay.

All of the movers shared they were leaving a culture that was toxic or not exactly what they were looking for professionally. They were searching for a supportive culture and climate based on community, collegial interactions, administrative support, and leaders and teachers who communicated with one another. Micro-managed and judgmental were aspects of school culture the movers were trying to escape. Mary shared "with a rudderless culture and climate, it makes it very difficult to teach and even stay."

Lacy, Luke, and Lori reflected that the culture and climate played large roles in them leaving education. The words "self-centered" and "self-serving" were descriptors of the culture and climate they left. There were perceived secret agendas

and widespread feelings of anti-trust throughout the schools they departed from.

These conditions led to teachers having the perception that they had no choice but to leave teaching. Larry and Lane were the two outliers who left a positive culture to pursue other personal goals.

Trust and Efficacy and How they Relate to Teacher Longevity

Research question two asked how the attributes of efficacy and trust influence teachers to stay, move, or leave a school or education. The results of the study indicated a strong agreement between the literature and participants in the current study on trust and collective efficacy. Individual efficacy was viewed as innate to all teachers, yet collective efficacy, within a culture of a building, needs to be nurtured like trust.

The stayers saw trust as foundational and a natural attribute of a good teacher. The stayers' experiences led them to reflect that trust is a trait that is nurtured. Sandy and Sarah had different backgrounds when they began teaching, yet both were steadfast about the importance of trust and collective efficacy in school culture and between teachers themselves. Sarah specifically said trust between her colleagues and administration kept her from leaving her current and only building. Trust in an administrator is twofold, both professional and personal. Trust, in the daily lives of teachers, can be taken for granted but when it is absent, the culture and climate of a building can disappear. Trust and collective efficacy are foundational to a strong culture and climate.

Shelly shared if trust and efficacy were present, her teaching would not be as stressful or difficult and she would not be in such a stressful position in her career to think about moving or leaving education.

The 5 movers wanted trust in their new teaching experiences. Trust and efficacy seem to be derivatives of a positive culture and climate, yet without it, a positive culture and climate cannot exist. Mark was adamant that in order for him to stay in the teaching profession, he needed a school where he trusted his colleagues and administration and they trusted him. Trust was viewed as something experienced through communication and collaboration. Efficacy, as an innate mindset teachers have, should never be situational or conditional.

Mike not only sought out new teaching experiences, he also kept adding that the relationship with students he created over time never subsided. His yearning to make positive differences and growth in students' lives beamed from his facial expressions. Mike felt the only way he could do this is if administration trusted him to teach and this is why Mike's moving was so important to him.

The two leavers who left education on their own terms shared the importance of self-efficacy and trust. Larry was adamant about his trust with leadership and with his colleagues and said if he had not experienced trust, he would have left teaching early than his 9-year career. Larry and Lane shared about their strong efficacy and how it should play a role in all teachers' lives, not just when their careers were going well.

The other three leavers, Larry, Luke, and Lori, were all grasping for words to share about trust. They expressed the importance of nurturing trust in climate,

relationships, and overall teaching culture of a school. They left teaching desiring to have not lived through a trustless teaching experience. The lack of trust was a large part of why they left education. Lori and Lacy both had experiences on a personal level where trust was crushed by administration. There were events outside of school that were brushed off as trivial and unconnected to their lives as teachers.

Trust, within relationships and culture, was demonstrated to be critical to teachers throughout their careers. It was demonstrated through the participants in this current study as very important to either the longevity or brevity of their teaching careers. Self-efficacy was not specifically mentioned to directly correlate to the longevity of a teacher's career because it was viewed from all participants as something every teacher should innately have. Collective efficacy within a culture, like trust, does play a part in the longevity or brevity of a teacher's career. If this is not present within the teaching culture of a building, there arise serious issues.

Traits of Authentic leadership and How they Influence Teachers' Longevity

The third research question asked what attributes of authentic leadership factored into a teacher's decision to remain or leave a school or the profession. The results of the study indicated the constructs or traits of a principal with authentic leadership traits play an important role in the retention of teachers.

The stayers all listed at least two constructs or traits reflected in authentic leadership as reasons they stayed in education. Sam repeatedly shared about principal trust and support through communication. Relationships between himself and his principals were extremely important to him remaining in education. Being included

when decisions were made that directly affected him indicated trust and relayed the important part he played in educating students.

Sandy and Sally reflected how a principal who demonstrated their natural strengths will develop the relationships with staff and students. These abilities are required to build a strong culture within a school.

Listening and communication were spoken about 18 times by the participants as traits needed by a successful principal. Trust was shared 7 times before it was even mentioned in a question. The development and growth of trust was spoken about through all three categories of teachers. In order for trust to grow, a principal needs to be transparent with strong moral decision-making. This was evident when Shelly spoke about how her principal did not exhibit these traits and how she wanted the culture of her school to change.

Sabrina's previous background in the military allowed her to identify with the traits of an authentic leader. This paralleled her experiences with her principals through her years of teaching. The ability to communicate effectively, along with the ability to lead without an alternative agenda, built trust, not only in her commanders but with her principals as well.

Mark was adamant about wanting to work with a principal that was transparent in communication and decision-making. This transparency would help create trust within the culture of a school. Mark used the phrase "not supported" several times within his discussion in reference to his first school. He found support and trust in his new school because his principal was interested in his growth as a

teacher and a person. These all fall within the traits of moral perspective and relational transparency.

Mary's responses reflected the desire for her new administrator to be able to communicate with teachers and students and demonstrated their importance above self. She wants the principal's mores to build a culture of trust and honesty between staff and leadership.

Madi and Mike both responded emphatically that they desired to find a principal who would do what they say they are going to do. This leads to being able to trust and teach. The principal that creates a trustworthy atmosphere, both between teachers and students, is a principal that will motivate and inspire teachers to rise above struggles and frustrations. Madi's response was she feels like her current principal is not separated from the teachers but united. The principal can communicate clearly in every situation with a clear message. This demonstrates the importance of relational transparency and balanced processing from an authentic principal.

The leavers Lacy, Luke, and Lori all wanted a trusting environment that allowed for teachers and principals to communicate openly. They all wanted the principal to create professional relationships in which they could grow as educators and know the principal views them as humans with lives outside of school. These experiences from the leavers were absent from their experiences at one time or another. The authentic principal who demonstrates a moral perspective with relational transparency could have allowed these three teachers to continue their educational and teaching careers. Lori shared that money and other tasks of teachers are not the

focus when you have an administrator who balances his leadership with the job and personal relationships.

Implications for Educational Leaders

Findings from this study led to several implications for educational leaders and their practices:

1. Education leaders need to consider the constructs of authentic leadership and the impacts they have on teachers. They should foster strong moral character in which to serve the teachers and students. The educational leader should be transparent with decision-making and be self-aware to understand the culture and climate changes within the building.
2. Educational leaders need to understand the importance of trust and the nurturing of trust in the teaching culture of a building.
3. Educational leaders need to take time to communicate with all teachers within a school. Honest and open communication fosters trust.
4. Educational leaders should be collaborating with teachers to discuss best practices and instructional growth.
5. Educational leaders need to take time to listen to teachers, both from a professional perspective and a personal perspective.
6. Educational leaders should never stop growing professionally.
7. Educational leaders should reflect on needs of the teachers in order to retain teachers who desire to remain in the field.
8. A school culture devoid of necessary leadership characteristics will likely result in teacher attrition and reduction of environmental trust and

efficacy. Leaders should display characteristics of self-awareness, relational transparency, shared leadership, and moral leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following suggestions are recommended for further research:

1. Include principals in the dialogue about retention of teachers.
2. A study should be conducted to better understand if teachers who have had other professions before becoming a teacher are better prepared for the dynamics of the educational career.
3. Replicate this study on a wider scale to gauge if the perceptions of the teachers are regional or if their viewpoints are national.
4. A study should be conducted in the higher education training of administrators, focusing on the preparations of authentic leaders and the traits that promote the retention of teachers.
5. A study should be conducted to further understand why teachers who choose to stay in a school culture that is described as toxic do not search for another school or leave teaching.

Summary

Chapter Five included a summary of findings, discussion of the findings, conclusion, implications for educational leaders, and suggestions for further research. The three research questions were discussed and answered in the conclusion. The researcher found the retention of teachers is influenced by a culture of trust and efficacy along with the traits of an Authentic leader or the absence of those traits.

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INFORMED CONSENT

Identification of Researchers: This research study titled “Stayers, Movers and Leavers: The Experiences of Teachers in the School Setting is being conducted by Bradley Drace, a doctoral student with the University of Missouri Columbia in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative case study is to explore why teachers either stay in education, those who have transferred to another school setting, and those who left education altogether.

Request for Participation: I am inviting you to participate in this research. This study will help to increase the understanding of why teachers are either staying, moving to another school or leaving education. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. Participation is voluntary. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

Description of Research Method: Teachers will participate in personal interviews with the researcher. Each interview session should last no longer than one hour, and questions will focus on teacher’s perspectives and experiences of school climate and how it influenced their educational longevity. The interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed, and secured in a password-protected computer throughout the research study. Observation notes created from the interview session will also be secured throughout the research study. The information gained from this research will be shared with Dr. Sandra Hutchinson, doctoral advisor, and will be published as part of

completion requirements for the researcher's Ed.D degree. Dr. Hutchinson may be reached at (660) 543-4720 or by email at hutchinson@ucmo.edu.

Privacy: All of the information we collect is kept confidential. Information produced by this study will be stored in the investigator's file and identified by a code number only. The code key connecting your name to specific information about you will be kept in a separate, secure location. Information contained in your records may not be given to anyone unaffiliated with the study in a form that could identify you.

Explanation of Risks: The risks to this study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

Explanation of Benefits: This research study will provide information that may be used to improve and enhance the retention of teachers and how educational leaders' practices and emphasis may enhance teachers staying in education.

Questions: If you have questions about research, please contact Bradley Drace at 816-335-5419 or by email at four@thefire.com. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please sign a copy of this letter and return it to me.

The other copy is for you to keep.

Participant Signature, Date

Interview Questions

Interview Questions	Information
1.What was your career path?	Learn about participants.
2. Have you ever moved to a different school? If so, please describe the culture and climate of your previous school. If you are in the school you began, describe the culture and climate of your current school.	Q1
3. Share with me the opportunities you had to collaborate, both Teacher to teacher and Teacher to Administration	Q1 & Q3
4. Explain how teachers were supported	Q1 & Q3
5. Describe to me how and when you felt trusted. How was this evident in the school culture and climate?	Q1, Q2 & Q3
6. Describe your belief about the power you had to make a difference in the education of your students. How was this part of your school culture and climate?	Q1 & Q2
7. Share the relationship you had with your principal.	Q3

8. Tell me about your principal and the leadership style he or she had. How was his style fostered among the staff?	Q2 & Q3
9. Explain the importance of your principal's leadership traits to you as a teacher. Describe the top 5 traits and explain if any or all help you your educational pursuits.	Q2 & Q3
10. Explain to me why you stayed, moved or left education. (This question depends on which group the person falls). How did any of the above relationships play a part in your teaching journey?	Q1, Q2 & Q3

VITA

Bradley K. Drace was born on March 14th, 1966, in Kansas City Missouri, the only child born to Richard and Connie Drace. He graduated from Raytown South High School in 1984 and began his post-secondary education at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar Missouri. He later transferred to University of Missouri Kansas City where he completed a B.S. in Secondary Education with an emphasis in the Social Sciences (1988). He then earned a M. Ed. from University of Missouri Kansas City (1998). He then attended Baker University and earned a MEDL (2009). Bradley completed his Ed. D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (2019). He has taught middle school for the Kansas City school district. He then taught in Asia for two years before returning back and teaching in Raytown School District before becoming an Assistant Principal. He has served as an Assistant Principal at Raytown High school for the last 12 years. He and his wife, Rebekah Drace, have two daughters, Audrey, and Emma.