The Impact of Hiring Practices on the Employment of Urban Teachers in Secondary Shortage Areas

Narlene Ragans
St. John Fisher College

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Second Supervisor
Jeannine Dingus-Eason

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Raymond J. Giamartino

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The Impact of Hiring Practices on the Employment of Urban Teachers in Secondary Shortage Areas

By

Narlene Ragans

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by
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November 2008
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Narlene Ragans


Be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Education Doctorate degree.

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Jeannine Dingus-Eason, Ph.D., Committee Member

Raymond J. Giamartino Jr., Ed.D., Committee Member

8/20/08

Date
Dedication

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD. Isaiah 54:17

This dissertation is dedicated to my “Silly Rabbitz.” May God bless you to have the strength to achieve your dreams and the courage to explore new opportunities.
Biographical Sketch

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The financial support and data collection assistance of the Rochester City School District towards this research is hereby acknowledged. I also would like to thank St. John Fisher College for providing a tuition credit. May the "seed" planted today reap a substantial harvest that feeds the success of students in the Rochester community.

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And to those whose names I did not mention, but who contributed in their own way, this dissertation is dedicated to you too.
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This study examined the teacher hiring process as one possible cause of urban districts’ difficulty to recruit and hire highly qualified teachers. The study examines how new teachers experience the hiring process, reviews the information they receive from the hiring process, and captures teachers’ perspectives of how the hiring process assisted them to adjust to their new positions. The following research question guided the study: What are the perceptions of the hiring procedures in one Western New York school district among newly hired teachers in secondary subject areas experiencing teacher shortages?

The study is a quantitative research project based on findings from a descriptive survey that analyzed cross-sectional data regarding the route taken by teacher candidates to secure employment. Descriptive statistics were used to acquire a teacher candidate’s perspective at a defined point in time.

The research subjects for this study were a convenience sample of 125 teachers recently employed in high-need secondary academic areas including Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. Seventy responses were received (a 56% response rate).

This study yielded four significant findings: (a) late hiring may reduce opportunities to compete for high-quality teachers, (b) hiring practices of the school district under study were inconsistent and (c) teachers did receive an accurate picture of the district and their job during the hiring process, and (d) teachers became aware of
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Chapter I: Introduction

Background of the Study

Human Resource Departments in many urban school districts face the serious challenge of attracting high-quality teacher candidates (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Liu, 2003; Levin and Quinn, 2003). Urban school districts with high violence and high dropout rates coupled with limited resources and low graduation rates face multiple obstacles when competing with affluent suburban districts for capable teachers willing to work with urban students (American Federation of Teachers, 2007). Generally, staffing difficulties are more prevalent in districts with a greater proportion of high-poverty, non-White, low-test-scoring students where less qualified teachers may either not be certified, or lack experience, or both (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

The hiring process constitutes procedures that are strategically crafted for control. It is, at times, complex, tedious, and time consuming (Hartocollis, 1997). School districts anticipate hiring needs, and teacher candidates generally comply with procedures in search for employment. In theory, and ideally, consistent hiring procedures are practiced and based on qualifications; all applicants have an equal chance of selection. However, in actuality, the teacher-hiring process is individualized. Candidates experience the hiring process from their own unique perspective. Inconsistencies in the hiring process may exist. Although staff may sort through an abundance of credentials (e.g., applications, transcripts, references, test scores, and certification) in hopes of finding the best-qualified candidate, inconsistency within the hiring process can exclude some candidates from
being considered. In some cases, it is because the applicant does not meet minimum qualifications. In other instances, it is because the candidate is unable to “navigate” along the “employment highway” leading to an absence of credentials for consideration.

According to Peterson (2002) and Madison (2007), teacher selection is often done in a manner not resulting in selection of the most effective teacher. Madison says that although effective teachers are being hired, he questions if the hiring is done by chance or a systematic and concerted effort by those involved in the teacher hiring process. Mondak (2004) agrees that diversification in teacher hiring stems from the variety of individuals involved in the teacher-hiring process (i.e., primarily principals, human resource directors, and subject area directors) since a universal selection process does not exist. To complicate matters, bureaucratic processes including vacancy notifications, union involvement, and budget restraints can limit the ability of school districts to hire teacher candidates with attributes deemed essential. These candidates may abandon hard-to-staff districts in the face of hiring delays, forcing districts to fill vacancies from applicant pools with a higher percentage of unqualified and uncertified teachers (Levin & Quinn, 2003).

This study is derived from the researcher’s curiosity about what appeared to be an abundance of teachers hired in late August or September. In this study, the researcher is a human resource professional in a large urban school district in Western New York employed specifically to work with substitute teachers. Despite her understanding of the No Child Left Behind regulation, which required that states develop plans to achieve the goal that all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified by the end of the
2005-06 school year (NYSED, 2008), the researcher failed to understand why classrooms were staffed with uncertified substitute teachers.

Unlike previous studies, this study is distinctive in two regards. First, other studies have been conducted by superintendents and principals involved in the teacher-hiring process (Claussen-Schoolmeester, 2006; Hammen, 2005; Jamison, 1987; Madison, 2007; Sinclair, 2000; Theel, 2001), and this study was written from the perspective of a human resources professional not involved in the teacher-hiring process. Secondly, unlike the other studies evaluating the teacher-hiring process from school administrators’ viewpoints, this study evaluates the process from the point of view of teachers recently hired by the participating school district. The study examines how new teachers experience the hiring process, reviews the information they receive from the hiring process, and captures teachers’ perspectives of how the hiring process assisted them to adjust to their new positions.

Introduction to the Problem

As documented by educators, researchers, and scholars in both a review of relevant literature and from empirical studies, an abundance of problems can be attributed to school districts’ inability to recruit, hire, and retain high-quality teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Teacher quality. An initial problem is defining and understanding what constitutes a “quality teacher.” Identifying characteristics of a “quality teacher” is subjective, often based on personal opinions and experiences. For example, according to Darling-Hammond (2000), the increased emphasis of more rigorous professional standards for teaching is a sign of progress in which insisting that teachers understand the
subjects they teach will better prepare them to pass that knowledge to students.

Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000) state, “The notion of quality as it applies to classroom teaching is a determination of what is asserted or implied when it is claimed that an instance of teaching is quality teaching” (p. 1). They indicate that defining quality has its own set of complexities to be encountered and resolved. Andriessen, Bossuyt, and Schreurs (2005) identify a distinction made in literature between a static quality concept (reaching certain levels or standards of quality) and a dynamic quality concept (continuous improvement). Harris and Sass (2008) outlines a framework for deciphering what research indicates about teacher quality and recommends that measures including teacher education, experience, and value-added should be used (or not used) as the basis for teacher certification, compensation, and other state and federal policies.

No Child Left Behind. A second concern is the No Child Left Behind legislation. President George W. Bush signed the landmark No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) into law on January 8, 2002. The legislation required all teachers in core academic subjects to be highly qualified by the 2005-06 school year; that school districts use proven research-based instructional methods; and timely information and options be provided for parents. In New York, a "highly qualified" teacher must meet three criteria, namely, (1) have a bachelor’s or higher degree, (2) be certified, except for certain charter school teachers, for the subjects the teacher is teaching, and (3) demonstrate subject matter competency in all core academic subjects the teacher is teaching (NYSED, 2006). No Child Left Behind “core academic subjects” are English, Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Economics, Civics and Government, Foreign Languages, and the Arts (NYSED, 2004). Special education is deemed a core subject when the teacher
provides direct instruction in a core academic subject in K-12 as the teacher of record for that subject (NYSED, 2004).

In New York State, for the most part, certified teachers who are teaching in their area of certification are also highly qualified (NYSED, 2008). In 2006-2007, teachers who were not “highly qualified” taught 4.3 percent of New York State’s classes in core academic subjects, down from 5.5 percent in 2006-2006 and 7.9 percent in 2004-2005 (NYSED, 2008). According to NYSED, when teachers who are not highly qualified teach five percent or more core classes, teacher shortages may occur because there may not be enough teachers to meet district hiring needs or teachers are not willing or able to work where they are needed. A disproportionate number of high-poverty schools still had a larger percentage of core classes not taught by highly qualified teachers than low-poverty schools (NYSED, 2008). In high-poverty middle and secondary schools, highly qualified teachers, in comparison to 2.9 percent in low poverty middle and secondary schools, did not teach 16.1% of the core classes (NYSED, 2008). The percent varied by subject area and geographic region.

Under NCLB, an assessment-based accountability system regulates standards and provides oversight of schools. This component is perceived as the foundation of the legislation, especially for schools with low-achieving students. As a federal law, NCLB renewed school districts’ interest in graduation rates and established a universal accountability and measurement system. No Child Left Behind requires schools receiving Title I funding to test students annually to determine their academic progress. Schools that have not made state-defined adequate yearly progress for two consecutive school years must be identified as needing school improvement. These schools must
develop a two-year plan to turn around the school. If the school does not make adequate yearly progress for three consecutive years, the schools becomes subject to corrective action and restructuring by the state education department, including a takeover or complete reorganization of the school (U.S. Department of Education, Adequate Yearly Progress, 2008). This legislation is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research (U.S. Department of Education, No Child Left Behind, 2008).

In the aftermath of NCLB, organizations including the Alliance for Excellent Education acknowledged that the legislation set important goals ensuring that all students succeed and turning America’s low-performing schools into schools that effectively served all their students. That legislation, however, was focused on the elementary grades, not addressing the needs of America’s middle and high school students, particularly the six million students who are most at risk of dropping out of school each year. In fact, the original proposal mentioned the term “high school” only twice, confirming the Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) findings that the educational and equity promises of NCLB failed to extend to America’s older students’ aspects of the legislation that are related to funding, measurements, and improvement strategies.

Teacher certification. A third concern is the process for teacher certification. The responsibility of determining the qualifications of teachers resides with the state. Each state establishes certification requirements that may differ in the types of candidates allowed to apply (e.g., career changers or recent college graduates) and in the academic backgrounds these individuals must possess (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007). For example, New
York State public school teachers are required to hold a New York State certificate. New York State offers two teachers certification programs: Collegiate and Alternative. The Office of Teaching Initiatives issues the certificates, certifying that an individual has met requirements for academic degree, coursework, assessments, and experiences. Issuance of a certificate is contingent upon completion of a traditional teacher preparation program at a New York State college or university. The New York State Education Department (NYSED, 2008) reported that in 2006-2007, New York State issued over 39,900 certificates to new teachers, defined as teachers who had not been in the public school workforce in the prior five years. However, in New York State, teachers without appropriate certification filled at least 5% of teaching assignments in all subjects, a slight decline from previous years.

**Reciprocity.** In licensing, reciprocity is a concern for veteran teachers seeking teaching opportunities in states other than New York. The term “reciprocity” refers to agreements state departments of education have with other states that make it possible to gain teaching certification. Barriers include, but are not limited to, the inability of districts to pay teachers reflective of their years of experience in other state systems and teachers’ inability to transfer pensions. As a result, many good teachers leave the profession prematurely. Similarly, many talented individuals are discouraged from considering teaching as a career. This applies both to college students preparing to start their careers and to the many skilled individuals looking for mid-career changes (Condliffe, 2002; Curran, Abrahams, and Clarke, 2001). The absence of reciprocity between states limits the portability of teacher skills and experiences. Teachers electing to work in a different state may face additional course work to receive state certification.
Initial salaries may be reduced because service credit may not be granted for years taught out of state, and retirement benefits may be lost (Condliffe, 2002). States without “reciprocity” may accept qualifications from most or all other states, but often require some additional assessment or training. To permit teachers to begin working as soon as possible, some states issue “initial” or “provisional” certificates, which bridge the certification gap until needed training is complete (NYSED, 2008).

Supply, demand, and distribution of teachers. A fifth issue involves the supply, demand, and distribution of teachers. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (National Center Education Statistics, 2008), total enrollment in degree-granting institutions, postsecondary institutions that provide study beyond secondary school and offer programs terminating in an associate's, baccalaureate, or higher degree, is expected to increase 19% to 20.8 million between 2005 and 2016. The number of elementary and secondary teachers increased 26% between 1991 and 2004 and is projected to increase an additional 18% between 2004 and 2016 ((National Center Education Statistics, 2008). Based on data provided by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), the “potential” supply of “new teachers” rose slightly between 2000-2007 and 2005-2006, from 27,400 to 30,800 (NYSED, 2007). The New York State Education Department defines “new teachers” as teachers who were not employed in the public school workforce for the five years prior to their certification. The New York State Education Department refers to the supply of teachers as “potential” because not all new teachers are available to work where there are vacancies. Condliffe (2002) notes that the teaching profession is governed by a complex set of rules and regulations that hinder the natural forces of teacher demand and supply and leads to a undersupply of teachers.
Despite the increase in supply, uncertified teachers or those with no prior experience, filled 5.1% of New York State’s teaching assignments (NYSED, 2007). A possible explanation for this phenomenon may be that uncertified teachers are lost to the complexities of the teacher hiring process.

The demand for new teachers is measured by the number of teaching assignments held by teachers in their first year of experience (NYSED, 2007). Demand for new teachers is an indicator of future demand because “baby boomers” continue to leave the workforce. In 2006-2007, 18% of the workforce was age 55 or older, a larger share than in prior years (NYSED, 2008).

Between 2000-2001 and 2005-2006, the total number of vacancies for new teachers in New York State rose 11% from over 10,000 to over 11,000, after a peak of more than 11,000 in 2004-2005. In that same period, the number of vacancies rose in 11 out of 18 subject areas. The more than 11,200 vacancies for new teachers in 2005-2006 were distributed among all the regions of New York State. By comparing the potential supply of new teachers to vacancies for new teachers, estimates can be made of shortages, possible balances, and possible surpluses of new teachers.

The distribution of teachers complicates school staffing because some states, including California, Florida, Nevada, and Texas are scrambling to find teachers, while others states such as Connecticut, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin consistently produce more teachers than they can hire (Bradley, 1999). Bradley attributes the uneven distribution of teachers to the number of college programs that focus on teacher preparation. The uneven distribution of teachers is apparent even within states. Some school districts attract an abundance of applicants while other school districts
attract only a few (Bradley, 1999). Within districts, mathematics, science, bilingual education, and special education classrooms are more difficult to staff due to comparatively lower numbers of certified teacher candidates in those areas. Within a school, the problem intensifies if preferential classroom assignments exist for veteran teachers. Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, & Wyckoff (2007) report that “students of first-year teachers learn less, on average, than students of more experienced teachers” (p. 3). The researchers indicate that offering veteran teachers the choice of classroom assignments may result in students with the highest need being taught by teachers with the least experience.

Content area shortages. A sixth concern, as previously mentioned, is the availability of teachers certified to teach in shortage areas. Throughout the nation, severe teacher shortages, especially in urban areas, plague school districts’ abilities to hire and retain high-quality teachers. Educators and scholars argue that this is due to a general shortage of teacher applicants. The severity of this situation has reached crisis proportions in some areas. It is most acute in high schools in both urban and rural school districts. The shortages are most recognizable at the secondary level where qualified teachers have been in demand for nearly every subject. In a study administered by Balter and Duncombe (2005), the researchers outline the difficulty of recruiting qualified teachers. They report that the difficulty of recruiting certified teachers varies by content area. Subject areas that generally have an adequate number of qualified teachers include general Elementary Education, Physical Education, and Social Studies. This can vary, however, by region. On the other hand, 90% of school districts reported that it is very difficult to fill Foreign Language, Science, and Mathematics positions. Other subjects
difficult to fill include English as a Second Language (73.1%) and Special Education (45.3%). This is illustrated in New York, where for the 2006-2007 school year, high-need subject areas include Bilingual Education, English, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages (Languages other than English), Mathematics, Science, and Special Education (NYSED, 2008).

Creating an equitable learning environment for bilingual students depends on meeting the need for quality bilingual teachers, including teachers capable of teaching English Language Learners (ELL). Bilingual Education teachers are key factors in the education of language minority students (Darder, 1997). Bustos-Flores, Keehn, and Pérez (2002) indicate that “the role and status of the minority language within the bilingual classroom depend on bilingual education teachers who can create an environment in which the minority language is viewed as having equal or majority status” (p. 501). Establishing this type of environment allows not only for ethnic self-determination, but also for linguistic self-determination. In 2003, Latinos were the second-largest segment of the U.S. student population and accounted for more than 8.8 million students in United States K-12 public schools, or 19% of total school enrollment. In the 2003-04 school year, ELL services were provided to 3.8 million students (11% of all students). For the same year, The National Center for Education Statistics (2006) indicate that only 30% of teachers were trained to work with English Language Learners, and less than 3% have earned a degree in ESL or bilingual education (The National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). In 2007, The National Center for Education Statistics reported that 29% of eighth-grade ELL students scored at or above the basic achievement level in reading, compared to 75% of non-ELL students. Similar gaps were found in mathematics (The
National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) provides opportunities to narrow these gaps by holding schools accountable for improving academic achievement. This directive is of little value if schools are unable to find teachers capable of working productively with these students.

The New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (2008) indicates that foreign language is also an area where recruitment and retention of well-qualified teachers is a problem and that providing language curriculum to students is clearly in the public and national interest. Exposing students to alternative languages increases their intellectual abilities and prepares them for global understanding and living in a multicultural, multi-lingual world (New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers, 2008). Study of another language provides students with essential communication skills enhancing learning through improved cognitive development, transferable reading skills, reinforcement of other subject areas, cultural literacy and sensitivity, and tolerance for diversity. According to the Joint National Committee for Language (JNCL) and the National Council for Language and International Studies (NCLIS), language competence is necessary for Americans to conduct effective trade policy, expand international trade, ensure the integrity of national defense, enhance international communication, and develop a truly broad-based education for all citizens (2008). Teachers should be fluent in the language they teach and must meet pedagogic qualifications (JNCL-NCLIS, 2008).

School leaders and policymakers must work together to determine ways of expanding the pool of foreign language teachers in order to offer the kind of comprehensive, ongoing language instruction that is needed (National Foreign Language
Center, 2008). According to Garcia and Long (2004), five basic reasons exist for the anticipated foreign language teacher shortage including: (1) an anticipated high number of teacher retirements, (2) continuing decrease in foreign language education trainees, (3) increased interest in foreign language study due to shifting migration patterns worldwide, the demographic changes in the United States, and the oral communicative/proficiency emphasis in recent years, (4) an increase in the overall student population K-12, and (5) an increased demand to establish new foreign language programs at the elementary school level and to expand existing programs at other levels.

The difficulty in recruiting certified math and science teachers calls for suboptimal adjustments that school districts may have to make to cope with supply problems (NYSED, 2008). These adjustments include employing uncertified teachers, requiring teachers to teach outside of their certification area, and either cancelling or overstaffing classes (Darling-Hammond & Hudson, 1990). The shortage of mathematics and science teachers in secondary schools has existed for more than five decades (Levin, 2005; Rumberger, 1985; Darling-Hammond & Hudson, 1990). Levine (2005) credits this deficiency to school salary policies because single-salary schedules are used in most school districts. These salary schedules compensate teachers regardless of certification area or teacher supply. The lack of competitive salaries creates a deficit in the number of qualified mathematics and science personnel willing to pursue teacher certification and work within school districts. Levine adds that systematic planning to change salary policy decisions and implement special increments to attract mathematics and science specialists may attract candidates to the profession. Secondary teachers in math and science are
more likely to leave teaching because of opportunities in business, engineering, and technology (Isaac-Hopton, 2003).

Several researchers indicate that the critical shortage of highly qualified Special Education teachers may be compromising the educational needs of special education students (Mason, Davidson & McNeary, 2000). Roughly one-third of the approximate 250 vacancies for special education teachers each year remain unfilled (Smith, Pion, Tyler, Sindelar, & Rosenberg, 2001).

Male teachers and teachers of color. In addition to content area shortages, school districts struggle with acquiring male teachers and teachers of color. The National Education Association reports that the percentage of male teachers overall is at a 40-year low, dropping from 32.5% in 1970 to an estimated 24.1% in 2007. The shortage of male teachers is most acute in elementary schools. NEA statistics show only about 260,000 men teaching in primary schools across the country, a number dwarfed by more than 1.5 million female teachers (NEA, 2008). Anthony Daniels, chair of the NEA's student services program notes that a man's decision to become a teacher tends to lead him toward middle and high schools due to increased opportunity to coach sports and teach "hard" subjects like history, math, and science. This practice exacerbates the shortage of male teachers at the elementary level (National Education Association, 2004).

School systems across the nation experience disparity between the number of teachers of color and White teachers, while the number of students of color is increasing. In 2004, students of color made up 42% of public pre-kindergarten through secondary school enrollment, up from 34% in 1993 (National Center Education Statistics, 2007). Despite the increase in minority student enrollment, minority teachers only compose 6%
of the teacher population (NEA, 2008). Researchers acknowledge that presence of minority teachers in the classroom provides students with a basis for understanding cultural differences along with techniques to live within a racially diverse and complex society (Young, Place, Rinehart, Jury & Bates, 1997). Studies have shown that when comparing White teachers to Black teachers, Black teachers are able to relate better culturally and pedagogically to Black students and their parents (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Teachers of color convey an inherent understanding of the backgrounds, attitudes, and experiences of students of color, yet a lack of parity exists among the supply of teachers of color and students of color (Lewis, 1996).

Despite its benefits, the declining number of teachers of color entering the teaching profession is alarming (Atkinson, 2001). During the past decade, research indicates that the causes of the decline have not significantly changed (Branch, 2001). Several factors deter teachers of color from entering the teaching profession: limited access to higher education, negative image of teaching, lack of prestige, and lack of financial rewards or incentives. Other researchers indicate that poor working conditions, negative recruitment practices, lack of support from parents and administrators, safety issues, increased teacher accountability and responsibility, the impact of teacher licensure tests and other certification standards, and increased opportunities in other professional fields are also deterrents (Lewis, 1996, Blanch, 1993; Gordon, 1993; Allen, 2000). In addition, Branch (2001) suggests that the reasons for the shortage of teachers of color are varied and complex and attributes this to the lack of people of color participating in the knowledge-construction process for students in the public school system; fewer numbers of teachers who have the cultural frameworks to make instruction culturally relevant for
students of color; and fewer role models who can say, by their mere presence, "You can be a teacher". Blanch notes that the decrease in the number of teachers of color who enroll in teacher preparation programs coupled with the lure of other career opportunities defeat the teaching profession from attracting minority teachers. In spite of barriers, commitment is the single most important factor in being successful in hiring teachers (Brosnan, 2001) since diversified faculties are an essential component to the overall school operation (National Education Association, 2008).

Attrition and retention. Plaguing the teacher hiring process is teacher turnover. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2007), low performing schools rarely close the student achievement gap because they seldom close the teaching quality gap and are constantly rebuilding their staff. This process of hiring and replacing beginning teachers consumes an inordinate amount of human and financial capital (Milanowski and Odden 2007). Hollis and Simonetti (2007) report that school districts lose approximately $45,360 every time a poor teacher is hired, and this amount is multipliable by the number of unsuccessful teachers that must be replaced. This cost is based on time invested in recruiting, screening, interviewing, and hiring pre-service teachers. Additional expenses include the cost of mentoring, evaluating, and participating in the intervention of student-versus-teacher issues or parent-versus-teacher issues, progressive discipline, and discharge procedures.

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2007) adds that high teacher turnover makes schools extremely costly to operate. In 2005, the Alliance for Excellent Education reported that teacher turnover cost exceeded $4.9 million annually (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). The National Commission on
Teaching and America's Future estimates that the national cumulative costs to hire, recruit, and train replacement teachers are a staggering $7.34 billion (Barnes, Crowe and Schaefer 2007). It is estimated that urban school districts can spend as much as $70,000 a year on costs associated with teacher transfers despite whether they leave the district or not. Trapped in a cycle of teacher hiring and replacement these schools drain their districts of precious dollars that could be spent on improving teaching quality and student achievement.

Retirement and attrition will further contribute to the teacher shortage. According to Ingersoll (2003), an estimated 157,000 people leave teaching every year and an additional 232,000 other teachers change schools to pursue better working conditions. Identified as “movers” and “leavers” the two groups compose an estimated 12% of the total teacher workforce. Despite assumptions that retirement is the primary reason teachers elect to leave the profession, using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) found that of the 269,600 “movers” and “leavers” in the public sector, retirees are responsible for only 16% of the attrition. According to the New York State Education Department (2006), there are 3.8 million elementary and secondary teachers working in U.S. public and private schools — approximately 4% of the total civilian workforce. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2007) reports that 14% of new teachers leave by the end of their first year; 33% have left within three years; and nearly 50% have left the profession by the end of their fifth year. Each school day, approximately 1,000 teachers quit and an average an additional 1,000 teacher’s transfer to another school. Ingersoll (2003) blames teacher attrition on several additional factors including No Child Left Behind legislation,
difficult students, lack of support from administration, and lack of adequate preparation or mentoring.

**Student enrollment.** Finally, another concern influencing teacher shortages is that student enrollment is expected to increase substantially over the next decade. Total public and private elementary and secondary school enrollment reached a record 55 million in fall 2004, representing a 15% increase since fall 1991. The National Center for Education Statistics (National Center Education Statistics, 2008) estimates a further increase of 9% between 2004 and 2016. Enrollment in grades 9-12 increased 26 percent between 1991 and 2004; and is projected to increase an additional 4 percent between 2004 and 2016. Teacher shortages are expected in the Midwest, South, and West, and a decrease in the supply of teachers is expected in the Northeast. Projected changes in the availability of teachers has been attributed to factors such as internal migration, legal and illegal immigration, the relatively high level of births in the 1990s, and resultant changes in the population, rather than changes in attendance rates ((National Center Education Statistics, 2008).

The means by which a school district imposes the teacher hiring process can deliberately influence the selection of qualified teachers. Kardos and Liu (2003) show that schools are not organized to hire and support new teachers. Their findings report that 33% of new teachers are hired after the school year has already begun and 62% are hired within 30 days of when they are expected to start teaching. Well-defined hiring practices could lead to more effective teachers along with the ability to make earlier hiring decisions. The attrition among beginning teachers is a cause for concern. Data suggest that after just 5 years of working as a teacher, between 40% and 50% of new teachers
leave the profession. Evaluating the teacher hiring process from the teacher’s perspective may shed light on why beginning teachers leave (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Significance of the Study

Assessing teacher quality and its influence on student achievement is a key criterion for the implementation of the No Child Left Behind legislation. To meet the expectations of this legislation, urban school districts are in direct competition with affluent districts to secure highly qualified teachers willing and able to support students from impoverished communities. Research literature indicates that school districts needing the best-trained teachers seldom receive them. School districts serving students with low income and high poverty are frequently staffed with teachers less qualified as evaluated by grades and test scores (Ingersoll, 2003).

Teacher selection is one of the most significant responsibilities for a school district because ineffective teachers, across several school years, can have a detrimental effect on student academic achievement. The shortage of highly qualified teachers to provide secondary instruction is overwhelming, resulting in classrooms taught by uncertified or unqualified educators. Prior studies have found that a disproportionate number of less-qualified teachers teach minority and high-poverty students than their student counterparts in affluent school districts (Lankfoed, Loeb and Wyckoff, 2002).

This study can assist school districts in understanding the problems associated with the teacher hiring process. Since that process will be reviewed from the perspective of a newly hired teacher, it may give valuable insight regarding actual teacher experiences. Understanding the hiring process from the user’s perspective may further
assist school districts evaluating their hiring practices and formulating guidelines to attract the best teacher candidates. According to Madison (2007):

- By developing hiring processes that are structured around selecting effective teachers who have attributes of effective teaching, the hiring of teachers becomes more likely and the likelihood of hiring ineffective teachers is lessened (p 13).

Citarelli (2006) indicates that a teacher’s influence on a student can be substantial and could last a lifetime.

This study addresses the problems that Human Resource Departments in urban school districts face in hiring high-quality teachers as aligned both with the school districts’ needs and with No Child Left Behind legislation. Despite arguments from educators and scholars that problems exist because of teacher shortages or that pre-service teachers do not have appropriate teaching qualifications, this study will examine the teacher hiring process as one possible cause of urban districts’ difficulty in recruiting and hiring highly qualified teachers. Data were collected from newly hired teachers. In this study, a newly hired teacher is defined as a teacher who was not employed as a probationary teacher the previous year by the subject urban district. These might have been teachers who had never taught before, former or current contract substitutes, teachers returning to teaching after working in non-teaching fields, or teachers previously employed in other districts or in private schools.

**Research Question**

The shortage of highly qualified teachers to provide secondary instruction is large, resulting in some classes taught by uncertified or unqualified educators. This study was
developed to understand how the teacher hiring practices influence the employment of teachers in the fields of Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. The study may add to knowledge of the hiring process by reviewing the hiring procedures recently employed to teach in secondary shortage areas in one urban school district in Western New York. The intent of the study is to examine how new teachers experienced the hiring process, review the information they receive from the hiring process, and capture teachers’ perspectives of whether or not the hiring process assisted them to adjust to their new positions. The following research question will guide this study: What are the perceptions of the hiring procedures in one Western New York school district among newly hired teachers in secondary subject areas experiencing teacher shortages?

Conclusion

Chapter 1 has presented the problem statement, significance of the study, purpose of the study, the research question being addressed, and definition of terms. Chapter 2 will review the relevant literature regarding the teacher hiring process with emphasis on teacher shortage areas, certification requirements, and teacher supply and demand. Chapter 3 will address the methodology employed in this study. Chapter 4 will present the data collected and an analysis of those data. Chapter 5 will present a summary, conclusions, and recommendations that emerge from the collected data and their analysis.
Glossary of Terms

Certain key terms used in this study should be understood as defined below:

*Contract Substitute:* A certified teacher employed for up to one year in the absence of a probationary or tenured teacher on approved leave of absence. Contract substitutes receive salaries and benefits consistent with newly hired probationary teachers.

*Newly Hired Teachers:* Teachers who were not employed by a particular school district as teachers the previous school year. They can be teachers who have never taught previously, teachers returning to teaching after working in non-teaching fields, or teachers previously employed in other districts or in private schools.

*Probationary Teacher:* A teacher who does not have tenure but who is appointed as a permanent, full time or as a permanent, part-time capacity.

*Recruitment Strategies:* Processes used to attract candidates to an open position. The recruitment process provides the organization with a pool of potentially qualified job candidates from which judicious selection can be made to fill vacancies. Successful recruitment begins with proper employment planning and forecasting. In this phase of the staffing process, an organization formulates plans to fill or eliminate future job openings based on an analysis of future needs, the talent available within and outside an organization, and the current and anticipated resources that can be expended to attract and retain such talent (Richardson, n.d.).

*Selection Process:* The process by which teacher candidates are interviewed, credentials reviewed, and selected or rejected for the position for which they are applying (Madison, 2007)
Chapter II: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

This chapter provides a selective review of the research literature related to the teacher employment process. This review examines empirical studies regarding various influences that contribute to the employment of teachers. The chapter is divided into sections that discuss quality teachers' influence on student academic achievement and the teacher recruitment and selection process.

Quality teachers influence student academic achievement. Literature linking student performance to teacher quality is extensive, the outcome of which strongly supports the idea that high-quality teachers influence student achievement in a measurable, positive way. Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin (2001) collected data in Texas that showed that a one standard deviation increase in teacher quality contributes to an increase in student test scores by approximately 10% of a standard deviation. In a similar study, Aaronson, Barrow and Sander (2007) collected data on secondary students in the Chicago Public Schools using matched student-teacher administrative data. They found that quality math teachers influenced ninth-grader math results by a one standard deviation improvement in one semester, which is associated with as much as a 20% increase over the course of one year. These findings are consistent with studies conducted by Sanders and Rivers (1996).

Darling-Hammond (2000), using state-level case studies and quantitative analyses of state-level achievement data, examined the ways in which teacher qualifications and
other school inputs are related to student achievement. Her findings suggest that policy investments in the quality of teachers may be related to improvements in student performance. She found that teacher preparation and certification have a considerable correlation with student achievement despite student linguistic and socioeconomic status. Her analysis suggests that state policies concerning teacher education, licensing, hiring, and professional development may affect teacher qualifications and its influence on student academic achievement.

Research conducted by The Center for Public Education (2005) indicates that students in affluent districts are more likely to have highly qualified teachers than students in high-poverty districts. In addition, The Center for Public Education discusses the strong correlation between teacher quality and student test scores. Peterson (2002) argues that securing high-quality teachers positively influences student learning and educational reform as well as curriculum design and implementation. Peterson also found that effective teachers have ten times the effect on curriculum, school organization, testing programs, and "teacher-proof" approaches to school improvements compared to lower quality teachers who reduce student-learning capability and erode morale.

Boyde, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, & Wyckoff (2007) explored how the distribution of teacher qualifications and student achievement in New York City changed from 2000 through 2005, using data on teachers and students. The researchers indicated that measurable characteristics of qualified teachers increased among schools from 2000 to 2005. Schools with large proportions of poor students and students of color, on average, they found that observable qualifications of teachers were much stronger than five years before. Even so, a significant number of schools with large proportions of poor
students did not show as much improvement. The researchers also found that changes in the observed qualifications of teachers account for only a modest improvement in the average achievement of students in the poorest schools. To help this problem, they suggest that teachers with stronger observed qualifications; for example, math SAT scores or certification status, could substantially improve student achievement. The authors found that the gap between the qualifications of New York City teachers in high-poverty schools and low-poverty schools had narrowed substantially. They attributed the narrowing of this gap to the assignment of fewer uncertified teachers and the use of new hires educated through alternative certification routes. They determined much larger gains could result if teachers with strong teacher qualifications could be recruited.

Gimbert, Bol, and Wallace (2007) used a mixed-method comparative design to study the influence of traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs on student achievement and the application of national standards by teachers of mathematics in urban secondary schools. Data were derived using standardized state test and district level quarterly assessments. The researchers found significant difference favoring the alternative preparation teachers on two measures of student achievement as well as the use of standard-driven instructional strategies. Using alternative teacher preparation programs, according to the researchers, are a feasible way to provide qualified high school teachers in mathematics classrooms.

Researchers Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor (2007) used data on statewide end-of-course tests in North Carolina to examine the relationship between teacher credentials and student achievement at the high-school level. They found compelling evidence that teacher credentials affect student achievement in systematic ways and that the
magnitudes are large enough to be policy relevant. They were able to conclude that the uneven distribution of teacher credentials by race and socio-economic status of high school students contributes to achievement gaps in high school.

A study conducted by Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) provides evidence that variations in teacher quality affect student achievement. Using data from UTD Texas Schools Project, compiled for all public school students from administrative records in Texas, the authors disentangle the impact of schools and teachers in influencing achievement with special attention given to the potential problems of omitted or incorrectly measured variables regarding students and school selection. The authors found that teachers have powerful effects on reading and mathematics achievement. Minimum variation in teacher quality is explained by observable characteristics such as education or experience. Several major conclusions emerged from their research. They found no evidence that having a master's degree improves teacher skills. In addition, there appear to be important gains in teaching quality in the first year of experience and smaller gains over the next few career years. However, there is little evidence that improvements continue after the first three years.

In a study conducted by E. Hanushek (1992), as cited by The Abell Foundation (2001), students assigned to good teachers have the potential to learn a full grade level more than students taught by ineffective teachers. According to Hinds (2002), "It is not that qualified teachers are so hard to find. The problem is that they have better options than working in school systems that ignore their professional needs" (p. 5). Hinds (2002), in an interview with Arthur Levine of Teachers College, indicates that affluent suburban school districts get their pick of the best-prepared candidates and provide them with
relatively good working conditions, supports, and salaries. In contrast, Walsh indicates that poor rural and urban districts have the least to offer in terms of salary, working conditions, and support, and consequently, they cannot recruit enough well-qualified teachers. According to Levine,

Over the last 20 years of school reform, we have done a marvelous job of improving American suburban schools, but with a couple of debatable exceptions, we have never succeeded in turning around any urban school system. We have a dual system of education, and the students who need the best teachers are faced with the least able teachers (p. 12).

According to Strong and Hindman (as cited by Claussen-Schoolmeester, 2006), teachers can assist in student improvement if “all educational stakeholders can come to an understanding of what constitutes an effective teacher and then search for teacher candidates who can demonstrate those desired qualities and behaviors” (p. 16). The teacher hiring process may have a direct influence on student academic achievement. The challenge for those involved in recruiting, selecting, and employment is to ensure that the teacher candidates selected are of the highest caliber available and that the hiring process itself has prepared the teacher for the expectations they were employed to accomplish.

Teacher recruitment and selection processes. School districts undertake a series of subsequent steps – recruitment, screening, interviewing, selection, induction, development, evaluation, and retention in pursuit of teachers capable of positively influencing the lives of the students they teach. Researchers throughout the states have studied the teacher recruitment and selection process to determine best practices to attract teacher candidates. Reviews of literature regarding the teacher recruitment and selection
process suggest that teacher-hiring procedures may need further evaluation because of the varied perceptions of those leading the hiring initiative and variation in which the hiring process is administered.

Wise et al. (1987) studied effective teacher selection techniques, from recruitment to retention, in six school districts selected by a panel representing most of the major education associations. Their case studies revealed that although school district selection processes appear similar, substantial differences are apparent. The researchers identified four conditions: (1) the criteria embodied in selection tools used (interview guides, test, certification standards, and evaluation of credentials), (2) the weights placed on different indicators of teaching ability, (3) the extent to which selection processes are centralized or decentralized, and (4) the manner in which candidates are treated, both before and after hiring (p. 7). They found that variations in a school district’s ability to secure teacher candidates influenced how the school district assessed teacher candidates, collected and distributed information to decision-makers, and interacted with teacher candidates.

Jacobson’s (1986) study of alternative practices of internal salary distribution and the effects on teacher labor market behavior is structured around three interrelated propositions: (a) the relationship between a district's internal distribution of salary increments and its ability to recruit and retain teachers depends upon the extent to which the district changes the relative attractiveness of its salary offerings, as measured by regional salary rankings, (b) changes in a district's salary rankings are a function of internal distribution, change in magnitude of the total wage bill, and the distribution and magnitude decisions of all other districts in the region, and (c) changes in salary rankings have a greater effect on the labor market behavior of novice teachers than on the labor
market behavior of veteran teachers (Abstract). Retention rates and changes in recruitment pools of internal salary distribution practices for 699 New York State school districts were studied in 1974, 1978, 1982, and 1984 through an examination of changes in the ratios of salaries paid to veteran teachers relative to salaries paid to entry-level teachers. The findings reveal that between 1974 and 1984, the majority of New York State school districts distributed salary increments to the advantage of their most senior teachers. Due to demographic changes in the work force, this practice called "back-loading" appears to have been the result of teacher unions negotiating for the benefit of their "aging" membership. Recruitment analyses revealed that when districts improved their entry-level salary ranking, they subsequently improved their ability to recruit the most highly educated teachers available. These findings are important for policy makers attempting to address recruitment and retention problems through changes in teacher compensation. The implications for policy are that district officials should be more attentive to the internal distribution of salary increments, but that distribution practices alone cannot substitute for overall improvements in teacher salaries.

Jamison (1987) studied factors influencing the teacher hiring decisions of Oklahoma public school administrators. A questionnaire/survey was sent to 77 randomly selected independent and 26 randomly selected dependent school districts. Fifty-two independent and 17 dependent districts participated in the study. Twelve of these districts defined themselves as urban districts, while 57 identified themselves as rural districts. This made it possible to interpret the data from an urban/rural as well as an independent/dependent perspective. In addition, 12 randomly selected administrators were interviewed to determine what information they required from teacher applicants
and how they made hiring decisions. Findings indicated that hiring administrators value college/university placement offices and letters of inquiry from applicants as primary sources of teacher applicants while the personal interview is the most important screening device in the hiring process. While letters of reference from previous education-related employers are perceived to be highly important in the placement files of applicants, a majority of the hiring administrators prefer confidential references because these are more likely to contain appraisal information that is valid, reliable, and truthful.

Wollman (1987) studied teacher recruitment and selection practices in Nebraska. Data for the study were obtained through a questionnaire mailed to Nebraska public school superintendents during the 1986-87 year. The findings of the study indicated that many districts lacked a plan for recruiting teachers. Most districts operated "as-need-arises" recruitment programs with activities concentrated late in the school year. College/university placement offices were the only major sources for candidates, and few districts had annual budgets specifically for recruiting. Recruitment and selection responsibility was shared by superintendents, principals, and often board members. The use of reference letters, transcripts, telephone follow-up, and interviews were prevalent. Districts neglected recommended selection practices such as requiring application forms, using structured interviews, encouraging teacher participation, and periodically evaluating practices. During the same timeframe, Deweese (1987) published a similar study for the 1986-1987 school term by local public school districts in Georgia and North Carolina. Data were requested from all 186 public school systems in Georgia and from the 140 school districts in North Carolina. The overall return rate was 86.5% (282 of 326). Administrative personnel specialists in the districts were questioned as to the extent
to which selected practices were used in their districts and the degree of importance they
attached to each practice. The study further sought to determine if a change had occurred
in the frequency of use, in Georgia, of certain practices over the time period from 1979 to
1986. Results showed no significant difference between perceptions of importance
attached to the various factors by personnel administrators in Georgia and North
Carolina. Likewise, no significant difference in perceptions of importance was found
between personnel specialists from city and county districts across states.

Jones (1993) studied the recruitment of underrepresented mathematics and
science teachers into the public school work force by investigating the success of Project
Pipeline. Project Pipeline uses funding from the California Postsecondary Education
Commission to recruit traditionally underrepresented Americans of Hispanic, Native
American, and African American origins that have qualifications in mathematics and
science, into classrooms as teachers for California public schools. Project Pipeline
participants follow the path of communicative action where participants harmonize
tactics to reach understanding. Fifteen participants engaged in a conversation with the
researcher that Jones describes as being “structured around theoretical categories of
tradition, prejudice, and fusion of horizons as presented by Gadamer (1991),
communicative action as presented by Harbamas (1990), and appropriation as presented
by Ricoeur (1981).” Jones’ findings implied that school districts, when recruiting
underrepresented groups to their work force, will orient their efforts toward the human
elements involved in recruitment and that they will work cooperatively in their efforts to
bring more such candidates into the teacher work force. Jones also notes that the
community including key stakeholders (school districts, universities, and businesses)
must collaborate to identify human resource needs prior to a crisis and that the state of California can support key locations throughout the state by establishing new consortiums.

Troisi's (1995) study aimed to determine how teachers are selected for employment in the public schools of New York State. The major topics explored in this study are (a) teacher recruitment, (b) criteria and methods used to assess candidates, and (c) principals and teachers' perceptions regarding the quality of the selection process. The study consisted of two distinct phases. During Phase I, a random sample of 350 public school principals throughout New York State, excluding those from the large city school districts of Albany, Buffalo, New York, and Rochester, were surveyed by mail. A total of 176 principals answered the survey, an overall response rate of 50%. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the survey data. An analysis of variance was performed in order to determine whether or not significant differences existed between the responses of principals based upon a variety of factors. In Phase II, telephone interviews were conducted and a descriptive summary of responses developed with 10 recently hired teachers to cross-reference principals' survey responses and to explore teachers' experiences with the selection process. The results indicate that current teacher selection practices in New York are basically consistent with those described in the selection literature of the 1970s and 1980s. Most school districts still do not actively recruit teachers. The interview continues to be both the most commonly used and most influential assessment procedure. Overall, principals de-emphasized the importance of performance assessments during the selection process, and the specific criteria that are used to evaluate candidates are still not disclosed.
Johnson's (1995) study addressed the issues of effective teacher preparation programs that will recruit, train, and retain minorities for the teaching profession. Discussion of purpose, social significance, research, and contribution to Florida public schools is offered to all educators, policymakers, and community leaders interested in a progressive and effective means of recruiting, training, and retaining minority teachers. The data collected suggest that a number of factors are contributing to the decline: expanding opportunities in other fields, non-competitive salaries, failure on qualifying tests, poor working conditions, overcrowded classrooms, and lack of respect for the teaching profession.

A 1997 study administered by Swinehart and Kay examined the principal's role and process used to select teachers. Study questions focused on the role of the principal, qualities that principals perceive as valuable in teacher candidates, levels of innovation and standardization in hiring practices, the importance of hiring decisions assigned by the principals, training that the principals had received that was helpful in teacher employment, and beliefs that principals hold about the importance of teacher selection. A qualitative analysis was conducted on data obtained from intensive interviews with 27 principals in the seven-county metropolitan area of Minneapolis/St. Paul. Overall, principals expressed satisfaction with the roles they held and the practices they employed in the employment of teachers. In all 27 schools examined, the principal played an integral role in teacher selection processes. In all sizes and levels of schools, the principal set the tone for hiring processes and led teacher selection efforts. In one case, the principal made the decision alone. In 13 cases, the principal involved others in the selection process, but ultimately made the final decision. In 13 cases, the principal was a
member of a hiring committee with decision-making power equal to the others in the
group. Issues identified by principals as needing change included: late budgeting
decisions and the consequent last-minute planning for teacher selection, limited time to
screen candidates and the impossibility of observing candidates actually working with
students, fragmented training for teacher selection, the need for improved training
opportunities and more collegial sharing, difficulty in recruiting candidates of color and
candidates in some curricular areas with specified areas of expertise, and the lack of a
systematized process of recruitment.

Teacher recruitment. Ericson (1997) examined teacher recruitment practices in
selected California unified school districts. Specific purposes were to: (a) describe the
educational and professional backgrounds of personnel administrators related to
recruitment; (b) determine the degree of importance assigned to teacher recruitment
efforts and if a significant difference exists related to the size of the district based on total
general fund budget, (c) determine districts' use of the components of a comprehensive
teacher recruitment plan, (d) identify and compare the teacher recruitment practices used
by districts in relation to the size of the district based on the total general fund budget, (e)
rate the personnel administrators' perceptions of the effectiveness of specific recruitment
practices for attracting teachers, in general, in relation to the size of the district based on
the total general fund budget, and (f) rate the personnel administrators' perceptions of the
effectiveness of specific recruitment practices for attracting underrepresented ethnic
teachers in relation to the size of the district based on total general fund budget. This
study was both descriptive and "ex post facto." A researcher-developed questionnaire was
administered to personnel administrators with the title "director" or higher in California.
unified school districts. Statistical treatment of data involved descriptive statistics, the parametric Analysis of Variance, the Scheffe post hoc test, and the nonparametric Pearson chi-square. The study showed that: (a) personnel administrators are well informed regarding a variety of recruitment practices; (b) personnel administrators consider teacher recruitment to be a priority among their professional responsibilities; (c) only 3 of the 12 components identified as being essential in strategic planning for recruitment are being used by 60% or more of the districts; (d) districts are using a limited number of 61 specific recruitment practices; (e) for attracting teachers in general, only 2 of 61 practices were considered "highly effective," with 3 practices indicating significant difference related to district size; (f) for attracting underrepresented ethnic teachers, no practices were considered "highly effective." Seven practices showed significant difference related to district size. Ericson offered the following conclusions: (a) districts are using a limited number of teacher recruitment practices; (b) districts are not maximizing their recruitment efforts by taking advantage of long-range, strategic planning or allocating adequate resources to support recruitment tasks; (c) the size of the district, based on total general fund budget, does not significantly impact which recruitment practices are used; (d) currently used recruitment practices are viewed as "moderately effective" in attracting qualified candidates; (e) district size is not related to the effectiveness of recruitment practices with the exception of 3 of the 61 practices; and (f) districts are not maximizing the use of promising practices for attracting underrepresented ethnic candidates.

Verdugo-Wood (1997) researched teacher recruitment practices of underrepresented groups in selected public school districts in California. The purpose of
the study was to obtain the views of Hispanic/African American teachers and personnel administrators and compare their perceptions in terms of minority recruitment policies, at the state and local level. Participants included Hispanic and African Americans from 14 large-sized school districts who were surveyed with questionnaires. Teachers reported they were unaware of any specific policies. Teachers and personnel administrators agreed that the most important recruiting practices were increasing salaries and reducing class size and that a shortage of Hispanic/African American teachers existed in their districts. Despite not being aware of specific policies, neither teachers nor administrators indicated any adverse opinions toward the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. It was found that both groups had similar attitudes and opinions and viewed shortages of teachers of color in terms of ratios to teachers, students and district population levels. Teachers and administrators agreed that recruitment practices and incentives should be the same for all teachers.

Hodges (1997) studied minority teachers’ perceptions of the teacher recruitment and retention process in the Omaha Public Schools. The qualitative research approach was used to gain insight into how minority teachers viewed their recruitment experience. Data were collected through recorded and structured telephone interviews with fifteen teachers of color. Hodges organized data around three major themes: recruitment, retention, and non-retention of minority teachers. In terms of recruitment, findings indicated that the teachers of color in this study had many options of where to begin their teaching careers. However, the recruitment process was a major determinant of where teachers chose to accept teaching positions in the Omaha Public School District. Factors included the connection made with the recruiter with whom they had their initial contact
and the follow-up that took place. Other factors included collateral materials and the school district's reputation. Data indicated that retention of teachers hired in the Omaha Public Schools has been a result of the importance that teachers place on teaching in a good school district, receiving support, and liking the city of Omaha.

The purpose of a study conducted by Lunger (2000) was to examine elementary school principals' current hiring practices to determine if there was a pattern that could be useful in developing a protocol for future hiring. The methodology used a non-experimental descriptive research design with a quantitative approach. Qualitative responses were obtained using open-ended questions at the end of each survey section. An original survey was developed to obtain data about current hiring practices in non-urban Michigan school districts. Survey participants were members of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School principals Association. Data were analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential analyses. Based on the findings of the study and review of related literature, hiring practices used in suburban and rural Michigan school districts were inconsistent in the recruitment role of the principal as well as the selection, interviewing, and hiring processes.

Atkinson, Sr. (2001) studied the recruitment programs and strategies used by personnel administrators in North Carolina to attract teachers of color. Specifically, he looked at the recruitment policies, programs, and strategies used by school systems to increase the number of minority teachers in North Carolina public schools and what challenges they present for personnel administrators. Study participants included 117 practicing personnel administrators in the K-12 public school systems of North Carolina. Responses were received from 55 (47%) of the 117 school districts surveyed. Data were
gathered using a five-part questionnaire. Atkinson, Sr. found that although state and national programs were available to hiring directors to recruit teachers, specific programs that targeted teachers of color were underutilized. Recruitment techniques such as attending job fairs, used by 98.2% of the school districts, were deemed very effective, whereas recruiting in magazines that targeted ethnic minorities, although not used as frequently, revealed opposing results with 57% indicating that it was effective or very effective, while 43.3% disagreed and found it ineffective or very ineffective. Most respondents (89%) agreed or strongly agreed that their district recruitment policies were effective \( (M = 3.20, \text{SD} = 0.68) \). Only 63% of respondents however indicated that their school district did not have specific policies to recruit teachers of color. Respondents indicated that although local school districts are putting forth a substantial effort to recruit, 92.7% agreed or strongly agreed that a major problem is the limited availability of teachers of color.

Butler's (2002) study was a heuristic, descriptive case study of teacher recruitment strategies. The purpose of this study was to (a) describe the different teacher recruiting strategies used throughout Florida, and (b) to identify the most productive teacher recruiting strategies defined as those resulting in the highest percentage of new teachers hired. The study was based on data gathered using the Teacher Recruitment Survey, a survey created by the researcher. The population for this study was the 67 public school districts in Florida. The completed surveys yielded a usable return rate of 61.2\% (\( N = 41 \)). Using descriptive statistics, the data revealed: (a) there were a variety of teacher recruitment strategies used throughout the state of Florida, and depending on the district size and region, certain strategies were more widely used; (b) recruiting teachers
via the Internet and College of Education job fairs generated the highest percentage of applicants across the state; (c) recruiting teachers via the Internet and College of Education job fairs resulted in the highest percentage of teachers hired; (d) elementary schools consistently had the highest percentage of teacher vacancies across the state; and (e) K-12 exceptional education, high school math, and high school science teacher positions were the most difficult subject areas to fill.

Zezech (2002) examined relationships between a school district's teacher recruitment practices and the perceptions of teachers new to the district to those recruitment practices. Specifically, the study examined teacher perceptions of (a) awareness of recruitment practices used by the district to attract teachers, (b) importance of recruitment practices in the decision to seek their present position, and (c) effectiveness of the specific recruitment practices used by the school district. The study also determined if there were differences in teacher perceptions when experience, gender, racial classification, teacher preparation program, or immediate prior residencies were considered. Surveys were used to collect data from 137 teachers in their first year of service to the school district. There were some statistically significant differences noted when gender and immediate prior residency were considered. There were also statistically significant differences noted at the item level. Teachers somewhat agreed with statements for awareness and somewhat disagreed with statements for importance. The most effective recruitment practices were: (a) using the World Wide Web page to announce vacancies, (b) holding a district-wide job fair, and (c) providing financial bonuses for holding a master's degree in the subject area. The least effective recruitment practices were: (a) making recruiting trips outside North Carolina, (b) holding mini job
fairs for specific school needs, and (c) providing financial bonuses for National Board Certification.

Perkins (2003) describes, examines, and analyzes the benefits and pitfalls of a complex structural pre-collegiate approach to help solve the minority teacher shortage as evidenced in minority teacher recruitment partnership programs. The focus of the research is Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT), a regional collaborative "grow-your-own" program designed to recruit, mentor, and train high school students, provide them with a minimum 50% tuition scholarship to attend college, and place them in teaching positions back in their communities. The researcher employed qualitative research through interviews, participant observations, questionnaires and surveys, and review of documents. These methods were used to gather feedback and data from the key participants involved in the regional collaborative partnership program; namely, students, parents, school officials, businesses, and community leaders. The results of the study demonstrate how a pre-collegiate minority recruitment program like TSTT can help solve the critical need for minority teachers. Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers has been effective because of the collaborative effort of school districts, colleges, businesses, government, and communities working on a common mission. By creating a strong network of human and financial resources, TSTT participants are given enriched opportunities to learn about teaching, to gain exposure to outstanding public school and college mentors, to obtain guidance and financial support, and to become gainfully employed as teachers.

To examine decentralized with centralized structures, Liu (2003) issued a random sample survey to 751 first and second-year teachers in California, Florida, Massachusetts,
and Michigan. The intent of the analysis was to measure new teachers’ experiences of hiring by using an 85-item survey. Four hundred eight-six surveys were returned, a 65% response rate. The survey findings indicated that 45.9% of participants experienced a highly decentralized hiring process for their current position while 30.9% reported their experiences as moderately decentralized. Liu notes that although most teachers experienced a decentralized process, many still had limited interaction with school-based personnel prior to accepting the position and that having control of the hiring process does not necessarily mean that interviews were conducted in ways that allow the applicant to take advantage of this control.

Liu (2003) also studied the process in which 486 new teachers were hired in California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan. The study conceives hiring as a two-way process and examines the extent to which the hiring process provides opportunities for prospective teachers and schools to collect rich information and form accurate impressions of an important prerequisite for achieving good matches between individuals and schools. Liu found that while much of the hiring of new teachers is now decentralized or school-based, it is still relatively information poor. Few candidates interact with current teachers, students, or parents during the hiring process. As a result, new teachers form only moderately accurate pictures of their future schools and jobs. The data also reveal that up to one third of new teachers in the four states are hired extremely late i.e., that is, after the school year has started. Finally, the study provides evidence that new teachers who do experience information-rich hiring are more satisfied with their jobs than new teachers who do not.
An Isaac-Hopton (2003) study reviews the ethnic and minority teacher recruitment policies and practices implemented in three selected suburban school districts in Texas. The participants of this study were superintendents, board members, principals, directors of recruitment, and teachers. The goal of the study was to collect data, evaluate results, and provide recommendations. The data and the evaluation suggested that several factors appear to influence the recruitment of ethnic and minority teachers i.e., the composition of the recruitment team, locations selected for recruitment of ethnic and minority teachers, improvement of present practices and strategies, evaluation of the recruitment efforts, additional benefits offered by the school districts, application and interviewing processes, and the support systems provided for teachers hired. Although factors influencing the recruitment of ethnic and minority teachers are being implemented in the districts involved with the study, the dilemma of how to attract and retain more ethnic and minority teachers remains a challenge. Brewer (2003) solicited the perceptions of three principals who opened new high schools within the past two years. Since the study was exploratory in nature, a qualitative research strategy was implemented. In reference to hiring, findings suggested overwhelmingly that the hiring process is the most important action that must be addressed by the principal who is opening a new high school.

Kelly (2004) examined the effects of financial and other incentives on recruitment and retention among public school teachers in Texas. The focus of the research was to examine the financial and other incentives that influence Texas teachers to retain their current positions or to seek employment elsewhere. Data for the study were collected by using two validated survey instruments of factors contributing to teacher recruitment and
retention: questionnaires and interviews. The sample population for the study was 328 public school teachers and 98 Texas superintendents throughout the state. Descriptive statistical procedures were applied to examine the effects of teacher recruitment and retention practices used. Quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that financial and non-financial incentives positively influence recruiting and retaining their teachers. Financial incentives that made a difference on teacher recruitment and retention were: offering teachers $5,000 above state base pay, providing at least a $2,000 signing bonus, providing free medical insurance, providing day care for their employees, and/or offering tuition reimbursement. The non-financial incentives that made a difference were effective staff development, having supplies and materials readily available, establishing a positive learning environment, providing additional planning time, and creating a student/teacher ratio of eighteen to one or less.

Farrell (2004) identified strategies used by school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia to recruit qualified teachers, as specified by the No Child Left Behind Act. Further, the strategies were investigated to determine which generated the most applicants and new hires and which selection criteria for potential candidates were the most helpful in selecting qualified teachers. Quantitative data were collected by administering the survey instrument, Teacher Recruitment Survey developed by Butler (2002) to a sample of the 132 school divisions. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze all the items on the survey. Findings from this study showed that even though a variety of teacher recruitment strategies have been used throughout Virginia, the most commonly employed strategies were college of education job fairs, visits, and city or community job fairs. Internet district websites and newspaper advertisements also were used.
extensively. College of education job fairs and visits yielded the highest number of quality teacher applicants. City or community job fairs, followed by Internet district websites, resulted in the highest number of new teachers hired. The selection criteria found most useful in selecting quality teachers were full state certification for the field to be taught, college major or minor in the field to be taught, and structured interviews that assessed aptitude and characteristics. The criteria found least useful were overall college GPA and scores on tests such as the Praxis. Additionally, school divisions had an immediate need for teachers certified in special areas in high demand and lowest supply: special education (all levels) and secondary-level mathematics and science.

Hammen (2005) investigated the differences in the perceptions of school district human resource officials and the perceptions of newly hired teachers regarding the identified teacher recruitment strategies. A survey research design was used to examine current teacher recruiting practices. Data were gathered from school district human resources officials and newly hired teachers. Teachers expressed the desire to apply in school districts where they sensed they could make a connection to others and have an opportunity to best meet their professional needs. The majority of respondents reported that interpersonal relationships were an important part of the recruitment process. The research suggested that opportunities for professional growth, collaboration, and support were factors that teachers identified as attractive qualities when choosing a teaching position.

A study conducted by Lopeman (2005) explored the cost effectiveness of alternative recruitment strategies used to attract teachers of ethnic and linguistic minority. Data were collected from human resources administrators in seven elementary school
districts in Phoenix, Arizona regarding the strategies each used, the effectiveness, and the estimated costs along with the names of teachers hired in the 2001-2002 school year. The named teachers were surveyed and asked to identify the recruitment strategy that successfully attracted them to the school district. The findings in this study revealed that the most effective strategies for recruiting teachers were word of mouth and collegiate partnership, to which no costs could be associated. The most commonly used strategy to which a cost could be associated was participation in job fairs. The researcher concluded that when recruiting for minority teachers, school districts should invest resources in cultivating positive public relations and establishing partnerships with universities.

Dyck-Stoddard (2006) studied the relationship of teacher education variables, screening, and hiring practices in predicting first-year elementary teacher proficiency. The study examined a group of 20 highly proficient first-year elementary teachers and a group of 20 least proficient first-year elementary teachers. Historical data, contained in the personnel files of the participants identified 32 common pre-service variables useful in determining relationship to first-year teacher proficiency. To evaluate the relationship of each independent variable with first-year teacher proficiency, Pearson correlation coefficients were generated to determine the magnitude and statistical significance of relationship among variables. Of the 32 independent variables studied, 11 showed a significant relationship to first-year teacher proficiency. These 11 variables were selected for inclusion in a Discriminate Function Analysis. The Discriminate Function Analysis was used to develop an equation to classify and predict membership in either the highly proficient first-year teacher group or the least proficient first-year teacher group. The
results of the discriminate score calculation predicted first-year teacher proficiency 92.9% of the time.

Madison (2007) studied hiring decisions of public high school principals to understand the practice of teacher hiring as it is conducted in Wisconsin's CESA 7. This study was a descriptive study that relied on survey data. Consistent with other studies, Madison found that principals were largely responsible for teacher hiring and that when making hiring decisions, principals place primary emphasis on the interview. Most favorable were teachers with strong verbal abilities, especially those who could effectively articulate how they would organize a classroom for student learning.

Amrein-Beardsley (2007) studied the most highly qualified teachers in the state of Arizona to understand their job-related preferences and the policy changes it would take to recruit them into hard-to-staff schools and then to retain them. The study was influenced by the fact that the nation's most highly qualified teachers are underrepresented in America's most challenging schools with only about 15% of America's expert teachers teaching in high-poverty, underachieving schools. She reports that in order to improve substandard levels of student achievement, more expert teachers must be recruited in those schools. Policies must be devised to attract expert teachers to them and then to retain those teachers.

Morgan & Kritsonis (2008) discuss innovative methods of recruiting and retaining new teachers to hard-to-staff school districts. They indicate that principals must work aggressively to attract new teachers to their campuses by forming university partnerships for early recruitment and initiating on-the-job training for new recruits as early as the previous school year. Additionally, principals must allocate the necessary fiscal resources
to the task of retaining new teachers, particularly in mentorship and professional development. Hard-to-staff campuses must invest in a full-time teacher mentor as well as retired teachers to provide intense mentorship and relevant professional training. Principals must also integrate other critical components to build teacher quality and commitment, such as on-site certification preparation, graduated retention bonuses, and most importantly, weekly formal and informal interactions between the principal and new teachers.

The teacher hiring process. School districts face a serious challenge in recruiting teachers, specifically "quality" teachers who exhibit the capacity to influence student academic achievement. This challenge places increased pressure on superintendents, principals, and human resources directors responsible for teacher selection. An abundance of studies, including those contained in this literature review, discuss the frustrations that face many hiring professionals when recruiting and selecting teacher candidates. These frustrations include recruitment policies, programs, strategies, and perspectives regarding which teacher attributes and job characteristics are needed, as well as a school district's ability to recruit teachers in high-need subjects, male teachers, and teachers of color.

In studying the effectiveness of position descriptions in hiring entry-level employees, Fiermonte (2006) found that of those surveyed, the hiring organizations used position descriptions for entry-level employees. Results also showed that respondents were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the final hiring selections. The larger the size of the respondent's organization, the lower the rating of the effectiveness of position descriptions in hiring and the lower the rating of overall satisfaction with the final hire.
The study demonstrated that while the position description played a role in the hiring process, the validity of its use is subjective and as such varies by individual and organization.

It should not be assumed that just because a job description outlining the minimum qualifications for the position is provided, all applications will meet those qualifications. Sinclair (2000) studied selection tools for hiring teachers to determine if the perceptions of personnel administrators and principals were consistent with selection tools deemed most useful in the teacher-hiring process. Participants included elementary and secondary principals and personnel administrators in three Missouri counties: Jefferson, St. Charles, and St. Louis. A survey was sent to administrators who were asked to rate the usefulness of 13 selection tools in the teacher-hiring process. Those tools were: the application, interview teams, one-on-one interviews, portfolios, recommendations, references, resumes, scholastic achievement, structured interviews, teaching experience, teaching samples, transcripts, and writing samples. The survey response rate was 75% and indicated no significant difference in the responses of principals and personnel administrators, with both groups choosing the one-on-one interview as the most useful selection tool.

Essential responsibilities for urban school districts include attracting, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers capable and willing to work in some of the nation's most poverty-stricken communities. Lohnas (1994) studied the practices school districts use to screen applicants prior to employment. The study sought to determine the extent to which administrators in public schools check applicants' credentials, physical health, criminal history, and references from other employers. A questionnaire was sent to a random
sample of school superintendents in seven states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Based on the survey results, selected districts were asked to send copies of application forms and related documents. Findings from that study suggested that school districts may not have adequate procedures to prevent hiring applicants with false credentials. Physical examinations were not required by many school districts nor was drug testing widely used. Although many application forms ask applicants for past criminal convictions, very few districts actually use state and federal agencies to conduct background checks.

A portfolio, also called a credential file, dossier, or placement file, is a professional file containing information about teachers' experiences and qualifications. It contains non-specifically addressed letters of recommendation along with other documents such as a resume, writing samples, student teaching evaluations, transcripts, a statement regarding the applicant's philosophy of teaching, certifications, and other evidence of knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications. A portfolio provides a professional, convenient, and dependable system to aid the job application process. It is a way to organize and send information to potential employers. It also eliminates the time-consuming process of continuously compiling the necessary documents for various applications. Finally, when properly used, it allows an applicant's information to reach the employer in one complete package (Loyola University Chicago, 2007).

Henderson (1999) administered a study of the perceptions of Delaware school administrators regarding the usefulness of beginning teacher portfolios in the hiring process. The study also investigated their views of the important components of a portfolio and the time they spend in reviewing the portfolios of prospective employees.
The study employed survey research techniques and utilized a survey instrument adapted from a survey form originally developed by Shannon and Barry (1997). The sample included 57 superintendents, personnel administrators, principals, and assistant principals. Data were analyzed using a series of descriptive and inferential procedures. Results indicated that school-level personnel viewed portfolios as more useful in the hiring process than did their district-level colleagues. Further, they reported the following as the most important elements of the portfolio: professional resume, letters of recommendation, evaluations from internship, unit and lesson plans, student discipline policy statement, and evidence of skill with computer technology.

Pardieck (2000) used a case study approach to evaluate how professional teaching portfolios have been used during the hiring process. Specifically, the study sought to determine if school administrators were using teaching portfolios as assessment tools during the hiring process and what information principals required for inclusion in a professional teaching portfolio. To collect the information, a comparative qualitative research study was conducted through interviews with four practicing area school administrators in a Midwestern county serving P-12 grade levels. The study incorporated interviews with recently hired teachers. Documents were collected from the four principals identifying the four principals' teaching portfolio perceptions, elements for inclusion, and electronic or paper format. Principals showed a favorable response to the use of professional teaching portfolios during the hiring process and expressed an increased desire to view portfolios of future applicants. There was consensus that professional teaching portfolios would help principals by providing information that would enhance the interview process.
Theel (2001) focused on three research questions: (a) What forms do teacher interview portfolios take? (b) What meaning do school principals make of these portfolios? (c) How, if at all, are teacher portfolios being used by principals in deciding whom to hire? This was a case study using qualitative research procedures. It examined the hiring policies and practices of an urban school district from 1995 to 1999. Semi-structured interviews of 18 K-12 principals and 4 key informants were the primary means of data gathering. Document analyses supplemented interview data. The study showed that interview portfolios typically consisted of lesson plans; photographs of projects, activities, and teacher-student interactions; and supporting examples of classroom practice. Statements of educational philosophy, credentials, letters of reference, transcripts, and other background information were also included. The study showed that overall, interview portfolios were not key contributors to principals' hiring decisions based on skepticism that portfolios provided meaningful evidence of candidates' teaching ability and people skills.

Once the application of the teacher candidate is screened, the next step in the hiring process is the interview. Virginia Tech (2006) describes four typical stages of the interview process. In the first stage, the interviewer establishes rapport and creates a relaxed, businesslike atmosphere. This phase allows the interviewer to assess the interviewee's demeanor and draw a first impression. The second stage is a review of the interviewee's background and interests. The interviewer collects information through use of open-ended questions. The objective of the interviewer is to extract information regarding the teaching candidate's likes, accomplishments, academic achievement,
previous work experience, and goals. In essence, the interviewer is trying to assess whether the interviewee’s qualifications match the declared work interests.

Virginia Tech terms the third stage “Matching.” Assuming the interviewee has the necessary qualifications, the interviewer will begin the process of determining whether the employer’s job opening matches the interviewee’s interests and qualifications. If a match exists, the interviewer may provide additional job details to determine interest in the position. In the concluding stage, the interviewer explains next steps in the hiring process and provides an opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions. Education World (2008) describes the interview as an opportunity for the interviewer to get to know an applicant in ways not determinable from reviewing the resume alone. She adds that “while an applicant addresses a mix of questions about background, teaching experience, and the ‘ideal’ classroom, the interviewer learns about the applicant’s enthusiasm for teaching and dedication to the profession” (p 1).

Preparation for the interview is one of the strongest predictors for success. Most American colleges and universities, not-for-profits, and private businesses supply handouts and websites providing a host of sample questions an interviewer may ask along with sample questions to ask of the interviewer. Many of these same websites provide explanations for the questions while others include crafted responses (e.g. A+ Career Curriculum). According to Liu (2003), interviewing is one of the most interactive parts of the hiring process and has the potential to provide schools, school districts, and teaching candidates with a rich source of information. In his study, Liu discussed interview procedures and processes ranging from “unstructured” to the “highly structured,” in which the interviewer asks specific questions following a planned format. In a structured
interview, in most instances, questions are structured to varying degrees. All interviewees are asked the same questions and a rating is associated with each response. The scores are tabulated and the interviewee is assigned a not-to-be-disclosed score.

An example of this is available at Leslie University in Cambridge, MA. The University identifies five types of questions typically asked of teacher candidates. The first type is “subject-area specific.” The design of the questions assesses knowledge of both theory and practice in the teacher candidate’s area of licensure. The second type is “educational methodology.” This type of question is used to elicit information on techniques for dealing with classroom situations. The third type is “educational philosophy,” which focuses on the applicant’s value system and commitment to teaching. Leslie University references a fourth type as “hypothetical situations.” This type of question is used to test for adaptability. The final question is identified as a test for “behaviors.” Instead of asking about a hypothetical situation, teacher candidates are asked to describe how they actually handled a specific situation in their professional past. Teachers4America.net (2008) describes four types of questions generally used:

situational: “What would you do...?” observational: “What are your thoughts on...?”
conceptual/personal: “What is your philosophy of...?” and behavioral: “Tell me about a time when...” Questions such as these are consistent with inquiries used nationwide.

Particularly in larger districts, interviewers rely on pre-packaged structured interview assessment sets. Two of the most popular are the Gallup Organization’s Teacher Perceiver Instrument (TPI) and the Haberman Star Teacher Interview.

Metzger and Wu (2003) synthesized 24 studies that used the Gallup’s Teacher Perceiver Interview. Overall, they found a modest relationship ($r = .28$) between the TPI
and some measure of teaching quality. The Gallop Organization (2001) describes the Teacher Perceiver Interview instrument as a structured interview consisting of a set of open-ended questions. The technique is based on Gallup’s research identifying characteristics associated with quality teachers. Interviewers are trained to score applicant responses to typical interview questions based on “listen-for’s.” These “listen-for’s” are specific phrases or concepts that reflect the TPI’s themes. According to Metzger and Wu, a question such as, “What is most rewarding about teaching?” requires a response that stresses student growth or success to earn a point.

The objective of The Haberman Educational Foundation is to implement research-based models for identifying educators capable of serving students at risk and in poverty (The Haberman Educational Foundation Inc., 2008). The Haberman Star Teacher Interview identifies teacher candidates predicted to be successful in working in urban school districts based on the teacher candidate’s predisposition, knowledge of, and skill in teaching lower-income students. The interview is based on ten components: for example, the scenario-based interview that assesses qualities like persistence, stakeholder focus, ability to translate theory into practice, perception of at-risk behaviors, personal vs. professional behavior, and fallibility. The Haberman technique has been shown to predict teachers who will succeed in increasing student achievement, who will be more persistent, and who will do a more effective job in urban school districts. Studies indicate that the retention rate for teachers hired using the Haberman Star Teacher Interview is 95% - 98%. Milwaukee schools, for example, report a 95% retention rate eight years after 137 Haberman-interviewed teachers were hired (habermanfoundation.org).
A study administered by Beutel (2006) concerned an interview system for school personnel to use designed to identify highly qualified special education teachers. The instrument was based on current certification standards, recommendations from national special education organizations, guidelines for best practices, and current literature. It consisted of a set of 36 items put forth as those that are best reflective of the standards. Forty special education teachers served as the sample for the field test of the interview instrument. Interviews were conducted over the phone by a neutral party fluent in special education practice and experienced in interviewing special education teacher applicants. Independent ratings were obtained from both principals and special education supervisors for each participant to measure concurrent validity. The field test of this instrument found that special educators who obtained higher scores on the interview instrument were rated higher by their special education supervisors. These results suggest that this type of structured interview, focused on the roles and responsibilities of special educators, holds promise in the hiring process by providing reliable, useful information.

A similar study conducted by Smith (2006) measured an interview instrument for school systems to use in the hiring process for school psychologists based on ten interrelated domains that address essential skills and knowledge necessary to be a school psychologist. A sample of 41 school psychologists volunteered to pilot the interview instrument. These school psychologists came to the study from 13 urban and suburban school districts in Kansas. Thirty-eight interview items, using a 3-point rubric, were used to assess proficiency across 10 domain areas, with an emphasis on serving the elementary school population: A Level 3 response was considered "above average," a Level 2 response was "adequate" or "average," a Level 1 response was "below average" or
"inadequate." To provide a measure of concurrent validity, an independent rating of the psychologist's skills across the 10 domains was obtained from each psychologist's current supervisor. Results of this study found that practitioners who obtained higher average scores on the interview were rated significantly higher by their supervisors. Again, this suggests that a structured interview instrument, with items based on essential skills and knowledge of school psychology, may be valuable when gathering information during the hiring process.

Kinicki and Lockwood (1985) interviewed 91 students in an exploration of factors recruiters use to assess applicants' interviewing skills and suitability for hire. Their findings concluded that recruiters relied more on impressionistic than concrete information (e.g., academic achievement and work experience) in making employment recommendations. McCormick (2000) explored the usefulness of the employment interview as a method to present realistic job information to candidates. Results indicated that candidates believed they received adequate information from the interviewers on six of nine items surveyed. Odds of turnover were significantly reduced when individuals received more information on one topic (of nine) that was rated as important by most respondents, specifically, the nature of work.

In a case study of how four principals in one medium-sized Midwestern school district identify effective teachers during the hiring process, Swofford (2003) examined the interview process, the individuals involved in the interview, and why it was important to determine effective teaching traits. He found that although training principals to conduct the interview was important, training alone would not allow a principal to effectively choose the most appropriate teacher in every interview. Qualitative research
methods, using triangulated data, were used in this study, which included interviews, observations, and written documents. Findings suggested that a variety of factors contributed to the interview process and that a systematic approach for facilitating and creating questions was needed in order to gain consistency and confidence in the interview instrument used.

The last step in the teacher-hiring process is final selection of employees, and the Human Resources Department is a strategic player at this point. The Human Resources Department does not always decide which teachers to hire or where they will be assigned to work. A study conducted by Liu (2003) describes two distinctive hiring processes used by school districts. The first is a "centralized process," where hiring occurs at the district level. In this structure, the Human Resources Department recruits and hires teachers. Some teachers may still interview within the district to secure a specific teaching position, while others are assigned a location without such an interview. Other school districts rely on a decentralized process where hiring occurs at the school level. In this structure, the Human Resources Department initially screens applicants while specific schools interview and select from among them.

Anschutz (1987) investigated the relationships between those factors related to job satisfaction and community satisfaction believed to influence rural teachers' decisions to either seek employment in, or remain employed by a rural school district. This study was designed to separate teacher satisfaction with the workplace from the teacher's satisfaction with the community, and then measured the influences of each on teacher recruitment and retention in rural schools. A review of findings concluded that the community has a greater influence than the job on retention in rural schools. Teachers-
most likely to remain employed in rural schools are those who come from rural environments. Rural married teachers are generally more satisfied than rural single teachers. The most accurate predictor of community satisfaction and retention is the community size preference of the individual applicant.

Allen (2000) sought to identify characteristics that explained teaching as a career choice among a population of 150 people of color recruited between 1992 and 1997. The intent of the study was to identify significant job characteristics discriminating between those who remained in the teaching profession from those who pursued careers other than teaching. Using an exploratory study approach and secondary survey data, questionnaires were collected regarding each participant's background, high school, college, foundation program, and job characteristics. Allen ran multiple regression analyses to explain the relationship between independent and program outcome variables. The most discriminating factors between those who became teachers and those who chose non-teaching professions were SAT performance, the attainment of a master's degree, the father's education attainment level, and ethnicity, specifically being African American or Hispanic/Latino.

Ban (2000) investigated the value of practitioners' program theories in an evaluation of minority teacher recruitment programs. The study looked at staff theories about causal mechanisms and the intervening outcome variables related to the minority teacher recruitment program "Intent to Teach." The study analyzed six participant theories about the theoretical underpinnings of the program, the evolution of their perceptions about the program, if their theories were similar and different, and how well their program theories fit the data obtained from program participants. Defined variables,
aside from the outcome variable included teaching self-efficacy, general academic self-efficacy, value of teaching, interest in teaching, status of teaching, financial rewards of teaching, and self-efficacy in classroom management. Interviews were conducted to extract the six practitioners' program theories. Ban described the practitioners as being very complicated and different from each other in significant ways even though all were involved with replicates of the "same" program. Three of six practitioners reported changing their program theories from the beginning of their involvement in designing or implementing the program to the present.

Cheng (2002) discussed factors that affect the decisions of Canadian teachers of racial and ethnic minorities to enter and stay in teaching as well as the implications for school boards' teacher recruitment and retention policies. Data were derived from interviews with 125 African, Chinese, and Portuguese-Canadian participants including elementary and high school students, teachers-in-training, and teachers, each representing a different stage in the teaching pipeline. The study found that racial minorities reject or select teaching based on a combination of intertwining personal, family, cultural, and institutional factors. It also was determined that racism, sexism, and classism intersected to impede minority youth from choosing teaching as a career. Cheng identifies three major barriers to teaching for minorities including the exclusionary Euro-centric learning environment in the pre-university and university stages that tended to disengage Black Canadians from school; parental emphasis on numerical skills and de-emphasis on language skills among Chinese-Canadians, and pressure to choose higher status, higher paying careers; and parental low priority on education and expectations for early employment among Portuguese-Canadians.
Conclusion

Chapter 2 reviewed selective literature related to the teacher selection process. Chapter 3 will address the methodology employed in this study. Chapter 4 will present the data collected and an analysis of those data. Chapter 5 will present a summary, conclusions, and recommendations that emerge from the collected data and their analysis.
Chapter III: Research Design Methodology

A description of the methodological procedures used in this study is presented in this chapter and organized into six components. The first is a statement of the general perspective including a reiteration of the problem statement, purpose of the research, the research question, and the research design. The second is a description of the research context including the location of the study and situational demographics. The third and fourth components identify the research participants and describe the instrument that will be used to collect data. The fifth component describes how the data is analyzed. The final section presents a summary of all methodological issues.

General Perspective

This study is based, in part, on the literature linking student performance to teacher quality. Research shows that students in affluent districts are likely to have more qualified teachers than students in high-poverty districts, as measured by certification, exam performance, and level of teaching experience (Jerald & Ingersoll, 2002; The Center for Public Education, 2005). Peterson (2002) argues that high-quality teachers have a positive influence on students, student learning, educational reform, and curriculum design and implementation. Effective teachers appear to have ten times the impact on curriculum, school organization, testing programs, or "teacher-proof" approaches to school improvements as lower-quality teachers who seem to reduce student-learning capability and erode morale. Ineffective teachers, across several school years, can have a detrimental effect on student academic achievement (Peterson, 2002).
**Purpose of the Research**

This study addresses the problems urban school districts face in hiring high-quality teachers as aligned both with the school districts' needs and with No Child Left Behind legislation. Despite arguments from educators and scholars that problems exist because of teacher shortages or that pre-service teachers do not have appropriate teaching qualifications, this study examines the teacher-hiring process as one possible cause of urban districts' difficulty to recruit and hire highly qualified teachers. Data were collected from newly hired teachers. In this study, a newly hired teacher is defined as a teacher who was not employed as a probationary teacher the previous year by the urban district under study. These might have been teachers who have never before taught, former or current contract substitutes, teachers returning to teaching after working in non-teaching fields, or teachers previously employed in other districts or in private schools.

**Research Question**

The shortage of highly qualified teachers to provide secondary instruction is large, resulting in some classes taught by uncertified or unqualified educators. This study was developed to understand how the teacher hiring practices influence the employment of teachers in the fields of Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. The study may add to the knowledge of the hiring process by reviewing procedures recently used to hire teachers in secondary shortage areas in one urban school district in Western New York. The intent of the study is to focus specifically on determining whether the hiring process is consistent with the process described in the literature and if it led to equitable hiring practices. The following research question will guide this study: What are the perceptions of the hiring
procedures in one Western New York school district among newly hired teachers in secondary subject areas experiencing teacher shortages?

Research Design

The study is a quantitative research project based on findings from a descriptive survey that analyzed cross-sectional data regarding the route taken by teacher candidates to secure employment. Descriptive statistics are used to acquire a teacher candidate’s perspective at a defined point in time. The study is non-experimental and is used primarily to acquire a deeper understanding of whether or not the teacher selection process is consistent for all applicants. A second objective is to determine patterns that may occur within the school district’s hiring process and if this process follows effective hiring procedures as identified in research literature.

The survey is a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a study sample population (Creswell 2003). The purpose of the survey is to collect procedural information and associated details regarding the hiring process from each teacher who applied for employment. The survey collects information regarding respondents’ experiences, perceptions, and understanding of the school district’s recruitment process, screening process, interviewing process, and selection process. Gill & Johnson (2002), citing Hartley (2001), note that employee surveys are used increasingly as an integral part of the human resource management strategy to bring about or influence organizational change. Hartley suggests that employee surveys often go beyond “fact gathering” and may be used as a diagnostic device to examine the effectiveness of a conventional process. Findings from this survey may help school leaders assess teacher perceptions about the hiring process and initiate better hiring practices.
Research Content

The school district under study is situated in the third largest city in New York State, with a population of 220,000 and a median household income of $31,257. Sixty percent of Rochester residents are African American or Hispanic. The city is ranked 11th in the nation per capita for child poverty among medium/large U.S. cities, ahead of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, DC. The school district employs approximately 5,300 people including 3,600 teachers, 250 administrators, 1,500 support personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals, clerical, custodians, sentries, and bus drivers), and uses approximately 900 substitute teachers. The student population includes approximately 34,000 students, Pre-K-12, and an additional 10,000 adults in continuing education programs.

The subject school district has the highest poverty rate of the New York State “Big Five,” which includes New York City, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Yonkers school districts, as well as Rochester. The ethnic makeup of the student population is 65% African American, 21% Hispanic, 12% White, and 2% Native American, Asian, and other minorities. Seventeen percent of the school districts students are classified as special needs students and 8% have limited English proficiency. Thirty-five different language groups are represented. Eighty-eight percent of the school districts students are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches, 50% of schools are at 90% poverty or higher. Eighty percent of students qualify for Title I services, provided to students whose family income is below the poverty level.

The teacher-hiring process may have a direct influence on the essence of the school district’s mission, vision, and core values that signify the importance of attracting,
developing, and retaining teachers capable of positively influencing student academic achievement.

During the 2007 teacher-hiring season, 618 teacher candidates applied for employment with the subject school district; 341 were offered employment. Of those offered employment, 160 were offered probationary contracts, 111 were offered contract substitute contracts, and 70 work as per-diem substitutes.

Research Participants

The research subjects for this study are a convenience sample of 125 teachers recently employed in the identified high-need academic areas. In New York, for the 2006-2007 school year, high-need subject areas include Bilingual Education, English, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages (Languages other than English), Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. The participating school district does not recognize English as a high-need academic area; therefore, English teachers were excluded from this study. Seventy newly hired secondary teachers in the fields of Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education completed the survey. For the purpose of this study, a newly hired teacher is identified as a teacher who was not employed by the urban district being studied as a probationary or tenured teacher the previous year. Study participants included teachers who had never taught before, former or current contract substitutes (certified teachers employed for up to one year to cover the absence of a probationary or tenured teacher on an approved leave of absence), teachers returning to teaching after working in non-teaching fields, and teachers previously employed in other districts or in
private schools. The following descriptive statistical profile outlines the survey’s findings.

Approximately three-quarters of new teachers in the sample are female (75.7%); just under one-quarter is male (24.3%). Approximately 78% of the new teachers are white, while almost 19% are members of ethnic minorities including American Indian or Alaska Native (2.9%), African American (4.3%), Asian or Pacific Islander (1.4%), and Hispanic or Latino (10%); the remaining 2.9% did not specify ethnicity. The ages of the respondents ranged from eighteen (25.8%) between the age of 20-25 years old, twenty (28.6%) between the ages of 26-34 years old, and the remaining thirty-two (45.7%) over 35.

The sample consists of 51 Probationary Teachers (a teacher who does not have tenure but who is appointed to teacher duties on a permanent full-time or a permanent part-time basis) and 18 Contract Substitutes (a certified teacher employed for up to one year to cover the absence of a probationary or tenured teacher on an approved leave of absence). The number of years of classroom teaching experience varied from less than one year to more than 10 years. Twenty-eight (40%) reported having less than one year of experience, 13 (18.6%) reported 1-2 years, 5 (7.1%) reported 3-4 years, 9 (12.9%) reported 5-6 years, 3 (4.3%) reported 7-8 years, 4 (5.7%) reported 9-10 years, and 8 (11.4) reported more than 10 years.

Approximately 92% of respondents characterize most of their P-12 education in public rural (20%), public suburban (28.6%), or public urban environments (42.9%). Twenty-four (34.3%) respondents’ highest level of completed schooling is a bachelor’s degree, forty-five (64.3%) have a master’s degree; and one (1.4%) has a doctoral degree.
The number of years in which respondents worked in urban school districts varied. Similarly, thirty-six (51.4%) reported having less than one year of experience, 16 (22.9%) reported 1-2 years, 3 (4.3%) reported 3-4 years, 4 (5.7%) reported 5-6 years, 4 (5.7%) reported 7-8 years, 2 (2.9%) reported 9-10 years, and 5 (7.1%) reported more than 10 years.

Although participants were selected based on working during the 2007-08 school year in the fields of Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education, respondents' teaching certification areas varied, and many held certifications in a subject area other than that in which they worked, had dual certifications, or did not have certification to teach in New York. Sixty-eight of the 70 newly hired respondents reported acquiring various types of teaching certifications: 9 (13.2%) are certified in math, 17 (17.6%) in Science, and 21 (30.9%) certified in Students with Disabilities. Additionally, eight (11.8%) are certified in a language other than English, and one (1.5%) certified in English as a Second Language (ESL). No one reported being certified in Bilingual Education. Seventeen (25%) also reported being certified in Elementary, 13 (19.1%) in English, thirteen (19.1%) in Social Studies, and 3 (4.4%) were not certified to teach in New York State. Appendix A contains a full listing of demographic data for survey respondents.

Instrument Used in Data Collection

Quantitative data were obtained using survey research. Teacher experiences were measured using a confidential, 29-question survey instrument adapted from a survey administered in 2002 by the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (Liu, 2003). The survey instrument contains questions that request basic demographic information,
professional teacher preparation (credentials), and with whom the teacher interacted
during the hiring process. The survey seeks information about the teacher’s experiences
specific to the hiring process; that is, was it centralized or decentralized, and further asks
the teachers to evaluate job fit versus school fit, to measure how well the hiring process
informed the teachers of their new position, and to measure current satisfaction levels.

Data collection involved the software application SurveyMonkey. Survey
Monkey is an online survey tool for creating surveys quickly and easily
(SurveyMonkey.com, 2007). Gill and Johnson (2002) suggest that email surveys provide
major cost savings, are quicker to conduct, enable efficient identity, and are convenient
follow-up of non-responders. Survey responses were collected between April 2008 and
May 2008. Since participants were employees of the subject school district and had
Internet and email access, it was possible to construct an online survey. An invitation to
complete the survey was emailed to 125 high school teachers on April 14, 2008. Each
participant was notified in writing that participation in the survey was voluntary. The
online invitation to participate in the survey and the survey tool included the following
statement: “completion and return of the survey implies your consent to participate in this
research.” Subsequent emails were sent to high school principals, subject area directors,
and human resources directors notifying them of the survey and encouraging them to get
their teachers to complete the survey. Responses were received from 46 participants
(36.8% response rate).

On May 2, 2008, a second invitation was sent to 84 non-respondents. A second
request was sent to administrators with the names of teachers who did not respond to the
initial survey. The survey was closed on May 16, 2008. Seventy responses were received
(56% response rate). Data analysis consisted of reporting descriptive statistics and displaying these data in a series of tables and figures. To limit response bias, participants did not provide their names or school assignments on the survey. Teachers were notified that participation in this study was both confidential and voluntary, and neither participation nor non-participation would affect their teaching assignment or standing with the school district. All respondent information and associated data were confidential, and no individual or related responses were identifiable in the final report. To ensure confidentiality of respondents and maintain a high level of confidentiality associated with the disposition of data, precautions were taken to ensure the data remains secure. Precautions included passwords and an SSL-encrypted survey that sends a link to participants and exports their responses to the researcher’s computer in an encrypted format. Once the survey was concluded, it was downloaded to a zip drive and deleted from SurveyMonkey. The zip drive is kept under lock in a secure location accessible only by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The study findings were based on a quantitative research project using data from a descriptive survey that analyzes cross-sectional data regarding the route taken by teacher candidates to secure employment. Frequency data were used to summarize the number of cases or instances of multiple characteristics and variables (Nicol and Pexman, 1999). Findings are presented in an assortment of tables that include the survey question, the response percent, and the response count.
Summary

This chapter describes a general perspective of the problem statement. Information was provided regarding the research context including a description of the research participants, a clarification of the instrument used in data collection, and procedures used for data collection and analysis is indicated. Chapter 4 contains the findings of the study.
Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The survey information in this chapter describes how the teacher-hiring practices influence the employment of teachers in the fields of Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. The intent of the study was to evaluate, from the perspective of a newly hired teacher in a large urban school district in Western New York, the effectiveness of the process that led to employment as a teacher in a shortage area. The following research question guided this study. What are the perceptions of the hiring procedures in one Western New York school district among newly hired teachers in secondary subject areas experiencing teacher shortages?

Findings

Each table provides the response percent and when applicable, the response count for each question answered by teachers newly hired in the subject school district for the 2007-08 academic year. For this study, a newly hired teacher is defined as one who was not employed by the subject school district as a teacher the previous year. Those participating can be teachers who have never taught before, teachers returning to teaching after working in non-teaching fields, or teachers previously employed in other districts or in private schools.

The survey requested that respondents select all choices that applied regarding their awareness that the subject school district was hiring. Respondents indicated that
they became aware of the district’s hiring needs from multiple recruitment venues.

Among the 70 respondents, 103 choices were selected. As captured in Table 4.1, the response percent is the response count divided by the number of respondents. The five highest ranked recruitment venues were current district employees (37.1%), having previously worked for the district (22.9%), college recruitment events (15.7%), college or university placement offices (12.9%), and awareness of a friend or classmate (12.9%).

Table 4.1

**Hiring Awareness**

Responses To Survey Question, “How Did You Become Aware That The School District Was Hiring? Please Select All That Apply.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiring Awareness</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee (Current)</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee (Former)</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (District Website, Continuous Recruitment)</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Recruitment Event</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend or Classmate</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or University Placement Office</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Previous Knowledge</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Member</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CareerBuilder.com</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Advertisement</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-College Recruitment Event</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note. N = 70**

As displayed in Table 4.2, prior to accepting their current position, respondents were asked about previous affiliations with the subject school district. Multiple responses
were acceptable. The survey requested that respondents select from seven designed affiliations. Responses were received from 69 of the 70 survey participants and 88 choices were selected. More than 76% acknowledged previous affiliation with the subject school district. These choices were as follows: former student teacher/intern (29.6%), former substitute teacher (17%), former contract substitute (13.7%), former volunteer (2.29%), former paraprofessional (3.38%), and other (10.2%).

Table 4.2

Previous Affiliation

Response To Survey Question, “Prior To Accepting Your Current Teaching Position, Were You Previously Affiliated With The School District? If So, Please Select All Affiliations That Apply.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous Affiliation</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Student Teacher/Intern</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Previous Affiliation</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Substitute Teacher (Per Diem, Long Term, or Building Substitute)</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Contract Substitute</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (ex., Former Teacher)</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Paraprofessional (Teaching Assistant or Teacher Aide)</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Volunteer</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 69

Table 4.3 gives the frequency distribution for the month each respondent recalled submitting an employment application. Respondents were asked to select from 14 categories including a category for each month, one category indicating Prior to 2007,
and one category indicating After December 2007. Although the hiring season did not begin until January 2007, 23 (32.9%) respondents submitted applications prior to that time. An additional 19 (27.2%) recalled submitting applications for their current teaching position between January and May 2007. Eighteen (25.7%) submitted applications between June and August, and the remaining 10 (14.2%) responded that they submitted applications after September 2007.

Table 4.3

Application Submission Date
Response To Question, “During What Month Did You Submit An Employment Application? Please Provide Your Best Estimate.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Submitted Date</th>
<th>Response percent</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to January 2007</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2007</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2007</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2007</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After December 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70
Table 4.4 presents a list of application credentials and the frequency with which newly hired teachers included these elements in their application packets. A credential file, also called a dossier or placement file, is a professional file that stores information regarding the teacher’s experiences and qualifications. The credential file contains non-specifically addressed letters of recommendation along with other documents such as a resume, writing samples, student teaching evaluations, transcripts, a statement regarding the applicant’s philosophy of teaching, certifications, and other evidence of skills, abilities or qualifications. Credential files provide a professional, convenient, dependable system to aid in the job application process. A credential file is a way to organize and send information to potential employers. A credential file also eliminates the time-consuming process of continuously compiling the necessary documents for various applications. Finally, a credential file allows an applicant’s information to reach the employer in one complete package (Loyola University Chicago, 2007).

Although the majority of respondents submitted required application credentials such as a resume, cover letter, personal and professional references, and academic transcripts, only 8.6% (6) included a sample lesson plan, and only 4.3% (3) indicated that they included a copy of their Assessment of Teaching Skills-Performance Video. Research suggests that unlike other professions, teaching has a highly centralized hiring process (Liu, 2003). Teacher candidates, during the hiring process, typically may only interview with district-level administrators rather than interviewing with teachers, parents, or students. The header row in Table 4.5 captures data regarding with whom the 70 respondents interviewed. Response percent is the response count divided by the number of respondents.
Table 4.4

Materials Submission

Response To Question "Which Of The Following Materials Did You Submit As Part Of Your Application For Your Current Teaching Position?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials Submitted</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Letter</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript - Undergraduate</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Reference</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYS Teacher Certification</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fingerprint Clearance Form</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript - Graduate</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Sample or Essay</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Reference</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Credential File</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference from Cooperating Teacher</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Score: Liberal Arts and Science Test</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Score: Content Area Specialty</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Score: Assessment of Teaching Skills</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Lesson Plan</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (ex., Portfolio)</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Teaching Skills-Performance</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

Table 4.5 presents a summary of this data. As the table illustrates, subject area directors (70%) and school principals (67.1%) dominate the interviewing process followed by human resources directors (31.4%). The percentage of new teachers who
interviewed with school-based administrators (7.1%), teachers (14.3%), or students (1.4%) was significantly less. No respondents indicated participating in an interview with a student, and only 4.3% recalled interviewing with a recruitment representative. Sixty percent of all interviews lasted between 20 and 50 minutes, and more than half (55.7%) of the respondents did not interview for other teaching positions. For those who did interview, the majority still interviewed with a subject area director, principal, or human resources director for other positions.

Table 4.5

Interviewer
Response To Question "While Applying For Your Current Position, With Whom Did You Interview? Check All That Apply."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Include Column Title</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject area director</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principal or Assistant principal</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources director</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s) at the school</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School or district-based team</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Representative</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student(s) at the school</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent(s) at the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

As outlined in Table 4.6, when asked, "Did someone observe you teach a lesson; if so, who observed you teach the lesson?" an overwhelming 75.7% indicated that no one observed them teach a lesson.
Table 4.6

Observation

Response To Question, “In Applying For Your Job, Did Someone Observe You Teach A Lesson? If So, Who Observed You Teach The Lesson?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>75.7%</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant principal</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s)</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject area director</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principal</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources director</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student(s)</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

Table 4.7 depicts the participants’ description of the hiring process. Survey responses indicate that inconsistent hiring is prevalent within the site studied. Nearly 33% of participants experienced a decentralized hiring process in which they received a job offer directly from a principal or Assistant principal. Another 18.5% experienced a centralized hiring process in which they were offered a job and assigned a location by either a Human Resources director (11.4%) or a subject area director (7.1%). Neither participant nor school personnel had primary influence on placement. Most prevalent was the 38.6% of respondents who experienced a hybrid hiring process. Prior to being offered a specific job placement, these individuals were first screened by Human Resource directors (20%) or subject area directors (18.6%), interviewed at one or more school locations, and then selected by a particular school. Although an open contract
(offer of employment) is customary at recruitment fairs, especially for candidates who teach in secondary subjects, of the 70 study participants, no one indicated that they received a job offer through this recruitment tactic.

Table 4.7

**Hiring Process**

Response To Question, “Which Of The Following Best Describes How You Were Hired?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiring Process</th>
<th>Response percent</th>
<th>Response count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a principal or assistant principal.</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a Human Resources director, interviewed at one school, and hired</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a subject area director, interviewed at one school, and was selected.</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a Human Resources director, and then assigned a location.</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a subject area director, and then assigned a location.</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a Human Resources director, then interviewed with several schools to find current teaching position.</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered a job by a subject area director, then interviewed with several schools to find current teaching position.</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** N = 70

Of the 70 survey participants, 7 (10%) opted to use the “Other” election and specified their own hiring process. Their responses ranged from being offered employment from a central office professional other than a Human Resources director or a subject area director, to being offered employment while employed as a long-term substitute teacher. One respondent indicated that she interviewed at several RCSD
schools and that although each school requested her, someone in the Human Resources Department made the final placement decision. A second respondent indicated that although a subject area director sent her to interview at one school in which she was selected, someone in the Human Resources department transferred her to a different school without notifying either school.

The designated school district’s hiring season began on January 3, 2006 and ended on October 14, 2007. Participants were asked, “During what month did you accept your current teaching position?” Table 4.8 presents values on the timing of hiring decisions. Responses show that five (7.1%) respondents accepted their current teaching position prior to January 2007. Only four (5.6%) respondents recalled accepting their current teaching position between January and June 2007. Forty-six (68.8%) respondents, however, recalled accepting their current teaching position between June and August, specifically 3 (4.3%) in July, 31 (44.3%) in August, and 14 (20%) in September. The remaining 13 (18.6%) responded that they were hired between October 2007 and December 2007.
Table 4.8

_Month Hired_

Response To Question "During What Month Did You Accept Your Current Teaching Position?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month Hired</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to January 2007</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2007</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2007</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2007</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2007</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After December 2007</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Note. N = 70_

As portrayed in Table 4.9, participants were asked their perceptions regarding how closely they felt their current teaching position matched their certification, their interests, the grade level(s) that they would prefer to teach, and the type of student population they preferred. Of the 70 respondents, 55 (78.6%) indicated that their current teaching position was a very good match with their certification, and an additional 10
(14.3%) indicated a good match. With regard to interest matching theirs, 51 (72.9%) responded that their current teaching position was a very good match to their interest while an additional 14 (20%) responded that their current teaching position was a good match. Only 56 (80%) indicated that they felt a good match (24.3%) or very good match (55.7%) when asked about the grade level that they would prefer to teach. When asked how closely their current teaching assignment matched the type of student population they would prefer to teach, 57 (81.4%) responded they felt the match was good (25.7%) or very good (55.7).

Table 4.9
Assignment Match

Response To Question “How Closely Would You Say That Your Teaching Assignment Matches The Following:”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location Match</th>
<th>Very Poor Match</th>
<th>Poor Match</th>
<th>Moderate Match</th>
<th>Good Match</th>
<th>Very Good Match</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>your certification</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your interest</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the grade level(s) that</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you would prefer to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the type of student</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>population you would</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prefer to teach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70
Participants were asked their perceptions of how closely their teaching assignment matches the following: their educational philosophy, the amount of autonomy they would like to have as a teacher (for instance, over what and how to teach), their own views on student discipline; the amount of collaboration or teamwork they would like with colleagues; the amount of input (or influence) they would like to have on school-wide decisions; and the amount of input (or influence) they would like to have on department or grade-level decisions. The survey requested respondents to use a scale of five to indicate the level they felt their teaching assignment matched the above attributes. The levels were labeled “very poor match, poor match, moderate match, good match, and very good match.” Overall, in response to educational philosophy, 39 (70%) respondents indicated that they felt that their educational philosophy was a very good (30%) or good match (40%) with their teaching location. When asked about the amount of autonomy they would like to have as a teacher, 59 said a very good (41.4%) or good match (37.1%). An additional 13 (18.6%) responded “a moderate match.” Responses regarding participants’ views on student discipline varied. Five (7.1%) indicated a very poor match, 5 (7.1%) a poor match, 22 (31.4%) a moderate match, 25 (35.7%) a good match, and 13 (18.6%) a very good match.
Table 4.10

*Teaching Location I*

Response To Question “How Closely Would You Say That Your Teaching Assignment Matches The Following:”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Assignment</th>
<th>Very Poor Match</th>
<th>Poor Match</th>
<th>Moderate Match</th>
<th>Good Match</th>
<th>Very Good Match</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Philosophy</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Autonomy</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on student discipline?</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 70*

When respondents were asked their perceptions of the amount of collaboration they would like with colleagues, the majority (84.3%) replied that they felt their match was a moderate match (22.9%), a good match (25.7%), or a very good match (35.7%). The amount of input (or influence) participants would like to have on school-wide decisions ranged from 10 (14.2%) respondents who felt a very poor (7.1%) and poor match (7.1%), 28 who indicated a moderate match (40% percent), and 32 (45.7%) who indicated good (27.1%) or very good match (18.6%). Similar responses were received regarding the amount of input (or influence) respondents would like to have on department or grade-level decisions.
Table 4.11

Teaching Location II

Response To Question “How Closely Would You Say That Your Teaching Location Matches The Following:”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Location</th>
<th>Very Poor Match</th>
<th>Poor Match</th>
<th>Moderate Match</th>
<th>Good Match</th>
<th>Very Good Match</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desired Collaboration w/Colleagues.</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>3.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Influence on School-wide Decisions.</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>3.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Influence) on department or grade-level decisions.</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>3.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

Using a 6-point Likert scale containing the following choices: strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree, participants were asked “If today, you were choosing among several job offers, how important would each of the following factors be in determining which teaching job to accept?” Responses are illustrated in Tables 4.12, 4.13, 4.14, and 4.15.

Table 4.12 illustrates respondents’ perceptions regarding five factors: salary and benefits, the principal and administrators at the school and their teaching style, the teachers at the school and what you think they would be like as colleagues, the student population that the school serves, and the grade level of students you would be teaching. Overall, in choosing among different job offers, 56 (80%) respondents considered salary
and benefits very important or extremely important. When asked about the principals and administrators at the school and their teaching style, 64 (91.5%) stated a very important (42.9%) or extremely important match (48.6%). The remaining six (8.6%) indicated it as being moderately important. In choosing among multiple job offers, respondents indicated that who their colleagues were was very important to 35 (50%) or extremely important to 25 (35.7%). The student population that the school served was only very important to 29 (41.4%) or extremely important to 15 (21.4%). Respondents’ views on the grade level of students they would teach showed varied responses. Twenty-seven (38.6%) indicated moderately important, 23 (32.9%) very important, and 12 (17.1%) extremely important.

Table 4.12

Subsequent Employment 1

Response To Question “If Today You Were Choosing Among Several Job Offers, How Important Would Each Of The Following Factors Be In Determining Which Teaching Job To Accept?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Employment</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Moderate Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desired Salary and Benefits</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Leadership and their Teaching Style</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Relationship with Colleagues</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Student Population at the School</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Teaching Grade Level</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70
Table 4.13 illustrates respondents' perceptions regarding four factors: overall teaching load (i.e., number of courses, number of students), the specific teaching assignment (i.e., subjects, courses), the amount of non-teaching responsibilities you would have, and opportunities for professional development and growth. Sixteen (22.9%) selected overall teaching load moderately important, 30 (42.9%) indicated very important, and eighteen (25.7%) extremely important. Responses regarding specific teaching assignment yielded 47 (67.2%) respondents who indicated that this would be very important (38.6%) or extremely important (28.6%). An additional 20 (28.6%) ranked it as moderately important. The amount of non-teaching responsibility was ranked moderately important by 29 (41.4%) respondents, while 23 (32.9%) selected very important.

Table 4.13

*Subsequent Employment II*

Response To Question “If Today You Were Choosing Among Several Job Offers, How Important Would Each Of The Following Factors Be In Determining Which Teaching Job To Accept?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Employment</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Moderate Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Teaching Load (i.e., courses, students)</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Teaching Assignment (i.e., subjects, courses)</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Non-Teaching Responsibilities Opportunities For Professional Development And Growth</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 70*
important, and 10 (14.3%) selected extremely important. The respondents’ access to professional development opportunities was ranked moderately important by 14 (20%) respondents, while 28 (40%) selected very important, and 25 (35.7%) selected extremely important.

Table 4.14 illustrates respondents’ perceptions regarding three factors: school’s curriculum; school’s resources and facilities; and the length of the daily commute from home to school. School curriculum, school resources and facilities, and the length of the daily commute from home to school would be of considerable importance if today they were choosing among several job offers. The schools’ curriculum ranged from 1 (1.4%) respondent who considered it not important to 8 (11.4%) slightly important, 18 (25.7%) moderately important, 30 (42.9%) very important, and 13 (18.6%) extremely important. Similar responses were received regarding the school’s resources and facilities. One (1.4%) considered it as not important, 4 (5.7%) slightly important, 20 (28.6%) moderately important, 30 (42.9%) very important, and 15 (21.4%) extremely important. The length of the daily commute from home to school was considered not important to six (8.6%) respondents. The commute was slightly important to 13 (18.6%) respondents, moderately important to 26 (37.1%) respondents, very important to 13 (18.6%), and extremely important to 12 (17.1%) respondents.
Table 4.14

Subsequent Employment III

Response To Question “If Today You Were Choosing Among Several Job Offers, How Important Would Each Of The Following Factors Be In Determining Which Teaching Job To Accept?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Employment</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Moderate Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School's Curriculum</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School's Resources And Facilities</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Commute</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

Table 4.15 illustrates respondents’ perceptions regarding two factors: I know someone in the district or school and I was once a student in the district or school.

Knowing someone in the district was not important to 31 (44.3%) respondents, slightly important to 19 (27.1%), and moderately important to 14 (20.0%) in choosing among multiple job offers. Similar responses were given regarding themselves once being a student in the district; 49 (70%) responded not important, 12 (17.1%) responded slightly important, and 6 (8.6%), selected moderately important.
Table 4.15

*Subsequent Employment IV*

Response To Question “If Today You Were Choosing Among Several Job Offers, How Important Would Each Of The Following Factors Be In Determining Which Teaching Job To Accept?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsequent Employment</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Moderate Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>Rating Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know someone in the district or school</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was once a student in the district or school</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

Using a 6-point Likert scale, participants were asked from their perceptions of the hiring process, “To what extent do you agree with the following statement.” The question requested participants’ perceptions regarding teachers, students, the principal’s leadership style, the curriculum, teaching assignment, school support, autonomy, opportunities for school-wide decision-making, and educational philosophy. The scale contained the following choices: strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree. The results are displayed in Table 4.16, Table 17, and Table 18.

Table 4.16 displays results for three questions beginning with the statement, “From the hiring process, I got an accurate picture of what the teachers were like at the school and whether I might enjoy working with them,” and diverse responses were received. Thirteen (18.6%) respondents strongly disagreed, 8 (11.4%) disagreed, 15
(21.4%) somewhat agreed, 16 (22.9%) agreed, and 5 (7.1%) strongly agreed. The statement “I got an accurate idea of what the students were like at the school and whether I might enjoy teaching with them,” drew inconsistent perceptions from respondents of what they thought the students would be like. Eight (11.4%) respondents strongly disagreed, 11 (15.7%) disagreed, 19 (27.1%) somewhat agreed, 16 (22.9%) agreed, and 5 (7.1%) strongly agreed. A third question asked whether from the hiring process, respondents received an accurate picture of the principal’s leadership style. More than half (55.7%) disagreed. For those who did agree, 10 (14.3%) somewhat agreed, 9 (12.9%) agreed, and 12 (17.1%) strongly agreed.

Table 4.16

Perceptions from the Hiring Process I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>From the hiring process I got an accurate picture of the …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principal's leadership style</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

According to Liu (2003), the hiring process is a means by which rich information is shared. He indicates that teacher candidates can receive from the process a precise perception of the district’s professional culture, its student academic and behavioral needs, and support structures (formal and informal) available in the school where the candidate will teach. As displayed in Table 4.17, when asked whether the hiring process gave an accurate picture of the curriculum the teachers would be teaching and what their
teaching assignment would be, the majority of the respondents (64.3%) felt that during the hiring process they received an accurate picture of the curriculum that they would be teaching. However, 9 (12.9%) somewhat disagreed, 6 (8.6%) disagreed, and 10 (14.3%) strongly disagreed. When asked whether the hiring process gave an accurate picture of what their teaching assignment would be, 46 (65.8%) agreed and 24 (32.4%) disagreed. When asked whether the hiring process gave an accurate picture of the support that the school would provide to them as new teachers, 10 (14.3%) respondents strongly disagreed, 5 (7.1%) disagreed, 15 (21.4%) somewhat disagreed, 16 (22.9) somewhat agreed, 17 (24.3%) agreed, and 7 (10%) strongly agreed.

Table 4.17

**Perceptions from the Hiring Process II**

Response To Question “To What Extent Do You Agree With The Following Statements? From the hiring process I got an accurate picture of the ...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiring Process</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Response Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>curriculum I would be teaching.</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching assignment I would be teaching.</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>available school support</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 70

As displayed in Table 4.18, 36 (51.4%) respondents felt that the hiring process gave an accurate picture of how much autonomy they would have as a teacher at the school; 34 (48.6%) disagreed. The last two questions asked respondents if they received
an accurate picture of the opportunities they might have to help make important school-wide decisions and the perception they received of the school’s educational philosophy.

Forty-seven respondents said that the hiring process did not provide them with enough information regarding the opportunities they would have to make school-wide decisions. Of the remaining respondents, 14 (20%) somewhat agreed, 8 (11.4%) agreed, and only 1 (1.4%) strongly agreed. Response to the question “From the hiring process, I got an accurate picture of the school’s educational philosophy,” 7 (10%) respondents strongly disagreed, 12 (17.1%) disagreed, 14 (20%) somewhat disagreed, 15 (21.4%) somewhat agreed, 15 (21.4%) agreed, and 7 (10%) strongly agreed.

Table 4.18

*Perceptions from the Hiring Process III*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response To Question “To What Extent Do You Agree With The Following Statements? From the hiring process I got an accurate picture of the …””</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Response average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>autonomy I would have as a teacher</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities for school-wide decision-making</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school's educational philosophy</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 70*

Chapter Five discusses and interprets the results: the significance of the findings in terms of professional practice, decision-making, and theory or scholarly understanding.
of the field. Recommendations and conclusions are presented for future studies relevant
to the teacher hiring process.
Chapter 5: Discussion

This section will provide a brief summary of the implications of the findings from the information obtained from this study. The section will detail some of the limitations of the study. In addition, recommendations to improve the teacher hiring process will be discussed. Finally, the section will identify areas of further study and discuss conclusions drawn from the research.

This study examined the teacher hiring process as one possible cause of the inability of urban school districts to recruit and hire highly qualified teachers. Unlike previous studies that evaluated the teacher hiring process from an administrator’s standpoint, this study evaluated the process from the perspective of teachers recently hired by the participating school district. The study examined how new teachers experienced the hiring process, the information they received from the process, and their perspective of how the process prepared them for their new positions. The goal of the study was to determine whether the hiring process was consistent with hiring processes described in the literature presented in chapter two; for example, research conducted by Citarelli, 2006; Claussen-Schoolmeester, 2006; Levin & Quinn, 2003; Liu, 2004; Madison, 2007; Mondak, 2004; and Peterson, 2002.

The study is a quantitative research project based on findings from a descriptive survey that analyzed cross-sectional data regarding the route taken by teacher candidates to secure employment. Descriptive statistics were used to acquire a teacher candidate’s perspective at a defined point in time. The research subjects for this study were a
convenience sample of 125 teachers recently employed in high-need secondary academic areas including Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. Seventy responses were received a 56% response rate.

The following research question was used to guide this study: What are the perceptions of the hiring procedures in one Western New York school district among newly hired teachers in secondary subject areas experiencing teacher shortages? In response to the research question, this study yielded four significant findings: (a) late hiring may reduce opportunities to compete for high-quality teachers, (b) hiring practices of the school district under study were inconsistent, (c) teachers did receive an accurate picture of the district and their job during the hiring process, and (d) teachers became aware of employment opportunities because of previous affiliations with the subject school district.

Study Findings

Late hiring. First, urban schools may be placing themselves at risk of missing the best teacher candidates by failing to make earlier hiring offers, and therefore, may be missing opportunities to compete for teaching talent. Several studies, including this study, found that urban school districts regularly hire teachers in late August or even after the school year has begun. This hiring practice can lead to school districts having to hire unlicensed teachers because of what Darling-Hammond (2000) refers to as “poorly managed hiring procedures” that encourage highly qualified teachers to seek employment with school districts (e.g., suburban) capable of making earlier hiring decisions (p. 15). Sixty-seven percent of newly hired teachers in this study recalled applying for
employment prior to June 2007; however, over 80% did not accept their current teaching position until after August 2007. The practice of late hiring of teachers is consistent in urban districts and has been confirmed in previous studies conducted by Liu (2003) and by foundations such as The New Teachers Project. For example, Liu’s study found that up to one-third of the 486 new teachers in California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan surveyed reported that they were hired after the school year had started. In his study, Liu found that approximately 40% of participants were hired after the school year had started. Failure to make hiring decisions earlier is an implication that also may have a detrimental effect on student academic achievement because late hiring may have a direct influence on the caliber of available teacher candidates. Researchers argue that late hiring may also lead to new teachers having less than a month to prepare for their first teaching assignments and such new teachers frequently receive the more challenging assignments (Levine & Quinn, 2003). This study substantiates previous studies assertion that late hiring is prevalent in urban school districts. This studies finding signify the voice of newly hired teachers whose “employment journey” began in the spring but was not “fulfilled” until the fall. The participating schools districts failure to make an earlier offer of employment may have lead to teacher candidates abandoning the participating school districts and seeking employment with school districts capable of making employment offers earlier.

Inconsistent hiring practices. The second significant finding showed that the school district’s hiring process was inconsistent. The hiring process constitutes procedure crafted strategically for control. It can be complex, tedious, and time consuming. School districts anticipate hiring needs and teacher candidates comply with procedures in search
of employment. In theory consistent hiring procedures are practiced, and based on qualifications, all applicants have an equal chance of selection. However, responses derived from this study found inconsistencies in reference to what materials (e.g., resume, transcripts, references) participants recalled submitting as part of their application, with whom they interviewed, and who offered them employment (e.g., Human Resources director, subject area director, principals). Inconsistent hiring also was seen in the reported length of interviews and the sequence in which candidates were recruited, interviewed, and offered employment. This practice also is consistent with findings from Madison (2007) who ultimately questioned if hiring decisions were being made by chance or because of a “concerted effort” by which guidelines and procedures were established and followed. This study reviewed the information that newly hired teachers received from the hiring process. Based on this study, it is apparent that the subject school district is at risk of misrepresenting themselves because individuals who underwent the hiring process recollected substantially different experiences. These experiences could have led to inconsistent messages about the participating school districts expectations of new teachers and the miscommunication of the school districts mission, vision, and core values.

Communication. A third point, based on newly hired teachers’ responses, affirmed that from the hiring process, they received an accurate picture of what the district’s teachers and students would be like. They agreed that the hiring process informed them of the curriculum they would be teaching and of their teaching assignment (i.e., subjects, grade levels, number of classes, and other duties). They also were aware of the support that the school would provide to them as new teachers, the level of autonomy
they would have, and information regarding the school's educational philosophy. However, respondents reported that they did not receive as much information regarding their principal's leadership style or an accurate picture of the opportunities they might have to help make important school-wide decisions.

Newly hired teachers also were asked questions about the importance of various factors in the hiring process in choosing among several job offers. The study showed that newly hired teachers felt that it would be “very important” or “extremely important” to provide information regarding the principal and administrators and the teaching style at the school where they would be teaching. These findings support the premise that during the hiring process, teacher candidates receive information that they typically perceived as useful in their transition to their new jobs. It is, however, unfortunate that not all teacher candidates received the same information. As outlined in chapter one, based on the problems associated with recruiting teachers to work in secondary shortage areas and issues regarding teacher retention, it is imperative that during the hiring process all teacher candidates receive consistent information. The absence of critical information could lead teachers to leave the school district, requiring school districts to once recruit again for these positions.

*Previous affiliations.* A four point, based on newly hired teachers’ responses, showed that prior to accepting their current positions, newly hired teachers were previously affiliated with the subject school district. In fact, more than 70% reported that they were former teachers, former student teachers, former substitute teachers (per diem, long term, or building substitutes), former contract substitutes, former volunteers, former paraprofessionals (teaching assistants or teacher aids) or former clerical employees. Only
30% reported that they had no previous affiliation prior to accepting their current teaching position.

As previously discussed, participants in this study indicated that they recalled seeking employment with the participating school district in Spring 2007, but was not offered employment until the Fall 07. This delayed hiring timeframes could have contributed to the abundant number of previous affiliations within the participating school district in which the candidate pool could have been largely composed of substitute teachers and former student teachers. It is apparent that these previously established relationships significantly contributed to the employment of teachers in secondary shortage areas. The problem however, is that these same teachers are a commodity and a desired necessity in urban school districts due the limited availability of teachers highly qualified and willing to work in urban school districts. Urban school districts with similar hiring timeframes run the risk of loosing the teacher candidates that they desperately need hire.

Respondents also recalled that aside from their previous affiliations they became aware that the subject school district was hiring by current employees, their friends or classmates, family members, or college placement offices. An essential implication for school districts is to ensure that their hiring needs are communicated to internal constituents. This study shows that these individuals are key contributors to the teacher recruitment process since they are the catalyst in which the school districts hiring needs are communicated. This study also made visible the importance of localized recruitment and the necessity of establishing or nurturing existing collegiate relationships to collaborate with the recruitment of teacher candidates.
Implications for Practice

Findings from this study may be useful in developing a teacher-hiring program to negate inconsistent hiring practices. For example, teacher hiring could be done as a team effort rather than in isolation. School districts are encouraged to involve non-educators in the hiring process with teams including parents, students, non-teaching staff, and representatives from the community. According to Liu (2004):

While teachers, parents, and students might have valuable insights in response to candidates and might also provide candidates with useful information about what school is like, relatively few new teachers have opportunities to interact with them, at least in the interview part of the hiring process. (p. 17).

In addition, all hiring should be done within a scripted, systematic process using a checklist designed to select the best teacher candidate. An evaluation tool could be created to ensure that defined steps and communications are used consistently. Particularly in larger districts, interviewers rely on pre-packaged structured interview assessments. Two of the most popular are the Gallup Organization's Teacher Perceiver Instrument (TPI) and the Haberman Star Teacher Interview. The Teacher Perceiver Interview instrument is a structured interview assessment that consists of open-ended questions. According to Metzger and Wu (2003), a question such as “what is most rewarding about teaching,” requires a response that stresses student growth or success. The Haberman Star Teacher Interview identifies teacher candidates predicted to be successful in working in urban school districts based on the teacher candidate’s predisposition, knowledge of, and skill in teaching lower-income students. In addition to
scripted interviews, training on interpreting the responses is needed. Hiring teams should be trained and monitored to ensure that candidate’s responses are evaluated consistently. Seasoned administrators should assist in the training of new administrators. Training for this scripted interview process could be offered frequently to ensure that newly appointed administrators experience it prior to actually participating in an interview.

*Suggestions for Enhanced Teacher Recruitment*

The teacher selection process of most urban school districts is in need of a transformation (Levine & Quinn, 2003). Peterson (2002) notes that hiring processes “suffer from poorly conceived recruitment systems, limited applicant pools, and poor training on the part of the recruiter” (p. 1). On any given Sunday, newspapers contain classified advertisements soliciting teachers. The notice of employment often contains little information about the location of the school, the grade level or levels to be taught, or the school’s culture. The expectation is that anyone holding teacher certification in the desired discipline should apply to the Department of Human Resources for further review. This blanket advertisement may imply that school districts are only seeking “warm bodies” to fill teacher slots (Pushkin, 2001).

One of the more efficient techniques is recruitment of teacher candidates from area colleges and universities, especially those specializing in teacher certification. A school district’s capacity to establish relationships with local colleges with pre-service teacher education programs can be beneficial to effective hiring. Equally, significant, using collegiate-district partnerships give pre-service teachers immediate access to networks, student teaching opportunities, and, perhaps, even insider information regarding employment opportunities. Darling-Hammond and Berry (1999) state that
collegiate partnerships permit school districts to collaborate with key facilities in identifying "cream-of-the-crop" candidates. Citrelli (2006) adds that establishing positive relationships among college faculty can give school districts a competitive edge in identifying desirable teacher candidates.

Teachers unions and management may wish to expedite teacher transfer processes and work toward enabling principals and schools to consider external and internal candidates equally. State and local budget-makers could address budget barriers by promoting earlier and more predictable budgets and may wish to insulate the highest-need schools from budget fluctuations.

Another suggestion for enhancing the effectiveness of teacher recruitment is use of internal tactics such as recruiting former students, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers. More school districts are preparing to "grow their own" teacher candidates through collaboration with local colleges to offer scholarships for those interested in teaching. Upon graduation, former students return as both alumni and licensed professional educators. Alumni of the school district understand local issues and may use their insight to help students obtain academic objectives. They also may act as role models for students who do not see college as a viable choice. Clements (2001) suggests that school districts should also encourage paraprofessionals or teacher aides to pursue teacher certification. According to Johnson (1995), most paraprofessionals (para-educators) have strong roots in the communities they serve and have demonstrated commitment to working in multi-cultural classroom settings. In the participating school district, for example, benefits such as tuition reimbursement and a leave of absence for student teaching can be arranged compensating the paraprofessional 80% of their annual
wages while affording continuation of fringe benefits while on the leave. Given their racial and ethnic diversity, cultural sensitivity, and classroom commitment, these candidates represent a potentially significant pool of prospective teachers.

Another viable candidate pool includes substitute teachers. Substitute teacher rosters encompass a wide range of potential teacher candidates who have yet to secure permanent employment. Many of these individuals would welcome full-time employment if it were available. Since substitutes are often familiar with the certification process, school districts might encourage them to pursue certification, especially in areas of high need. Substitute teacher rosters also host uncertified substitutes with bachelor’s degrees in disciplines other than teaching. If encouraged, these career changers may have an interest in pursuing teacher certification. Although paraprofessionals and substitute teachers are good internal sources for teacher certification, Clements (2001) suggests that all school district personnel look internally at quality employees and encourage them to pursue teacher certification.

Limitations

A number of limitations were part of this study. In this instance, the hiring process is examined only from the perspective of teacher candidates employed in high-need secondary academic areas such as Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. The study was further limited by a population that included only teachers hired by the designated school district as probationary teachers and contract substitutes during the 2007-2008 hiring season. The hiring period began on January 2, 2007 and ended on October 29, 2007. The perspectives of the superintendent, principals, content area specialists, and
human resources personnel involved in hiring teachers were not included here, although they have been studies elsewhere. Insight from these individuals may have led to different perspectives resulting in a more comprehensive examination of school districts hiring processes. Absence of this population limits the degree to which the findings can be generalized.

A second methodological limitation is that the 29-question survey instrument adapted from the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers. The findings suggest what was self-reported and do not confirm whether hiring activity actually occurred as the participants indicated. Since the findings reported here are based on data derived from the participants, the findings are only as reliable as the subjects’ recall (Yu, 2000). According to Cook and Campbell (1979) as cited by Yu, it is common for participants to report information that they perceive the researcher expects. Yu, studying the works of Schacter (1999), indicates that psychologists warn that in recalling events, the human memory is imperfect and can yield unreliable data. Equally, the length of this instrument may come into question when seeking complete or comprehensive responses. Despite this potential limitation, the survey instrument can be extremely important in evaluating hiring practices as perceived by newly employed teachers.

Although the study does not take into account district initiatives (i.e., diversity hiring) that may influence the timeliness and caliber of teachers hired, the study does include perception data regarding the teacher hiring process in core content areas that have experienced teacher shortages. Although findings cannot be generalized, information may assist school districts with managing hiring and may lead to more equitable practices.
Recommendations for Further Research

This study could be enhanced by using qualitative methodology including personal interviews and focus groups to reveal more details of newly hired teachers' perspectives of the hiring process. An interview, for example, could yield insight regarding specific incidences during the hiring process that had a significant impact on the teacher candidates' perception of the process. A focus group may trigger rich informative that may decipher the participant's perspective of the delayed hiring timeframe and why they elected to pursue employment with the subject school district despite the delay. A dialog may yield an understanding of what constitutes the high number of new teachers with previous relationship with the participating school district prior to employment as a contract substitute or probationary teacher. This insight may assist school districts in formulating an action plan to secure teacher candidates they would like to hire until a former offer of employment can be given.

Research examining and comparing teacher hiring in secondary shortage areas with teachers in all subjects to determine differences. This study also could be replicated to include all teachers hired within the school year. A similar study could be done with teachers who left the designated school district to confirm if they perceived the teacher hiring process in the same way that current teachers perceived the hiring process.

Research can be done to determine the manner in which collective bargaining agreements influence the teacher hiring process, and what, if any, influence union association has on teacher hiring. Research should be conducted to examine and compare the teacher hiring process from the perspective of administrators involved in the teacher
hiring process to determine how well administrators understand their roles and responsibilities in teacher hiring.

Conclusions

The teacher hiring process in urban school districts may be one cause of their apparent inability to recruit and hire highly qualified teachers. Ineffective recruiting practices, inconsistent process, and late hiring all contribute to this critical situation. This study addressed the perceived problems urban school districts face in hiring high-quality high school teachers as aligned both with the school districts’ needs and with No Child Left Behind legislation.

In this study, findings confirm the inconsistent hiring practices, as reported by newly hired teachers, that may lead to an equitable teacher hiring process. Mondak (2004) agrees that diversification in teacher hiring stems from the variety of individuals involved in the teacher hiring process; that is, principals, Human Resource directors, subject area directors, in the absence of a universal selection process. To complicate matters, bureaucratic processes including vacancy notifications, union involvement, and budget restraints can limit the communication between school-level and central-office-level leaders’ ability to hire teacher candidates with attributes deemed essential. These candidates may abandon hard-to-staff districts in the face of hiring delays and force districts to fill vacancies from applicant pools with a higher percentage of unqualified and uncertified teachers (Levin & Quinn, 2003).

This study may assist school districts in understanding the problems associated with the teacher hiring process. Well-defined hiring practices could lead to earlier hiring of effective teachers. Evaluating the teacher hiring process from the teacher’s perspective
may shed light on why beginning teachers leave (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Other concerns include the teacher certification process; the lack of reciprocity in licensing among states; and the supply, demand, and distribution of teachers.

The study is distinctive in two regards. First it was researched, conducted, and written from the perspective of a human resources professional who is not involved in the teacher hiring process. This prospective provides an opportunity to access the teacher hiring problems from an unbiased perspective because findings from the study bare no consequences to researcher. Secondly it evaluates the process from the point of view of teachers recently hired by the participating school district. Inconsistencies in the teacher hiring process resulted in wide differences among hiring professionals (e.g., principals, subject area directors, and Human Resources directors) and the order in which they interviewed, made employment offers, and made school assignment decisions. Inconsistent hiring practices were also apparent in the order in which hiring professionals actually interact with the teacher candidate, and the absence of some hiring professionals from the teacher selection process altogether. While no evidence from this study can confirm that the members of the hiring teams interviewing and selection techniques were inconsistent, empirical studies have shown that characteristics and attributes of teacher hiring are subjective and lead to variations in the hiring process (Young, Place, Rinehart, Jury & Baits, 1997). Thus, this study provides valuable insight into actual experiences of those being hired. School districts could use the information gathered here in constructing or revising hiring procedures.

Recruiting competent, committed, and caring teachers, preferably those with a strong commitment to students' needs may involve altering existing policies, practices,
and perceptions of the teacher hiring process. The teacher hiring process may be
successful in recruiting the best teachers; however, hiring and retaining those teachers
may be contingent upon the new teachers’ comfort levels, perception of what their future
will entail, and reassurance that the position selected is the best option available to meet
their professional needs.
References


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