

NEW TEACHER RETENTION: WHAT THE FIRST YEAR TELLS US

By

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(Under the Direction of CYNTHIA O. VAIL)

ABSTRACT

Despite the efforts of teacher preparation programs, some first-year teachers lack the preparation needed to be successful in the classroom at the beginning of their teaching careers. Teaching is hard work and beginning teachers may not understand what is required outside of the time spent teaching students (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Due to working conditions, new teachers have the highest rate of turnover of any group of teachers (Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014; Ingersoll, Merrill, Stuckey, Collins, & Harrison, 2021). The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of first year teachers after initial certification through a teacher preparation program. The intent is to understand these experiences to better support new teacher growth and development and increase the retention of new teachers in the field.

Research continues to support the stage theory of development where beginning teachers are concerned about their own behaviors, such as how they manage the class and how they perform daily routines (Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). At highly varied rates, teachers grow to be more concerned about academic tasks and their impact on student learning (Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). In this study, teacher growth is looked at

through a social constructivist lens to include the complex nature of development by combining reflexivity and cognitive development theories (Conway & Clark, 2003; Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990). Individual interviews, a joint interview and reflective journals are analyzed through abductive coding.

The study follows two teachers throughout their first year of teaching kindergarten in different districts after graduating from the same teacher preparation program. Although the teachers experience similar feelings and developmental stages throughout the first semester, one new teacher's growth begins to accelerate in the second semester while the other remains in the initial stages. Central issues that surface through new teacher experiences are toxic school cultures and lack of autonomy, induction program support, and overall job satisfaction. The study finds developmental stages still exist and should be considered when planning how to best support new teachers. Implications for teacher preparations programs, schools, policymakers, and future research are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: New teacher growth and development, new teacher retention, new teacher experiences, toxic school culture, teacher autonomy, induction and mentorship programs, new teacher job satisfaction, professional learning communities, student teacher incentive programs

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DEDICATION

I come from a long line of teachers. My grandmother, my mother, my daughter, and I are all teachers. My best friends are teachers. The role models throughout my life have been teachers. To an outsider teachers make their work look easy, but in reality, it is one of the most difficult jobs in the world. Teachers possess the power to build positive and inspired future leaders and consequently design a society on a local and global level. Teachers are role models, support systems, and motivators. They supply the knowledge that is the basis for all things that can be accomplished in life. Teachers must be hard-working, compassionate, patient, understanding, and good communicators across cultures. They do all of this while managing disruptive environments, unique personalities, lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms, varying levels of parental involvement, and constantly changing expectations. Teachers arrive early and leave late. They spend a tremendous amount of time outside of the time spent teaching students. Beyond school hours, teachers must find the time to collaborate with other teachers, prepare lessons and activities for the next day, grade and record papers, attend faculty and committee meetings, and communicate with parents. Teachers must attend professional development training in order to increase knowledge and continue to grow in their profession. It is often very difficult for teachers to find a work-life balance. From teachers who teach the very youngest students to the professors who teach students in higher education, I see that it is pure passion that keeps you going. I dedicate this dissertation to all the past, present, and future teachers of the world.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Observing a well-developed teacher orchestrate a learning activity in a classroom of students gives the impression that it is one of the easiest jobs in the world. Invisible to the naked eye are the knowledge, judgement and complex decisions that directly impact students' futures, making it one of the most intense and difficult professions of the 21st century. Teaching requires extraordinary personal and professional skills which are often overlooked by those who lack understanding of what happens behind the scenes (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Teachers must meet the needs of students who are socio-economically, culturally, racially and linguistically diverse, develop and implement appropriate curriculum, plan research-based activities, authentically assess student growth, maintain accurate classroom records, ensure a safe learning environment, inculcate healthy habits and emotional behavior in children, form partnerships with parents, participate in self-growth opportunities, assist and support other teachers, and uphold accountability measures (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Along with this extreme amount of responsibility, teachers face classrooms with 25% of U.S. students living in poverty, 10-20% with identified special needs, 15% who are English second language, and 40% who are considered racial or ethnic minorities. The realities of what it takes to allow all children the opportunity to learn is often overwhelming (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 303).

It is no wonder that U.S. schools struggle to hire and retain teachers, and the shortage is quickly becoming a national crisis (Garcia & Weiss, 2019a; 2019b; Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Since 2013, U.S. public schools have gone from zero to approximately

110,000 teacher positions left open with projections of over 200,000 vacancies by 2024 (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Special education teacher shortages have become of particular concern, with 98% of school districts reporting shortages (National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services, 2019). The special education attrition rate has continued to increase over the past decade to an estimated 30% annually (Mason-Williams et al., 2020; Sullivan et al., 2017). In 2020, enrollment in teacher preparation programs decreased 15% forcing many schools to hire teachers without full credentials (Ondrasek, Carver-Thomas, Scott, & Darling-Hammond, 2020; Mason-Williams et al., 2020). More recently, the Center for American Progress (CAP, 2022) reported a 28% decline in graduates from teacher preparation programs, further illustrating the teacher shortage is continuing to grow.

As schools continue to face challenges to fill teacher positions, educational stakeholders grow concerned over three potential outcomes: a continued decline in teacher qualifications with subsequent weakening teacher preparation programs and decreased requirements for initial teaching credentials; pressure on schools to hire teachers with fewer credentials; and the cycle of high-poverty schools having excessive shortages being filled by novice teachers who leave the school and profession at an alarming rate (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Garcia & Weiss, 2019b). Any of these possible outcomes produces inequities in student access to excellent teachers and have dire consequences for students' academic growth and achievement.

The teacher shortage problem is not a new phenomenon. The systematic issues that contribute to the recruitment and retention of teachers are numerous and complicated. In a recent analysis, three primary problems at the root of the teacher shortage are a sharp decline in the enrollment of teacher preparation programs, lower salaries and benefits compared to other

professions, and a lack of fully qualified applicants (Buttner, 2021). Trends in the decline of teacher candidates entering preparation programs in the last decade have been attributed to a shifting economy, reductions in hiring due to budget restraints, and negative public perception of the profession (Malatras, Gais, & Wagner, 2017). Since the recession in 2009, opportunities in other sectors have caused a stagnation of students entering higher education. Additionally, the recession witnessed a decline in state revenue which greatly impacted education and left college graduates facing one of the worst job markets in history. Lower enrollment at the campus level resulted in reduced faculty, materials, and facilities and created a long-term impact on meeting the needs of future teachers. Reports that teacher candidates consistently scored lower on standardized tests than other students gained public attention and contributed to the negative perception of the profession (Auguste, Kihn, & Miller, 2010). The National Council on Teacher Quality criticized teacher preparation programs for failing to recruit the best students. Meanwhile nations such as Finland and Singapore began a national campaign to recruit the top graduates and have seen remarkable outcomes in student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Malatras, Gais, & Wagner, 2017).

Further exacerbating the issue is the consistent decline in teacher salaries. Inflation adjusted teacher salaries have remained flat since the 1990's with a critical dip after the recession (Miles & Katz, 2018). One report confirms that in 30 states, a ten-year veteran teacher with a family of four would qualify for government assistance (Boser & Straus, 2014). Districts operate on limited budgets with expenditures up to 80% based on salaries and compensation. Other careers offering better salaries and benefits make it difficult to attract and keep people in the profession. To address this issue, "policymakers should provide compensation packages that are equitable across districts and competitive with those of other occupations requiring similar levels

of education” (Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2017). Districts may make small gains by adding compensations employee perks, but the heart of this matter lies in increasing educational funding (Buttner, 2021).

The most common reason given for the teacher shortage is a lack of qualified candidates in the profession (Buttner, 2021). In 2015, more than 100,000 classrooms were filled with underprepared teachers, and that number is expected to rise (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Teachers are leaving the field for numerous reasons including dissatisfaction with testing and accountability measures, lack of administrative support, dissatisfaction with the teaching career, dissatisfaction with working conditions, and retirement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). With high turnover rates driving the teacher shortage, administrators look to first-year teachers to fill the vacancies. Yet, first year teachers typically lack the preparation needed to be successful in the classroom at the beginning of their careers. Teaching is an ongoing learning process. Hiring new teachers with potential that are not given the opportunity to develop their skills through targeted professional development and support leads to a revolving door of new teacher turnover and endless job postings (Buttner, 2021).

Beginning teachers have the highest rate of turnover of any group of teachers (Ingersoll, Merrill and Stuckey, 2014). As many as 50% of new teachers leave the profession in the first few years after entry (Ingersoll et al., 2021; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). From 1988 to 2008, the rate of leaving for first-year teachers increased by 34%, but as the new teaching force has grown, the numbers leaving the profession have quadrupled. In 1988, over 6,000 first-year teachers quit their profession and twenty years later, more than 25,000 new teachers left the occupation (Ingersoll, Merrill and Stuckey, 2014). Excessive attrition plays a

troubling role in the continued cycle of teacher shortages with the loss of highly qualified new teachers before they can fully develop their skills (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017; Ingersoll, Merrill and Stuckey, 2014; Sutchter, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas 2016). The shortage cycle imposes real costs on student achievement, school cohesion, the education system at large and the morale of teachers who remain in the field (Garcia & Weiss, 2019b).

Investing in the professional growth of new teachers who have potential is one way to solve the teacher shortage problem. Educational stakeholders look toward teacher preparation and new teacher induction programs to transform to the kinds of settings where new teachers can learn to teach and become long-term, expert educators (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Powerful teacher education programs have become critically important in addressing new teacher retention, with research pointing toward tight coherence and integration in coursework that involves classroom application where observation, coaching, and student teaching occur (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). However, a gap currently exists between the skills learned in teacher preparation programs and the capabilities that schools need from new teachers (Buttner, 2021).

Given the complexity of teaching, new teacher induction and mentoring programs are gaining popularity to address on-the-job skills necessary for new teachers to become successful (Ingersoll, 2012). Research shows that induction programs are having a positive effect on new teacher retention, and as the induction program becomes more comprehensive, the level of retention increases (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). However, induction programs vary greatly from school to school and research gives no clarity as to what the best method is or amount necessary to support new teachers and be affordable to schools (Ingersoll, 2012).

New teachers benefit from support, especially in the first year of their careers (Malatras, Gais, & Wagner, 2017). They frequently report feeling “isolated, without supportive partners, at times working within a school environment that is more competitive than cooperative” (Malatras, Gais, & Wagner, 2017, p. 10). To gain a clearer picture of how to best support new teacher’s growth and development, it is important to examine the experiences and personal reflections in the initial year of teaching. Understanding the views of new teachers may help higher education to bridge the training to practice gap and allow schools to provide more targeted and effective support during the induction year. This could lead to accelerated growth and development of new teachers, increase new teacher retention, and ultimately provide a viable solution to the ongoing teacher shortage. Research questions that guide the study are:

1. How do new teachers describe their experiences in the first year of teaching?
2. How do new teachers describe their induction support?
3. How do new teachers describe their commitment to continue a professional career in education?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although being an educator is never without its challenges, the first year is by far the most difficult (Gunn, 2021). Everything is new and different. The theories and training of teacher preparation programs must be pieced together with standards, technology, diversity, and accountability. Reported feelings of confusion, fear, and excitement mix with ongoing teacher issues, such as lack of time, student misbehavior, and dwindling resources. Advancing from supported student teacher to being fully in-charge of a classroom of students is an arduous step. To adequately train and assist new teachers as they transition from college programs into employment, it is necessary to investigate the theories of teacher growth and development (Stair, Warner, & Moore, 2012; Stroot et al., 1998). This examination will provide insight into the views and reflections of the experiences that first year teachers have.

There are many theories in literature that describe the process of learning to teach and the changes a teacher experiences during these processes (Stroot et al., 1998). One such theory describes the way a teacher moves through phases in his or her career as stages of development (Burden, 1980; Caruso, 1977; Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Katz, 1972; McDonald, 1982; Yarger & Mertens, 1980). Like other developmental theories, teacher development stages assume there are distinct periods of time where certain needs, behaviors, experiences and capabilities are common and different from other periods of time. Kohlberg (1973) describes the characteristics of stages as distinct differences in structures that have similar functions at various developmental points, the structures are sequential in individual development, and move from

the concrete to the abstract. Stages of developmental are hierarchal in nature and can be directly applied to the experiences and concerns of all preservice and novice teachers as they learn to teach (Stroot et al., 1998). Individual teachers move through stages at varying rates unrelated to their years of experience that may be dependent on personal and professional factors that cannot separate the adult from the teacher (Capel, 2001; Corrigan & Howie, 1980). This could result in fluctuation among stages or becoming “stuck” in an early developmental phase (Conway & Clark, 2003; Stroot et al., 1998).

Pre-Service Stages of Development

Fuller and Bown (1975) identified one of the most classic and well-known models for preservice teacher development (Richardson & Placier, 2001; Stroot et al., 1998). The model consists of three sequences of concern beginning in the pre-teaching phase where preservice teachers are “concerned about self” in their role of teacher, such as their teaching performance and feelings of belonging in an education setting (Stair, Warner, & Moore, 2012). In the second stage, early teachers are “concerned about tasks and situations”, such as developing appropriate instructional materials and working effectively with students (Fuller & Bown, 1975). This is the stage where teachers become worried about their survival as teachers (Stroot et al., 1998). When the concerns in the previous stages have been resolved, teachers move outwardly toward the final phase of “concern about students” where impact on learning is the primary purpose and teacher considerations are centered on educational decisions and current trends to support best practices (Stair, Warner, & Moore, 2012).

Other researchers who identify similar stages for preservice teacher development include Caruso (1977), who suggests four developmental phases that teacher candidates pass through during their student teaching experience. The first phase is “anxiety/euphoria” where student

teachers separate from familiar college campuses and adjust to the classroom setting where they worry about being accepted by cooperating teachers and students. After adjusting to the entry period, student teachers enter the second phase of “confusion/clarity”. This phase is defined by the complexities and uncertainties in the classroom environment, including rules and routines, personality styles of other adults, differentiated needs of students, unfamiliarity with the physical setting, uncertainty in their role, and college supervisory requirements. Student teachers pass through this phase dealing with the smaller pieces, still unaware of the bigger picture of teaching. Phase three is described as “competence/inadequacy”, where the student teacher builds self-confidence through small triumphs to feel competent. Strong positive reinforcement from cooperating teachers and supervisors is necessary to promote positive growth for the student teacher. This is also a difficult time for student teachers as they acclimate to an authoritarian role and feelings of control in a classroom. It is important for student teachers to validate their struggles and insecure feelings with other student teachers at this time. The last phase of student teaching is “criticism/new awareness”. Caruso (1977) indicates concerns at this stage remain centered on “self”, consistent with Fuller’s model, although student teachers begin to accept criticism and evaluate themselves more objectively (p. 60). The author suggests passing through these phases has a lasting effect on the personal and professional self-identities of student teachers.

Other researchers also identified multiple stages of teacher development that transition from the concrete to the abstract with special attention focusing on the preservice phases of teaching and teacher education. (Harrington & Sacks, 1984; Yarger & Mertens, 1980). Harrington and Sacks (1984) suggest teacher educator interventions at varying phases of development to promote movement towards knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to

become a master teacher including integrated fieldwork experiences. Yarger and Mertens (1980) propose a six-stage framework for teacher development with emphasis on school-based teacher education in the preservice stages and hands-on professional development in the initial, developing, and practicing stages of learning to teach. These frameworks resemble the Fuller and Bown (1975) model, viewing teacher development in a continuum of movement from one stage to another beginning at the preservice phase of becoming a teacher (Stroot et al., 1998).

Some researchers argue that the concerns model is a clear outward trajectory of teacher development but lacks multi-dimensionality such as emotions and individual differences in gender, age, previous experiences, and other personal factors (Capel, 2001; Caruso, 1977; Kokkinos, Stavropoulos, & Davazoglou, 2016; Korthagen, 1993; Poulou, 2007; Wood, 2000). In this way, the generality of the concerns model overlooks differences that are important in the development of each unique teacher candidate (Korthagen, 1993; Capel, 2001). Conway and Clark (2003) state “the extent to which student teachers are reflexively oriented toward development of self-as-teacher depends on person-context relationships, that is, the culture of teaching within which prospective teachers learn to teach” (p. 478). The authors offer a social constructivist view of teacher development embedded with self-reflective practice during teacher preparation experiences (Conway & Clark, 2003).

Pre-Service Research

Continued inquiries into the preservice concern model for teacher development (Fuller & Bown, 1975) have proven relevant over time (Bartell, 2005). Kagan (1992) reviewed over 40 articles investigating professional growth for preservice and new teachers to identify five major components. These included “increased awareness of beliefs about the context of teaching, acquisition of information about students that challenges pre-existing images, transfer of

attention from an introspective focus to emphasis on student learning, development and implementation of consistent procedures, and expanded problem-solving skills” (Kagan, 1992; Stair, Warner & Moore, 2012, p. 155). The phases in Kagan’s professional growth framework are consistent with the shift away from self-concern towards task and student concerns in Fuller and Bown’s (1975) model.

Much of the research that examines preservice teacher concerns and stages of development uses a variety of measurement scales. Using the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (George, 1978), Pigge and Marso (1994) surveyed over 300 preservice and in-service teachers at varying stages in their careers. The survey found that pre-service teachers have lower levels of task and student impact concerns and higher levels of self-concerns, where in-service teachers have lower levels of self-concern and are not significantly different from one another with task and student impact concerns. Pigge and Marso (1997) also investigate the changes in teacher concerns over a seven-year longitudinal study using the TCQ (George, 1978). Teachers show a decrease in self-concerns and an increase in task concerns over time, consistent with Fuller and Bown’s (1975) theory of concern stages. Stair, Warner and Moore (2012) further support Fuller’s model with a study of preservice agricultural education teachers using the Teacher Concerns Statement (Fuller, 1974) and a Likert-type scale. The researchers indicate concern levels change over time and there is a distinct shift between the level and concerns across the groups. However, in a study of postgraduate student teachers in England, the results of the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (George, 1978) only partially substantiate Fuller’s three stages of concern. The study’s results do not demonstrate that the stages are sequential (Capel, 2001). More recently, researchers are establishing measurement scales to reflect distinct periods of time in preservice teacher development.

Alpan, Özer, Erdamar, and Subasi (2014) developed the Student Teacher Concern Scale (STCS) to measure student teacher concerns about their experiences in the final phases of becoming a teacher. The researchers conducted a survey of 98 student teachers to identify primary concerns and develop a 5-point Likert-type scale with 23 items. In the study, factor structure of the scale was determined, construct validity was tested, and the reliability was calculated. The results indicate that classroom management is the most frequent concern, consistent with previous research (Capel, 2001; Caruso, 1977; Fuller & Bown, 1975).

Kokkinos, Stavropoulos, and Davazoglou, (2016) developed and validated the Stressors about Practicum Inventory (SPI) to measure student stressors during the practicum phase of the teacher preparation program in Greece. The study surveyed 138 student teachers on a 5-point scale with 94 items in six broad classifications. These classifications included student teacher assessment, student behavior, professional interactions, the structure and the workload of the practicum, and person-related factors (p. 284). Overall, the study shows the participants have moderate yet manageable stress levels in all areas of the practicum experience except for student teacher assessment. The study's results indicate a lack of current, theoretically-sound scales which also suggest a lack of systematic research in this critical area (Kokkinos, Stravropoulos, & Davazoglou, 2016).

The most current research on preservice teacher development focuses on reflexivity to examine complex personal and professional themes that emerge in training. Burn, Hagger, Mutton, and Everton (2003) suggest that preservice to teacher development is much more complex than a linear model. Poulou (2007) states "reflection offers a means of unfolding prospective teachers' concerns and personal theories and integrating them into teaching decisions" (p. 98). Using semi-structured interviews in a phenomenological analysis, Wood

(2000) investigates teacher candidates' understanding of learning to teach through a student teaching program in the United Kingdom. The results show that student teachers move through stages at varying speeds due to personal aspects, although all become less centered on self-concerns as the program progresses. Through content analysis of interview data, Conway and Clark (2003) examine the concerns of student teachers throughout their internships. The authors suggest extending Fuller's theory to include inward growth due to heightened reflexivity and self-awareness shown by the participants in the study. Poulou (2007) investigates the concerns of 59 student teachers in Greece using content analysis of reflective journal entries. The study indicates one of the primary concerns at the beginning of student teaching is classroom management in respect to self-survival and discipline techniques which reflects Fuller and Bown's (1975) concern model. Also consistent with Caruso's (1977) developmental stages, the study reveals anxiety as the predominate feeling at the beginning of student teaching with movement toward future-oriented emotions centered on self-evaluation and becoming a teacher. However, Poulou (2007) states that student teachers were also able to reflect into "deeper non-self-related themes, realizing social, moral, and political effects of their actions as teachers on their students" which broadens the scope of teacher concerns described by Fuller (p. 103).

Although many of the studies on student teacher reflexivity remain qualitative, some researchers have identified measurement scales to quantify levels of reflective thought (Kirby & Teddle, 1989; Korthagen, 1993; Seng, 2004; Sparks-Langer, Simmons, Pasch, Colton, & Starko, 1990). Kirby and Teddle (1989) created the Reflective Teaching Instrument to measure teacher perceptions of their engagement in reflective practice around three dimensions: diagnosis, testing, and personal causation. In the Netherlands, Korthegan (1993) developed the Reflective Attitude Scale in an examination of teacher preferences in learning to teach and the relationship

of personal factors such as age, gender, and previous schooling. The study's measurement of reflective attitudes during the teacher education program suggests that more focus should be on personal differences during teacher development. Sparks-Langer, et al. (1990) created a framework to measure seven levels of reflective pedagogical thinking intended to analyze interview data (Table 1). The framework is constructed using a combination of van Manen's (1977) levels of reflective thinking, cognitive psychology, and Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning (Seng, 2004).

Table 1

Framework for Reflective Thinking

<u>Level</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	No descriptive language
2	Simple layperson descriptions
3	Events labeled with appropriate terms.
4	Explanation with tradition or personal preference given as the rationale.
5	Explanation with principle or theory given as the rationale.
6	Explanation with principle/theory and consideration of context factors.
7	Explanation with consideration of ethical, moral, political issues.

Source: Sparks-Langer et al., (1990). Reflective pedagogical thinking: How can we promote it and measure it? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(4).

Levels 1-6 reflect the technical to cognitive level of reflective thinking and level 7 is the critical level described by van Manen (1977). The study indicates student teacher's reflective thinking

seldom reaches beyond level 5 (Sparks-Langer, et al., 1990). In Malaysia, Seng (2004) investigated practicum students' reflexivity in a school-based teacher education program incorporating mentorship and clinical supervision. Using a revised 6-level Reflective Pedagogical Thinking Scale (Sparks-Langer, et al., 1990), the practicum students' journal writing indicates reflexivity remains at the technical level during the practicum, seldom moving beyond level 2 (Seng, 2004).

In-Service Stages of Development

Katz (1972) identifies four stages of development beginning the first year of teaching, including Survival, Consolidation, Renewal, and Maturity. The first stage of Survival is typically filled with anxieties and feelings of inadequacy as new teachers question their abilities to succeed or even cope daily. In this stage, new teachers may feel they lack control with their teaching context (Katz, 1972). An observer may notice the lack of clear rules and routines, unclear procedures, reactivity to situations as they arise, and a teacher-directed style of teaching with very little student interaction (Stroot et al., 1998). During the survival phase, new teachers require onsite support and technical assistance to learn specific skills and gain insight into complex situations (Katz, 1972). The second stage of Consolidation focuses on instruction and the needs of individual children and problem situations. Observers may notice management of most of the class and instruction that meets the needs of average students, although the teacher may struggle with students who have special needs (Stroot et al., 1998). Katz (1972) suggests teachers in this phase require continued onsite assistance as well as access to specialists, consultants, and peer mentoring. The third stage of development is Renewal, where teachers have become competent with classroom management and a variety of instructional strategies but are self-motivated to learn new ideas. An observer will most likely see a well-managed class

where all students are learning at their individualized levels (Stroot et al., 1998). Teachers in this phase require access to professional associations, regional and national conferences, workshops, research journals, and opportunities to visit other classrooms and programs (Katz, 1972). The last stage is Maturity where teachers begin to ask questions and focus on insights, perspectives and beliefs about teaching and students' learning. Observers may notice similarities with the teachers in the Renewal stage, but subtle differences occur through conversations with the teachers in this stage (Stroot et al., 1998). Katz (1972) suggests teachers at this stage require access to professional organizations and workshops, seminars, higher education degrees, and leadership opportunities. Katz (1972) places emphasis on informed and interpreted on-the-job learning over preservice education suggesting "strategies acquired before employment will often not be retrieved under pressure of concurrent forces and factors in the actual job situation" (p. 54). Knowledge of these stages and each teacher's place in the model guides the location, timing, and content of the teacher's individualized needs for growth and development (Katz, 1972; Marshall, Fittinghoff, & Cheney, 1990; Stroot et al., 1998).

Marshall, Fittinghoff, and Cheney (1990) investigate the first two phases of Survival and Consolidation (Katz, 1972) in a study of beginning teachers in a collaborative induction year internship program. The authors report observations with the interns were very consistent with Katz's (1972) model, with most interns transcending survival concerns and moving to the consolidation stage. However, it is noted that a few interns remained in the survival phase throughout the program despite the completion of similar preservice programs (Marshall, Fittinghoff, & Cheney, 1990). The study also identifies a series of micro-phases in the Survival and Consolidation stages (Katz, 1972) that may reflect differences in the adjustments of first year teachers. The micro-phases within the Survival stage are identified as: (1) Order/Time-Filling

Micro-Phase; (2) Time, Planning, and Management Micro-Phase; and (3) Experimentation Micro-Phase (Marshall, Fittinghoff, & Cheney, 1990, p. 29). In the Order/Time-Filling Micro-Phase, interns were concerned with planning enough activities to fill the day and maintaining student attention to the activities. In the Time, Planning, and Management Micro-Phase, interns required support to keep students on task, determine what to do when students finished early, and develop centers. In the Experimentation Micro-Phase, interns begin to feel safe with presenting ideas and materials but require support to balance district curriculum guidelines with innovative teaching ideas. Marshall, Fittinghoff and Cheney (1990) identify two micro-phases in Katz's (1972) Consolidation stage including: (1) Long-Range Planning; and (2) Focus on Students. Long-Range Planning is characterized by the interns' clearer sense of direction with year-end goals and understanding what needs to be taught. In the Focus on Students Micro-Phase, interns begin to look at the learning and emotional needs of individual students (Marshall, Fittinghoff & Cheney, 1990).

Other researchers who identify similar stages of development for in-service teachers include Burden (1980) and McDonald (1982). Burden's (1980) three stages of teacher development from the first-year stage to the more than five years stage reflect Katz's (1972) model of Survival, Consolidation and the combining of Renewal and Maturity stages. Burden (1980) also takes into consideration human development stages concurrent with teacher development stages. The study also reports other teachers have a profound influence on teacher development; accumulated experiences and personal life have significant influences on teacher development; and supervisor practices have little impact on teacher development. McDonald (1982) investigates induction programs and terms the initial stage of teaching "the transition period". He reports that "teachers appear to go through a series of phases or stages in this

transition period. At each phase they confront a different type of problem. In the earliest phases the teacher must learn to manage and organize instruction. At later phases the teacher learns to evaluate pupils, relate to parents, and to cope with being evaluated by the school administration” (p. 25). Although terminology may differ among researchers, all these models reflect the concrete to abstract flow of hierarchical stages in teacher development (Stroot et al., 1998).

Schon’s model of the ‘reflective practitioner’ (1983) has become a popular theory for professional growth and development, initiating a reflective pedagogy movement in teacher education (Copeland, Birmingham, La Cruz, & Lewin, 1993). The framework of reflection “in action” and “on action” is based on knowing and knowledge about professional experiences that produce growth and development (Schon, 1983). In this way, it closely resembles the views of Conway and Clark (2003) where preservice teacher development occurs through experiences with others and meaning is created through interactions and reflective thought. Several researchers suggest reflexivity occurs at three hierarchical levels: technical reflection, practical reflection, and critical reflection (van Manen, 1977; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Technical reflection is concerned about achieving a means to an end; practical reflection involves questioning assumptions and outcomes; and critical reflection considers moral and ethical issues of social justice (Seng, 2004). Critical reflection leads to the development of professional knowledge through schemas, or personal knowledge based on attitude and beliefs about experiences (Doyle, 1983). There are three stages in cognitive task and schema theory of teacher development with instructional practices including: (1) rote knowledge, where teachers can explain instructional strategies but cannot yet perform them; (2) routine knowledge, where teachers can perform strategies in specific context with much effort; and (3) comprehensive knowledge, where teachers perform strategies effectively across contexts with automaticity

freeing their thoughts to focus on student learning (Doyle, 1983; Kagan, 1992).

Growth and Development of First-Year Teachers

Research repeatedly shows that first-year teachers are in survival mode, concerned about their own needs related to day-to-day coping, including class management, filling instructional time, and working with administration and parents (Baptiste & Sheerer, 1997; Katz, 1974; Ryan, 1986; Stroop, et al., 1998). At this stage, beginning teachers frequently express feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and anxiety (Katz, 1974; Marshall, Fittinghoff, & Cheney, 1990; Ryan, 1986). In a new teacher self-reflection, Moore (2016) states:

Although nothing out of the ordinary, my first year of teaching was almost enough to do me in. The demands will sound familiar to novice and veteran teachers alike: planning lessons from scratch, learning curriculum, managing large classes, making photocopies, and pleasing administrators, parents, and students. And the grading—the endless grading. I irrationally avoided sleeping at night because I dreaded waking up and going back to school the next day. I owed a lot of money on my newly acquired master’s degree in education but working at a coffee shop for the rest of my life sounded pretty appealing (p. 60).

Systematic Review Process

There is an abundance of research on the topic of first year teaching due to the teacher shortage crisis and high rates of attrition after the first year of teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Using online databases including ERIC and PsycINFO and two key terms – *first year teachers*, *first year teaching* – with *development* and *professional development*, online searches included over 1,000 peer-reviewed research articles between 1990 and 2020. Most of the current research on the development of first-year teachers is related to the effectiveness of teacher induction, coaching, and mentoring programs (Baptiste & Sheerer, 1997; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Marshall, et al., 1990; Moore, 2016; Muller & Burdette, 2007; Orland, 2001; Seng, 2004). Although this research cannot be understated, this study is primarily interested in the developmental growth of first-year teachers after graduating

from a teacher preparation program through perceived experiences with others. Changing the second search term to *teacher developmental stages*, or *teacher growth* yielded 69 articles for examination. A study was included if it met the following criteria: (1) an empirical study seeking to investigate first year teachers' growth and development through concerns, perceptions, and/or professional knowledge; (2) contained explicit descriptions of data sources, sample sizes, research methods, and outcomes; (3) did not indicate the participants were involved in a support program; and (4) was not investigating the impact of a teacher induction or mentoring program. A literature review on the growth and development of preservice and beginning teachers served as a resource for cross-examination to search for studies meeting the criteria (Kagan, 1992). To the best of my knowledge, the 10 studies reviewed reflect the current research base examining the growth and development of first year teachers in the field. The studies are compared by general content, data and methods, measurement scales, presence or absence of measurement construct validity, reliability, and the study's findings (Table 2).

Review Synthesis

Research continues to investigate the development of new teachers in their first year of teaching through the concerns-based theory (Fuller & Bown, 1975). In Latvia, Zhukova (2018) examines 4 beginning teachers in a public secondary school in the first 2 years of teaching through interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. Using content analysis for the interviews and focus groups, the author identifies developmental patterns of teaching concerns closely related to the Fuller (1975) model. Using the Teacher Concerns Checklist (Borich, 2000) as a third data source to validate and complement emerging themes, Zhukova (2018) indicates early concerns are personal in nature and include class management and daily routines. These self-concerns change over time to focus more on impact concerns at a highly varied rate among

individual teachers, suggesting systematic, differentiated support is needed at the beginning of this crucial period. On the other hand, Watzke (2004) suggests a reconsideration of the concerns-based theory in a 2-year study of 79 beginning teachers using the Teacher Concerns Checklist (Fuller & Borich, 1974). With 6 applications of the TCC, Watzke (2004) indicates teacher concerns consistently focus on impact (the second stage of the concerns model) with a two-fold concentration including academic impact and personal concern for individual students. Further, the concerns of teachers in the study fluctuate between stages and are not affected by contextual variables. The author suggests the concerns-based theory may be limited in explaining the complex nature of new teacher development and a more comprehensive approach linking student learning and instructional practices may be needed to better understand the development process.

Other research focuses on instructional practices of new teachers to examine growth and development in the first year of teaching. Brashier and Norris (2008) investigate 61 female early childhood educators in their first year of teaching at 19 school districts to examine if they implement developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) in the classroom. Using a researcher-made electronic survey consisting of 27 questions (11 on a Likert-type scale, 4 open-ended, and 12 multiple choice) and a 6-person focus group, the results indicate 48 percent of new teachers feel they are unable to implement DAP due to rigid curricula and strict state requirements (p. 34). Thematic analysis reveals other themes inhibiting the implementation of DAP in first year of teaching, including time restraints, differing views about what DAP includes, lack of classroom management, practices of using recess-loss as a behavior consequence, center-time becoming teacher-directed workstations, need for support from peers, administration and parents, and lack of self-confidence.

Smeaton and Waters (2013) investigate instructional practices of 6 secondary teachers in

their first year of teaching in 2 rural districts with many high-risk students. Results from classroom observations using a researcher-made rubric indicate first year teachers primarily use direct instruction as an instructional strategy and most often ask lower order questions. The observational rubric included 15 research-based instructional components shown as effective for teaching. Reasons for instructional challenges that surface through content analysis of focus groups include time for planning, emphasis on high-stakes tests, lack of resources, frequent need for behavior interventions, and the extent of student apathy or noncompliance (p. 82). The study suggests several unexpected gaps between college programs and first year practice, including knowledge of parallel assessments and the responsibility of supervising paraprofessionals. Both studies reflect the first stage of the concern's theory of teacher development, where novice teachers focus primarily on their performance, classroom management, and feelings of belongingness in the school setting.

Some studies investigate the role of the 'reflective practitioner' (Schon, 1983) in the growth and development of first year teachers. Bullough and Knowles (1990, 1991) investigate the perceptions of a secondary teacher in their first year of teaching in two single participant case studies. Using content analysis of interviews, classroom observations, and journal writing, the authors indicate the roles of 'self as teacher' in the fantasy stage changed to a different role in the survival stage. The male secondary teacher entering from a prior career started with a vague sense of 'self as teacher' and feelings of passion for his subject matter moving to a 'policeman as teacher' role with feelings of disillusionment and frustration. The female secondary teacher entering from motherhood started with a 'nurturer as teacher' role in the fantasy stage moving to a more traditional teacher role in the survival stage, where she became personally detached and driven to deliver content.

Table 2 *Ten Studies on the Growth and Development of First-Year Teachers*

General Content	Data/Method	Measurement Scale	Content Validity	Reliability	Findings
1. Brashier & Norris (2008) Studies implementing DAP in 1 st year of teaching with 61 female ECE graduates in 19 districts (Pre-K to 4 th special education; 32% low-income schools).	Electronic survey; focus group of 6. Thematic analysis	27 questions (11 Likert-type 4 open-ended, 12 multiple choice) Researcher-made	N/A	N/A	Teachers struggled to use DAP in 1 st year due to curriculum requirements, time restraints, district and beliefs on play, classroom management, recess used as behavior contingency, teacher-directed centers, need for support, and lack of confidence.
2. Bullough & Knowles (1990) Studies changes in perceptions of 1 male secondary teacher entering as second career through 1 st year of teaching	Interviews, classroom observations, journals Content analysis & Schon Model (1983)	None	N/A	N/A	Role of self as teacher changed from vague at fantasy level to survival level; feelings of passion towards science moving to feelings of disillusionment and frustration.
3. Bullough & Knowles (1991) Studies perceptions of 1 female secondary science teacher entering career after motherhood in 1 st year of teaching.	Interviews, classroom observations, journals Content analysis & Schon Model (1983)	None	N/A	N/A	Role of self as teacher changed from nurturer at fantasy level to traditional role of teacher in survival (Personal detachment; direct content delivery).
4. Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski (1990) Studies levels of reflexivity with encountered problems and attempted solutions with 6 beginning teachers at different schools in the 1 st year of teaching.	Interviews Coding analysis	Reflective Judgement model scale (Kitchner & King, 1981)	Yes	N/A	Level of teachers' reflexivity with problem solving increased as degree of principal control over curriculum decisions decreased.

General Content	Data/Method	Measurement Scale	Content Validity	Reliability	Findings
5. Levin & Ammon (1991) Studies growth in problem solving skills with 4 elementary school teachers as they complete a graduate program and through the 1 st year of teaching.	Interviews, classroom observations, post-observation interviews Coding analysis	Cognitive Development model (Ammon & Hutchenson, 1989)	Yes	N/A	By the end of the 1 st year teaching, all 4 increased from vague, global skills to a multi-dimensional level of problem solving. Inconsistencies were noted between teacher beliefs and practices.
6. Lidstone & Hollingsworth (1990) Studies growth of problem solving and professional knowledge of 1 female 1 st year teacher who was also in a 5 th year graduate program.	Interviews and observations Content analysis & schema theory (Doyle, 1983)	No	N/A	N/A	Level of professional knowledge grew from focus on classroom management and organization to focus on academic tasks and early stages of focus on student learning.
7. Maier, Grogan, & SRET (2013) Studies changes in classroom performance for 965 alternatively certified 1 st year teachers in K-12 and special education classrooms.	3 classroom observations, subjective evaluations by principal, student survey data for 3-12 grades. Analysis of Variance	Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (ACE) observation rubric; 5-level Performance Scale (TNTP, 2013)	Yes	No	Teachers varied widely in performance in the 1 st year of teaching with early proficiency the best indicator of overall performance.
8. Smeaton & Waters (2013) Studies instructional practices of 6 secondary teachers (3 male; 3 female) in 1 st year of teaching at 2 rural school districts with at-risk student populations.	4 classroom observations, 3 focus groups Content analysis/ comparison of rubrics	Rubric on research based instructional components for effective teaching. Researcher-made	Yes	No	First year teaching practices were mostly direct instruction with frequent use of lower order questions.

General Content	Data/Method	Measurement Scale	Construct Validity	Reliability	Findings
9. Watzke (2004) Studies developmental change (concerns-based theory) in 79 beginning teachers across first 2 years of teaching	Questionnaire (6) Analysis of Variance, Scheffe post hoc tests	Teacher Concerns Checklist (TCC) (Fuller & Borich, 1974)	Yes	Yes	Teacher concerns for impact ranked highest across time; concerns not affected by contextual variables; suggests reconsideration of concerns based theory.
10. Zhukova (2018) Studies developmental change (concerns-based theory) in 4 beginning teachers in public secondary schools	Interviews, focus groups questionnaire (2) Content analysis	Teacher Concerns Checklist (TCC) (Borich, 2000)	Yes	Yes	Teachers most concerned with self (managing class, daily routines) at start and moved to impact concerns at highly varying rates.

Other research surrounding reflective thought centers on new teachers' growth with problem solving skills and professional knowledge. Kilgore, Ross, and Zbikowski (1990) study levels of reflexivity with novice teachers' perceived problems and attempted solutions. Using periodic interviews and analysis with the Reflective Judgment scale (Kitchner & King, 1981), the authors examine 6 beginning teachers' growth with problem solving skills in the first year of teaching. The Reflective Judgment scale is a 7-stage model of reflective judgement where mature reflective judgment is a willingness to consider new evidence, search for alternative explanations, view situations from multiple perspectives, and judge the adequacy of a decision using supportive evidence (Kagan, 1992; Kitchner & King, 1981). The study suggests there is a negative relationship between a teacher's level of reflexivity with problem solving and the degree of control over the teacher by administration (Kagan, 1992; Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990). This could indicate that the degree of autonomy given to a new teacher in a school setting could be a contextual factor in their growth and development as a teacher (Kagan, 1992). Levin and Ammon (1991) investigate level of reflexivity and growth with problem solving skills using interviews, classroom observations, and post-observation interviews through the lens of cognitive development. The data was coded using levels of pedagogical understanding, where higher level thinking is evident with the presence of differentiation and integration (Ammon & Hutchinson, 1989). The study of 4 elementary school teachers from end-of-program preservice through first year of teaching indicates pedagogical conceptions grow from vague, global and undifferentiated to a higher multi-dimensional level that is subject and context specific (Kagan, 1992, p. 153). In the study, the authors explain inconsistencies in teacher practices and beliefs as the possible influence of school context constraints (Levin & Ammon, 1991). Lidstone and Hollingsworth (1990) also examine new teacher growth in problem solving skills and

professional knowledge with 1 female first-year teacher also enrolled in the 5th year of a graduate program. Using content analysis with interviews and classroom observations, the case study indicates the teacher changed from attention to classroom management and organization to academic tasks by the end of the year. The authors also describe changes in the teacher's instructional practices through the lens of Doyle's (1983) work with schema theory, where the teacher changed from rote knowledge (unable to apply known strategies) to approaching the comprehensive stage (application of various strategies with focus on student learning).

The last study examines growth in teacher performance with 965 alternatively certified first-year teachers in kindergarten through 12th grade and special education (Maier, Grogan, & Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, 2013). The authors use classroom observations, principal evaluations, and student survey data consistent with the Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (ACE) evaluation manual (The New Teacher Project, 2013). The ACE evaluation system includes an observational rubric based on 7 teaching competencies and a 5-level performance scale. Three observations for each participant were averaged to indicate performance level and compared using an analysis of variance. The study indicates teachers vary substantially with growth and performance in the first year of teaching with early proficiency the best indicator of overall performance by the end of the year. The authors include limitations, including only being able to explain 38 percent of the variation between teachers with the possibility of omitted variables; results showing no association with teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and teaching efficacy with teachers' growth in performance; and lack of knowledge about specific interventions used with individual teachers in the study.

Eight of the ten studies reviewed are qualitative, one is quantitative, and one is a mixed-method study. Two of the qualitative studies use previously established theoretical scales-the

Reflective Judgement model (Kitchner & King, 1981) and the Cognitive Development model (Ammon & Hutchenson, 1989) to analyze and code qualitative data (Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990; Levin & Ammon, 1991). The models are shown to have content validity through empirical research although there are no indications in the studies that a reliability measurement was taken. Two studies use observational rubrics to measure classroom observation data-Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (TNTP, 2013) and a researcher-made rubric (Maier, et al., 2013; Smeaton & Waters, 2013). Content validity was established with the ACE rubric through research evidence and although it is indicated that observers were trained to use the observational rubric, the study does not indicate if reliability was established between observers. Smeaton and Waters (2013) do not indicate validity or reliability in their study. Brashier and Norris (2008) use thematic analysis methodology with a researcher-made electronic survey consisting of 27 Likert-type, multiple choice, and open-ended questions. Survey validity and reliability are not indicated in the study. The remaining three studies use theoretical content analysis to analyze qualitative data with no measurement scale indicated (Bullough & Knowles, 1990; 1991; Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990).

The quantitative and the mixed method studies reviewed (Watzke, 2004; Zhukova, 2018) use the Teacher Concerns Checklist (Borich, 2000; Fuller & Borich, 1974) to measure changes in development through the concerns of first-year teachers. The Teacher Concerns Checklist (TCC) is a 45-item questionnaire with a Likert-type answer scale including 1) not concerned; 2) a little concerned; 3) moderately concerned; 4) very concerned; and 5) totally preoccupied. Schipull (1991) concluded that the TCC factor scores possessed an adequate degree of reliability and a reasonable amount of validity for research purposes in a study analyzing the responses of in-service teachers to the Teacher Concerns Checklist, the Quality of Teacher Work Life Survey

(QWLS), and the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI). Results of the test-retest analyses indicated that the TCC factor scores possessed reliability, with r values ranging from .69 to .77. Cronbach's coefficient alpha values ranged from .71 to .94. The Pearson Correlation coefficients obtained between the TCC factor scores and subareas on the QWLS and the TSI indicated moderate relationships between the TCC factor scores and the subarea scores on the QWLS and the TSI (Schipull, 1991). In a repeated measure design and a large sample size, Watzke (2004) established internal consistency with the TCC and determined statistical differences using analysis of variance and Scheffe post hoc tests. In the mixed-method study, Zhukova (2018) used the TCC as a third data source to validate thematic analysis from interview and focus group data with no indication of internal consistency or statistical significance measurements.

In a review of instruments measuring stress, anxiety, and concerns during practicum (Kokkinos, Stavropoulos, & Davazoglou, 2016) there are two tools that could also be considered in a quantitative study investigating first-year teachers' growth and development including the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (George, 1978) and the Teacher Stress Scale (Freeman, 1986). The Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (TCQ) is a 15-item assessment designed to measure the concerns of teachers across three areas: self, task, and impact on student learning. Construct validity of the scale was examined using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and reliability of the measurement was tested using Cronbach's alpha (George, 1978). The Teacher Stress Scale (TSS) is a 23 item self-reporting instrument grounded in phenomenology with scaled analysis using three factors: behavior management, workload, and lack of support (Freeman, 1986).

Literature Review Findings Summary

Despite the differences in focus, methodology, and theoretical rationale, the studies reviewed provide similar insight into the growth and development of first-year teachers. Current research continues to support the stage theory of development where beginning teachers are concerned about their own behaviors, such as how they manage the class and how they perform daily routines (Brashier & Norris, 2008; Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). At this time of self-concern, teachers' instructional practices are primarily direct-instruction to maintain classroom order and developmentally appropriate practices remain at the rote level (Brashier & Norris, 2008; Bullough & Knowles, 1991; Smeaton & Waters, 2013). Problem solving skills are vague and undifferentiated, and the role of 'self as teacher' is mostly influenced by personal fantasies about being a teacher (Bullough & Knowles, 1990; Bullough & Knowles, 1991; Levin & Ammon, 1991). At highly varied rates, teachers grow to be more concerned about academic tasks and their impact on student learning (Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). Instructional practices move to a more comprehensive level where teachers can implement various strategies to meet individualized student needs (Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). Reflexivity levels increase and problem-solving skills become multidimensional, growing more concrete and context specific (Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990; Levin & Ammon, 1991). As novices become more knowledgeable with students, they adapt the role of 'self as teacher' based on the modifications of their attitudes and beliefs about teaching (Bullough & Knowles, 1990; Bullough & Knowles, 1991).

There remains to be controversy about how new teachers move through the stages of development with some research supporting linear stages while others indicate teachers fluctuate between stages (Maier, Grogan, & SRET, 2013; Watzke, 2004). Additionally, some researchers

suggest the stage theory should be modified to include the complex nature of development by combining reflexivity and cognitive development theories (Conway & Clark, 2003; Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990). There remains a question as to why teachers vary so widely in their developmental growth and why there seems to be inconsistencies between new teachers' beliefs and practices (Levin & Ammon, 1991). One common likeness among the research is the indication of the critical need for support systems during the initial stages of becoming a teacher (Ingersoll, 2012). Questions about the optimal quantity for induction components needed and the impact of preservice preparation and teaching settings on levels of induction support remain to be clarified through research (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

New teachers are at the highest risk of leaving the field in the shortest amount of time. It is important to know how new teachers interpret their experiences in the initial year of teaching. The study described in the following chapters adds to the literature by helping us to understand how initial experiences may support or hinder new teacher growth through stages of development. Findings could inform schools about the process of creating the most effective growth paths for new teachers and subsequently contribute to increased retention in the field.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which new teachers describe their first year of teaching. Although there is an abundance of research supporting the concern-based model of teacher development stages, the role of organizational and personal-contextual influences in the first year of teaching cannot be overlooked. Emphasis toward reflexivity and the culture in which the new teacher is learning to teach could reach beyond outward concerns and examine inward developmental growth (Conway & Clark, 2003; Poulou, 2007; Wood, 2000). This could enrich our understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on new teachers that could accelerate or deepen their growth and development in the initial years of teaching. This research would inform teacher preparation programs, school systems, and educational policymakers on the best practices to train and retain new teachers in the most cost-effective method.

The overall methodological approach for this research investigation was interpretive multi-case study (Yin, 2018). This approach facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. The study used a combination of individual interviews, journal entries, and a joint interview as sources of data. Patton (2015) and Tracy (2010) suggested triangulation with multiple data sources and multiple participants would support a high-quality qualitative study. Interviews provide qualitative researchers with a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon by exploring participant's views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations on a specific matter (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). Participants

discussed their experiences as teachers in their initial year of teaching and reflected on their feelings through journal entries. Reflexivity examines complex personal and professional themes that emerge during the initial year of teaching. Reflexivity and self-awareness provide researchers with a view of the inward growth and personal aspects that may influence new teacher stages of development (Conway & Clark, 2003; Poulou, 2007; Wood, 2000). The joint interview at the end of the teachers' initial year was used to generate a richer understanding of participant's collective experiences and beliefs. One criterion for joint interviews is to clarify, extend, or qualify data collected through other methods (Bloor, Franklin, Thomas, & Robson, 2001). Using a variety of lenses allows multiple facets to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The case design was a purely qualitative strategy using naturalistic inquiry, qualitative data, and content analysis (Patton, 2015). The data sources were analyzed through interpretive methods to identify the pattern of experiences participants had in their school settings. The interpretivist approach is frequently attributed to Max Weber and his concept of "verstehen", or understanding something in its context (Prasad, 2018). Interpretivists attempt to understand phenomena by assessing the meaning that participants give them or construct from their experiences. This interpretive epistemological position is supported through the theoretical lens of constructivism (Bruner, 1990; Dewey, 1998; Piaget, 1972). A constructivist approach suggests learning should be grounded in real experiences (Dewey, 1998). Discovery learning occurs when participants are placed in problem solving situations where they draw on past experiences and existing knowledge to discover new information (Bruner, 1990). Learning, therefore, is a dynamic process of successive stages of adaptation to reality where learners actively construct knowledge by generating and testing their own theories of the world (Piaget,

1972). A multi-case study involving the use of constructivist theory requires the researcher to seek out the multiple perspectives of the participants and collectively gather agreed upon or diverse ideas of what occurred (Stake, 2006). The study's design also demonstrated an analytical characteristic to explore a broader phenomenon of interest beyond the immediate experiences being examined (Stake, 2000). This broader phenomenon is the decreasing retention rate of new teachers in the initial years of their professional career.

The Internal Review Board approved the study on August 24, 2021 (Appendix A).

Participants

Participants were recruited through email (Appendix B) from a list of teacher candidates graduating the previous fall, spring, and summer quarters who attended a local teacher preparation program. The participants were chosen through criterion sampling, meeting the criteria of recently graduated from the university's teacher preparation program and employed fall 2021 as a first-year teacher in a public or private school (Patton, 2015).

The participants were enrolled in an initial teacher preparation program yielding an MAT in Special Education with an emphasis on Birth through Kindergarten. Upon graduation, candidates are eligible for a teaching certificate in general pre-kindergarten through kindergarten and preschool special education. The students in this program complete 6 hours in required courses on classroom and behavior management while working with families and other professionals, 30 hours of coursework related to teaching all children (with and without developmental delays) birth through kindergarten, 9 hours of practicum experience (infant/toddler, preschool, and kindergarten placements) and a semester of full-time student teaching.

Three potential participants responded in August 2021 with interest in the study. Two participants who met the criteria and wished to voluntarily participate in the study met with the researcher to discuss the purpose of the research, expected duration and procedures, participant rights, research benefits, limits of confidentiality, and incentives. An electronic copy of the consent form (Appendix C) was emailed to sign and return to the researcher. The original electronic copy remained available for the participants' personal records. The third potential participant did not meet the criteria of the study because she was employed as a teacher the previous year at her school, defining her as a second-year teacher. In September 2021, a third participant who met the criteria for the study was recruited through a second email (Appendix B). However, this participant wished to be dropped from the study at the first interview contact in October 2021, due to being overwhelmed with new teacher duties and lack of time for the study's commitment.

Overview of Participants

The two participants in the case study identified as females in their early twenties who graduated from the same initial teacher preparation program in spring, 2021 yielding a MAT in Special Education with an emphasis on Birth through Kindergarten. Both participants originated within eighty miles of the surrounding geographic area of the university and were employed as first-year general education kindergarten teachers in a public-school beginning fall, 2021. The participants both returned to their hometowns for their first year of teaching and were in different school districts that were approximately thirty miles apart.

When asked if they identified with a race, one participant responded as Black, and one responded as Caucasian. Throughout the study, Participant one is referred to as "Cami" and Participant two is referred to as "Kyra", which are pseudonyms to assure anonymization.

School Sites

Cami's school site was in a rural county within an eighty-mile radius of the university. The location of the school was defined as "rural" by the state's Office of Rural Health with a county population of less than 50,000. Cami's school had approximately 500 students from prekindergarten through fifth grade. The school's demographics were reported as 43% White, 42% Black, and 8% Hispanic. The school's low-income population was 66% based on qualifications for free or reduced lunch. The state's Governor's Office of Student Achievement (2019) reported student progress on standardized assessments to be about the same as the state average. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement gave Cami's school a Grade C. These reports include A-F letter grades based on school performance and other useful information about the school, such as performance on statewide assessments, the make-up of the school's student body, the graduation rate, and additional academic information.

Kyra's school site was in an urban and suburban county within a seventy-mile radius of the university. The location of the school was defined as suburban and was within twenty miles of a large, metropolitan city. Kyra's school had approximately 700 students from prekindergarten through fifth grade. The school's demographics were reported as 90% Black, 7% Hispanic, and <1% White. The school's low-income population was 100% based on qualifications for free or reduced lunch. The state's Governor's Office of Student Achievement (2019) reported student progress on standardized assessments to be about the same as the state average. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement gives Kyra's school a Grade B. The researcher was unable to visit the school sites during the study due to Covid-19 restrictions that did not allow outside visitors in the building.

Data Collection

The study used a combination of individual interviews, reflective journal entries, and a final joint interview as sources of data. To ensure a high-quality multi-case study, it is necessary to achieve thick description and triangulation with data sources. Tracy (2010) states that one of the most important means of achieving credibility is thick description, or in-depth illustrations that show the data's complexity. Patton (2015) and Tracy (2010) suggest triangulation with multiple data sources and multiple participants will support a high-quality research study.

Individual Interviews

New teachers participated in semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with the researcher with a range of 25-36 minutes. Semi-structured interviews consist of several open-ended, key questions that define the areas to be investigated, yet allow the interviewer or interviewee to explore outside the original topic (Gill et al., 2008). Participants scheduled an interview at the end of each quarter, approximately every nine weeks of school, for a total of three individual interviews (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured style using an interview procedure and protocol for guiding questions (Appendices D, E, F). The procedure included thanking the participant for the interview, engaging in some small talk, informing the interviewee of the purpose of the interview, reviewing the consent to participate, and getting verbal permission to audio record the session. The protocol (Appendices D, E, F) included topic domains, lead-off questions, covert categories, and possible follow up questions (Carspeken, 1996). An interview protocol is an instrument of inquiry where well-planned guiding questions assist the researcher with maintaining a focus on answering the research questions while also allowing flexibility in the conversation (Carspeken, 1996; Patton, 2015).

The individual interviews were conducted through videoconferencing using Zoom. The conversations were audio recorded with a Dell laptop and iPhone 10. To protect the identity of the interview participants and those they work with, the audio recordings of the interviews were only available to the researcher and were destroyed after transcription. Additionally, the interview transcriptions include pseudonyms for any revealing information. As a method of procedural ethics, Tracy (2010) states it is necessary to avoid deductive disclosure (p. 847). This occurs when certain facts about the participant may provide information to others that could lead to undue exposure. All interviews were hand-transcribed by the researcher using a researcher-made key code conventions chart.

Joint Interview

The new teachers participated in a semi-structured joint interview after completion of their first year of teaching as a wrap-up to the study (Appendix G). “Focus groups are used for generating information on collective views, and the meanings that lie behind those views” (Gill et al., 2008, p. 293). The purpose of the joint interview as the final interview was to clarify or extend the data collected, to give insight to the topics of interest, and to provide feedback from the research. Having a joint interview at the end of the study rather than during it avoided limitations such as generating expectations for the outcome of the study when listening to other participant’s viewpoints. The semi-structured joint interview included a welcome, introduction of the topics of interest, guidelines for the group discussion, and open-ended questions based on the data collected during the study (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Guidelines for the joint interview included 1) first name basis; 2) listen respectfully as others share, 3) no right or wrong answers, only different points of view; 4) talk one at a time; 5) rules for cellphone use (phones on silent; emergencies taken in the hallway and rejoin as soon as possible); and 6) the role of the

moderator is to guide the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The joint interview was hand-transcribed by the researcher using a researcher produced key code conventions chart.

Reflective Journals

Each of the participants were asked to submit periodic journal entries throughout their first-year teaching experience to reflect on leading questions. Participants were given a timeline for journal submissions that fell between interviews at approximately mid-quarter. Journal entries included initial descriptions of community, school, and classrooms; school policies that may affect their experiences; and reflective statements about developmentally appropriate practices, classroom environment, instructional planning, classroom management styles, school culture, and induction support (Appendix H). The journal entries could be written, or self-audio recorded, and submitted to the researcher through email. As a method of procedural ethics, the self-audio recordings were unavailable to others and destroyed after transcription. Any identifying information was given pseudonyms and written identifying information was marked through to avoid deductive disclosure (Tracy, 2010).

Analysis

Consistent with the constructivist approach, participants are actively involved in and interpreting experiences, and the researchers are actively involved with constructing interpretations of the data collected (Charmaz, 2014; Lauckner, Paterson & Krupa, 2012). The focus of interpretive analysis lies in reflective reading of the text obtained from the data and the application of codes (Gibbs, 2012). Codes allow the researcher to categorize group concepts that seem to relate to the same phenomena. Interview transcripts and journal writing were reviewed using step-by-step thematic analysis that included reading the transcripts several times, labeling relevant pieces, deciding which codes were most important and creating categories, labeling, and

describing the connections between them, and summarizing the results (Lofgren, 2013). This inductive approach develops categories constructed from the data using phrases from the participants themselves rather than the researcher's theoretical vocabulary (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Line-by-line coding allowed the researcher to capture the complexity and diversity of the data and categorize group concepts that seemed to relate to the same phenomena (Charmaz, 2014). Descriptive data also allowed the researcher to construct conceptual categories that may give insight to the assumptions held about the broader phenomenon (Merriam, 1998).

There are some problems with using a purely inductive approach which includes data that becomes overly complicated and lacks focus (Bendassolli, 2013; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). In deductive reasoning, a research-based theoretical framework is adopted by the researcher and is converted into a pre-defined list of codes before the data is analyzed (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013). Although the coding framework can be adjusted if something new emerges, deductive reasoning is criticized for its limited and narrow approach to the data. A combination of inductive and deductive reasoning is commonly used by cycling back and forth between the data and theory in a blended approach called abduction (Alvesson & Karreman, 2007; Graebner, Martin, & Roundy, 2012). Abductive reasoning reduces the problems associated with a purely inductive or deductive approach by allowing the richness of the data to emerge while staying focused on existing theories (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). The blended approach of abductive reasoning was used in an ongoing cycle of content analysis throughout the data collection procedures using hand-coding. This allowed the researcher to create applicable leading questions based on the experiences and constructed ideas of the participants. Inter-coder reliability was addressed by a second researcher (major advisor) in a portion of the data analysis process.

To reach a point of saturation, data sampling, data collection, and analysis was combined in an ongoing, cyclic process rather than separate stages in a linear procedure (Bryman, 2012). Saturation, which is typically viewed as the ‘gold’ standard in assessing qualitative research, can be viewed in multiple perspectives depending on the type of research study being conducted (Saunders et al., 2017). In a deductive approach, saturation may be regarded as the extent that the predetermined codes are represented adequately with the data collected. In this instance, it may be necessary to refer to research where categories are supported through existing theory to establish an adequate sample size for saturation (Francis, 2010; Saunders et al., 2017). In an inductive approach, saturation may refer to the extent that new codes or themes are recognized from the data (Saunders et al., 2017). Although saturation plays a different role in each approach, it can be considered thematic in both cases.

Thematic saturation focused more on reaching saturation based on the ‘meaning’ of the inductive codes rather than the number produced (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). The authors argue that the “dimensions, nuances, or insights” related to the codes is achieved later through interpretive analysis and relying on the number of inductive codes “misses the point of saturation” (p. 15). Interpretations made at the beginning stages related to themes and categories may be theoretically immature and require modifications through detailed methods such as constant comparative analysis (Saunders et al., 2017).

Inductive Coding

In constant comparison analysis, every part of the data is constantly compared with other parts of the data to explore variations and exhaust all possible angles of a topic (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). To systematize constant comparative analysis the study adopted a procedure (Table 3) mirroring the work of Boeije (2002) which included the following steps: 1) comparison

within a single interview/journal reflection, 2) comparison between interview/journal reflections in the same group, and 3) comparison between interview/reflection journals in different groups.

Table 3

Steps for Constant Comparison Analysis

Type	Analysis Activity	Aim	Questions	Results
Comparison within a single interview or reflection	Open coding: summarizing main ideas; finding consensus within fragments	Develop categories; label with adequate code	What is the core message? How are fragments related? Is there interview consistent or are there contradictions? What do fragments with the same code have in common?	Summary of interview of reflection; code tree; conceptual profile memos.
Comparison between interviews or reflections in same group	Axial coding; hypothesizing about patterns	Conceptualize the subject; produce a typology	Is A talking about the same as B? What do they both reveal about the category? What are the similarities between A and B? What criteria underlie in the comparison?	Expansion of codes? Description of concepts?
Comparison between interviews or reflections in different group	Triangulation of data sources	Enrich information	What does A say about a theme and what does B say about the same theme? What themes exist for A but not for B and vice versa?	Additional information; memos

Source: Boeije, H (2002). A purposeful approach to the constant comparative method in the analysis of qualitative interviews. *Quality and Quantity*, 36(4), 391-409.

Comparison within a single interview or reflection

Comparison within a single interview or journal reflection is the start of the inductive coding cycle, where every passage of one interview or one journal reflection is examined to

determine what was said and labeled with an appropriate code (Boeije, 2002). The interview as a whole is also examined by its parts. For example, clarification is needed if a participant says they have no concerns about behavior management but later describes an issue with student behavior. If one part of the interview or journal reflection is given a label, other parts are studied for fragments that match that label. The fragments within each label are then compared to examine how they are alike or different and in what context the participant made the comments. The aim of this step is to develop categories and label them with the most adequate codes. Researchers can formulate a central message to an interview or reflection by studying the codes attached to it and highlight any difficulties or inconsistencies. This first step of constant comparison generates several results including a summary of the interview or reflection, a list of codes (code tree), a distillation of the interview reflection into an inventory, and memos that describe the analysis process. All new interviews or reflections were examined as described in Table 3.

Comparison between interviews or reflections in the same group

In this step, interviews or reflections are compared to one another based on fragments that have the same theme or *code* (Appendix I). Making an inventory of the characteristics of each category makes it possible for researchers to describe and define some concepts (Boeije, 2002). The themes function as the systematic criteria for comparison during this axial coding process. The aim of this step is to develop conceptualizations of the new teachers' experiences and discover combinations of codes and possible patterns if they exist. The results are an extension of the codes until no more are needed to describe the themes in the compared interviews or reflections.

Comparison between interviews or reflections in different groups

The researcher then goes about identifying the criteria on which some interviews or reflections differ from others. The differences are dictated by using patterns or combinations of codes. Interviews or reflections from two different participants are compared based on a specific phenomenon to explore its dimensions and give depth to the typology. The results are a deepened insight into a phenomenon and additional memos about the analysis process.

Deductive Coding

After systematically interpreting the data through the inductive approach of constant comparative analysis, line by line color coding using the theoretical framework was used as the deductive coding cycle. This allowed the researcher to realign with the theory supporting the study. In this study, Conway and Clark's (2003) social constructivist view of teacher development embedded with self-reflective practice was used as the theoretical framework for the deductive reasoning cycle of abduction (Table 4). The framework is more comprehensive than the other concerns models as both an inward and outward trajectory that encompasses teacher hopes and aspirations as well as fears and concerns. The idea that new teachers think and change as they construct meaning from their interactions with others is consistent with the constructivist theory of learning. Some categories during the coding analysis were not mutually exclusive and were counted twice.

Reflective Statement

One of the purposes of providing and identifying the researcher's background is that readers can find understanding in the researcher's perspective. In qualitative research, the researcher's perspective is explained by subjectivity. Preissle (2008) defined a subjectivity statement as "a summary of who researchers are in relation to what and whom they are studying"

(p. 845). A subjectivity statement supports researchers in reflecting how their personal characteristics, experiences, beliefs, cultural perspectives, feelings, and professional predispositions may affect their research (Preissle, 2008).

Table 4

Framework for Deductive Coding

One Word Category	Description
Self-Concern	Any feelings, hopes or fears centered on oneself that includes an “I” statement. Examples: “I hope I can be a fun teacher” or “I’m afraid I can’t handle the students”.
Relationships	Any feelings, hopes or fears that have to do with a relationship with someone else, including parents, students, coworkers, cooperating teacher, own family, peers, and university supervisor. Examples: I’m afraid some teachers don’t care” or “I hope to have supportive colleagues”.
Knowledge	Any feelings, hopes or fears related to knowledge about curriculum or instruction. Examples: “I fear that they won’t catch the idea I am teaching” or “I’m afraid about how detailed the lesson plans have to be.”
Expectations	Any feelings, hopes or fears related to what is expected from others such as timelines, assessment, student progress measures, and evaluation systems. Examples: “The list of things for teachers to do is overwhelming” or “I’m afraid that my students won’t do well on tests”.
Goal setting	Any feelings, hopes or fears related to improving teaching ability or career goal setting. Example: “I hope to establish myself as a credible teaching prospect.”

Source: Conway, P. F., & Clark, C. M. (2003). The journey inward and outward: A re-examination of Fuller’s Concerns-Based Model of Teacher Development. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 19*(5), 465–482.

I have been in a classroom for most of my life. I have witnessed multiple reform changes aimed at educators throughout my twenty-four years in the same school district. I started as a paraprofessional in general education kindergarten when my children were young, and later became a teacher of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students as a second career. I have taught general education, self-contained special education, and been a co-teacher for inclusion. My research interests began as a student in higher education. While interacting with teacher candidates through field work supervision, I began to see the difficulties related to the transition of becoming a teacher. Since my path into teaching was different, I wanted to better understand the college to classroom experience. I expect that I can introduce my findings as confirming some of my experiences as a teacher, while also understanding new aspects of teaching in the first year. Crossley (1996) explains intersubjectivity as the key to understanding human life in its personal and societal forms.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in a chronological sequence to gain an understanding of how new teachers' feelings are experienced throughout their first year. The initial individual interviews were held after the first quarter grading period with subsequent individual interviews after the second and third quarter grading periods (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). A joint interview was held near the last grading period at the end of the school year.

Table 5.1*Interview Schedule with Cami*

	Date	Time of Day	Length
Interview One	10-20-2021	5:30 - 6:06 PM	36:09
Interview Two	01-24-2022	3:43 – 4:09 PM	25:56
Interview Three	03-23-2022	4:01 – 4:36 PM	34:25
Joint Interview	05-16-2022	3:44 – 4:19 PM	35:47

Table 5.2*Interview Schedule with Kyra*

	Date	Time of Day	Length
Interview One	10-20-2021	3:04 – 3:27 PM	23:08
Interview Two	01-24-2022	2:59 – 3:19 PM	19:42
Interview Three	03-31-2022	3:06 – 3:31 PM	24:10
Joint Interview	05-16-2022	3:44 – 4:19 PM	35:47

Summary of Interview One

The initial independent interviews with participants ranged from twenty-three minutes to thirty-six minutes in length. Interviews were held after school in the participants' classrooms through Zoom. The platform allows users to create a private virtual meeting room where they can communicate with each other using video and audio. A semi-structured interview protocol was used for the interviews (Appendix D). Participants were informed that the meeting would be recorded and then erased permanently after transcription was complete using non-identifying pseudonyms.

Interview One: Cami

Cami felt that the school misled her with the idea that she would have a new teacher coach available to her. Instead, the coach was always tied up with administrative duties and was not able to support her. She said, "What it turned out to be is that person is being required to attend so many professional developments and so many meetings and different tasks that [she] does not support first year teachers." She felt criticized by her administrative team without a clear explanation of what they wanted to see in her classroom. She received a "needs improvement" for her learning environment on her first Teacher Keys Evaluation System (TKES) walk through. She said it was "slightly frustrating because it had a positive learning environment as a two and it wasn't clearly explained." She felt the most supported by the veteran kindergarten team, a veteran early intervention teacher, and her veteran paraprofessional. She stated, "They are absolutely amazing. I don't love going to work every day, but I would really not love going to work every day if they weren't as awesome as they are."

Cami felt she had a personality conflict with the principal. She felt unsupported and lacked direction, but then she was criticized for the way she was doing something. She became

so frustrated at one point with a conversation about conflicting assessment instructions that she began to cry, and the principal gave her a “blank face” and showed no concern or empathy. This along with school demands left Cami feeling there would be a “high turnover rate again this year” for her school and she was “disheartened to think I have twenty-nine more years of this to endure.” Some of the school demands that she called “absurd” were a template for lesson plans for each subject that amounted to twenty-four pages for one week. She felt this was very different from her student teaching experience where weekly lesson plans were a three-page document. She felt the curriculum that her district had adopted did not align with the state’s inventory of skills, which doubled the assessments she had to give. She said, “The amount of assessments feels very micromanaged, and I don’t feel like I can teach them half the time just because the number of assessments I have to do.” Cami felt the curriculum assessments were not developmentally appropriate and all her students were “in the red.” She felt that she had no flexibility with the curriculum or the schedule and felt that if she did what she thinks her kids need, she would suffer repercussions. She said, “I’m told to do what’s best for my kids, but I don’t feel like I can actually do that.” When needing support with behavior issues, Cami felt unsupported. She said, “First year teachers in my school feel like they can’t hit the black button for an administrator because they’re too busy or you’re supposed to be able to deal with it yourself.” When referring to student misbehavior she said, “I don’t know what else to do.”

Cami felt she needed to improve more with differentiating instruction since her students’ abilities were varying and those exceeding expectations were “bored.” She felt the most successful with setting up classroom expectations and student transitions. She felt weighed down by the school’s Covid-19 protocol which conflicted with best practices for early childhood. Young students had to remain at individual desks with their own materials and could not sit as a

group on the carpet. Cami's classroom carpet was removed from the room. Small groups could not last beyond fifteen minutes, which conflicted with the forty-minute groups that were required for early intervention. Cami felt that she was ineffective as a new teacher at this school, but she was "trying to stay positive and get through every day."

Interview One: Kyra

Kyra had a new teacher orientation before school started but felt unsupported and unprepared to begin teaching in the classroom. She said, "What am I supposed to do when they get here? Like I'm just thrown in the classroom and like figure it out." The veteran grade level chair provided her with support regarding classroom set up and what to do with the students during the first days of school. Kyra was grateful that she did her student teaching within the district that she was currently employed in through a student teaching incentive program. She said, "If I had done my internship in one county and then come to this one, I would be really lost." She felt everyone forgot she was a first-year teacher, and she was basically on her own to figure things out. She stated, "I think they forget new teachers have never taught before and they just expect you to already know the information that somebody who's been teaching ten, or twenty, or even three years knows."

Her biggest challenge had been the behavior of one student whose mom threatened to remove her from school. The student was very disruptive, and Kyra felt the administration did not support her or the student but wanted her to figure it out on her own. She said, "But instead of them supporting me and helping her, they were like you have to figure out a way to deal with this." At first, Kyra felt unequipped to handle the situation, saying "I don't know how to deal with her", but later she felt successful because they "developed an understanding and relationship with each other." Kyra felt classroom management had become her strength. At the

beginning of school, she said, “The kids were running over me, yelling at me. I lost my voice the whole entire first month of school.” She felt she had developed a classroom routine that had greatly improved the situation. She had also seen growth in student knowledge and felt students were learning in her classroom. She said, “I think I’m teaching them. I think they’re learning but to actually see it and hear them say it back is amazing.” An experience that hurt her confidence occurred when a new student who had behavior issues was removed from her classroom and put into a co-worker’s classroom. Her co-workers became angry and said that Kyra had a new teacher favoritism and could not effectively handle the students in her class. Kyra wrote a formal complaint about it and the talking stopped, but it felt “messy” and uncomfortable for her.

At the beginning of school Kyra felt very off balance with her workload. She was working at school and at home until midnight and was discouraged that this was called “the life of a teacher.” By mid-October, she decided not to push herself as much and developed a better work-life balance. Kyra felt her highest demand was Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) and developing lesson plans each week. At the beginning of the year, she was meeting every day after school for each subject and did not have time to plan lessons. Her PLC was also feeling the stress, so they developed a better plan of meeting virtually during specials to free up their afternoons.

Kyra felt she needed to work on improving her mini lessons and small groups. Her mini lessons were “too long”, and she felt she did not always “stick to the lesson plan”, causing them to go over time or become less focused on the intended outcome. There are times she expressed ineffectiveness as a teacher, and she wasn’t sure students were learning or if she was a “good” teacher. She said, “Some days I’m like, did you guys even get that?”

The relationship with the paraprofessional in her room developed over time. Administration advised Kyra to give her assistant more direction and discuss procedures to reduce distractions. Kyra felt uncomfortable at first but learned to tell the paraprofessional what she needed her to do to support the classroom. She stated, “At first, I was timid like do whatever you want. You should know what you are doing. But now I’m like here’s what you’re going to do.” When asked about Covid-19 restrictions, Kyra indicated that they occasionally must wear masks, but she did not feel impacted by district or school Covid-19 protocols in the classroom. She said, “The kids can sit at group tables, share materials, and go to the whole group carpet for lessons. We go to specials, recess, and the lunchroom with no restrictions.”

Interview One Comparison

Both participants felt their induction programs were not as they perceived, and they felt unprepared and unsupported as first-year teachers. Kyra felt grateful that she did her student internship in the same district that she was now teaching through a student teacher program, so she didn’t feel “completely lost”. Cami, however, felt her student teaching experience was completely different than the expectations in her current job. Both felt they got the most support through informal mentorships with veteran teachers on their team. They both expressed that they were dissatisfied with their jobs. Kyra said she “wants to quit every other day” and Cami said she “does not love going to work”.

The participants expressed discordancy with adult relationships at school. Kyra had incidences that were “uncomfortable” and “messy” with the co-workers on her team, her paraprofessional, and a parent. In contrast, Cami had an ongoing, conflicting relationship with her principal. Both participants had feelings of ineffectiveness as a teacher. Kyra’s feelings were based more on her inability to handle student behavior and improve instruction where Cami’s

feelings were based more on district and schoolwide demands that prevented her from teaching effectively. Both new teachers felt they lacked administrative support. Kyra felt her administration only wanted to hear good things and expected her to deal with anything that came up by herself. In contrast, Cami felt her administration was overly critical of her, and they primarily enforced policies and provided repercussions to those who did not meet their unclear expectations. She felt she and her co-worker's lacked autonomy with the curriculum at her school. Kyra expressed multiple feelings of accomplishment with classroom management, student behavior issues and student learning. Cami expressed one accomplishment in setting up expectations when directly asked by the researcher.

Inductive Coding Themes

Themes were analyzed after each interview in an ongoing cycle through inductive coding (Appendix I). These themes impacted the content of the semi-structured protocol for the next interview for each participant. Since some themes changed, some were not universal, and some remained for both throughout the first year, it was advantageous to look at them in a chronological order. This will aid researchers to better understand new teacher experiences and subsequent development. Several themes emerged after the initial individual interviews.

Feeling Unprepared

Kyra made several statements that indicated she felt unprepared to be a teacher in the first quarter of school. She stated that she “doesn’t know what the first day is going to look like” and she is not sure what she is “supposed to do when they get here”. Kyra felt that just because new teachers had an internship, everyone expected them to already know what to do even though they have never taught before. She said her first three months were so difficult, that she would say “I quit” every other day. Cami made no statements about feeling unprepared.

Feeling Unsupported

The participants felt unsupported throughout the first quarter of teaching. After the new teacher orientation, Kyra felt she was not given any direction about how to prepare for her classroom. She said, “When we first started it was like alright. Go. Teach. I think they forget like especially for new, new teachers that we never taught before.” In response to the effectiveness of the orientation Kyra said, “They don’t actually break down the information for you or with you, they’re like, well you did an internship.” Cami was under the impression she would have a new teacher coach, but said, “In reality, it hasn’t quite been that way.” The coach is “too busy” to spend time with Cami because she is “doing other tasks that do not support first year teachers”.

The participants also felt they lacked administrative support, particularly with student misbehavior. Both new teachers felt the administration did not want to intervene when a student was overly disruptive. About behavior, Kyra said, “He was only in my class for three days and he was under the table, throwing his shoes, hitting my kids, throwing his shoes at my kids and it would trigger the little girl and she would run out of the hallway and be gone.” Kyra felt forced to handle student behavior issues by herself even though she confessed, “I don’t know how to deal with it.” Cami said the administration would not get involved with student misbehavior until it is escalated to physical altercations and first year teachers did not feel like they could call for assistance. She said, “They’re too busy or you’re supposed to be able to deal with it yourself.” Cami also felt overly criticized by her principal when given feedback. This felt personal to Cami because the principal was not able to effectively communicate what her expectations were but told her that she needs to improve. Cami said, “So, my biggest challenge so far would definitely

be not collaborating well with administration. For sure. And just not feeling supported. We just don't seem to...it's a personality clash."

Feeling Ineffective

The participants felt ineffective as teachers for various reasons in the first quarter of school. They felt unsuccessful with classroom management and student behavior issues. Kyra said, "My classroom management on the first day of school was all over the place. The kids were running over me, yelling at me. I lost my voice the whole entire first month of school." Kyra also talked about student behavior saying, "...the first month of school every single day she went home because she was like throwing phones, she was being disruptive, she was cussing me out, cussing everybody out. She was one of those that was like the behavior was very disruptive."

Both participants made statements about feeling ineffective with instruction. Kyra felt she had difficulty keeping students engaged during the whole group and following her lesson plans during small groups. She said, "...some days I'm just like, did you guys? Did it register in your brain what I just taught you? That's something I need to work on. And I need to be confident in myself. I think that's my biggest struggle right now because I am a new teacher. I just don't know if I'm good." Cami felt she has difficulty differentiating instruction and challenging students who excelled. She was also frustrated with the curriculum that her school district required her to use. She said, "Kindergarten used to be fun. I think a lot of it has to do with the required curriculum because in my students teaching, we didn't have that. We got to use unit-based, theme based, fun teaching, like an apple unit, a farm unit, and we still taught all the standards. We were still able to integrate the units like beginning, middle, end and living/non-living. I feel like kids would enjoy this more than the required curriculum. And it doesn't line up to [State Assessment] at all. At all. There are things that we are covering in August and

September when [State Assessment] doesn't require it until the end of the year and the kids are not ready for it. It's not developmentally appropriate and we are turning in these assessments and they're all sixties because they aren't ready for it."

Cami also expressed feeling unsuccessful with the use of best practices for young students due to the school's Covid-19 restrictions. Students stayed at individual desks throughout the school day, had to stay three feet apart, and were not allowed to turn and talk, even during social times such as lunch. Her classroom carpet was removed by the school and there were no centers. She said, "I think the kids feel weighed down by it. I can see they are not enjoying school which is very sad to me. They don't have interactions and they are being asked to basically not talk all day long so we can get through all we have to get through."

Feeling Overwhelmed

Both participants expressed feeling overwhelmed with their workload in the first quarter of teaching. Kyra said, "I was working at school and then bringing it all home and I wasn't enjoying my home life because as soon as I got home, I would still be working and not going to bed until midnight." Much of the workload was required after teaching school all day, such as professional development, collaborative meetings, and lesson planning. Cami felt the twenty-four-page lesson plan template they were required to submit each week was unreasonable. In addition, she said, "...but there is still so many meetings, so many professional developments. Everyone's feeling it."

Feelings of Accomplishment

Kyra expressed feelings of accomplishment with classroom management, student progress, and problem solving during the first quarter. She said, "But now we know when the timer goes off, we know what to do next, we know who the line leader is, we know when we're

supposed to wipe down the tables, we know when it's time to go. My classroom management grew the most out of everything." Kyra also felt successful with student progress saying, "I was just like wow, going over this every single day and seeing the growth and development is amazing." She felt that she had successfully created more of a work-life balance by the end of the first quarter saying, "...now that's its mid-October I feel like I'm starting to develop a schedule and a routine. Once I get home, I will look at my power points and then be done. I don't try to push myself as much as when I was really stressed. I cannot be like this." When asked directly by the researcher about feelings of accomplishment, Cami stated, "I think I have done a good job understanding each of my students' needs and trying to figure out how to approach each of them behaviorally."

Feeling Appreciative

Both participants expressed appreciation for the informal mentorship they were receiving from veteran teachers on their team. With formal induction programs falling short, the veteran teachers were providing the new teachers with necessary support. Kyra said, "But thankfully I was blessed with my (informal) mentor teacher and she's like, okay, were going to sit down. What do you need? Let's help you prepare." Cami said, "They are veteran teachers, they know kindergarten, they know the school but not in a stuck up way like, here's my hand, we're going to do this all together."

Feeling Dissatisfied

Both new teachers expressed feelings of dissatisfaction with their careers following the first quarter of school. Kyra felt that the job demands were hard and felt like she wanted to "quit every other day". Cami was struggling with feelings of administrative micromanagement and criticism. She said, "I do not love going to work every day."

Deductive Coding Analysis

After thematic analysis using inductive coding, a framework for deductive coding (Table 4) was used to analyze stages of development through Conway and Clark's (2003) Concerns-Based Model of Teacher Development. Deductive coding followed thematic analysis after each interview to examine changes in teacher development throughout the first year of teaching.

Interview one with Cami revealed fourteen statements of feelings related to self-concerns (46%), ten statements related to feelings about relationships with others (33%), five statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (16%), one statement related to feelings about expectations from others (3%), and no statements made related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting (Figure 1).

Interview one with Kyra revealed seventeen statements of feelings related to self-concerns (45%), thirteen statements related to feelings about relationships with others (34%), six statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (16%), one statement related to feelings about expectations from others (2%), and one statement (2%) made related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting (Figure 2).

Reflection One Analysis

Reflective journal responses were requested by the researcher midway through the first quarter with two prompts (Appendix H). The first prompt was to describe the school culture, the school policies, and the participant's classroom. The second prompt was to describe hopes and fears for the coming school year.

On September 16, 2021, Cami described the school culture as micromanaging and negative due to unclear expectations followed by administrative criticism. Descriptions about school policies mirror the dialogue in interview one related to the mandated curriculum that did

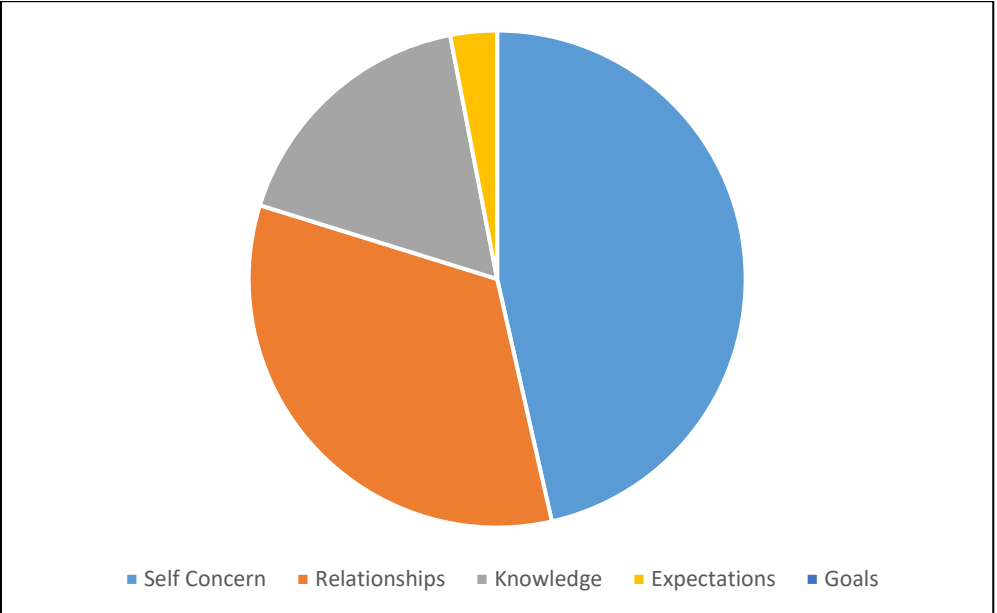


Figure 1. First Quarter Teacher Development for Cami.

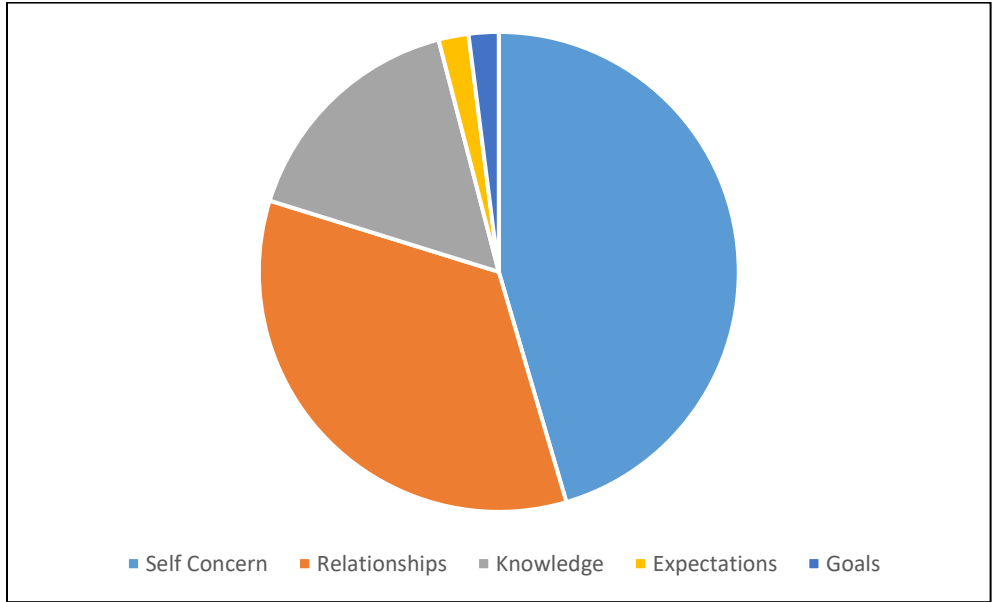


Figure 2. First Quarter Teacher Development for Kyra.

not align with state assessments and the frustration that teachers have “no voice” in what they are teaching. If teachers attempted to reach outside the parameters of the mandated curriculum, it was felt there will be repercussions given by administration. District demands left her feeling

overwhelmed with the number of things she had to do other than teach her students. She was frustrated and felt defeated. She hoped the district would hear what teachers were saying and feared she would not make it through the school year. Using a Framework for Reflective Thinking as a measurement scale (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990), Cami's reflection was at level 4, where she gave explanations with personal preference as the rationale for her feelings. Kyra was unable to complete this reflection due to the level of her workload at school.

Summary of Interview Two

The second independent interviews with participants ranged from twenty minutes to twenty-six minutes in length. Interviews were held on January 24, 2022, after school in the participants' classrooms through Zoom. A semi-structured interview protocol was used for the interviews (Appendix E). Participants were informed that the meeting would be recorded and then erased permanently after transcription was completed using non-identifying pseudonyms.

Interview Two: Cami

Cami felt proud of her students who all grew in either math or reading on the district benchmark assessment. She excitedly anticipated further growth in the spring. She felt that using [PHONICS PROGRAM] had been beneficial for student growth in reading. Cami said, "...like most students grew in at least one area or stayed in the blue. It was so exciting and just sweet to see them realize they were learning, too."

On a personal level, Cami expressed difficulty fully enjoying school and finding fun things for students to do. She continued to feel "bogged down" with district demands to use the curriculum they had purchased and that assessments consumed too much of her instructional time. She said, "This curriculum is not working for kids at all. It's a waste of time. And I wish I did not have to do these many assessments. I mean, I spent the last two weeks...because my

parapro keeps getting pulled to cover other classes because Covid numbers are high...and it's taken me two weeks to complete this [READING PROGRAM] assessment that's like five pages long." She expressed exhaustion with these demands and felt like she was not able to create fun learning units like she did in her student internship. She said, "I don't feel like I have the ability to be creative with the curriculum that we're given. That's why I'm having a hard time with it. I just feel like last year we had so much fun in my internship and we had the freedom to create these fun units. I don't know. I have partner games and different things like that. It's just so much effort." She felt she lacked the autonomy needed to alter activities to make them more engaging because it was time consuming, and she feared administration would "come in" and say she was "not doing what she's supposed to be doing."

Cami indicated on reflection two that "school is not fun" and when asked to elaborate, she felt Covid-19 restrictions limited her ability to optimize classroom management and learning opportunities. She said, "...like having to have desks three feet apart, not having the space to get my classroom rug back in here at this point, and not having a table to work together collaboratively, and the fear if a kid is near someone for longer than 15 minutes, they're going to be sent home. I just have a hard time with it still and just I'm eager for the day that I don't have to think about it anymore." Cami's school did not require schoolwide virtual learning when returning from winter break. The only schoolwide virtual learning was in the first four days of school, and her grade level gave her the materials and resources needed. However, many of her students relied on paper packets instead of virtual learning due to lack of devices or reliable Wi-Fi. Restrictions at her school were beginning to lift when a new strain arrived, and she felt they were "back at square one" with protocols. She expressed her opinion that the school's principal

was particularly strict with guidelines because “she doesn’t want to have the school with the highest numbers”.

Cami expressed more challenges with feelings of discordancy during the second quarter. She continued to feel a conflicting relationship with her principal who gave her two more “needs improvement” marks on a second TKES evaluation. Cami was upset that the principal never came to observe formally but said she was “watching her all the time.” Cami felt her principal was giving a negative opinion of her performance with no clear explanation of what she wanted to see. She says, “I don’t think there was any evidence in my walk through to support that I wasn’t doing that.” Cami also experienced negative communication with parents who misinterpret her and question her teaching abilities. She said, “I had a mom blow up at me this morning because I emailed asking her where her kid’s book bag was and could she bring it to school and somehow, she took that the wrong way.” She felt ill-equipped to manage these negative communications and said, “She straight up told me I don’t know anything because I’m so young and I don’t have any kids. So, that really hurts.”

Cami continued to feel there was a lack of administrative support for student misbehavior. She said the principal overlooks teacher concerns about student behavior to avoid “looking bad on paper.” She stated, “Overall, the lack of support comes from the lack of behavioral support throughout the school. That’s across the board right now. There’s no real set of consequences.” She felt she had “emptied her bag of tricks” yet student misbehavior still existed. Cami continued to feel that her biggest support was her kindergarten team, and their relationship had evolved into friendships. She said that she would miss them when she left at the end of the year as she had decided to transfer to a different school district. Cami felt that she

would “do better” having people her age around her and that her rural district was too far away from “literally anyone.” She said, “I have no real life outside of school.”

Interview Two: Kyra

Kyra felt her current challenge was becoming frustrated when she had to repeat directions to students who were not listening. She said, “...sometimes I notice the kids aren’t listening to me and I get frustrated really easily and I say things over and over and over. It happens every single day. It’s hard to teach and manage the class when I’m frustrated.” She felt her biggest accomplishment was the growth she saw with student progress on a software diagnostic benchmark assessment. Kyra stated, “When the kids took the [SOFTWARE DIAGNOSTIC] I saw the growth from the beginning of the school year to December. Wow, to actually see them learning and growing every single day. Learning their letters and sounds and being able to write words and spell words. It’s really awesome to see.” She said, “Seeing this growth is what drives me to come to work every day.”

Kyra continued to feel unsupported by the new teacher induction program which had now dissolved. She said, “New teachers we are supposed to have new teacher meetings every month, and we talk about if we need anything, or something is going good or what’s going bad. And because so many people are leaving the school it seems the admin team just did away with it.” Kyra also felt the administration did not support her and lacked the time and answers that she could get quickly and efficiently from veteran teachers. She said, “I rarely talk to them or go to them at all. I don’t feel like they’re really here to support me. They’re like, you can come to talk to us if you need anything, but my team leader can answer it faster and better than them.” She felt most unsupported by the administration for lack of developing consistent consequences for student misbehavior. She stated when she asks for help, administration “sends her right back to

me and I'm the one who has to deal with her problem." Kyra felt that administration's time was mostly consumed with tasks that made the school "look good on paper." She expressed that the overall school was not happy with the new principal and talked about how many teachers had already quit. Kyra felt the new principal used to have a micromanaging style but had "backed off" due to the problems that were occurring at the school. She said, "...lots of changes and people are leaving. Because the principal is new for this school year and people were used to the old principal and no one wants to work with the new principal and the new admin. Team. A lot of people are leaving and feel like the job isn't a good fit for them. So, this is really hurting the kids and the teachers that are still here because we don't have as much support as we did."

Kyra felt she had accomplished a more suitable work-life balance by finding resources to help her prepare in planning and now had a system of putting the grades in each week, so she no longer felt overwhelmed. She said, "I feel like it's balanced really well now because I can actually breathe when I leave work and feel like I have a life outside of my job. And I'm not as stressed as I was when I first started." She expressed a positive relationship that had developed with her co-workers and was grateful they got along and did not argue like the teachers she worked with in her student internship. She said, "That was one of my biggest fears that I'd have to work with people that I didn't like because it happened in my internship when two teachers went back and forth all day long arguing with each other and they had to work together. I was like, I hope that doesn't happen to me. But I love my team."

When asked about Covid-19 protocols, Kyra stated that students in her district had two weeks of virtual learning after winter break. She felt she was ineffective when teaching virtually due to technology issues, parent interactions during lessons, and lack of student attention. She said, "It was really hard to keep them engaged for eight hours on a computer. I would take the

morning time to get through all the subjects and then if we needed to pull for small groups, I would use the afternoon for that instead of trying to keep the whole class focused on the screen the entire time. It doesn't work!" She stated she would often have to repeat lessons that many students missed or were unable to understand when learning virtually. Kyra felt relieved that she no longer had to teach virtually, and students were back in classrooms with no restrictions.

Kyra felt frustrated and ineffective when her paraprofessional was pulled to cover for another class or was not able to get a substitute. She felt overwhelmed in these instances because the students were very "needy", and she was not able to function well when she was the only one in the room. She said, "...like when my para is absent or leaves for weeks, or is constantly pulled to cover another class and I don't have a sub. Having all twenty kids by myself and still teach and having to do everything and small groups...those are the days I want to quit." Kyra felt conflicted when asked about job satisfaction, saying some days she "loves it" and other days it's "too hard".

Interview Two Comparison

In interview two, participants no longer expressed feelings of being unprepared as new teachers, although Kyra continued to feel unsupported through the induction program that had disappeared at her school. Both participants continued to rely heavily on the veteran teachers at their grade level for informal mentorship. Cami continued to have conflicting relationships with her principal and her student's parents. Her principal continued to give her "needs improvement" on TKES evaluations without a formal observation or a clear explanation of what she wanted to see. She felt frustrated that the principal was evaluating her based on her opinion with no guidance. Cami had also experienced some negative confrontations with parents who she felt

were aggressive and questioned her expertise. She did not feel equipped to handle these confrontations. Kyra did not express any negative relationship experiences this quarter.

Both participants continued to express feelings of being ineffective as a teacher, but for varied reasons. Kyra's feelings of ineffectiveness centered on instructional methods, such as "the kids aren't listening" and students not retaining information after breaks. Cami, however, felt ineffective as a teacher because the curriculum she was required to use had too many assessments that absorbed her instructional time, and she lacked the autonomy to be creative and make lessons more engaging. She also felt Covid-19 restrictions continued to prevent her from using best instructional practices such as peer-paired learning, small groups, and the use of manipulatives. Kyra did not express feelings of ineffectiveness due to Covid-19 restrictions, however her district did return from winter break with mandatory virtual learning. Kyra did not enjoy the experience because it was difficult to engage young students on a computer all day and she had to reteach the information when returning to school. Cami's district did not require schoolwide virtual learning after winter break but continued to have rigid protocols in place.

Both participants continued to express frustration with the lack of administrative support. They felt administration did not have a consistent set of consequences that supported them with student behavior issues. They both felt the administration did not want to "look bad" so they overlooked misbehavior and sent students back to class for teachers to deal with. Kyra felt that she had not built a relationship with the administration because they were too busy and didn't know what they were doing. She instead went to her veteran grade level teachers for quick and reliable information. Cami felt more of a personal conflict with her principal due bad feedback on evaluations without clear explanation and retaliation when questioning the curriculum.

The new teachers felt they were better able to manage the workload this quarter and had feelings of accomplishment with student learning due to increases on winter benchmark assessments. Cami felt a particular reading program had been the benefit to student success. Kyra expressed feelings of accomplishment centered on problem solving by finding resources to make lesson planning timelier and setting goals for improving student progress monitoring this semester.

Both participants continued to express a lack of job satisfaction. Shortages with substitutes resulted in having their paraprofessionals pulled to cover classes. They found it hard to manage the class and teach without classroom support. Kyra expressed a high teacher turnover rate during the school year that left pressure on the teachers that remained. Kyra joked that she still quits every other day and needed a new career. Cami felt she had a challenging time fully enjoying school and had decided to apply to a new district for the next school year.

Inductive Coding Themes

Themes were analyzed after the second interview in an ongoing cycle through inductive coding (Appendix I). Feelings of being unprepared to teach were not present after the second quarter. Several themes remained the same but in varying contexts after the second individual interviews.

Feeling Unsupported

Kyra continued to have feelings of being unsupported by the new teacher induction program, which had been dissolved at her school. Both participants felt challenged by student behavior issues and unsupported by administration, particularly as it related to consistent consequences for student misbehavior. Both participants felt the administration was not willing to give consequences for misbehavior so the school “looks good on paper” to its stakeholders.

This left the new teachers feeling like they were isolated in trying to solve severe behavior issues in their classrooms. Kyra said, “We don’t have something put in place for behavior issues...to give consistent consequences, so it just keeps happening. And with our counselors leaving like every month, we don’t have that support either from someone else who could come talk to the child or take that burden off of us.”

Cami also felt unsupported due to ongoing relationship problems with her principal and parents. She felt at odds with the principal as she was given continual negative feedback without clear expectations or coaching. She felt she could not voice her concerns or be creative in her classroom since she feared there would be repercussions. She also felt unsupported by a few parents who misinterpreted her communications and disapproved of her first-year teaching status.

Feeling Ineffective

Both participants felt ineffective as new teachers to varying degrees and for different reasons. Kyra’s ineffectiveness was situational, such as when she teaches virtually for two weeks, when her para is pulled, and when she feels frustrated that she had to repeat herself to students. In contrast, Cami felt globally ineffective due to a lack of autonomy with instructional and classroom practices. She said, “The curriculum has these tasks that we have to do each week in addition to the standards and they just aren’t engaging. In my opinion. I’d much rather be more autonomous.” She felt conflicted with the required curriculum and Covid-19 protocols and feared consequences if she made changes that were more in line with her beliefs.

Feeling Appreciative

Both new teachers continued to make statements of feeling appreciative of the veteran teachers on their grade level. When asked what empowered her, Kyra said, “I would say the

people I work with. We have a great relationship and simply because they know I am new...they call me out when I'm wrong and then I can fix it. I'm really learning from them more than you know. I love my kinder team." While Kyra felt she had been coached by her veteran team, Cami felt hers had become her friends. She said, "...my biggest support is my immediate kindergarten teammates and our EIP teacher. They are just the best. Just outside of academics, like we're friends now...to the point that I'm really sad to be leaving them."

Feeling Overwhelmed

Cami continued to make statements in the second interview about feeling overwhelmed with the workload and demands at her school. She said, "...for some reason it all piled up last week and I was stressed out and I haven't felt that kind of stress and backlog since August and September when I was getting my bearings." When she expressed feelings about making activities more engaging, she said, "I want to have partner games and different things like that. It's just so much effort."

Feelings of Accomplishment

Both participants made statements that demonstrated feelings of accomplishment with the results of student winter benchmark assessments. Kyra also felt accomplished with balancing her workload more successfully and finding valuable classroom resources. She said, "I've found resources that help me make my power points and stuff. So that's basically what it was...preparing for my next day of school. And now that I actually have resources that help me make the power points or have a power point that's already created that I can use...has saved me a lot of time." The demands of the job seemed less daunting for her as she exclaimed, "I'm keeping up now with the day-to-day stuff like lesson plans. I usually take the afternoons before I

leave to get things done. Even like with grades. I was usually putting them in all at the same time and it was a lot, but I've been putting grades in every week now and I'm so proud of myself."

Feelings of Job Dissatisfaction

Both new teachers made statements about feeling dissatisfied with their job. Kyra stated during the interview, "I just got back from winter break a couple of weeks ago and I already feel like I need another break. I mean, it's only January." Cami said, "I don't know. A lot of it's me. I'm having a hard time fully enjoying school and finding fun things for us to do." Kyra had mixed feelings saying, "It's just some days, I love my job and other days it's too hard and it's a lot. I actually quit last week, but then I came the next day. They're like, okay, Kyra, see you tomorrow. I'm like, no, I quit. I'm done. But then I come back." Cami had decided to teach at another district next year, which she attributed to her upcoming marriage. She said, "I maybe would have explored other opportunities, but now that I'm getting married, I'll be teaching in a different county next year."

Deductive Coding Analysis

Interview two with Cami revealed fifteen statements of feelings related to self-concerns (47%), nine statements related to feelings about relationships with others (28%), six statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (19%), two statements related to feelings about expectations from others (6%), and no statements related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting. Cami's concerns after the second quarter remained relatively the same with a slight increase in each category other than goals (Figure 3).

Interview two with Kyra revealed twelve statements of feelings related to self-concerns (45%), five statements related to feelings about relationships with others (19%), six statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (22%), three statements related to

feelings about expectations from others (11%), and one statement made related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting (3%). Kyra's feelings related to self-concern remained the same and relationship concerns decreased. Kya's feelings, hopes, and fears about knowledge increased after the second quarter of teaching (Figure 4).

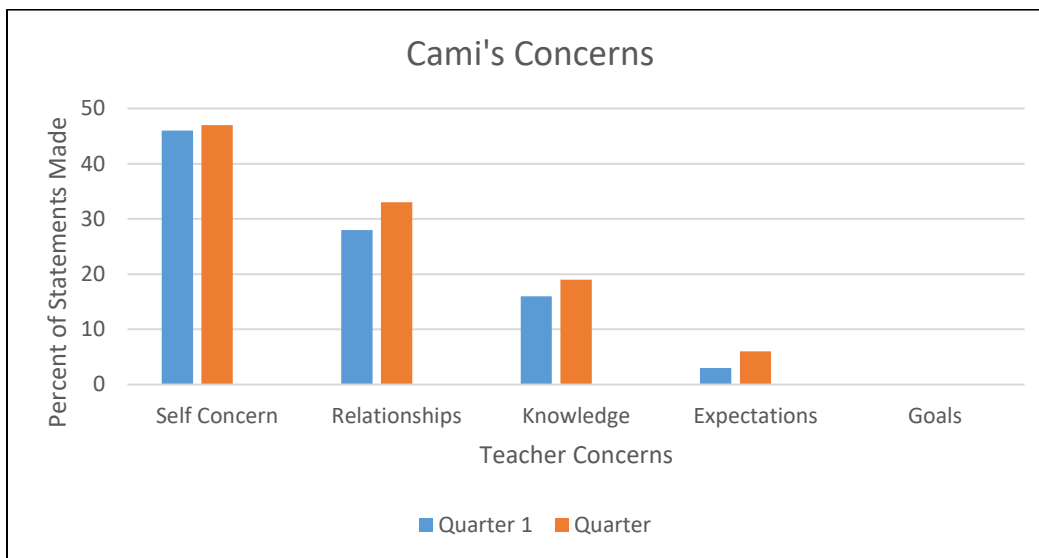


Figure 3. Second Quarter Teacher Development for Cami.

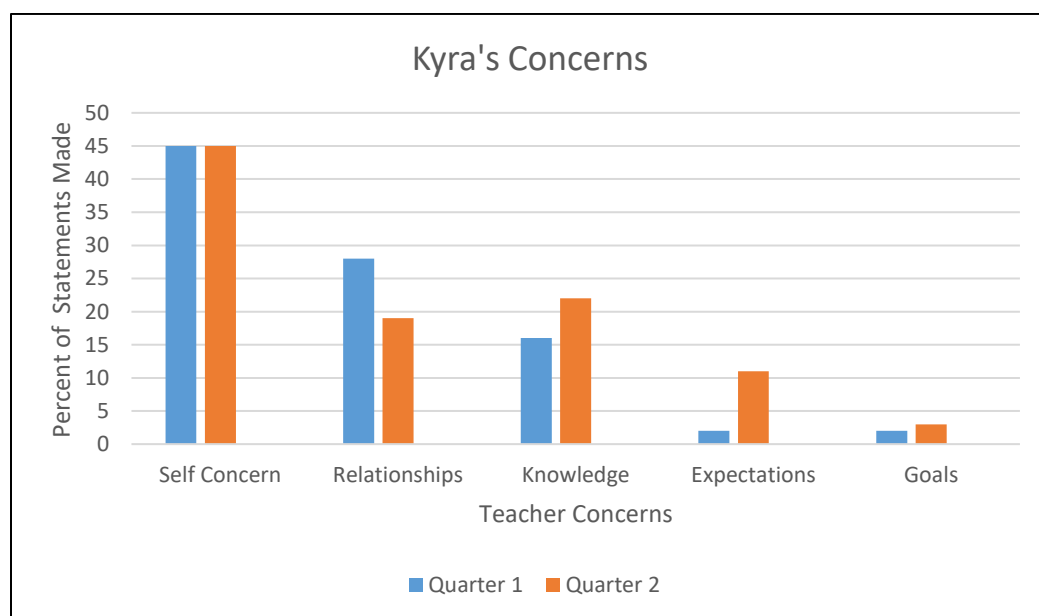


Figure 4. Second Quarter Teacher Development for Kyra.

Reflection Two Analysis

Reflective journal responses were requested by the researcher mid-way through the second quarter with two prompts (Appendix H). The first prompt was to describe the best moment as a new teacher and how you could have more like this. The second prompt was to describe the most challenging moment, why it was challenging, and how you would respond next time.

Cami's journal reflection on December 24, 2021, described her best moment as student improvement on winter benchmark assessments. Students "had fun" at a schoolwide celebration and she felt this was the happiest she had ever seen her students. She would like to have more of these moments by having more schoolwide incentives for students to work toward each month. She felt students needed incentives because school was "not fun". She felt students should enjoy coming to school but felt she could not make activities more engaging for them due to the rigid curriculum she was required to use. Cami's felt her most challenging moment had been the overall management of classroom behavior. She felt one student in her class was particularly challenging and the level of attention she was required to give him was "rubbing off" on the other students. She felt frustrated with her ineffectiveness to get students to "do the right thing". She felt anxious about this situation as a whole due to administrative and parental criticism. The reflective journal responses were consistent with Cami's feelings in interview two. Using a Framework for Reflective Thinking as a measurement scale (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990), Cami's reflection remains at level 4, where she gave explanations with personal preference as the rationale for her feelings. Kyra was unable to complete this reflection due to a lengthy personal illness.

Summary of Interview Three

The third independent interviews with participants ranged from twenty-four minutes to thirty-five minutes in length. Interviews were held on March 23, 2022, and March 31, 2022, after school in the participants' classrooms through Zoom. A semi-structured interview protocol was used for the interviews (Appendix F).

Interview Three: Cami

Cami felt like she had gotten “lazy” with lesson planning since it now felt like a “daily routine”. She felt like she could “play more” with the lesson plans since she was leaving at the end of the year and no longer feared repercussions. She had added a student reflection component to assessment instead of “copying all those sheets.” She continued to feel that the pre- and post-assessments based on her school’s required curriculum were “the most absurd things I’ve ever seen in my life”. Cami expressed frustration with the multiple ways she was asked to track data across multiple programs making it difficult for her to navigate what to focus on. She said, “...we have like twenty ways to track data. It’s absurd. I do wish there was more concise way to do it because when I was in my student teaching, we had [SOFTWARE PROGRAM] and I loved it. It was awesome. Everything was in one place, and it graphed everything and mapped everything for you. And we have things in twenty different locations.”

Cami’s grade level team met each week and was required to go through the county wide curriculum tasks and complete a checklist for administration. She felt “tired” of having a “one-size fits all curriculum that meets no one’s needs”. She felt relieved that she “said her piece” about adhering to the required curriculum and was grateful that the veteran teachers on her team had helped her feel “more confident” with adapting it to meet her students’ needs. She said, “I would have just gone with the flow and stressed myself out trying to adhere to all this even when

it wasn't working for my kids." She stated, "I don't know if I'd have been as confident or doing that as well if it wasn't for the two people on my team that have been doing this for eighteen plus years that they have now."

Cami continued to have feelings of dissonance with her principal at the end of the third quarter. When asked about relationships with others at school she said, "The only thing is the professionalism of our principal at times. There have been some things recently with transfers and different jobs that have affirmed my kind of beliefs that I didn't really want to have about her but at the same time is eye opening." She felt that the teachers in her building were more relaxed when the principal was not there, and overall, teachers were not happy. Cami said, "My principal is giving me a good reference when the schools are calling, and she's been very polite about it so I'm going to keep playing the game until I leave."

Cami continued to feel ineffective as a teacher. She described a lesson that did not go well due to her instructional methods and how she relied on a veteran teacher to help her understand why her students did not "get this". She said, "...we were all focused and listening to the mini lesson. But then I gave them independent practice and I don't even know. My parapro was looking though them and was like...okay, well they didn't get this." When asked about a lesson that she thought was really successful, she instead described a software program that "frontloaded" addition for her students and that overall, this concept was going well. She said, "I think I was stressing trying to teach addition. I mean, I don't know. It was just challenging. I wanted to make sure I presented it in a way they would understand." Cami described her biggest obstacle over the last three quarters as students who do not want to learn and parents who do not support her. She said, "Between that (kids who don't care) and the parents who have not taken my side on a lot of things. Those are the two biggest." She felt that Covid-19 protocols that did

not allow parents to come into the school had a negative impact on family and school relationships.

Overall, Cami felt apathetic because “the culture of the school itself is not fun. It’s like nothing is allowed.” She says, “I mean, planning fun things for us to do is just not happening. So, the culture of the school doesn’t allow fun events to celebrate, or venture away from the curriculum, or even go on field trips. I can’t tell if it’s the curriculum of the county that binds us to do things or the culture of the school that doesn’t allow us to celebrate and have fun.” Cami also felt apathetic about the professional development she had participated in as a new teacher. She said, “Across the board, some of it feels a little redundant, and it doesn’t apply to me.” Cami felt anxious about how her students would perform on the end of the year state testing “because it’s a true reflection of me at the same time”. She also stated that she was both excited and anxious to find a new job. She said, “It keeps me awake at night.”

Interview Three: Kyra

Kyra made several statements about feeling more effective as a teacher in interview three. She described how she and her team used summative assessment data to inform the next week’s whole group instruction and how she was using formative assessment data to plan and differentiate small groups. When asked about a lesson that went really well, she explicitly described a subtraction word problem lesson. She said, “I love math lessons. Math lessons are really fun because you can do so much with it.” When asked about a lesson that did not go as intended, Kyra reflected back to the beginning of the school year to describe a scripted reading lesson that she herself did not understand. After receiving clarification from her grade level chair, she retaught the lesson during “Flex Friday” with a book she could relate to better.

When asked about current challenges, she described feelings of dissonance over a recent situation with one set of parents. In disagreement about consequences for misbehavior, the parents told Kyra she was not a good teacher. She said, “So yesterday her parents came up to the school and were just like, my child wants to change classes, you are not a good fit for her, and we don’t think you’re a good teacher now. I mean, it’s March. The end of March. Actually April. You thought I was a good fit and a great teacher the entire year.” Kyra empathized with parents who were protective of their child, but some of the things parents said when they were “sensitive at the moment” really affected and hurt her. She said, “I mean, I was really down all day yesterday. I thought I was a good teacher. I don’t really know if I want to teach and everything now.”

When asked about school relationships, Kyra continued to feel the most supported by her veteran grade level team members. She felt she was never alone with situations that arose, and they offered advice on how she could handle problems. Kyra added that she did not go to administration “for anything”. She stated she had only seen the principal and assistant principal in her classroom twice this year. She said, “I feel like if someone made the effort to sit down with me and just talk, I’d be more open and willing to talk to them. I know they have a lot going on but if I was a principal and I had a new teacher, I would definitely try to make sure she was at least straight for her first four months of school.” Kyra felt teaching was a challenging job and “you really want to feel like they care about you.”

When asked about professional development opportunities she participated in, Kyra felt they were “repetitive, long and boring”. She said, “I pretty much already know it” and “I don’t think it’s been beneficial at all.” She went on to describe professional development that would be more practical to her as a first-year teacher, such as training or coaching with instructional

planning, student engagement, and behavior strategies. She said, “We need to figure out what works in our classroom, and it would really help to be able to hear practical things.”

When asked to describe her expectations for next year Kyra said, “I’m still trying to debate if I want to do this long term. Like something I really want to do.” Kyra felt hopeful for next year since she knows what to expect. She planned to make changes for improvement with her schedule and small groups and wanted to do stations next year “so that way every kid will be doing something fun while they’re learning for reading and math”. She felt excited to see the results of diagnostic tests so she could “see how much the kids have grown the whole school year.”

Interview Three Comparison

Both participants continued to feel supported professionally through informal mentorship from veteran teachers on their grade level. This support extended to a personal level for both new teachers, as veterans offered empathy and guidance with problems that arose. Both participants continued to feel unsupported by the administration, although in different ways. Cami felt the lack of support was due to continual micromanaging and personal criticism, where Kami felt there was an absence and lack of caring by her administration. Both participants felt challenged by conflicts with parents. Cami felt an overall lack of caring from parents about their child’s learning and “being on her side.” Kyra felt upset by a particular incident that occurred with parents where she felt attacked and vulnerable as a new teacher. Both participants lacked enthusiasm with professional development trainings, describing them as “repetitive” and “redundant.” The new teachers felt that their district-assigned professional development did not apply or benefit them in the classroom. Both new teachers looked forward to seeing student growth on the end of year diagnostics, but Cami felt anxious while Kyra felt excited.

Many other differences started to surface after the third quarter of first-year teaching. Cami felt apathetic with instructional planning and delivery. She felt the culture of the school prevented her from adapting lessons to be fun and engaging for her students. Cami continued to feel globally ineffective as a teacher due to these restraints and was not able to describe a lesson that made her feel successful. In contrast, Kyra felt effective with instructional planning and delivery. She gave detailed descriptions of lessons that made her feel successful, and when discussing a lesson that did not go well, she referred to the beginning of the school year. When responding to the researcher about next year's expectations, Cami felt excited and anxious about finding a new teaching job while Kyra felt hopeful that teaching will be easier next year since she knows what to expect. Kyra made plans to change things that were more difficult this year and said, "I'm not going to be as stressed going into the next school year."

Inductive Coding Themes

Themes were analyzed after the third interviews in an ongoing cycle through inductive coding (Appendix I). These themes impact the content of the semi-structured protocol for the joint interview (Appendix G). Feelings of being overwhelmed by teacher workloads are no longer prevalent after the third interviews. Several themes remained the same but in varying contexts and feelings of apathy emerged.

Feeling Unsupported

Both participants continued to feel unsupported by administration and parents after the third quarter of teaching. Cami felt unsupported by her principal due to negative feedback, although it was reduced since she is leaving at the end of the year. Cami said she had to "continue to play the game" with her principal in order to get through the year. Kyra felt unsupported because her administration did not make an attempt to build a relationship and she

felt they didn't care about her. She said, "I feel like I don't have a relationship with them because they never come in and visit or ask me if I need support in any way. I think they forget I'm a new teacher really and they just assume I got everything under control." Both new teachers also felt unsupported by parents. Cami felt like parents did not "take her side" and Kyra felt hurt by parent statements that occurred at "sensitive moments." Kyra said, "I have to work two times harder when parents are not on the same page with me." Kyra also felt unsupported by her paraprofessional at the end of the third quarter. She said, "My para had different things happen and she didn't come a lot of days. So, I got stuck in the mindset that I'm just going to do everything myself since I can't count on someone being here consistently."

Feeling Appreciative

Both participants continued to feel grateful for the informal mentorship they had with veteran teachers on their grade level. Kyra said, "Thankfully, me and my mentor we're really close and I can talk to her any time I want. I get suggestions on how I'm teaching or what I need to work on or change. She's been teaching for like twenty-seven years now and she's the grade level chair." The relationships with the veterans felt both professional and personal to the participants. Cami said, "I have built a very close relationship with the people on my team. It's one of the things I look forward to going to work every day. I am basically friends with them." Kyra said, "So, thankfully we became friends, so our mentorship is informal and the formal part of it went away. I'm lucky because not all new teachers have that relationship with someone."

Feeling Ineffective

Cami continued to feel ineffective with instructional planning and delivery due to Covid-19 restrictions and school demands that prevented her from having autonomy. She felt the overall culture of the school was "not fun" and that she was not allowed to do anything except

what they told her to do. She felt ineffective with data collection tools that were complex and confusing to use. Cami felt she had no voice at her school. She said, “People have complained but it falls on deaf ears and that’s why everyone is frustrated. There is no mutual respect, and everyone is just putting on a show half the time.” Cami was looking forward to end of year testing to see student growth but felt anxious because it was a “reflection” of her.

Feelings of Accomplishment

In contrast with Cami, Kyra had feelings of accomplishment with instructional planning and delivery. She described lessons that made her feel successful with student learning and referenced the first quarter for lessons that were learning experiences. Kyra described formative and summative assessments that she used to guide instruction. She felt excited to see student growth on end of year diagnostics and felt hopeful that she would not be as stressed next year. Kyra made plans to change her schedule and small groups, as well as add learning stations to improve her teaching next year.

Feeling Dissatisfied

Both participants expressed feelings of dissatisfaction with their jobs. Cami felt teaching at her school was unexciting and monotonous. She said, “I mean, planning fun things for us to do is just not happening.” Kyra continued to have mixed emotions about teaching as a long-term career. She said, “So, yea, I’ll be back next year as a teacher, but I’m still trying to debate if I want to do this long term like something I really want to do.”

Feeling Apathetic

Feelings of apathy emerged as a new theme in the third individual interviews. Both participants lacked feelings of enthusiasm for the mandatory professional development training at their schools. Cami said, “Across the board, some of it feels a little pointless, a little

redundant, and doesn't apply to me." Kyra said, "I don't really think it's been beneficial at all. The literacy trainings I feel like those days are just a waste...like come to work without the kids and try to stay awake pretty much." Both participants felt they would benefit with more "practical" professional development aimed at classroom practices and coaching opportunities for new teachers.

Additional feelings of apathy emerged for Cami related to lesson planning and instruction. She said, "I will say that I've gotten lazier with it to a degree which is awful. It's like if we get to it, we get to it." As it related to instruction she said, "I mean, I have kids who do what they want to do and I'm tired of wasting my breath to get them to want to learn." In response to enrolling in outside professional development for new teachers Cami says, "...it's hard to find the time to do that and I feel checked out to a degree."

Deductive Coding Analysis

Interview three with Cami revealed eighteen statements of feelings related to self-concerns (47%), ten statements related to feelings about relationships with others (26%), eight statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (21%), two statements related to feelings about expectations from others (5%), and no statements made related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting. Cami's concerns after the third quarter remained relatively the same as after quarters one and two, with a slight decrease in feelings with relationships and expectations with others, and a slight increase in feelings related to knowledge about curriculum and instruction (Figure 5).

Interview three with Kyra revealed nine statements of feelings related to self-concerns (9%), twelve statements related to feelings about relationships with others (36%), eleven statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (33%), four statements

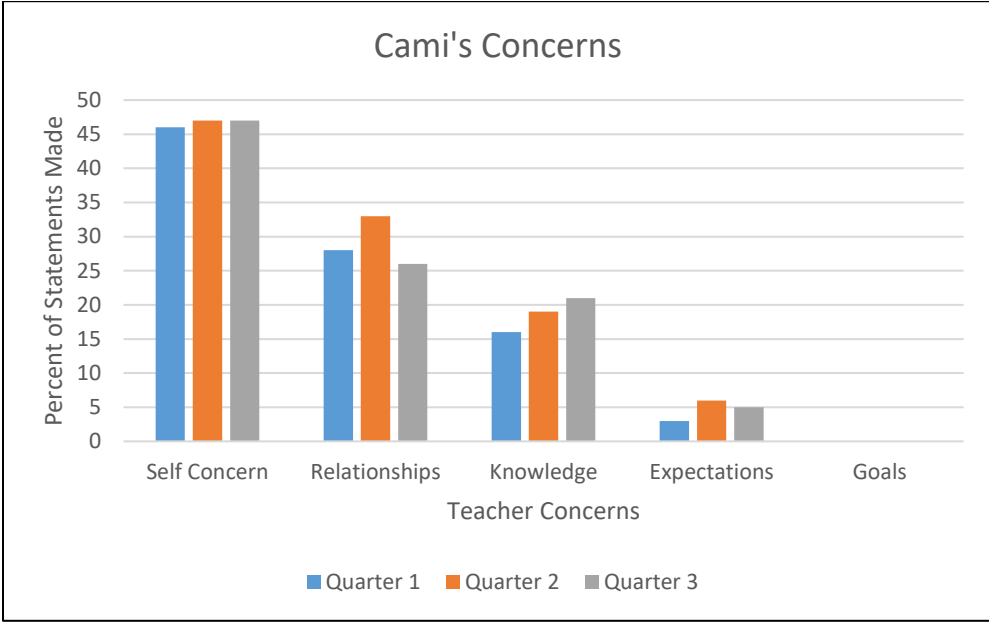


Figure 5. Third Quarter Teacher Development for Cami.

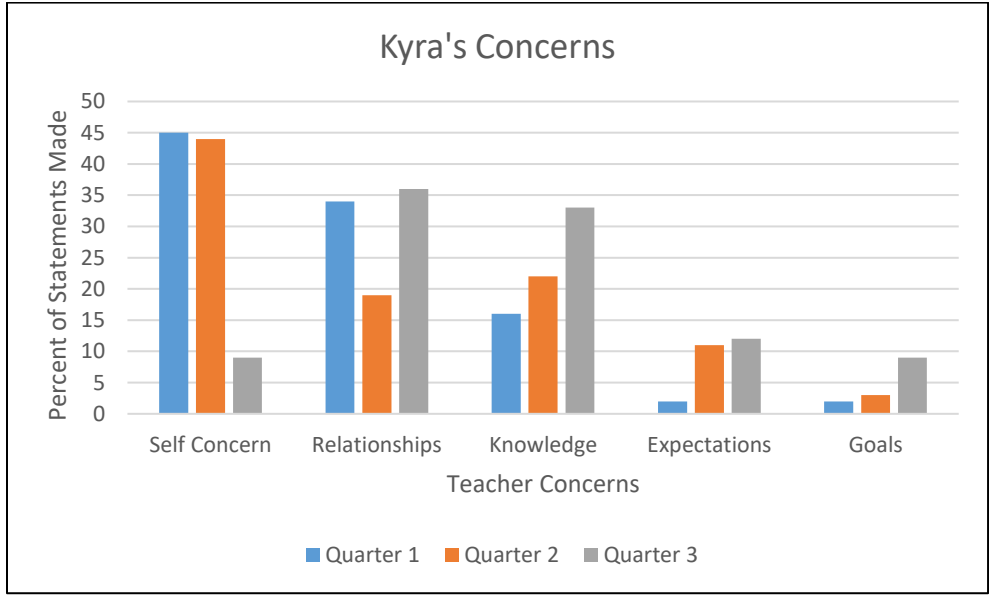


Figure 6. Third Quarter Teacher Development for Kyra.

related to feelings about expectations from others (12%), and three statements made related to feelings, hopes, or fears related to career goal setting (9%). Kyra's self-concerns decreased substantially, and statements related to feelings about relationships, knowledge of the

curriculum, expectations of others, and career goal setting increased after the third quarter of teaching (Figure 6).

Reflection Three Analysis

Reflective journal responses were requested by the researcher mid-way through the third quarter with two prompts (Appendix H). The first prompt was to describe how the participants supported their colleagues and how they would continue to do so. The second prompt was to describe how well the participants felt they communicated with others and how they could do this better.

Kyra's journal reflection on February 3, 2022, reflected on the ways her grade level team supported one another by lesson planning, sharing resources, and discussing concerns. She felt she communicated well with her team but was timid when it came to communicating with administration. She felt uncomfortable with them because she thinks they are disorganized and confused within their own team. Kyra would like to feel more comfortable with communicating outside her grade level by developing courage to have conversations with administration. This reflective journal submission was consistent with Kyra's feelings of lack of administrative support and appreciation for veteran team members' mentorship in interview three. Using a Framework for Reflective Thinking as a measurement scale (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990), Kyra's reflection was at level 3, where she labeled events with appropriate terms but offered little explanation for the rationale of her feelings. Cami did not submit the third reflection journal due to time restraints as she interviewed with other school districts.

Summary of Joint Interview

The fourth interview with participants was a joint interview held on May 16, 2022, lasting for thirty-five minutes. A semi-structured interview protocol was used for the interview

(Appendix G). The semi-structured joint interview included a welcome, introduction of the topics of interest, guidelines for the group discussion, and open-ended questions based on the data collected during the study (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Guidelines for the joint discussion included 1) first name basis; 2) listen respectfully as others share, 3) no right or wrong answers, only different points of view; 4) talk one at a time; 5) rules for cellphone use (phones on silent; emergencies taken in the hallway and rejoin as soon as possible); and 6) the role of the moderator is to guide the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Guidelines for the joint discussion were reviewed with participants before the interview began. Participants were informed that the meeting would be recorded and then erased permanently after transcription was complete using non-identifying pseudonyms. The transcription completed by hand.

Joint Interview Summary and Comparison

The new teachers felt that their biggest challenge this year had been student misbehavior and the lack of administrative support in handling it. Kyra said, “So I had to come up with my own consequences for her because the school just wasn’t doing anything.” Cami described a school wide event for students who were “not written up” with more than two behavior referrals. Cami said, “I feel bad for my one student who didn’t go but the rules and the rules and I really hated it.” Kyra described her school’s positive behavior rewards and stated that the “kids in trouble” go to the counselor during the celebration, but they didn’t understand it was a consequence.

Both participants felt student growth on end of year standardized assessments was their biggest accomplishment. Cami said, “I think we have a really strong team, so I feel like we worked really well to get these kids fresh and get them caught up.” When describing her students’ growth Kyra said, “I was just like wow. I didn’t really see it throughout the year, but I

made a big difference in their lives.” Kyra described an encounter with a substitute teacher where she was complimented on her success saying, “I saw your scores and everything and these kids learned in your class. You’re going to be a teacher forever.” Kyra felt “comfortable” with the compliment and felt confirmation that she was a good teacher.

Both new teachers described their relationships with their principals in different ways. Kyra felt that she and her principal made no real attempt to have a relationship and next year she wanted to be more open by having personal conversations. Kyra felt her first year principal was “like a chicken with her head cut off most days” and she would rather avoid her. Cami described her relationship with her principal as “I bother her”. She described the incident where she was crying from frustration and the principal did not show empathy or check on her later. Cami did not feel her principal was genuine or had the best interests of students and teachers in mind. She instead wanted to “make our school look good on social media, or with the numbers, or with whatever she’s got going on”. Since Cami was leaving, she felt her principal had been more supportive by giving her good references, but Cami felt it was “just a game”. Cami said, “I’m curious if I stayed if things would change between us.”

The participants felt that informal mentorship with a veteran teacher on their grade level was their biggest support this year. Kyra said, “My formal membership lasted for about three months...from August to October.” Cami described her formal mentorship as monthly meetings where they were expected to keep up with logging hours and activities with an assigned mentor. She said, “I feel like my formal mentor had a very rough group this year and she’s very burnt out on teaching.” Cami felt she and her teammate formed a mentorship, saying, “we both got here early in the morning, and I just got to sit in her classroom. It’s just like the little things like advice on how to answer a parent or how to handle a situation.” Kyra also felt she had a

personal relationship with an informal mentor on her team saying, “I grew a lot with her because I got to know her. Whenever I had a problem about anything I would go to her because she was right next door.” Both new teachers felt fortunate to have found informal mentorships in their first year because it “played a huge role” in their survival and development.

When asked to give advice to incoming first year teachers, both participants felt it was necessary to ask more questions and get more comfortable with where and who you are going to work with. Kyra felt she was unprepared for preplanning and the extra things she had to do behind the scenes. She felt fortunate that her student teaching internship was in the same school that she was currently teaching, or she would have “really been stressed.” Cami suggested asking questions about teacher turnover at the school you were interviewing and going to observe before signing a contract. She said, “Turnover would have been a red flag for me here and I probably would have waited for the other school in the county.” Kyra advised incoming teachers to “make sure this is what you want to do.” She said, “There were plenty of times I was like...I hate teaching. I want to quit. So, talk to someone and get their story on how they did it to make sure this is what you want to do. Because this is not for the weak.”

Both participants continued to stress the importance of building relationships with those outside of the grade level team. The new teachers felt they were not prepared to work with a paraprofessional in the room at first. Cami felt as a young teacher it was hard to set clear guidelines saying, “you need a to-the-T plan of how you want the first week to look because you get in there and you’re sitting there, and they are looking at you bug-eyed...and you’re both lost.” Kyra says, “She was older than me and I didn’t feel comfortable telling her what I need.” Cami felt it takes time to develop respectful teamwork with a paraprofessional but suggested including them in school conversations by “just filling them in and trying to advocate for them.”

When asked to rate the overall quality of their job from one to ten, with one being “horrible” and ten being “the best ever,” both new teachers responded with “six”. Cami felt the school administration and Covid-19 restrictions prevented her from enjoying teaching this year. She said, “The only reason it’s a six is because of my teammates because they’re amazing and I’m really going to miss them.” Kyra rated teaching “a six or seven” because of “the behavior issues, dealing with parents, dealing with administration, and dealing with so many outside resources”. She said, “I just want to teach these kids. I don’t want to deal with all of this. Because there’s so much that goes with it and it’s draining...and so it’s a lot.”

When asked about the components in their teacher preparation programs, both participants felt their student teaching internship was the most helpful for their first year. Cami felt her student teaching mentor showed her ways to set up her room and fun things to do in class. She said, “It’s really so different than this year which is disappointing because it really was so fun in my student teaching.” Kyra felt grateful that her student teaching was in the school where she works through a student teaching incentive program. She said, “I learned so much on being comfortable teaching and knowing what to throughout the day and so I feel like that was huge.” Kyra felt regretful that she missed preplanning at beginning of the school year in her student teaching due to Covid-19. She said, “I wish I got to see that part...the preplanning part of everything she went through and did because that would have been really valuable to me as a new teacher.” Cami also felt the special education component in her teacher preparation program helped her to be prepared to teach and advocate for students with disabilities in her classroom.

When asked what was missing in their teacher preparation programs, both participants felt they needed more hands-on “in the moment” practice. Although they felt having special

education classes benefitted their classroom practices, they felt more was needed with promoting positive behavior. Cami said, “I think it just hits harder than anything that you can be prepared for.”

Inductive Coding Themes

Themes were analyzed after the joint interview through inductive coding (Appendix I). Feelings of apathy no longer appeared at the end of the year. The remaining themes continued in the joint interview and were consistent throughout the first year. The participants agreed on the major themes, although there are some differences in experiences that were apparent (Table 6).

Feeling Unsupported

The participants felt unsupported by administration and formal induction programs after their first year of teaching. They felt formal induction programs were either ineffective or nonexistent. Ineffective programs were described by mismatched teachers as mentors, obligated activities, and mandatory accountability measures. Both participants felt administration did not support them with student misbehavior. Kyra said, “I called admin to tell them her behavior was out of control, and she was running up to the front. They were like...just write her up, we only have two more weeks, just write her up...and it was just so frustrating to me.” The participants also felt unsupported by the administration in contrasting ways. Cami felt her principal inhibited teacher voice and autonomy by forcing conformity to “look good.” Kyra felt her principal was too busy to care for her and she would rather avoid her and go to her grade level instead.

Feeling Ineffective

Both new teachers continued to feel ineffective with handling chronic student misbehavior. Cami also felt ineffective with using instructional methods and materials that were engaging due to the “culture of the school” and continuing Covid-19 restrictions. In contrast,

Table 6*Summary of Inductive Coding Themes*

Feelings	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	C	K	C	K	C	K	C	K
Unprepared for Job		X						
Unsupported by Induction Program	X	X		X			X	X
Unsupported by Administration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unsupported by Co-workers or Para		X		X		X		
Unsupported by Parents		X	X		X	X		
Ineffective with Student Behavior	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ineffective with Instructional Planning/Delivery	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Overwhelmed with Workload	X	X	X					
Appreciative of Veteran Teacher Support	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Accomplishments with Student Progress		X	X	X		X	X	X
Accomplishments with Professional Progress		X		X		X		X
Apathetic toward Professional Development					X	X		
Apathetic toward Job Duties					X			
Dissatisfied with School	X		X		X		X	
Dissatisfied with Teaching Profession		X		X		X		X

Kyra did not express feelings of ineffectiveness with instructional planning or delivery in the joint interview or feel any restraints due to Covid-19 protocols. She did, however, say that she felt ineffective at the beginning of the year with preparation because Covid-19 restrictions prevented her from participating with preplanning in her student teaching experience. She felt regretful that she missed this experience.

Feelings of Accomplishment

Both participants expressed feelings of accomplishment with student growth this year based on the results of end of year diagnostic testing. Cami felt globally grateful for her team in this effort, where Kyra felt individually successful with her teaching abilities. Kyra openly shared feelings of accomplishment with instructional practices and she felt motivated to make

changes next year to improve her teaching. She said, “We need to have more stations, not just mini lessons and small group.”

Feeling Appreciative

The participants were grateful for the informal mentorship and personal relationship they developed with a veteran teacher on their grade level. Both felt this component had the biggest impact on their success as new teachers this year. Cami said, “I feel like I definitely have learned the most from the veteran teachers.” Kyra said, “So, I feel like the informal played a huge role and part in my development for this school year. Because without the informal I feel like I would have been so stressed.” The new teachers described openness, availability, and knowledge as characteristics with their informal mentor. The new teachers were also appreciative of student teaching experiences in their teacher preparation programs. Kyra felt thankful that her student teaching specifically prepared her to teach through a district incentive program. Although Cami felt grateful for her student teaching experience, she expressed how different it was from her first year of teaching.

Feeling Dissatisfied

The new teachers felt dissatisfied with teaching after their first year for different reasons. Cami felt disgruntled with her experiences at the school where she was employed. She felt hopeful that going to a new school and starting over would be better for her next year. Kyra had mixed emotions with the teaching profession and felt discontent with the amount of “behind the scenes” responsibilities that exhausted her and derailed her focus from “just teaching the kids.” She says, “There were plenty of times I was like...I hate teaching, I don’t want to be a teacher anymore. I want to quit! This job is not for the weak.”

Deductive Coding Analysis

The joint interview with Cami revealed nine statements of feelings related to self-concerns (50%), seven statements related to feelings about relationships with others (38%), and two statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (11%). No statements were made about feelings, hopes, or fears related to expectations from others or career goal setting. Cami's self-concerns remained high through the first year of teaching. Feelings, hopes, and fears about relationships are slightly elevated in the fourth quarter but also remained close to the same throughout the year. (Figure 7). Feelings, hopes, and fears about knowledge decreased but also remained close to the same throughout the first year. Cami's feelings related to expectations from others decreased and career goal setting remained the same. There were no specific statements made about goal setting to improve teaching ability throughout the first year.

The joint interview with Kyra revealed two statements of feelings related to self-concerns (13%), three statements related to feelings about relationships with others (20%), three statements related to hopes or fears about knowledge with the curriculum (20%), five statements about feelings, hopes, or fears related to expectations from others (33%), and two statements related to feelings about goal setting to improve teaching ability (13%). Kyra's feelings, hopes, and fears about self-concerns, relationships, and knowledge of the curriculum decreased by the end of the school year. Feelings, hopes, and fears related to expectations from others and career goal setting increased throughout the first year of teaching (Figure 8).

Reflection Four Analysis

Reflective journal responses were requested by the researcher midway through the fourth quarter with two prompts (Appendix I). The first prompt was "What are the biggest

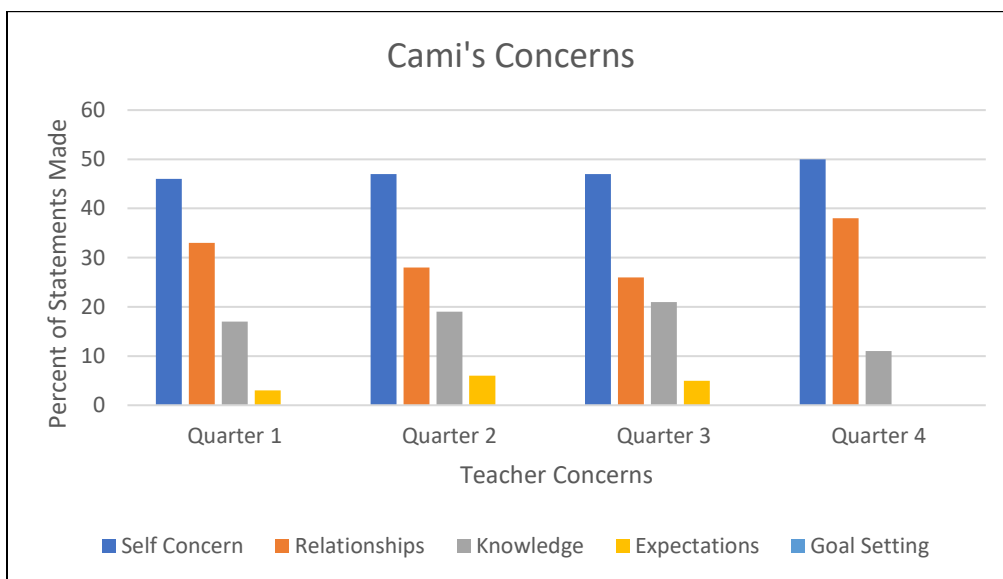


Figure 7. First Year Teacher Development for Cami.

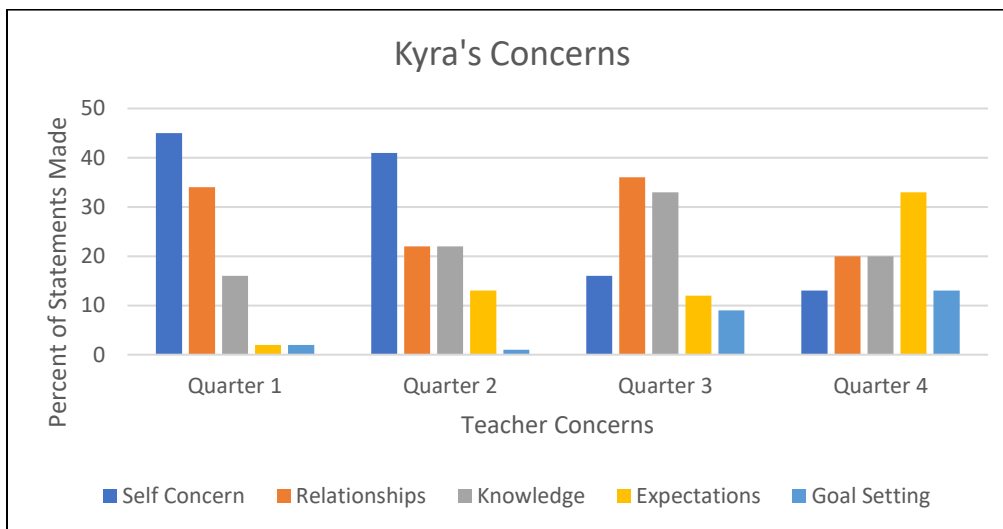


Figure 8. First Year Teacher Development for Kyra.

obstacles to improving my practice and how will I overcome them?” The second prompt was “What do I want everyone to be able to say about me?”

Kyra’s reflective journal on April 24, 2022, expressed that her biggest obstacle in improving her practice was controlling her frustration when she had to repeat herself after giving directions. She felt she could overcome this by teaching students some strategies that would

eliminate her having to repeat herself and increase student listening skills. Another obstacle she felt that she had overcome was remaining calm and not getting overwhelmed by assignments that had deadlines. She felt she was consumed with work at the beginning of the year and was always tired and stressed but had learned to set up timelines and complete tasks as they arose. Kyra wanted everyone to say she was a great teacher. She wanted people to notice the tremendous amount of work and difference she made in her students' lives, and she wanted this hard work to "pay off". Kyra's feelings about frustration with repeating herself and adapting to a better work-life balance were consistent with feelings in interview three. Her feelings about teaching being a difficult job were consistent with feelings throughout all of the interviews. Using a Framework for Reflective Thinking as a measurement scale (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990), Kyra's reflection increased from level 3 to level 4, where she gave explanations with personal preference as the rationale for her feelings.

Cami's reflective journal on May 4, 2022, relayed that she felt the biggest obstacle to improving her practice was her fear of "stepping out of her comfort zone" and trying new things in the classroom. She felt she tended to do the same things over and over because she was afraid to fail at something new. She felt that even with relationships with colleagues, she was a "people pleaser" and would do things just to keep people happy with her. To improve her practice, she felt she needed to encourage herself and surround herself with people who allowed her "room to learn and grow." Cami's feelings in this journal were new expressions related to the experiences she was having at her current school and her pursuit of finding a new setting to develop more as a teacher. Cami submitted a response to prompt one only. Using a Framework for Reflective Thinking as a measurement scale (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990), Cami's reflective thinking

increased from level 4 to level 5, where explanation with principle or theory were given as the rationale for her feelings.

Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability are important for assuring the quality and accuracy of the case study findings and to also prove to a reasonable degree that readers can trust the findings (Prasad, 2018). Patton (2015) stated that reliability and validity are two factors that qualitative researchers should consider when designing a study, analyzing the findings, and judging the quality of the study.

Validity in qualitative research refers to the steps taken by the researcher to check for the accuracy of the findings by adopting certain procedures (Gibbs, 2012; Patton, 2015). To ensure a high-quality multi-case study, it is necessary to achieve thick description and triangulation with data sources (Tracy, 2010). Triangulation is a cross-reference technique to see if the findings are consistent among multiple data sources related to the same research questions (Patton, 2015; Tracy, 2010). In the study, I used triangulation in data collection with three individual interviews, a joint interview, and reflective journals. For respondent validation, I used member check in with participants to confirm interpretations and conclusions. These were written into the interview protocols for subsequent interviews after analyzing data. McMillan (2012) states that trustworthiness in a qualitative study is established when using triangulation of data sources and a member check-in procedure.

Reliability refers to whether a study can be repeated (Gibbs, 2012; McMillan, 2012). Yin (2018) stated that reliability can be achieved through careful documentation of procedures and record management. The author suggested reliability and validity of a case study can be achieved by ensuring multiple sources of evidence, creating a case study database, and maintaining the

chain of evidence. To maintain reliability of my study, I documented the case study procedures with as much detail as possible. I checked inductive and deductive codes with my major advisor for intercoder agreement during initial phases of data analysis. The Intercoder agreement measures "the extent to which the different judges tend to assign exactly the same rating to each object" (Tinsley & Weiss, 2000, p. 98). This could reduce the primary coder's possible judgment and increase coding coherence and accuracy. Inductive code names were adjusted to align between researchers and redundant themes were combined. Deductive coding was aligned to agree on the number of chunked statements made by the participants and yielded 86% agreement between the researchers and the teacher's concerns. During the data collection process, I used a database to collect evidence (Yin, 2018). Data bases are one way to prove that data collection protocol was followed.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways new teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. It is important to examine these experiences to gain a clearer picture of how to best support new teachers' growth and development. Understanding the views of new teachers may help higher education to bridge the training to practice gap and allow schools to provide more targeted and effective support during the induction years. This could lead to accelerated growth and development of new teachers, increase new teacher retention, and ultimately provide a viable solution to the ongoing teacher shortage. This chapter consists of four major sections including a summary of the findings, discussion of the research questions, implications, and conclusion. In this section I discuss the following four issues based on the results of the study: (1) Toxic School Cultures; (2) Teacher Autonomy; (3) Induction Support; and (4) Job Satisfaction. I also discuss implications for teacher preparation programs, school districts, policymakers, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

The findings show that the new teachers' feelings remained relatively the same through the first two quarters of teaching. Statements made related to feeling unsupported, ineffective, overwhelmed, dissatisfied, and appreciative of veteran support are consistent among the participants through inductive coding analysis (Table 6). Kyra also expressed feelings of accomplishment with student progress and personal growth during this time. Findings from

deductive coding also remained similar in the first two quarters of teaching, with a high level of self-concern for both participants (Figures 7 and 8). Both new teachers expressed feelings, fears or hopes related to relationships with others as the second highest concern, followed by feelings related to knowledge of their jobs. The slight difference between them is Kyra's statements of feelings related to goal setting during the first two quarters (Figure 8). Findings with Cami's first two reflective journals further substantiate her feelings through abductive coding, with descriptions mirroring feelings expressed in interviews one and two.

Although similarities between feelings remained after the third quarter, differences between the participants' feelings also began to emerge. Similarities that remained between them were feelings of being unsupported by various stakeholders, dissatisfaction with their jobs, ineffectiveness with student misbehavior, appreciation of veteran teacher relationships, and apathy toward professional development opportunities. Differences that began to emerge between them were contrasting feelings of ineffectiveness with instructional planning and teaching (Cami) compared to feelings of accomplishment with student and professional progress (Kyra). Differences between teacher concerns through deductive coding became apparent after the third quarter of teaching (Figures 7 and 8). Cami's teacher concerns remained the same as in quarters one and two, with a high level of feelings related to self-concerns followed by feelings related to relationships with others (Figure 7). In contrast, Kyra expressed a remarkable reduction in feelings related to self-concern. Her feelings related to relationships with others, knowledge about curriculum or instruction, and feelings about improving her teaching ability increased during this period (Figure 8). Kyra's third journal analysis reflected her increased feelings related to relationships with others and knowledge. She expressed feelings about being

unsupported by the administration and gratefulness toward a veteran teacher in guiding her knowledge about curriculum and instructional practices.

At the end of the first year of teaching, similarities and differences between participants' feelings through inductive coding analysis remained relatively the same as the previous quarter. Deductive coding indicated Cami continued to have feelings related to high levels of self-concern and relationships with others. She did not yet express feelings related to expectations from others or goal setting to improve her teaching ability (Figure 7). Her concerns remained relatively the same throughout her first year of teaching. Cami's final journal analysis mirrored her continued elevated level of self-concern with statements such as, "I'm afraid I'm going to fail".

In contrast, Kyra expressed decreased feelings, hopes, and fears related to relationships with others and knowledge about instruction. She expressed increased feelings of concern related to expectations from others and career goal setting, while self-concerns remained lowered as in the previous quarter (Figure 8). Kyra's last reflective journal was consistent with her increased concerns related to improving her teaching next year and with reflections about how she felt she could overcome teaching obstacles.

Discussion

Research Question 1: How do new teachers describe their experiences in the first year of teaching?

The ways new teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching may provide valuable information as to why teachers vary so widely in their developmental growth and why there seems to be inconsistencies between new teachers' beliefs and practices (Levin & Ammon, 1991). The study's findings suggest that one new teacher increased in growth

and development while one remained relatively the same all year despite their similarities in feelings. Feelings of being unsupported, particularly by administration, and feelings of ineffectiveness with handling student misbehavior remained constant for both new teachers throughout their first year.

Kyra's feelings about lack of administrative support were due to her principal's absence of leadership. An absent principal, one who continually hides in their office or leaves the building for meetings, may not be the best suited for a leadership role. There could be a variety of reasons for this phenomenon, including the principal is young, new, or retiring (Fyke, 2018). Kyra indicated the principal was new and was not yet able to maintain her role as the school leader. When Kyra requested help during times of chronic student misbehavior, she felt the principal placated her by telling her "Everything is fine" and the weight of the problem remained on her. Fortunately, Kyra found leadership in a twenty-seven-year veteran teacher on her team who supported her professional growth and helped her handle parental situations that were more in line with an administrator's role. Kyra's feelings of motivation toward developing a better relationship with the absent principal in the coming year suggests her growth was not greatly impacted by the lack of a relationship with administration, particularly since she had a replacement leader.

In contrast to Kyra, Cami's principal was negative and micromanaging. She felt her principal was unclear in her expectations but openly criticized results among her and the staff. Cami's principal enforced the rigid school demands and retaliated when teachers attempted to deviate from the given procedures. The school's rigid policies and procedures prevented Cami from feeling effective with instructional planning and teaching her students. She lacked autonomy with classroom set-up, lesson planning, instructional and assessment methods, and

using other resources and tools outside of the school's definitions. Cami was unsure if the strict Covid-19 restrictions were school or district driven, but these also greatly impacted her ability to teach in line with her beliefs about how young children learn. Cami felt her principal overlooked student misbehavior rather than supporting teachers because she wanted the school's statistics to look good to its stakeholders. Lack of data on student misbehavior and subsequent consequences gave the impression that student behavior was positively maintained at the school. Cami stated the school does not allow field trips, celebrations, or "anything fun". Fortunately, Cami found emotional support from a veteran teacher on her team, although Cami expressed that all the teachers felt stressed by the toxic school culture. She decided to leave the school by the end of the second quarter and applied to some other school districts for the next year.

The study's findings indicate that previous research on teacher stages of growth and development remain to exist. The findings are consistent with literature that shows first-year teachers start in survival mode, concerned about their own needs related to day-to-day coping, including class management, filling instructional time, and working with administration and parents (Baptiste & Sheerer, 1997; Katz, 1974; Ryan, 1986; Stroop, et al., 1998). At this stage, beginning teachers frequently express feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and anxiety (Katz, 1974; Marshall, Fittinghoff, & Cheney, 1990; Ryan, 1986). Both participants showed prominent levels of self-concern in the first two quarters of teaching with several statements indicating they were anxious and uncertain of their abilities. Previous research also indicates teachers grow to be more concerned about academic tasks and their impact on student learning, but at highly varied rates (Lidstone & Hollingsworth, 1990; Zhukova, 2018). The study's findings support the literature as one new teacher begins to shift from concerns about self and relationships to concerns about knowledge and student learning while the other remains in "survival" mode.

Previous research indicates reflexivity levels increase and problem-solving skills become multidimensional, growing more concrete and context specific (Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990; Levin & Ammon, 1991). Both participants' levels of reflective thinking increased slightly throughout the first year and both new teachers show they are problem solving in the respective contexts of their surroundings.

The research on teacher growth and development stages should be considered when planning how to best support first year teachers. One new teacher is beginning to grow in stages of development while one new teacher is "stuck" in the initial stages. After the third quarter of teaching, it seems the difference contributing to growth, or lack of it, points to the context of the participant's teaching environment. Conway and Clark (2003) state "the extent to which student teachers are reflexively oriented toward development of self-as-teacher depends on person-context relationships, that is, the culture of teaching within which prospective teachers learn to teach" (p. 478).

Toxic School Cultures

The culture of a school consists primarily of the underlying norm values and beliefs that teachers and administrators hold about teaching and learning (Deal & Peterson, 2016). A positive school environment demonstrates a set of values that supports professional development of teachers, a sense of responsibility for student learning, and a positive, caring atmosphere for all members (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016). In a toxic school environment, the cultural players are negative and put others down (Epitropoulos, 2019). Deal and Peterson (2016) explain some characteristics of a toxic school culture: (a) school staff are focused on their own interests instead of what's best for students; (b) staff become hostile using retaliation and distrust when handling disagreements; (c) staff are apathetic, view students as burdens, and

applaud teachers for their lack of drive; (d) few celebrations or positive rituals are held; and (e) toxic staff use social media to bully new teachers, complain, and attack other staff members. Cami's feelings give all the warning signs that her first year of teaching is in a toxic school culture. In this type of environment, it is difficult for teachers to flourish. There is no room for innovation or open sharing when the overarching feeling is insecurity and distrust. Compliance is encouraged and fear of mistakes can be crippling. When self-preservation takes priority over teaching students, it is impossible for talented teachers to grow (Epitropoulis, 2019). Without the autonomy to grow and learn, teachers in a toxic school culture fail to fully develop their skills and often become trapped in the initial stages of teacher development.

Teacher Autonomy

Previous literature suggests there is a negative relationship between a teacher's level of reflexivity with problem solving and the degree of control over the teacher by administration (Conway & Clark, 2003; Kagan, 1992; Kilgore, Ross, & Zbikowski, 1990). This could indicate that the degree of autonomy given to a new teacher in a school setting could also be a contextual factor in their growth and development as a teacher. The study's findings support the relationship between teacher autonomy and teacher growth and development. Kyra had a level of freedom with her classroom set-up and instructional planning and delivery, in contrast with Cami who had no autonomy with these professional decisions.

Teacher autonomy is defined as a teacher's willingness, capacity, and freedom to take control of their own teaching and learning (Huang, 2005). When given a high degree of autonomy, teachers have control of their teacher-student interactions in the class, the type of activities they use, pacing and timing allocations, and timing of assessments. In a shared autonomy with others, there is a group responsibility for objectives, curriculum materials, and

teaching strategies. In a low level of autonomy, decisions are dominated by leaders who are responsible for handing down global concepts, an outline of the curriculum, and the criteria for assessing students (Leithwood et al., 1997). The National Curriculum Framework (2005) states that teacher autonomy is essential for ensuring a learning environment that addresses children's diverse needs. As much as the learner requires space, freedom, flexibility, and respect, the teacher also requires the same.

Kyra's feelings of ineffectiveness in the first semester centered on situations related to her inexperience in her role as a teacher. As she was coached by a veteran teacher and untended by administration, she was free to take chances, make mistakes, and set goals with her teaching. Her level of autonomy was between high levels and autonomy shared with others. She shared a group responsibility for student objectives and curriculum materials and was independently free to choose the type of activities used in class. In contrast, Cami ongoing feelings of ineffectiveness throughout the year centered on low levels of autonomy with administrative control over concepts, curriculum, and assessment. She was not free to plan, teach, chose resources, or seek opportunities to promote professional growth.

Teacher autonomy also extends to professional development, with research indicating that freedom in adult learning is optimal for teacher growth (Darling-Hammond, Hylar & Gardner, 2017; Zepeda, 2019). The call to reform professional development (PD) from the one-size-fits-all auditorium-style learning to high-quality PD through active learning has been decades in length (TNTP, 2013; Zepeda, 2019). Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond (2016) indicate opportunities for collaboration and shared decision making are necessary components for PD and overall job satisfaction. Yet, both new teachers were openly apathetic about their first-year professional development opportunities. Post Covid virtual PD brings

especially big challenges to active learning. The new teachers in the study received virtual PD in a passive style giving them information they already knew. It is difficult for teachers to stay motivated in their professional growth with mandatory repetitive trainings absorbing their valuable time (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017).

Research shows that high quality PD leads to higher quality teaching, and higher quality teaching leads to student achievement (Desimone, 2009; Darling-Hammond, Wei & Andree, 2010). The shift from passive, intermittent PD to PD that is active, consistent, and supported by peers through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is slowly beginning to appear in schools. One participant in the study refers to the members on her grade level as her “PLC” and explains how they use data to inform instruction when planning. The other participant does not use the term and explains how her team fills out mandatory checklists during planning.

Desimone (2009) proposes a core conceptual framework with five key features that can lead to depth of teaching practice: content focus, active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation. When these features are incorporated into a project, a cycle of continuous improvement can take place (Stewart, 2014). PLCs that show success are made up of teachers from the same school who have autonomy to select their learning objectives and had training on how to collaborate (Mindich & Lieberman, 2012). When autonomy and training are absent in PLCs, teachers are not yet reaping the benefits of Professional Learning Communities as growth opportunities.

Research Question 2: How do new teachers describe their induction support?

Although research indicates the critical need for support systems during the initial stages of becoming a teacher (Ingersoll, 2012; Podolsky et al., 2016), both participants’ induction programs fell severely short. Induction programs were introduced to both new teachers in their

interview process, yet neither school delivered what was indicated as support. Kyra's school indicated new teachers would meet regularly to discuss topics of interest and address areas of need. The new teachers met in August and September, but by October the invitations to the meetings disappeared and the induction program completely dissolved. The principal became overwhelmed in her new role as leader and was unable to fulfill the promises of a formal induction program. This left Kyra feeling unprepared, unsupported, and anxious in her new role as a teacher. She found guidance with the veteran grade level chair who provided her with practical support for lessons, classroom set-up, resources, behavior strategies and informal coaching. Throughout the year, Kyra went to her informal mentor for everything she needed and even relied on her advice for some issues that fell under the role of an administrator. Kyra attributed the veteran grade level teacher as having the hugest impact on her development as a first-year teacher.

Cami's school had monthly new teacher meetings, but she was paired with a veteran teacher who was experiencing "burnout" and was often unavailable to attend. To Cami, the induction program was forced, and she had to meet to fill out the necessary forms to report activities to administration. Rather than being supportive, this added to her workload. Cami's assigned instructional coach was not available to meet with her because of administrative duties that absorbed most of her time. As Cami became criticized by the administration for classroom practices, she began to find support with a veteran teacher on her grade level. Their relationship provided emotional support and Cami attributed the veteran teacher as the biggest reason she was able to endure school each day.

Induction Programs

To address the challenges faced by new teachers in their first years of teaching, many school districts are developing induction programs (Ingersoll et al., 2021; IRIS Center, 2023; Podolsky et al., 2016). Research shows that induction programs are having a positive effect on new teacher retention, and as the induction program becomes more comprehensive, the level of retention increases (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011; Podolsky et al, 2016). First-year teachers who participated in a comprehensive set of induction activities were half as likely to leave the field as those who did not participate (Strong & Ingersoll, 2011). Induction programs can also accelerate teacher growth and teacher effectiveness, and have positive outcomes on student achievement (Ingersoll, 2012). Formal induction plans may include orientations to the district and school, introductions to the school community and culture, specific professional development, and mentoring (IRIS, 2023). Comprehensive induction programs need to be well-planned, including those who will be responsible for implementing and evaluating the effectiveness for new teachers. Schools must not continue to miss the opportunity to provide structured, comprehensive induction programs to support new teachers (Podolsky et al., 2016).

The participants in the study were fortunate to have found informal veteran mentorship on their grade levels, but not all new teachers are so lucky. Even with the teacher shortage, research shows that trends in the workforce are seeing increasing levels of green teachers each year (Ingersoll et al., 2021). Although trends also show teachers are staying in the workforce longer and are therefore older, veteran teachers will eventually retire. Having enough veteran teachers in a school can make a positive difference for beginning teachers as witnessed in this study. The decreasing number of veteran teachers with the increasing number of new teachers

could have a negative impact, particularly if veterans continue to be the biggest support for induction.

Research Question 3: How do new teachers describe their commitment to continue a professional career in education?

One does not become a successful teacher by simply getting a four-year degree (Keeling, 2021). As with all professions, there requires a commitment to continue to be actively engaged with growing and learning (Zepeda, 2019). Lack of job satisfaction is a primary deterrent to motivation toward professional growth and development (Will, 2022). Being unhappy with your job is understandable in a toxic school environment, but when new teachers experience feelings of success with student progress and professional growth, lack of job satisfaction must be examined more closely.

Job Satisfaction

Teaching has never been easy, but since the beginning of the pandemic teacher stress levels have skyrocketed. Teachers have had to pivot back and forth between online and in person teaching, and sometimes both at the same time. Teacher shortages have added to teacher workloads and decreased classroom support. Teachers feel students are becoming less engaged and misbehavior is increasing in the classroom. With new demands and expectations being added each year, teachers feel increasingly stretched thin (Will, 2022).

The Merrimack College Teacher Survey (2022) found that a little more than half of teachers are satisfied with their job. In fact, more than half of teachers would not advise their younger self to pursue a teaching career at all. Of the first-year teachers that departed school at the end of the 2011-12 school year, Ingersoll et al. (2021) found the most frequently cited reason for leaving was dissatisfaction with teaching. Reasons for being dissatisfied involved school and

working conditions, including salaries, classroom resources, student misbehavior, accountability, opportunities for development, input into decision making, and school leadership (Ingersoll et al, 2021). In fact, teachers report that working conditions are the biggest predictor on their willingness to stay in the profession (Podolsky et al., 2016). The authors indicate teachers repeatedly cite four primary factors that influence working conditions: 1) school leadership and administrative support; 2) opportunities for decision making and collaboration; 3) resource availability; and 4) the pressure of accountability measures.

Implications

Understanding the experiences of first year teachers could have a remarkable impact on improving new teacher retention. The implications of the study are aimed at this overall goal while highlighting the issues that surfaced through data collection and analysis.

Teacher Preparation Programs

As previously stated, educational stakeholders look toward teacher preparation programs to transform to the kinds of settings where new teachers can learn to teach and become long-term, expert educators (Darling-Hammond, 2006). However, research shows a gap currently exists between the skills learned in teacher preparation programs and the capabilities that schools need from new teachers (Buttner, 2021). Overall, teacher preparation programs need to provide a more stable pathway from learning to teach to becoming a teacher. First, tighter coherence and integration in coursework that involves classroom application is necessary (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). New teachers need to feel more prepared for classroom management and handling student misbehavior. Second, increased collaboration with districts throughout the state to develop student teaching incentive programs and planned induction programs could also support a more stable path for new teachers. Collaborating with school districts could provide teacher

candidates with opportunities to student teach in the school where they want to become employed. Lastly, coursework related to developing reflective thinking and emotional intelligence would greatly benefit teacher candidates. Learning to reflect critically in the preservice stages of teaching could accelerate future growth and development (Poulou, 2007). Emotional intelligence, or the ability to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships effectively, would support new teachers in transforming toxic school cultures and addressing relationship conflicts with coworkers and parents (Magers, 2019). This, in turn, could increase teacher job satisfaction.

School Districts

The most common reason given for the teacher shortage is a lack of qualified candidates in the profession (Buttner, 2021; Podolsky et al., 2016). Many schools are forced to fill vacancies with teachers who do not have full credentials (Ondrasek, et al., 2020; Mason-Williams et al., 2020). This has an adverse effect on student achievement. First, schools must begin forming collaborative relationships with surrounding teacher preparation programs. Student teaching incentive programs, such as offering a stipend to student teachers and employment at the end of successful student teaching, could provide schools with a pipeline for gaining highly qualified teachers. This would also allow student teachers to become more familiar with district policies and procedures, therefore making the transition from college to classroom easier. This in turn could accelerate new teacher growth and development as well as increase job satisfaction. Next, schools must carefully plan and implement induction programs to retain highly qualified new teachers (Podolsky et al, 2016). It seems schools are suffering from inadequacy with delivering programs that they indicate are present. It is necessary for school districts to review evidence-based research on the components that are most beneficial for new teachers. Careful planning,

implementation, and training are needed for fidelity with induction programs to occur. This includes funding for the induction program, hiring support staff or compensating current staff for extra work, training induction staff, and assigning responsibilities for induction program delivery. Lastly, schools need to require induction support for new principals and ongoing leadership training for reflexivity and emotional intelligence. For schools to be successful and achieve their goals, the leader must have the ability to understand and shift the school's culture (Mager, 2019; Podolsky et al., 2016). School culture influences how people behave and respond to challenges on an everyday basis. Creating and maintaining a positive, healthy school culture lies in the hands of its leader. "A good leader is one who has an open mind, a compassionate heart, and a willingness to listen" (Pellicer, 2008, p.18). Sustaining a positive, healthy work environment could increase teacher retention and overall job satisfaction.

Policy Makers

The current political perspective promotes the micromanagement of teachers and overlooks the importance of professional autonomy and academic freedom (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2010). Several recent reform initiatives aimed at improving teacher practices make teachers accountable exclusively to external monitoring. While teachers should be held accountable, such accountability can be best achieved through a balance of autonomous career goal setting and student progress measures rather than exclusive external reporting. Research shows that teachers respond positively to the professional autonomy in the PLC environment while developing teacher expertise in their specific areas (Kristmanson, Dicks & Le Bouthillier, 2008). The authors state "key aspects of PLCs include collaboration, communication and commitment, a philosophy of ownership of and direct involvement in the professional development process, belief in the concept of shared leadership, administrative support, and a

shared vision to improve some aspect of professional practice.” (p. 37). This puts accountability in the hands of teachers themselves. “Professional autonomy for teachers is not merely a fundamental requirement of quality education, but for creating students who become engaged and politically active democratic citizens.” (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2010, p. 12).

With emphasis on teacher improvement and subsequent student achievement, state policy makers should be focusing their attention toward assuring more effective professional development (Jaquith, Mindich, Chung Wei & Darling-Hammond, 2010; Podolsky et al., 2016). There are key factors that determine the impact of state policy on effective professional development: leadership, infrastructure, resources, and intermediaries and outside providers. Several key components for delivering successful professional development include developing multiple accountability systems, monitoring quality, requiring induction and mentoring programs, adopting the PLC model, partnering with professional organizations, creating networks of intermediary organizations, and addressing federal mandates and accountability measures in constructive ways (Jaquith et al., 2010). Educational stakeholders call for policy makers to make a clear plan for professional development that permeates vision to practice.

Future Research

Although research indicates that induction programs are beneficial for new teachers, it is still unclear as to what that looks like and how much is needed. Induction programs vary greatly from school to school and research gives no clarity as to what the best method is or amount necessary to support new teachers and be affordable to schools (Ingersoll, 2012). For school systems to plan effectively for future induction programs, research related to specific components that provide the most support should be further examined. This could guide school

systems in developing and implementing induction programs with more fidelity and in turn, increase new teacher job satisfaction.

Future research should also examine the effects of the pandemic on the education system and teachers in general. Covid-19 continues to impact schools, classrooms, and teachers. Balancing health risks with in-person learning and students' educational needs leave school leaders with impossible decisions to make. As studies begin to report comparisons between pre- and post-pandemic student achievement, teachers are left with the job of accelerating student growth using instructional methods that are not in line with best practices. Inconsistent restrictions among schools create frustration and anxiety. Research needs to guide school systems in having more consistent Covid-19 guidelines and address the emotional nature that the pandemic has had on teachers. More consistent guidelines and understanding these experiences would support teachers in removing the state of uncertainty in their jobs and move toward emotional healing. This could, in turn, improve teachers' satisfaction with their jobs.

Limitations

One potential limitation to the study could be interpreter validity. McMillan (2012) defines interpreter validity as how well the interpretations of the phenomena being examined aligns with the participants' perspectives. Some researchers argue that a purely inductive approach can be too broad and lack focus and a purely deductive approach can be too narrow and limiting (Bendassolli, 2013; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Therefore, a combination of inductive and deductive analysis was used in a back-and-forth analysis called abductive reasoning. Abductive reasoning reduces the problems associated with a purely inductive or deductive approach by allowing the richness of the data to emerge while staying focused on existing theories (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

Another potential limitation is the multi-case study sample size. It was the researcher's intention to have three or more participants, but due to length of the study and time limitations of the participants, the case study was completed with two participants. A multi-case study focuses on the differences and similarities between participants on the phenomena being examined (Yin, 2018). Although there is no magic number in a multi-case study, it may have been beneficial to have more participants. However, developing a theory about factors driving differences and similarities was achieved with two participants.

A third potential limitation to the study is the inconsistency of the participants with submitting journal reflections between the interviews. Cami reflected on five of the eight reflection prompts and Kyra reflected on four. Although the reflective responses added valuable triangulation to the interview data they supported, it would have been advantageous to have this data more consistently throughout the study.

Conclusion

Teaching requires extraordinary personal and professional skills which are often overlooked by those who lack understanding of what happens behind the scenes (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Most new teachers begin their jobs without a clear vision of the multiple duties required outside of teaching students. Additionally, new teachers are the most at risk of leaving the profession in the shortest amount of time (Ingersoll, 2012). The purpose of the study was to investigate the ways new teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. The long-term goal was to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on a new teacher's retention in the field. Two new teachers from the same teacher preparation program were followed through their first year of teaching kindergarten in different school districts.

The study's results revealed several themes that remained consistent throughout the year for both new teachers, as well as identified some differences that may have accounted for more growth in one new teacher compared to the other. Both new teachers started the year with elevated levels of self-concern, which is the first stage of learning to teach. This is consistent with previous research on teacher development theories that explain how teachers grow in stages (Burden, 1980; Caruso, 1977; Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Katz, 1972; McDonald, 1982; Yarger & Mertens, 1980). New teachers' feelings centered on lack of support from induction programs and administration, feelings of ineffectiveness with handling student behavior, feelings of being overwhelmed with the workload, and feelings of job dissatisfaction. The study's results indicate one new teacher began to become less concerned about self and relationship issues and move toward concerns about knowledge with the curriculum, expectations from others, and some feelings related to goal-setting in the second semester. This is also consistent with previous research on teacher development theories that explain that teachers grow in stages at varying rates due to personal and professional factors that cannot be separated (Capel, 2001; Corrigan & Howie, 1980). The new teacher continued to feel ineffective with student behavior and unsupported by administration, and therefore, dissatisfied with her job. She also had feelings of accomplishment with student progress, teaching ability and problem solving, and was grateful for an informal mentor who supported her development.

The study's results indicate that the other new teacher remained in the first stages of teaching throughout the school year. This is also consistent with previous research stating that personal or professional factors could result in fluctuation among stages or becoming "stuck" in an early developmental phase (Conway & Clark, 2003; Stroot et al., 1998). The new teacher continued to feel ineffective due to ongoing conflicts with her principal and district mandated

procedures that stripped her of autonomy with planning and instruction. Her feelings of being criticized, threatened with retaliation, and emphasis on rules over people indicated she was in a toxic school culture. These professional factors may be the reason she was unable to progress from the initial stages of teaching and remained dissatisfied with her job, causing her to find new employment in another district for the next year.

The study has many practical implications to better support new teachers in their first year of teaching. First, school district emphasis needs to be placed on consistently delivering high quality induction programs, developing collaborative systems for student teaching, and training leaders to promote and sustain positive, healthy cultures. Teacher preparation programs can provide a more supportive path from college to classroom by developing collaborative partnerships with school districts, promoting student teaching incentive programs, and creating more opportunities for candidates to experience classroom management and handling behavior issues. Adding reflective thinking and emotional intelligence as topics for discussion and practice would also benefit teacher candidates. Lastly, policymakers should focus on ensuring more effective professional development through leadership, infrastructure, resources, and outside providers. Emphasis should be placed on teacher autonomy through professional learning communities and the requirement of induction and mentorship programs.

The study's findings are expected to be helpful with understanding how to better support new teachers in their first year of teaching. Additionally, it provides further support on previous research about how teachers grow and develop in stages and at varying rates. It is hopeful that it will give insight as to why new teachers remain unsatisfied with their jobs and will provide an avenue for educational stakeholders to increase job satisfaction and retain high qualified teachers who can develop and grow into experienced educators.

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Appendix A: Internal Review Board Approval



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Human Research Protection Program

EXEMPT DETERMINATION

August 24, 2021

Dear [Cynthia Vail](#):

On 8/24/2021, the Human Subjects Office reviewed the following submission:

Title of Study:	New Teacher Retention: What the First Year Tells Us
Investigator:	Cynthia Vail
Co-Investigator:	Traci Fleck
IRB ID:	PROJECT00004194
Review Category:	Exempt 3(ii)

We have determined that the proposed research is Exempt. The research activities may begin 8/24/2021.

Since this study was determined to be exempt, please be aware that not all future modifications will require review by the IRB. For more information please see Appendix C of the Exempt Research Policy (<https://research.uga.edu/docs/policies/compliance/hso/IRB-Exempt-Review.pdf>). As noted in Section C.2., you can simply notify us of modifications that will not require review via the "Add Public Comment" activity.

A progress report will be requested prior to 8/24/2026. Before or within 30 days of the progress report due date, please submit a progress report or study closure request. Submit a progress report by navigating to the active study and selecting Progress Report. The study may be closed by selecting Create Version and choosing Close Study as the submission purpose.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Email

Dear _____,

Congratulations on your recent graduation from the University of _____'s Department of Special Education! I hope your employment inquiries as a new teacher are progressing and you are becoming excited to begin your career as a professional educator.

As a Ph.D. student at the University of _____, Dr. (advisor) and I are conducting a dissertation research study to investigate the experiences of new educators in the first year of teaching. The objective of the study is as follows:

Objective and Long-term Goal: The objective of the project is to investigate the ways in which novice special education teachers describe their experiences throughout their initial year of teaching. The long-term goal is to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on novice special education teacher's retention in the field. This research could inform teacher preparation programs, school systems, and educational policymakers on best practices to retain new teachers. We seek to answer the following research questions:

1. How do new special education teachers describe their experiences in the first year of teaching?
2. How do new special education teachers describe their level of induction support?
3. How do new special education teachers describe their commitment to continue a professional career in education?

We are looking for newly employed teachers as volunteers in the study. If you are interested in participating, please respond to this email for a follow-up conversation regarding the study's timeline and any clarifying details. Please indicate a convenient time and the best method to contact you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix C: Participant Signed Consent Form

CONSENT FORM New Teacher Retention: What the First Year Tells Us

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal Investigator: _____ Co-Investigator: _____

We are doing this research study to learn more about the experiences that may have an impact on new special education teacher's retention in the field of education. The research questions are:

4. How do new special education teachers describe their experiences in the first year of teaching?
5. How do new special education teachers describe their induction support?
6. How do new special education teachers describe their commitment to continue a professional career in education?

You are being invited to be in this research study because you recently graduated from a teacher preparation program in special education and are employed as a first-year teacher.

If you agree to participate in this study:

- We will collect information about your experiences in your classroom and school.
- We will ask you to participate in four interviews (October, January, March, and May). The interviews will take about 30-40 minutes each.
- We will ask you to write or record four reflective responses to prompted questions (September, November, February, and April). The responses will take about 15 minutes each.

Participation is voluntary. You can refuse to take part or stop at any time without penalty. If there are questions that make you uncomfortable, you can skip these questions if you do not wish to answer them.

Your responses may help us understand the needs of new teachers. This research could inform teacher preparation programs, school systems, and educational policymakers on best practices to keep special education teachers in the profession.

All information will be treated confidentially. We will take steps to protect your privacy, but there is a small risk that your information could be accidentally disclosed to people not connected to the research. To reduce this risk, we will use pretend names for participants and for other people and places revealed. We will destroy all audio recordings and written or self-recorded reflections that could identify you. After the identifiers are removed, the information will be shared with other researchers by submission to academic journals.

Please feel free to ask questions about this research at any time. You can contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. _____ at (*phone number*) or (*email address*). If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the IRB at (*phone number*) or by email at (*email address*).

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol Interview One

Interview Protocol Outline

What is the context/topic of your study?

The objective of the proposed project is to investigate the ways in which novice teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. The long-term goal is to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on new teacher's retention in the field.

Who are you going to be interviewing?

First-year teacher(s) 1-2 weeks after the end of the first quarter.

Topic domain #1: Induction Issues

Leadoff questions

“Tell me about the experiences you’ve had in your school.”

Covert categories

The teacher's perception of her/his teaching abilities; the teacher's perception of any other adults he/she interacts with (assistant teachers, occupational therapist, speech pathologist, physical therapist, grade level team, administration, etc.); the teacher's views on classroom set-up and organization; the teacher's views of the overall school and its culture.

Possible follow-ups

Walk me through a typical school day with as much detail as possible.

Can you tell me more about the classroom organization?

Explain how the adults in the classroom interact with each other.

Tell me about your relationship with a mentor teacher.

Tell me about your relationship with the other adults on your grade level.

Tell me about any experiences that gave you confidence in your teaching ability.

Tell me about any experiences that made you question your teaching ability.

Tell me about experiences you've had with other people in the school. How do you feel about these experiences?

How would you describe the overall school environment?

Topic domain #2: Readiness Issues

Leadoff questions

“Describe your feelings about being a new teacher.”

Covert categories

The teacher's perception of her abilities; the teacher's views of his/her teacher preparation program, the teacher's perceptions about prior experiences with children; the teacher's motivation for teaching; the teacher's perceptions of a “good” teacher.

Possible follow-ups

Can you tell me about your areas of strength?

Describe the areas you want more time to work on.

Describe your experiences in teacher preparation that have been most valuable as a teacher.

Describe the ones that were least valuable.

Tell me about your previous experiences with children.

Explain how you chose to be a teacher.

Describe the qualities that make a teacher effective.

Source: Carspeken, P.F. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research (critical social thought)*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Appendix E: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol Interview Two

Interview Protocol Outline

What is the context/topic of your study?

The objective of the proposed project is to investigate the ways in which novice teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. The long-term goal is to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on new teacher's retention in the field.

Who are you going to be interviewing?

First-year teacher(s) 1-2 weeks after the end of the second quarter.

Topic domain #1: Effectiveness as a Teacher

Leadoff questions

“Discuss your biggest challenge in teaching right now and how you are responding to it.”

Covert categories

The teacher's perception of classroom management abilities; the teacher's perception on the level of support he/she is receiving; the teacher's self-concerns; the teacher's perception about his/her teaching abilities.

Possible follow-ups

Describe how your induction program supports you.

Describe your classroom management system.

Discuss ways you would change your job if you could.

Describe what you feel is difficult about being a teacher.

Describe what you feel is your biggest accomplishment so far.

Discuss any virtual learning or challenges related to Covid-19 protocols.

Topic domain #2: School Culture/Relationships

Leadoff questions

“Describe the overall culture of your school.”

Covert categories

The teacher's perception of relationships with parents, colleagues and administration; the teacher's perception of administrative leadership styles; the teacher's feelings about job satisfaction; the teacher's perception with autonomy.

Possible follow-ups

Describe the relationship you have with others at school.

Describe a relationship that empowers you.

Describe a relationship that is difficult.

Discuss your current work/life balance.

Describe what you mean when you said "school is not fun."

Discuss what is holding you back the ability to be creative in your classroom.

Describe how you are feeling as you enter the second semester.

Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol Interview Three

Interview Protocol Outline

What is the context/topic of your study?

The objective of the proposed project is to investigate the ways in which novice teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. The long-term goal is to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on new teacher's retention in the field.

Who are you going to be interviewing?

First-year teacher(s) 1-2 weeks after the end of the third quarter.

Topic domain #1: Teacher Growth and Development

Leadoff questions

"Describe your process for planning lessons and how it has changed over time."

Covert categories

The teacher's perception of knowledge about the curriculum; the teacher's perception of his/her teaching abilities; the teacher's perception of his/her level of autonomy; teacher's perception of evaluation feedback.

Possible follow-ups

Describe a lesson that you taught that felt really successful.

Describe a lesson that did not go as intended.

Discuss the freedom you have in planning activities in your classroom/grade level.

Describe your level of confidence as a teacher.

Discuss the teacher evaluation feedback you have received.

Describe any coaching you have had.

Discuss the professional development you have participated in

Describe your expectations for the last quarter of school.

Explain your assessments.

Topic domain #2: Chronic Challenges

Leadoff questions

“Describe what feels like your biggest challenge this quarter.”

Covert categories

The teacher’s perception on handling student behavior; the teacher’s perception on relationships with others; the teacher’s perception of his/her support system; the teacher’s self-concerns, teacher’s perception about handling problems with parents; teacher’s perceptions about job satisfaction.

Possible follow-ups

Describe what you mean by “feeling vulnerable” as a new teacher.

Describe the ways that Covid-19 restrictions have influenced your classroom practices.

Discuss your support system when handling problems with parents.

Describe your relationships with others, both positive and negative.

Discuss your thoughts on teaching as a profession.

Appendix G: Semi-Structured Joint Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol Outline

What is the context/topic of your study?

The objective of the proposed project is to investigate the ways in which novice teachers describe their experiences throughout their first year of teaching. The long-term goal is to develop an understanding of the experiences that may have an impact on new teacher's retention in the field.

Who are you going to be interviewing?

First-year teacher(s) 1-2 weeks before the end of the school year.

Topic domain #1: Teacher Growth and Development

Leadoff questions

“Discuss your biggest accomplishment this year and how you were able to achieve it.”

Covert categories

Teacher's perception about student progress; teacher perception on knowledge with curriculum; teacher's perception about effectiveness of teacher preparation program; teacher's perception of their level of effectiveness as a teacher; teacher's perception of restrictions that impacted classroom practices.

Possible follow-ups

Discuss any students who did not make the intended progress.

Discuss your level of autonomy with the use of curriculum and resources.

Describe how Covid-19 restrictions influenced your classroom practices this year.

Looking back on your teacher preparation program, describe what you feel was the most helpful and useful for your first year of teaching.

Describe something you wish you were taught or had more of in teacher preparation.

Topic domain #2: Job Satisfaction

Leadoff questions

“Describe your biggest challenge this school year and how you responded to it.”

Covert categories

The teacher's perception on handling student behavior; the teacher's perception on relationships with others; the teacher's perception of his/her support system; the teacher's self-concerns; teacher's perception about handling problems with parents; teacher's perceptions about job satisfaction and teaching as a career.

Possible follow-ups

Describe the relationships in your school that remain challenging.

Describe how the formal or informal mentorship supported you or did not support you.

Discuss the support that helped you the most this year.

Describe something you are looking forward to next year.

Describe the advice you would give to teacher candidates graduating right now.

If you had to rate the quality of your job from 1 to 10, with 1 being horrible and 10 being the best ever, where would you rate it and why.

Appendix H: Journal Entry Prompts

Initial Prompt

- Describe your school culture, the policies at your school, and your classroom.
- What are your hopes and fears for the coming school year?

Reflection Two

- What has been my best moment as a new teacher and how can I have more moments like it?
- What was my most challenging moment and why? How will I respond next time?

Reflection Three

- How do I support my colleagues and how will I continue to do so?
- How well do I communicate with others and how can I do this better?

Reflection Four

- What are the biggest obstacles to improving my practice and how will I overcome them?
- What do I want everyone to be able to say about me?

Appendix I: Inductive Coding Tree

Theme	Sub-Theme	Quotes	Participant
New Teacher Induction Programs	Feeling Unsupported	Like the first week of school, they really were just like <imitating> okay, off you go. You got your class. Do what you're gonna do."	K-1 Line 17
		"But when we first started it was like <imitating> Alright, GO, TEACH. I think they forget like (.) especially for new, new teachers that we never taught before."	K-1 Line 28
		"They don't actually break down the information for you or with you, they're like <imitating> well, you did an internship."	K-1 Line 31
		"There is a person hired part time for our school (.) Principal found that funds to support first year teachers to the school. THAT is her official position. That is what she does (.) IN THEORY. However, what it turned out to be is that person is being required to attend so many professional developments and so many meetings (.) and different tasks that do not support first year teachers."	C-1 Line 5
		"So that was presented to me in my interview saying <imitating> hey, here's someone that's going to be able to help you, this is a great position, no one else in the county offers this, I have this here for ya'll. In reality, it hasn't quite been that way."	C-1 Line 13
		"We do have an instructional coach and she's a little more hands-off which I appreciate honestly @@@ I'm about tired of all the and micromanaging of everything. I think she's noticed that and is a little more hands-off (.) and it's her first year in her role and she's still learning as well."	C-1 Line 39
		"New teachers we are supposed to have new teacher meetings every month, and we talk about if we need anything, or something is going good or what's going bad (.) and because so many people are leaving the school it seems the admin team just did away with it."	K-2 Line 32

		“We don’t have something put in place for behavior issues (.) to give consistent consequences, so it just keeps happening. And with our counselors leaving like <@> every month (.) we don’t have that support either from someone else who could come talk to the child or take that burden off of us.”	K-2 Line 82
		“We were told we were going to meet once a month to talk about things and check up on you and everything and someone from the admin team was going to be over it. But by October the whole thing just went away.”	K-3 Line 155
		“I like the mentor coach although I haven’t seen her much (.) I mean, the principal hired her part time and has kept her in meetings all year instead of supporting new teachers.”	C-3 Line 255
		“I do feel like my true mentor has had a very rough group this year and she’s very burnt out on teaching.”	C-4 Line 196
		“My formal mentorship (.) it wasn’t really there. I was looking forward to the monthly meetings and learning new strategies so when I didn’t get that (.) I knew I had you know, seek it elsewhere.”	K-4 Line 218
	Feeling Unprepared	“Because I was like it’s the first day of school, but I don’t even know what my day looks like. What’s the run down? What am I supposed to do when they get here? Like, I’m just thrown in the classroom and like figure it out.”	K-1 Line 19
		“Because three months ago every other day I’d say <imitating> I quit @@.”	K-1 Line 43
		“And so, it’s just like when you’re a new, new teacher they forget that you’re new. And they just expect you to already know the information that somebody who’s been teaching for ten, or twenty, or even three years knows.”	K-1 Line 37
Feelings of Discordancy	With Co-Workers	“...they moved him out of my class and the other teacher decided she was going to quit if he was in her class and my team was blaming me and like saying I was getting new teacher privilege. I didn’t ask them to move him from my class. I didn’t even talk to them about the little boy.”	K-1 Line 117
		“Two of my coworkers started talking behind my back and saying <imitating> I got privileges, this doesn’t make sense, I need to deal with	K-1 Line 122

		the little boy, I don't have that many kids in my class, I don't know how to run my class."	
		"...they turned around and talked behind my back and say oh, you can't deal with your students."	K-1 Line 126
		"I wrote a written statement about it and signed it and all. It got shut down and it didn't get out of hand. But it was messy (.)"	K-1 Line 137
	With Paraprofessional	At the beginning of the school year, I was just like I don't need nobody in the classroom (.) she was just like taking up space @@@ but now I feel like you're gonna have a small group and you're gonna have something to do every single day with the kids. You can't just sit around.	K-1 Line 212
		At first, I was timid, like do whatever you want. You should know what you are doing. But now I'm like here's what you're gonna do @@@.	K-1 Line 219
		"She was saying "come here "or "sit down" and I could work on talking with her about not yelling out while I am doing my mini lesson because it takes away from the lesson when I stop to see what's going on."	K-1 Line 203
		"My para had different things happen and she didn't come a lot of days. So, I got stuck in the mindset that I'm just going to do everything myself since I can't count on someone being here consistently."	K-3 Line 144
		"I was just like she's older than me and I don't feel comfortable telling someone older, like my elder, what I need (.) but then I got like oh, I'm the teacher and it's got to be like this, this and that."	K-4 Line 259
	With Parents	"It got so bad the mom is like <imitating> I'm taking her out of school. I'm going to withdraw her."	K-1 Line 50
		"I had a mom blow up at me this morning because I emailed asking her where her kid's book bag was and could she bring it to school and somehow, she took that the wrong way."	C-2 Line 128
		"But she straight up told me I don't know anything because I'm so young and I don't have any kids. So, that really hurts."	C-2 Line 135
		"I just have some odd families. I never know what I'm going to get from them even when I bring up even a <@> simple conversation."	C-2 Line 155

		“...the parent was like <imitating> oh, we don’t think you’re a great teacher, we don’t think you’re a great fit, and this and that. And my child doesn’t think so high of you, and we just want her to be comfortable.”	K-3 Line 69
		“So yesterday her parents came up to the school and were just like <imitating> my child wants to change classes, you are not a good fit for her, and we don’t think you’re a good teacher now. I mean, it’s March (.) the end of March (.) actually April! You thought I was a good fit and a great teacher the entire year.”	K-3 Line 75
		“But saying negative things that put me down (.)I mean, I was really down yesterday and like <imitating> I thought I was a good teacher. I don’t really know if I want to teach and everything now.”	K-3 Line 79
		“I have to work two times harder when parents are not on the same page with me.”	K-3 Line 85
		“It’s the same kids doing the same thing every single day and the parents who don’t care that the kids are doing the same thing every single day. Between that and the parents who have not like taken my side on a lot of things. Those are the two biggest...” (obstacles)	C-3 Line 163
		“A lot of it is parents not being allowed in the building and not being involved in their child’s education. Honestly, I think that’s a lot of it. It’s finding different ways to get parents to care.”	C-3 Line 182
	With Administration	“So, my biggest challenge so far would definitely be not collaborating well with administration. For sure. And just not feeling supported. We just don’t seem to (.) it’s a personality clash.”	C-1 Line 146
		“I got a two (needs improvement) on academically challenging environment because I have two kids on first grade level that I’m trying to get ready. But both of their MAP scores improved so that’s where I’m having a hard time. I must be doing well enough if their scores improved.”	C-2 Line 204
		“I don’t think there was any evidence in my walk through to support that I wasn’t doing that. And she didn’t even come have a formal observation either. She said she didn’t need to because she’s like <imitating> I’m watching all the time.”	C-2 Line 207

		“There was another area I got a 2 in as well, but I can’t think of what it was off the top of my head. I asked for a little clarification on it, but it seems like it’s her opinion. That’s kind of frustrating.”	C-2 Line 211
		“I’m going to be really disappointed if these two’s don’t turn to three’s. She never set foot in my classroom in the fall either and did a TKES evaluation. In my midyear conference I asked about it and she said <imitating>oh, I’m always watching.”	C-3 Line 134
		“My principal is giving me a good reference when the schools are calling, and she’s been very polite about it so I’m going to keep playing the game until I leave.”	C-3 Line 148
		“The only thing is the professionalism of our principal at times. There have been some things recently with transfers and different jobs that have affirmed my kind of beliefs that I didn’t really want to have about her but at the same time is eye opening.”	C-3 Line 250
		“So, I definitely want to be more open with her and have conversations with her (.) because our relationship is nonexistent, and I feel like a part of that is my fault because I didn’t reach out.”	K-4 Line 132
		“She’s like a chicken with her head cut off most days @ so I’m like <imitating> I don’t really want to talk to you with all you got going on (.) I’d rather go to my team and talk to them about it.”	K-4 Line 140
		“I feel like I bother her more often than not (.) like I’m a bothersome (.) trying to get anything.”	C-4 Line 144
Feelings of Ineffectiveness as a Teacher	Classroom Management	“My classroom management on the first day of school was all over the place. The kids were running over me, yelling at me. I lost my voice the WHOLE entire first month of school @@.”	K-1 Line 92
		“I don’t know how to deal with her.”	K-1 Line 66
	Student Behavior Issues	“...the first month of school every single day she went home (.) because she was like throwing phones, she was being disruptive, she was cussing me out, cussing everybody out. She was one of those that was like the behavior was (.) very disruptive.	K-1 Line 54

		“I wasn’t able to do any tests with her or anything because she wasn’t in class. Class started at 7:40 and by the time it was 8:30, she was out of my classroom. She used to run out of the classroom and say like she hates this school and this and that. She was by far my biggest challenge.”	K-1 Line 58
		“He was only in my class for three days and he was under the table, throwing his shoes, hitting my kids, throwing his shoes at my kids and it would trigger the little girl and she would run out of the hallway and be gone.”	K-1 Line 113
		“I’ve emptied my bag of tricks. My coworkers have emptied their bags of tricks. But they’re making me put him in tier three for behavior.”	C-2 Line 146
	Instruction	“I think trying to actually keep them engaged in math for ten minutes is what I need to work on. Also, in small groups and I know what to do, sometimes I feel we end up doing other things.”	K-1 Line 180
		“So, I guess actually sticking with the plan and using it is something I need to work on. I want to actually FEEL like I’m teaching.”	K-1 Line 184
		“...some days I’m just like <imitating> did you guys? Did it register in your brain @@ what I just taught you? That’s something I need to work on. And I need to be confident in myself. I think that’s my biggest struggle right now because I AM a new teacher. I just don’t know if I’m good.”	K-1 Line 187
		“...some days I’m just like <imitating> did you guys? Did it register in your brain @@ what I just taught you? That’s something I need to work on. And I need to be confident in myself. I think that’s my biggest struggle right now because I AM a new teacher. I just don’t know if I’m good.”	K-1 Line 187
		“I feel like I could do better with differentiating instruction. I have two who are reading above a level D, and I was not expecting that. I have a small group just for them but understanding where they are at and understanding they are bored sometimes.”	C-1 Line 167
		“...sometimes I notice the kids aren’t listening to me and I get frustrated really easily and I say things over and over and over. It happens every single day. It’s hard to teach and manage the class when I’m frustrated.	K-2 Line 3

		“I feel like the winter break took away everything the kids knew and I’m starting over from day one @@.”	K-2 Line 168
		“It was one of [CURRICULUM] lessons for reading and it went over MY head, so I know it went over my kids’ heads.”	K-3 Line 49
		“Matter of fact, I completely skipped that whole lesson (.) I had to go back and reteach it because my kids were like <imitating> HUH? This was the beginning of the year when I was already like <imitating> I have no idea what I’m doing so I’m just going to keep on going.”	K-3 Line 58
		“I think I was stressing trying to teach addition (.) I mean, I don’t know (.) it was just challenging (.) I wanted to make sure I presented it in a way that they would understand.”	C-3 Line 86
		“...we were all focused and listening to the mini lesson. But then I gave them independent practice and I don’t even know. My parapro was looking though them and was like <imitating> okay, well they didn’t get this.”	C-3 Line 103
		“I’m looking forward to seeing how my kids do at the end of the year on state testing (.) it makes me a little anxious (.) because it’s a true reflection of me at the same time.”	C-3 Line 268
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	District Policies that conflict with teacher values	“...and I don’t feel like I can teach them half the time just because of the number of assessments I have to do.”	C-1 Line
		“It is like PULLING TEETH. It is not user friendly for the kids and some of the quizzes require them to read, which many are not. They can’t read it and can’t get it correct and all my kids are in the red.”	C-1 Line 180
		“...what happened to kindergarten? I’ve only been out for two years, but it used to be fun. I think a lot of it has to do with the required curriculum because in my students teaching, we didn’t have that. We got to use unit-based, theme based, fun teaching, like an apple unit, a farm unit, and we still taught all the standards. We were still able to integrate the units like	C-1 Line 220

		beginning, middle, end and living/non-living. I feel like kids would enjoy this more than the required curriculum. And it doesn't line up to [State Assessment] at all. At all. There are things that we are covering in August and September when [State Assessment] doesn't require it until the end of the year and the kids are not ready for it (.) It's not developmentally appropriate (.) and we are turning in these assessments and they're all sixties because they aren't ready for it."	
		"I don't feel like I have the ability to be creative with the curriculum that we're given. That's why I'm having a hard time with it. I just feel like last year we had so much fun in my internship and we had the freedom to create these fun units (.) I don't know (.) I have partner games and different things like that (.) It's just so much effort."	C-2 Line 44
		"The curriculum has these tasks that we have to do each week in addition to the standards and they just aren't engaging. In my opinion. I'd much rather be more autonomous."	C-2 Line 56
		"...this curriculum is not working for kids at all. It's a waste of time @@. And I wish I did not have to do these many assessments. I mean, I spent the last two weeks (.) because my parapro keeps getting pulled to cover other classes because Covid numbers are high (.) and it's taken me two weeks to complete this [READING PROGRAM] assessment that's like five pages long."	C-2 Line 229
		"I do wish there was a more concise way to do it because when I was in my student teaching, we had [PROGRAM] and I loved it. It was awesome, everything was in one place, and it graphed everything and mapped everything for you. And we have things in twenty different locations."	C-3 Line 48
	Covid-19 Restrictions	"The kids are three feet apart, all in masks, all in desks. We get to go to the lunchroom but are required to be three feet apart and face front at all times. They can't turn and talk or whatever."	C-1 Line 196
		"The kids have to stay in their desks. I've gotten to where in our social studies time I'm letting them work in partners for fifteen minutes. That's where it's confusing. We're allowed to have small groups for fifteen	C-1 Line 206

		minutes just fine, but our EIP kids have small group for forty minutes. How does that add up? It's inconsistent."	
		"I think the kids feel (.) Weighed down by it. I can see they are not enjoying school which is very sad to me. They don't have interactions and they are being asked to basically not talk all day long so we can get through all we have to get through."	C-1 Line 212
		"...like having to have desks three feet apart, not having the space to get my classroom rug back in here at this point, and not having a table to work together collaboratively, and the fear if a kid is near someone for longer than 15 minutes, they're going to be sent home. I just have a hard time with it still and just I'm eager for the day that I don't have to think about it anymore."	C-2 Line 32
		"Covid restrictions that are holding me back, too (.) It's just so very prevalent right now (.) I'm waiting for it to calm down a little bit. Then maybe I can feel more comfortable doing partner games and using more manipulatives."	C-2 Line 58
		"...my principal had just told me I could have my classroom rug back (.) but then Omicron hit, and January came, and we got locked down as hard as we were at the beginning of school when cases were bad...the kids still have to be three feet apart and in desks all day, though. My principal added some more things on top of it because I think she doesn't want to be the school with the highest numbers."	C-2 Line 64
		"...it is hard to find the creativity to teach in fun ways when we have to maintain the Covid protocol and the culture of the school itself is just not fun. It's like nothing's allowed."	C-3 Line 203
		"...there's no daily five, there's no centers, there's no dramatic play (.) There's little play at all. I think that's due to Covid this year. I haven't been able to have them at tables, I haven't had a classroom rug, um, yea. It's been just like depressing almost and the kids feel it (.) like they don't enjoy school and that's where I'm really hard on myself because I can only do so much."	C-4 Line 290

		“...if it wasn’t for Covid we would have been in on preplanning with our mentor teacher for [STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM] (.) but I wish I got to see that part (.) the preplanning part of everything she went through and did because that would have been really valuable to me as a new teacher.”	K-4 Line 355
	Virtual Learning	“I mean, they aren’t here with them at school typically but when they’re home, they want to be in the background and tell the kids how to do EVERYTHING. Then you have to worry about kids (.) like technology (.)”	K-2 Line 137
		“And then it’s so challenging because our scheduled class ends at 10:25, and then they go to specials, recess, and lunch. Then they come back from 12:10-2:10, and they’re really tired. They’ve been on a computer all day and they want to go do something else.”	K-2 Line 142
		“It was really hard to keep them engaged for eight hours on a computer. I would take the morning time to get through all the subjects and then if we needed to pull for small groups, I would use the afternoon for that instead of trying to keep the whole class focused on the screen the entire time. It doesn’t work!”	K-2 Line 147
		“I had to go back and reteach lessons because half the kids weren’t always there sometimes. I’m glad we aren’t doing that anymore.”	K-2 Line 162
		“We only had school wide virtual learning for four days at the very beginning of the school year when too many bus drivers had it and they couldn’t get to and from school. Most of my kids couldn’t join virtually and they did paper packets because they didn’t have devices or reliable Wi-Fi.”	C-2 Line 75
Feeling Unsupported by Administration	Toxic School Culture	“But instead of them supporting me and helping her they were like <imitating> [KYRA] you gotta figure out a way to deal with this.”	K-1 Line 52
		“In hindsight (.) In the interview it sounded very impressive when my principal said <imitating> we’ve only had three major write ups for behavior this past year. In my brain, I am thinking oh wow, that’s awesome. You have a good handle on behavior, you have good PBIS,	C-1 Line 58

		and you have good classroom management, good support from administration @. That's NOT quite the case. It's just that behavior goes unmanaged for so long that when it finally reaches a VERY LARGE like four adults removing someone from a classroom point (.) That's when you're written up. It's not the smaller, minor incidences that are reported because she wants to look on paper."	
		"There's no follow through until its major enough to be written up as a physical altercation. First year teachers in my school feel like they can't hit the black button for an administrator because they're too busy or you're supposed to be able to deal with it yourself."	C-1 Line 126
		Going to admin I would probably be waiting for a lot of things I need. Admin has a huge lack of support. It started good at the beginning of the school year, and they were like <imitating> oh, we're going to have a check in once a month, so you get what you need (.) and then they just do away with it (.) It just disappeared.	K-2 Line 38
		I rarely talk to them or go to them at all. I don't feel like they're really here to support me. They're like <imitating> you can come to talk to us if you need anything (.) but my team leader can answer it faster and better than them. They're like<imitating> oh, we'll get back to you or we can make a meeting about it @@@. I'm like <imitating> no, just need you to answer this question @@@.	K-2 Line 46
		"The little girl I told you about that acts out is sent to admin for consequences when needed and they just give her a slap on the wrist and send her right back to me and I'm the one who has to deal with her problem."	K-2 Line 75
		"That puts a really big strain on ME and my para because we don't want to have to deal with her while everyone else is saying oh no, it's okay."	K-2 Line 80
		"There's stuff we have to do that serves no purpose except looking good on paper (.) For them."	K-2 Line 110
		"Overall, the lack of support comes from the lack of behavioral support throughout the school. That's across the board right now. There's no real set of consequences."	C-2 Line 102

		“So actually, the parents came up to the school and we had a face-to-face meeting. It was just me and the parents and admin didn’t get involved.	K-3 Line 90
		“So, having that support and my team is very big (.) Because I don’t talk to admin about anything (.) I mean, I’d rather hold it in than to go to them.”	K-3 Line 107
		“I feel like I don’t have a relationship with them because they never come in and visit or ask me if I need support in any way. I think they forget I’m a new teacher really and they just assume I got everything under control.”	K-3 Line 114
	Lack of Teacher Voice (No Autonomy)	“I think it’s more the administration’s fault for having her tied up so much.” (Related to the absence of the new teacher coach)	C-1 Line 13
		“I already got my formal observation back (.) Which was just two of the TKES standards. I already spoke to you about that was slightly frustrating because it had a positive learning environment as a 2 (needs improvement) and it wasn’t quite clearly explained.”	C-1 Line 19
		“...and then there are other situations that communication is not clear AT ALL (.) That time we were crying in front of her was when we were frustrated because we were told three different ways to do this one assessment (.) and she’s like <imitating> just do what’s best, just do what’s easiest. And I’m like <imitating> no, you need to tell me exactly what you want because you have something specific in mind and you’re not going to be happy until you get THAT.”	C-1 Line 73
		“My teammate got called out in a faculty meeting for not following the daily schedule (.) When we, me and her, had to rewrite our schedule for the EIP programming where six of our kids were being served within our classroom. I cannot teach whole group with six kids up at a table. It is way too loud and chaotic.”	C-1 Line 108
		“We get observed outside of TKES VERY frequently, like once a week. They leave detailed feedback which I do appreciate (.) but if it’s a little snip of time and they don’t see what they think they should, it is	C-1 Line 114

		frustrating. I don't have a chance to converse with them or explain what why they are seeing what they are seeing, and I'll get a little note."	
		"I'm TOLD that <imitating> do what's best for my kids. But I don't actually FEEL like I can do that."	C-1 Line 123
		"I feel like I have to play the game. I do. Because it's going to reflect on my TKES evaluations which will follow me through no matter where I go, or I feel like it's going to affect how I am supported from administration."	C-1 Line 144
		"But if I had more creative freedom, to do more craft-based activities, to do more cut and glue activities, I barely have time to do any of that in a day. I am trying in the free time that I have to create more engaging activities for them. But it's just you know (.) And I'm afraid if I'm observed, they are going to look at the curriculum and ask why I am not doing that. They will ask <imitating> where's the learning in that? And then there would be repercussions. It's hard not having a voice as a first-year teacher. I mean it's just speaking up for what I can see in my classroom is needed."	C-1 Line 232
		"I don't think any of us are heard. That's the problem @@@. In some situations I've seen, it is first year teachers compared to the rest, but at our school it's not anyone. We do communicate and it falls on deaf ears or they get defensive or yeah (.) or they look at me while I'm crying, and they brush right past it @@."	C-1 Line 256
		"...but we had to adapt it and it was A LOT of effort to go rewrite it in a way so if admin or the county came in, we could say we were still following what we are supposed to do."	C-2 Line 54
		"I wish we had more monthly things, and I've expressed this to admin, to look forward to schoolwide (.) To incentivize more for behavior and learning."	C-3 Line 97
		"People have complained but it falls on deaf ears and that's why everyone is frustrated. There is no mutual respect, and everyone is just putting on a show half the time."	C-3 Line 259

	Lack of Teacher Voice No Autonomy	“I think it’s more the administration’s fault for having her tied up so much.” (Related to the absence of the new teacher coach)	C-1 Line 13
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		“We get observed outside of TKES VERY frequently, like once a week. They leave detailed feedback which I do appreciate (.) but if it’s a little snip of time and they don’t see what they think they should, it is frustrating. I don’t have a chance to converse with them or explain what why they are seeing what they are seeing, and I’ll get a little note.”	C-1 Line 114
		“I’m TOLD that <imitating> do what’s best for my kids. But I don’t actually FEEL like I can do that.”	C-1 Line 123
		“I feel like I have to play the game. I do. Because it’s going to reflect on my TKES evaluations which will follow me through no matter where I go, or I feel like it’s going to affect how I am supported from administration.”	C-1 Line 144
		“But if I had more creative freedom, to do more craft-based activities, to do more cut and glue activities, I barely have time to do any of that in a	C-1 Line 232

		day. I am trying in the free time that I have to create more engaging activities for them. But it's just you know (.) And I'm afraid if I'm observed, they are going to look at the curriculum and ask why I am not doing that. They will ask <imitating> where's the learning in that? And then there would be repercussions. It's hard not having a voice as a first-year teacher. I mean it's just speaking up for what I can see in my classroom is needed."	
		"I don't think any of us are heard. That's the problem @@@. In some situations I've seen, it is first year teachers compared to the rest, but at our school it's not anyone. We do communicate and it falls on deaf ears or they get defensive or yeah (.) or they look at me while I'm crying, and they brush right past it @@."	C-1 Line 256
		"...but we had to adapt it and it was A LOT of effort to go rewrite it in a way so if admin or the county came in, we could say we were still following what we are supposed to do."	C-2 Line 54
		"I wish we had more monthly things, and I've expressed this to admin, to look forward to schoolwide (.) To incentivize more for behavior and learning."	C-3 Line 97
		"People have complained but it falls on deaf ears and that's why everyone is frustrated. There is no mutual respect, and everyone is just putting on a show half the time."	C-3 Line 259
	Lack of Caring	"And then when teachers are sharing that frustration and you still look at them with a just blank face and lack of empathy."	C-1 Line 70
		"I've only seen the principal in my classroom twice this whole year (.) And the same thing with the assistant principal."	K-3 Line 118
		"I feel like if someone made the effort to sit down with me to just talk, I'd be more open and willing to talk to them. I know they have a lot going on (.) but if I was a principal and I had a new teacher I would definitely try to make sure she was at least straight for at least her first 4 months of school."	K-3 Line 121
		"...you really want to feel like they care about you (.) But I don't see that happening."	K-3 Line 125

		“In December the principal did her meeting with me. She just said I was doing great and to keep it up. That was it.”	K-3 Line 130
		“It’s kind of like they’re putting me off, like <imitating> okay, you’re good <yelling> NEXT! @@”	K-3 Line 134
	Lack of Support	“I called admin to tell them her behavior was out of control, and she was running up to the front. They were like <imitating> just write her up, we only have two more weeks, just write her up <imitating> and I was just so frustrating to me.”	K-4 Line 6
		“...so, I had to come up with my own consequences for her because the school wasn’t doing anything.”	K-4 Line 15
		“Lack of consequences is a large portion of it (.) LARGE.” (In response to student behavior being the biggest challenge this year).	C-4 Line 74
Feelings of Accomplishment	Classroom Management	“But now we know when the timer goes off, we know what to do next, we know who the line leader is, we know when we’re supposed to wipe down the tables, we know when it’s time to go. My classroom management grew the most out of everything.”	K-1 Line 94
	Student Behavior	“I had to explain to her <imitating> I understand that you’re in the classroom. I see you. I know you’re my student. Just because I didn’t call on you this time, I’m going to call on you the next time. I had to build trust with her.”	K-1 Line 76
		“I think I have done a good job understanding each of my students’ needs and trying to figure out how to approach each of them behaviorally.”	C-1 Line 169
		“I had an observation recently and she said that the kids are trying to get the easy way out and I’m not letting them so setting high expectations and following though has really paid off for helping them to become more independent.”	C-3 Line 118
	Student Progress	“I had two kids, really three when they first came (.) one little girl only knew like three letters and letter sounds and now today I tested her and she knew 21 sounds and 22 letters (.) and I WAS SO PROUD. And I was just like wow, going over this every single day and seeing the growth and development is amazing.”	K-1 Line 99

		“When the kids took the [SOFTWARE DIAGNOSTIC] I saw the growth from the beginning of the school year to December. Wow, to actually see them learning and growing every single day. Learning their letters and sounds (.) and being able to write words and spell words. It’s really awesome to see.	K-2 Line 21
		“That’s what keep me (.) What drives me to come to work every day (.) to see that growth in them.	K-2 Line 27
		“...like most students grew in at least one area or stayed in the blue. It was so exciting and just sweet to see them realize they were learning, too.” (Benchmark Assessment)	C-2 Line 9
		“Looking across the board, kindergartens. We use [READING PROGRAM] and the data we collected for that with letters and letter sounds is significantly higher than any other grade.”	C-2 Line 19
		“I’m looking forward to the diagnostic tests so I can see how much the kids have grown the whole school year.”	K-3 Line 205
		“I had eight students in language arts exceed (.) That’s above the meets (.) exceed kindergarten expectations and twelve on the math portion and I have twenty kids.”	C-4 Line 81
		“To see them grow was amazing. I was just like wow; I didn’t really see it throughout the year, but I made a big difference in their lives. I was just like, that’s amazing.”	K-4 Line 99
	Problem Solving	“...now that’s its mid-October I feel like I’m starting to develop a schedule and a routine to know once I get home, I will look at my power points and then be done. I don’t try to push myself as much as when I was really stressed. I cannot be like this.”	K-1 Line 153
		“I feel like it’s balanced really well now because I can actually breathe when I leave work and feel like I have a life outside of my job (.) And I’m not as stressed as I was when I first started.”	K-2 Line 57
		“I’ve found resources that help me make my power points and stuff. So that’s basically what it was (.) preparing for my next day of school (.) and now that I actually have resources that help me make the power	K-2 Line 64

		points or have a power point that's already created that I can use (.) has saved me a lot of time."	
		"I'm keeping up now with the day-to-day stuff like lesson plans. I usually take the afternoons before I leave to get things done. Even like with grades. I was usually putting them in all at the same time and it was a lot, but I've been putting grades in every week now and I'm so proud of myself."	K-2 Line 192
		"This semester, I am going to do everything I need to do on time and not wait to the last minute and not get overwhelmed with the amount of things I have to do."	K-2 Line 195
		"So, I used Flex Friday to reteach it in the way my grade level chair explained (.) But I used a different book@@. I just couldn't relate to that beetle book."	K-3 Line 61
	Instructional Methods and Planning	"...we look at [SOFTWARE PROGRAM] and look at the data to break down what the kids have been working on. I have been doing blends and digraphs based on different groups and what my kids need. So, that is a valuable program to tell us where the kids are and what tools you can use to make plans for small groups."	K-3 Line 6
		"We break down for small groups based on pervious lessons so let's say last week I taught how to find a missing addend but a group of kids didn't get it on the exit tickets so that would be small group for this week."	K-3 Line 17
		"...we were working on subtracting. And the word problem was like <imitating> Jake has five apples. He ate four apples. How many apples does he have left? What are we going to do now? That's right, put down four fingers (.) he had one apple left! I love working with my hands and stuff for math. It's engaging and the kids understand it better."	K-3 Line 32
		"...we were working on missing addends and using tour theater online. We were using the magician, and I had three kids, so we went around the table and made it out of a game."	K-3 Line 36
		"The kids are like "four" and they really got it. I love math lessons. Math lessons are really fun because you can do so much with it."	K-3 Line 40

		“I definitely want to make some changes, like the way my schedule is (.) Like for my small groups. I want to do stations for next year so that way every kid will be doing something fun while their learning for reading and math.	K-3 Line 198
Feeling Appreciative of Veteran Teachers as New Teacher Support	Mentorship	“Like me and my mentor teacher are really, really close and I can go to her and be like <imitating> hey, I need help, or I don’t understand this.”	K-1 Line 14
		“But thankfully I was blessed with my mentor teacher and she’s like <imitating> okay, [KYRA] were going to sit down. What do you need? Let’s help you prepare.”	K-1 Line 17
		“I feel the most support from my kindergarten team. They are absolutely amazing. I don’t love going to work every day. But I would REALLY NOT love going to work every day @@@ if they weren’t as awesome as they were. They are veteran teachers, they know kindergarten, they know the school but not in a stuck up way like <imitating> here’s my hand, we’re going to do this all together.”	C-1 Line 26
		“...there’s, um, an interventionist for K-1 that used to be a kindergarten teacher as well (.) She’s retiring at the end of the year. She’s very supportive as well. She’s pull out (.) for EIP with my kids, so she’s roping in working with all of them, and helping me professionally and personally and always. So that’s definitely the area I feel most supported, and I communicated that with them as well because they are rock stars.”	C-1 Line 34
		“...between my parapro (veteran) providing EXCELLENT support for behavior. Oh, my stars! She’s just right there where I need her to be.”	C-1 Line 154
		“I get support from my kinder team than actually going to admin.”	K-2 Line 35
		“That was one of my biggest fears that I’d have to work with people that I didn’t like (.) Because it happened in my internship when two teachers went back and forth all day long arguing with each other and they had to	K-2 Line 101

		work together. I was like <imitating> I hope that doesn't happen to me. But I love my team."	
		"It was difficult finding materials for virtual learning, but my coworkers helped me out a lot. If it was me as a first-year teacher with no support, it would have been very challenging. But they'd done so much virtual learning all last year and had lots of resources that they were eager to share with me."	C-2 Line 83
		"...my biggest support is my immediate kindergarten teammates and our EIP teacher."	C-2 Line 96
		"They are just the best. Just outside of academics (.) like we're friends now (.) to the point that I'm really sad to be leaving them."	C-2 Line 99
		"My co teacher [MS. BLACK] has done that and kind of gone ahead of what the curriculum is asking us to do, and they are getting it. I think if I just shut my door and do that, they'll pick up on it."	C-2 Line 243
		"...we come together as a whole group because I know our grade level chair actually makes the whole group math lesson (.) The top part (.) the whole lesson (.) so we all stay on the same place."	K-3 Line 15
		"When I talked to my grade level chair, she was like <imitating> no, you could have talked about a time you saw a beetle or what that meant to you or how it made you feel and I'm like <imitating> oh, I didn't do that. I had to reteach it."	K-3 Line
		"Thankfully like I was telling you my team is very supportive, and so I talked to them about what happened, and they were like <imitating> this is how you should go about it." (In response to a parent problem.)	K-3 Line 103
		"Thankfully, me and my mentor we're really close and I can talk to her any time I want. I get suggestions on how I'm teaching or what I need to work on or change. She's been teaching for like twenty-seven years now and she's the grade level chair."	K-3 Line 158
		"So, thankfully we became friends, so our mentorship is informal and the formal part of it went away. I'm lucky because not all new teachers have that relationship with someone."	K-3 Line 162

		“I don’t know if I’d have been as confident or doing that as well if it wasn’t for the two people on my team that have been doing this for eighteen plus years that they have now (.) I would have just gone with the flow and stressed myself out trying to adhere to all this even when it wasn’t working for my kids.”	C-3 Line 68
		“I have built a very close relationship with the people on my team. It’s one of the things I look forward to going to work every day. I am basically friends with them.”	C-3 Line 245
		“I have a great kinder team, so I go to them if I need anything.”	K-4 Line 128
		“So, I feel like the informal (mentorship) played a HUGE role and part in my development for this school year. Because without the informal I feel like I would have been so stressed.”	K-4 Line 216
		“I feel like I definitely have learned the most from the veteran teachers.”	C-4 Line 239
		“...get to know the veteran teachers in your building. They’ll either give you hand me down stuff, they’ll give you advice, they’ll let you know the ropes around the school.”	C-4 Line 247
Feeling Overworked	Too Much Work	“I was working at school and then bringing it all home and I wasn’t enjoying my home life because as soon as I got home, I would still be working and not going to bed until midnight.”	K-1 Line 145
		“I got to the point that I was like I am doing too much. I’m working all day at school and then turning around and working all night at home. And I know they say not to bring your work home (.) but that’s how I felt every single day and I was just this cannot be the life of a teacher. Because I need a personal life outside of my job and I just felt like I wasn’t having that.”	K-1 Line 148
		“...first would be PLC’s with lesson plans and everything would be the highest because that’s where I spend most of my time. With the lesson plans to turn in every Friday.”	K-1 Line 161
		“We used to have PLC’s Tuesday for writing, Wednesdays for math, and then Thursday with your grade level. Then they wanted us to meet	K-1 Line 164

		unofficially on Mondays and Fridays and it was just TOO much. I mean we don't have time to plan, and we would have to stay after school to plan."	
		"...but there is still SO many meetings, SO many professional developments <sighing> everyone's feeling it (.) I feel like there will be a lot of turnovers at the end of the year again this year. Some of it is county mandated but not all of it. So that's a frustrating thing coming in as a first-year teacher, and even these twenty-something teachers are feeling the same. It's kind of disheartening to think I have twenty-nine more years of this @@."	C-1 Line 83
		"...for some reason it all piled up last week and I was STRESSED out (.) And I haven't felt that kind of stress and backlog since August and September when I was getting my bearings."	C-2 Line 181
	District Demands	"The lesson plans would be a big thing. The template is ABSURD. Um, we have to do one for science, social studies, math, language arts (.) a detailed plan of each. Basically, I do science and social studies. Each of those is about five pages long each. Math and language arts are about seven pages long to include what we need for there. All together, we have 24 pages of material that we are having to frontload and write."	C-1 Line 91
		"It was SO MUCH, and they did NOT (.) Are not going to let up on that. So that from the get-go, seeing how micromanaged that was VERY different from my student teaching experience. We had like <@> a three-page document with an opening, middle, closing, and shared the theme of the activity and that was about? It."	C-1 Line 97
		"...the curriculum our county mandates us to use called [Curriculum] (.) They have paid thousands of dollars for us to have to use it (.) They created it about five years now and it does NOT align with [State Assessment]. We have voiced our concerns about it several times and we're having to do two different assessments for both. The number of assessments feels very micromanaged, and I don't feel like I can teach them half the time just because of the number of assessments I have to do."	C-1 Line 100

		“We have a software program called [PROGRAM] that we are required to use. It is THE worst thing I have EVER put in front of a kid. I am required to use it for math and language arts for 15 minutes a day. It is like PULLING TEETH. It is not user friendly for the kids and some of the quizzes require them to read, which many are not. They can’t read it and can’t get it correct and all my kids are in the red.”	C-1 Line 178
	Teacher, Para, or Substitute Shortages	“...lots of changes and people are leaving. Because the principal is new for this school year and people were used to the old principal and no one wants to work with the new principal and the new admin. Team, a lot of people are leaving and feel like the job isn’t a good fit for them. So, this is really hurting the kids and the teachers that are still here because we don’t have as much support as we did.”	K-2 Line 90
		“...like when my para is absent or leaves for weeks, or is constantly pulled to cover another class and I don’t have a sub. Having all twenty kids by myself and still teach and having to do everything and small groups (.) those are the days I want to quit @.”	K-2 Line 183
		“...because my parapro keeps getting pulled to cover other classes because Covid numbers are high (.) And it’s taken me two weeks to complete this [READING PROGRAM] assessment that’s like five pages long.”	C-2 Line 253
		“My para had different things happen and she didn’t come a lot of days. So, I got stuck in the mindset that I’m just going to do everything myself since I can’t count on someone being here consistently.”	K-3 Line 144
		“I told the AP <imitating> yea, well you know when someone’s not here and they don’t get a sub, I’m doing everything by myself, and I’m just used to doing it now.” (In response to not using her para effectively.)	K-3 Line 146
Job Satisfaction	Feeling Dissatisfied	“...three months ago every other day I’d say <imitating> I quit @@.”	K-1 Line 43
		“I don’t love going to work every day.”	C-1 Line 27
		“I just got back from winter break a couple of weeks ago and I already feel like I need another break. I mean, it’s only January @@.”	K-2 Line 170

		“I was like <imitating> I need to find a new career @@”	K-2 Line 176
		“...like when my para is absent or leaves for weeks, or is constantly pulled to cover another class and I don’t have a sub. Having all twenty kids by myself and still teach and having to do everything and small groups (.) those are the days I want to quit @.”	K-2 Line 183
		“I think I’ll do better when I have you know people around me (.) Close enough to me. [JEFFERSON] is just so far away from literally ANYONE. I have no real life outside of school.” (About being in a rural district)	C-2 Line 165
		“But saying negative things that put me down (.) I mean, I was really down yesterday and like <imitating> I thought I was a good teacher. I don’t really know if I want to teach and everything now.” (In response to parent comments)	K-3 Line 79
		“I mean, planning fun things for us to do is just not happening. So, the culture of the school doesn’t allow fun events to celebrate, or venture away from the curriculum, or even go on field trips.”	C-3 Line 199
		“I’m very excited to find a new job.”	C-3 Line 270
		“I’m excited about working with my new principal and going somewhere different and getting established there.”	C-4 Line 169
	Mixed Feelings	“It’s just some days, I love my job and other days it’s too hard and it’s A LOT. I actually quit last week, but then I came the next day @@. They’re like <imitating> okay, [MS. SMITH] see you tomorrow. I’m like <imitating> no, I quit. I’m done. But then I come back.”	K-2 Line 177
		“I don’t know (.) A lot of it’s me. I’m having a hard time fully enjoying school and finding fun things for us to do.”	C-2 Line 37
		“I maybe would have explored other opportunities, but now that I’m getting married, I’ll be teaching in a different county next year.”	C-2 Line 253
		“So, yea, I’ll be back next year as a teacher, but I’m still trying to debate if I want to do this long term like something I really want to do.”	K-3 Line 193

		“There were plenty of times I was like <imitating> I hate teaching, I don’t want to be a teacher no more; I want to quit! This job is not for the weak.”	K-4 Line 234
		“I would say for me like a 6 or 7 (out of 10) because there are days when I’m like I love it; like I want to come to work and then there are days like I don’t want to come to work. It’s because of the behavior issues, dealing parents, dealing with admin, dealing with so much OUTSIDE resources and sources (.) It’s just like want to teach these KIDS. I don’t want to deal with all of THIS.”	K-4 Line
	Feelings of Apathy	“I will say that I’ve gotten lazier with it to a degree which is awful.”	C-3 Line 3
		“It’s like if we get to it, we get to it.”	C-3 Line 5
		“But for the most part I would say (.) I’m able to quickly (.) like lesson plan, plug and chug and keep the same template which is what you have for the whole unit.”	C-3 Line 12
		“...what’s the point of having the one size fits all curriculum that meets no one’s needs.	C-3 Line 63
		“They were probably ready for them in January but that’s beside the point.”	C-3 Line 91
		“I mean, I have kids who do what they want to do and I’m tired of wasting my breath to get them to want to learn.”	C-3 Line 94
		“...it’s hard to find the time to do that (professional development) and I feel checked out to a degree.”	C-3 Line 127
Professional Development for New Teachers	Feelings of Apathy	“Mostly we’re doing this district mandated literacy course online this semester. I think the training is repetitive because its stuff I pretty much already know and when we do it asynchronous, the people make it long and boring (.) and I find myself falling asleep.”	K-3 Line 169
		“I don’t really think it’s been beneficial at all. The literacy trainings I feel like those days are just a waste (.) like come to work without the kids and try to stay awake pretty much.”	K-3 Line 178

		"I feel like if I would have had the professional development on ways to plan lessons for your classroom, or different ways to keep your kids engaged, things like that, it would have been helpful instead of me trying to figure it out on my own."	K-3 Line 180
		"I had to ask if there was any kind of trainings for new teachers that I could go to. To find a lack of it (.) we need that for new teachers (.) we need more support for that in the county."	K-3 Line 182
		"...it would really help to be able to hear practical things (.) I only had one session like that."	K-3 Line 185
		"It was really helpful because it gave me like behavior strategies for some students in my class (.) But that was only one time and I feel like if I had more trainings like that, that would be very beneficial."	K-3 Line 187
		"I'D be more interested in ones like that (teacher-led PD) versus the entire school sitting through a social studies one for three hours which was quite miserable. I appreciate it, but I like ones that apply to me more."	C-3 Line 219
		"Across the board, some of it feels a little pointless, a little redundant, and doesn't apply to me."	C-3 Line 224
		"...hey, you have to stay after school and take this professional development as a schoolwide event. So, I would say that is a weak area, getting to decide what professional development truly applies to me."	C-3 Line 235