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PRINCIPALS' RESPONSE TO PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM: PRINCIPALS' PROCEDURES AND PERSPECTIVES WHEN INTERVIEWING GRADUATE M.ED. STUDENTS FROM THE EDUCATORS FOR COLLABORATIVE CHANGE, A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS PROGRAM AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education of The Ohio State University

By

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*****

The Ohio State University 2000

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ABSTRACT

Teacher selection directly affects the educational opportunities of every student. It becomes the responsibility of educational administrators to select the highest quality teachers, who are highly knowledgeable in curriculum and pedagogy. The purpose of this study was to examine the interview phase in the selection process: the procedures and perspectives that influenced principals when they hire teachers.

Research, using primarily quantitative analyses, has struggled over the past 80 plus years to find valid predictors of employee success on which to base hiring decisions. A qualitative research methodology was chosen to make sense of the selection phenomenon and understand the meanings that interviewers bring to it. This methodology was used to provide an in-depth analysis of the complexities of the decision-making process in teacher selection. This research extended previous studies by examining the selection process in naturalistic settings.

The data revealed that (1) the procedures that principals in this study followed when hiring teachers; (2) the perceptions that influenced the way the principals in this study made decisions about hiring teachers:
and (3) the knowledge of and/or experience with a teacher education program that influenced decision-making in the hiring process.

Themes emerged that described what actions principals take and what perceptions influenced their hiring of teachers. The major themes that appeared throughout the interviews were: principal's vision of school, hiring procedures, rating scales, interview questions, interview team, teacher qualities, challenges, tacit knowledge, district pressures, and differences in teacher education programs.

These themes represented the complex environment that principals in this study experienced when hiring teachers. Principals spent time and energy to align the hiring process with the vision and needs of their schools reflecting that student academic success was the main issue. These themes enabled a more thorough description of the hiring process and ultimately, a better understanding of a critical ingredient to student academic success, hiring the best teachers.

This study, while investigating the hiring processes and perspectives of principals, confirmed recent research on educational reform: Principals are increasing faculty involvement in decision-making, creating a shared vision of the school, and focusing on whole-school restructuring.
Dedicated to my family.

Ernie, Kinnett, and James
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

They say, “No man [or woman] is an island.” That certainly holds true for me. Without the wonderful people I have found at The Ohio State University, this dissertation would not have been possible at all. I am especially indebted to my extraordinary committee members. Beside their support, I deeply appreciate and treasure their friendship.

I thank Marilyn Johnston for her gracious and enduring encouragement. She broadened my perspectives and raised my sights. She stimulated my thinking. Her intellectual and emotional support led to my metamorphosis and believing in myself. She taught me to trust. What an incredible gift!

I thank Michael Thomas for his endless probing questions. He was an idea generator whose continual input and guidance helped me learn.

I thank Brad Mitchell for being my alternative thinker. His generous spirit pervaded our discussions and helped me look for alternative ideas.

I thank Franklin Walter for his warm greetings and constant encouragement, wanting me to succeed. I wish I had known him earlier.
I thank Diane Baugher for her knowledge of how to get things accomplished around the department. She was always there with her encouragement, assistance and support, to tell me how to get out of the jams I worked myself into.

I thank Michael Parsons for his wonderful British humor that kept me laughing. His creative thinking was always intriguing. And I want to thank him especially for that coveted parking pass.

Last but not least, I thank my husband, Ernie, for being my solid rock and for believing in me.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Education, like democracy, is “of the people and by the people.” Recently, however, cynicism and criticisms have permeated discussions of public education in the United States. For more than 40 years, educators have come under intense scrutiny in their attempts to provide excellence, equity, and efficiency in public education (Duke, 1987). During the late 1950s, educators were confronted with a public outcry demanding excellence in instruction and an overhaul in curriculum. In the late 1960s, there were equity issues concerning the education of disadvantaged students, accompanied by an infusion of unparalleled amounts of federal funds. Throughout the 1970s, as school populations declined, society voiced frustration over continued increases in public school expenditures, which resulted in a general demand by the American public for a more efficient educational system (Duke, 1987).

Between 1950 and 1980, this educational journey shifted from a focus on excellence, to a focus on equity, and then to a focus on efficiency. In the early 1980s, all three of these issues were of significant
concern to the American public. During the 1980s, numerous research studies conducted in America's public schools indicated a crisis in education. One of the most noted of these studies was "A Nation At Risk" (1983) conducted by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), which launched in earnest the efforts for improving education.

These recommendations were important not because they reflected a consensus concerning needed changes, but because they suggested a strong link between the future of American society and the quality of instruction in the nation's classrooms... Virtually every report singled out the school principal as the key to successful reform (Duke. 1987, p. 3-4).

The reports, research, and reform initiatives tied the quality of instruction to the nature of school organization and leadership (Duke. 1987). The debunking of professional knowledge in education contributed to increased scrutiny in the selection of professional educators, and administrators began to be examined strictly on their knowledge, personal attributes, and professionalism. In turn, the public began to hold educational institutions accountable for their selection of all educators (Schon. 1983).

Problem Statement

The selection of highly qualified and capable educators affects public confidence. Educator selection also directly affects the educational opportunities of every student. Because children deserve the best quality in educational opportunities, it becomes the responsibility of
educational administrators to select the highest quality teachers who are highly knowledgeable in curriculum and pedagogy.

Schalock (1979) reviewed the findings of studies that found some teachers were more effective than others. The studies that investigated the teacher selection process indicated that most of the research had been in the form of correlational studies examining teacher characteristics and their purported relationship to "subsequent success as a teacher" (Schalock, 1979, p. 397). Schalock concluded that in order for reform initiatives to be successful, the best available people must be hired and retained. To enhance our understanding of decision-making in hiring and the variables that affect hiring, more studies on selection are needed.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the selection process in education. This study focused on the interview phase in the election process and the processes and perspectives that influenced principals when they hired teachers.

Research Questions

The selection of highly qualified teachers is a critical factor in student academic success. Therefore, it is critical to the success of schools for principals to make the best hiring decisions. This study describes the procedures and perspectives involved in hiring teachers. The collection of data was intended to answer the following questions:

1) What procedures do principals follow when hiring teachers?
2) What influences principals' decisions when hiring teachers?

3) Does the knowledge of and/or experience with teacher education programs influence the hiring of students from a specific teacher-education program?

Definition of Terms

**Intern**: A student in a teacher-education program preparing to become a teacher during the formal internship of extended practice teaching.

**Learning organization**: An open or adaptive organization that responds to external or internal environmental shifts by transforming behaviors to better adapt to a changing environment in order to thrive and survive.

**Personal Vision**: A mental model or picture of the future with a deep commitment to act on that concept and create the future.

**Plan**: A course of action designed to accomplish a goal.

**Professional Development School (PDS)**: A program promoted and defined by the Holmes Group (1983) that consists of a collaborative effort between universities and local schools for the development of novice teaching professionals, for continuing development of experienced teaching professionals, and for the research and development of the teaching profession.

**Reliability**: Reliability is discussed in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In quantitative methodology, reliability is the degree to which a study can be replicated and the findings of the study remain the same over different time periods and among different research
participants. In qualitative methodology, reliability is the degree to which a study will have consistent findings through comparing data and testing alternative explanations.

**Restructuring:** An organizational model used to creating new structures of organizational and operational principals and practices to radically change the way work is conducted.

**Shared Vision:** A covenant shared among members of a group that incorporates a commitment to ideas, issues, values, and goals with the ultimate goal of creating the future.

**Validity:** Validity is discussed in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Validity in the quantitative paradigm is the degree to which a study's measuring instrument accurately measures the variable in question. Careful instrument construction is necessary to determine if the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Validity in the qualitative paradigm is the degree to which the study data is accurate and credible by comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information over time and using different means.

**Methodological Assumptions**

I have been interested in the selection of quality teachers since the beginning of my teaching career but I have had limited experience with the selection process as an administrator. As I began the current study, I reviewed many research studies on teacher selection, which are predominately quantitative. However, while the studies were informative
and interesting, there seemed to be things that were missing. When I began to study qualitative methodology, I realized that this approach would help me address questions that had not yet been investigated.

The methodological approach to this study is based on a phenomenological hermeneutical stance. It is exploratory and aims to gain new understandings that cannot be found in quantitative analyses. The nature of my questions were best studied by interviewing principals who are the key persons in the hiring process. This study does not attempt to find cause-and-effect explanations, only to explain the procedures and influences on the hiring process.

Advancements for Selection Research

"Research on employee selection indicates that the predictive validity of selection decisions is notoriously weak, suggesting that identification of the most qualified teacher candidates from the applicant pool is a risky if not erroneous process" (Pounder, 1989, p. 188). Ten years ago, this comment was a daunting reminder to principals of the gravity of the hiring process: School administrators must determine the best candidate from the candidate pool, i.e., to distinguish the excellent applicant from the average or below-average applicant. This has been confirmed by research on teacher effectiveness in the last decade, which shows that the success of a school can be built or toppled based on the quality of its teachers.
The shortage of teachers during the 1970s put pressure on principals to hire teachers. While principals were concerned about teacher quality, the crisis required them to be more concerned with making sure that each classroom was covered with a person. However, as education reform movements and research results subsequently stressed the direct relationship of teacher quality to student success, the emphasis shifts to "a quality teacher in every classroom" (Riley, 1998).

During this time, changes in organizational theories influenced educational organizations. Numerous reform initiatives have been undertaken nationally. Educational organizations have the responsibility not only to educate our country's children, but also to respond to the problems in society such as violence, poverty, and prejudice. The goals of the current reform initiatives are in response to the national focus on education as a solution to society's problems.

Never before, perhaps, have educators been required to do more. We have been asked to be surrogate parents, drug czars, and peace officers, as well as driving instructors, nutritionists, custodians, and health advisors. Legislation requires us to serve the increasingly diverse needs of people in disparate locations. And never before, possibly, has an educator's stock been lower. We work hard, but seem to be getting less respect and fewer results of which we can be proud. Change is a constant companion of education and the mega-environment in which education functions (Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, 1996, p. xiii).

Has the process of restructuring and reconceptualizing education affected the way teachers are hired? Have changes in expectations for teachers affected the perceptions and influences of principals when hiring teachers? These questions form the background for the current study with a focus on the hiring process.
Further information is needed on the interview stage of the selection process to examine the influences on principals' judgments. The examination of processes and perspectives will assist in understanding the influences that affect the outcome of hiring decisions. The current study will contribute to information about and understanding of the teacher selection process.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational organizations have experienced increased demands from the American people for accountability in the selection of school personnel. With the passage of time, predictors of and criteria for selection of school employees have changed. However, the goal in the selection of personnel has remained the same: to hire school employees who will contribute to the improvement of instruction while maintaining a selection process that will be responsive to society's increasing emphasis on the need for excellence, equity, and efficiency.

The selection process is a pivotal point in creating excellence in education. As the public demand for more effective and efficient schools escalates, the issue of hiring quality school personnel takes on increased significance. Therefore, the challenge is to identify quality teachers who improve the outcomes of education.

Selection in education has been modeled after the hiring processes in private sector businesses. An essential instrument in the selection process is the interview. However, research has demonstrated that the
interview alone is neither reliable nor valid (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wagner, 1949; Wright, 1969).

A model of the selection process used by most businesses represents sequential multi-stage activities of personnel selection (Castetter, 1986). Most working-age people immediately think of the selection process in the context of the interview alone (Dipboye, 1992). The selection process, however, is composed of multi-stages which include the recruitment, pre-interview, interview, post-interview, and the evaluation stage, all strategically developed by following established guidelines to achieve congruence between applicant and position (Castetter, 1986; Dipboye, 1992; Harris & Monk, 1992). "In multi-stage selection, the organization renders several decisions and applicants are required to pass each step of the process before proceeding to the next step" (Dipboye, 1992, p. 3).

Traditionally, the first stage in the selection process involves recruitment. Recruitment should be neither ignored nor forgotten. "The development of a large pool of highly qualified applicants available for selection consideration is the primary goal of the recruitment program" (Harris & Monk, 1992, p. 89).

Decision-makers involved in the selection process utilize the pre-interview stage to familiarize themselves with the applicants through review of transcripts, application forms, cover letters, reference letters, resumés, academic major, background checks, and other paper credentials (Dipboye, 1992). First impressions are generally formed at this stage.
Research reveals that interviewers typically prepare for the interview stage by developing interview questions based on the information provided in the applicant’s file (Dipboye, 1992).

The next stage, which is the interview, offers the first opportunity for face-to-face communication between the interviewer and the interviewee, and involves both verbal and non-verbal messages. “The interview remains one of the most important selection tools for securing information and impressions about applicants” (Castetter, 1986, p. 242). Unfortunately, repeated studies have not found the interview stage to be a reliable or valid predictor of employee success on the job (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wagner, 1949; Wright, 1969).

In the multi-stage selection process, the post-interview stage provides for the integration of paper credential information and face-to-face impressions. The interviewer or decision-maker uses this obtained information to predict a prospective employee’s potential job success. The decision to make a job offer is generally shaped in the post-interview stage of this process.

Once an offer of employment is extended, personnel induction, socialization, personnel development, and performance appraisal become steps in the evaluation stage (Castetter, 1986). The final step that should be conducted to add relevant information to employee selection is an evaluation of the selection process.
Along with understanding the multi-stage approach to selection, it is also vital to understand the decision-making process. Selection of personnel is the end result of an information gathering and decision-making process (Dipboye, 1992). Each stage of the decision-making process requires that the applicant succeed for continued consideration in the hiring process.

Research methodologies addressing the hiring process have ranged between two extremes: (1) macroanalysis, which investigates the selection process as a whole unit; and (2) microanalysis, which investigates small units in the process. Neither of these analytical approaches proved to be more reliable or valid than the other. Several factors emerged from studies that explain this phenomena, and they will be discussed below. Therefore, researchers continue to recommend both methodologies for future research projects.

**Historical Aspects of Selection Research**

Selection research has been questioned and discussed for over 80 years by social and industrial psychologists (Arvey & Faley, 1992; Harris & Monk, 1992; Mayfield, 1964; Schmitt, 1976; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wagner, 1949; Wright, 1969). Selection research in educational organizations has been under the same scrutiny as selection research in other organizations. Castetter (1986) admonished educational leaders that "the impact of poor teaching on children is so serious that the selection process in education is a matter of critical concern" (p. 223).
The overall success of educational organizations, historically, has been predicated on the quality of instruction. Therefore, the goal of selection decisions has been to provide the highest quality personnel (Harris, 1992). Several major reviews of selection research have been published since 1949.

Since most of us accept the interview as inevitable, if not indispensable, it is important to survey the research which has been done to date. Such a survey may provide clues to the most effective function of the interview; then, if it is possible to define this function, research may be directed toward developing the interview toward its greatest usefulness. (Wagner, 1949, p. 17)

**Interview Utility**

Wagner (1949) examined 106 research studies concerned with the employment interview. His review focused on the utility of the employment interview to evaluate personnel traits needed for successful employment (Wagner, 1949). Traits, abilities, and characteristics of applicants were isolated in numerous early studies.

Wagner (1949) noted the frequency with which these traits, abilities, and characteristics were mentioned in the studies, as well as the reliability and validity estimates made on some traits. The intelligence or mental ability estimate seemed to be the only factor with reliability or validity in interview research. Intelligence estimates ranked highest with a range of reliability coefficients from .62 to .96 in five studies, and a range of validity coefficients from .45 to .94 in six studies. Wagner (1949) discovered that these studies investigated the ability of the
interviewer to estimate the intelligence of the applicant and investigated the ability of the interviewer to predict job success of the applicant.

Some of these interview studies contradicted other interview studies examined by Wagner (1949). As an example, Wagner (1949) included a study by Rundquist, which examined only the social interaction with the interviewer and the applicant, and suggested that the interview had reliability, validity, and utility. However, in reviewing the individual studies of Binet, Magson, Cleeton and Knight, Corey, and Driver, Wagner (1949) concluded that there was neither agreement among interviewers in estimating intelligence nor significant correlation of interviewer estimates with intelligence tests.

**Interview Predictability**

In studies that addressed the interview as a means of estimating the intelligence and character of applicants, Wagner (1949) found some methodological problems. Some studies contained too few subjects to have generalizability, and other studies failed to explain its basic methodology (1949). Out of the 106 research studies reviewed, only 25 studies reported statistical measurement. Also, there was no resultant consensus in interview predictability in this empirical research. Results of the studies ranged from negative correlations to positive correlations, with no definitive evidence produced regarding the actual value of the interview (Wagner, 1949).
Other studies, that were conducted to determine whether the interview could predict overall ability and potential job success revealed the same conflicting results (Wagner, 1949). Early works demonstrated that test and other data had higher reliability quotients than interviewer judgments. There was inconclusive evidence to suggest that interviewers could predict applicant job success as well as or better than statistical procedures (Wagner, 1949).

Following Wagner's (1949) review, although new selection techniques and devices were developed and utilized, the selection interview remained the most widely utilized and accepted instrument for selection (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wright, 1969). Despite its widespread use, however, it did not elicit customary research and development efforts. The use of selection interviews was based on opinions and recommendations, not on empirical evidence of its predictive validity (Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965).

Criticism followed the studies of the selection interview. Studies were confounded by the combination of face-to-face data and written forms of data such as applications, academic major, and letters of reference. The actual contribution of the face-to-face interview was not being measured (Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965). Therefore, the utility of the interview's ability to add meaningful information to the selection process was unknown (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wright, 1969).
In his analysis of previous selection interview studies, Mayfield (1964) agreed with the majority of researchers: As a hiring tool, the selection interview lacked reliability or validity. He also observed that there were two issues in these studies hindering the gathering of useful data concerning the selection interview process: (1) lack of comparability among studies; and (2) generalizations concerning the selection interview were incorrectly drawn from studies.

Lack of comparability was the first issue noted by Mayfield (1964). Early studies were designed to investigate interview validity. However, the studies were conducted in highly specific situations, where neither similar data nor equal amounts of data were being examined. Therefore, comparison of the studies did not generate viable results.

In limiting these studies to the situation-specific context, Mayfield (1964) noted:

There is no question that this type of research is very practical and very necessary. However, it does not provide an answer to the question of why a given interview works or doesn’t work. Therefore, such studies by themselves do not give us the information necessary to fully understand and improve interviews. (p. 241)

Mayfield’s (1964) second issue of concern was that generalizations regarding the selection of employees were drawn from studies not specifically associated with the selection interview. Generalizations are general principles inferred from the facts in a study. That is, researchers who purported to investigate entirely different variables than selection
interview variables, inferred general principles concerning the selection interview based on information gained in the study. Thus, researchers created selection generalizations from studies that did not investigate selection variables.

For instance, a hypothetical study may have been conducted on the observation skills of interviewers and, in reviewing the results, a researcher may have created a generalized statement on “how to word questions in an interview.” The hypothetical study did not specifically examine an interview question, nor did it examine the interview process. Therefore, generalizations were derived incorrectly “from results obtained in situations quite removed from the selection interview” (Mayfield, 1964, p. 246).

**Standardized Interview**

As a result of Mayfield’s (1964) critique of interview research conducted between 1949 and 1964, other researchers began to focus studies directly on the selection interview. Wright (1969) organized the early research into two categories: (a) interview structure and process and (b) validated outcomes of the interview (p. 392). The selection interviews conducted with a standardized interview format, which established patterns for each interviewer to follow with each interviewee, suggested acceptable reliability. Wright found that when an unstructured interview was utilized, prescribed material was not covered consistently and, therefore, the unstructured interview lacked reliability.
Wagner (1949) reviewed a study by Hovland and Wonderlick (in Wagner, 1949) that reported a reliability coefficient of .71. In this study, two interviewers rated 23 applicants using a standardized interview form. Two other studies using the structured interview procedure were conducted with larger samples—100 and 300 employees—resulting in similar moderate ranges of reliability.

Wright (1969) noted, “though interview validities are low even for studies that find acceptable reliabilities, structured interviews generally provide higher inter-rater reliabilities than do unstructured interviews” (p. 392). When inter-interviewer (i.e. inter-rater) reliability appeared high, interviewer techniques and approaches became consistent among interviewees. However, even when reliability coefficients were found to be acceptable, reliability coefficients required interpretation in conjunction with the interpretation given to the validity coefficients (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wagner, 1949).

Although some studies indicated a high reliability coefficient when utilizing the structured interview, many of these same studies produced unacceptable validity coefficients. “Interviewers, consistent in their approach to interviewees, are inconsistent in their interpretations of data obtained in the interview” (Wright, 1969, p. 392). He concluded that studies showing acceptable reliability and unacceptable validity lacked utility to predict applicant success in employment.
Decision-Making Process

With this information, studies evolved to investigate the decision-making processes of interviewers. Several situational variables appeared. These variables influenced the interviewers' decisions, such as the interviewer's bias, the interviewer's influence, the rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, and the inter-personal trust developed between the interviewer and interviewee during the actual interview.

Following Mayfield's (1964) review, selection interview studies began to focus on decision-making processes in the actual interview. Selection studies from 1949 to 1960 yielded inconclusive data. In the 1960s, the frequency of selection studies increased creating new interest in the selection research process. Wright (1969) concluded that the status of selection research was still in need of more investigation in the following areas: interviewer-interviewee rapport, interviewer bias, and interviewer decision-making processes.

The evolution of research on the selection interview continued with Schmitt's (1976) review. Schmitt examined the variables and determinants of the decision-making process. He found that selection decision-making studies were organized around common variables: negative-positive information, interviewer stereotypes, and attitudinal, sexual, and racial similarity (Schmitt, 1976).
Of particular interest were the Webster (1964) studies, which were conducted at McGill University, on the decision-making processes of the selection interview. The Springbett (1958) study, which was one of several of the Webster studies, investigated negative-positive information. This study concluded that interviewers attempted to find negative facts regarding the applicant during the interview, and that they had a tendency to place more weight on negative than on positive information.

However, a study by Hollmann (1972) contradicted Springbett's (1958) findings, concluding that "interviewers appropriately weigh negative information but do not weigh positive information heavily enough" (p. 132).

Schmitt (1976) found evidence in some studies that interviewers created differential weightings of content categories in the selection process. Different weighting strategies within and among interviewers were examined to identify factors in the decision-making processes of the interviewer. A study by Valenzi and Andrews (in Schmitt, 1976) found that there was a discrepancy among interviewers' actual cue weights and intended cue weights of content categories.

**Stereotypes**

Several studies indicated that interviewers possessed stereotypes of the ideal employee upon which they sometimes judged applicants unfairly.
(Schmitt, 1976). Not all interviewers were aware of or could identify their own stereotyping. While interviewers used different stereotypes across interviews, they also used different stereotypes among interviewers. This produced a strong tendency among interviewers to create a specific rater effect. Dipboye (1992) explained that a specific rater effect was the systematic rating tendency of the interviewer to evaluate interviewees according to a type of category (primacy, halo, negativity, and context effects) as opposed to evaluating the interviewee based on observable behavior.

**Interviewer-Interviewee Similarities**

Similarities between the interviewee and interviewer had an impact on hiring decisions (Schmitt, 1976). Perceived attitudinal similarities by the interviewer had a positive effect on hiring decisions; the interviewee was perceived to be more competent. Race and gender dissimilarities between the interviewer and the interviewee had unfair discriminatory effects on the hiring decision (Dipboye, Fromkin, & Wiback, 1975).

**Research Themes**

Arvey and J. Campion (1982) reviewed the research literature on selection interviews between 1975 and 1982. They noted that since 1975, a large number of studies were conducted on the selection interview. Additionally, these studies utilized increasingly sophisticated methodological techniques, netting increased reliability and validity coefficients in overall research results.
Five themes of research were identified by Arvey and Campion (1982) as a result of the research reviewed over this period. The first theme concerned the increase in the amount of research investigating the possibility of interview bias. Dipboye, Fromkin, and Wiback's (1975) findings on gender discrimination raised the possibility that the interview could be used as a tool for unfair discrimination affecting protected groups such as women and minority job candidates.

A second theme was that variables associated with the interviewee were studied (Arvey & Campion, 1982). Researchers examined aspects of the interview such as the interviewee's non-verbal behavior, the interviewee's perception of the interviewer, and the interviewee's perception of himself or herself. For the first time, selection research dealt with applicant perceptions rather than interviewer perceptions alone.

The third theme was the need to utilize the new sophistication in research methodologies. Although, the new research had used a diversity of paper designs (resumé, application, and cover letter), researchers still felt the need for increased sophistication in methodologies to be utilized in studying the selection interview. "There has, however, been little attention to more sophisticated decision-making models and their incorporation into research on the interview" (Arvey & Campion, 1982, p. 312).

The fourth theme was a confirmation by Arvey and Campion (1982) that research should continue to be microanalytic in nature. Microanalytic
research examined individual variables in the selection process. Researchers developed the microanalytic research design to analyze the content of the selection process and the interview's contribution to the decision-making process. Research "should focus on capturing more real or actual behavioral and evaluation processes but continue to focus on relatively small components of the interview and interview process" (Arvey & Campion, 1982, p. 312).

The fifth and final theme revealed that researchers neglected to consider related research in the person-perception literature. Arvey and Campion (1982) recognized the need to base research on a theoretical foundation. They recommended that research be conducted from theoretical models stemming from other areas of psychology such as:

1. attribution models in which interviewers "form judgments about interviewees according to the attributions they make for the cause of past achievements on the part of job candidates" (p. 313);

2. impression formation and management models where interviewers combine informational cues; and

3. implicit personality theory models that account for "the notion that individuals have their own idiosyncratic models of personality which differ from those of other judges" (p. 314).

**Interview Validity**

Whether or not the interview added value to the selection process when statistically valid assessments were utilized remained questionable. "Perhaps the glaring 'black hole' in all previous reviews and in the current literature concerned the issue of why the use of the interview
persists in view of evidence of its relatively low reliability, validity, and its susceptibility to bias and distortion” (Arvey & Campion, 1982, p. 314). Arvey and Campion (1982) suggested four reasons for the continued use of the selection interview:

1. The interview yielded valid judgments on several observable interpersonal dimensions of behavior such as sociability and verbal fluency.

2. The interview might not have been valid but was a popular choice because it facilitated the communication of accurate job information.

3. The interview was not valid, however, interviewers were “prone to place confidence in highly fallible interview judgments” (p. 316) despite the fact that decision-making research in clinical settings provided evidence that clearly documented the superiority of statistical prediction over clinical prediction.

4. The interview was not valid but it did other things well. There were untested assumptions regarding the value of the interview for accomplishing objectives unrelated to the selection decision, such as selling the candidate on the job.

Harris (1989) reviewed the research studies conducted since the Arvey and Campion review in 1982. The new studies also continued to investigate issues such as methodology, decision-making, applicant characteristics, and interviewer training (Harris, 1989). These studies did not confirm the earlier research, which concluded that the interview as a selection tool lacked validity.

Harris (1989) found two meta-analyses conducted to explore statistical artifacts and the negative impact that artifacts had on interview
validity. The meta-analysis by Wiesner and Cronshaw (Harris, 1989) was conducted on 150 effect-sizes, with validity data from both American and foreign sources. The meta-analysis revealed an overall uncorrected validity coefficient of .26. In correcting for reliability and range, the validity coefficient was .47 (Harris, 1989).

Some findings in the study supported earlier findings. Structured interviews continued to have significantly higher validity; the average corrected coefficient of .62 was found for structured interviews, and a corrected validity coefficient of .31 was found in the unstructured interview (Harris, 1989). A “noteworthy finding was that most of the variance between studies using an unstructured interview could be accounted for by statistical artifacts; thus. the validity of this type of interview appeared to be the same across all situations” (Harris, 1989, p. 695).


Studies using formal job analyses had higher validity in structured interviews, and board interviews continued to show higher validity for the
unstructured interview (Harris, 1989). Board interviews are those in which an applicant is interviewed simultaneously by more than one interviewer. In other words, a board interview engages several decision-makers as opposed to the traditional process of one interviewer per interviewee.

These studies (i.e. structured and board interview studies) provided evidence to conclude that the interview was a valid predictor of job success, however modest the result (Harris, 1989). "Research suggests several different conclusions about the employment interview. Earlier reviews of this literature were quite negative about the validity of the interview as a selection tool; recent research suggests that the interview may be much more valid" (Harris, 1989, p. 614).

Phases of the Interview Process

Dipboye (1992) heeded the concerns of early researchers concerning the study of the interview in small units (Mayfield, 1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wright, 1969). He cautioned that research needed to consider the interview as a multi-phase process. Dipboye (1992) described the interview process in three phases: (1) pre-interview, (2) interview, and (3) post-interview; each phase contained unique components.

The pre-interview phase consisted of information an interviewer or decision-maker obtained concerning an applicant before the face-to-face interview (Dipboye, 1992). The first contact with the applicant was
usually through paper credentials such as academic major, application forms, reference letters, academic credentials, cover letters, and personal resumés obtained before the interview. These components critically impacted an interviewer's first impression and evaluation of the job applicant as the information was examined.

Dipboye (1992) reviewed studies on the pre-interview stage which suggested that interviewers not only expected, but relied on, paper credentials. Paper credentials served as a basis for developing questions for the interview (Dipboye, 1992). The resumé was one component of the paper credentials that provided information regarding employment history, academic major, and academic credentials.

Influencing the first impression, the resumé strongly impacted job-hiring decisions (Dipboye, 1992). Because early impressions were established based on the resumé, they may have been valid or erroneous and they may or may not have been predictors of job success (Dipboye, 1992). “These categorizations may occur in a thoughtful, conscious fashion, but it is probable that the processing of information in these early stages often comes in the form of an automatic, unintended reaction to the applicant” (Dipboye, 1992, p. 73).

**Relevant and Irrelevant Factors**

There were relevant and irrelevant factors in the pre-interview phase, which influenced the interviewer's behavior, and subsequently the decision to hire or not hire the applicant. “Relevant is used to refer to
information that is acceptable both legally and ethically as a basis for judging applicant qualifications” (Dipboye, 1992, p. 56). Relevant factors were those “factors that are legitimate bases for evaluating the qualifications for many jobs” (Dipboye, 1992, p. 73). The use of applications, reference letters, resumés, academic credentials, and work experience are all legitimate sources of relevant factors.

Irrelevant factors, which were not based on legal or ethical considerations, were factors that the interviewer utilized to evaluate applicants. Irrelevant factors unfairly impacted the decision-making process when an interviewer used gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability or age to predict an applicant’s chance of job success. For example, gender is an irrelevant factor upon which to base most selection decisions. If an interviewer uses gender to decide not to hire, the interviewer has, in most instances, done so illegally and unethically.

Federal, state, and local laws and policies have been enacted to protect individuals and certain groups from adverse discrimination based on irrelevant factors. These laws were intended for all phases of the selection process although the emphasis in this study will only be on the pre-interview phase. The next section will discuss how and why laws have been established at all levels of government to protect certain individuals and groups.
Legal Aspects of Selection Research

In U. S. educational organizations, administrators rely on a vigorous selection process for securing competent personnel who are well matched with the organization. As in other organizations, they are under legal guidelines to provide a fair and equitable process for selecting employees. According to Castetter (1986), "Whether a school system is small or large, a considerable amount of system-wide and unit planning is necessary if the thrust of the personnel selection process is to achieve congruency between people and positions" (p. 224).

Numerous federal, state, and/or local laws, regulations, court interpretations, and executive orders guide this process. The selection process can be characterized as complex and composed of many interrelated parts. These parts include establishing position requirements, determining the kinds of data needed to select competent individuals from the pool of applicants, deciding which devices and procedures to employ in gathering the data, securing staff participation in appraising the data and applicants, relating the qualifications of applicants to position specifications, screening qualified from unqualified applicants, preparing an eligibility list, and selecting suitable candidates for appointment by the board of education (Castetter, 1986).

Dipboye (1992) noted that although the selection process was complex and "subject to a changing political climate" (p. 199), these laws and regulations provided much needed guidance to administrators. A
study by Van de Water (1988) indicated that building administrators made a difference in educational excellence and that those who had skills considered "excellent" by organizational standards were positively connected with excellence in school outcomes. That is, excellence in student performance. Therefore, it is imperative for educational administrators to adhere to legal and ethical guidelines in the selection process as they hire the highest quality teachers.

**Legal and Ethical Guidelines**

These laws and guidelines define permissible and impermissible aspects of the employment relationship, which is a voluntary agreement between organization and employee (Heneman & Heneman, 1994). Their "purpose is to create a reasonable balance of power between employer and employee, as well as to provide protections for each" (Heneman & Heneman, 1994, p. 53). Several laws and regulations propose to afford all workers equal employment opportunities. These were developed in response to the need to protect various classes of citizens, such as racial, ethnic, religious, gender, disabled, veteran, and older groups.

However, these laws have placed "increasing restrictions on hiring" practices in the field of education in the last 25 years in the United States (Dipboye, 1992, p. 183). This section will discuss the following hiring laws and regulations designed to provide fair selection practices to all applicants: (1) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (2) The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines; (3) The Age

1. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits unfair discrimination in employment based on race, gender, national origin, religion, age, and disability.

2. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines were developed to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Since 1964, the guidelines have been expanded to include the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 prohibits unfair discrimination in employment based on the age of candidates between the ages of 40 and 69.


5. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits unfair discrimination in employment against an otherwise qualified handicapped candidate solely based on having the handicap.

Protected Class Citizens

Most of the prohibitions in these laws pertain to protected class citizens. These citizens should not be evaluated in a different manner or with different criteria than non-protected class citizens. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines refer "to practices that are designed and used in a facially neutral manner, meaning that all applicants and employees are treated similarly without regard to protected characteristics such as race and sex" (Heneman & Heneman, 1994, p. 57).
In the case of *Love v. Alamance County Board of Education* (1984), the court could find no discriminatory practices on the part of the Board of Education. Through documenting its selection practices, the Board was able to prove that it had applied the selection process uniformly and fairly to all candidates. Arvey and Faley (1992) define unfair discrimination as follows:

Unfair discrimination or bias is said to exist when members of a minority group have lower probabilities of being selected for a job when, in fact, if they had been selected, their probabilities of performing successfully in a job would have been equal to those of nonminority group members. (p. 7)

The concept of *protected class status* evolved from cases of unfair discrimination, in which fair hiring practices had not been afforded to some members of the protected class (Young & Ryerson, 1986). Gamble (1992) noted that the goal of Title VII (i.e., to make every workplace neutral concerning race, color, religion, national origin, or gender) was to eliminate prejudice based on stereotypes.

**Affirmative Action**

On the basis of concepts such as *Affirmative Action*, *disparate treatment*, and *dis disparate impact*, members of a protected class have recourse in the courts to exercise their rights (Arvey, 1992; Dipboye, 1992; Harris, 1992; Heneman & Heneman, 1994). Affirmative Action gives preference to protected groups who are underrepresented in the employment arena, and who have been discriminated against in the past. An employer may voluntarily undertake Affirmative Action plans or the
court may order them. In either case, a plan of action is required to remedy past unfair discrimination (Heneman & Heneman, 1994). This concept is not facially neutral, in that it gives preference to protected classes. For example, an employer may invoke an affirmative action plan and may make final hiring decisions for qualified candidates based on characteristics such as race or gender, in order to correct any past under representation of a protected class.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Affirmative Action plans were in accordance with the intent of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In Steelworkers v. Weber (1979), white employees in a Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation plant brought a class action suit against the company, stating that the Affirmative Action plan discriminated against white employees under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Court found that "race-conscious" steps were not prohibited by Title VII when they existed to eliminate racial imbalances in jobs that had a history of racial discrimination.

A movement began in the early 1980s to change the philosophy of using Affirmative Action as a tool to compensate for past discrimination. Tumultuous politics in the U.S. Congress produced confusing attempts at legislation concerning Affirmative Action policies. There was an increase in the number of U.S. Supreme Court cases regarding policies that explicitly favored minorities because of their race in areas of contracts, admissions, and employment. As a result of these cases, the U.S.
Supreme Court, rather than Congress, became the dominant voice on racial policies (Biskupic, 1997).

Members of Congress and the public who support maintaining Affirmative Action policies believe that the constitutional amendment allows for remedies of past discrimination. Those members of Congress and the public who are against Affirmative Action policies believe that the constitutional amendment was not intended to protect only one group. Inevitably, this confusion and shift in guidelines regarding Affirmative Action policies will affect the selection policies of educational organizations.

Current political conversations about Affirmative Action plans and their usefulness in the hiring process will change the structure of the hiring process. The argument seems to be about which concept and process works best to achieve fairness in the selection process. The goal, therefore, of the selection process should not change. The selection process must continue to be concerned with hiring the most qualified teachers.

"The system must be able to demonstrate that the relationship between position requirements and person requirements does not result in discriminatory selection practices" (Castetter, 1986, p. 235). An exception to fair hiring practices, or using characteristics such as race and gender on which to base hiring decisions, is the use of a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) by employers. The employer is
required to prove that protected class status does not apply to a specific position, because specific characteristics such as race or gender are necessary qualifications for the position and are reasonably necessary to the operation of the business. Arvey & Faley (Arvey & Faley, 1992) commented that a BFOQ is rarely allowed, “so that now only in rare instances are jobs found where only a person of a particular sex, national origin, age, or religion may perform the job” (p. 58).

Unfair Discrimination

The courts require that, if an employee makes a claim of unfair discrimination, he or she must provide evidence of discriminatory actions by the employer, establishing a prima facie case of unfair discrimination. “Prima facie means that a case of discrimination is established until the party accused of discriminating rebuts this claim” (Dipboye, 1992, p. 185). In other words, the initial burden of proof is placed on the employee. For example, in O’Brien v. Sky Chefs (1982), the U.S. Court of Appeals allowed statistical evidence to be presented as a prima facie case. In this case, the court noted that statistical disparity could constitute proof of discrimination.

At the same time, in the case of Hazelwood School District v. U.S. (1977), the U.S. Supreme Court reversed a Court of Appeals decision and remanded it to the District Court. The Court of Appeals recognized the use of statistical data as the prima facie case to show a pattern or practice of discrimination. However, the Supreme Court argued that the employer
was not allowed an opportunity to articulate some legitimate non-discriminatory reasons for its behavior. Thus, a prima facie case was established by the employee, however, due process was still not afforded the defendant.

At this point in the legal process, the burden of proof is transferred to the employer. The employer must then submit evidence to the courts that the process, intent, and effect of hiring did not discriminate against protected groups. This is called a burden of production (i.e., to produce documentation and statistical analyses) placed on the employer.

Employers also must meet a preponderance standard in presenting information to the courts. This standard requires them to provide superior information that outweighs the prima facie information presented by the employee. With the preponderance standard, the employer demonstrates that the same selection decision would reflect the absence of unfair discrimination, regardless of the facts or circumstances (Gamble, 1992).

In the case of Leisner v. New York Telephone Company (1973), female employees brought a class action suit against the New York Telephone Company for discriminating against women in management-level positions in its traffic departments. The court concluded that there were significant disparities in the number of men and women in management positions, along with a highly subjective interview process.
It therefore held:

that the wide statistical disparities which the court has found in the Company’s employment of women in various job categories and training programs places a burden on the defendant to show that the disparities are not the product of discrimination against women on the basis of their sex. (Leisner v N.Y. Telephone, 1973)

**Disparate Treatment**

The courts usually depend on one of two doctrines, disparate treatment and disparate impact, to determine prima facie evidence. In the disparate treatment doctrine, the employee must show that the employer intentionally acted in a discriminatory manner. In other words, disparate treatment focuses on the intent or motive of employment practices. There must be evidence to show that the employee was treated differently because the employee belonged to a protected group (Arvey & Faley, 1992; Dipboye, 1992).

**Disparate Impact**

In the disparate impact doctrine, the employee must prove that the selection process of the employer results in fewer members of protected class groups being hired than members of the general public who are not accorded protected class status. In other words, disparate impact focuses on the effect of employment practices on the protected class. A prima facie case would prove that the employer’s selection process resulted in discriminating against, or under representing, a protected class. Disparate impact focuses on the effect of employment practices on the protected class.

The objective of Congress in the enactment of Title VII is plain from the language of the statute. It was to achieve equality of employment opportunities and remove barriers that have operated in the past to favor an identifiable group of white employees over other employees. Under the Act, practices, procedures, or tests neutral on their face, and even neutral in terms of intent, cannot be maintained if they operate to "freeze" the status quo of prior discriminatory employment practices. (*Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*, 1971)

These acts and guidelines apply to the end-result of selection decisions. However, they also apply to each phase of the selection process. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the possibility of discrimination in all phases of the selection process. For example, in the pre-interview phase, employers accept or reject applicants for the next phase, which means that the decision-making process has to be free of discriminatory practices at every phase.

School administrators have a legal responsibility to use job-related criteria in the selection process. The résumé is one of the first opportunities for administrators to become acquainted with the applicant. This early screening stage in the selection process enables the interviewer to form first impressions of the interviewee. This component of the pre-interview stage has a direct impact on educational organizations: screening applicants in or out of the selection process at an early stage,

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and denying an applicant the opportunity to have the face-to-face interview.

Decisions made at this or later stages should not be based on factors such as race, gender, age, national origin, disability, or religion. If interviewers in educational organizations intentionally or unintentionally base their decisions on these protected class factors, they do, in effect, commit an unfair discriminatory act towards an applicant. Any elimination or under representation of groups of people is antithetical to the goal and purpose of the educational selection system, which is to hire the most qualified employees. Therefore, the selection process of educational systems should be examined to determine whether its hiring practices improve the instructional program and whether the rights of protected class groups are really “protected.”

Methodological Aspects of Selection Research

Traditionally, researchers have relied on macroanalytic or microanalytic studies to guide selection research. Early studies reported by Wagner (1949) involved the macroanalytic approach, which attempted to predict the future employment success of a job applicant. Characteristic of this approach was its focus on the entire process of selection as a single unit. It relied on a single predictor to establish a relationship with a single criterion, the measure of job success. Macroanalytic research measured observable responses such as the
applicant's answer given to an interviewer's question (Carmines & Zeller, 1979).

**Macroanalytic Studies**

These macroanalytic studies also attempted to correlate individual traits (e.g., connections between intelligence and future performance) by comparing the relationship between measures of traits and measures of performance (Wagner, 1949). However, the correlational procedures of macroanalytic research revealed inconclusive reliability or validity results. In essence, macroanalytic studies could not establish correlations as valid or invalid indicators of employment success.

Mayfield (1964) criticized early research for its inability to show "why a given interview works or doesn't work" (p.241). His review concluded that attention should be directed to the decision-making processes of employee selection. When researchers looked at the decision-making process, their focus shifted from observable responses to the underlying unobservable responses that affected the final decision (Carmines & Zeller, 1979).

Because macroanalytic research methodologies in selection failed to provide conclusive reliability and validity coefficients, Mayfield (1964) called for a shift in emphasis from macroanalytic to microanalytic methods in selection research. Such a shift in focus would transform research methodologies from looking at the final results of the hiring process to investigating individual units or sequences of decisions made.
along the way. Consequently, new studies divided the selection interview process into small units that investigated the decision-making process as it occurred in sequence.

**Microanalytic Studies**

This change in focus launched microanalytic studies, which looked at multiple predictors that investigated the selection process as separate, smaller units. With this concept, researchers described the selection process in terms of sequential decision-making stages, promising new insights into the selection process (Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965).

The field of teacher selection paralleled the shift of focus from macroanalytic studies to microanalytic studies. Microanalytic research revealed irrelevant factors that impacted a school principal's decision-making process when hiring teachers. Irrelevant factors are those with no legal or predictive basis for assessing job qualifications. The microanalytic studies reported the irrelevant factors (race, gender, age, disability, national origin, and religion) as vehicles of bias in the selection process. They noted that the use of irrelevant factors resulted in unfair discriminatory practices (Dipboye, 1992).

Federal guidelines, which were developed as a result of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, recommended the use of statistical methods to identify and therefore, avoid unfair discriminatory practices. Statistical analyses were conducted on the teacher selection process to identify irrelevant variables (see *Hazelwood School District et al. v.*
United States 1977). Thus, through statistical analysis, studies showed that using the guidelines to develop teacher selection processes contributed to fair selection procedures (Bredeson & Caldwell, 1988).

Education Reform

The American school exists in a state of flux, continuous change, and instability. Historian, Joel Spring (1994), reminds us that the beginning of the institution of education in America developed out of a concept of meeting the needs of society. "After the American Revolution, many Americans began to believe that a public system of education was needed to build nationalism, to shape the good citizen, and to reform society" (Spring, 1994, p. 28). Education was seen as a tool to serve the practical needs of society and thus, the institution of education changes as society's needs change.

The following reports emerged in the early 1980s to decry the need for change in American education:

- High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (Ernest Boyer)
- Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve our Nation’s Schools (Education Commission of the States)
- A Place for School: Prospects for the Future (John Goodlad)
- National Assessment findings and educational Policy Questions (National Assessment for Educational Progress)
- A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform (National Commission on Excellence in Education)
- Educating Americans for the 21st Century: A Report to the American People and the National Science Board (National Science Board Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology)
- Horace’s Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School (Theodore R. Sizer)
Along with the education reports, there was an emerging attitude that education needed to be reformed to keep the United States at the forefront of global economy and security. Education was declared "mediocre" in preparing individuals to survive in the global arena of science, technology, industry, and commerce. The reports declared that education needed to raise academic standards by teaching a common core curriculum and higher-level thinking skills (Asher, 1984). The reports recommended that (1) all students be required to take more mathematics, science, English, social studies, and foreign language, (2) computer science be added to the common core curriculum, and (3) students be tested frequently based on new standards of achievement (Asher, 1984, p. 1).

The teaching profession came under scrutiny and the poor quality of teachers was blamed for the problems in education. The reports declared that radical changes were needed in teacher education. Teacher education programs needed to raise the admission and graduation requirements. Teacher education courses needed to be oriented more to subject matter and less to pedagogy. The teaching profession needed to be raised to a level of respect as in other professions, and selection procedures needed
Issues of accountability were stressed as educational organizations began to respond to society's demands for higher academic achievement in students which placed the majority of responsibility on teachers. The American public demanded a redesign of education starting with the reform of teacher education programs. "Any changes in curriculum, instructional materials or methods, and assessment need to be supported by appropriate changes in teacher training if the entire program is to succeed" (Gregg, 1992, p. 1).

In the current climate of systemic reform, the professional development of teachers has taken on new prominence. There are a host of reasons for this new urgency, ultimately centering on the importance of the classroom teacher in promoting successful student learning. Without the continuous improvement of teaching (and of professional teachers), the reforms will fail. Professional development must serve the purpose of promoting teachers' continuous learning of integrating new knowledge about teaching and learning within the social contexts in which teaching takes place. (Dilworth & Imig, 1995, p. 4)

In 1986, The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy recommended needed improvements in the teaching profession in its report, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" (1986). It recommended that a governing board be established to address the need for uniform teacher qualities and teacher assessment. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was established in May 1987 to formulate policy on teacher certification.
Professional Development Schools

At the same time as the Carnegie Report was published, a prominent report by The Holmes Group, “Tomorrow’s Teachers,” was published that had a major impact on the changes in the teaching profession. The Holmes Group began in 1983 as a group of deans of education in research universities concerned with teacher reform. This forum created a national dialogue and debate concerning the professionalization of teachers, improvement in practice, and restructuring teacher education programs. “Tomorrow’s Teachers” (Holmes Group, 1986) set the agenda for teacher reform with the following five goals:

1. **To make the education of teachers intellectually more solid.** Teachers must have a greater command of academic subjects, and of the skills to teach them. They also need to become more thoughtful students of teaching, and its improvements.

2. **To recognize differences in teachers’ knowledge, skill, and commitment, in their education, certification, and work.** If teachers are to become more effective professionals, we must distinguish between novices, competent members of the profession, and high-level professional leaders.

3. **To create standards of entry to the profession—examinations and educational requirements—that are professionally relevant and intellectually defensible.** America cannot afford any more teachers who fail a twelfth grade competency test. Neither can we afford to let people into teaching just because they have passed such simple, and often simple-minded exams.

4. **To connect our own institutions to schools.** If university faculties are to become more expert educators of teachers, they must make better use of expert teachers in the education of other teachers, and in research on teaching. In addition, schools must become places where both teachers and university faculty can systematically inquire into practice and improve it.

5. **To make schools better places for teachers to work, and to learn.** This will require less bureaucracy, more professional autonomy, and more leadership for teachers. But schools where teachers can learn from each other and from other professionals will be schools...
where good teachers will want to work. They also will be schools in which students will learn more. (Howey, 1990, p. 2-3) (emphasis in the original)

The goals of the Holmes agenda were not uniformly accepted and adopted by all of the members of The Holmes Group, other educational institutions, or the K-12 education arena. However, it did provide the basis of discourse which brought attention to the issues. This, in turn, created a catalyst for change in teacher preparation and program development (Howey, 1990).

The debate centered on reconceptualizing teacher education and development and subsequently led to changes in attitudes and beliefs. Stages of a teaching career were previously viewed as sequential and separate. Gradually “a more holistic view of the development of a teacher from novice to advanced” evolved (Office of Educational Research and Improvement. 1995, p. 1).

The view of teacher inservice shifted from the idea of remediation to the idea of continuous professional development. Empowering teachers to be reflective about their practice and to participate in collaborative decision-making brought about a shift in attitudes towards teachers being able to solve problems, becoming experts in the field, and informing instructional practices in teaching and learning.

The national dialog influenced a change in perspective from teachers and teacher education programs as separate entities to teachers
and teacher education programs as partners in teaching and learning. Educators began to structure teacher development around the concept of learning together. A second Homes Group report, “Tomorrow’s Schools: Principles for the Design of Professional Development Schools” (Holmes Group, 1990) promoted this concept by recommending the development of Professional Development Schools (PDS), a partnership of local schools and teacher education programs in colleges and universities. These PDSs would create an exchange of pedagogical knowledge. Classroom teachers are perceived as professional resources and collaborators in their professional development.

Two additional reports impacted the reconceptualization of teacher education by addressing the knowledge base needed for teaching and learning: (1) Knowledge Base for Beginning Teachers, The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), and (2) Handbook of Research on Teacher Education, Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) (Strom, 1991). Coinciding with The Holmes Group report, these served to broaden the support for PDSs because PDSs could provide the structure for reflection, creation, research and assessment of the knowledge base in teaching and learning.

“PDSs are a special case of school restructuring: as they simultaneously restructure schools and teacher education programs, they redefine teaching and learning for all members of the profession and the school community” (Darling-Hammond, 1994, p. 1). The purpose of PDSs
is to transform the teaching profession in all aspects, becoming the foundation for all school reform: teacher development, teacher education, developing the knowledge base for teaching, professionalization of teachers, and teacher empowerment.

Educators for Collaborative Change

In the reform efforts to make schools better, PDSs were created to partner local schools and teacher education programs. Following the major reports on education reform, hundreds of school-university partnerships were created (Darling-Hammond, 1994). One PDS, the Educators for Collaborative Change, created at The Ohio State University in 1991 is of particular interest to this study.

The ECC/PDS program is a Masters of Education certification program in the School of Teaching and Learning, College of Education, which is a member of The Holmes Group. Reflecting the aims of The Holmes Group, ECC/PDS has three goals: (1) teacher education, (2) teacher professional development, and (3) inquiry. ECC/PDS used the theme of collaboration as a grounding focus to guide the development of the school/university partnership and to co-create the professional development of teachers (Johnston, Brosnan, Cramer and Dove, 2000).

As a member of the ECC/PDS for almost three years. I observed and participated in a collaborative spirit to improve the study, implementation, and outcomes of teacher education and teacher development espoused in the teacher reform literature. It is clear that this
PDS supports restructuring in teacher education, school-university relationships and collaboration, teaching knowledge and inquiry, and the practice of teaching.

In addition, the ECC/PDS has a high rate of ECC/PDS interns being hired. With the focus on improving teacher practices and teacher qualities in reform efforts, this study investigated whether principals perceived the reform efforts supported by the ECC/PDS program coordinators.

In summary, selection research has provided structural procedures and processes to use when hiring employees. When applied to the educational arena and that of hiring teachers, the whirlwind of reform efforts of the last two decades created additional pressures on principals to hire highly qualified teachers. While we have learned much about the knowledge base of teaching and pedagogy during this time, reducing the profession of teaching to a finite list of teacher qualities is not possible and more importantly, is not applicable. Each school has its unique characteristics and problems and principals and hiring boards are responsible for understanding these issues and hiring a highly qualified teacher that will meet its school needs.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

School administrators must be able to select the best candidate from the candidate pool, i.e., to separate the excellent applicant from the average or below-average applicant. Therefore, more information is needed to identify the myriad of influences that affect principals during the selection process and to understand the processes that principals utilize when hiring teachers. Specifically, this study is focused on how principals hire—what are the actions and steps in the process—and what factors principals use in the evaluations of teacher-applicants. To better inform their decisions, principals need to understand the influences on their selection processes and perspectives.

Situating the Researcher

Beginning my career in education as a teacher at the age of 30 and as a mother of two lower-level elementary school-age children, I had the knowledge and realization that everything that I did and said would have an impact on my students. An early experience in my first year of teaching began my interest in the administrative task of hiring teachers.
I began to teach fourth grade in a suburban elementary public school setting in Charleston, South Carolina in 1981. By late fall that year, I realized that a small group of my students were especially poor in reading skills. It became apparent that this group of students all had the same third grade teacher. I did not attribute their low skill level to the third grade teacher until I was asked by the principal to participate in a project in which I periodically went into that teacher's classes. On several occasions, I dropped into this particular third grade teacher's class unannounced to deliver materials. I observed that the children were "coloring," the teacher was sitting at her desk, and the television was on and turned to a popular "soap opera" channel. After about the third time I observed this scenario, I was angry and approached my principal. I demanded that he "Do something!" because I had to do double duty and teach these children the lessons they should have learned in third grade, and then bring them up to reading level. (I was mature, but still naïve.) The principal kindly explained to me that she had been reported before; she had received remediation, and at this point, there was nothing more he could do. He concluded that it was not worth his time to pursue the matter any further. I had no choice but to accept his response, but never forgot my outrage.

My next position in education was at the U.S. Department of Education in the early 1980s, when there was a public outcry condemning the competencies of teachers nationwide. It was at this time that the U.S.
Secretary of Education held meetings with the Deans of teacher education colleges and universities. My job was to provide the Secretary with statistics, records, and stories about teacher competency. It was at this point that I decided to pursue education administration.

I obtained an M.Ed. degree with a concentration in supervision and personnel administration. Even in my Education Law class, I focused on teacher dismissal. However, I believed that if we hired the best and most competent teachers, we would not have to dismiss them, but could simply avoid having incompetent and uncommitted teachers in our children's classrooms like I had witnessed.

In 1986, I became an assistant principal for a rural elementary school in Mt. Jackson, Virginia, where I served for three years. Although I liked most of the 20-25 teachers whom I supervised, I still felt that the teachers were closed to new ideas and concepts. They felt very threatened by my innovations, and I felt very stifled with the status quo. I continued to study what it takes to be a master teacher, but found guidelines and research reports on hiring teachers to be elusive and vague. As an administrator, I felt that what I had learned was only of marginal help.

Starting my doctoral program at The Ohio State University, I became a graduate teaching assistant in the Professional Development School Program, Educators for Collaborative Change (PDS/ECC) that I am now studying. In the beginning, I was extremely excited about the possibility of putting into practice my philosophy of hiring "good"
teachers. Teacher education had changed drastically from my teacher education program and even from the programs that the teachers I evaluated had experienced. I could see this difference in the interns I was supervising. So, this was THE opportunity for me: I could ensure that our teachers were "good" teachers. I thought that this would be simple, direct and easy, until the complexities began flying at me. How do you know what a "good" teacher looks like? What influences student teachers' development? Is it the methods courses? Is it the academic courses? Is it the pedagogy? Is it the personality of the applicant? Is it the "match" between teacher and school environment? Is it a combination of these things? I felt like the program at Ohio State was as good as teacher education could be. It was collaborative and it was evolving. It was challenging the norms of teacher education. I truly believe that we have graduated the most incredible teachers that I have ever encountered.

But my experience as a supervisor in PDS/ECC showed me that the principals I encountered in our PDS schools did not necessarily understand the program or value it as I did. As part of my doctoral studies, I began to study selection history with a focus on hiring teachers. As described in chapter two, the majority of the research on selection in the past has been in organizational and business arenas, and the majority of studies have been conducted using quantitative methods. These results have given us little data to use regarding the educational task of hiring teachers, which leads me to study the selection process of hiring teachers.
from a different methodological approach and in a different context—education. In order to understand why some teacher applicants are hired and some are not, we need to go to the source—the principals—to understand their perspectives and processes.

Methodological Stance

Qualitative Methodology

Typical research methodologies addressing the hiring process have ranged between two extremes of quantitative analysis: (1) macroanalysis, which investigates the selection process as a whole unit; and (2) microanalysis, which investigates small units in the process. Neither of these analytical approaches has proven to be more reliable or valid than the other. Indeed, only in recent years have investigators found even modest validity measures using quantitative analysis. Although macroanalytic research failed to verify how or why an employer's screening or interview decisions were valid and accurate, it began the search for reasonable indices in selection. Microanalytic research complemented and extended the earlier research methods by dissecting the decision-making process.

Research has struggled over the past 80 plus years to find valid predictors of employee success on which to base hiring decisions using primarily quantitative analyses.

Attempting to draw implications for research and practice from a body of work as untidy as the interview literature is difficult and often frustrating. Opinions regarding the interview differ widely, with some relegating it to the bottom rung of selection procedures.
and others placing it among the best of procedures. As a consequence of its unique position at the intersection of social, psychological, and psychometric concerns, there are also differences of opinion regarding the way research should be conducted on this topic. The research literature consists of an intriguing mix of lab and field, correlational and experimental, and applied and theoretical investigations. (Dipboye, 1992, p. v)

Numerous selection studies reviewed by Arvey and Faley (1992) and Dipboye (1992) demonstrate the need for educating interviewers and employers in hiring procedures. Therefore, there is a need to provide additional research that would provide a basis for understanding why principals decide to hire or not hire a particular teacher applicant in the decision-making process of teacher selection.

In the current study, a qualitative research methodology was chosen to make sense of the selection phenomenon and understand the meanings that interviewers bring to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of people. Rossman and Rallis (1998) offer eight characteristics of qualitative research and researchers: It (1) is naturalistic, (2) draws on multiple methods that respect the humanity of participants in the study, (3) is emergent and evolving, and (4) is interpretive. Qualitative researchers (5) view social worlds as holistic or seamless, (6) engage in systematic reflection on their own roles in the research, (7) are sensitive to their personal biographies and how these shape the study, and (8) rely on complex reasoning that moves dialectically between deduction and induction (In Marshall, 1999, p. 2).

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Thus, research using qualitative analysis has the ability to add depth and detail to quantitative studies. "where the statistical results indicate global patterns generalizable across settings or populations" (Patton, 1990, p. 131). This methodology was used in the current study to provide an in-depth analysis of the complexities of the decision-making process in teacher selection. This research attempts to extend previous studies by examining the selection process in naturalistic settings. Marshall and Rossman (1999) argue that "one cannot understand human actions without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to those actions—their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worlds; the researcher, therefore, needs to understand the deeper perspectives captured through face-to-face interaction" (p. 57). By design, this study was flexible and inductive rather than deductive. Therefore, it used exploratory approaches to further the knowledge gained from experimental studies to find meaning in the selection process, and was situated where these complexities exist, in a natural setting.

Phenomenological Hermeneutics

To understand the teacher selection process, it is important to understand the selection process phenomenon of the principal. Therefore, the particular qualitative genre in which this study is grounded is phenomenological.

Phenomenology is the study of lived experiences and the ways we understand those experiences to develop a worldview. It rests on an
assumption that there is a structure and essence to shared experiences that can be narrated. The purpose of this type of interviewing is to describe the meaning of a concept or phenomenon that several individuals share. (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 112)

A phenomenological approach to qualitative research investigates the experience of a phenomenon to make sense of the world. Patton (1990) states that "phenomenological inquiry focuses on the question: "What is the structure and essence of experience of this phenomenon for these people?" (p. 69). Patton’s (1990) philosophical stance regarding the phenomenological approach is:

the assumption that there is an essence or essences to shared experience. These essences are the core meanings mutually understood through a phenomenon commonly experienced. The experiences of different people are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon. (p. 70)

As this approach focuses on the meanings that lived experience has for individuals and guides their actions, it not only acknowledges the experiences of individuals as their “truth,” but also allows for the advantage of explicating the experiences and assumptions held by the researcher. With this strategy, my previous personal experience and assumptions were made open and available for readers to examine, which required a self-examination of my beliefs and preconceptions regarding the hiring process for teachers. Using a naturalistic inquiry stance, this study attempted to be unobtrusive, non-controlling, and open to the emergence of themes, categories, and dimensions.
Phenomenological inquiry has three stages: (1) epochè; (2) phenomenological reduction; and (3) structural synthesis (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Patton, 1990).

Epochè is a process that the researcher engages in to remove, or at least become aware of prejudices, viewpoints or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Epochè helps enable the researcher to investigate the phenomenon from a fresh and open viewpoint without prejudgment or imposing meaning too soon. This suspension of judgment is critical in phenomenological investigation and requires the setting aside of the researcher's personal viewpoint in order to see the experience for itself. (Katz, 1987, pp. 36-37, qtd. in Patton, 1990, p. 407) (Emphasis in original.)

The initial stage, the epochè stage, required that I look inside, examine my own assumptions about hiring teachers, and clarify my own prejudices or biases in order to gain a shift in phenomenological attitude. As I examined the experiences of others, I examined and identified my own biases on an ongoing basis. But it is difficult to suspend one's own pre-judgments. As M. A. Johnston (personal communication, March 28, 2000) asked, "Can we ever really see others clearly and in a new light?" Therefore, additionally, I looked for disconfirmatory information with which to check my prejudices to the extent possible. I asked for alternative explanations and became sensitive to examples that would invalidate my initial thoughts.

In the second stage, or phenomenological reduction, the essence of the phenomenon is explored. This stage requires the researcher to inspect and dissect the phenomenon isolated from common meanings and contexts. In the current study, I took apart and dissected the explanations and comments of the participants, and
tried to suspend judgment as I coded the material into terms and phrases, again, to the extent that this was possible. Having coded all aspects of the data, codes were treated as having equal weight and combined into groups or clusters with similar meanings. Clusters were then examined to identify themes and common experience or meanings among the participants. Patton (1990) described the need to identify invariant themes to examine these from various perspectives and to describe the experience. Invariant themes were those experiences or understandings that held common meanings (unalterable, unchanging, and constant) among the participants. Themes that were developed in this study were utilized to describe the shared or common experiences of the participants when hiring teachers.

Having coded, clustered, inspected, and described the themes that emerged from the data, the final stage, or structural synthesis, described by Patton, was to examine, develop, and describe the essence of the phenomenon. “In the structural synthesis, the researcher looks beneath the affect inherent in the experience to deeper meanings for the individual” (Patton, 1990, p. 409). Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to examine the deeper meanings or the essence of the hiring process that principals attach to hiring teachers.

However, in my attempt at fulfilling Patton’s goal of structural synthesis, which is to examine and describe the essence of a phenomenon, I am aware of the contradiction that my description is really my interpretation of the essence of the phenomenon. In addition to identifying
the essence of the phenomenon of teacher selection, it was also important in this study to be able to interpret the phenomenon for meaning and understanding. Thus, a hermeneutic approach to qualitative research was utilized to extend the phenomenological approach. The hermeneutic approach focused on the interpretive understanding that principals place on their experience (Patton, 1990).

"Hermeneutic theory argues that one can only interpret the meaning of something from some perspective, a certain standpoint, a praxis, or a situational context, whether one is reporting on one's own findings or reporting the perspectives of people being studied (and thus reporting their standpoint or perspective)" (Patton, 1990, p.85). Hermeneutic research clarifies that the researcher, based on her particular background and focus, will construct the meaning and understanding of the phenomenon from the data collected from the participants. In this sense, the researcher reveals her understanding of the data gathered from the participants and acknowledges her experiences, background, and biases.

While my aim is to elucidate the intended meaning of the participants. I realize that "as readers, we are conditioned by prejudices of our own historical existence . . . As interpreters, however, we never achieve a complete or objective interpretation since we, limited by our own historical circumstance and by our own language, are inextricably involved in the interpretive conversation" (Gallagher, 1992, p. 9). I do not deny my own involvement or experiences. I hope to utilize my
knowledge of professional development school programs and the collaborative enterprise with local school systems as a basis to add richness and understanding to my interpretation of the data.

The purpose of this study was to understand in depth the factors that affect the hiring processes of principals, and to understand why they select or do not select particular teacher applicants. By utilizing the phenomenological hermeneutic approach to qualitative research to investigate the teacher selection process used by principals, this study investigated the whole phenomenon with respect to its complexities and interrelationships (Patton, 1990). It searched for the shared, common experiences, and essences of the phenomenon across principals' experience emerging to portray a depth of understanding of the selection process.

Research Site

The research site was situated in a unique professional development schools (PDS) program at The Ohio State University entitled Educators for Collaborative Change (ECC). This is a teacher education program offering teacher certification and the Master's of Education degree.

Professional development school programs (PDSs) are a new approach to teacher education that have developed over the last 15 years. The guiding philosophy of this new approach to teacher education has three functions: "(1) professional development of preservice, beginning, and veteran teachers; (2) inquiry into and refinement of effective practice;
and (3) maximization of student achievement" (Abdal-Haqq, 1995). The intent of this study was to investigate only professional development school programs of teacher education.

In particular, this study investigated one professional development schools program at The Ohio State University, Educators for Collaborative Change. Choosing one PDS program reduced irrelevant factors from affecting principal reflection and response because of the myriad of philosophical differences in teacher education programs. This PDS program, ECC, is grounded in the theory of collaboration. Its student interns are selected into the program from a variety of professional and academic degrees and experiences and they enter the program at a wide variety of age levels.

I selected the Educators for Collaborative Change program because, as a graduate associate, I was a university supervisor for the student interns in this PDS for 2½ years. I continue to have a vested, personal interest in the impact of this program on the quality of teachers being prepared to teach our school children. While studying the principal perspectives of the hiring process, I have the advantage of understanding the philosophical orientation from which interns responded during interviews. This gave me further insight into the assumptions made by principals.

Having stated earlier that the significance of this study was to inform principals as they attempt to select the highest quality teachers for
their schools, choosing this PDS had the added benefit of informing the Educators for Collaborative Change program of the program’s impact on the public school system. This study provided much needed information on principals’ perspectives of how well ECC interns were prepared to teach. This study informed the stakeholders (professors, cooperating teachers, teaching assistants, and clinical educators), who collaboratively create and re-create the program, of the PDSs efficacy and impact when interns graduate and enter the teaching profession.

Research Sample: Participants

The participants in this study were selected from the population of public school principals in the surrounding public school districts in Columbus, Ohio. Interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of principals who had interviewed teacher applicants from the Master’s in Education degree program, Educators for Collaborative Change, a Professional Development School program at The Ohio State University.

Three scenarios were developed that would provide in-depth, explanatory data and identify the sites that would “maximize comparability and allow access to a wide range of behaviors and perspectives” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 70). One scenario was to select 3 principals who interviewed and hired an ECC intern during spring or summer 1999. To provide disconfirmatory information, the second scenario was to select 3 principals who interviewed and decided not to hire an ECC intern during spring or summer 1999. The third scenario was
to select 3 principals who interviewed and hired ECC interns 2 or more years ago to provide information on the success of the teacher.

Principals were selected for the three scenarios by the following procedures: (1) identifying PDS/ECC interns who interviewed in the Columbus area public schools; (2) identifying interns who agreed to participate in this study and allowed the researcher to utilize their hiring interviews as the basis for conversations with the principals; and (3) holding conversations with stakeholders to identify those principals who would be most likely to provide depth and richness and be willing to participate.

Because I had been a graduate associate in the Educators for Collaborative Change program, I had copies of student rosters for most of the years that ECC had existed. I also obtained a copy of the current year’s student roster. I initially contacted students in the current cohort who were at the end of their program and gave them a survey requesting information about their interviewing experiences and inquiring into whether they would be willing to participate in this study. I contacted those who were willing to participate and received permission to contact their interviewing principals. From this list, I contacted the principals by telephone to explain my study, communicate the student’s permission to contact them, and to request an interview. The reception that I encountered was cautious, yet willing. Most principals agreed to the interview.
During this part of the process, some principals were not available. Some had retired or moved out of the district, and only one declined to participate. In one example, I contacted the school in which a student had interviewed and received an offer. However, the current principal whom I contacted was not the principal who had interviewed this student. Because this principal was very interested in participating in this study and had extensive research knowledge of professional development schools programs, I asked for his participation, since his participation would add additional information and valuable insight to this study.

The principals selected to participate in the study were experienced and knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation. They represented diversity in school sizes, school districts, and school types in years of experience and in the range of points of view and perspectives, which helped to capture the complexities of hiring and to explain those complexities in a comprehensive way. (See Table 1.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>District &amp; School Type</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Student Enrollment</th>
<th>Years as Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>R w/ 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Whitney</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>220</td>
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<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Desmond</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>Dublin ES</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>Columbus MS</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>R w/ 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>Worthington ES</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
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<td>Columbus ES</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>P13</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>P14</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Gahana - Jefferson MS</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ES = Elementary School; MS = Middle School; F = Female; M = Male; W = White; B = Black; R w/ = Retired with; N/A = Not Applicable

Table 1: Participant Demographics
A stem and leaf display below was constructed to show the depth and breadth of experience of the principals in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years</th>
<th>Number of Principals</th>
<th>Percentage of Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>XX</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stem: Years of Experience
Leaf: Number of Principals at each level

Figure 1: Number of Years Experience as Principal

The above experience display shows that 64.3 percent (or 9) of the principals had from 2 to 5 years of experience being a principal and that 35.7 percent (or 5) of the principals had 10 to 19 years of experience in the job.
Data Collection

This qualitative study employed interview data. The in-depth interview was the overall strategy in the study to explore general topics in the hiring processes of principals. It was designed to be an informal conversation, allowing the participant to have full latitude in responding to questions (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This design was chosen to discover the emergence of common themes or concepts of participants. Patton (1990) labels this design as a standardized open-ended interview.

Following Marshall and Rossman's (1999) advice, the interview questions were structured around topics to elicit the participant's views, and they were open-ended to respect "how the participant frames and structures the responses" (p. 108). The topics included hiring procedures, decision-making procedures, school vision, and teacher education programs. Interview questions were designed around each topic and used as guidelines in actual interviews. Some questions were modified, repeated, or deleted based on the responses of the participants as needed. The intent of using the questions as guidelines was to elicit as much depth and detail as possible from the participants, in order to gain a rich description of the hiring processes and perspectives. A list of the basic interview questions is found in Appendix A.

In this study, it was more appropriate to obtain and explicate descriptive information about what happened when principals hire teachers than to use a standardized instrument to measure validity.
Qualitative data can be inspected and judged by interested parties to check their own interpretations with those of the researcher. To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of this study, I endeavored to reveal the "full scope and nature" (Patton, 1990, p. 23) of principals' feelings and perspectives about the teacher selection process. Out of a concern for accuracy, I presented principals' own personal comments and descriptions of their experiences in their own words.

Two formal interview sessions were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the decision-making process that each principal utilized when interviewing teacher applicants. Interview sessions were scheduled with each principal individually at the principal's convenience for (approximately) 1-2-hours for the initial interview and a half-hour follow-up interview. The second interview was structured to clarify comments made in the first interview and to verify my understanding of the responses. Participants were given a copy of the transcribed interview to review and verify its accurateness. Most of the participants had read their transcript before the second interview and had no corrections or comments to add to or delete from the transcript. Data were collected over a two-month period with three to four weeks between each interview. This was designed to give each participant time for review, reflection, correction, and comment on the transcribed interviews provided for them.

Interview sessions were tape-recorded with the permission of each participant. Literal transcriptions were made of the tape-recorded
interviews and provided to each participant for review. I attempted to be
diligent in collecting, organizing, and maintaining data and providing raw
data to participants and to my dissertation committee. I have maintained
interview tapes and transcribed data in a secure place for review. I
created and maintained an ongoing personal journal for reflection,
thoughts, biases, and feelings to guard against my personal involvement
with the material at the initial stage of data review.

It was my earnest intent to be honest, to avoid deception or harm of
any kind to the participants. In the quest for research data, I was
constantly aware of the myriad of ethical obligations that are due the
participants, such as avoiding harm personally, professionally, legally,
politically, physically, or psychologically. In trying to treat each
participant with respect and dignity, I understood that “treating
interviewees seriously, going out of your way to prevent them from being
hurt by the research or the write-up, being honest and keeping your
promises are all ethical obligations that the researcher knowingly takes
on” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

All participants were informed of the purpose and the risks of the
research. Because researchers do not have the legal rights of client
confidentiality afforded to lawyers, therapists, and to the clergy, and
therefore, can be summoned into court to testify on information learned
from the participants, I informed the participants of this fact and its
possible risk to them.
Each participant was requested to sign a letter of consent. The statement of consent informed the participants of the purpose of the research, the risks to the participants, and the limits of confidentiality, and emphasized that participation is voluntary. Each participant agreed to the terms of the consent form without question. An informed Consent Statement can be found in Appendix B.

Participation was voluntary. I respectfully requested permission to tape-record the interviews and instructed each participant that they had control over the use of the tape recorder and were encouraged to turn the tape recorder off at any time if they desired. Participants had the option at any time to withdraw from the study or request that any piece of information be deleted from the report. “You have an obligation to warn interviewees if something they are saying may get them in trouble and to give them an opportunity to retract what they said or tell you not to use the material or not to identify them as the source” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 94). Only one participant asked that the tape recorder be turned off during certain parts of the interview and no participants as of this date have requested to be removed from the study.

Anonymity of participants has been and will continue to be respected. Each participant was notified that they would remain anonymous. I selected pseudonyms for the principals to use instead of their real names in the transcripts and in the write-up of the study. Pseudonyms were used in the transcriptions of the interviews and the final
report, so that those who wish to review the raw data cannot use information found there to directly or inadvertently harm a participant.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of data took place concurrently in two phases: ongoing during the interview process and during the formal phase of coding and interpreting data.

There is typically not a precise point at which data collection ends and analysis begins. In the course of gathering data, ideas about possible analysis will occur. Those ideas constitute the beginning of analysis; they are part of the record of field notes. It is important to keep track of analytical insights that occur during data collection. This overlapping of data collection and analysis improves both the quality of data collected and the quality of the analysis... (Patton, 1990, p. 378)

Tapes and transcriptions were reviewed between each interview to identify meanings and themes that developed and needed to be pursued in the subsequent interviews. Interview questions were reanalyzed on an ongoing basis in preparation for the next interview.

The formal phases of coding and interpreting the data was conducted after the interview process was completed. Each interview transcript was read several times. Strategies suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1984), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Patton (1990) were utilized to develop themes and interpret meanings.

The qualitative software program, NUDIST Nvivo 1.1, was chosen to assist in the analysis of the data because of its ability as a text base manager, code manager, theory builder, and conceptual network builder.
As a text base manager, the software organizes the text systematically for search and retrieval (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As a code manager, it divides text into segments, attaches codes to the segments, and finds and displays all instances of coded segments (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 312). As a theory builder, it allows you to make connections between codes (categories of information); to develop higher-order classifications and categories; to formulate propositions or assertions, implying a conceptual structure that fits the data; and/or to test such propositions to determine whether they apply (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 312).

As a conceptual network builder.

You can see your variables as nodes, linked with other nodes by specified relationships (e.g., 'belongs to,' 'leads to,' 'is kind of'). The networks are not just casually hand-drawn, but are real 'semantic networks' that develop from your data and your concepts (usually higher level codes) and the relationships you see among them (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 312).

NUDIST NVivo 1.1 was designed to handle complexity. Managing the data (coding, linking, building concepts and models) helped me to synthesize, understand, build, and test theories in the data. I was able to bring together over 250 pages of transcribed interviews in various ways that assisted and clarified the conclusion drawing process.

A total of 15 interviews were conducted. Each interview transcript was entered into the NUDIST NVivo 1.1, qualitative software program. In keeping with the emergent focus of this study, there were no predetermined categories for coding. I examined the raw data for content
analysis. "Content analysis is the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data" (Patton. 1990, p. 381).

Therefore, initially, I coded each document in a literal manner, attaching a label to each segment of information based on the descriptive or exact wording of the participants. This required minimal interpretation.

Coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis. This part of analysis involves how you differentiate and combine the data you have retrieved and the reflections you make about this information. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56)

Examination of the documents led to the construction of over 85 individual codes. I began to combine and consolidate the codes into clusters of like-meaning codes. In some instances, I could see that some coded segments were parts of a larger concept. The descriptive codes were analyzed for meaning and combined with other codes into categories for later analysis. This led to a systematic classification scheme of categories and sub-categories. (See Appendix C for Data Codes.)

An attempt was made to allow for more than one interpretation of some segments of the raw data. "Many passages can serve several different purposes, patterns, or themes" (Patton. 1990, p. 382). Some segments of text were assigned to two or more codes to describe the contents of the segments. This part of the data analysis or the coding and clustering stage evoked little interpretation in order to remain flexible and open for disconfirmatory or alternative explanations because "tightly
structured, highly organized data-gathering and data-analyzing schemes... often filter out the unusual, the serendipitous—the puzzle” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, pp. 150-151).

“The purpose of classifying qualitative data for content analysis is to facilitate the search for patterns and themes within a particular setting or across cases” (Patton, 1990, p. 384). The emergent set of categories and sub-categories was complete when information was exhausted, and no new categories emerged. The naturalistic evaluator then works back and forth between the data and the classification system to verify the meaningfulness and accuracy of the categories and the placement of data in categories (Patton, 1990, p. 403).

The final step in the analysis of data in this study was the description of the common patterns of experience and descriptions of the unusual or isolated experiences in those patterns of experience when principals hire teachers. “In the structural synthesis, the researcher looks beneath the affect inherent in the experience to deeper meaning for the individual. This reveals the essence of the phenomenon (Patton, 1990, p. 409). A synthesis of the meanings and the essence of the experience of hiring teachers for these principals is described in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter describes the procedures and perspectives that selected public school principals initiated when hiring new teachers into the school faculty. It describes the steps or stages in the process that occurred at the school building level with teacher selection. The influences that affected the hiring of teachers are discussed in the context of the degree of knowledge of and/or experience that a principal had with a specific teacher education program, and the degree of influence that knowledge had on the hiring of teachers. The names of principals have been changed to protect their anonymity.

The themes that emerged from the interviews with 14 public school principals are described in three parts: Part I. Procedures principals follow when hiring teachers; Part II. Influences that affect principals' hiring decisions; and Part III. Knowledge of and/or experience with teacher education programs influencing hiring teachers from a specific teacher education program.
Part I. Procedures Principals Follow when Hiring Teachers

A vacancy occurs and the selection process begins. Principals in this study discuss the processes that they go through when faced with a teacher vacancy in their school. This critical administrative task is simultaneously complex and individualistic.

One of the first things I think about is, in my own mind, is to go back through the philosophy here, our mission statement, and then also the goals of the district because I need to have an employee here that buys into the same type of philosophy that the rest of my staff has, can buy into our mission statement, and then can feel that they would be able to achieve the three goals that the superintendent has placed out here for the district within the classroom. Those are the things I think of first when I’m thinking of getting ready to put together my questions and put together my team to do the actual interviewing. (Sara, P6. Section 0. Paragraph 4)

Vision

Most principals have an intuitive or explicit vision of their school that drives the thinking and planning in teacher selection. Mary, principal of an exemplary school and ready to retire, describes her vision of the perfect school:

Well, it would be where students are happy learning. Teachers are happy in their job of teaching, willing to give of time necessary to get their job done. Kids would be actively involved in the learning process, with hands-on, some working independently, and an infusion of technology. They are able to set goals and meet those goals. Students are meeting the goals of the school system. It’s an attractive place and yet it’s apparent that it’s a busy place. Work is going on. Things are being accomplished. You can tell what the focus is by walking through the building. (P1, Section 1.1.1. Paragraph 1)

A beginning principal of a low performing school describes a different vision of the perfect school:
It would have high achievement. It would have community support. Parental support. Support from the news and media would be great. Students that came to school well-fed and dressed and ready to learn. Probably from middle class parents who want the best for their kids. That would probably be an ideal requirement. But, that's not the real world. That's totally idealistic. (Lydia, P5, Section 1, Paragraph 66)

A wide variety of characteristics are reflected in the visions of individual principals as seen in the following comments. Eleanor describes the ideal environment as one that is bright, colorful, happy, clean, and tidy. A literacy rich environment would be exhibited in the school by "words and writing and books everywhere you looked." There would be student project-based learning in the halls by children who celebrate learning. Teachers, parents and community members would be "bustling about" as they enhance the learning environment for students (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 34).

Abigail comments that her vision of the perfect school would have a diverse population that consists of regular education, special education, different cultures, and different socio-economic diversity. Having diversity is important to providing good role models for peers which enhances student success. She also has a vision of good working relationships with her community "so that the students can get a sense of community" (P10, Section 0, Paragraph 125-129).

Tyler has a vision of a "community of learners, with the parents, the students, the teachers, and everybody that works in the building have..."
the same focus and the same goal; and that's student learning, and that we’re all life-long learners” (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 51).

Ford envisions his school as a place where students and teachers are excited about student achievement. It’s important to Ford that students feel accepted for who they are irregardless of mental or physical abilities.

Where students really want to come to school . . . Where students are excited. They are recognized for their achievements, whatever that may be. Where every student is accepted. They like to come to school no matter what their ability level is. Where teachers come to school and not just go through the motions. Where they do plan. They really put everything they have into teaching... And then finally, a place where parents are comfortable when they send their children to us each day, they know that they are going to be taken care of. That’s how I want it for all students. (P14, Section 0, Paragraph 123-125)

Each principal’s vision derives from the individual and complex situations that make up his or her school. The characteristics that one principal has at his or her school may or may not be what another principal envisions for his or her school. For example, Mary, who has high academic performance in her school, envisions a school in which students and staff are happy. Whereas, in Lydia’s case, her school has a low socio-economic population and low academic scoring students, she envisions a school with high parent and community involvement that would help her to achieve academic success for all of her students.

In addition, three principals in this study (Aretha, Mary and Jon) stated that after a vision for their school is created, they make an analysis
of school needs to determine what kinds of qualities to look for in hiring new teachers.

When we are looking at hiring teachers, we look at the teachers that we already have. We look at the areas we need strengths from teachers at that particular grade level. We look at the racial makeup of our building. We look at our reading model to see if the teacher has been trained in that particular model. Those are some factors that we look at... We look at the extracurricular activities of the teacher, the interviewee, that they could bring to our school; Strengths that they could bring that we might need. So there are various things that I look at. (Aretha, P13, Section 1, Paragraph 9)

Interview Team

Based on this expressed vision of their school, principals in this study, whether required to by school district regulations or not, set about composing an interview team to assist with the hiring process. Dublin City Schools were not required to create interview committees. For several reasons these principals found the use of the interview team valuable: It assists in the decision-making procedures; It provides multiple perspectives; It enhances a better selection from among the applicants; It empowers teachers to have ownership and responsibility in the process and in the new hire.

In Columbus Public Schools, ARTICLE 211 of CEA/Board of Education, Collective Bargaining Agreement, Assignments and Transfers, mandates the use of interview teams. The Board/CEA Agreement stipulates the following:

Vacancies will be filled utilizing the interview/selection process. The interview panel in a building will consist of the principal, the senior faculty representative and one elected member of the
Association Building Council, and two parents/members of the school community, or an alternative panel as agreed at the building between the principal and Association. The administrator shall determine which applicant is selected for the position. If his or her selection does not follow the panel’s recommendations, the administrator shall send written notice of the selection to members of the interview panel and to the Association President. The interview panel can utilize sub-committees or delegate any of its responsibilities. (1998, p. 4)

Sara, in Columbus Public Schools, values the interview team for its multiple perspectives and because teachers embrace the new teacher with an attitude of helping him or her become successful.

I like having the committee because I think it brings in - like there were times that someone on my committee would say you know what. “I really felt like they were saying this when they answered that question.” And it makes you sit back and think you know what. “I’ll bet that is what. I’ve read it the wrong way.” So I like having those different voices in there and I like the fact that I do, as a building administrator, I do still have some control over who we really do hire because I can override their decision if I like someone else. But I like having teacher input because then they can give me input of “You know what, this is someone I really think I can work with.” “This isn’t someone I think this staff is going to be able to work with.” And I like parent input. “As a parent, this is the type of teacher I would want my child to have in the building.” (P6, Section 0, Paragraph 57)

Eleanor agrees with the benefits of the multiple perspectives and also thinks that this is another example of shared decision making in her school.

I value it very strongly . . . There’s a greater commitment from the existing staff to embrace their role in bringing that new person on board and committing themselves to that new person’s success in the classroom.... They might be nice to that person, but they’re not necessarily committed to that person’s success. When they have a vested interest in deciding who comes on staff, if that person fails it’s a reflection on them as well as on me. (P7, Section 1, Paragraphs 47-48)

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I feel really strongly that you empower teachers when you share decision making with them and the interview committee is just another aspect of shared decision making or participatory governance in the building. So I feel strongly about that. (Eleanor, P7, Section 1, Paragraph 52)

Tyler and Ford also see the interview team as a way of having more people involved which improves the chances of hiring the best candidate. In addition, they think that it empowers teachers and creates a school and community environment.

Also, it fosters ownership from other people in this school beside myself. And we all take ownership in this person that we are going to be bringing into the school family... it’s a better way of doing it although it is more time consuming. (Tyler, P11, Section 1, Paragraphs 28-30)

I think it’s helped the teachers feel that there is some ownership here. Their opinions are valued. They are important people and that I trust their professional judgment. I think it helps them feel confident in their abilities because they’ve been asked to be on an interview team. (Ford, P14, Section 0, Paragraphs 85-87)

Multiple perspectives is also valued by Marvin as he sets up his interview team. Martin identifies three goals: 1) the participation of many members on the interview team identifies issues with teacher applicants that one person, interviewing alone, may miss in the interview. 2) the process takes the decision-making away from just one person; and 3) because the new teacher will have to function as part of the team, having the team participate in the interviewing and decision-making enables a better decision. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 21)

Even though the selection process could be easier and faster without using the interview team, it is still a vital part of the process when hiring
teachers to Abigail. She values the interview team process because it improves the staff. It brings teachers together as a team, which enhances the achievement of common school goals. (P10, Section 0, Paragraph 54)

Abigail thinks that it improves the process because "everyone hears things differently" (P10, Section 0, Paragraph 67). The consequences of multiple perspectives, however, do not always result in discussions that concur with her best judgment. Although each member of the interview team looks for the same qualities and skills in a new teacher, each member can participate in a way that identifies and/or clarifies concerns about an applicant. For example,

We interviewed somebody a couple of years ago for a first grade. I knew the person; I had taught with her, and that's why I was [excited we could] interview her. She made a comment [when] asked about [teaching first grade], "I know I can teach first grade". And, I'm sitting there saying [to myself], "I know you do. That is not a bragging thing but that is a fact." And [some others thought it was] arrogance. I guess it did sound arrogant. I happened to know that she is excellent, that she does know how to teach first grade and do it well. Oh, but just that one little statement [affected the perceptions of the interview members] and it's gone the other way too. (Abigail, P10, Section 0, Paragraphs 217-221)

In summary, the principals in this study described that having an interview team to assist in the hiring process was beneficial in many ways. They felt that many persons heard and saw more than what one could. They felt that it improved the morale and commitment of teachers on staff. It increased the likelihood that the newly hired teacher would receive more and better assistance from peers on staff. Even when one principal was in a position that required him to hire without the interview
team, he noted that it was less preferable: “I didn’t have anybody to help me interview fifth grade because I was working to recreate our fifth grade team that works here. I was doing these on my own” (Tim, P8, Section 1, Paragraph 46). Tim, comparing it to interviewing alone, commented on how using the interview team was valuable to him.

It was really successful in kindergarten because I’ve a high degree of trust for these two teachers. They are very quality teachers. I wanted to involve the fourth grade teachers in those interviews but they were on vacation. (Tim, P8, Section 1, Paragraph 50)

Composition of Interview Teams

Although all principals reported using and valuing the interview team, the composition of the interview teams had great variety. For example, the number of persons serving on the interview team ranged from 3 to 12. Each principal selected some form of teacher representation such as, a grade level teacher, a grade level chairperson, a resource teacher, or a general teacher not associated with the grade level of the open position. Table 2 below depicts the various compositions of the interview teams developed by the corresponding principals.
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<th>Composition</th>
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Table 2: Composition of Interview Teams

The most typical components of the interview team are grade level teachers and parents. Four unusual components of the interview team were identified in this study: a university professor, a teacher in the
district but not located in the hiring building, a student in the hiring building, and a classified staff person such as the cafeteria person or custodian. The most unusual interview team consisted of both the student and the classified staff. Eleanor describes her reasoning behind this composition:

The first step for me would be to build a committee because I do truly believe that it needs to be a committee based decision . . . I think it’s important . . . for example, we have a third grade opening, that we’re not really just hiring a third grade teacher, we’re hiring someone to come on to our staff. First and foremost you’re a member of the staff and then you’re in a grade level. So it’s important to have representation from all grade levels as well as to have parental involvement. I think it’s important to include classified staff as well as certified staff on the committee. I think that it’s also critical to have at least one student on the committee. Typically usually a student that is past the grade level that we’re actually hiring for . . . It would not be unusual to have 9-12 people on a committee interviewing candidates . . . One of the reasons why we have a kid on our interview committee is so that when it’s that youngster’s turn to ask a question [if] the candidate doesn’t look at the kid to answer the question or doesn’t respond in a respectful way to the child. I end the interview after that question because I don’t want someone to not be interactive with the kids appropriately. So it has to be a person who is willing to be humble enough to respond to a child in an interview situation. (Eleanor, P7, Section 1. Paragraph 7-10)

Just as the configuration of the individual members of the interview team has an important purpose of providing multiple perspectives, the purpose of the interview team as a unit is to enhance the decision making process when hiring teachers. Marvin reminds us why we interview:

I think that when we interview, we interview for children. I think that’s the most important part. When we interview with a team everybody had that in the back of their mind. We are interviewing for the very best teacher and we are interviewing for those people that are going to be good for kids. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 29)
The interview team is formed and organized during the pre-interview stage. Most principals in this study configure the interview team to review resumes and make the selections to interview among the collection of applicants for each position. For most of the principals, the resume review is an interview team project. "What occurs next is, they will send us their resume, we will review that resume, take a look at the resume in terms of whether or not it's going to be a viable person for us" (Marvin, P9, Section 1, Paragraph 9). "Then we decide on who we're going to interview and we set up the interviews" (Lydia, P5, Selection 1, Paragraph 10).

Reviewing resumes. I think it's important that the whole committee review all the resumes and indicate who it is that they'd like to interview. So after that kind of tallying up who we're interviewing; who we're not interviewing, who are the maybe people, calling and scheduling and then actually conducting the interview. (Eleanor, P7, Section 1, Paragraph 4)

However, one principal, Ford routinely reviews the resumes himself and decides on which teacher applicants will be interviewed based on a commercial, structured interview program (Ventures for Excellence). He then, conducts an interview with the teacher applicants selected. His preliminary screening procedure consists of three parts: 1) reviewing Ventures for Excellence scores and questions; 2) conducting an audio-taped structured interview with questions from the Ventures for Excellence program; and 3) concluding with a non-structured interview after the taped interview. The teacher applicants selected through the pre-
selection process then are interviewed by the principal and interview team (Ford, P14, Section 0, Paragraph 17).

Interview Questions

The pre-interview stage is also the point at which the principal and/or interview team creates the interview questions. "The questions are prepared ahead of time to make sure that we cover the areas that we need to cover.... So, we've always tried to talk over in committee how we are going to do it and what we are looking for" (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 18). "So we create our own interview questions" (Tyler, P1, Section 1, Paragraph 18).

Several principals structure the interview so that each applicant for a grade level position receives and answers the same set of questions. For example, it is typical for Eleanor and her interview team to select a question of interest and then ask that question to all applicants.

Usually before the first interview we will gather around the table. Every committee member has a copy of the questions for each candidate so that they take notes while the candidate is talking. [Question] number 7 is always about parental involvement. Usually our parents on the committee will say let me ask that one. Generally we let the child pick first because they're going to obviously pick the shortest question with the easiest words in it. And then people just kind of select and then for every candidate you ask that same question. . . . I feel very strongly that you need to ask all candidates the same questions. (Eleanor, P7, Section 1, Paragraph 52)

Aretha also structures the interview questions this way:

When we interview . . . our team all have the same questions. We ask the same questions of all of our applicants. We have rubrics
that we look at. We have a written question. And then we have a verbal interview (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 13).

It [the interview question] comes from the interview team pertaining to what area that the person is going to be interviewing for. They all have the same written question. And they have the same questions. We ask the same question because they apply to all the grade levels. So they would answer them pertaining to the grade levels. (P113, Section 1, Paragraphs 14-21)

In contrast, three examples stand out that illustrate principals (Tim, Ford, and Walter) and interview teams that do not use a structured questions approach. Tim uses a set of questions as guidelines and changes or modifies the questions as the interview takes place.

I gave them [interview team] all the questions that I generally ask when I conduct interviews by myself. I said, “I really need your help working with me on these to make these appropriate for kindergarten.” Because up to that point, the only positions that I hired for the year before, were for fourth and fifth grade and I did ask some content-specific questions about Social Studies, math, standardized testing and so forth that may not have been as important to kindergarten. We went through the questions together. They added in questions. I started off the interview and I would ask some of the ones I was most interested in. But without fail, always in the interviews we conducted together, a dialog would then start to take place when they started to talk about how the day would be structured. But I could then start to see this discussion take place between the interviewee and my two teachers. At that point I would take a step back and let them go because they were getting good information from all the candidates. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 25)

Ford sees that his process is a mixture of structured and unstructured questions in the interview. He sees the initial school district interview as structured. He then conducts the structured part of the first school site interview according to instructions in the Ventures for Excellence Program and ends the interview with unstructured questions.
The interview team next meets with the applicants using an unstructured questioning format. "It was a round-robin type, we went around and asked questions. In that interview, I do not participate. I sit back. I’m there, unless there’s a question that I do not think was covered. I will ask that question (P14, Section 0, Paragraph 9). Ford holds a final interview with the applicant recommended by the interview team.

Basically it’s more of just an informal discussion with them. There are really no questions, more, “Would you like to work here?” “Would you like to be part of this team?” “Do you see any problems?” Just, “hello.” or maybe a get to know you on a more personal level. (P14, Section 0, Paragraph 28)

Walter was a principal in a professional development school (PDS) before his retirement. He explained how the interview questions changed subsequent to his school’s transformation to a professional development school:

We did that [structure interview questions] more prior to PDS [being a professional development school]. After PDS it was just a sense of the kinds of things you want in all of our people. We still involved people [like the interview team] in that program. We involved Marilyn at times as a faculty member [and co-coordinator from Ohio State University]. We involved some of the GAs [graduate associates] that would come to the building if they were part of our supervision team. There was just a sense about the kinds of questions that you would ask. It was more of a way of doing business; we knew the kind of people we really wanted. (P12. Section 1, Paragraphs 24-25)

Goals of the Questions

It appears that whether a principal and interview team utilize a structured, unstructured, or combination of questions, the most important
aspect of the questions is to identify how similar the applicant’s
philosophy is to the school’s philosophy.

Because the way we have our questions worded, because we build
our philosophy into our questions, we build those goals into our
questions but a lot of it is within the way our questions are worded.

So as we’re going through the interview . . . I’m looking at
teacher qualities [to] make sure that they understand what teaching
is all about. A lot of that just goes with the answers they’re going
to give me from the questions. Because . . . we know exactly what
we want to hear as answers. And we’re going to know whether
we’ve got a good teacher candidate sitting in front of us by the
answer they’re giving us. (P6, Section 0, Paragraphs 12 & 48)

Driven by the school vision, Tyler gave a detailed example of how
the questions inform the interview team. He and his interview team
design the interview questions based on their core values and goals of
student centeredness. In addition, they develop their preferred responses
to these questions. They use these questions as guidelines when screening
teacher applicants. They feel that the questions and the responses
reinforce their focus on their school vision and core values.

We work a lot on authentic evaluation and authentic assessment. So
one of the questions that we’ll ask has to do with integrated
curriculum of thematic units and how do you teach when you are
doing an integrated approach, how do you know that the child has
learned a particular objective in mathematics with what we call our
central learnings. A good response to that would be to first find out
what the kids know. Based upon what they know what do they want
to learn. Based upon that, what they did learn. So we look at that
part of what they did learn. There might be a formal assessment at
the end of the particular unit, that would determine whether or not
that child learned something or not. Better for us, and what we
would like to see I guess just a little bit better, is a continual
checkpoint along the way, a checking of student progress, not
waiting until the end of the unit or the end of spelling test to find
out if that child knows [the material]. So what we’d like that
teacher to do is have an intervention plan in mind, to have a
specific sequence of how they’re going to know whether or not a student has learned the particular materials . . . . We really are firm believers here, of student self-assessment. . . . And that’s the feedback that we are looking for. (P11. Section 1. Paragraph 46)

Lydia uses the responses to determine if a teacher applicant will be able to help improve her school’s low academic standing by assessing the curriculum skills that they possess. Like Tyler, Lydia and her interview team design questions and their responses to inform them of a teacher applicant’s curriculum knowledge, which is critical to increasing student success. These questions and responses assist in the decision-making procedures so that the principal and interview team can accomplish the school vision.

You get a feeling of who has a knowledge [of curriculum]. Like several of the questions were about reading. If they don’t have any background knowledge about how to start a reading program in a classroom that’s something that we would really look at closely. Their interests, and if they come with a strong math interest, how that would be of a benefit to our staff and the team they’d be working with. We really try to find out what their strengths are and what their interests are. (P5. Section 1. Paragraph 20)

The variety of interview questions reflects the variety in individual principal visions of their schools. For example, Desmond looked for a person who embraces the particular culture of his school such as diversity. He noted that some teachers work better in urban environments, than in rural environments. His approach was to adapt his interview questions to reflect the culture he is in, which assists him in finding the best teacher applicant to match the culture.
They may not function extremely well in a particular type of school or a particular type of school system. There is inner city. There are city schools. We have the rural schools. We have the suburban schools. So, those are different types of mind sets. So obviously, the different teachers would fit differently in those environments. (P4, Section 1, Paragraph 34)

Tim looks for a strong child-centered philosophy from a teacher applicant. He looks for evidence of this philosophy to be voiced in the interview, in order for an applicant to be successful.

First, and foremost, the teachers that I talk to that I’m most impressed with really do seem to have a vision. And the vision is that they want to do this because they want to make a difference in the lives of children. It’s really that simple, but it’s amazing that the people who look wonderful on paper that when I actually interviewed with them so much would actually come down to what was in it for them. And that’s not what we are all about. We’re about boys and girls. I do think professional growth is critical, and career aspirations is something that everyone should have, but I also believe that you truly need to express a belief that why I really want to do this because I really want to make a difference in the lives of children. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 29)

We have seen that interview teams are created by the principal in each school. As a team, they use the school vision as a guiding principle to develop interview questions in order to collect data from applicants. The applicants’ responses provide the data for the decision-making process.

Interview Team Discussions

Once this information from the questions has been gathered from each interviewee and the interviews have been completed, principals and interview teams move into the discussion and decision-making stage.

This part of the process was similar for all principals who conducted
interviews using the interview team (Mary, Whitney, Jon, Lydia, Sara, Eleanor, Marvin, Abigail, and Tyler). Three examples below illustrate the discussion and decision-making process using perceptions, discussions, and consensus building.

Marvin and his interview team discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each teacher applicant right after the interview.

After the person leaves, we try to review those interviews and get their strong points, their weak points, how they’d fit in, if they wouldn’t fit in, what is it that we see in this person that would make us accept them as a teacher here. At the end of all the interviews, we may have five or six, we try to go back over, then review and try to select the strongest candidate. (Marvin, P9, Section 1, Paragraph 9)

After all interviews have been conducted, Tyler and his interview team discuss their perceptions of the teacher applicants. They narrow the list down to two to three applicants who appear to be the strongest candidates.

We generally don’t discuss the candidates after their interview. We wait until we are all done with all the candidates. Then that process is just going through individual candidate by candidate... We go through and we look at each candidate and we outline strengths, areas of concern, or areas that need any document. Those will go for each candidate. That usually will sort itself down to two or three candidates that are going to be your strongest candidates. From those two or three, then we’ll go through that same process again. We try to always come back and correlate to what are our goals, what are we looking for, what are the needs of the building. We also have a recording sheet that we use when we are asking the candidates questions. We rate the candidates at that time. But when we get really, really stuck, we get back to those recording sheets. (Tyler, P11, Section 1, Paragraph 30)
For Eleanor and her interview team, it becomes a consensus building process. After a group of interviews containing two to three teacher applicants, eliminating some applicants along the way, they come to consensus about the chosen applicant.

It truly is a team decision and everybody on the interview committee has a vote. We’ve never really needed to take a vote though. It’s usually been some kind of consensus building process. Looking at different qualities of different candidates and what is it that we’re looking for and who feels most comfortable with which person and just building towards consensus. We usually process after like every two or three interviews. We’ll just stop, take a 15 minute break from interviewing and process those two to three candidates along the way. Some people automatically are eliminated and then some people we just set aside in a reserve pile that we’ll reconsider. (Eleanor, P7, Section 1. Paragraph 18)

In an attempt to come to consensus, the following principals and interview teams utilize rating scales or rubrics: Mary, Whitney, Jon, Lydia, Sara, Eleanor, Abigail, Tyler, and Aretha. These principals had a district training session using the rating scale concept to score applicants. Jon, who is in his second year as principal and has had one year of hiring teachers, felt that the rubric was cumbersome and difficult to use.

The district has a program it puts us through each year. We talk about interview questions, writing up a rubric for answers. We tried to do that and we found that it was extremely time consuming. When you are looking at a third grade teacher and a kindergarten teacher, you can’t use the same questions for each. If you start looking at music and everything else, it just becomes too time consuming for us with the number of individuals we had to interview . . . So that part of the process didn’t help us. We basically, narrowed it down to five questions that we asked everybody. We asked them by the same person, same order. I didn’t feel real comfortable with it afterwards but I still haven’t come to terms with what the real aspects are of deviating from the administration, that you have to do it that way; Don’t ask any other
questions . . . I probably would have liked to have it a little more free flowing. I think that once they bring up something you’re allowed to start asking about it. I’m not positive, but it was our first year as a team together in doing that. It was pretty cut and dry: five questions, five answers, let them ask any questions they wanted. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 26)

The rest of the principals accepted the use of the rubric or rating scale as helpful because it structured the evaluations of the applicants, although, the way that they used it varied from school to school. Whitney felt that the use of the rubric facilitated understanding the teacher applicant for her interview team.

We had, in our training, a level of questioning that we were made aware of and an opportunity to practice. They were: weak responses, strong responses, and expanded or extremely good responses. So we have a chart that we could use. Our team decided ahead of time, which of us would ask which question. Then we rated our own responses [the applicant response to the question that we asked], in terms of what they gave back, like using a rubric. At the end when we met as a team, after we had interviewed everyone, we decided who we wanted to ask back and/or who we thought was a good candidate. (P2, Section 0, Paragraph 29)

Mary’s interview team uses the rubric to give each applicant points. ranks the applicants based on those points, and then discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each applicant (P1, Section 0, Paragraph 14).

Sara’s interview team uses a simple ranking system that helps the team stay focused.

With our interviewing questions, we have like a rating scale. The rating scale is very simple, like a 1, 2, 3. One being the lowest, three being the highest . . . We sat down and went through every question . . . If in their answer we see this, this, this, that would rate them as a three. If in their answer we see this, this, and this, that would rate them as a one . . . We sat down as a team to make sure we were all on the same page. So, I wasn’t giving someone a
three and then someone else was saying, I thought that was a one. (P6, Section 0, Paragraph 14)

The rating scale system may be of assistance in keeping teams focused and clarifying ideas for team members, but it cannot remove differences of opinion. Final decisions must be made and someone must be hired. All of the principals have the authority to and responsibility for the final hiring decision in each school. Most of the principals (Mary, Whitney, Jon, Lydia, Eleanor, Abigail, Tyler, Walker, and Ford) reported that rarely, if ever, do they encounter strong disagreements on the interview team.

Final Decisions

When conflict arises on the interview team, principals in this study reported that they tended to react in one of three ways: principal would work for consensus; principal would agree with the interview team; or principal would make the decision. Although the simplest and most efficient way of selecting a new teacher would be for the principal to make the decision by him or herself, most principals prefer to have consensus on the interview team.

The principals, who tended to work for consensus, use discussion to justify and explain reasons for a decision. Principals (Mary, Sara, Eleanor, Abigail, Tyler, Walter and Ford) participate as a team member, giving their reasons and justifications as each interview team member would. For example, Mary states,
Well I ask each team member to justify their position; get more specific on what made you feel this way. I don't think that I've been on very many teams where that was the case, where there was opposition as to who should be [selected]. I guess, I have shared my view as well... If I feel strongly enough about one [applicant] I might try to sell it over another just by doing the same thing I'm asking them to do, justify reasons for selecting one over the other. (P1. Selection 1.1.1. Paragraph 62)

Eleanor reflects that having a conflict on the interview team may indicate a lack of shared mission on the team. This would be a critical issue for her because it would reflect on her as an instructional leader. She feels that it is necessary to communicate her values and help her staff have a sense of shared mission when hiring someone new on their staff. Eleanor would model reflection and trust to her interview team because it is important to her that the team exhibits reflection and trust in the process also. And finally, she would trust the judgment of and decisions of her interview team (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 50).

In Tyler's experience, consensus has always worked, however, the process and structure is in place in case it does not.

I talk with the team about that up front. I say, "This is never going to happen, but, if we just can't come to a decision, and we disagree, then it's my responsibility to make that decision. Hope you understand. Maybe you don't agree with it, but I hope you understand the process." We have been very successful with my 15 years as a principal, I've never had to say, this is the person we're going to hire. (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 74)

A similar process occurs for those principals who reported that they would agree with the interview team when there were differences of opinion. A discussion of the candidate occurs; "Let the individuals
discuss why they like or don't like the individuals that we were interviewing, how they do or don't fit into the school culture. Hopefully, they could win over some others to their opinion” (Jon, P3, Section 1, Paragraph 34). However, some principals (Whitney, Lydia, Jon, and Tim) felt that an important aspect of the hiring process is having trust in their teachers' judgments. Lydia explained.

There was somebody that the committee just loved and they thought was fabulous. I had kind of not the best feelings about... But especially the grade level, really loved this person, so, I went with what the committee said because they [teachers] have to work with them [new teacher]. If I had said, “No, you're going to take the person I like,” that would be a losing battle already, to start. And I know as a teacher, my principal dealt with it the same way... This teacher has been fine, so, they made the right decision. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 14)

Tim also stressed that he trusted his teachers' judgment to select a teacher applicant that would be best for students. Also, he stated that trust in his teachers was essential because these teachers have to work with the new person closely.

Just the one I thought had the most experience, could come in and could do the best job; they felt that there was another candidate right out of the undergraduate program that already had the philosophies and the belief system in place. They knew that they could work with her and have an outstanding team. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 21)

Two principals (Marvin and Aretha) reported that they tended to make the decision themselves. When there were differences of opinion on the interview team, Marvin’s group of teachers preferred that he make the decision.
We have had that before. We’ve had that situation . . . but I think they have enough faith in me to understand what it is that I need for that person to do for me as a principal to work in that situation. They have given me the leeway to say, “If that’s not the person we want, you select the person or give us the reasons why you feel that way.” Most people have gone along and said, “Hey, we trust your decisions,” and “We value your decisions,” and “We will go with your decision.” That’s the kind of relationship that we have been able to build. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 57)

Aretha prefers to have a discussion come to a consensus decision by the whole team, however, she finds it necessary at times to make the decision herself.

Initially we started out with the rubric. We have a discussion as the interview panel. I can accept their suggestion or I can go with someone that I feel would be more appropriate at that school . . . . But as the principal, I have to look at the total school. I have to listen to what parents would like; what the needs of the students are. So I think my philosophy would be a little bit different from what the teachers would be, and usually we agree. Maybe it’s been about once, that I had to say “No.” . . . It was someone that was sent here during the middle of the year who was a kindergarten teacher put in a fourth grade position. When we interviewed, they [grade level teachers] had bonded with this teacher, but you have to look at how successful she was. You have to look at the interaction . . . So, it’s my responsibility as the principal to make that tough decision. I really like you as a person, but we need this at fourth grade. So that’s a little difficult at times. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 56)

I try to let the interviewing team make the decision and I sit back and listen. I am a listener on the team. And when they are headed in a direction that would best benefit the school, they go with it. And sometimes I have to come in and remind them. “This is what we need to look at. Let’s look at the needs of our students. Let’s look at our test scores.” We look at the data. And that’s how we try to keep them on track with that. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 59)

As we look at how the principals in this study organize the hiring process, we can understand that it is complex, time consuming, and
difficult. In Part I, I have described the hiring process of these principals with both variety and similarity of activities and logistical decisions to be made starting from the vacancy announcement to the final decision to hire a specific candidate. In the next section, Part II, I will describe why some decisions are made and what influences affect the decision-making process.

Part II. Influences that Affect Principals’ Hiring Decisions

Principals make many decisions during the hiring process. Initially, the decisions concern how the hiring process will be structured, but, eventually, these decision-making procedures compare and evaluate each applicant against the other. “Results of these evaluations are then used to make decisions about which applicants to reject and which to offer a job” (Heneman & Heneman, 1994, p. 6). In Part II, principals in this study discuss the influences on the evaluation and assessment of the teacher applicants.

These principals identified four dynamics or motivating forces that influenced the decisions to chose a particular teacher applicant: Dynamic 1. Teacher Qualities; Dynamic 2. Challenges; Dynamic 3. Tacit Knowledge; and Dynamic 4. District Pressures. These will be discussed in Part II.

Dynamic 1. Teacher Qualities

Harris and Monk (1992) report that research on teacher qualities and skills began in the 1950s. They caution us that not all research results
have resulted in effective teaching practices. "It is on the basis of extensive, if imperfect, research that practitioners can proceed with due caution to specify desirable teaching practices and utilize carefully detailed descriptions of such practices for teacher selection..." (Harris & Monk, 1992, p. 72).

Principals in this study have seen teacher practices come and go with reform initiatives. Most of what these principals look for now is a match between teacher philosophy and the current school philosophy. Principals in this study identified areas of teacher qualities that reflected their needs and concerns. A list of the teacher qualities identified by principals can be found in the Data Codes in Appendix C.

Sara's comments below reflect the typical thoughts of the research study principals as they try to describe a basic quality in a teacher applicant, having similar philosophies. For this principal it was important that everyone on the interview team agree on what qualities they were looking for in a teacher.

I like the fact that they're [the district] allowing buildings to put teams together and choose their own people because I think it's a better way to put your staff together. Because now you do have everyone on the same page, you have everyone working toward the same goals. (Sara, P6, Section 0, Paragraph 55)

Several categories of teacher qualities developed out of the discussion with principals regarding what qualities they look for in teachers. These categories are described below. Each category was not equally discussed by all principals. Only one category, Child-Centered,
was discussed by all 14 principals. Two categories, Knowledge of Teaching and Learning and Professionalism, were discussed by 13 of the 14 principals. The remaining categories had a range of 6 to 10 principals responding to a category. However, it is important to note that no attempt has been made to either determine the order of importance of any category or to display the categories in any order of importance.

Teamwork

Most principals (Mary, Whitney, Sara, Tim, Marvin, Abigail, Tyler, Walter, Aretha, and Ford) described teamwork as a teacher quality that they wanted to have evidence of in the interview. The concept of teamwork was described as an organizational structure, such as the grade-level as a team. and the whole-school as a team. A variety of organizational structures met individual school needs. For example, Tim structured teams in his school around grade level curriculum.

I had conducted quite a few interviews for the fifth grade position. We were switching this year to a teaming approach where instead of looking for a general curriculum fifth grade teacher, I needed someone who could teach Social Studies. (P8, Section 1. Paragraph 46)

A middle school principal, Ford, organized teams in a similar fashion around the curriculum, but felt that this organization schema was not typical of how most principals would organize teams.

When I say teamwork or being part of a team, we don’t have true teams here. What we have is one teacher from each content area on one team . . . We don’t have separate teams [such as a team of Math teachers]. They work together as a group; that’s how I refer to them, with the word team. (P14, Section 0, Paragraph 96)
More importantly, teamwork, teaming, team players, and other synonymous terms were used to describe the relational aspects of the organizational structure of team, such as working together as a team.

I was fairly comfortable with those folks because they had been accustomed to working together. The teaming concept was very prevalent among that group. It was not difficult for them to sit down and plan together. (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 253)

Nine of the principals (Mary, Whitney, Sara, Tim, Marvin, Abigail, Aretha, Ford and Walter) looked for teacher qualities that would indicate a willingness to work cooperatively. “I am also looking for someone that gets along with staff and will get along with me” (Whitney, P2, Section 0, Paragraph 17). Mary mentioned that she looks for:

someone who has a philosophy that’s compatible with that of the staff. . . . How well they will fit into current staff and work around here, and how they will complement the staff. (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraphs 10 and 38)

Sara not only looks for evidence of the teacher applicant’s philosophy to check to see if it is in line with her school philosophy, but she thinks that having the same philosophy will make the teacher successful.

The quality I look for is someone who is going to buy into our building philosophy and our goals. . . . So, I think having everyone on the same page and everyone believing in the same philosophy and working toward the same goals makes them successful here. . . . I really think that the team philosophy has a lot to do with it because that makes them feel like they’re not out there by themselves. That they can really go to so and so and get the help that they really need. (Sara, P6, Section 0, Paragraphs 10 and 42)
The ability to work with others seems to be especially critical to teamwork for these principals. Some principals in this study share the expectation that teacher behaviors should change from the traditional behaviors, of every teacher walking into his or her classroom, closing the door, not communicating with others, and teaching in an individualistic environment, to more team-oriented behavior. The term teamwork for these principals means that teachers will open their classrooms and share their ideas to improve the educational experience for students.

Abigail asks applicants to describe their classrooms looking for clues about teaming in the way that they respond. If teacher applicants comment that they like to work together and share ideas, this makes them more desirable to Abigail's school.

And sometimes just in the course of the interview people will say, “I like to share ideas or make ideas available.” Sometimes they even bring to the interview ideas to share. Oh good, here's somebody who likes to share things and I think that's part of working together. (P10, Section 0, Paragraph 36)

Tyler stresses the importance of being a team player over other teacher qualities because he has experienced higher levels of student success since implementing the team concept in his school. A priority, Tyler and his interview team look for evidence of collaborative interpersonal relationship skills when hiring new teachers. They feel that they can teach a new teacher model curriculums, proficiency, and the course of studies, but new teachers need to have good innate interpersonal relationship skills.
We are looking for that interpersonal relationship. Do they seem to connect with what our building is all about? Do they seem to connect with the staff that’s interviewing them? Are they open? Are they willing to be flexible in many ways? Or are they very rigid? Or are they very set in their ways?

There are some people that we’ve passed up that were very experienced people that probably could have walked in, and if we were just concerned about test scores, could have risen our test scores for that particular class and grade level immediately. My question is, what’s going to happen over 2-5 years? Are they going to be able to maintain that? My answer is probably no, because they have their own very focused way of doing it, which is probably wonderful and probably works very well, but what we look for is a team approach here... and a community approach. You can’t walk in your room, close your door, and be isolated from the other team classes that are on your grade level and the rest of the building.

(P11, Section 1, Paragraphs 42-43)

Ford describes another example of teaching being about teamwork that improves the educational experiences of children. He noted that as a principal of a middle school, there are many activities, such as an educational camp for sixth grade students, that requires a team approach, with team planning and team involvement with students.

So, when we are looking for someone, whether they can work with other people, and they are not just going to come in and shut the door and do their own thing. There are many different ways to deliver instruction, however that person sees fit, as long as its effective and accomplishing what we are set out to accomplish.

(P14, Section 0, Paragraphs 96-97)

The previous examples have described various ways that teams are being utilized, with the emphasis on teachers working with other teachers and staff. However, another component of the teamwork concept is the quality with which teachers work together such or the compatibility of the
faculty. Principals described teamwork as a relationship, such as in the manner in which teachers related to each other.

Six principals in this study (Whitney, Tim, Marvin, Tyler, Aretha and Ford), mentioned two phrases—fits in and gets along—to describe a preferred manner of faculty interaction. The examples below demonstrate differences in how principals describe these terms. Tim wants teachers to be able to “see others’ points of view” (P8, Section 2, Paragraph 127). While Tyler describes it as a “willingness to contribute to the school” (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 58), Whitney defines these terms as becoming a part of the school family, having pride and ownership in the school (P2, Section 0, Paragraph 33).

Marvin gives a clear example of the willingness and ownership that his interview team looks for in his statement that describes a teacher that does not fit in:

> When I say, fit in, being able to join into the social group.... usually there are six people on a team. They have team meetings.... We have a form that can better help communicate with parents... They have to sit down each week... [and] they have to discuss lesson plans. They have to discuss who is giving tests[and] when. They have to discuss when they fill out the sheet, what goes home. ... We had one lady who really didn’t want to do this. She didn’t want to be involved... and it brings out a lot of tension on the team. Those are the kind of things we look for. Can they fit in? Can they be a positive participant? (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 45)

Having an open classroom and accepting visitors into the classroom is important to Aretha. She designs the interview questions to identify these teamwork traits in teacher applicants. Specific responses from
interviewees help to identify teacher applicants that would or would not be compatible with Aretha's school faculty.

Well, "Do you like volunteers in your classroom?" Those types of questions. If they say, "No, they can come in and take the kids out." That's not what we want because we have students from Otterbein. We have students from Ohio State. We have parents... We have students from Northland High School, the teaching academy, coming into our building and if you don't want anyone in your classroom, it's not going to work here... If you are not open to that type of visitation, then we look for someone else because it's going to be there. (PIO, Section 1, Paragraph 78-79)

An interesting example describes the importance of compatibility.

This middle school interview team had prior knowledge of a veteran teacher's excellent reputation in the community, which resulted in a positive bias towards the veteran teacher. However, in this example, teamwork and compatibility had a stronger influence than reputation.

Intern 14 had applied for this position. Another intern had applied for this position also. But also there was a very veteran teacher in the district that had applied from an elementary school and wanted to teach 6th grade language arts. So, Intern 14 had worked in the building and even though Intern 14's cooperating teacher was part of the interview team, I respect her enough that I didn't think it would cloud her judgment as to who the best candidate would be. So we get to the final interview and not to take anything away from Intern 14 but this veteran teacher, outstanding reputation, was part of one of our feeder elementary schools, I just was so excited that she had applied. I figured that it would be no contest whatsoever. A lot of people did too. However, when this person got to the final round of the interviews, there were some answers to some questions... that indicated that... this person would not be a true team player. She had her own way of doing things, which is not bad, but perhaps would come across as too strong. Too strong willed from their own standpoint, the team... These teachers have to work with this individual. And if it's going to make any impact on the learning that happens for students they need to be comfortable with that individual... You can tell whether or not it's going to be a fit. (Ford, P14, Section 0, Paragraphs 75-76)
As described in the previous examples, the teamwork concept as a teacher quality was important to the principals in this study, in the selection of teachers and concurrently to the strategic implementation of their school vision. The principals described incidences where they and their interview teams did not offer a teaching position unless the teacher applicant demonstrated the ability to be a team player. These principals clearly considered teamwork as a necessary teacher quality.

Child-centered

Child-centeredness emerged as a category that also is an important teacher quality to the principals in this study. Many principals (Mary, Whitney, Desmond, Lydia, Sara, Eleanor, Tim, Marvin, Abigail, Tyler, Aretha, and Ford) used the term, child-centered, in their responses. I asked each principal to define child-centered. Their definitions indicate a variety of contexts where they understood child centeredness to occur.

Most principals (Mary, Whitney, Jon, Desmond, Lydia, Eleanor, Tim, Marvin, Abigail, Tyler, Walter, Aretha and Ford) describe child-centered in relationship terms such as a teacher that: cares, nurtures, is sensitive, serves, is friendly, listens, values, and inspires.

Desmond thinks that being a caring teacher is linked to student achievement.

The teacher’s ability to care is to give the student hope, is to never lose hope and so, that is one of the traits that I would like to see coming out of the teachers is the teacher’s ability to care for a
student... But, I think that has to be one of the overriding themes because if the teacher cares then we're going to find that the teacher has learned to utilize creative approaches to student achievement. (P4, Section 1, Paragraph 80)

Tim responds from the perspective of the students, stating “to be successful with the children, they [the children] just want the teacher that they feel cares about them” (P8, Section 2, Paragraph 100).

Some principals (Mary, Whitney, Jon, Tim, Tyler and Ford) have found child-centeredness a missing component in teacher qualities as they interview and hire new teachers. “It’s easy to say you care about kids. It’s easy to say that you want to teach kids and have them learn, but to really have that ability to go the extra mile is lacking in a lot of people now” (Jon, P3, Section 1, Paragraph 81).

Whitney and Tim discuss the differences between being a child-centered teacher and a non child-centered teacher. Whitney describes a teacher applicant as a non-child-centered teacher when it was evident that the applicant is only looking for a job and did not really like students.

You have to be careful because you may end up with someone who really doesn’t like children but knows that teaching is what they have been trained to do and they are just going to do that. (Whitney, P2, Section 0, Paragraph 17)

Tim looks for a person who is more concerned with children than a specific philosophy of teaching. He wants them to be able to balance many teaching approaches or philosophies depending on the child’s needs rather than be committed to a specific philosophy that may not apply to all children.
A balanced person, that believes in teaching children, not in teaching philosophy. Unfortunately, some of the candidates I talked to have been so grounded in philosophies that I think that they have almost lost track that we are here because of children. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 29)

Similarly, Mary, Jon, Desmond, and Lydia look for evidence that a teacher will personalize the learning process for individual students. Planning, teaching, student-driven activities, and learning revolve around each student. They want each child to be personalized in that the teacher feels responsible for student achievement for each child.

As an example, if the teacher is actually child-centered then I categorize that as personalizing the teaching. It becomes a situation in which the teacher realizes that I am responsible for the child. The child is my customer. I'm here to serve you. I'm not going to let you fail. Failure isn't an option.... So, those are the types of jargon that I would like for a teacher to utilize - child-centered, caring, concern, respect. (Desmond, P4, Section 1. Paragraph 92)

As described in the above examples, one aspect of a child-centered teacher is the ability to meet the needs of individual students and to place the needs of the students above anything else. However, Mary, Eleanor, Tyler and Aretha add a group component to this. They include active involvement by students as necessary in a child-centered classroom. Students are involved in the planning and interaction of learning activities. They participate in hands-on and cooperative learning activities. Mary described examples of a child-centered classroom:

Looking for, first of all, someone who is caring in relationship to children. If it’s a child-centered classroom, it’s one in which the students work is displayed. There is evidence that students have had input into what’s going on in the classroom. They have some
choices to make. There are opportunities for them to make lots of choices. The schedule is conducive to what students would be interested in doing. A pattern that would suit their needs and everything would not just be teacher-oriented as far as the operation of the classroom. The students are involved in the real development. The students are participating in their own evaluation. (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraphs 231-233)

Tyler indicated that child-centeredness is not only a teacher quality, but a core value in his school and one that influences the decisions made by the interview team.

It drives the hiring as well. Again we talk about student centeredness. We talk about a community of learners. That’s our vision. And within that vision are our core values and our goals. And one of the major core values is student centeredness, so again, that drives the questions that we develop. It drives the searching and screening that we look for. It drives the type of answers that we’re looking for in the candidates. It drives our final decision. It’s what keeps us back on task. (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 92)

Caring for children may not always be easy as Abigail explains. For her, child-centeredness is having the strength to continue teaching when you do not see positive results in children that come from impoverished environments.

I think they [teachers] must have flexibility and caring. I think they have to have... a strong, a high self-esteem because every day it’s very hard to [come back]. They have to be able to get up and face children every day and our children are challenging.... The scores are abysmal but yet you have to come in tomorrow and do it all over again for the child. And it’s a strain. It’s almost like an inner strength, “Yeah I can do it.” And somebody who is willing to celebrate a small increment. Gee, we went from [point] A to [point] B. let’s celebrate. I think a person has to be real strong but flexible. (P10, Section 0, Paragraph 93)

As we have seen in these examples, the concept of child-centeredness emerged out of the contexts of the individual schools.
Several principals (Mary Whitney, Sara, Eleanor, Tim, Martin, Tyler and Ford), who are in schools that are meeting (moderate to high) academic achievement standards for students, were certainly concerned with academic achievement as a baseline requirement for their schools’ success. However, child-centeredness seemed to be an added value for students, an enrichment of the student experience.

At the extreme, Abigail, who is in one of the lowest academic performing schools, perceived child-centeredness as an essential ingredient for students. Child-centeredness is what made teachers stay and continue to teach in spite of the difficulties working with impoverished students.

Knowledge of Teaching and Learning

Can this person teach? Will he be a successful teacher? Can she give me specific examples of a lesson plan? Does this person value academic achievement? How does this person assess academic performance? These are some of the guiding questions that interview teams in this study developed to determine teaching ability. The responses provided principals and their interview teams with evidence that a teacher applicant can facilitate academic success and understanding in students, can use a variety of pedagogical practices.

They wanted to know if a teacher applicant understood that the practice of teaching is not a simple “one size fits all” approach but is affected by many complex issues. Academic success in students is the
predominant measure of teaching ability and teaching success. Most of these principals discussed the kinds of evidence they looked for during the interview to evaluate the teaching and learning knowledge and skills of the applicants. They looked for pedagogical practices, learning styles, understanding of the complex issues impacting learning and academic success, and assessment and evaluation.

Tim, principal of a high performing suburban school, describes his sense of responsibility towards hiring good teachers because of the long-term impact they will have on the school.

There's really no way to predict that [teaching ability], but the teachers that I bring on board will be affecting the lives of children for 30 years. It is imperative that I make sure I find the best people, from the best candidates that are out there, to make an informed decision because the stakes are so high [academic success]. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 5)

Another principal of a high performing suburban school, Tyler, stresses the importance of hiring good teachers who have the teaching ability to facilitate academic success in students.

Well, the most important thing is . . . that they provide good sound instruction, students are learning, and learning at their highest levels. . . . There's a lot of ways that can be objectively measured and there's a lot of ways that can't be. One is certainly student achievement. We need to see students growing every year. We track all of our kids now. . . . At the very least we expect our students, their attained scores need to be higher than their anticipated scores. So obviously, if we see kids doing that in a particular classroom, we know that that teacher is successful in some area. (P11, Section 1, Paragraphs 58-61)

Mary looks for "knowledge about child development and learning. . . . Of course the most important one is to relate to children and develop a
curriculum that keeps the students engaged” (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 54).

Jon’s comments below seemed contradictory to some of the comments made in the previous section, concerning the importance of being child-centered: “Obviously teaching, they’ve got to be able to teach. You can have somebody come in that’ll be wonderful to kids, but they don’t know how to do the teaching aspect of it, you’re wasting your time” (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 89).

This statement stands in contrast to Whitney’s earlier statement in the “Child-Centered” section, that some people only do what they were trained to do in the classroom, which is teach, but cannot provide the important quality of being a child-centered teacher. Jon and Whitney’s statements seem to separate one teacher quality from the other, Child-Centeredness on one end versus Knowledge of Teaching and Learning on the opposite end of a spectrum. Another contrast, Lydia’s comments blend the two concepts because she believes both child-centeredness and academic success are equally important teacher qualities; one is integrated with the other to produce student success.

When I think of child-centered I think that you look at what the child needs to learn [academic success] and then you build around that with what you have to get done. But you do it in a way that it’s going to meet the children’s needs [child-centeredness]. So sometimes it has to be done differently for every child because they’re not all learning the same way. So really knowing your children and figuring out what they need to learn... You want to make sure that what you’re doing is developmentally and age-appropriate. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 175)
Tyler gave an example of the integration of good teaching and learning with child-centeredness. For Tyler, the component of assessment and evaluation needs to be present to facilitate academic success. The child-centeredness component is evident when the teacher knows the child and knows what teaching styles and activities facilitate that child's academic success.

We want to have some evidence of student learning obviously and how do they [teachers] know that students are learning the material? What are they trying to present to them? So, there needs to be some evidence of evaluation as well. Again, our (interview) questions are all tailored towards that. (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 42)

Three principals (Mary, Desmond, and Eleanor) expect teacher applicants to exhibit knowledge of the complexities of teaching and learning. Mary and Eleanor want to see depth and thoughtfulness in the responses of teacher applicants during the interview. They described the depth of a response as the ability to recognize the complexities of teaching and learning. Thoughtfulness was described as a teacher's ability to reflect on their practice, to be flexible, and to know when and how to change their practice for student success. Mary looked for teacher applicants' responses to be open ended and conditional, reflecting their sense of the complexities.

They give ideas but they let it be known that these are interpretations at that point, and these could change, giving room for flexibility as far as the ideas are concerned. I think that, seeing that it's not simple, not giving you very simple answers. (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 58)
Eleanor stated that a teacher demonstrates an understanding of the complexities in teaching and learning when their responses reflect several possible plans of action.

As they answer questions in the interview process, are they stopping after yes or no? Is there a pattern of giving short, non-descriptive answers? In their language, do they demonstrate a pattern of multiple levels of thinking all wrapped around the same question?

I would be looking for a multiple layered answer and an answer that reflects that they’ve given thought to the multiple of constituents that they served.... Looking for multiple perspective all centered around the question. And I think that teachers that can give multiple perspectives are the same teachers who can pull multiple perspectives out of a child, who will help children get to a deeper level in terms of their own academics. (P7, Section 1, Paragraphs 43-46)

Three principals (Whitney, Marvin and Abigail) discussed the negative impact and the difficulties they face with diverse students and how that impacts their hiring.

Marvin believed that student diversity in urban schools made student success more difficult to attain, and questions. “Can they [teacher applicants] work with urban children to the point where they are not afraid and they can function and do a good job so that we can get the maximum out of each child? (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 5). He looks for teachers who “would be . . . able to adapt to different learnings of different children and being able to come up with different learning styles to accommodate children (P9, Section 2, Paragraph 196).

Whitney is concerned with students who may have environmental and community problems such as drugs and poverty, that interfere with
their academic achievement. She felt that teacher interns do not receive enough instruction in this area and are not prepared to teach this population of children. She looked for teacher applicants to demonstrate that they can use a variety of teaching methods and be flexible when students are not learning (P2, Section 0, Paragraph 5).

Abigail, a principal in one of the lowest performing schools that has students from the lowest socio-economic environment in Columbus Public School District, discusses environmental influences that hinder the academic and social success of students.

*We are getting more and more children . . . that are coming to school with problems and they will not qualify for Special Education (resources). . . . There you start looking at learning styles. . . . I really think that the classroom teachers need to do, almost an IEP for each child, so that you can look at each child and say, ‘Okay, this is what the child can do. This is what they need to do. This is the way they learn best. How can I facilitate that?’* (P10, Section 1, Paragraph 284)

The principals in this study placed much emphasis on the knowledge of teaching and learning. They look for teacher applicants to not only understand the complexities of teaching and learning, but also, be able to apply appropriate, well thought out strategies to a myriad of complex teaching-learning situations.

**Commitment**

Commitment, the act of committing, pledging or engaging oneself, is a quality that all principals looked for in a teacher. Principals and interview teams ascertained the level of commitment that teachers had to
children and to education through responses to interview questions in such areas as: time, academic success, endurance, and hard work. A variety of principal comments in this category provides a range of examples and are displayed in the following list:

- Someone who indicates more than interest in just a job. (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 6)
- A willingness to self-evaluate, not give up when the going gets tough, keep being very persistent, in terms of getting the goals accomplished. (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 54)
- Just to know that it's going to be difficult, but, I'll overcome the obstacles. (Lydia, P5, Section 1, Paragraph 18)
- One would be endurance, especially working in an inner city. Just the ability when you have a bad day to come back the next day with a positive attitude. (Lydia, P5, Section 1, Paragraph 177)
- I'd look for teachers with a deep sense of commitment and compassion to the field of education, that truly grasp their role in the lives of children. (Eleanor, P7, Section 2, Paragraph 147)
- The people that spoke to having a commitment to working with children who were struggling, to make sure they learned the material, but also taking into account the needs of the children who may need more challenges. They spoke of the children as individuals not as a group. Those were the people that really struck me early on that would be good candidates. (Tim, P8, Section 1, Paragraph 29)
- We're looking for those people that are really going to make sure that these children meet the expectations and go beyond the expectations that we have for them. (Marvin, P9, Section 1, Paragraph 37)
- I also look for somebody who is flexible. Especially tolerance. And we make it very, very clear that we have a difficult population here and I always let them know right up front that we do have a difficult population and that if you are not prepared for inner city, very urban kids, then this may not be the place for you... We need somebody who is willing to go the extra distance. (Abigail, P10, Section 0, Paragraph 28)
- But we also look for a teacher that's willing to go above and beyond the normal work day. We have a school improvement plan and a school improvement team. So we are looking for a
teacher who'd have something to offer on those teams, those committees. We're looking for a teacher to be willing to take on added responsibilities with extra tutoring for kids during the day or after school. Be actively involved in some of our extra curricular activities that we have here as well. (Tyler, P11, Section 1, Paragraph 58)

Each of these statements reflects the principals' interest in hiring teachers who have a strong commitment to teaching.

Interpersonal Relationships

School teachers have numerous relationships to manage on a daily basis. They have the relationships with students, the principal, and other teachers that we have mentioned before. They have relationships with non-teaching staff personnel and community members. Another aspect that emerged from the principals in this study is the importance of relationships between teacher and parents. Eight principals (Mary, Jon, Lydia, Sara, Eleanor Tim, Marvin, and Tyler) discussed the importance of the teachers' ability to have a positive and constructive relationship with classroom parents.

Jon described the kind of relationship that he would look for in communicating with a specific ethnic group of parents.

The ability to relate to parents... Having worked on the West side with strong Appalachian parents over there, you deal with parents differently. They all have a right to be involved in education and they all want to be involved, but there is a different way of communicating with each of them... That's something I'm always looking for, the teacher's ability to be positive when talking to parents and be honest with them as well. You can't pull the wool over their eyes, they'll catch you right away. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 89)
Eleanor uses a teacher applicant’s portfolio to find evidence of the kinds of relationships that a teacher has had with parents and others.

I look for evidence in their portfolios. Do they have thank you letters from parents? Do they have pictures that children have drawn for them? Do they have any evidence that children will miss them now that they’re gone? The connections that they’ve made with children, with parents, with other staff members that they’ve done (in) their pre-service internships or student teaching or whatever. I think there is evidence. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 38)

I’d look for teachers who firmly embrace the concept of parent-teachers . . . that are willing to work with parents in terms of the education of their children. (P7, Section 2, Paragraph 147)

These principals mentioned parent communication as an important component of their schools and its success. They value the positive relationships between teachers and parents. Tim described the relationship behaviors that would be successful in his school:

To be successful with the parents in this school, happy children make happy parents, but, beyond that, good communication skills. Frequent communication skills. You need to show a commitment that you care about everyone’s son or daughter. They really need to feel that you are working for their child’s best interest or else they can really cause a lot of static and you would find it very difficult for an experienced teacher as well as a beginning teacher. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 98)

Therefore, the ability of a teacher to have good relationships with their students’ parents is an important aspect in the hiring procedures. Principals looked for evidence as demonstrated above that a teacher applicant can and has had the experience of positive and respectful relationships with parents.
Portfolios

Some teacher applicants present portfolios when they come to the interview session. The portfolio usually contains varied samples of the teacher’s work with children. Applicants and interview teams find that it is a way to demonstrate behaviors and skills. Five principals (Mary, Lydia, Sara, Eleanor, and Tim) discussed how they utilized the portfolio in the hiring process. Tim has an example of using the portfolio to find information about the applicant that probably would not have been evident in the interview.

The teacher candidates for the most part are bringing in portfolios and I try to make an effort to look through the portfolios and just dialog with them. You can really learn a lot about them as a person from the experiences they share. Some candidates focus more on the mechanics of how they do lesson plans; others really focus on their experiences with children, and how much success and happiness they’ve felt with their children which makes them successful with the lesson plans they’ve developed. You learn a bit that way too. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 13)

Sometimes going through the portfolio is an aid to me. By going through the portfolios, with them they start to give not so much a polished side of themselves. You can get into a dialog with them. You can start to discern, I want to find out if they had discipline problems with a child. I want to find out that if a parent critiqued them, how they dealt with that. I want to find out if their cooperating teacher put them in a position of teaching to a philosophy different than their own. These are the things that when I go through the portfolio, I’m really looking for. When I look at a picture of a child working on a project, I go “well, how did he respond?” I try to find out these things and learn how they deal with these situations because those are common things that happen....

It’s really through the portfolio process I kind of learn what sort of difficulties that they’ve had. If you ask them directly as a question, you get these pat answers, such as, “What are some of your shortcomings?” “Well I’m so dedicated to my work, and I work so hard people tell me you need to back off.” I’m not getting anywhere with that. But through the portfolio, most of them start
to, you can see the wheels turning, and they start to share. It works to their disadvantage at times.

I interviewed one candidate who had been in a long-term sub position. In the course of [discussing] her portfolio, we really started to get into the fact that the parents were being extremely critical of how she taught and that 2 or 3 of them came in one day. She got so hung up on these parents personalities, and how they were wrong, that I immediately knew this is how she is going to deal with it, not look at it from the perspective of a parent whose child is the most important thing in the world to them. This is an interview, and she is saying, “Maybe if the children at home were reading more and playing less Nintendo, the kids wouldn’t be having a problem with school.”

I got to that point of honesty with her, where I realized that this is not the candidate I want. I was just amazed that she said this to me. But I realized, we were just whipping through these things and we weren’t making eye contact. We were looking at these pictures and I was starting to get some information from her that made me realize, boy, on paper she looked great but in talking to her and [knowing] this community [his school community] with this viewpoint towards mom’s and dad’s. It’s not going to fly. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 109)

The principals in this study noted that portfolios have been presented as a part of the interview process more frequently in recent years. They felt that portfolios provided evidence not only to confirm teacher applicant responses, but also, in some cases, to disconfirm interview responses as in Tim’s example above. To these five principals, portfolios increased the knowledge gained about the teacher applicant in the hiring process, and, therefore, assisted the decision-making process.

Knowledge of Curriculum

Eight principals (Mary, Sara, Eleanor, Marvin, Abigail, Tyler, Aretha, and Ford) mentioned knowledge of the curriculum as being one of the top five teacher qualities but did not elaborate on their responses. It is
interesting to note, that, although knowledge of curriculum was an important issue, none of the principals discussed the concepts beyond descriptive phrases. These phrases included: 1) to have content knowledge, 2) a broad base of knowledge, 3) to be knowledgeable about the academics that they will be teaching, and 4) to know their subject area.

Professionalism

The category of professionalism included a plethora of personal attributes. There are ten aspects principals indicated that they wanted to find in new teachers. These are described in a table that points out the personal attributes mentioned by each principal.
Table 3: Influences that Affect Principals’ Hiring Teachers

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<td>Energetic Personality</td>
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Saphier and Gower (1997) capture the essence of the principals in a statement of their beliefs on the importance of teacher qualities, reflect the emphasis that the principals in this study conveyed in the interviews.
We believe that many things are important for good schools: curriculum is important; parent involvement is important; having a clean, safe building is important. But of all the things that are important to having good schools, nothing is as important as the teacher and what that person knows, believes, and can do. That is where the rubber meets the road in our business. Everything, literally everything, else we do is in service of empowering that relationship and what can happen in the learning environment teachers create for students with the resources they have.

We believe that a teacher's skill makes a difference in student performance, not only in achievement scores on tests (as important as that might be), but in student’s sense of fulfillment in school and their feelings of well-being. We do not mean to imply that being skillful substitutes for other human qualities; but we will argue that, whatever else teachers do, they perform in the classroom and their actions set the stage for student's experiences. (p. v)

Dynamic 2. Challenges

It might appear that identifying the qualities that principals and their interview teams want in a teacher and matching the needs and vision of their school would be a simple process. Unfortunately, we know from organizational and industrial psychologists that the hiring process is fraught with rigorous, complex, and sometimes contradictory elements (Arvey & Faley, 1992; Dipboye, 1992; Heneman & Heneman, 1994). Educational administrators in this study find this to be the case also. In the following passages, principals describe their challenges and difficulties in the hiring process.

One challenge that emerged from the data was related to authenticity. Are the candidates faking it? Are they sincere? What are they really like? Most principals (Mary, Jon, Desmond, Sara, Eleanor, Marvin, Abigail, Tyler, and Ford) feel that it is difficult to determine if
the teacher that they hire is the same as the teacher that they get. Ford uses intuition to see if a teacher applicant is sincere.

Trying to match up what you see on paper. We all know that someone can answer questions. They can tell you what you want to hear... But something inside you has to tell you whether you can see through that. (P14, Section 0, Paragraph 117)

The next four examples (Eleanor, Mary, Marvin, and Jon) discussed the dilemma of hiring a teacher applicant who then demonstrated teaching behaviors in the position that were different from what was expected based on the interview. It was difficult, if not impossible, to determine if a teacher applicant’s interview behaviors and responses would be congruent with future teacher behaviors. It was distressing to find out after the applicant had been hired that they were not what they seemed. This creates stress and anxiety on the principals in the hiring process. They want to avoid the dilemma of hiring a teacher and not getting what they expected.

Eleanor worries that she may miss important clues that would benefit the decision-making process and help her make good decisions about teacher applicants.

Well there’s always a worry that teachers will present in the interview situation and then perform differently in the employment situation. And there have been a couple of times when I, the whole committee, has just really missed. We’ve identified a candidate, hired the person, and then, when they come in they’re totally opposite than what they presented in the interview. There’s all this self-reflection and doubt. What did I miss? Why didn’t I see that? So there’s always that anxiety. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 56)
Mary looked for signs from the applicant during the interview that not only demonstrated the desired teacher qualities, but also demonstrated evidence if the teacher applicant was not being authentic.

And some kind of sign that’s kind of subtle, that’s not always obvious. Looking for the more subtle kinds of evidence of caring and creativity, and looking beyond what they are telling me to see. Try to determine are they answering the question the way they felt it should be or the way they truly think it is. (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 70)

Seeing behind that facade to determine how much of it is natural, real, honest, and how much of it is trying to get the correct answer. (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 86)

Marvin finds that it makes the situation for the principal, the applicant, and the school difficult when they have not hired the kind of person they thought they did.

For me, the most challenging part is to get a person and they are just the opposite of what you expected. Then, how do you go about changing that person? If you have to let that person go, that’s difficult because you have selected that person and I think most people don’t want to admit a time that you selected the wrong person. That’s the most, to me, difficult situation, is admitting that maybe you didn’t make the right choice. Then being able to go about getting that person to rethink and go to another school, or to buy-in . . . It’s hard to correct in most situations. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 65)

With the checks and balances, the guidelines, the regulations, and the studies regarding the hiring process, there is still the difficult question of knowing or not knowing, who you are hiring. Most principals and interview teams in the study struggled with this question.

In the next three examples, principals (Abigail, Lydia, and Tyler) describe another challenge they have finding good candidates. In these
examples, the concept of good is not explicitly defined, but it can be interpreted by situating it in the context of each principal's individual school needs and vision.

Abigail is from an inner city school with students that have low academic scores, poverty level socio-economic environments, and stereotypically, difficult behavioral problems. She describes the challenge of finding teachers that want to teach in an urban school.

I think finding good people to interview. . . . I think a lot of people know they don't want to come here because . . . why would you want to come to this school. It's on the line because their [our] test scores are low. If you're at a school that's doing well, you can get a $500 bonus. . . . And people look at our population, where . . . they [the students] come from. . . . I think a lot of people back off. Some people who might even be good have that fear. . . . So it really pulls us down. (Abigail, P10, Section 0, Paragraph 103)

Another principal, Lydia, also thinks that low performing urban schools have difficulty finding good quality teacher applicants.

There would probably be a lot more applicants. I think schools that have those reputations as being high achieving and high supportive probably draw some really good applicants and so you'd have more choice probably.

Sometimes I think we interview people who Columbus is their last resort. They would rather be in a suburban school but they know that Columbus is so big, so there's a lot more chances for a job. . . . But you just never know in an interview if it's really what that person wants or if they're using it as a backup. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 68-70)

An interesting contrast to these urban principals is a principal from a high performing suburban school who described a similar concern. Tyler noted that in recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to find quality teachers.
We don’t have the quality candidate, the numbers out there, that we used to have. I could interview 10-12 teachers with my team and probably get 4-5 very, very good people that would work in different capacities and would work out. Now, if you interview 10-12, I think you are really fortunate if you find one good person. We’re having to do much deeper screening, much, much deeper searching than we’ve ever had to do before. . . . The last 2-3 years we’ve had a more difficult time finding a good candidate. (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 87)

Two principals, Abigail and Tyler, in the previous examples also report that, in addition to having the challenge of finding good candidates, having more than one good candidate for the same position is another kind of challenge.

Sometimes I think the most difficult part is making the decision because say you have two people that you really like I think it’s really hard to come right down to it and say okay, which one will best fit. (Abigail, P10, Section 0, Paragraph 111)

In two self-reflective responses, two principals (Mary and Jon) discuss the challenge of “asking the right questions [and] knowing exactly the questions to ask to get the kind of answers you want” (Mary, P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 90). In response to a similar question, Jon wonders about the criteria on which they had based their hiring decisions.

I’m guessing that while we had talked about what we were looking for as far as their experience and their techniques in teaching, was that really the topic that came down to making the selection? (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 69)

Principals in this study spoke contemplatively of the challenges or issues that make the selection of teachers difficult. These issues included: questioning if the teacher applicant was authentic; hiring and getting what you expect; finding good candidates; having more than one
good candidate for one position; and questioning their own interviewing
techniques. The comments seemed to come from a sincere desire to make
the very best decisions because they wanted the school experiences of
children to be the very best.

Dynamic 3. Tacit Knowledge

People know more than they can tell. Personal knowledge is so
thoroughly grounded in experience that it cannot be expressed in its
fullness. In the last 30 years, the term tacit knowledge has come to
stand for this type of human knowledge—knowledge that is bound
up in the activity and effort that produced it. (Horvath. 1999. p. ix)

Some principals in this study (Ford, Abigail, Marvin, Tim,
Desmond and Jon) described this kind of tacit knowledge or sense of
knowing that they used when hiring teachers. Jon and Tim describe it as a
gut feeling. Jon wants the more objective approach using the rubric but
returns to the subjective approach using his gut level feeling to make
hiring decisions.

As much as you want to look at the rubric as being something that
takes the guess work out of it, the gut level feeling out of it, I think
it comes back to the gut level feeling when you hire somebody. (P3,
Section 1, Paragraph 68)

Tim similarly remarks that he uses his gut feeling to help him
identify the teacher that he wants for the position.

The fourth grade position, after the first four hours, there wasn’t
anyone that just struck me as being the right person. It was almost
a gut feeling. I wish I had something more specific but after
talking to all of them, [no one] struck me as someone that was
going to come in here and be successful as I truly hoped. (P8,
Section 1, Paragraph 37)
These comments seem to portray a lack of confidence or trust in the gut feelings, although they both seem to rely on them. Both of these principals have relatively few years in this position. This can be contrasted to Marvin’s remarks who is a principal that is scheduled to retire this year with many years in this position. Marvin seems to trust and rely on his experience.

I think some of it, you have to use your past experiences, and rely on some of those past experiences. . . . Some times, I think that just the experiences of the principal, sometimes the experiences of the teacher helps that whole process because you have to be aware. And if people want a job, I think that they say things that they will do things, that they really won’t do. It’s a lot that has to do with experience. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 32)

I think just by the responses…. I think that there is an experience that you gain from being able to interview and having the opportunity to interview for a number of times. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 61)

Described as a sense, or a gut feeling, or past experience. these principals used their tacit knowledge to guide them in the hiring process to find the best teacher. Tacit knowledge seemed to be individually understood without being verbally expressed. It is their implied way of knowing. Some principals also talked explicitly about collecting evidence that additionally influenced their decisions.

Dynamic 4. District Pressures.

Academic performance, student success, and proficiency are terms that have echoed through the halls of educational reform for more than 30 years. In Ohio “the educational reform agenda is clear. The State Board, the Department, and the Legislature call for higher expectations for all
students; continuous improvement for districts; increased accountability; and better results” (2000, p. 1). This resulted in the creation of a mandated statewide proficiency test with which districts, schools, principals, teachers and students are compared and evaluated. Nine principals (Whitney, Jon, Lydia, Eleanor, Tim, Marvin, Abigail, Aretha, and Ford) discussed the impact that the proficiency test scores have had on them and their hiring procedures.

Some principals (Whitney, Eleanor, Tim, Marvin, and Ford) report that the emphasis to raise test scores does not have a stressful impact on them or their school.

Ford, a principal in a high socio-economic school environment, does not feel pressure from the proficiency test situation. He trusts the learning environment in his school and looks for continuous improvement. It has not affected his hiring in any way.

I’m a believer that if our courses of study are well written, which they are, and they correlate with the state model, that if we teach what we are supposed to teach, then we will be fine. And I am also looking for other things and ways to deliver instruction that will capture attention. . . . So, I try not to attach anything with proficiency. They take tests on one day of a student’s life. As long as we are showing continuous improvement then I know that we will make a difference. (P14, Section 0, Paragraphs 104-107)

Tim, another principal in a high socio-economic school environment, recognizes the high degree of importance that parents of children in his school community place on statewide test scores and wants
a new teacher who can balance the pressures of the testing environment with good teaching, learning, and child-centeredness.

You obviously have to have the child centered people, but I have to have child centered people that accept the fact that being frustrated about the Ohio fourth grade proficiency test is not going to make it go away. You need people who accept the fact that the test is here, that it’s based on the Ohio model curriculum, which our own local grade courses of study are based upon, so therefore, we are not teaching to the test, but this is the test that is consistent with our curriculum. We are educating the children as we should. It’s just that in this year we have an examination that they need to take. I need people that have that frame of mind but aren’t going to be so discouraged or feel so put-upon by the fourth grade proficiency, that the children are going to be hurt in the process. I also need someone that is not so driven by proficiency, proficiency, proficiency, that they become a mind numbing factoid teacher. The fourth grade positions are hard to fill. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 54)

Eleanor feels that it’s her responsibility to see that every child learns and that no child is left out. Therefore, she feels that the emphasis on testing is more of a challenge than a pressure.

I don’t know if it’s a pressure or an obligation. I feel that it’s my role to facilitate a program in which children grow academically. Because that’s the sole mission of a school in society is to help children learn. I feel very obligated to create a system in which children learn and all children learn. I feel very strongly about equity and access and that we leave no child behind. There’s a lot of external pressure on test scores in the state of Ohio with proficiency testing and I feel that to some extent and having been a principal of a high performing school I probably feel that less as a pressure and more as a challenge. If we were a low performing school I probably would feel more pressured by that. Those pressures, those obligations impact the hiring process. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 54)

Whitney, principal in a high performing school, uses the Columbus Public School District emphasis on raising test scores as a hiring strategy.
Not only does she want some of the teacher qualities discussed earlier in Part II, but she also wants teachers to be able to read and interpret data.

Our superintendent is not settling for anything except the best and she wants results from all of us, all the people she employs. I have not felt very many pressures other than the pressures of making sure that we do raise test scores. I think that's all over this country. The things I look for because of the demands and the politics are people who can interpret data, who are diagnosticians, who know how to prescribe instruction to children who are really [needy]...

When we are asking questions in the interview, we do ask questions specific to proficiency tests. How much they know about that. We ask them about how they would use a course of study, because I know some of them come from districts or areas [where] they don't necessarily use a course of study. We ask questions about any type of testing they have ever given. How, as student teacher, maybe their students performed as a result of their teaching or impact that they have made. If it is a seasoned teacher, then I'm always interested in talking to the former principal. Usually, I don't do that unless it is someone coming into a grade that is critical. Our third grade scores and our fourth grade scores are very important here. I have taken the opportunity to call and we do try to look for more seasoned people for grades three and four. (P2. Section 0. Paragraph 41)

Marvin, a principal retiring this year, recognized that the proficiency test situation was going to bring a lot of pressure to principals and schools, therefore, he prepared years ago. He restructured the academic program at his school and was rewarded with “Exemplary” status in Columbus Public Schools this year. Exemplary status is the highest category given in a recognition program for outstanding schools in Columbus Public Schools. However, with this foresight and preparing his school to meet exemplary standards, he noted that he also has had to change his hiring strategies over the years.
I think you become more sophisticated in terms of what you’re looking for. I think when I was a young administrator and I think this is true in the district we almost accepted anyone and we accepted them from the standpoint that there were so many kids and we needed teachers right away and now I think we look for quality instead of quantity and that quality has to be that they’re able to work in this situation. Able to accommodate kids. Able to get results from kids and those are things that we never really took a real close look at it. Now it’s becoming more defined in terms of if you can’t get results and you can’t meet the expectations of the district’s test scores and so forth then you may be out the door. That’s a harsh way to put it but those are the realities of the day. I think as administrator you become attuned to that. You become attuned to the fact that you’ve got to get people that are going to be able to get results from children. (P9, Section 2, Paragraph 198)

Another principal, Aretha, uses the emphasis on proficiency tests and student success as an informational tool that guides her hiring of teachers and states that the pressure is a good pressure because it makes schools accountable. “Well, we do have pressures, but I think it’s a good pressure. We have to be accountable” (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 83).

There were three principals (Jon, Lydia, and Abigail) who feel pressure from the testing environment in Columbus Public Schools. Jon and his interview team made a decision to hire only teachers with teaching experience and not new graduates coming out of teacher education programs because they felt that the experienced teachers would have a positive impact on raising test scores.

This past year I had a real concern about the experience of the teachers. I had to make a conscious decision along with our interview team that probably this past year, we were going to look at more experienced teachers rather than newly graduated teachers. That was in an effort to help with proficiency tests and parent expectations of our students with enrichment. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 6)
Lydia and Abigail comment that the pressures in the district regarding the proficiency test scores and student success are personal threats to them as principals and also to teachers in low performing schools. Lydia, faced with a low performing school, felt that hiring teachers that had different backgrounds other than education would provide the new teacher with strengths that are needed to work with students from low socio-economic environments to raise test scores.

We just really try and look for people who are going to be strong enough to make it through. Like I said having a lot of different backgrounds so they had stuff to pull from. Sometimes having a background in private industry makes them stronger. Just various backgrounds that people can pull from when things get tough. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 112)

Lydia also feels that the Columbus Public Schools emphasis on test scores has the effect of discouraging good teachers from teaching in Columbus or from teaching at all.

As an administrator if your scores aren’t improving in two years they say they can fire you. Which we’re saying try it, because you aren’t going to have enough administrators... These schools are low performing and they’re making improvements but they may not be making improvements that they’re telling us we have to make. Our school made a lot of improvement last year. So I’m worried this year - what if we don’t make the same 10% improvement. What if we stay the same? Are we going to be labeled low? They’re labeling schools. Labeling teachers and students, trying to scare people. I think that only works - either your new teachers are going to say forget it, I’m a good teacher and I’m not going to be told I’m a bad teacher and they’ll go somewhere else or they may be disenchanted with the whole profession which I hope that’s not the case and trying something else. I think it’s crucial for new teachers to be pumped up and feel good about what they’re doing and that isn’t always happening. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 110)
Abigail, also in a low performing school echoes the same concerns about keeping new teachers.

We've been told flat out if we don't show a 2.5% improvement over two years, like for each year for two years, we're gone. They haven't gotten down to teachers but I would say they will not be welcomed back and that is a lot of pressure. (P10, Section 0. Paragraph 95)

In addition to raising test scores, Columbus Public Schools has another issue, hiring minority teachers, that creates another challenge that three principals (Aretha, Lydia and Jon) discuss. The school district encourages each school to have a ratio of minority and non-minority teachers similar to its student population. Principals find it difficult to find minority applicants or to identify minority applicants from the resumes because of the fairness and legal issues prohibiting this information from being on applications. Although, this information is used to make unfair hiring decisions. it also hinders affirmative action hiring.

Aretha hires minority teachers based on the needs of her school. Well, you know, we have to take into consideration our needs here at school with the population that we have. Last year we had some very good applicants that we would have interviewed, but we had all females on our staff. We had to take into consideration how boys need role models. So I was looking for a male last year. We were able to hire one white male. Now, I am looking for a black male. We don’t have a black male on our staff. So this year if an opening occurs, I will be looking for a black male. I'm not just looking for any black male; I want a qualified, mature black male. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 44)
Jon also describes the difficulty in identifying minority teacher applicants.

One of the concerns was minority hiring. We had a staff of 10 at the time, to be expanded to 11½ with one Black. The district looks at Black and Non-Black, not minority and white. We had an Indian on the staff. She was considered as Non-Black which doesn’t count. We had one. The district suggests 2-4 for the building. A lot of our looking at candidates was trying to find minority candidates so that we could be in compliance in the district. We came up with some candidates. We looked through records and while you can’t specifically ask if somebody is a minority or not, you look at affiliations, groups they’ve been with, to try to find out if there is anything that would lead you to that. That was a very frustrating experience, it’s hard to find minorities out there. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 40)

Lydia describes the same difficulties in identifying minority teacher applicants but stresses the desire to hire them because she feels that they would benefit her school environment.

Sometimes we can tell [if the teacher applicant is a minority] like where they went to school. If they went to a certain college, an African-American college or if they belong to a certain group or if they attended a conference you can kind of get an idea... But when we have them come in, we’re always glad if we can hire somebody that will add some dimension. . . . because I think they have a different perspective of being raised in America. I think that’s good for our kids and there’s a lot of our parents that are minority parents who are looking for that. They want their child to have a teacher that is of the same color. That’s a plus for them. They feel like their kids are getting an extra bonus in the classroom. I think it’s good for some of our kids. We have a lot of kids that come from racist families and it’s good for them to have a teacher that is African American. They see that they are a professional. The majority [of students in] . . . our building is white Appalachian. So, there’s a lot of prejudice that is in the neighborhood. It benefits both [ethnic groups] of our students. (P5, Section 1, Paragraphs 22-34)
A plethora of information from researchers, advisors, and guidelines inform principals related to the hiring process. They help principals to use fair and legal procedures when hiring teachers: Part I in this chapter described how principals attempt to create procedures to use in hiring teacher applicants. Principals tried to identify teacher applicants that will fulfill the criteria needed to make their schools successful: Part II in this chapter discussed the influences that affect the hiring decisions of principals and interview teams. And yet, with all these mechanisms in place, hiring teachers for the principals in this study, remains a complex and uncertain decision-making process.

Part III of this chapter will add to the information shared so far by considering another phenomena influencing this complex hiring process, the introduction of Professional Development Schools.

Part III. Knowledge of or Experience with Teacher Education Programs Influencing the Hiring of Teachers from a Specific Teacher Education Program.

Teacher education programs have received much attention since "A Nation At Risk" (1983) and the Holmes Report (Holmes Group, 1990). The result of the conversations and reform initiatives that followed these reports and proposals has led to widespread systemic changes in the preparation of our country's teachers.

One of the major changes from the Holmes Report (Holmes Group, 1990) is the creation and development of Professional Development
Schools (PDS) programs for teacher education. Thirteen PDSs were developed at The Ohio State University, one of which was the Educators for Collaborative Change (ECC).

The purpose of a PDS is to establish strong collaborative contexts between schools and/or the cooperating teachers so that student teachers do their field and student teaching in context where theory and practice are well integrated. The development of PDSs is beginning to have an influence on principals' perspectives in the hiring process demonstrated by principal responses in this study. In Part III the focus is on what perceptions principals in this study have of a specific teacher education program, the Educators for Collaborative Change, Professional Development School Program, (ECC/PDS), and if these perceptions have any impact on their hiring decisions. To distinguish between newly graduated and experienced teachers from the ECC/PDS program, those who graduated in August 1999 will be identified as “ECC/PDS interns”, and those who graduated from the program and taught for a year or more, will be identified as “ECC/PDS teachers”.

The data in Part III is presented by placing the study principals into five groups based on their knowledge and experience with this teacher education program, Educators for Collaborative Change (ECC/PDS). Information for each group has three criteria:

1) Principal’s knowledge of program
   a. No knowledge of the ECC/PDS program

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b. Some knowledge of the ECC/PDS program  
c. Understanding of the ECC/PDS program  

2) ECC/PDS interns(s) in the school  
   a. Having ECC/PDS intern(s) in the principal’s school  
   b. Not having ECC/PDS intern(s) in the principal’s school  

3) ECC/PDS intern(s) interviewing with principal and interview team  
   a. Principal and interview team interviewed an ECC/PDS intern  
   b. Principal and interview team did not interview an ECC/PDS intern  

Each group is identified in Table 4 below:  

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<th>Group #</th>
<th>Knowledge of ECC/PDS</th>
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<th>Intern Interviewed</th>
<th>Principals in Group</th>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Desmond</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Whitney, Sara, Tim, Marvin, &amp; Abigail</td>
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<td>Mary, Jon, Lydia, &amp; Aretha</td>
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<td>Understood</td>
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<td>Eleanor, Tyler, &amp; Ford</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Deep Understanding</td>
<td>Intern(s)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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Table 4: Principals groups based on knowledge of and/or experience with ECC/PDS
Desmond, in Group 1 is the only principal with no knowledge of or experience with ECC/PDS. Desmond obtained the principal position at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year having arrived from a northern district in Ohio. The former principal, who had interviewed the ECC/PDS intern was no longer available for this study. However, Desmond was interested and knowledgeable about professional development school programs generally and agreed to be interviewed. There will be no data to report from Desmond in Group 1 in this section.

Data will be presented in order of the groups, from least knowledge of and/or experience with ECC/PDS to the most knowledge of and/or experience with ECC/PDS. As principals discuss the specific interns interviewed at their schools, each intern will be identified as Intern (1. ... 14) with the number corresponding to the principal's identification. For example, Mary, whose identification is P1, interviewed Intern 1.

**Group 2**

Group 2 is made up of five principals, Whitney, Sara, Tim, Marvin and Abigail. This group had no knowledge of or experience with the ECC/PDS program nor did they have experience with having an ECC/PDS intern in the building prior to interviewing one of the ECC/PDS interns for a teaching position in their respective schools.

While these principals had no knowledge of ECC/PDS, four ECC/PDS interns were subsequently employed in their buildings.
Whitney and Sara and their interview teams decided not to extend an offer of employment to two ECC/PDS who interviewed in their schools. Whitney did not remember the interview with Intern 2 or any characteristics about her. However, Whitney did express that a teacher applicant had to be impressive to the interview team to be invited in for an interview. Sara remembered that Intern 6 interviewed very well when she said, “I do remember making the comment that she interviewed very well for a first year applicant and being green to the profession (P6. Section 0, Paragraph 99).

The three remaining principals in Group 2 (Tim, Marvin, and Abigail) have ECC/PDS interns and ECC/PDS teachers as members of their teaching staff. Each principal was impressed with the teaching skills and performance of the ECC/PDS interns; however, none attribute this to the ECC/PDS program. Abigail obtained Intern 10 when she was transferred to her school because of a staff reduction in another school. Therefore, Abigail did not have an opportunity to interview or extend an offer to Intern 10, but she has observed her performance on staff during the 1998-1999 school year.

Marvin was impressed with Intern 9 before she was interviewed because she introduced herself to him and the staff in an effort to gather information about the position before the interview.

We have to be impressed with a person who is willing to take time to come in and spend some time to learn some things about the school before she even got here. Then in her interview process, she
interviewed real well in terms of going above and beyond what we expected. (P9, Section 1, Paragraph 120)

Marvin explains that Intern 9 has some teacher qualities that impressed him, such as good communication skills and getting along with staff members. However, Marvin does not know if these are personal traits or traits that she gained in the ECC/PDS program.

Tim did not have an interview team in place at the time of the interviews with three ECC/PDS interns (Intern 8a, Intern 8b, and Intern 8c). There were two positions to be filled and Tim hired Intern 8a and 8b. He interviewed these ECC/PDS interns because he saw from their applications that they had “rich life experiences” and they were “high achievers”. (He also was so impressed with Intern 8c that he recommended her to a colleague and consequently, she was hired at the colleagues’ school, but this discussion is limited to Intern 8a and Intern 8b.)

Having interviewed the ECC/PDS interns without an interview team, Tim spent more time with each intern than typically happens with interview teams. This afforded him a more personal and conversational type interview from which he gleaned information about the ECC/PDS program.

He observed a commonality between the two ECC/PDS interns that he described as being different in his opinion from other teacher education programs. He was impressed with their respective research projects that they did to complete their Master’s degree. Tim regards
these research and writing skills as valuable assets not only to the teachers but to the students' education as well.

We don't see that much from the undergraduate programs. Anything you can do to increase the rigor and take them through that process, I think is only going to be advantageous. I think it does show a certain amount of work ethic, and dedication to do that, that I really didn't see... in an undergraduate program other than having to put together a detailed portfolio. I didn't see that dedication to research from the undergraduate programs... I really was impressed in all three interviews to listen to these three people to be able to talk about the research. They seemed to be very engaged by it and very excited by it. I think that's neat. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 77)

Tim observed a common trait, a high maturity level, between the ECC/PDS interns that makes him wonder if it is attributed to the ECC/PDS program or to older students and richer experiences in general.

They all had a certain level of maturity that some of the other candidates that I talked to did not, or had more confidence that they could just come right in and be successful. I don't know that if generally, the graduates that are coming out of the OSU program are a little bit older or that they are going into the program with different backgrounds than the 4 year undergrads. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 73)

The ECC/PDS interns were impressive in the interview, received an offer of employment, continue to be impressive, and are moving along a successful track in teaching according to Tim.

That's why I was so excited about both of them coming on board.... But these two in particular have just wonderful backgrounds that lend themselves to coming in and doing a wonderful job with the students here. But in terms of understanding teaching and learning, they both seem to have a great grasp on that in the three weeks that I've watched them. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 89)
Like Marvin, Tim does not attribute personal qualities or the philosophies of the ECC/PDS interns to their ECC/PDS teacher education program. However, Tim compared this teacher education program (based on the qualities that he observed in these interns from the ECC/PDS program) to other programs, especially undergraduate teacher education programs.

But I'm not convinced that either of them, their philosophies, were shaped by OSU. They both seemed to be coming from backgrounds that they already had the philosophies that "Maybe teaching is right for me. I want to make a life making a difference in children". Then they went to Ohio State. So it's tough to say, but I can't complain about the training they received. They seemed to be extremely knowledgeable of education issues for having only attended four or five quarters, whatever the program entails. Whatever Ohio State is doing in those 5 quarters is obviously a lot. And I think its a wonderful opportunity. (P8, Section 1, Paragraph 73)

In summary, the principals in Group 2, who had no prior knowledge of or experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program, employed five of the seven ECC/PDS interns interviewed. The number hired (5) includes the ECC/PDS intern hired by the colleague of Tim, who was not in the study. Their decision-making was based on the teacher qualities and individual school needs expressed in Part II. One principal, Tim, observed one connection, the emphasis on research, between teacher qualities and teacher education program because he was able to interview a small group of interns from the same program. Finally, none of the principals in this group commented on teacher education programs or
ECC/PDS specifically, as an influence on their hiring procedures or perspectives.

**Group 3**

Group 3 consists of four principals, Mary, Jon, Lydia and Aretha. Each principal had some knowledge of and experience with the ECC/PDS program. They have had at least one ECC/PDS intern as a teacher(s) in their respective buildings. Jon and Lydia have had four ECC/PDS interns in their schools and Aretha had seven ECC/PDS interns in her school.

Each principal and their interview teams have interviewed at least one ECC/PDS intern or ECC/PDS teacher for a regular teaching position on their staff. Mary and Jon hired an ECC/PDS intern on their regular teaching staff that had been in their building as a student teacher. Aretha hired a ECC/PDS teacher who had been a regular school teacher for two years in another state when he returned to Columbus, Ohio.

Lydia, principal from a low socio-economic environment in the school system, reported that she would not have hesitated to extend an offer of employment to any of the ECC/PDS interns in her school. Intern 5 was one of the four ECC/PDS interns in that school and interviewed for a regular teaching position. Lydia and her interview team interviewed, but did not make an offer of employment to Intern 5 because it was common knowledge among her staff that Intern 5 did not want a teaching position in that school. Tim, in Group 2, subsequently hired intern 5 in a suburban school system.
Mary, Jon, and Lydia expressed that the yearlong ECC/PDS program was an advantage to the interns and to students. Mary thought that “the longer period of time in the classroom definitely would prepare them, give them a little more confidence, a little more knowledge of what they are actually going to face” (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 126). She found that ECC/PDS interns had a more similar philosophy to that of her school’s staff in inquiry and integration than other interns coming from the Dayton area.

Having observed the four ECC/PDS interns in his building for the school year, Jon concluded that the ECC/PDS interns are better prepared because of the yearlong experience which allows for and fosters a broader and more complete concept of teaching. ECC/PDS interns have opportunities to experience the typical situations that arise in schools over time. They have the opportunity to become more comfortable with their cooperating teachers which fosters a deeper understanding of the teaching-learning process.

I don’t think there is any doubt that the ECC/PDS program is a strong program. In fact, the students are in there for as long as they are, and allowed to get as involved as they are, helps strengthen the teachers experience. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 73)

The fact that they get to do a lot of hands-on working with the kids for so long. Your meeting once a week and talking about topics that will really help them down the line, in the field. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 141)

I think overall there’s probably a lot more experience coming out of the ECC/PDS group for the amount of time that they put in, and the type of situations that they’re put in. What I’ve been able to observe, ECC/PDS is much more intensive with what they are doing with the students. Very well organized. They do a lot of feedback
from how the program is working and are willing to make adjustments to it based on changes in the districts. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 121)

Lydia commented that having two teachers (the ECC/PDS cooperating teacher and the ECC/PDS intern) in the classroom all year was a benefit to students.

I think it can be a very big positive in the classroom to have a student teacher plus a teacher working with kids. You couldn’t ask for anything better than an energetic teacher that’s working with an experienced teacher. I think it makes the experienced teacher more on their toes, more professional. So it makes your program stronger and you have more bodies with kids. You get lower ratios. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 106)

I think initially it takes time and if the teacher doesn’t make time outside of the classroom then it could inhibit what’s going on during that time but if the teacher works well with the intern they’ll make time during their breaks and that sort of thing and then I think once the intern gets rolling that it’s a benefit. There’s two certified teachers in the room that are working with kids. I think that’s great. (P5, Section 1, Paragraphs 202-205)

Lydia and Jon discussed that the ECC/PDS program was a benefit to the cooperating teachers. As a part of the ECC/PDS teacher education program, cooperating teachers are enrolled in a professional development seminar. Jon noticed that cooperating teachers bring back new ideas to the school because of their involvement in the seminar. Lydia felt that the professional development seminar brought an added value to her teachers.

There were a lot of teachers that took the class even if they didn’t have interns in their room and they’re taking it again. I think that was a benefit to them in their professional development as teachers. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 201)
Both Jon and Lydia stated that ECC/PDS was a strong program and that it produced strong teachers. "I don't think there is any doubt that the ECC/PDS program is a strong program" (Jon, P3, Section 1 Paragraph 72).

I think that Ohio State is definitely [a] stronger program. Ohio Dominican their teachers...didn't have any training. They just were not into it. The work ethic just wasn't very high. We were disappointed with what Ohio Dominican was putting out. I can't say that about the teaching of our student teachers [ECC/PDS interns] because they were all very qualified and handled themselves great in the classrooms. (Lydia, P5, Section 1, Paragraph 95)

As a result, Mary hired the ECC/PDS intern in her school on her teaching staff. Lydia remarked that she would not hesitate to hire any of the ECC/PDS interns that had been in her school. Jon discussed that although he was impressed with the strength of the ECC/PDS program and the strength of the ECC/PDS interns, he was not sure if he could attribute the teacher qualities to the ECC/PDS program or not. However, with the knowledge that Jon had gained about the ECC/PDS program, it would affect his decision-making in the hiring process in a positive manner for ECC/PDS interns.

I would say that if I had an individual that had that in their background, that I'd probably pull that one out and look at it a lot closer and give consideration to it over others. It would be a feather in the hat. (P3, Section 1, Paragraph 149)

Although these three principals, Mary, Jon, and Lydia, are impressed with the ECC/PDS teacher education program, no program is perfect, and they shared their concerns about the program. Mary described that at the beginning of the year, ECC/PDS interns maybe spent
too much time observing before they became involved in working in the classroom.

I guess the one thing that I saw in general was that maybe the students could have started working sooner. Maybe for shorter periods of time but they spent a lot of time observing and moving from one school to the other at the beginning and I don't think that you can truly gain a feel for what it's all about by just observing. I think you have to work and do something and I think the more time that they spend working with the students the better. They still only had - even though they were there the whole year they only had four weeks that they were teaching, going through the student teaching. It seems to me that you could take advantage of them being there for that long a period of time by having them do more. (P1, Section 1.1.1, Paragraph 241)

While Mary was concerned about maximizing the time that ECC/PDS interns were actively teaching in the classrooms. Lydia was concerned about the ECC/PDS interns’ attitudes towards getting a job. The attitudes exhibited by the group of ECC/PDS interns at her school suggested a belief that they could have any job they wanted.

And the attitude that I got from them is that we’re from PDS [ECC/PDS] so we can turn down jobs. We can take jobs [that we want]. We’ll take the cream of the crop jobs because we’re PDS [ECC/PDS] students (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 90). I think maybe that when they come from PDS [ECC/PDS] they’ve been told that you’re going to be placed, we’ve placed everybody and that they should get the best job that they can get and if the best job for them is in a suburban school, then that’s what is right for them. Because I definitely wouldn’t want them to stay in city schools if that’s not really where they want to be and who am I to say. It’s hard being in a city district, so suburban life might just be better. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 140)

Lydia felt that student teachers should not have this kind of attitude. She compared the hiring experience of the ECC/PDS interns to the typical hiring experience for herself and most teachers.
But I think she was trying to look for a perfect fit for her and we were just thinking when we got out of school we took the first job that they handed us and you’re thinking that’s so cocky for her to think I can turn down five job offers. (P5, Section 1, Paragraph 122)

Jon and Aretha were concerned about the cooperating teachers because of the time and energy requirements in mentoring teacher interns.

Jon said:

One concern I had and the teachers also, was the amount of time the teachers have to give up for this program every Thursday night. We’ve talked over and over again about the benefits of having the student teachers work with the teachers, especially on Thursday evenings when they can do all that. But on the same hand, when you are trying to do some programs in the building, you are asking them to commit some other time to it. They are already giving a whopping amount of time to ECC/PDS. How you juggle that and make it easier on the teachers without sacrificing some of the program... I know last year that was a big concern. Because every Thursday night, we wanted to do some things and you’re asking a lot of the teacher to give up another night. Other than that I’m pleased with what I’ve seen. (Jon, P3, Section 1, Paragraph 174)

Aretha agrees with Jon that there are competing interests for the cooperating teachers’ time. She was frustrated because her teachers were frustrated with the time requirement and the work requirement of the professional development seminar. Aretha felt that the professional development seminar added too much work to her teachers who were already feeling over committed, however, she did notice that the teachers enjoyed the collaborative, collegial environment.

I guess I’ve got a lot of concerns about why do we need to go [to the professional development seminar]. We have all these students here why can’t we plan for our building. We pull them [teachers] in
so many different ways. I know, if we have articles or books for them to read, you want them to interact, but, why do you have to go every Thursday night? Maybe once a month, because that's a lot when you have other commitments that you have to attend to.

I am just trying to address concerns that I have. And when my teachers are frustrated, that makes me frustrated. I know they enjoy the collaboration. They really like that. They really like having the time to have collegial talking, and sharing. That made them become a closer group. But they didn't like it every week. They felt that we had so many student teachers here. I think they felt the time would have been better spent working with those students, with teachers right here in the building, as opposed to what went on in the meetings. (Aretha, P13, Section 1, Paragraphs 162-165)

In comparing the ECC/PDS program to other teacher education programs, Aretha commented that they had one intern from Ohio University. “Those teachers don’t have to put in much time” (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 143). The cooperating teacher with that intern did not have extra duties and did not display the frustration shown by the ECC/PDS program cooperating teachers.

As a result of the time and energy commitments that her teachers made, Aretha expressed concern that having the ECC/PDS program in the school had not benefited her students.

We were talking more about student teachers than we were about children. We have to plan for the student teacher. We have to meet with the student teacher. I don’t see anything but children. I look at the plans for children. I felt that the planning that they were doing with the student teacher should enhance all of this was focused to what the children need to be more successful in the classroom. And somehow we’ve lost that. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 102)

The PDS [ECC/PDS] program have their criteria focus and it’s not the same as the school’s. When we’re making decisions, we have to think about what’s best for our students just as OSU [ECC/PDS] is making decisions about what’s best for their students.
I am going to be looking at the data this year and where the focus is. I think the students that leave the program; I think all of them got jobs. They are very good, but I haven’t seen any results of how it’s helping improve education of the student in the school. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 121)

Three years ago, the student population in Aretha’s school changed from a majority White ethnic group with city-wide proficiency passage rates in the 60th and 70th percentiles to a majority Black ethnic group with passage rates now in the 30th to 60th percentile range. Faced with a new student culture, a sudden drop in city-wide proficiency scores, increased pressure to increase student test scores, and learning the Benchmarks, Aretha explains the frustrations that her teachers feel.

And it’s difficult when you are trying to make the transition and meet the needs of your students and you’re asked to train someone else. You have all of this responsibility of the first part that has to be met. (P13, Section 1, Paragraph 257)

In summary, Group 3 consisted of four principals (Mary, Jon, Lydia, and Aretha) from the Columbus Public Schools District. Each principal in this group gained knowledge of and experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program by having one or more ECC/PDS interns in their building. Having an ECC/PDS intern exposed the principal and the cooperating teachers to the professional development component of the ECC/PDS program, which was unique to this program, compared to other teacher education programs the principals had experienced. It is interesting to note that the majority of concerns
expressed by these principals related to the professional development component; there were no concerns expressed about the teacher education program, the qualities of the ECC/PDS interns, or their interns' abilities to teach.

Three of the four principals (Mary, Jon, and Aretha) had interviewed and hired a ECC/PDS intern. The fourth principal (Lydia) did not extend an offer of employment to the ECC/PDS interns in her building because she knew that those interns were not interested in employment in the Columbus Public School District, but felt that she could have hired any of the ECC/PDS interns in her building. Therefore, each principal in this group, having some knowledge of and experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program, had a favorable, receptive attitude towards hiring a ECC/PDS intern.

Their decision-making was based on teacher qualities similar to that of Group 2, however, three principals (Mary, Jon and Lydia) in Group 3 were also influenced by the opportunity to observe and evaluate the ECC/PDS intern that they interviewed. Each of the principals in this group commented on the ECC/PDS program as a positive influence on their hiring decisions.

Group 4

Group 4 consisted of three principals, Eleanor, Tyler, and Ford. This group had a comprehensive understanding of the ECC/PDS teacher education program. A comprehensive understanding signifies that the
principal not only knows the components (inquiry, professional
development of teachers and teacher pre-service education) and activities
of the program, but also, has a sense of the underlying theories and goals
of the program. The categorization of comprehensive understanding was
based on comments made by the principals in this group such as,

I've got to believe the approach that the ECC/PDS program takes
with its students has to be a very, very sound approach. as far as. I
call it being realistic about what can happen and what can't happen.
And how do you really make a difference and how you don't make a
difference. I think it's more the approach that the program takes
with these students than it is giving them content knowledge or
methodologies or interpersonal relationships or evaluation or
anything else that we look at in teaching. I think it's the approach
that they take . . . The program models what they would expect to
see out of that teacher when that teacher has their own classroom. I
think we learn best by modeling. And I've got to believe there's a
lot of really good modeling that takes place so these teachers can
learn what it is to be a good teacher, just by observing and watching
someone else teach. (Tyler, P11. Section 1. Paragraph 143)

A common pattern that emerged with this group is the absence of
concerns about the ECC/PDS teacher education program. In contrast to
Group 3, none of these three principals (Eleanor, Tyler and Ford) included
any concerns either when reflecting on their impression of the program or
when specifically asked for concerns about the program. When asked the
question, "Do you think there was anything [in this program] that was not
of benefit to your school?" Ford responded, "No, I really don't.... I have
not seen any negatives with it whatsoever" (P14. Section 1. Paragraphs
235-236).
Similarly, Tyler was asked, "Are there any things – no program is perfect – when you were in the process, that you would have wanted to change?" and Tyler responded with this statement:

Actually no. I really think the program is the way to go with student teaching. I really think that's the only answer to it, to have these people spend a longer period of time. Also their training and their background lends itself to that. . . . I don't think the traditional undergraduate student coming out that does traditional student teaching is really prepared first of all for what they have in store for them as a student teacher and I don't think after the student teaching it prepares them enough to have their own classroom. Never had that concern with a ECC/PDS student. They're prepared when they come in and they're definitely prepared when they go out. (P11, Section 2, Paragraphs 205-206)

Although Tyler and Ford attribute differences that they see in the ECC/PDS interns to the program, Eleanor thinks that it would be difficult to compare teacher education programs with the many complexities involved. However, she gave a comparison of two first year teachers that she has observed in her school that came from different teacher education programs. Eleanor described the teacher from the ECC/PDS program as being more child-centered than the teacher from another teacher education program is.

It's a complex question because I guess in my head I'm thinking of an example like we hired a young woman who was in the fourth grade [the ECC/PDS intern] to be a third grade teacher this year. We hired a young woman from another university to be a first grade teacher. So in my head I'm questioning are there differences in those two young women because of where they came from or because one is first grade and one is fourth grade and there's just this difference there. I think it's a hard question to answer. I can honestly say that the two teachers [ECC/PDS program] I worked with and the two teachers [ECC/PDS interns] I hired were
outstanding educators. It's hard to compare them to other programs. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 86)

The first grade teacher who was a non-PDS [non-ECC/PDS] person, I think placed more emphasis on surface level appearance. How things look in the classroom as opposed to what do we need to do in our classroom to get the learning done. The first grade teacher had a beautiful room. It was organized and tidy and bright and cheery. . . . It was adult centered items. . . In the other teacher's room, the PDS student [ECC/PDS intern] it was bright and cheery but it was student work that was displayed in a bright and cheery way. Things were organized at eye level for children to read if it was on the board. It was always at eye level for kids. Pre-reading, self-selected, reading books were down low so kids could reach them, that kind of stuff as opposed to the first grade teacher who bought pretty books but put them up so that little hands couldn't tear them. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 102)

I think that the third grade teacher was. . . much more academic and much more knowledgeable and much more scientific about the practice of teaching. I think the other teacher from another university in a more rural area did not have an analytical mind to break down multiple step teaching into simple steps where children couldn't communicate as well in terms of analyzing tasks to be taught. There was more of a feel good kind of [approach]. She [ECC/PDS intern] was more well-read. Her first focus was always on academic achievement as opposed to we need more balls at recess. Her focus was always on teaching kids academic skills and she communicated that in her language and the choices that she made in terms of her interactions with kids. (P7, Section 1, Paragraphs 90-101)

Eleanor values the teacher qualities exhibited by the teacher that graduated from the ECC/PDS program more than the teacher qualities she observed in the teacher from another teacher education program. She had the experience of observing ECC/PDS teachers at various stages in the program. Beginning her first year as principal, Eleanor had a teacher on staff that graduated from the ECC/PDS program. The second year as principal, she hired an ECC/PDS intern as a member of her teaching staff.
and last year Eleanor and her interview team hired the ECC/PDS intern in their school also to be on the teaching staff.

With this experience, Eleanor observed other teacher qualities that were common among the teachers from the ECC/PDS program. Eleanor noticed that these ECC/PDS teachers reflected on their own practice “both with their colleagues and with the children entrusted to their care” (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 108). The ECC/PDS teachers talked the language of learning and reflection. They modeled the importance of being life-long learners to their students by their reflections.

Eleanor thought that reflection was purposefully taught in the ECC/PDS program. She observed it in ECC/PDS teachers at the school and she observed it in the ECC/PDS interns during their pre-service education.

I think true reflection is the result of purposeful teaching. Everybody wonders every now and then, but many times you see teachers wonder a little bit, put it down and go home. I think the depth of their [the ECC/PDS interns] reflection, I would think, is probably something that was taught in their pre-service education or the practice in their pre-service education. And then even seeing [it in practice]. Last year working with the ECC/PDS intern and traveling to meetings where she would present her unit to her colleagues or whatever, [they were] supporting her through that process. Watching her reflect in front of a group of people would suggest to me that there’s some expectation for reflection. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 116)

Not only did Eleanor discuss shared teacher qualities that she observed in the teachers from the ECC/PDS program, but she observed an increase in student success as evidenced by student proficiency test scores.
They all valued teaching and learning and assessing it in their language and in their behavior. They [the ECC/PDS interns] all demonstrated the value for work first. They all have the ability to take kids to a deeper level. Even when you analyze writing samples from those teachers [ECC/PDS interns] versus writing samples from other teachers... Two of those teachers were fourth grade teachers and I would look at their writing and think I can’t believe this came out of a fourth grade kid. And those kinds of things don’t just spontaneously erupt from children. We have to pull them out piece-by-piece. Our fourth grade proficiency writing was 81 percent of the kids passed writing in our fourth grade and that’s the 12th highest in the district and that’s really significant. In three years as a principal there [in her old school] we went from 38 percent to 51 percent to 81 percent [in writing proficiency scores]. So just in the course of three years our scores more than doubled. And it strongly reflects that they were good teachers of writing. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 108)

These experiences with and observations of teachers from the ECC/PDS teacher education program influenced Eleanor’s decision-making and therefore, her hiring practices.

Yes, most definitely because all... of the [teachers]--the two teachers I worked with and the two teachers I hired— were such exceptional quality that you have to look at what do they have in common. One of the things that they had in common was their pre-service preparation [ECC/PDS]. So, it would pre-dispose me to giving greater consideration to people from the same pre-service program. (P7, Section 1, Paragraph 106)

Tyler and Ford made the strongest connections between attributing the ECC/PDS teacher qualities to the ECC/PDS teacher education program. Tyler describes the ECC/PDS program as excellent. He knows that some of a teacher’s success is attributable to the personal characteristics of the individual teacher; however, he also attributes their success to the preparation program. These teachers are more centered by which Tyler means that “the content information is better than I’ve seen
other students coming out of college with” (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 108).

About 25 percent of the student teachers that we’ve had here... that were not full year situations, have not been ready and we’ve had to ask them to look at a different placement... I’ve never had that experience with one of the full year student teachers from the PDS program because they... come in more prepared. I don’t know how else to say it. They come in with better relationships and those opportunities that they provide kids and I’ve never had a situation with one of those student teachers where we even had to consider maybe this isn’t the right thing at this point in time. About 25 percent of the time with the other student teachers we’ve had that situation. (P11, Section 2, Paragraph 200)

They [ECC/PDS interns] have a maturity level that’s higher. That’s not a bad thing if someone doesn’t have that but they come in with that and that’s very helpful because they can relate to what’s happening at a school in a bigger picture. I don’t think other students [from other teacher education programs] can do that. I think their relationships tend to be better with the students and the staff. I want to call it instant credibility. There’s more credibility in this person who’s been out and spent time doing another program or in the PDS [ECC/PDS] program, which is a more intensive program... So I’ve been really pleased with the students [ECC/PDS interns] that we’ve had, these student teachers, the people that I’ve worked with. (P11, Section 1, Paragraph 108)

In addition, Tyler described that the yearlong program, having teacher interns in the classroom for the entire school year, is preferable to the typical teacher education program, which lasts about nine weeks. The yearlong program is an investment in student success compared to the nine-week program, which may result in lost academic time for students.

When you have them for a full year, then I think that time that you invest starts to pay off somewhere down the road where... that student teacher becomes more independent. [They] can actually feel their way through the curriculum better than if they’re only here for nine weeks. It’s a tremendous investment from a classroom teacher for nine weeks with a student teacher... Probably that
student teacher gets to a point where they might be able to make some progress with kids and then they are gone. So if you ask me about a nine-week student teacher, I'm not as excited about that process and generally, I call it repair damage, control damage. Generally, we have to do a lot of repair damage after that nine week student teacher leaves simply because things may have been done a little differently . . . With a full year PDS [ECC/PDS] type of student teacher, you have a lot of opportunities and we actually see some growth occurring . . . My gut feeling on that is, we generally don’t see the progress with kids over nine weeks with that student teacher as we would over a longer period of time like a PDS [ECC/PDS] student teacher. (P11, Section 2, Paragraph 192)

Ford attributes the teacher qualities (knowledge in content areas, perseverance, determination, high expectations, and collaboration) that he values to the ECC/PDS program because the yearlong program allows teacher interns to understand the full scope of teaching. It provides for opportunities to experience difficult situations, recover from those situations, and continue in the teaching-learning process. It allows ECC/PDS interns to have a closer, and possibly a more intimate relationship with the ECC/PDS cooperating teacher. The collaborative philosophy encourages more direct and open dialogue between cooperating teacher and intern. All of which increases competence, confidence, and ultimately teacher success, which is evidenced in student success (Ford. P14, Section 1. Paragraphs 171-177).

While Eleanor mentioned an aspect of the ECC/PDS program, reflection, from a teacher intern perspective, Ford mentioned reflection from the perspective of his teaching staff and the professional development of teachers in the ECC/PDS. It benefits the teachers on his
staff who want to reflect on and improve their practice. The professional
development component provides his teachers with opportunities to
dialogue and gain new perspectives.

I think it gives our teachers a chance to reflect on their own
instructional delivery and practice some new things. . . . At some
point teachers get so busy, and they have their Masters [degree],
and they’ve done course work, it’s an opportunity for them to go
back to school perhaps in a more relaxed mode. . . . It becomes
more interesting and I think for teachers that’s true . . . because it’s
something that they really want to do. (P14, Section 1, Paragraph
232)

Each of these principals (Eleanor, Tyler and Ford) discuss the
influence that the ECC/PDS teacher education program would have on
their hiring decisions. They would be more confident about inviting a
teacher applicant in to interview and hiring an ECC/PDS intern or teacher
on their staff. The teacher qualities that these principals have seen in
ECC/PDS interns and teachers reflect the qualities that they are seeking in
teacher applicants. Tyler stated that the ECC/PDS intern would be a
benefit to his school or district.

That’s a direct benefit in my opinion when we have those particular
student teachers. Also I think a secondary benefit is, should we
have vacancies that occur in our school or our district, it’s much
easier for me to make a recommendation on that person as a full
time teacher when I’ve seen them for a full year and they’ve done a
great job. A benefit for us, at least as a school or a district, is we
might have the opportunity of hiring a really good person. (P11,
Section 2, Paragraph 203)

In summary, Group 4 consisted of three principals (Eleanor, Tyler,
and Ford), each from a different public school system. Similar to Group

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3. each principal in this group gained knowledge of and experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program by having an ECC/PDS intern in their building for one or more years. Unlike Group 3, all principals in this group had hired at least one ECC/PDS intern on their teaching staff. These principals had worked closely with the Clinical Educators (teachers coordinating the ECC/PDS interns and cooperating teachers in their school) in the ECC/PDS program, which provided them with more depth and breadth of understanding of the program.

Their decision-making was based on their understanding of the ECC/PDS program. Principals voiced the opinion that the yearlong program and the benefits that it brought to their school, students, and staff influenced their hiring decisions. These principals would give extra consideration, or preference, to ECC/PDS interns and teachers when applying for a teaching position on their staff.

**Group 5**

Group 5 consists of one principal, Walter. While he is now retired, Walter worked closely for several years as a principal in the development and leadership of the ECC/PDS teacher education program. He currently has a part-time position working with all PDS programs at The Ohio State University. With 19 years as a principal in the Columbus Public School District, Walter experienced the myriad of changes that occurred in the hiring process over more than two decades.
Walter's school was approached by the ECC/PDS program at Ohio State University to become a PDS site. Walter's philosophy was similar in several ways to the other principals in this study, such as, vision of school, teacher qualities, and hiring procedures. However, changes occurred at his school because of the ECC/PDS program, which, in turn, influenced the way Walter and his interview team approached the hiring of new teachers.

I think we organized ourselves better, in a better way, to actually hire people who were willing to examine what they were doing, and be willing to talk about what they were doing in the classrooms with their colleagues. And I think also, there was a national idea about what Holmes was, what teacher reform was all about and how teachers who were teaching the classrooms had some responsibility to teachers and to the teaching profession. It's a more professional approach there than the way we used to do it. (P12, Section 1, Paragraph 22)

One characteristic set Walter (Group 5) apart from Groups 1, 2, 3, and 4. Walter and his interview team actively tried to hire all ECC/PDS interns for his teaching staff. He used his PDS school status to request special consideration from the district to have all ECC/PDS teachers in his school.

Of course we tried to hire all our own student teachers [ECC/PDS interns], that was very different in a sense. In a lot of ways, in fact, that got to a point in Columbus... when we went to the personnel department and we said that because this is a professional development school, we want teachers who are coming out of there, the professional development schools programs, because they understand it. They wouldn't let us do that totally. They wouldn't give us all the control, but they did try to funnel PDS [ECC/PDS] students and M.Ed. graduates linked with some of the PDS programs. (P12, Section 1, Paragraph 22)
Walter felt that the decision-making process was easier when interviewing ECC/PDS interns from his school. He remarked that having observed this person for a year, he had a record of watching this person work with students and colleagues. Walter and his staff felt that they knew the ECC/PDS interns well.

I realize that's pretty subjective by saying how well they do this, but it's a lot easier to make those kinds of decisions when you know someone. You know what kind of program they've gone through whereas looking at someone who's gone through Marshall University you don't. (P12, Section 1, Paragraph)

The first two years Walter had students from other teacher education programs. Otterbein and Capitol. He noted differences in the programs.

We had two types of student teachers... who were in our school at the same time. That was real interesting. Not only differences in the students but in the expectations of the program and the supervision of those students over the background and the philosophy to our school. There were a lot of differences. Maturity. You saw a more mature student. You knew that they were going to be with us for the academic year as opposed to someone who was only going to be there 10 weeks. There was more of a commitment in terms of supervision of the faculty member to integrate them into the program. There was never a faculty member that actually could integrate them like in PDS [ECC/PDS]. (P12, Section 1, Paragraphs 23-30)

Walter experienced changes in his teaching staff also because of their participation in the professional development component of the ECC/PDS program. He observed improvement in instructional pedagogy, in reflection, and in inquiry. Many teachers obtained advanced degrees.
during this time and Walter credits his school's participation in the ECC/PDS program for the changes.

In summary, Group 5 consisted of one principal, Walter, who had not only the most experience in terms of years but also, the most intense experience in terms of development and leadership in the ECC/PDS teacher education program. As a result of his involvement and experience, Walter tried to hire only ECC/PDS interns because he knew that the program was creating the philosophies and qualities that his school looked for in new teachers.

In summarizing Part III, the degree of knowledge of and experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program influenced the decision-making process in the hiring of new teachers for principals in this study. Principals were organized into five groups that depicted the amount of knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS program. Interviews were analyzed to determine if knowledge and/or experience influenced the hiring of ECC/PDS interns or teachers. Table 5 shows the principal responses.
Table 5: Were principals influenced by knowledge of or experience with ECC/PDS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Influence?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Desmond</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Whitney</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>Yes, greater consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Aretha</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Yes, greater consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>Yes, benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>P14</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Yes, benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Walter</td>
<td>Yes, only ECC/PDS interns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is understandable that the principals in Groups 1 and 2, who had no knowledge of the ECC/PDS program, were not affected by the program when making hiring decisions. As we look at the remaining Groups 3, 4, and 5, each group had more knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS program than the previous group. Principals from Group 3, 169
which had some knowledge of but not a deeper understanding of the ECC/PDS program, had a mixture of responses indicating that there was some influence of the program on their hiring decisions when interviewing ECC/PDS interns. In Group 4, the principals gave greater consideration to an ECC/PDS intern or teacher in the hiring process because of the knowledge and understanding that they had about the ECC/PDS program. Group 5, having only one principal, had the greatest amount of knowledge of and experience in the ECC/PDS teacher education program of any of the principals and he preferred to hire only ECC/PDS interns or teachers. The amount of knowledge of the ECC/PDS program clearly had an influence on the likelihood of hiring a teacher from that program.

Conclusion

The data revealed patterns that describe 1) the procedures that principals in this study follow when hiring teachers; 2) the perceptions that influence the way the principals in this study make decisions about hiring teachers; and 3) the knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program that influenced decision-making in the hiring process. For the data codes, see Appendix C.

The interviews contained descriptions of the hiring process for principals in this study. Themes emerged that describe what actions principals take and what perceptions influence their hiring of teachers. The themes were induced from the patterns or categories that repeatedly
appeared from the analysis of the interview data. The major themes that appeared throughout the interviews were: principal's vision of school, hiring procedures, rating scales, questions, interview team, teacher qualities, challenges, tacit knowledge, district pressures, and differences in teacher education programs.

These themes represent the complex environment that the principals in this study experienced when hiring teachers. Principals spent time and energy to align the hiring process with the vision and needs of their schools always remembering that student academic success is the main issue. The themes that emerged are like pieces of a large puzzle that looks easy, but never are. These themes enable a more thorough description of the hiring process and ultimately, a better understanding of a critical ingredient to student academic success, hiring the best teachers.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The selection and employment of highly qualified personnel for a school district or other educational institution is one of the most difficult of all administrative responsibilities. The ability to select the best candidate from a large or small pool of applicants is a skill that, without doubt, directly impacts the quality of the educational program and the success of the administrator responsible for selection. (Harris & Monk, 1992, p. 105)

The selection of teachers in the school setting is a critical administrative duty for any school principal. Over the last 20 years in education, there has been a strong emphasis on the selection of the highest quality teachers to bring about increased student success (Harris & Monk, 1992). This emphasis has increased the need to understand the hiring procedures and perspectives of school administrators.

This exploratory study was undertaken to better understand how and why principals hire teachers for their schools. This chapter discusses the findings of this study on principals' hiring practices. This discussion includes a theoretical discussion of the finding from this research, an analysis of the political contexts that influenced principals, an interpretation of the major findings, some methodological reflections. the
limitations of the study, the implications for further research on selection in education, and the practical significance of the study.

Selection History

I began this study using selection theories as a framework for my research. I had used this research literature in the design of an earlier, quantitative study of hiring practices. Although this qualitative study also focused on the hiring practices of principals, using only selection theories for this qualitative study would have limited the interpretations I could offer for the hiring phenomenon that I found. The focused scope and controlled methods of selection research studies are of limited use when larger contexts and sociopolitical aspects of hiring and schooling are considered. Selection theories therefore were not broad enough to capture the beliefs and procedures espoused by principals in this qualitative study.

In place of selection theories, I have used organizational theory to help explain the hiring procedures espoused by principals in this study. Principals are not merely utilizing fair or improved hiring practices—however important these are. Most principals and school districts are responding to national and local socio-political contexts that include pressures to fundamentally change education in this country.

Utility of the Interview

The function and usefulness of the selection interview has been questioned and investigated since the 1920s. Research initially focused
on the usefulness of the interview to evaluate persons for successful employment. Most research that found interviewing lacked validity concluded that the interview had no usefulness or value in the selection process. However, the interview continued to be used extensively. There was an enormous reliance on the interview because people felt that they could gain information from the interview that they could not find in other forms of applicant information (Arvey, 1982).

With changes toward more structured interviews, research in the 1980s found modest validity in the use of the interview to predict job success. Some of the evolving changes in the interview process can be identified in this study of principals hiring teachers. All the principals in this study used the interview process to make decisions on teacher applicants. All but one principal (Tim) used the structured interview process and a board interview (interview team).

Based on the interview procedures designed by the principals in this study, the interview did have utility (usefulness in predicting job success). Principals in this study created a vision of their school that guided the hiring process (which is described in more detail in Part I, below). The actual face-to-face interview revealed qualities that were not evident in written forms of data such as applications, transcripts, portfolios, or resumés, and principals and their interview teams were able to gather additional information that made the interview useful.
This study identified the use of standardized interview formats, which were recommended by quantitative research studies in the 1960s. Standardized interview formats establish patterns for interviewers to follow with interviewees. This standardized format improves fairness and creates consistency. The same material is covered in each interview to allow each applicant an equal opportunity in the interview.

The Columbus Public Schools District requires a standardized interview format for schools and principals to follow. It includes the use of the board interview or interview team, structured interview questions, and the use of the rubric as a decision-making aid. Within the basic requirements for the standardized interview format are opportunities to tailor some aspects to each individual school. For example, an interview team is required to have teacher participation, however, the number of participants is not specified and the team is open to other participants at the discretion of the principal. The composition of the interview team varies widely from school to school.

**Discrimination in Hiring**

The research studies that followed the civil rights laws aimed at preventing unfair discrimination, have been important in identifying processes, procedures, and perspectives that create unfair hiring situations. Interviewer bias and stereotyping began to be investigated in the decision-making process of the selection interview in the 1970s. The terms bias and stereotype are usually mentioned with a negative
connotation, and frequently have been investigated in quantitative studies to examine unfair practices.

One type of interviewer stereotyping can be seen in this study when principals and interview teams designed questions and preferred responses to identify the ideal teacher for their school. Principals and interview teams used the school vision to create a stereotype of the ideal teacher. Their vision may be different from other schools, but it met the needs of their school. In this study, interviewer stereotyping was not seen as a tool used unfairly or in an attempt to exclude protected classes of people.

In fact, the Columbus Public School District requires that principals hire a certain number of minority teachers based on the minority population of students in the school. The purpose of Affirmative Action in this district is to balance teacher ethnic groups with student ethnic groups, which is encouraged and allowed by several anti-discriminatory laws. This policy, however, seems only to apply to African American school populations. Other minority groups (Asians, Latinos) were not considered in this way.

Interviewer-Interviewee Similarities

Another influence on the decision-making process of the selection interview, interviewer-interviewee similarities, has been studied using quantitative methodologies and found to be used unfairly in some situations. Perceived attitudinal similarities by the interviewer were found to have an influence on hiring teacher applicants. Race and gender
dissimilarities, in particular, were found to be the basis for negative and unfair decisions.

In this qualitative study, attitudinal similarities were seen to impact principals and interview teams when they looked for similar attitudes in candidates related to the school vision. This attitudinal similarity was used as a criterion for selection. Therefore, in this study, a bias toward attitudinal similarity promoted the continuation of the vision and the goals of the school.

Job analysis, structured interviews, and board interviews were recommendations from the findings of quantitative studies. These procedures had positive correlations with success on the job. Some school districts (Columbus and Gahana-Jefferson) have implemented these structured hiring recommendations to improve the process of hiring teachers.

Problems with Hiring Recommendations

For school systems, there are two problematic issues with following these hiring recommendations: (1) many articles addressing hiring procedures and practices are not based on actual research studies, and (2) little research has been conducted in actual educational settings. Great care must be taken when following the advice found in the plethora of "how to" articles and books on hiring practices and recommendations. It is difficult to determine if a hiring recommendation has been based on an actual study of the recommendation (the variable studied) or whether
the recommendation has been extrapolated as a “common sense” technique from a study investigating other variables.

Only in the last 20 years has research begun to investigate the hiring of teachers. Most teacher selection studies have not been conducted in educational settings. In fact, older studies on the hiring of personnel were conducted in business and industrial settings. Therefore, research findings based on corporate structures may not apply to educational organizations.

Summary of Findings

Part I. Procedures principals follow when hiring teachers

In Part I of Chapter 4, hiring procedures were identified by principals who reported their decision-making processes for hiring new teachers. The predominant procedures for principals and interview teams consisted of a review of the applicant material before the interview, the actual face-to-face interview session, discussion of applicant characteristics, evaluation of teacher applicants, and final decision of whether or not to extend an offer of employment.

Among the 14 principals interviewed in this study, many commonalities emerged in their hiring procedures. Principals utilized a vision of their school as a guideline in developing the procedures and questions in the hiring process, and they relied on the hiring interview as the primary means of assessing teacher applicants. The creation of interview teams served to provide multiple perspectives as well as
empower teachers through a shared decision-making process. The composition of the interview teams that included community involvement added a further dimension to enhance the decision-making process. While the final decision rested with the principal to select the chosen teacher applicant, principals preferred, and worked toward consensus building on the interview team to make final applicant decisions.

Evaluation of the selection process has been conducted for almost a century, producing a plethora of guidelines and advice to (1) accurately select the candidate that would be successful on the job, and (2) avoid unfair discrimination and abuse in hiring practices. The goal of such studies has been to improve the effectiveness of information gathering and decision-making in evaluating prospective employees (Dipboye, 1992).

The majority of changes in the selection process have been implemented as a reaction to fair hiring practices stemming from legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. There have also been changes in the selection process because of the cultural and organizational changes taking place in business and industrial organizations.

The education profession has followed the practices of the business world to improve the hiring procedures in its schools. Typically, these procedures have been influenced by quantitative selection research and prescriptive texts used mainly by business organizations (Dipboye, 1992; Harris & Monk, 1992). The common hiring practices among the principals
in this study reflect the common hiring procedures in business and industrial organizations.

Learning Organization

One important cultural change in the business world in the last decade is the emergence of "learning organizations" (Argyris, 1993; Kline & Saunders, 1993; Senge, 1990). A learning organization is an open or adaptive organization that responds to external or internal environmental shifts. Through this process, people in the organization learn and transform their behaviors to better adapt to a changing environment in order to thrive and survive (Rainey, 1991). Classical approaches treated early organizations, even those with educational purposes, as if they were closed systems.

Their approaches emphasized stable, clearly defined structures and processes, as if goals were fairly clear and the central problem was the design of the most efficient, repetitive, machinelike procedures for maximizing attainment of the goals. This is also the basis for the characterization of these approaches as emphasizing "one best way" to organize. (Rainey, 1991, p. 268)

Since the 1980s, organizational theories have provided avenues to discuss and ultimately change organizational cultures. An organizational culture is made up of the social constructions of an organization—that is, the perceptions, beliefs, facts, realities, and values that members of an organization implicitly and subconsciously agree on and come to believe. These social constructs affect organizational behavior.
Schein (1992) argues that organizational cultures are dynamic and evolving. The organizational literature (Bolman & Deal, 1991) as well as the educational literature (Starratt, 1995) call for the restructuring of organizations to stop the cycle of poor results in respective areas of business and education. Senge (1990) responds that for organizations to restructure, reinvent, or renew, organizations must become learning organizations. A learning organization has the ability:

- to develop and sustain an environment favorable to learning at every level, to reawaken and stimulate the power and joy of learning in all the members of the organization, regardless of their position and background, and to harness the new learning that was generated in order to produce maximum benefit for the organization. (Kline & Saunders, 1993, p. 12)

Educational organizations are also moving in the direction of creating learning organizations (McChesney, 1998). Educational stakeholders are demanding that schools stop producing “more of the same.” Critics of the reform efforts state that add-on programs are not enough. Rather, systemic reform is needed, to make fundamental changes in every aspect and on every level of education (Thompson, 1994).

In recent years, a new generation of programs has become available to educators with a promise that they will help all students, even those on the margins, succeed in school. These programs have in common the assumptions that school reform, to bring about measurable improvement, must embrace the whole school. . . . be prepared to reexamine and change all parts of school life, from attitudes and culture to leadership, parent and community involvement, curriculum, facilities, and, of course, financing. (McChesney, 1998, p. 1)
According to Senge (1990), learning organizations consist of five disciplines or component technologies that are necessary to create and sustain learning organizations. These disciplines include systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision and team learning (Senge, 1990). Senge stresses that all five disciplines should be integrated simultaneously. In this study, some aspects of systems thinking, building shared vision, and mental models were identified to differing degrees, which make these principals amenable to creating learning organizations.

**Systems Thinking**

"Systems thinking" is the discipline that "integrates the disciplines, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice" (Senge, 1990, p. 12). Systems thinking changes the mindset of the persons involved from looking at issues as separate entities, to looking at issues as parts of the whole. Using systems thinking, a puzzle is not complete until the purpose of each piece of the puzzle is understood, and each piece is integrated into the whole.

In educational organizations, systems thinking makes it clear that the operation of the school cannot be understood, much less recreated, unless it is understood as a whole. Each component of the operations of a school must be integrated. Systems thinking creates a change in thinking about, and a change in perceptions of, the organization and enables the
organization to become a learning organization. Learning organizations are then able to recreate themselves.

Systems thinking was evident in the interviews with the principals who participated in this study. The principals incorporated systems thinking, whether consciously or unconsciously, when they considered the school organization as a whole. These principals saw the hiring process as interrelated with other school operations rather than an isolated operation of the school:

But we also look for a teacher that’s willing to go above and beyond the normal workday. We have a school improvement plan and a school improvement team. So we are looking for a teacher who’d have something to offer on those teams, those committees. (Tyler, P11, Section 1, Paragraph 58)

The hiring process is a small piece of the whole school. But for the principals, it is an important focused action that affects the success of the whole school. The results may not be seen immediately when new teachers are hired, but principals who were interviewed for this study described how positive hiring decisions would produce significant, enduring results in student achievement.

School Vision

The first step in systemic reform in education is creating a vision. A vision is a mental picture creating an aspiration or goal for the future, a commitment for creating the future, and a deep understanding of the forces that must be mastered to create it. “Excellence in education is closely related to what we refer to as vision. Vision and visionary
leadership are concepts common in the fields of business and management as well as in education" (Wallace, 1996, p. 4). [Emphasis in the original]

[The vision] drives the hiring as well. We talk about student centeredness. We talk about a community of learners. That’s our vision and within that vision are our core values and our goals. And one of the major core values is student centeredness, so again, that drives the questions that we develop. It drives the searching and screening that we look for. It drives the type of answers that we're looking for in the candidates. It drives our final decision. It’s what keeps us back on task. (Tyler, P11, Section 1, Paragraph 92)

Having a vision for the school is considered one of the basic building blocks upon which to base systemic reform and restructuring. There is a direct link between the vision of education and the organizational changes that take place. The theories of systems thinking mandate that in order to be successful, education must be recreated so that the vision is embodied in its structures and processes (Starratt, 1995). Principals are aware that each person hired has an impact on the whole school. Therefore, principals state that it is necessary to hire those teachers who agree with the school philosophy and who buy into the vision.

At the beginning of the 1980s education reform movement, few principals had a vision for their schools other than “teachers teach and children learn.” Typically, prior to the use of systems thinking, principals would individually create a vision for the school and share it with the staff.
At present, many school districts (including Columbus Public Schools) require the development of a school vision and plans to implement that vision. Principals interviewed in this study have attempted to create a shared vision for their schools with input from their staff, and in some cases, from parents, students, and the greater community. A shared vision is important in school restructuring because it is a mental picture to create the future of that school, which is shared and supported among members of that school community.

It is interesting to note that the principals who were less worried about the results of their school test scores (Eleanor, Tyler, Mary, Tim, Ford, Sara and Marvin) seemed to have a vision of creating the future (seeing the process of change) for their school, whereas those principals who were highly concerned about school test scores (Abigail, Lydia, and Aretha) did not talk in terms of creating the future. The concerns of the latter group focused on the immediate short-term needs of their schools. The principals who were concerned with test scores tended to be the ones in predominately low-performing schools, with students from low socioeconomic environments. It may be for these principals that the crisis of the moment prevented them from creating a vision of the future for their school.

It is doubtful that principals fully understand and construct shared visions for their schools in the way that Senge and others propose:
Today, “vision” is a familiar concept in corporate leadership. But when you look carefully you find that most “visions” are one person’s (or one group’s) vision imposed on an organization. Such visions, at best, command compliance—not commitment. A shared vision is a vision that many people are truly committed to, because it reflects their own personal vision. (Senge, 1990)

The requirement to construct a vision for the school is usually a top-down organizational mandate. It is doubtful that school districts provide the education learning context for principals to fully understand the differences between creating a shared vision and creating a vision statement. However, creating a vision statement could be the beginning of understanding the differences and the importance of a shared vision to reconstruct schools.

Without a deep understanding of shared vision, attempts to create shared visions may produce problematic effects. Principals and interview teams looking for teacher applicants that are a match/fit for their school may create school cultures that inhibit creativity and diversity of thought. Team members may feel a need to be compliant rather than creative. This would have the opposite effect of empowering teachers and enhancing the teacher profession, which in effect may inhibit education reform initiatives.

Interview Teams

Another discipline of a learning organization surfaced as principals discussed the use of interview teams as a new part of the process of interviewing teacher applicants. Interview teams were required in most
cases because of an agreement with the teachers' union. However, principals summarized the use of interview teams as helpful to their decision-making and beneficial to the hiring process. No one found the interview team to be a detriment to the process. Interview teams can be seen as a beginning step to creating a learning organization through uncovering mental models.

From Senge's (1990) learning organization model, mental models represent the images, assumptions, and stories that people have about a concept, as in this study—hiring teachers. Mental models often inhibit the progress of a learning organization.

New insights fail to get put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting. That is why the discipline of managing mental models—surfacing, testing, and improving our internal pictures of how the world works—promises to be a major breakthrough for building learning organizations. (Senge, 1990, p. 174)

The use of the interview team provided opportunities for discussion and debate that may help to uncover assumptions about hiring. "Our 'mental models' determine not only how we make sense of the world, but how we take action" (Senge, 1990, p. 175). The study principals encouraged members of the interview team to share different views. Each member of the team had opportunities to expose their reasoning or "make their case." There was an atmosphere in which members tried to understand others' reasoning and make their own reasoning explicit. While this environment provides the opportunity to expose mental models
or assumptions that influence the hiring process, managing mental models requires a conscious effort to do so. Continuing these behaviors exhibited by the interview team may lead to an understanding of and a conscious effort to manage mental models that could improve the decision-making process in teacher hiring to promote educational reform.

In summary, the principals in this study are not just hiring teachers to fill an empty classroom with a teacher, as was the practice in the past. These principals are looking for a new teacher with a similar vision of the school’s, who will help to recreate their schools. Thus, the hiring process becomes a piece of the whole school process for recreating greater academic success of students in their schools. The nature of schooling and the political context of increased accountability require that principals have a vision of student academic success. The data from the study principals suggest that school visions, while incorporating visions of school change and student success, are influenced by the differences in school contexts.

**Part II. Influences that affect principals’ hiring decisions**

An interviewer is not a tabula rasa at the beginning of the interview, but brings to the encounter a priori ideas for what the job requires the types of persons engaged in the work, and the characteristics of categories of persons... Interviewers fall back on these knowledge structures in the encoding, interpretation, and retrieval of information and in their assessment of the applicant’s fit to an ideal. (Dipboye, 1992, p. 9)

Dipboye (1992) reminds us that the persons who come to the interview to evaluate the applicants bring with them ideas of what the
ideal applicant should say and do in the interview, to exhibit evidence of a successful employee. Research has recommended that interviewers assess the needs of the organization, develop position descriptions, and develop questions that would identify the qualities needed in a candidate (Dipboye, 1992).

**Identify Critical Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes**

In translating these research recommendations to the educational organization, principals should identify the critical knowledge, skills, and attitudes they require of teacher applicants (Dale, 1991) because:

> teachers affect thousands of students’ lives, make hundreds of impressions on the public, and contribute to the climate of their buildings. The difference between the performance of an outstanding teacher and that of an average teacher over a couple of decades can be immensely significant to a school district. (Norris & Richburg, 1997)

All but one principal in this study (Tim) demonstrated what selection research is now recommending as good hiring practices: assess the school needs, identify critical knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and align needs and criteria with school vision. The principals and interview teams spent the time and energy necessary to identify the needs of their schools, while aligning those needs with the school vision. As a team, they then developed the questions and the preferred responses around the needs and vision of their school that would provide information to them on the teacher applicant’s fit with their school philosophy.
While this is still part of the procedural activities and behaviors of the principal and interview team, it became a structured basis for the influences on hiring decisions. "The selection interview itself provides the best opportunity for assessing the potential match between the individual and the needs of the institution" (Watts, 1993, p. i).

Principals described a sense that they gained enough information from the interview to make good decisions about the quality of a teacher applicant and simultaneously, shared a concern that the information gained from teacher applicants during the interview would not translate into classroom practice. The interview may not provide clear evidence of teacher qualities because applicants can look good on paper and in the interview but not follow through in their espoused practices and beliefs.

Teacher Qualities

Teacher qualities was the predominant theme that emerged related to the influences on principals' decisions when hiring teachers. The heavy influence of teacher qualities evolved out of the vision for the school. Most principals were able to articulate their vision of raising academic success for students and sought to hire highly qualified teacher applicants who would strengthen student learning and the overall performance of the school.

A recent national call for excellent teachers by U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard W. Riley (1998), has been one of many such pronouncements addressing teacher qualities in this current era of
education reform. Riley challenges the education arena of the state
government, local school districts and universities, to improve teacher
qualities with the goal of placing a “high quality teacher in every
classroom” (Riley, 1998).

The principals who participated in the current study are responding
to this goal of a quality teacher in every classroom. The teacher qualities
that principals and interview teams identified as those desired in their
schools had an influence on the hiring decision-making process.
Concomitantly, teacher qualities now being identified in the reform
literature are reflected in influences on principal and interview team
decision-making (Kindsvatter, 1992; Saphier, 1997). Since the principals
in this study did not specifically discuss education reform literature. I
cannot be sure if, or to what degree, they are being influenced by reading
the literature. Therefore, these parallels are drawn from examples of what
these principals are doing and from the reform literature.

Returning to Senge’s disciplines of the learning organization, the
described hiring procedures and perspectives demonstrate that the
principals in this study are engaging in systems thinking: selecting
teachers with teacher qualities associated with higher student achievement
and those who would promote the school vision. Again, principals viewed
this aspect of the hiring process as a part of the whole. How they conduct
the hiring process and the primary influences of teacher qualities became
pieces of the puzzle and actions that propelled the school towards achieving its vision.

**Part III. Knowledge of and/or experience with teacher education programs influencing hiring teachers from a specific teacher education program**

Principals in U.S. public schools, in general, are in a state of transition. The innovations of education reform are changing the role of the principal. The education community now refers to systemic education reform as “whole-school reform” (McChesney, 1998) to emphasize the need for whole-school academic improvement. This extensive focus on schoolwide improvement efforts changes the expectations and thus the behaviors of practicing principals.

Achieving the goals of the school vision requires more than creating a shared vision for student academic achievement, school improvement, and excellence. It requires a systematic evaluation of the school needs and a plan of action that will promote the process of change. Two of the many critical skills that principals (in general) must have to be successful is (1) to be innovative, and (2) to be able to assess innovative educational programs (The National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2000).

Like most principals, the principals who participated in this study have been deluged by educational programs promising to help all students (McChesney, 1998). Part of their job has been to evaluate educational
programs based on the program's ability to promote and further the vision of their schools.

The principals in this study were familiar with several teacher education programs, mostly in the Columbus, Ohio area (Ashburn, Capital, Dayton, ECC/PDS, LEADS/PDS, Marshall, Ohio University, and Otterbein were mentioned). All but one principal (Desmond) in this study had some knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program. As detailed in Chapter 4, it is clear that a positive relationship exists between knowledge of ECC/PDS and the likelihood to hire an ECC/PDS intern. The degree of knowledge of ECC/PDS influenced the principal and interview team during the decision-making process of hiring a teacher applicant. The principals who had the most knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS considered it to be a highly effective and innovative teacher education program. These principals viewed the ECC/PDS interns from this program as teachers who would promote and enhance the vision of their schools.

With the emphasis on whole school reform, principals in this study regarded their hiring decisions as a vehicle to accomplish the school vision of excellence for their school in raising student achievement. These principals discussed professional development for teachers and teamwork, which they believed were aspects of the ECC/PDS teacher education program that aligned with their visions of their schools. According to the principals in this study, neither the professional development of teachers
nor teacher teamwork aspects were evident in other teacher education programs. Compared to other teacher education programs, the ECC/PDS teacher education program added value to the school, in that it aligned with and promoted the accomplishment of the vision of the school.

It is confirming that the ECC/PDS interns have had a high level of success in attaining teaching positions. Ninety to ninety-eight percent of those seeking teaching positions in the last five years have been hired (Office of Academic Advising, OSU, May 2000). During the formative years of Professional Development School Programs, some were concerned that teachers graduating from these programs with master’s degrees would find it difficult to find teaching positions. In contrast, interviews with principals in this study indicated that when the principals are familiar with the ECC/PDS program, teachers graduating from the program have an easier time being hired.

There is also informal data from the coordinators and teachers associated with the program that candidates from this PDS program present themselves well during interviews. The high percentage of hiring further suggests that, regardless of the principals' knowledge of the PDS program, candidates from this program do well in interviews and are hired at a high rate. PDS coordinators report that 100 percent of those seeking jobs the last two years were hired.

For the principals in this study, a higher level of understanding of the ECC/PDS program led to higher confidence or greater acceptance by
principals when interviewing ECC/PDS interns compared to principals who had less knowledge of the ECC/PDS program. Seven principals (Mary, Jon, Lydia, Eleanor, Tyler, Walter, and Ford) in this study who have knowledge of the program tend to hire, or have tried to hire, ECC/PDS interns in a continuous way.

Overall, the current study, while investigating the hiring processes and perspectives of principals, confirms recent research on educational reform.

Contemporary scholars have observed an emerging style of principal leadership characterized by high faculty involvement in and ownership of decisions, management of the school's vision, and an emphasis on significant change and improvement.... Educational reformers have begun to develop a vision of schools as more fluid, adaptive, and cooperative environments, creating a new set of demands for teachers and principals who must work together for change to occur. (Conley & Goldman, 1994, p. 237)

Political Influences

This study is situated within a current political milieu where everyone seems to be interested in improving schools. Everyone—parents, politicians, legislators, business persons—seems to know what is needed to improve schools. The need to improve schools is often associated with the need to increase economic development so that the United States will be capable of staying in the forefront of global economy and technology. To do this, the labor force must improve its skills and abilities. Coming full circle, improving education standards and delivery is the starting place for an improved economy.
The national political and economic needs of this country have filtered down to the individual classroom and sit squarely with the teacher and students. Often the principal and teacher in the local school however, are given little voice in determining how change will occur or what direction it will take. In other cases, or sometimes at the same time, they are required to create change and improve test scores with few resources and little support. In this study, principals know their jobs are on the line if the test scores of their students do not meet targeted improvement percentages.

Marvin (principal in a high performing school) described the pressure on principals to have teachers follow the “Benchmarks” in Columbus in order to raise test scores. This results in teachers feeling like they must teach to the test. Marvin realigned the curriculum at his school several years ago because he sensed the pressures coming from the school board and superintendent.

Three principals (Jon, Lydia and Abigail) stated that severe pressure is being placed on principals to raise test scores. Principals in Columbus are being evaluated based on test scores; sixty percent of their evaluations are based on their schools' proficiency scores. They reported that principals that do not meet the required improvement measures each year are subject to being fired or replaced. One principal (I prefer not to name) seemed to be unwilling to discuss the pressures from the school
district and another principal (I prefer not to name) would only discuss district pressures when the tape recorder was turned off.

The political pressures also tend to drive teachers away. One principal (Tim) in a high scoring suburban district, described that he had offered a fourth grade teaching position to an applicant that impressed him. The applicant turned down the employment offer because of the district pressures on the proficiency test. Another principal (Lydia) discussed the difficulties in hiring high quality teachers when teacher applicants tended to accept teaching positions in urban school districts only as a last resort.

Two principals (Eleanor and Mary) with less pressure than most principals over the proficiency scores wanted to see happy children and a bright and cheerful school. In contrast, a principal (Lydia) coming from a very low scoring school with high pressure concerning the proficiency scores, described high quality teachers and higher test scores as her vision for her school. The differences in the school contexts has a direct effect on the school vision. In creating the school vision, because it is an imposed process, would principals approach it differently if it were not imposed? To what degree do they implement the vision or CIP?

It seems that because the vision or CIP is required from the school district and bringing with it various degrees of pressures on the principals in regard to test scores, the principals' personal vision for their schools may not be the same as the required vision. Possibly, the threats on the
principals' careers has a limiting effect, creating compliance with the school district instead of creating a shared vision that promotes commitment from principals and teachers.

It seems that school districts have adopted the typical legislative and societal approach of denigrating, blaming, and threatening principals and school teachers. If a learning organization approach were adopted, this would be unnecessary because the precepts of a learning organization have the ability to promote continuous growth and improvement in a positive, collaborative atmosphere. In the education reform literature, teachers have been an extremely valuable part of developing new theories and approaches to teaching and learning. A legislative environment tends to restrict vision and commitment to improvement. People who feel these pressures usually withdraw from the process of education reform to avoid punishment, then they lose interest. We should learn from teachers and principals, not restrict them.

In a learning organization, commitment and vision are restored. Mental models that usually inhibit achievement are openly discussed and changes in behaviors supported. Although this is not a simple process, to create a learning organization, this philosophical stance has the potential to assist principals and teachers in changing their behaviors to meet the needs of the changing educational environment, whereas, the current political stance is more likely to inhibit the very goals it is striving to achieve.
The political pressures on principals and teachers have filtered down to the selection process for hiring teachers. Because teachers are viewed as such a critical component to school improvement, identifying and hiring high quality teachers has become paramount. The political pressures from numerous stakeholders in education and in society have directly affected the ways that principals think about the hiring process, and these pressures have changed the procedures that principals use in the hiring process.

Methodological Reflections

During this study I have had the experience of changing methodological paradigms from quantitative to qualitative research. It changed my thinking about the selection process greatly. Having studied the selection process from both methodologies has made my understandings more complete.

One method complemented the other in this study. Quantitative analysis provides a generalized understanding of a specific research question. However, this approach in the previous selection studies did not provide a complete understanding of the processes principals used when hiring new teachers. Therefore, qualitative analysis was needed to understand individual contexts and nuances of the hiring process.

Using both perspectives has the potential to create a more complete picture. In some ways using both paradigms was complementary and in some ways it became problematic. There are difficulties in taking the
results of a quantitative study and a qualitative study and trying to put them together.

This was my paradox, however. I attempted to hold on to both worlds simultaneously, maybe unconsciously trying to meld the two into a new research world. I soon found the error of my ways. If I stayed on the fence, I could not stand on both grounds simultaneously. To see the perspectives of quantitative analysis, I had to walk on one side and then to see the perspectives of qualitative analysis. I climbed over the fence to walk on that side. These methodologies were complementary in this study, but they are not the same. Each had its own methodological stance complexities. Each paradigm has different norms, vocabulary, contexts and purposes.

If I had merely completed a quantitative design, I would have found results on a narrow range of variables such as finding a “yes” or “no” response to “Does this variable influence your decisions?” I may have found a list of factors that influence hiring, but the list of factors would be limited to those variables that were chosen for study.

With the qualitative study, using open-ended and exploratory interviews, I was able to ask and receive responses regarding why a certain factor influenced hiring decisions. In addition, participants provided information on additional influences on their hiring practices than those specifically questioned. For example, principals discussed organizational and political influences that affected how principals hire
that were not asked for specifically on the interview protocol. Overall, the qualitative study provided and explained additional factors that influence hiring that would not have been evident in the quantitative study alone.

Initially I stayed in a state of confusion trying to compare one against the other and use both in this study. When I first started reading qualitative methodology texts, such as Patton (1990) and Miles & Huberman (1994), it felt refreshing and freeing. I felt that I had been lifted out of the rules and constraints of quantitative analysis.

But then, I tried applying quantitative reasoning and questions to qualitative situations. It took a long time for me to become comfortable responding to questions like: “How do you know the essence of the experience if you only know 14 examples compared to the experience of 200 principals?”

It was difficult, and still is, to switch back and forth between the specific assumptions and languages of each paradigm. Marilyn corrected me many times when I used quantitative terms to explain qualitative meanings. I had to learn to use the word “I” in my writing for the first time. One of the hardest changes was to trust myself as the primary interpreter of the data.

The differences in purposes between quantitative and qualitative studies can be clearly seen by comparing selection studies. Selection studies using quantitative analysis are useful, for example, in providing
the basic tenants for understanding fairness issues incorporated in a standardized interview process. Quantitative studies have found generalizable findings of unfairness in many minority cases. Most issues of unfairness especially in minority hiring were analyzed through statistical lenses. These studies confirmed that unfairness exists in minority hiring today.

Qualitative analysis helped me to investigate the issue of minority teacher hiring in the Columbus Public Schools from another perspective other than unfair bias. In these exploratory interviews, principals described the difficulties they have in finding minority teachers. The school district issued a directive to hire a quota of minority teachers, but had failed to provide assistance to accomplish the task. There is no evidence of district minority recruitment in this study, which frustrated the principals trying to find minority teachers. One of the primary benefits of an exploratory approach is the ability to create new theories and new understandings. These then can be added to or compared with findings from quantitative studies.

A possible next step using the findings from this qualitative study would be to conduct a quantitative survey to identify factors that influence the hiring of minority teachers. The purpose of qualitative and then quantitative analysis or vice versa, would be to build on the finding of the first analysis to construct more comprehensive theories related to teacher selection. It seems that quantitative studies are limited to testing
already developed theories and their objective is to "objectively" uncover the accurateness of theories, whereas, qualitative studies can explore and develop explanations leading to the development of theories.

In quantitative analysis, each study comes to a conclusion. The conclusion may be "this is true," "this is not true," or "this is inconclusive." However, it seems finished. In qualitative analysis, it never seems finished. As I tried to describe or explain an issue, additional layers of complexity emerged. After nine months of reading this data, my analysis is not yet exhausted. There are no doubt still layers of understandings to be constructed.

Through the separate complexities that each paradigm presents, I have learned more than if I had situated my studies in only one paradigm. I have more tools to use in investigating different aspects of a phenomenon. I feel much stronger about designing this qualitative study because I could question the issues and usefulness of both methodologies.

Effects of the Study on the Researcher

It would have been impossible for me to conduct this study without it having an impact on me personally and professionally. This was an area that I wanted to study in order to apply to my life. I accomplished that.

Personally

On a methodological level, this study taught me to look critically at evidence or discussion of the methodologies when reading research. I
will not assume that any article is based on adequate research methodologies. I will be able to understand research articles better now knowing how to critically assess the research paradigm.

This study taught me to look further for explanations. I will be cognizant of my tendency to assume that I understand an explanation given by someone else. Typically in the past, I immediately assumed that I understood someone’s comment. After doing these interviews and analyzing them carefully, I now will ask for clarification so that I can better understand people’s perspectives. I want to be careful that I don’t take another person’s meanings for granted.

As a direct follow-up to avoiding quick assumptions, I hope to be less inclined to judge others—based on my understandings of them. Quick and inaccurate assumptions can lead to quick and inaccurate judgments, which I want to avoid. I have lived with a tape recorder in my book bag for so long that it has become a permanent part of me. Please feel free to tell me to turn it off when I talk to you.

As Interviewee

Interviewing principals about interviewing teachers taught me a lot about my own interviewing for a job. As I conducted this study, I was interviewing for a principal’s position myself. The opportunity to discuss issues, criteria, and qualities that experienced interviewers think are important has prompted me to think through these issues at a deeper level.
Many issues have become more clear in terms of what an interviewer is looking for, but most importantly, I have become more clear about what is important to me. For example, I have more carefully considered terms like “child centered” and other terms and issues by doing this research. Therefore, I can be more confident and more articulate when I interview for a job. I feel that I have become more honest with myself and with interview teams.

As Principal

I have begun to think about how I will respond and think differently as a potential principal after having conducted this study. One of the most important things that I learned is the importance of considering issues within these specific social and political contests. Before the study, contextual issues would have been “glossed over” as interfering with “black and white” conclusions. Now, I will look for the nuances that reflect complexities of all social contexts.

I have always been concerned with “fairness” issues in selection and in professional relationships. This concern has increased because I now look at contextual issues differently. I realize how easy it is to be influenced by biases of which we are unaware. I will endeavor to be a better listener and become more empathetic, trying to understand the contextual influences that surround issues and people’s understanding of them.
The student teaching experience is crucial to the development of new teachers. I want to be actively involved in the teacher education program at my school. It is important to facilitate the development of the cooperating teachers as well as the teacher interns. It is important to be a resource for cooperating teachers because this additional task that they take on is vital to the future of students and the education profession. I want to be an example of a life-long learner, creating a learning organization rich in reflection, inquiry, openness, and growth.

As Interviewer

I expected to find consistencies within a somewhat structured hiring process in my study. However, there were many activities described by the principals that were not structured that I thought were creative and effective. Before this study I would have relied on a structured hiring process related to procedural fairness especially when interviewing minority applicants. Now, I would no longer rely entirely on a structured hiring process because I have learned that unstructured procedures can add additional information that may not be gained from a rigid process. The following list identifies some of the procedures that I would like to implement:

- Send out a school brochure and packet of information to those selected for the interview and indicate teacher qualities the school is looking for.
• Request a “demonstration lesson” (15 minutes) on a teaching objective from the grade level curriculum
• Request that applicants bring a portfolio
• Create an interview team with grade level teachers, community members, resource teachers, support staff, and a student
• Request a writing sample concerning the applicant’s vision of teaching and learning
• Conduct a site tour with informal conversation
• The interview team will create a structured but open-ended question for categories: curriculum, professionalism, pedagogy, discipline, relationships with students and guardians, and professional development
• Create a democratic process in which the interview team comes to consensus

Advice for M.Ed. Interns

There are thousands of interview questions that can be found in articles and books, which are quite helpful. However, it takes more than scanning interview questions to be successful in the interview. Every facet of the interviewee is examined (voice, body language, dress, grammar, eye contact, nervousness, etc.) usually by a group of several people. It is not uncommon to find interview teams of 3-15 members.

Think about and come to a clear understanding for yourself about the educational issues that are important to you such as child centered.
teamwork, professional development, and school vision. It is common to be nervous, but then you tend to forget something that you wanted to say. If you haven’t decided on what is important to you, this happens more often. It is important to state these issues clearly because interview teams want to know you better and understand your philosophies.

Be prepared with a portfolio. Interview teams tend to evaluate applicants higher that appear to be organized and prepared. Be prepared to discuss examples in your portfolio, showing that you understand the complexities in teaching and learning.

The most important advice is to remind you to be honest and clear with yourself, which will bring you more confidence. However, another very important piece of advice is to practice. Practice with a group of your peers. A group environment with four to five persons will help you adjust to large groups in the interview setting. The feedback that you will gain from your peers on their perceptions of your responses should be similar to those of interview teams’ perceptions. The more you practice, the less nervous you tend to be in the actual interview setting.

Limitations

Participants were limited to recent graduates of the ECC/PDS teacher education program, who were willing to allow their hiring interviews to be shared and discussed between the researcher and the interviewing principal. The content of the interviews provides a thick description of the experience of hiring new teachers. However, this does
not suggest the same or similar findings if compared to a broader population of principals.

The intent of this study was to elicit data to understand and gain different perspectives on the hiring phenomenon for principals. Principals were free to choose what was said concerning the hiring process. I generated questions as general guidelines in search of opinions, perceptions, and attitudes designed to make the interviews conversational, open-ended, and unrestricted. My limited experience with question construction and the non-linear process of repeating and feedback loops influenced the initial interview responses. However, questions were tentatively constructed, to be revised and when needed to follow "unexpected leads that arise in the course of... interviewing" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 92). I also did follow-up questions when responses were unclear or not probed sufficiently.

My background may have had a limiting effect on principal responses. Principals were aware of my experience in the ECC/PDS and my philosophy towards this teacher education program. I tried to limit my personal comments about the program, but I did not hide them. I attempted to show them that I valued their impressions, especially contradictory ones, because I wanted to approach this from many perspectives. The fact that I was a former assistant principal seemed to enhance the relationship established with the principals. They responded well to me as a colleague.
This study was also limited by the decision to use interview techniques at the cost of participative and observational techniques. I had no ways to triangulate my data in order to assess whether their descriptions of the hiring processes were demonstrated in their implementation. Principals, however, appeared comfortable with the interview approach and seemed to speak without hesitation of their experiences and the realities of the hiring process.

Implications for Future Research

Principals are in a unique position to influence the whole-school reform movement through their knowledge and practice of the hiring process. The reform initiatives for the last two decades have called for the hiring of highly qualified teachers because of the direct effect that teachers have on student achievement. This study shows that principals who have knowledge of and/or experience with the ECC/PDS teacher education program would be likely to hire the student teacher interns graduating from that program, because they consider them to be highly qualified teachers.

This study sought to better understand three issues with the hiring process of principals: (1) What procedures do principals follow when hiring teachers? (2) What influences a principal’s decision when hiring teachers? and (3) Does the knowledge of and/or experience with the teacher education program, ECC/PDS, influence the hiring of teachers?
Organizational and educational reform theories were useful to explaining the findings of this study. The findings suggest further research based on organizational, education reform, and selection theories:

Organizational theories.

- How does knowledge of “systems thinking” affect hiring practices?
- How and to what extent do principals use the school vision to effect hiring decisions?
- Does participation in interview teams affect the decision-making process?

Professional Development Schools Programs.

- How do the test scores of students from PDS program teachers’ compare to the test scores of students from non-PDS program teachers?
- What differences do principals see in PDS Programs compared to traditional teacher education programs?
- Do teachers graduating from PDS Programs make a difference in the academic achievement of students? In what ways?
- Do hiring frequencies of PDS interns differ from those of non-PDS interns?
- How do cooperating teachers evaluate their involvement in the hiring of PDS interns?

Selection

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• Are the hiring practices of these principals common among principals in other urban, suburban, or rural areas?

• Does the construction of the interview team influence the decision-making process? In what ways?

Practical Significance of the Research

Typically, politicians, the public, and parents evaluate schools based on quantitative data results. In the current political and educational climate, school improvement is evaluated primarily on student outcomes such as achievement test scores, particularly improved reading, writing, and math scores. In addition, “tactics, strategies, and methods for principals to use in promoting school change/reform have been consistently addressed themes” in the reform literature (Prestine, 1994, p. 123). However, quantitative data and strategies do not reflect the whole story of what is happening in school reform initiatives today, and in this specific case, the hiring of new teachers.

This study was conducted using qualitative methods intended to increase our knowledge of hiring practices in schools. The use of the interview method gives the researcher an understanding of a person, his or her internal and external realities, and the meaning in his or her life experiences. The use of the qualitative interviews elicited information from principals concerning their beliefs, visions, and procedures for the hiring process.
The interviews allowed principals to explain and expand on their ideas and concepts of the hiring process. "Giving voice to the participants offers data that might otherwise go unobserved by researchers" (Schiavone. 2000, p. 180). In some cases, asking questions may have helped principals to clarify these concepts for themselves. Principals sometimes replied that they had not thought of these questions before, and that it was helpful to them to answer these questions for themselves. This format encouraged and provided an environment for reflection of the principals' perceptions and behaviors. This reaction of principals suggests that principals would benefit from contexts where they can talk about their practices and ask each other questions about vision, purposes, and procedures.

The hiring process in education has only begun to be studied in the last 15 years, compared to selection research in business and industrial organizations. The majority of the educational hiring literature available relies more on practical guidelines than on research results. In addition, only a small portion of the research on educational hiring practices has used qualitative methodology. The findings of the current study provides an initial examination of both the role of other actors in hiring practices and the dynamics of change within the current context of educational reform related to the selection of new teachers.
APPENDIX A

Interview Questions
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. HIRING PROCEDURES

- When we talk about hiring teachers, what do you think about?
- How do you prepare yourself for an interview? What do you try to think about? What do you look at?
- Describe how you conduct teacher interviews.
- What teacher qualities do you look for in a teacher applicant?
- What criteria do you use when you decide to hire or not hire a teacher?
- What makes the teachers unique that you hire?
- What added values do you look for that a teacher might bring to your school?
- Describe what makes a teacher successful in your school?
- In what ways do you look for teachers to grasp the complexities of teaching?
- If you utilize the group interview method, what do you do if you feel strongly about an applicant that the interview team does not support? Or vice versa? How do you resolve those differences?
- What kinds of things would you see yourself really attached to?
- What kinds of school district pressures affect your hiring of new teachers? How?
- What do you see as the most difficult part of hiring new teachers?
- What do you feel is most challenging in the hiring process?
II. VISION FOR SCHOOL
• If you could imagine your school in the best light, what would it look like?

• How does this vision for your school affect the way you hire teachers?

I. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS
• Do you think things are different in teacher education programs now? How?

• Do those differences make a difference in schools? How?

• Do you have any prior knowledge about the PDS/ECC program at OSU?

• What do you know about the PDS/ECC program at OSU?

• Did that influence how you viewed the teacher applicant?

• Do you notice anything different about the teacher from this program? What?

• How are teachers from ECC different from teachers from other teacher education programs?

• What are the qualities of that person that impressed you?

• What are the qualities of that person that did not impress you?

• Why did you decide to HIRE (NOT HIRE) this ECC teacher?

• With all the external pressure on principals to produce something different such as improvement in student achievement, do you hear or see something different in PDS/ECC teachers? What?
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

The Ohio State University Protocol # 99EO184

I consent to participating in research entitled:

Principal's perceptions and hiring practices of Master's of Education students in Educators for Collaborative Change, a professional development schools program at The Ohio State University

Dr. Marilyn Johnston, (Principal Investigator), or her authorized representative, Donna B. Weatherholtz, (Co-investigator) has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation. Possible benefits of the study have been described, as have alternative procedures, if such procedures are applicable and available.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information regarding the study and that any questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: ____________________________

Signed: ____________________________

(Participant)

Signed: ____________________________

(Principal Investigator or her representative)

Witness: ____________________________

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APPENDIX C

DATA CODES
I. TEACHER HIRING PROCESS
   a. Actions
      i. Time
      ii. Rating Scales
      iii. Steps
         1. Pre-Interview
         2. Interview
         3. Discussions
         4. Final Decision
         5. Job Offer
         6. Culture-Philosophy
   v. Commercial Programs
   vi. Principals Prepare Themselves
   b. School District Requirements
      i. Actions
      ii. Requirements
      iii. Impedes Process
      iv. Benefits Process
   c. Questions
      i. Kinds of Questions
      ii. What you are looking for
      iii. Process
   d. Interview Team
      i. Interview Team Conflict
      ii. Composition
      iii. Training
      iv. Responsibilities
      v. Value
      vi. Process

II. FACTORS THAT AFFECT HIRING TEACHERS
   a. Teacher Qualities
      i. Teamwork
         1. Philosophy
         2. Complement
         3. Examples
         4. Fit in
         5. Gets Along
      ii. Caring for Kids
      iii. Relatedness
         1. Parents/Guardians
         2. Children
iv. Knowledge of Teaching & Learning
   1. Teaching & Learning Styles
   2. Academic Success
   3. Diversity in Students
   4. Developmental
   5. Pedagogy
   6. Complexities

v. Professionalism

vi. Speak well
   1. write well
   2. presents themselves well
   3. philosophy
   4. organized
   5. vision
   6. portfolios
   7. flexible
   8. honesty
   9. confidence-maturity
   10. personality

vii. Child Centered

viii. Commitment

ix. Professional Development
   1. Reflection
   2. Lifelong learners

x. Experience

xi. Knowledge of Curriculum
   1. Student Achievement
   2. Subject Matter

b. Challenges & Difficulties
   Ethnic diversity
   Difficulties
   Quality Candidates
   Not What they Seem
   Principal Skill in Interviewing
   More than 1 Outstanding Candidate
   Time Demands
   Cohesive Team

c. Principal's Vision of School

d. Analysis of School Needs

e. Tacit Knowledge

f. District Pressures
   i. Test Scores
   ii. Pressure on Students
   iii. Personal Threats on Principals
III. TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

a. Making a Difference in Schools
   i. Weaknesses
   ii. Recommendations
   iii. Knowledge of TEPs

b. Professional Development Schools
   i. Changes from Teacher Education Programs
   ii. Making a Difference in Schools

c. Educators for Collaborative Change
   i. Qualities in Interns
      1. Knowledge of Curriculum
      2. Pedagogy
      3. Professionalism
      4. Maturity
      5. Negative Qualities
   ii. Impression of Program
      1. Inquiry
      2. Concerns
      3. Can you attribute to program
      4. Strengths
   iii. Differences in Other Programs
      1. Reflection
      2. Better Prepared
      3. Professional Development
      4. Better Teaching Experience
      5. Program Design
   iv. Interns in Classrooms
      1. Classroom Test Scores
      2. Program brought added value
      3. Matching STs & CTs
   v. Administrator Participation
   vi. Program Changes to Benefit Schools
LIST OF REFERENCES


http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ca/Ohio_standards.htm [2000, April 12, 2000].


