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The Currency of Teacher Trust in Working Conditions for Teacher Retention

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THE CURRENCY OF TEACHER TRUST IN WORKING CONDITIONS

FOR TEACHER RETENTION

by

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ABSTRACT

THE CURRENCY OF TEACHER TRUST IN WORKING CONDITIONS
FOR TEACHER RETENTION

Jeanette White
Old Dominion University, 2023
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Virginia Public schools continue to face teacher shortages, and policymakers and school leaders are desperately seeking ways to influence teachers' decisions to stay at school. This multi-site case study of seven elementary schools offers a conceptual framework to examine how teachers' trusting relationships with students and parents relate to working conditions and retention. Teacher interview excerpts, an overall measure of teacher working conditions using the Virginia Climate and Working Conditions Survey (Virginia Department of Education, 2021), and school-level descriptive statistics were analyzed to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of trust and other working conditions within their schools. In this study, teachers' trust is closely related to teachers' perceptions of their working conditions. Across class groups previously identified by a latent profile analysis, teachers spoke most often about benevolence, portrayed as respect, competence, reliability in their relationships with students and parents, and the impact of COVID. Teacher trust in students and parents did not appear connected to teacher tenure or the average percentage of teachers who planned to continue teaching at their school. However, school-level teacher retention rates did relate to teachers' perceptions of working conditions through student engagement, relationships among students, relationships between students and adults, and parent involvement. The average years of teaching experience for the case study schools were associated with the teachers' responses on the state survey about managing student behavior and student engagement. The dissertation concludes with future directions for research and implications for teachers and leaders about the underlying

reasons for students' misbehavior, the social context of student learning, fostering trust with parents, and paying attention to the currency of trust in strengthening satisfying working conditions.

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband and daughters, who patiently waited for me to complete my scholarly pursuit. Thank you for seeing beyond what I thought I could do. I love you. To my brilliant, beautiful daughters, this dissertation proves the value of education and that hard work, and a growth mindset can lead you to achieve anything your heart desires. To my mother and father, who left this world too soon, I pray this work reflects the honorable life you raised me to live.

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I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Rachel White, who provided invaluable guidance and encouragement. Even when her career path took her to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, she remained with me on my scholarly journey. Dr. White's thoughtful feedback and unwavering commitment to my success as a researcher and educator led me to complete this dissertation. I am also grateful to my esteemed committee, Dr. Rachel White, Dr. Steve Myran, and Dr. Tony Perez, for their time, critical thinking, and meaningful comments that strengthened my work and my growth as a researcher. They saw the value in my work and guided me through the unexpected twists and turns of this research and dissertation.

I want to acknowledge my ODU Cohort 5 doctoral program colleagues who inspired me with their personal stories, passions, and educational contributions. I especially want to recognize two members of my cohort, the Dissertation Divas, my accountability partners, for keeping me moving forward with humor and encouragement. These ladies always kept the end in mind, even when I could not see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I am grateful to the participants. Their stories and introspections left me wanting to continue this research to strengthen teachers' trusting relationships with their students and their parents and to give them a compelling reason to continue teaching. And, to my school family, your daily work is evidence that teachers' trust in our students and families binds all of us together to make for a joyful learning place.

Finally, thank you to my family and friends for understanding when I disappeared into my study for weeks to research and write. Each of you contributed to my sanity in some way. Your loving support, understanding, and unique brand of humor helped me to keep this challenge from becoming overwhelming.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

For almost twenty years, researchers have discovered that teachers who leave public schools serving historically marginalized students are not choosing to turn away from their students (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Ladd, 2011; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Marinell & Coca, 2013), but they are turning their back on working conditions that interfere with their teaching and student learning (Johnson, 1990, 2006; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).The school context, particularly issues related to school and district leader support, teacher involvement in decision-making, salary, and school culture, are related to higher teacher turnover despite school location, school level, and demographic characteristics of teachers and students (Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson et al., 2012; Ladd, 2011). Working conditions, then, are strong predictors of teachers' job satisfaction and their decisions to stay in or leave their schools or districts (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Simon & Johnson, 2015). The working conditions that are the strongest predictors of teacher job satisfaction and retention are intangible working conditions of social relationships, including aspects of school organizational culture defined as "the extent to which the school environments are characterized by mutual trust, respect, openness and commitment to student achievement" (Johnson et al., 2012, p. 14). So, what is it about teachers' relationships that helps them feel satisfied with their working conditions and stay at their schools?

Background

According to the Virginia Department of Education Workforce Data (Austin et al., n.d.), 79.58% of teachers are staying at their school, a steady decrease over the last ten years. There is also a substantial increase in teaching positions in Virginia with 800 vacancies on average prior

to the pandemic to 3300 as of August 2022. Since 2000, prekindergarten through twelfth-grade student enrollment in Virginia Public Schools has increased at twice the national rate (Virginia Board of Education, 2019). The number of students requiring supplemental instruction and services has increased, especially English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students receiving special education services (Miller, 2018; Sorensen et al., 2018). At the same time, Virginia's public school teacher turnover rate was 10.2% between 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (Virginia Department of Education, 2017), a significantly higher rate than the national average of 8 percent (Sorenson et al., 2018). In a Virginia Board of Education (2022) report, elementary (PreK-6) and special education teachers were the top two critical shortage teaching areas—meaning that districts are struggling to recruit and retain teachers with these specialty areas. When teachers turnover—that is, when teachers move from their position to another position within the same school, to another school within the same district, or to another district, but stay in the profession (Garcia & Weiss, 2019)— the replacement teachers hired are largely early-career teachers (teachers with 3-5 years' experience) with provisional teaching licenses (Sorenson & Ladd, 2018). Consequently, students— particularly in high-poverty divisions in Virginia's rural and suburban areas with large portions of teachers with provisional licenses (Sorensen et al., 2018)—are likely taught by less experienced teachers (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Carroll et al., 2000; Clotfelter et al., 2007; Hanushek et al., 2004; Ingersoll, 2001; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Moreover, Ingersoll (2001), Guin (2004), Johnson et al. (2005), and a host of researchers who built on their work years later found that chronic teacher turnover negatively impacts the organization, including finances and student learning (Achinstein et al., 2010; Allensworth et al., 2009; Balu et al., 2009; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). In Virginia, 82% percent of teachers stay at their school, 7 percent leave to continue teaching in another school within the

division or across divisions, and 11% of Virginia's teachers exit the system to teach in another state, work in a non-teaching position, retire, leave to work in another field, or leave for other reasons (Miller, 2018; 2020). The demand outstrips the supply of highly qualified teachers in Virginia's public schools.

Repeated turnover may weaken the stability necessary for trusting relationships among teachers, students, and families. Instead, sustained relationships are the strong social capital that helps schools establish norms for instructional quality, professional conduct, student behavior, and parental involvement, especially for students living in poverty (Bryk et al., 2010; Simon & Johnson, 2015). Allensworth et al. (2009) found that while teacher stability rates in elementary schools are strongly related to the characteristics of the student population, many of the differences that remain can be explained by aspects of the school climate and organizational factors. The most influential organizational factor in teacher stability rates was "positive, trusting, working relationships" (Allensworth et al., 2009, p. 25). In addition to trust between teachers and their peers and building leaders, trust between teachers and their students and parents influenced teachers' perceptions of their working conditions and teacher turnover (Allensworth et al., 2009). Teachers want to be in schools with strong norms for behavior and consistent discipline practices (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Marinell & Coca, 2013). It is evident across the research that teachers want to be at schools where adults and students feel safe and teachers can teach (Allensworth et al., 2009; Cohen et. al, 2009; Public Agenda, 2004). Research suggests that student behavior influences teacher turnover; however, teacher turnover also influences student behavior (Marinell & Coca, 2013) when students do not respect or trust incoming teachers.

The organizational effect on trust emphasizes the importance of interpersonal trust and the extent to which learners believe in the trustworthiness of their teachers as a source of information in schools (Forsyth, 2008; Goddard et al., 2001). The impact of trust between teachers and students is further substantiated by learning science literature which states that learning happens within complex and dynamic social contexts that mediate and shape knowledge construction and co-construction (Alexander et al., 2009; Bandura, 1999; Bruner, 1966). Within the social context of schools, teacher trust in the student (Forsyth, 2008, Goddard et al., 2001) and academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006) have a greater potential to predict student achievement than socio-economic status. Goddard et al. (2001) asserts that teachers also help students gain institutional access through "trusting relationships that create social capital that fosters academic success, especially for disadvantaged students" (p. 6).

Teachers' relationships with their students' parents also contribute to teachers' satisfaction with working conditions (Allensworth et al., 2009; Loeb et al., 2005). Teachers need and expect parents to collaborate with them to problem solve about student misbehavior (Bryk et al., 2010). Goddard and colleagues (2001, and Smith et al. (2001) found that trust between teachers and parents is essential where a power imbalance can get in the way of supportive home-school relationships. A teacher's trust in students and parents is needed for cooperation to accomplish common goals for the benefit of students (Goddard et al., 2001). In the Joint Legislative Audit and Review commission Report for the Virginia General Assembly on the 2022 Pandemic Impact on k-12 Public Education (Austin et al., n.d.), one reason teachers are experiencing lower job satisfaction is a lack of respect from parent and the public. Teachers are not likely to trust parents who do not demonstrate appropriate care for their children. Likewise, parents need to be able to rely on the word and actions of the teacher to trust. Trust within the

home-school relationship is more likely when both parties are willing to risk vulnerability for children.

Purpose of the Study

If school leaders and policymakers want to retain quality teachers that will positively impact students, they need to understand the factors that improve teacher morale and increase job satisfaction, including how to build a trusting school environment. Researchers have shown that trust fosters a set of organizational conditions where members will likely treat one another with respect, honesty, and selflessness, promoting a fair workplace for teachers to work and students to learn (Goddard et al., 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2004; 2011). Studies also show that working conditions can influence teachers' decision to leave schools, increasing teacher turnover (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2011). Yet, scholars have not systematically studied teachers' trust in students and parents as a possible influence on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), which may play a role in teacher turnover. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between teachers' perceptions of trust in students and parents, their working conditions, and whether teachers stay or leave a school. Informed by research on teacher trust, working conditions, and turnover, this study was guided by the following questions:

1. How does teacher trust in students and parents, together, relate with teacher perceptions of their working conditions?

2. What is the relationship between teacher trust in students and parents and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

3. What is the relationship between teacher working conditions and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

In the sections that follow, I describe the conceptual framework that guides the study, based primarily on existing literature on teacher trust, working conditions, and turnover. Following the framework, I describe the significance of the study. Then, I define terms relevant to this investigation. Finally, I provide a roadmap to the study.

Conceptual Framework

This research is grounded in a conceptual framework based on the integration of research and literature on teacher trust, working conditions, and turnover. As shown in Figure 1, the framework is a model that represents a way of looking at trust as a key variable that, in conjunction with working conditions, may provide a more holistic understanding of turnover. The framework supports the possible relationship between teacher trust in students and parents, teacher perceptions of working conditions, and teacher turnover, and will be further elaborated in Chapter II. While many researchers have analyzed student and teacher characteristics as predictors of teacher turnover, the working conditions most predictive of teacher satisfaction and retention are school leadership, collegial relationships, and elements of school culture (Simon & Johnson, 2015). The model, as seen in Figure 1, guided this research to analyze the effects of trust on teacher perceptions of the work environment and turnover.

Figure 1

Framework for Effects of Teacher Trust on Working Conditions and Teacher Turnover
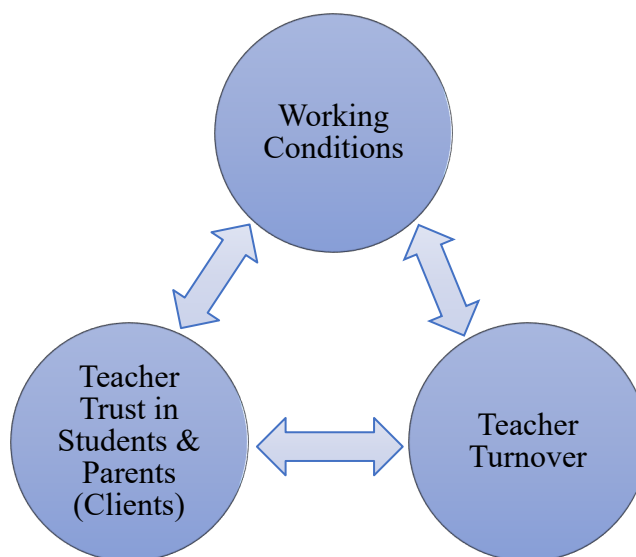
Significance of the Study

This research will contribute to the field of K-12 educational leadership by building upon prior research on teacher trust in students and parents and its possible relationship with teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, which may play a role in teacher turnover. With this knowledge, school and division leaders will gain insight into trust as a social feature that matters in teacher satisfaction, teacher retention, and the success of elementary schools. This research will help school leaders make decisions about working conditions and school climates that are trusting, satisfying, safe, and lead to student success. With increasing teacher turnover rates, especially for teachers early in their careers, this study could convince school leaders to abandon a one-size-fits all approach and shift toward a differentiated strategy to retain teachers. While teacher turnover in some districts declined during 2020, working conditions and job satisfaction have remained the same, and there is a critical need to make the teaching profession worth pursuing and remaining (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021). Furthermore, the COVID -19 context has resulted in a need for greater levels of differentiated learning for students, requiring strong relationships between students and adults in their schools.

The needs are even greater for Black and Latinx students, English language learners, students with disabilities, and schools serving the lowest-income communities (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021).

I use the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b) to examine potential explanations of teachers' perceptions of working conditions and teacher turnover and the role trust plays in both factors. Additionally, I examine how teacher tenure and student achievement on state standardized tests vary based on teacher trust, alongside working conditions and turnover. The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews provides a deeper understanding of the harder to measure elements of teacher working conditions and trust in students and parents, and the relationship to teachers' decisions to stay or leave their school, division, or the teaching profession altogether.

It is important to understand the influence of teacher trust in students and parents on teacher professional experiences and decisions. If teacher trust has a significant impact on perceptions of working conditions or turnover, it will be beneficial for research to examine if and how trust can be strengthened within schools. While researchers have examined this topic, much of the research is outdated, as schools have experienced a rapid change in working conditions that will likely change the school environment in perpetuity. We must recognize the currency of trust and working conditions to break the cycle of chronic turnover and build capacity in schools where teachers trust students and parents and there is collective trust to help students succeed.

Definition of Terms

The terms defined below are derived from the themes related to this study. While there may be multiple meanings in other fields, for the purposes of this study, they are defined as follows:

Teacher Attrition. Teacher attrition is when teachers decide to leave the education profession (Ingersoll, 2001).

Early Career-Teachers. Teachers with three to five years of experience (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2019).

Faculty Trust. Also referred in this study as "Teacher Trust," is "an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, p. 189).

Novice Teachers. Teachers with one to two years of experience (NCES, 2019).

Teacher Retention. Teachers who remain in the teaching profession, regardless of if they are the same teaching assignment (Billingsley, 1993).

Turnover. Teacher turnover is when teachers move from their position to another position or school, either in a school division or across divisions, but stay in the profession (Garcia & Weiss, 2019).

Trust. Tschannen-Moran (2000, p. 556) recounts the definition of trust she created with Hoy (Hoy &Tschannen-Moran, 1999) as "one party's willingness the to be vulnerable to another party or group, based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honest, and (e) open."

Voluntary Teacher Turnover. Voluntary teacher turnover is a teacher's willingness to leave their current school, in contrast to teachers who are reassigned to different schools (Reid, 2008).

Working Conditions. Working conditions for teachers include the physical features of the workplace, the organizational structure, and the sociological, political, psychological, and educational features of the work environment (Johnson, 2006; Johnson et al., 2005).

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of this study provided the context for the problem of teacher turnover in Virginia, and an introduction to the conceptual model to explain the possible relationship of teacher trust in students and parents as a factor of working conditions that may influence teacher turnover decisions. Chapter II provides a review of literature related to teacher turnover, working conditions, and teacher trust, which informs the conceptual model. In Chapter III, I describe the methods used for this study. The findings of the study, including analysis of the descriptive quantitative data and qualitative phases of the study, are provided in Chapter IV. The themes across the phases will be discussed. In the final chapter, Chapter V, I summarize the findings, discuss the implications for school and district level leaders, and suggest possible research.

CHAPTER II

Literature and Conceptual Framework

This literature review will provide a conceptual framework for teacher turnover, teacher perceived working conditions, and teacher trust. First, the literature on national trends of voluntary teacher turnover, especially the trends related to novice, early career, and minority teachers, are described. Next, research on the predictors of teacher turnover including school characteristics, teacher characteristics, and working conditions are reviewed to understand the possible root problem of teacher turnover. The impact of teacher turnover and working conditions are evident in a school's organizational capacity, student achievement, and the intangible costs of teacher relationships. Finally, teacher trust in a variety of referents is described. The scholarly pursuit is to build a logic that connects teacher trust in students and parents to teachers' perceptions of working conditions that may impact voluntary teacher turnover intentions in schools.

Voluntary Teacher Turnover

A well-functioning school must be prepared to meet the complex needs of diverse students. Yet, the increasing demand for teachers and a decreasing supply and constant rate of teachers leaving the profession jeopardize students' welfare (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Teacher turnover describes the mobility within the workforce and includes when teachers transition between schools and districts, and even out of the profession (attrition) (Castro et al., 2018; Ingersoll, 2001). Voluntary teacher turnover is a teacher's willingness to leave their current school, rather than being reassigned (Reid, 2008). Some involuntary teacher turnover is beneficial to schools, when the quality of the workforce improves when ineffective teachers leave and are replaced with higher quality teachers (Katz, 2018). In all organizations, there will

inevitably be some portion of employees who are dissatisfied with their employment and choose to leave their positions; however, high rates of voluntary teacher turnover in a district may be related to working conditions (Johnson et al., 2012; Katz, 2018; Ladd, 2011; Loeb et al., 2005). Working conditions for teachers include the physical features of the workplace, the organizational structure, and the sociological, political, psychological, and educational features of the work environment (Johnson, 2006; Johnson et al., 2005). According to the Department of Education Teacher Follow-up Survey (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012), 90% of the demand for teachers comes from when teachers leave the profession. This situation is critical in public schools that serve historically marginalized populations (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

National Trends

A report from the Economic Policy Institute (Garcia & Weiss, 2019) examines the magnitude of teacher shortages and working conditions, and other factors contributing to the shortage. The study's findings are clear: more teachers are leaving schools and the profession than people are entering the teaching profession. In fact, 13.8% of public-school teachers are leaving schools. In the last decade, the annual teacher turnover rate has remained around 8 percent nationally and is more than double that for schools designated for Title 1 funding (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). By comparison, the annual turnover rate in high-performing countries, such as Finland, Ontario, and Singapore, is approximately 3 to 4 percent (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

According to the report (Garcia & Weiss, 2019), this harsh reality leads to three problems. First, the potential decline in the teachers' qualifications is driven by increased turnover and attrition, changes in teaching preparation programs, changes in state teaching

credential requirements, and the overall loss of individuals going into the profession. High attrition and fewer applicants are issues driving the teacher shortage and are responsible for some of the costs and consequences of the teacher shortage (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Ingersoll 2004; Sutcher et al., 2016).

The second problem described in the Economic Policy Institute report (Garcia & Weiss, 2019) is the challenge of filling positions, sometimes resulting in hiring teachers with fewer credentials and qualifications. The third problem is that high-poverty schools are tough to staff. These schools usually have more vacancies, are likely to fill positions with newly hired and often novice teachers and have teachers who are more likely to leave the school or profession, which leads to a shortage of highly qualified teachers. Notably, Ingersoll (2001) found that teacher turnover rates are highest in the South and generally at Title I schools and schools with high proportions of students of color.

In a recent study of six cities by Rosenberg & Anderson (2021), teacher turnover declined from 17.3% in the last three years to 12.5%, but the challenges that influenced turnover before the pandemic continued. In all six cities, there was a decline in teacher turnover across all subgroups (gender, ethnicity, school level, school poverty, and years of experience) when compared to the average of the previous three years. Still, there was a disproportionate impact on women caretaking for children (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Diliberti & Swartz, 2021; Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic brought teachers increasing workloads and decreased job satisfaction with virtual instruction demands, engaging students, caretaking responsibilities, and fear of sickness (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021; Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021). One-third of teachers working during the pandemic said they would retire earlier, and of the teachers staying, 84% of administrators report low teacher morale (Rosenberg & Anderson,

2021). The challenges of the pandemic compound the problem of attracting and retaining teachers with low salaries, difficult working conditions, and a lack of career opportunities. Overall, the decline in teacher quantity, coupled with the possible decline in quality, mitigate disparities in student access to quality instruction.

Novice and Early Career Teachers

After a teacher's first few years in the profession, they often either commit to staying, or decide to leave the profession or move schools. Novice teachers are teachers with one to two years of experience (NCES, 2019) who often do not have access to the experience and mentoring of veteran teachers, are in schools with lower student achievement levels, and likely, will leave schools or the profession (Hopkins et al., 2019; Loeb et al., 2005 Before their fifth year, up to 30% of early career teachers leave the profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Cooper & Alvarado, 2006; Ingersoll, 2003; NCES, 2019), and a startling 16% of public-school teachers either move school or leave the profession every year (Castro et al. 2018). According to Rosenberg and Anderson (2021), 32% of teachers in high poverty schools have less than three years of teaching experience. In a typical year, novice teachers in high poverty schools are more likely to leave their district than peers who are also early career but at low-poverty schools and more than experienced teachers at any subset of schools (Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the early career teacher turnover rate dropped to 19.5%. While this may sound like a positive trend, it was likely the economic conditions (unemployment rates were two to three times higher in summer 2020) that led teachers to stay at their jobs (Rosenberg & Anderson, 2021). In research of Massachusetts schools, Bacher-Hicks et al. (2021) found no major changes in turnover during the pandemic years compared to previous years, but there was an increase in diversification of the teacher workforce. Bacher-Hicks et al.

(2021) hypothesize the increase is due to the loosening of teaching credential requirements during the pandemic. As the economy is recovering and school districts are returning to in-person instruction, schools are beginning to see an increased teacher shortage, again, with increased resignations, leaves of absences, and retirements. Teacher retention is vital to addressing teacher shortages. As a current example, nine out of ten teachers hired to replace a teacher who has left teaching in California are first year teachers (Carver-Thomas et al., 2021).

Minority Teachers

Teacher turnover is higher among teachers of color, early career teachers, and teachers with alternative certification (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2017; Castro et al., 2018). These indicators are reinforcing, because more minority teachers and inexperienced teachers are at schools serving lower income and minority communities (Erichsen & Reynolds, 2020). Teachers of color tend to have higher turnover rates than White teachers, and the gap has increased in the last decade (Ingersoll & May 2011). This is particularly problematic given the extensive research that now shows the strong relationship between academic achievement and outcomes of students of color and having teachers of color (Gershenson et al., 2017; Holt & Gershenson, 2015; Joshi et al., 2018; Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Lindsay et al., 2021; Redding, 2019; Yarnell & Bohrnstedt, 2018). Additionally, both minority and White teachers who moved between schools in 2004-2005 were most likely to move to schools similar in demographics from the schools they departed (Ingersoll & May 2011). High-poverty schools, high-minority schools, and urban schools have higher teacher migration rates than low-poverty, low-minority, and suburban schools. The result is still a loss of minority teachers from urban and poor schools – the schools already having trouble filling positions. According to the teachers surveyed by Ingersoll & May (2011), the most common reasons for moving or leaving a school

were to pursue a different job or career or dissatisfaction with an aspect of their job. Ingersoll

and May's (2011) findings do not show what aspects of the teachers' jobs they are dissatisfied

with, and they suggest investigating the impact of job and organizational conditions on teachers'

choices,

Predictors of Teacher Turnover

Predictors of teacher turnover closely related and across the research are school

leadership, collegial relationships among staff, and resources. A school community of shared

trust predicts job satisfaction and mitigates the negative influence of working conditions.

Nevertheless, teachers are still leaving schools where working conditions interfere with teaching

and learning. Ultimately, a vicious cycle is created where teachers leave when there is low

student achievement and stay where student achievement is higher.

School Characteristics

Studies at the national and state levels, From California (Loeb et al., 2005) to North

Carolina (Ladd, 2011), have examined how teachers' perceptions of their working conditions

impact retention, and the findings can guide school leaders and policymakers to reduce turnover

(see also Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012). These studies identify

school leadership, trust and shared responsibility between administrators and teachers, teacher

self-efficacy, and student behavior as areas to improve to reduce teacher turnover. The most

significant predictors of teacher turnover across the research are school leadership, collegial

relationships among staff, and resources.

Stearns et al. (2014) examined the level of kindergarten teachers' job satisfaction using

the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. In this study, they created a concept of a "collective

pedagogical teacher culture" (Stearns et al., 2014, p. 56) that relates to the idea of relational trust

and a norm of collaboration. Stearns et al. (2014) found that a community of shared trust and values predict job satisfaction among kindergarten teachers and reduces the negative influence of working conditions. Stearns et al. (2014, p.22) conclude, "a strong professional community cushions the challenges and frustrations teachers otherwise experience, permitting them to find satisfaction in their very challenging jobs."

Bryk and Schneider's theory of relational trust (2002) takes a similar perspective on collective pedagogical teacher culture. In their research, Bryk and Schneider (2002) surmised that Chicago Public schools struggling the most with student performance also lacked trust and were the least successful with reform efforts. Teachers trust one another when they believe that their colleagues will competently do their job, and teachers will respect each other and help one another when needed (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Building on this idea, Guin, 2004; Louis, 2007; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009 found that relational trust is necessary for teachers' satisfaction and school improvement. Moreover, Simon and Johnson (2015) and Johnson et al. (2012) found that teacher trust in other teachers fosters a commitment to excellence. Ultimately, high teacher turnover is a deterrent to establishing trust (Torres, 2016). There is likely a cycle of teacher turnover and low student achievement when social trust is lacking,

Teacher Characteristics

Generally, younger, and older teachers turnover more often than middle-aged teachers (Allensworth et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2005). Additionally, teachers who are early in their careers turnover at higher rates than more experienced colleagues, and turnover rates increase again when veteran teachers retire (Allensworth et al., 2009; Ingersoll, 2001). Boyd et al. (2006) determined that novice teachers who complete an alternative certification program are also more likely to turnover. In their Hamilton project report to address teacher shortages in the United

States, Dee & Goldhaber (2017) found it especially difficult to recruit and retain teachers in schools with high proportions of historically marginalized students and teachers with certifications in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), special education and English language learning.

While more qualified teachers, identified by certification scores, are more likely to leave the profession (Boyd et al., 2005), more effective teachers, as identified by gains in student achievement, are less likely to turnover (Boyd et al., 2008; Goldhaber et al., 2011; Hanushek et al., 2004). One thought about this trend is that more qualified teachers leave because their qualifications are valued in other professions, and "effective teachers tend to remain in the profession because they derive satisfaction from their success with their students" (Katz, 2018, p.4). Therefore, teachers whose students show academic achievement through student assessment scores are more likely to remain in the profession (Boyd et al., 2007; Hanushek et al., 2005).

The Teacher Follow-up Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau conducted every three to five years for the National Center of Education Statistics through the U.S. Department of Education provided data about teachers who left their schools during the 2004-2005 school year (NCES, 2019). In this study, 35.7% of teachers surveyed left the profession for a better work-life balance, while 25.7% moved schools for increased autonomy (Marvel et al., 2007). More than half of the teachers participating in the survey report state their primary reasons for leaving are their need for more manageable workloads and better work conditions (Castro, 2018).

Workplace Conditions

A common reason teachers change schools or leave the profession is their dissatisfaction, especially with school leadership and their working conditions (Borman & Dowling, 2008;

Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Additionally, teachers' low pay, poor facilities, no voice in how and what they teach, and personal safety are the working conditions influencing teachers' decisions to stay or leave (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Katz 2018). Teachers leave schools and the profession because they fear violence and experience stress from behavior management issues (Smith & Smith, 2006) and student discipline problems (Ingersoll, 2001).

Yee (1990) found that the trust and cooperation among staff is also a job condition that may influence teacher morale. In a study of North Carolina public schools, teachers remained at their schools when they perceived they were respected and trusted by school leaders, participants in shared decision-making, and were supported with student discipline (Ladd, 2011). Furthermore, interactions with colleagues can have a positive or negative effect on teachers' perceptions of working conditions (Mason-Williams et al., 2022).

The six major studies of teacher turnover in high poverty schools and studies of public teachers in Chicago, California, New York City, Massachusetts, and North Carolina support the notion that to retain teachers, schools must consider the quality of school leadership, collegial relationships, within a culture of trust, respect, and shared values. Borman and Dowling's (2008, p. 398) meta-analysis studies of teacher attrition revealed that "teacher networking, collaboration, and administrative support" were essential for retention. In each of the six studies, special attention to staff relationships and work conditions was found to be critical to confront the high levels of turnover in high poverty schools.

School leadership is responsible for setting the school climate, establishing daily norms and routines, and ensuring teachers have the needed resources for success. A teacher's working conditions, including administrative support and feedback, influence their decision to leave or

stay (Allensworth et al., 2009). Administrative support is important for beginning teachers'

retention (Miller et al., 1999), especially for special education teachers (Youngs et al., 2011) and

teachers in high poverty schools (Bettini et al., 2020). Administrators can promote teachers'

access to social assets to allow them to build relationships for educational opportunities for their

students (Miller et al., 1999).

Impact of Teacher Turnover

Underserved students are faced with the highest rates of teacher turnover. Turnover, then,

depresses student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorenson &

Ladd, 2018). Along with student achievement, turnover negatively impacts a school's climate,

which gets in the way of building community and developing trusting working relationships.

Shortage of High-Quality Teachers in Low Achieving Schools

Schools with a shortage of teachers likely have teachers with less experience, are less

effective, and have lower levels of student achievement and less positive student outcomes

(Castro et al., 2018). Teacher quality is especially a concern for schools comprised of greater

proportions of students of color and students living in poverty. These schools are three to ten

times more likely to have uncertified teachers, teachers not adequately prepared, or teaching

outside their prepared field than predominantly White and more affluent schools (Castro et al.,

2018). The impact of teacher turnover on student achievement is most sorely felt in schools with

larger populations of low-performing and Black students (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). High rates of

attrition compound the negative impact of teacher turnover among teachers in schools with

higher portions of historically marginalized students (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2005;

Hanushek et al., 2004). Turnover creates more turnover, weakening the overall quality and

ability of the school's teacher pool (Sorenson & Ladd, 2018). This issue is amplified because the

most underserved students are faced with the highest rates of teacher turnover. Turnover depresses student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorenson & Ladd, 2018), especially in the highest poverty schools, with "turnover-induced loss of general and grade-specific experience" as the primary influence of declining student achievement (Sorensen & Ladd, 2018, p. 4).

Diminished Organizational Capacity and Intangible Costs

Turnover has broad, harmful effects on students and schools, specifically related to relational trust among faculty. When comparing the portion of teachers leaving a school to the portion of teachers who arrive, turnover harms the morale of the teachers who stay. It also impacts the cohesion of the school, given the role colleagues play in curriculum, instruction, student assessment, and school governance and policy (Kraft & Papay, 2014; Sorenson & Ladd, 2018). Simon and Johnson (2015) state, "repeated turnover thwarts the continuity needed to build sustained, trustful relationships among teachers, students, and families" (p.5).

Trusting relationships are the social capital that help schools to create norms for instruction, professionalism, student behavior, and parental involvement which relates to student achievement, especially for financially impoverished students (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Bryk et al., 2010; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). The most influential organizational factor in teacher stability rates was "positive, trusting, working relationships" (Allensworth et al., 2009, p. 25). Furthermore, "Teachers in high poverty schools report significantly less social support than those in low poverty schools" (Mason-Williams et al., 2022, p. 3).

Teacher turnover negatively impacts professional networks in schools, affecting teacher morale and effectiveness (Jackson & Bruegmann, 2009). Intangible costs of teacher turnover may include a decrease in employee morale or increased pressures on working relationships

(Guin, 2004). These intangible costs are connected to the concept of trust, which Bryk & Schneider (2002) found influence organizational functioning and student outcomes. Relational trust in schools can be defined as "the social exchanges of schooling as organized around a distinct set of role relationships: teachers with students, teachers with other teachers, teachers with parents and with their school principal" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 20). In schools with strong relational trust, "individuals understand what is expected of them and the consequences that may ensue if obligations are not met" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 33). Helping teachers connect with parents also improves relationships and improves teacher retention (Allensworth et al. 2009).

High turnover impacts the ability of school members to work as teams, which may erode relational trust. A person must have some experience with another person to trust, and if schools are repeatedly getting new teachers, it is "difficult to establish trust because teachers, students, and parents are always dealing with strangers, individuals with whom they have no experience" (Guin, 2004, p. 3). Furthermore, turnover makes teamwork difficult because of the instability of the team players. Trust may decrease uncertainty for teachers (Luhmann, 1979) and bolster their cooperation (Gambetta, 2000). Teachers are likely to feel safer, more secure, and more positive about others in their school if they consider them trustworthy. And teachers are more likely to feel satisfied in their job when they feel others are trustworthy (Dinham & Scott, 1998; Ma & MacMillan, 1999).

Teacher turnover can negatively impact the schools' climate and student achievement (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). A positive school climate, including trust (Cohen et al., 2009), is essential in retaining beginning special education teachers (Billingsley, 2004; Billingsley et al., 2004), along with informal support systems to help prevent turnover (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007). Special

education teachers may also be vulnerable to leave school or the profession because they encounter additional stressors, unlike their general education teachers, such as working with students with behavioral or emotional challenges and inadequate resources (Adera & Bullock, 2010).

Hopkins et al. (2019) examined teacher turnover by studying 47 teachers in their first five years of teaching. They found that social conditions, like not feeling supported by colleagues or administration, are strong influences on beginning teachers' decisions to stay or leave. Although beginning teachers desire to collaborate with experienced colleagues, they often work alone (Kardos & Johnson, 2007). Neugebauer and colleagues (2019) built on Johnson & Birkeland's work (2003) by identifying a relationship between teacher collaboration and a higher self-efficacy that influences teachers' decisions to stay at their schools and in the profession. Many scholars have shown that trusting relationships positively affect teachers (e.g., Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Daly & Liou, 2014; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2007). Teachers are more likely to make themselves vulnerable in high-trust environments where they can ask questions and receive help (Daly & Liou, 2014; Leana & Pil, 2017).

In addition to trust between teachers and their peers and building leaders, trust between teachers and their students and parents influences teachers' perceptions of their working conditions and teacher turnover. Teachers want to be in schools with clear student behavior norms and consistent discipline practices to feel emotionally and physically safe (Allensworth et al., 2009; Cohen et. al, 2009; Public Agenda, 2004). Student behavior influences teacher turnover: however, teacher turnover also influences student behavior (Marinell & Coca, 2013) when students do not respect or trust incoming teachers.

Influence of Working Conditions on Teacher Turnover

Schools serving a high proportion of historically marginalized students tend to have less desirable working conditions which may be strongly related to teachers' decisions to stay or leave (Katz, 2018). The organizational issues related to school and district leader support, teacher involvement in decision-making, salary, and school culture, are related to higher rates of turnover even when controlled for school location, school level, and demographic characteristics of teachers and students (Ingersoll, 2001). Working conditions, then, are strong predictors of teachers' job satisfaction and their decisions to stay or leave their schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Simon & Johnson, 2015). The working conditions that are the strongest predictors of satisfaction and retention are intangible working conditions of social relationships, including aspects of school organizational culture defined as "the extent to which the school environments are characterized by mutual trust, respect, openness and commitment to student achievement" (Johnson et al., 2012, p. 14).

Job Satisfaction

In a study by Van Maele & Van Houtte (2012), the influence of social connection on teacher job satisfaction is investigated. Smith et al. (1969) describes job satisfaction as an overall satisfaction with work, which is assessed using measures of individuals perceptions of the job including the extent the job is fascinating, creative, useful, and challenging. A teacher's level of job satisfaction predicts retention (Crossman & Harris, 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011) and relates to their sense of efficacy and stress (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2012). Considering the conditions for job satisfaction, then, will likely improve teacher retention.

A teacher's involvement in a social system and their interactions with other school members is necessary to meet goals (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Students are active participants in the learning process in the classroom, colleagues help one another with instructional issues, and

principals provide needed resources to teachers for effective instruction. Additionally, a teachers' work can lead to student learning success when parents are involved in their children's education. The essential element to the quality of teachers' social relationships in their workplace is trust.

Relational Trust

In this study, Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999 's definition of trust is used as it relates to a person's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the expectation that the other person is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent. Bryk and Schneider (2002) explored trust in a school context using a relational trust perspective that considers social exchanges within schools around a role relationships (Blau, 1986; Merton, 1957). Trust is an essential component to an organization's social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Coleman, 1990). The social capital perspective for trust relations in schools is frequently used in educational research (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard, 2003; Moolenaar & Sleegers, 2010; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011). Many researchers have determined the worth of a trusting environment for school effectiveness (e.g., Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Cosner, 2009; Daly, 2009; Daly & Chrispeels, 2008; Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Louis, 2007; Van Meal & Van Houtte, 2009, 2011; Van Maele, 2011). Faculty trust is a collective characteristic when repeated interactions among teachers from a school builds the trustworthiness of other school members (Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) surmised that positive social relationships with colleagues, parents, and school leadership relate to teachers' job satisfaction through their feelings of belonging to the school. However, teachers consider their relationships with students, not adults, as the most crucial aspect of their job (Shann, 1998).

Disparities in Social Assets

Using data from the Schools and Staff Survey and quantitative processes, Mason-Williams et al. (2022) studied how beginning teachers' race/ethnicity and their students' race ethnicity and other characteristics related to perceptions of their schools' social capital and how the teachers perceptions influenced their decisions to continue teaching. According to Amos (2020) and Endo (2015) beginning teachers of color reported experiencing discriminatory treatment; and their perspectives on students and families were often the opposite of colleagues' stereotyped perspectives and they felt less supported. Mason-Williams et al. (2022) found relationships between teacher and student sociocultural characteristics (disability, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status) and their intent to stay. Additionally, they found that beginning teachers who experienced stronger administration support and colleague satisfaction were significantly more likely to stay at their school (2022). Special Education teachers were significantly less likely to stay than general education teachers; and teachers of color were significantly less likely to plan to stay than White teachers (Mason-Williams et al., 2022).

Mason-Williams and colleague's (2022) review of the literature highlighted that beginning teachers rely on social and cultural resources in their schools, highlighting that collective social assets are "powerful predictors of beginning teachers' experiences and outcomes" (p.4). They call attention to beginning teachers who establish strong social assets which include positive school culture, strong administrative support, and colleagues who feel satisfied with the working conditions, have greater confidence, development of more effective pedagogical skills, and greater commitment to stay in the field. As they emphasize, the school's social resources can quell the danger of attrition by providing beginning teachers with necessary

information about meeting their responsibilities and how to have a sense of belonging to their school community (Mathews et al., 2017).

Teaching assignments can also contribute to vulnerability. Research suggests that early career teachers may experience weaker collective social assets if they (a) teach special education, (b) are people of color, (c) teach in high poverty schools, or (d) teach in schools serving larger portions of students of color (e.g., Fall & Billingsley, 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Wasburn-Moses, 2010). As previously described, these positions have higher risks of attrition (e.g., Nguyen et al. 2020). The disparities in teachers' access to schools' collective assets may contribute to inequities in students' access to well-supported, committed teachers. Marginalization is seen when teacher assignments are made in special versus general education, high versus low poverty schools, schools serving more students of color than fewer students of color (Mason-Williams et al., 2022). "Together, the beginning teachers' identity and their students' identities may cause them to feel a lack of connectedness, support, and collegiality, all associated with high attrition" (Mason-Williams et al., 2022, p. 3).

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic added stress to an already stressful profession. In a RAND Survey of almost 1000 former public-school teachers, nearly half of the public-school teachers cited the pandemic because they voluntarily stopped teaching after March 2020 and before their planned retirement (Diliberti et al., 2021). Some teachers report added work hours, navigating a remote environment, and technical issues as contributors to their stress (Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2021; Diliberti, et al., 2021; Rosenburg & Anderson, 2021). However, the majority of the teachers who voluntarily left the profession because of reasons related to the pandemic indicated that they would be willing to return to public school (Carver-Thomas &

Darling Hammond, 2021; Diliberti, 2021). In the RAND Survey, stress was reported as almost twice more than insufficient pay as the reason for leaving, and most of the teachers took jobs with less or equal pay (Diliberti et al., 2021). Finally, of the teacher leaders currently employed, three in ten hold a non-education related job, another three in ten have a different teaching position, and the remaining teachers are in non-teaching education jobs (Diliberti et al., 2021).

Teacher Trust

Definition and Conceptualization of Trust

Early studies define the concept of trust as a behavior (Deutsch, 1958), and later it was considered an attitude(Rotter, 1967). In more current studies, trust is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct (Schoorman et al., 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) that is unique to a context (Rousseau et al., 1998; Schoorman et al., 2007). The seminal work by Hoy and Kupersmith (1984) on faculty trust launched research into different forms of trust, its formation within schools and the consequences for school and student performance. Across the literature, vulnerability is a necessary condition for trust (Rousseau et al., 1998; Schoorman et al., 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Building on this, a common definition of trust can be found in Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's work (e.g., Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Tschannen-Moran, 2004) where trust is defined as "the willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the other party is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 29). School trust will also be considered a collective commodity of all teachers that develops through affective, cognitive, and behavioral norms (Adams et al., 2009).

Facets or Faces of Trust

Benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness are five criteria on which teachers judge other people's trustworthiness (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Benevolence is the confidence that another party will protect a person's well-being or something they care about. Reliability is the extent to which a person can count on another party to follow through with what is needed. Competence refers to the ability of another party to do as expected according to the standards related to a task. Honesty describes another party's character, integrity, and authenticity. Lastly, openness is the extent to which relevant information is shared with another party. A person becomes vulnerable to another by sharing information (Forsyth et al. 2011; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999).

Distrust

Trust can facilitate communication, promote cooperation, and improve employee performance (Davis et al., 2000). Perceived violations of trust in a workplace frequently result in diminished trust, job performance, commitment, and retention (Robinson et al., 2004). When there is diminished trust, "people are increasingly unwilling to take risks, demand greater protections against the possibility of betrayal, and increasingly insist on costly sanctioning mechanisms to defend their interest" (Kramer, Brewer, & Hanna, 1996, p. 4). A lack of trust in school is a barrier to progress and a school reaching its full potential (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Distrust in a school causes students to disengage and spend time in self-protection rather than learning (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Distrust is compounded when there is a plethora of classroom or school rules derived from a lack of trust and fosters alimentation between teachers and students.

Teacher Trust in School

Trust in school is made up of social exchanges within the school around unique role relationships (Blau, 1986). Adams (2008) describes four referents of trust are based on the organizational roles within school communities: students' parents, teaching colleagues, and the school principal. "Each party in a relationship has an idea about their role obligations but also hold some expectations about the other parties' role obligations" (Bryk and Schneider 2002, pp. 20). Teachers consider the actions of these role groups in relation to meeting their own role expectations, which affects teachers' level of trust (Bryk and Schneider, 2002). A trust-based environment changes schools into learning communities (Tschannen-Moran, 2004), and a reduction of teacher turnover builds a culture of trust (Mishra & Morrissey, 1990).

Teacher Trust in the Principal

Teacher trust in the principal as an individual differs from the collective trust (Forsyth et al., 2011; McEvily et al., 2006) in students, parents, and colleagues. Teacher trust perceptions increase when principals work in a way that is consistent with the responsibilities of their positions. The principal's behaviors are operationalized when they are aware of teachers' needs, are open to teacher feedback and ideas, set a positive example in building a healthy climate, and respect the professional judgement of teachers (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Furthermore, the principals' intentions are judged by their leadership practices and the culture that reflects their leadership. Especially in the early stages of a relationship, when a teacher is vulnerable to the authority held by the principal, it is critical for a teacher to determine if their principal is trustworthy (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). A principal's trust can be the glue holding a school together, or it can cause distrust and teachers protecting themselves from anticipated harm (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Faculty trust in principals is linked to faculty perceptions of the

professional orientation of a principal, and the professionalism of colleagues, meaning principals set the tone of trust in their buildings (Tschannen-Moran, 2009).

Teacher Trust in Colleagues.

While teacher-client and teacher-principal trust is built from interactions across roles, faculty trust is based on exchanges and relationships within a teacher role group (Adams, 2008). Bryk and Schneider (2002) argue that reducing vulnerabilities creates social conditions for the kind of interactions needed to build trust. For example, engagement, collaboration, and professional behaviors break down real and self-imposed vulnerabilities and risks and foster supportive climates. Student economic status and size do not account for significant variability in faculty trust (Geist & Hoy, 2004; Hoy et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2001), supporting the notion that faculty trust is dependent on social conditions within the teacher role group.

Teacher Trust in Students

As teachers trust their students, they believe their students are respectful, honest, reliable, open, and competent, and are more likely to create classrooms that facilitate student academic success (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Students benefit from having teachers who trust them as this relationship enhances the students' sense of belonging and achievement (Goddard et al., 2009). The organizational effect on trust in schools emphasizes the importance of interpersonal trust and the extent to which learners believe in the trustworthiness of their teachers as a source of information (Forsyth, 2008). Research by Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy (2001) have shown that increases in student trust results in increases in student achievement in reading and math, even when considering socioeconomic levels. Teachers' trusting relationships with students (Forsyth, 2008; Moore, 2010; Watson & Ecken, 2003) and academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006) have a greater potential at predicting student achievement than socio-economic status.

The impact of trust between teachers and students is further substantiated by learning science literature which states that learning happens within complex and dynamic social contexts that mediate and shape knowledge construction and co-construction (Alexander et al., 2009; Bandura, 1999; Bruner, 1966). Trusting relationships foster student engagement (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003), which can positively impact student behavior and achievement.

Teacher Trust in Parents

Parent-teacher relationships influence teachers' satisfaction with working conditions (Allensworth et al., 2009; Loeb et al., 2005). Teachers expect parents to problem-solve with them about student behavior (Bryk et al., 2010); therefore, trust between teachers and parents in schools is essential to building supportive home-school relationships (Goddard et al. 2001; 2009; Smith et al. 2001). Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) discovered when teachers do not trust their students; they are unlikely to trust their students' parents. Trust between home and school is more likely when both parties are willing to risk vulnerability for children (Adams, 2008). By communicating perceived risks and vulnerabilities, fears are diminished, and positive, collaborative interactions are built (Adams et al., 2009). While relational barriers can sometimes cause ineffective communication between teachers and parents, the barriers can be lessened by structures, policies, and practices that promote harmonious social exchanges (Adams et al., 2009). A teacher's perception of a trusting relationship between teacher and parent in not about the number of contacts, rather it is the quality of the relationship (Adams & Christenson, 2000). Parents are essential to student success and fostering trusting relationships with them will keep parents involved. in school and students' educational experiences (Abdul-Adil & Farmer, 2006).

Teacher Trust in Students and Parents

Teacher trust in clients, conceptualized by Hoy & Tschannen-Moran (1999), includes both teachers' trust in students and parents. In their development of the Faculty Trust in Clients subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale, Hoy & Tschannen-Moran (2003) found that there was not enough difference between the student and parent scales to maintain two measures. Therefore, they merged the two factors together as a single factor, known as faculty trust in clients. Teacher-student trust works through teacher-parent trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). In research by Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy (2001), greater levels of faculty trust in students and parents resulted in higher levels of reading and mathematics achievement. The effects of academic emphasis (Geist & Hoy, 2004; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Hoy et al., 2002), collective teacher efficacy (Goddard & Tschannen-Moran, 2001), and parent-school trust (Adams & Forsyth, 2007) reflect the behavior of the actors in the teacher-client relationships which is considered open, reliable, competent, benevolent, and honest (Adams, 2008). Over time, the information of each group align with socially defined expectations and client trust begins to build within teachers (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Impact of Teacher Trust, Working Conditions, and Turnover

Researchers have shown that trust fosters a set of organizational conditions where members will likely treat one another with respect, honesty, and selflessness, promoting a fair workplace for teachers to work and students to learn (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; 2011). Studies also show that working conditions can influence teachers' decision to leave schools, increasing teacher turnover (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; 2011). Nevertheless, scholars have not systematically studied teachers' trust in students and parents as a possible influence on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), which may play a role in teacher turnover. This study examined the relationship between teachers' trust in students and parents

and teacher perceptions of working conditions to understand better the role of trust in the workplace that may influence teachers' decisions to stay or leave schools. If school leaders and policymakers want to take action to retain quality teachers that will positively impact students, they need to understand what trust is about and the factors that may foster or hamper a trusting school environment.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

School leaders and policymakers can take action to retain quality teachers by understanding the factors that may foster or hamper a trusting school environment. The primary purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between teachers' trust in students and parents and teachers' perceptions of their working conditions to understand how trust in the workplace may operate, and its potential relationship with teachers' decisions to stay or leave schools in the state of Virginia. The secondary purpose of this research was to explore if teacher tenure varies based on teacher trust, alongside working conditions and turnover.

Research Design

This study was a multi-site case school design (Jenkins et al., 2018) that is primarily qualitative with descriptive quantitative data to support an understanding of the local context. By collecting data from multiple settings with similar methods and procedures, I aimed to enhance the "transferability and trustworthiness of findings to other contexts by comparing data across sites" (Jenkins et al. 2018, p. 1). As a qualitative researcher, I constructed my understanding of context and experience as I engaged with the focus group teacher participants and studied data. Informed by research on teacher trust, working conditions, and turnover, the following questions guided this inquiry:

1. How does teacher trust in students and parents, together, relate with teacher perceptions of their working conditions?

2. What is the relationship between teacher trust in students and parents and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

3. What is the relationship between teacher working conditions and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

The teacher focus group interviews were essential to answer the research questions from a teacher's perspective. In this phase of the study, I extended my thinking to ask and answer new questions that may not have surfaced using a different approach (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Additionally, gathering information from various sources ultimately provided an efficient design (Creswell, 2007). The two phases of this research design were Phase 1, Qualitative Focus Group Interviews, and Phase 2, Analyses of Descriptive Data to understand the local context and to answer the research questions. Each phase is described in greater detail in the following sections.

Data Collection and Methods

Site and Sample Selection Procedures

My research was a sub-study of a larger project, the Teacher Working Conditions for Equitable Student Outcomes (TWC-ESO), funded by the U.S. Department of Education Institute for Education Sciences (IES). The TWC-ESO is a collaborative project between the University of Virginia, the University of Tennessee, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, and the Virginia Department of Education (Grant R05S210009) that is collecting and analyzing the Virginia Department of Education's School Surveys of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE) completed by all teachers in the state, alongside focus groups of teachers and interviews with principals to understand the relationship between teacher working conditions, teacher retention, and equitable student outcomes. The seven schools in this sub-study were purposely selected based on the school-level average of teachers' responses to the Climate and Working Conditions and their participation in the TWC-ESO study.

Four classes of schools in the TWC-ESO study were developed by Miller et al. (2023) through latent profile analyses of survey data focused on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions. The four classes of schools are described as follows:

- **Class 1**: Schools in this class have below average teacher working conditions on all eight dimensions of the survey with especially low scores on the physical environment and feeling safe dimensions.

- **Class 2**: Teacher working conditions at schools in this class tend to be average or above average, with high scores on Rigorous Instruction, Managing Student Behavior, and Family Engagement. Meanwhile, scores are below-average typically for Instructional Agency and Professional Growth.

- **Class 3**: Teacher working conditions at schools in this class tend to have below average teacher working conditions but have the highest scores on Instructional Agency. However, they have below-average scores on Managing Student Behavior, Family Engagement, and Rigorous Instruction.

- **Class 4**: Schools in this class have mostly above-average teacher working conditions with especially high scores on the School Leadership and Professional Growth Opportunities dimensions.

I selected seven elementary schools within classes 1, 2, and 4, each having at least 70% probability in their respective classes. I was interested in these classes because they potentially offered the most insight into teachers' perceptions of their working conditions. I did not select Class 3 schools because of their similarities to Class 2, and no Class 3 elementary Schools participated in the TWC-ESO study. My study focused on elementary teachers because the Virginia Board of Education (2022) identified this group as having the most significant number

of unfilled positions. I limited the target population to licensed prekindergarten to grade five teachers in a classroom setting who are employed full-time.

My research was granted an exemption as a sub-study of the TWC-ESO study, and, as a graduate student assisting the lead researchers on the TWC-ESO study, I observed the teacher focus groups as they responded to the semi-structured interview protocol on video conference. Site-specific interview transcripts were uploaded and organized in a qualitative database program to facilitate an analysis of the seven site-specific subsets by the lead researchers of the TWC-ESO study. I deductively and inductively coded the transcripts from seven elementary schools as secondary data. This qualitative coding process included identifying themes and learning how teachers' perceptions form about trust, working conditions, and their choices to remain or leave employment with a school.

I also analyzed responses to six measures of the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b) from teachers in the sample of seven schools. Average scores from the following measures were used: Student Engagement; Relationships Among Students; Relationships Between Students and Adults; Rigorous Instruction; Managing Behavior; and Parent Involvement. I considered teachers' responses to the question asking about their intentions for employment next year. Additionally, descriptive statistics from the VDOE on the schools' teacher retention rate and teacher tenure were analyzed to determine the possible relationships between teachers' trust in students and parents, teachers' perceptions of working conditions, and the influence of both on teacher turnover.

Instrumentation

2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions

The 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b) assesses teachers' perceptions of the extent to which their school provides access to a healthy school climate to learn, work, relate, and flourish and provides data specifically to assess school-level teaching conditions in four domains of a healthy school climate: engagement, relationships, expectations, and safety. According to the VDOE Frequently Asked Questions (2019a), research supports four domains contributing to improved student outcomes: engagement, relationships, expectations, and safety. The questions in the engagement area are related to a caring and comfortable environment that fosters connectedness to the school and learning. The relationship domain is aimed at a culturally responsive environment that encourages mutual trust, respect, and supportive relationships among students, parents, and staff. Questions in the expectations domain are related to the schools' roles in addressing obstacles to learning and implementing effective teaching pedagogy that promotes the overall development of students. The safety domain measures how all school members feel welcomed, supported, and safe.

The Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions was piloted in 2017, and the measures were found reliable and valid at the respondent and school levels. The anonymous surveys were administered statewide in 2019, with the psychometric analysis of the responses completed again to confirm the reliability and validity of the measures (VDOE, 2021a). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey was not administered in 2020. In a presentation about the descriptive analyses of the 2019 Virginia Climate and Working Conditions Surveys, Dr. Luke Miller (2020) reported the 2019 survey outcomes and in January 2021, the Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions Survey was administered for a second time. School districts were invited to add district-specific questions, and schools were encouraged to request access to raw survey data for additional analysis. The survey serves as a diagnostic tool to

identify areas needing support from the state, to allocate resources specific to local needs, and monitor the progress of state initiatives. At the school level, this survey helps schools ensure favorable working conditions for professionals working in Virginia public schools.

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Research on teacher retention has primarily been based in large quantitative survey-based data sets that highlight elements of school context that influence teacher retention decisions and limit choices for teachers to explain complex ideas (Ladd, 2011). In phase 1, qualitative data from the schools' teacher focus group transcripts were collected for the larger TWC-ESO study. The focus groups were a convenience sample of teachers from seven schools. Semi-structured focus group interviews were completed via video conference to ensure safety due to COVID mitigation standards. The virtual meeting was convenient for teachers' schedules, and provided a similar experience to face-to-face interviews, allowing the interviewer to observe visual cues (Garbett & McCormack, 2001) and nonverbal data (Burnard, 1994; Fontana & Frey, 2005).

The interviews invited discussion about the issues directly under investigation and tapping into participants' perspectives (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The interviews consisted of six parts and began with an open-ended activity asking teachers to sort words related to working conditions on their computer screens. The teachers were then asked to explain their thinking as they separated the working condition issues into groups and introduced themselves to the group. The semi-structured interview questions from the TWC-ESO teacher focus groups are listed in Table 1. After introducing themselves to the interviewer, for the second part of the interview, teachers were asked about factors contributing to working conditions at the school and district level and with families and outside organizations. In the third part of the interview, teachers were asked questions about variations in working conditions - over time, after COVID,

across grade levels, by groups of students taught, demographics, and tenure. The fourth part of the interview included questions about how working conditions influence their decisions to stay or leave a school. Questions about the contextual factors of the school environment were in the fifth section. The final part of the interview included questions aimed at how the survey results are used in their schools.

Table 1

TWC-ESO Teacher Focus Group Interview Questions

Interview Questions
1. Lead me through your thinking in separating these working conditions issues into groups. Are there other working conditions you would add? Which condition stood out to you as the most relevant to you lately? If you were given a chance to change any condition about your school, what would it be?
2. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? How long you have been at this school? Teaching?
3. Thinking more generally about working conditions, not specifically related to COVID, what do you feel are the major contributors to supportive working conditions in your school?
4. What do you feel are the major barriers to supportive working conditions in your school?
5. What are district-level supports or barriers to working conditions?
6. In what ways, if any, do you feel families contribute to or hinder working conditions for teachers in your school?
7. In what ways, if any, do groups or organizations contribute to or hinder working conditions for teachers in your school?
8. Obviously, over the past year, there have been some major working condition changes as a result of COVID-19. Thinking back to the Flippity activity that we first did, what do you feel is the biggest working condition change that you've experience in the past year?
9. Now I am wondering about working conditions not related to COVID. Beyond the changes that have had to occur due to COVID, what do you feel is the biggest working condition change that you experienced over the course of time you've been working here?
10. What do you think informs changes in working conditions? Is there any data that you know is used to inform decisions to make the change you just mentioned?
11. In what ways do you feel that teachers at different grade levels experience different working conditions? What about content areas? What about teachers working exclusively with specific student populations?

Interview Questions

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12. Do you feel that you experience working conditions differently because of your race or ethnicity? Why or why not? How about gender?
13. Do you feel that the amount of time you have worked as an educator has an impact on how you experience working conditions in this school?
14. What is it about this school and/or division that keeps you coming back each year?
15. Among friends and colleagues that you know of that have left your school, district, or the profession, has there been a common reason for their decision to leave?
16. Do you feel that leadership in either your school or district has attempted to make any changes in order to reduce turnover for this/these reasons?
17. What working conditions do you think most contribute to your ability to meet the needs of your EL students?
18. Do you feel like there are additional supports or changes in working conditions that are needed in order for you to meet the need of your EL students?
19. Does serving EL students shape how you perceive of working conditions in your school?
20. How would you describe your school community – rural, suburban, or urban?
21. In what ways do you feel that being a school located in a [insert type] community contributes to your working conditions? Did you grow and attend school in this community?
22. What do you think is the purpose of the survey (referring to the Virginia Survey of Climate and Working Conditions)? Has your administration ever reviewed results with you?
23. What would you like to see done at your school with the survey results?
24. What, if anything, would you like to see your district, or the state do with this data?
25. Do you feel like the survey is a way to have your voice heard? Why or why not?
26. Is there any other information, feedback, or suggestions you would like to provide related to the Working Conditions Survey?

Turnover Measures

The Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions Survey (2021b) included questions about the teachers' positions, primary and secondary teaching assignments, and years of experience. One survey question focused on retention asking, "Which of the following best describes your immediate professional plans?" At the state level, according to the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions Executive Summary (VDOE, 2022), most classroom instructors (83.6%) planned to continue working at their current school.

There were teachers who planned to continue teaching in their division but leave their school (3.4%). Another 2.7 percent of teachers planned to continue teaching in Virginia but will leave their division. There was 2.1 percent of the teachers who planned to retire, and 2.7 percent planned to leave education for a non-education field. The averages from the sample schools data were similar in most regards to the state level results. Most classroom teachers (81%) from the sample schools planned to continue working in their current school, but 4.71 percent teachers planned teach in their division, but leave their school. Another 2.43 percent of teachers planned to continue teaching in Virginia but would leave their division. The greatest differences between the state and sample averages were the percentages of teachers who would retire (.71%) and would leave education for a non-education field (4.74%). In the semi-structured teacher interview, questions were also included about working conditions/retention and turnover invited teachers to describe what keeps them coming back each year and why friends and colleagues have left their school, district, or profession. District retention, years of teacher experience, and percentage of novice teachers for the seven schools were secondary data provided through the TWC-ESO project.

The research data collection began in December 2022 and ended in February 2023. The original design incorporated a teacher trust survey for the seven schools to supplement to the Virginia Survey of Climate and Working Conditions. The notion was that since research on teacher turnover intentions shows that teachers tend to decide to leave around February and before state testing (Bang et al., 2007), the timing of the survey seemed ideal for gleaning teachers' career intentions. However, the logistics for incorporating the trust survey into the 2023 state survey could not be completed within the time allotted. Instead, responses from the 2021 Virginia Survey of Climate and Working Conditions at the seven schools were analyzed.

Combining the quantitative data from the survey, district data on teacher turnover or retention, transfer, and exit, along with the qualitative data from the interviews, provides a complete picture of turnover at the case study schools.

Analysis

This study aimed to systematically study teachers' trust in students and parents as a possible influence on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, which may play a role in teacher turnover. I used descriptive statistics from the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions from all public schools to identify potential participating schools. I selected seven elementary schools, one class 1, two class 2, and four class 4 schools. with at least 70% probability in classes previously identified by Miller et al. (2023). In considering the relationship between student achievement levels and teacher trust in students, I also considered the schools' Black and Hispanic-white achievement gaps. I selected these schools because I wanted to investigate any differences in teachers' perceptions and turnover between schools within certain classes and with different achievement gaps. Table 2 shows information about the sample in which pseudonyms are used for the schools to ensure confidentiality:

Table 2

Participating Schools

School	Class	Class Probability	Type	Gap Quartile
Cedar Elementary	1	.794	Suburb, Large	2
Gingko Elementary	2	.966	City	3
Maple Elementary	2	.867	Rural	4
Holly Elementary	4	.780	Rural	2
Magnolia Elementary	4	.700	City, Small	4

School	Class	Class Probability	Type	Gap Quartile
Mulberry Elementary	4	.864	Rural, Fringe	3
Oak Elementary	4	.957	Suburb, Large	2

In Phase 1, I drew on qualitative teacher focus group data collected as part of the larger TWC-ESO study to provide more nuanced descriptions of their working conditions, trust in parents and students, and decisions to stay or leave their school, district, or the teaching profession. The study's qualitative phase involved coding of interview transcripts obtained from teacher focus groups conducted via a videoconferencing platform. Line-by-line coding of each school was completed using a qualitative data program and the coding scheme in Table 3. I coded interview transcripts in two rounds. The first coding round was deductive, focusing on the five facets of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Research from schools in various settings confirms that these facets are essential aspects of trust in schools (Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Van Maele et al., 2014). Summaries of the facets by Tschannen-Moran's (2014), in Table 3, guided the deductive coding.

Table 3

Five Facets of Trust

Benevolence	Caring, extending goodwill, demonstrating positive intentions supporting teachers, expressing appreciation for faculty and staff efforts, being fair, guarding confidential information
Honesty	Showing integrity, telling the truth, keeping promises, honoring agreements, being authentic, accepting responsibility, avoiding manipulation, being real, being true to oneself, actions align with words

Openness	Maintaining open communication, sharing important information, delegating, sharing decision making, sharing power, no hidden agenda, share information with the appropriate people
Reliability	Being consistent, being positively dependable, showing commitment, expressing dedication, exercising diligence
Competence	Buffering teachers from outside disruptions, handling difficult situations, setting standards, pressing for results, working hard, setting an example, problem solving, resolving conflict, being flexible, have the right knowledge and skills to provide for what is needed

The teachers' interview responses were also coded as being about students, parents, both students and parents. Code cooccurrences were noted and contributed to the data analysis by establishing themes. I used a spreadsheet downloaded from a qualitative data program to categorize excerpts from the interviews systematically. I examined the frequency of the facets of trust, the number of positive and negative responses to each question, and the cooccurrence of codes.

I completed a within-site analysis for each school, followed by a cross-site analysis (Jenkins et al., 2018) to consider the frequency of codes for the whole sample. Then, I completed a between-site (Jenkins et al., 2018) analyses of schools grouped by class and by gap. A second within-site analyses of themes, inclusive of all seven sites was completed of the coded focus group transcripts to discern patterns and identify emerging themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) related to working conditions and teachers' decisions to stay or leave schools. Analyzing the data for each school through multiple readings increased my immersion in the data and contributed to the development of school-specific themes. Themes and observations from each school were written on memos within the qualitative database program. Two raters and this researcher coded three transcripts to check for reliability. There was 74% inter-rater agreement, indicating a moderately reliable coding scheme.

In Phase 2, I obtained secondary data from the TWC-ESO project with participating school-level scores from the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b). These data were analyzed, focusing on the six measures of the survey: Student Engagement, Relationships Among Students, Relationships Between Students and Adults, Rigorous Instruction, Managing Behavior, and Parent Involvement. The survey provided a quantitative description of beliefs and attitudes of the teachers (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). I completed descriptive statistics on secondary data secured from the school districts related to teacher turnover. I also considered in my analyses, school scores on state standardized achievement tests, Virginia's accreditation status (Virginia Board of Education, 2019), Title I (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002), student demographics, school discipline rates, and attendance. Finally, I used triangulation to reduce the risk of unintentional association and biases.

Limitations

Limitations are restrictions in a research design that the researcher has no control (Roberts, 2010). This study is focused on seven Virginia elementary schools in city, suburban, and rural districts and the results may not be generalizable to all schools but may be illuminating for other schools working with similar populations. The data were primarily obtained through the self-report survey and teacher focus group interviews. The objectivity of the teacher responses may be influenced by self-enhancement biases (Alicke, 1985; Alloy & Ahrens, 1987). The Teacher Response Rate on the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b) for each school ranged from 100% to 50%, and respondents may not have adequately represented the overall perceptions of the teachers in the school. Last, a limitation of the study is the reluctance of district and school leadership to participate in the TWC-ESO study. In the qualitative portion of the study, despite reassurances of confidentiality, teachers might

have been reluctant to participate or answer honestly in the semi-structured interviews conducted

in focus groups.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Overview

Frequently, the teachers leaving schools and education identify the reasons for their departure as working conditions that interfere with teaching and learning (Johnson, 1990, 2006; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). And a strong predictor of teacher job satisfaction and retention is the working conditions of social relationships (Johnson et al., 2012, p.14), including trust. Allensworth et al. (2009) cite trust between teachers and their students and parents as major influences on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions and teacher turnover. As summarized in the Chapter II Literature Review, teachers want to be in schools where adults and students feel safe and respected, and where trusting relationships can foster academic success (Goddard et al., 2001). In Chapter III, I described the study's methodology as a multi-site case study design. In this design, I used data about teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, semi-structure interviews of teacher focus groups, school-level teacher retention and tenure data, and school profile data from VDOE. Chapter IV describes the findings from the study from the semi-structure interview transcripts from the seven schools' teacher focus groups, the descriptive analysis of survey data from the 2021 Virginia Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b, and secondary data about the schools from the VDOE.

Research Questions

This study aimed to investigate the possible relationships between teachers' perceptions of trust in students and parents, their perceptions of their working conditions, and the ways these factors might influence teacher retention and teacher tenure. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. How does teacher trust in students and parents, together, relate with teacher perceptions of their working conditions?

2. What is the relationship between teacher trust in students and parents and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

3. What is the relationship between teacher working conditions and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure?

Findings

The content of the teachers' interviews, the frequency of codes, and the average scores on six measures of the 2021 Virginia Survey of School Climate and Working Conditions (2021b) were analyzed for reoccurring patterns. The state survey's measures of the percentage of teachers who agreed and strongly agreed were combined, then averaged for use in this study. Table 4 provides the average scores for the six measures analyzed in this study. A comprehensive table (Appendix A) including class and school demographics are included in the appendices. These descriptive data from the TWC-ESO study and the VDOE guided my inquiry.

Table 4

Six Measures of Working Conditions

Elementary School	Student Engagement	Relationship Among Students	Relationship Between Students & Adults	Rigorous Instruction	Managing Student Behavior	Parent Involvement
Gingko	93.25	94.50	96.60	82.17	68.23	87.25
Maple	83.50	95.25	91.00	71.33	59.69	83.75
Magnolia	65.50	88.75	86.00	63.17	55.54	78.75
Mulberry	72.00	77.25	88.20	69.33	45.31	63.75
Cedar	87.75	92.50	91.40	68.17	74.77	83.50
Oak	73.50	93.00	92.60	80.50	72.46	87.25
Holly	93.25	93.75	93.00	81.33	80.69	93.00

Note: Responses for Agreed and Strongly Agreed were combined for each question. The figures above represent the school's average percent of agreement to statements included in the six measures.

Research Question 1

In the focus group interviews and in the Virginia School Survey for Working Conditions, teachers perceived students as caring about each other and generally respectful in their relationships with adults. Teachers care about student success with academics and their relationships. Teachers often felt students needed more competence with self-regulation and social-emotional skills and that there was lost instructional time because of these deficits. Teachers across Class 1, 2, and 4 schools talked most frequently about the benevolence of students and parents.

The teachers' responses to the focus group questions were coded using the Facets of Trust (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) to answer the first research question about a relationship between teacher trust in students and parents and the teachers' perceptions of their working conditions. The focus group interview transcripts contained 168 coded responses about teachers' trust in students, parents, and students & parents as they relate teachers' working conditions. The teachers talked about students in 84 of the excerpts, the parents in 80, and, together, parents and students for 14 times. The teachers' responses about their trust in students were primarily negative (70), whereas the responses about parents were split between 49 negatives and 32 positive responses. The codes used most frequently were benevolence (62), competence (52), and reliability (37). The most insightful reflection of teacher trust was when teachers told stories focused on working conditions related to four reoccurring themes, student behavior, parent support, teachers' expectations about students' competence, and the impact of COVID.

Student Behavior

Student behavior was the working condition that teachers saw as most critical to satisfying work and learning. Many teachers believed a positive teacher-student relationship was foundational to an effective learning environment. Teachers described students as generally accepting, inclusive, and respectful in their relationships with adults. However, teachers often felt students lacked competence with problem-solving, emotional regulation, and social-emotional skills and that teachers spent a great deal of instructional time teaching these skills.

The co-occurrence of benevolence and reliability codes was evident when teachers talked about students' severe behaviors so that the teachers "could not push academics." "If we don't get this [student behavior] under control, the academics are secondary." A teacher stated that the working conditions involved "a new way of behavior that DOE has not seen." As teachers shared stories about their various classroom experiences, there was a consensus that "managing student behavior has become increasingly difficult." One teacher described her dilemma,

> I never know what my day is going to be like because we have children that will run, and you're chasing them down the street. They will rip your hair out and rip things off the walls destroying the classroom. Like it is intense. So that makes the work conditions hard. I plan for the day for my groups and I'm not gonna get to it because I'm chasing a child or I'm helping with a child who's you know, got four teachers in the hallway trying to block the hallway because the student is having an episode and they may hurt themselves. It is difficult to have a normal day.

While some teachers saw student behavior as a major challenge, they often blamed the adults - parents, administration, district, and society, as is evidenced by one teacher's statement,

I had a collaborative classroom, and the kid threw pencils at the County Administrator while I was teaching, and I was told to ignore the kid, so I did. They thought getting in their face and being kind and sweet was going to stop it because they didn't know the kid.

The teachers also discussed students not accepting responsibility for their behavior and needing to be rewarded, suggesting students lacked honesty and reliability.

Parent Support

A repeated theme was the teachers' need and appreciation for trusting relationships where parents supported them in matters related to students behavior. Teachers identified parent involvement as an essential working condition. Many teachers felt that when parents were actively and positively involved, parents supported the teachers, their children, and other families in the school. "We work together to make this the best place you can be at. Relationships are super important to build the foundation. When I have the support of families with student behaviors, things can fall into place." Teachers recognized the role of openness in establishing trust between teachers and parents, saying, "I've got great parent support. It is a kind of two-way street-we make sure that if you give them [parents] information, you find that they're more supportive." I identified a co-occurrence of the benevolence and reliability codes when the teacher stated, "You are lucky when you have it [parent involvement], but sometimes you don't." Another teacher considered parent involvement as a "plus and minus." The teachers expressed a strong desire to work with families to support their children to meet with success. A teacher stated, "I love the acceptance in our community and the diversity."

There were many teachers' accounts about times when parents lacked trust and were honest, open, and reliable as partners in their child's education. Frequently, teachers voiced frustration about parents lacking benevolence to support the teachers, especially with student

behavior. Teachers described parents as entitled, demanding, having unrealistic expectations, and controlling district decisions. A teacher explained, "Every year, certain families will cause issues. It is part of the game – you will always have someone unsatisfied. Parents disbelieve teachers about behavior or student learning problems or ask how we, the teachers, will fix it." One teacher concluded, "The number of parents of students with IEPs is increasing, and they are more anxious than before. Their expectations do not match reality." Some responses reflected a lack of trust that parents were honest, open, and reliable regarding being partners in their child's education. Examples of a lack of benevolence were when parents volunteered only for their child at field day, parents disbelieved the teacher when a student misbehaved, and parents not responding to communication. Perceptions about a lack of honesty were discussed when teachers felt parents did not accept responsibility for their children or were unrealistic about expectations. Many teachers found a lack of openness when parents loudly complained, used social media in despairing ways, and tipped the balance of power in district decisions. A teacher shared that she had to "lawyer up" because her student's parents threatened her livelihood with statements made on social media. Another teacher felt, "Parents have a big voice in what happens in our school, "there are certain families you just couldn't touch – people are afraid to say anything about a child misbehaving. You feel like you are always defending stuff." Finally, a lack of reliability with parents was described when they were unresponsive, uninvolved, and did not support teachers. A teacher said they sent home things for the parents, and it was "crickets." She stated,

> I don't know if parents even read all those little indicators. Some of my parents don't
> even know I exist. Another teacher added, I send the pictures. I do the comments. And
> parents are not responding at all. Nothing. I feel like, wow, I'm doing all these things for
> your kids. I'm trying to make this a comfortable place, a warm place, a place where your

kid wants to come and enjoy, learn, and have fun. And I'm seeing nothing from the parents' end.

Teachers across Class 1, 2, and 4 schools spoke about the importance of parental involvement, with teachers in Class 4 schools speaking more positively about parent support. Unlike the abundance of teacher interview responses about the lack of trust in parents and reliable parental support, the measure on the state survey for parent involvement reflected a more positive experience.

Teachers' Expectations of Students' Competence

When teachers thought about competence in the interviews, they mostly referred to the ability and reliability of students to follow school rules and exhibit self-discipline. However, they did discuss children's school readiness, learning loss, and student engagement. One teacher talked about student engagement and the teacher-student role in the engagement for effective instruction. She said, "I taught a student how to tie his shoes, and he was so excited he kept tying and untying his shoes. That was all I needed to remember why I am here." Teachers grappled with their concerns about meeting the needs of all learners, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students from communities with social and economic issues. A teacher said that English Learner "needs get lost in the fray, and I have to put him on the computer with math stuff he can understand" and "There are 12 IEPs in the classroom, and a couple of those kids need a teacher on their own."

Some teachers commented on different communities saying, "the populations are very different in our county, and the instruction comes across differently because of the behaviors. I never know what my day is like because our population – we have children that will run…it makes the work conditions hard." Another teacher reported,

We are having to deal with below-grade level performance. Fine motor skills have

plummeted, and handwriting is a huge issue. The kids are helpless as a result of COVID.

They don't know how to cooperate, or share, they are used to the adults solving it for

them.

The teachers at schools with the largest achievement gaps between the group, Gap 4,

spoke most often about how student behavior impacted learning and work environments.

Teachers from Class 4 schools spoke more positively than Class 1 and 2 schools about student

engagement, student learning, and how teachers work to support students. The teachers across

classes of schools acknowledged learning loss after COVID and the sometimes-unrealistic

expectations to catch students up.

Impact of COVID

The semi-structured interview included questions for teachers to reflect on working

conditions due to COVID and beyond. The subthemes for COVID were related to parent support

before and after COVID and addressing gaps in students' academic progress. A teacher

commented, "It's amazing that kids home with their parents for a year and a half are worse

behaved than when they were with us." A teacher agreed, "Because of the pandemic, the kids

were home, and they were driving their parents crazy. The parents were happy to throw them

back at us. And we've just lost a lot of those good connections. I think these are barriers we have

to overcome now." One teacher describes a relationship where teachers' break-up with parents,

I was trying to explain to someone the other day, it's almost like we had a relationship

with parents, and we broke up. You know, during COVID, we broke up, and our parents

got upset, got hurt in this relationship. It was COVID, something we couldn't control. But

we are humans and humans want to point at somebody for whatever is going on. I think

parents are thinking that you didn't want my kid, my kid didn't go to school, and I had to keep them. Now, here you go. It's all on you.

Several teachers lamented about parent support,

I feel like we have really lost the support of parents since COVID. And I think it's sad that we don't have volunteers in the building as much. We used to have volunteers everywhere you would like, and they were beating down the doors to come into the building to volunteer to file our Tuesday papers, do our bulletin boards, or have class parties. Now, we can't find people to do anything, but maybe Field Day.

On a more positive note, a teacher observed how happy parents were to be back in school and volunteering when saying, "When we were allowed to have volunteers back, I had five parents jump on it. The announcement went out. I had one mom come in and cry because she's never been in."

During the focus group interview, teachers acknowledged that students lost ground with learning. A second-grade teacher commented, "The whole second grade needed some kind of remediation. I mean, it was kind of crazy. And then we had that huge influx. And I think that the behavior part of it is one of the things that we struggle with as a school." And, with the acknowledgment of learning loss came the feeling that parents had unrealistic expectations of teachers. A teacher said,

There is the expectation that we're going to get it all done, you know, we're going to do it. We're going to catch them up. They have high expectations for their kids, and they should, but they have to also keep in mind that we're one person dealing in a room of maybe 20 individuals…things can't always happen the way they would like them to happen.

A teacher also noticed, "Students with IEPs were increasing, and parents were even more anxious than they probably were before. The expectations don't match reality." The teacher continued, "It's not just what's being asked, it's what's being demanded, and the expectations are not even in the realm of possibility."

Analysis by Class

When looking at the interview transcripts of schools grouped by Class, all three classes talked most frequently about benevolence. The teachers from Class 1 mainly shared positive comments about the benevolence of parents. The teachers acknowledged the importance of building relationships and parents want to be involved and visit school when they can. The teachers appreciated that their school community was different in its diversity, acceptance, and understanding. The teachers expressed their dislike when parents were loud, confrontational, and when parents "control the district's backbone."

Class 2 teachers spoke more negatively about the benevolence of parents and students. The themes were student misbehavior, parent entitlement, and lack of parental support for teachers. Teachers described students as expecting rewards for behaving and not receiving consequences. A challenge the teachers explained is the entitlement of parents. They stated,

> We have lots of the professor's children, we have lots of people that have higher socio-economics than most people…So I think that comes with a sense of entitlement and a sense of, yeah, this is what I can do. And I'm going to do it and you're not going to tell me I'm not going to do it. And then we struggle with that because parents feel that way. These teachers felt because the parents feel this way, they have raised their children to have a similar mindset.

Teachers also recognize the imbalance of power, when stating,

Those parents have had a big voice into what happens in our school. So basically, those

parents sort of rule what happens in our school, what happens to their kiddos, what

happens in the classrooms…there were certain parents and certain families you couldn't

touch.

The teachers at Class 2 schools spent considerable time describing the parents' lack of honesty

and benevolence. The teachers felt social media did not help build trusting relationships with

parents. One teacher shared, "You feel like you're always defending stuff, because there's some

you know, crazy, stay at home cat mom that you know, isn't happy with a teacher and just drag

your name through the mud."

Teachers in Class 4 schools also spoke more often about the challenge of student

behavior. However, they spoke more positively about parent involvement and support.

Our parents are absolutely wonderful, and they will support anyway they possible can.

And it's not even that they just support their kids, but the parents that can help to support

other families, too. There's never a lack of volunteers. And so, we are truly very, very

lucky to have them come in and help us all the time.

On the negative, teachers felt parents were demanding. One teacher said,

While our community is fantastic, our communicate can be kind of demanding and you

have to set some boundaries…I think you have to have some tough skin can't let it like

and you can't be checking your email all the time on the weekend because it will ruin you

and you have to set some personal boundaries.

The teachers also felt some parents had unrealistic expectations,

[They think] that we're going to get it all done, you know, we're going to do it, we're

going to catch them up, we're going to get the work together, no matter what happens on

their end, and so they have high expectations for their kids, and they should, but they

have to also keep in mind that we're one person dealing in a room of maybe 20

individuals. And so, things can't always happen the way they would like them to happen.

The teachers from Class 4 schools described the challenges of extreme student behaviors and

how these behaviors interfere with instruction. Teachers in this class spoke more positively than

Class 1 and 2 about student engagement, student learning, and about how teachers work to

support students.

Competence was the next most frequent facet of trust coded for Class 2 and 4 schools.

The teachers at these schools commented about students' misbehavior, their need for social-

emotional skills, and meeting the diverse student needs to achieve grade level performance. I

identified co-occurring codes for benevolence and reliability, positive and negative. The teachers

summarized that when the students and teachers were in positive relationships, students behaved,

parents supported teachers, and the teachers felt they could meet their students' needs. Likewise,

when students misbehaved and parents did not support teachers, there were unmet academic and

behavioral expectations. The teachers in Class 1 and Class 4 schools described instances when

parent benevolence was diminished when they were not honest and open in their communication

with teachers.

Analysis by Achievement Gap

Schools in the TWC-ESO study were also identified as having gap levels in achievement

between Black and white students. The smallest gap in overall achievement between the group

were identified as Gap 2 and the largest was a Gap 4. Teachers at Gap 2 schools most frequently

discussed the importance of relationships with students and parents to accomplish instruction. Of

the 79 excerpts, nearly split between parents and students, 47 excerpts were coded as negative

and 32 as positive. Negative comments were predominantly about student behavior and how it obstructs delivering instruction. These comments were mostly all from Oak School. Positive codes were about parent support through helping and showing acceptance. Co-occurring codes were benevolence, competence, reliability, and honesty or openness.

Teachers at Gap 3 Schools most frequently spoke about student competence. Of the 49 excerpts, I coded 40 as negative comments, 33 about parents and, 26 about students. The excerpts were about student behavior, students lacking self-control, and teachers being overrun by parents who often feel entitled. Honesty and openness in parents contributed to teachers feeling supported. Similarly, to the Gap 2 schools, I identified co-occurring codes as reliability, competency, and benevolence.

When looking at the excerpts for schools in Gap 4, the largest achievement gap between groups, benevolence, and competence were the most frequent codes. There were 51 excerpts, about half about parents and the other half about students. Excerpts coded for benevolence related to student behavior and how it impacted learning and work environments, and the influence of parents. The excerpts about competency were predominantly about student misbehavior contributing to teacher burnout and the need for students to develop social-emotional skills.

Research Question 2

The coded transcripts about teachers' trust in students and parents, along with the teacher' responses to the state survey's specific question about teachers' professional intentions, state data on the schools' teacher retention rate, average years of teaching experience, and percentage of novice teachers were used to answer the second research question about the relationship between teacher trust in students and parents and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher

tenure. There did not appear to be a relationship between the teachers' responses about their assessment of trust in students and parents and tenure or the average percentage of teachers who planned to continue teaching at their school. However, there was a relationship noted for Oak Elementary school which had the most negatively coded trust codes and the lowest teacher retention rate amongst schools in the sample. Teachers' relationships' with students and parents are vital for satisfying working conditions and influence a teachers desire to stay at a school. A teacher expressed the general feeling of the teachers saying, "As I look forward to next year, and the group that's coming up from third to fourth to me, seeing those behaviors down there, like honestly, it almost made me decide to retire."

Research Question 3

The third research question about teachers' perceived working conditions and (a) teacher turnover and (b) teacher tenure was answered by using the school average responses to state survey and state data. There were positive relationships between the percentage of teachers planning to stay at their school and three measures of the 2021 Virginia School Survey for Climate and Working Conditions: Student Engagement; Relationships Among Students; the Relationship Between Students and Adults; and Parent Involvement. According to the state survey, Oak and Mulberry had the lowest percentage of teachers planning to stay at their current school and had the lowest teacher retention rate according to the VDOE. Because the teachers' self-reported intentions on the state survey were used, rather than actual turnover outcomes, I also used data from the VDOE on school-level teacher retention rates, teacher tenure, and percentage of novice teachers to compare with the teachers' level of satisfaction of working conditions.   The teachers' average years of teaching experience negatively related with the

Managing Student Behavior and Student Engagement measures of the state survey. As an example, an experienced teacher expressed dismay when thinking about novice teachers,

> "When you get someone who is very passionate, like just graduated, they are so excited. And they end up in a building where there is a lot of behaviors and not a lot of parents' support. Their dream is deflated."

The school level teacher retention rate had a positive relationship with the state survey measures of Student Engagement and Relationships Among Students. As described by a teacher, "I taught a student how to tie his shoes, and he was so excited he kept tying and untying his shoes. That was all I needed to remember why I am here." Another teacher described the reason why she stays with her students at her school as,

> "Students' relationships with adults are huge. If you've got that relationship, it doesn't matter where they [students] come from, or what their background is, they're going to work for you and for themselves. Student engagement is huge for me, and I want the students to feel engaged. I find that personal experiences mixed with my lessons, really engage the students. You can't just use paper and pencil anymore, and you can't stick them on a computer. You've got to go back to old school where you're engaging them and getting them excited about what they're learning."

> The findings in this study holistically answer the question from the beginning of this dissertation, "So, what is it about teachers' relationships that helps them feel satisfied with their working conditions and stay at their schools?" Teachers believe positive teacher-student and parent-teacher relationships are foundational to an effective learning and working environment. And, when teachers are satisfied with the conditions at their school, they choose to stay.

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Implications

School and district leaders across Virginia are striving to retain quality teachers, but they have yet to understand how trust may foster what Goddard et al. (2001 and Tschannen-Moran 2004; 2011) describe as a set of organizational conditions that create a satisfying workplace for teachers to work and students to learn. The increasing demand for Virginia elementary teachers (VBOE, 2022) and the incongruence between a decreasing supply and a constant rate of teachers leaving the profession (Garcia & Weiss, 2019), puts students at risk. The research in this study will help leaders make decisions about working conditions and school climates that are trusting, satisfying, and contribute to student success. This final chapter summarizes the study and describes the relationship between teacher trust in students and parents as reflected in the teacher focus group interviews, teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, as well as teacher turnover. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future practice and research.

Summary of Methodology

This multi-site school level case study (Jenkins et al., 2018) involved seven schools selected based on their participation in the TWC-ESO study and a latent profile analysis of survey data (Miller et al., 2023), which was based on the results of the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (VDOE, 2021b). In Phase 1of this study, representative teachers participated in teacher focus group interviews. Secondary descriptive data was analyzed in Phase 2 included the average percent of teachers who planned to continue teaching at their school (from the state survey), school level teacher retention rates, teacher average years of experience, and the percentage of novice teachers.

The primary variables examined in this study were teacher trust in students and parents, teachers' perceived working conditions, and teacher turnover. Together, teacher trust in students and parents was hypothesized to relate with working conditions and teacher turnover as measured by the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions and school-level information. Additional measures examined included teacher retention rate and teacher tenure. I considered the qualitative data to holistically analyze the relationships/trends between teacher trust, teacher working conditions, teacher turnover and tenure.

Discussion of Findings

The conceptual framework in this study, based on the integration of research and literature on teacher trust, working conditions, and turnover, theorizes that trusting relationships between teachers and their students and students' parents influence teachers' perceptions of their working conditions and teacher turnover. The model in Figure 2 shows the relationships between the variables and their influence on teacher turnover. To complement the results of the 2021 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (2021b) and descriptive data, the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews provided a deeper understanding of the difficult to measure aspects of trust, working conditions, and turnover.

F**igure 2**

Effects of Teacher Trust on Working Conditions and Teacher Turnover
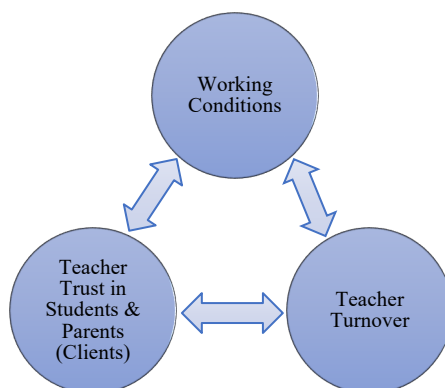
Finding 1: Teachers' Trust in Students and Parents is Consistent with Teachers'

Perceptions About Relationships as a Working Condition

Classrooms are a social context where risk, vulnerability, and interpersonal engagement is needed for teaching and learning. When children engage in learning, it is in the social context. Therefore, trust is essential to make those spaces foster learning. Two measures of the working conditions survey—Relationship Among Students and Relationship Between Students and Adults—related to the teachers' interview responses. Statements on the working conditions survey were worded similarly to teacher transcript excerpts regarding teachers' beliefs about students caring about one another, students ready to learn, and reciprocal respect. The teachers' interview responses also aligned with the research of Johnson et al. (2012), who concluded that the working conditions that strongly predict teachers' satisfaction and retention are the working conditions of social relationships that include aspects of the school culture, "trust, respect, openness and commitment to student achievement" (p. 14).

Three other measures from the working conditions survey that related to teachers' interview responses were Rigorous Instruction, Managing Behavior, and Student Engagement. Trust between teachers and students facilitates engagement. The more students can trust their teachers, the more willing they are to take risks for learning academics and social and emotional skills (Wilson, 2020). The school-level state survey measurement results for Managing Behavior reflected the teachers' concerns about student behavior during the interviews. As teachers shared stories about their various classroom experiences, there was a consensus that managing student behavior has become increasingly difficult. Teachers want to be in schools with firm, consistent norms for behavior and discipline so they can teach where adults and students feel safe (Allensworth et al., 2009; Cohen et. al, 2009; Public Agenda, 2004).

Finding 2: Teachers' Trust in Students and Parents Impacts Teacher Retention

While there does not appear to be a direct relationship between teachers' assessment of trust in students and parents and teacher retention, the qualitative interviews emphasized the importance of a teacher's trust in their decision to stay or leave a school. However, with a larger sample, the connection between teacher trust and retention might be evident. In this study, Oak Elementary School spoke the most negatively about their trust in students and parents and had the lowest retention rate amongst the sample schools. Oak and Mulberry Elementary Schools also had the lowest percentage of teachers planning to stay at their current schools and had the lowest teacher retention rates in the sample. As the teachers in this study shared, when students and teachers were in positive relationships, students were competent in regulating their emotions, parents supported teachers, then teachers felt they could meet their students' needs. School leaders can best foster these relationships by supporting teachers when students disrupt teaching and learning. School leaders can also model for teachers and parents to be collaborative partners who communicate respectfully, honestly, and benevolently to benefit children's success. District leaders and policymakers may put their attention and resources into these harder-to-measure areas that influence teachers' decisions to leave their school, district, or profession. Respectable salaries may address some aspects of teachers' job satisfaction. Still, it will not address the other reasons most teachers leave schools, including the "more challenging student populations, including behavior issues and mental health and lack of respect from parents and the public" (Austin et al., n.d, p. 65.). School leaders could improve the cycle of teacher turnover by dedicating in-school resources, demonstrating a commitment to children's growth and development in academics and socio-emotional health, and parenting strategies and supports.

These resources may include teaching assistants, school-based instructional and behavioral specialists, and community mental health and parenting services.

Finding 3: Teachers' Working Conditions Influence Retention

This study's findings supported previous research that high rates of voluntary teacher turnover within a district may be associated with differences in working conditions (Johnson et al., 2012; Katz, 2018; Ladd, 2011; Loeb et al., 2005). In this investigation, the 2021 Virginia School Survey for Climate and Working Conditions measures Student Engagement and Relationships Among Students related to school-level teacher retention rates. There was also a connection between the percentage of teachers planning to stay at their current school and the survey measures of Student Engagement, Relationship Among Students, Relationship Between Students and), and Parent Involvement. The sentiments in the teacher interviews were clear that students actively engaged in their learning when teachers could teach without disruption. When teachers spoke optimistically about their working conditions, they planned to stay at their school. School leaders who want to retain quality teachers must work proactively to prevent disruptions to instruction, which will help teachers strengthen relationships with students and parents.

While this study did not investigate the working condition of school leadership, the teachers repeatedly expressed the importance of competent, reliable, trustworthy leaders that influence their decisions to stay or leave a school. The teachers' responses in the focus group interviews amplified this by stating that student behavior and lack of support from parents and school leaders were reasons for teacher "burnout" and leaving a school or the profession. Without trust, "people are increasingly unwilling to take risks, demand greater protections against the possibility of betrayal, and insist on costly sanctioning mechanisms to defend their interest" (Kramer et al., 1996, p. 4). Trust promotes working conditions where members will

likely treat one another with respect, honesty, and selflessness, promoting a fair and satisfying workplace for teachers to work and students to learn (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; 2011).

Implications for Practice

Teachers, students, parents, and school leaders must build trust in the organizational context of school by practicing trustworthy behavior based on core values, a vision for student success, a balanced concern for completing tasks, and for the relationships of all involved. When there are trusting relationships in a school, teachers value the relationships as positive working conditions, influencing their decisions to stay at a school. As such, educators must rethink the underlying reasons for students' misbehavior, consider their beliefs about student learning, foster trust with parents, and pay attention to what counts for satisfying working conditions.

Rethink the Underlying Reasons for Student Misbehavior

The underlying theories about the causes and interventions for student behavior are primarily based on a basic mistrust of students. We assume that students will do what is asked if they are lured by extrinsic rewards, and praise and that unpleasant consequences will stop their misbehavior. We believe that removing the misbehaving student from the classroom will be an incentive for them to exhibit improved self-control. Unfortunately, when students are removed from the classroom to allow instruction to continue for their peers, educators contributing to the low esteem and mistrust that causes the misbehavior. Furthermore, these interventions may be similar to parenting strategies that result in the child's insecure attachments. Researchers found that teachers and children can build positive relationships that may differ from parent-child relationships (Howes & Ritchie, 2002). Children with positive teacher-student relationships can better adjust to the behavior expectations of the school setting.

In the elementary grades, teacher-student relationships resemble parent-child interactions (Ainsworth, 1967, as cited in Tschannen-Moran, et al., 2011; Bowlby, 1969). The accumulated trust in family life must be transferred to the classroom teachers for successful learning. There is security in students' trusting relationships with teachers that may influence students' achievement in school; similarly, that children's attachment to their caregivers affects their cognitive development. When this happens, teachers of elementary age students "hold diffuse affective power over their students" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, p. 31). Trust grows in the early years of school, primarily through the teachers' initiative. However, children who arrive in school with insecure attachments have deficits to overcome, including self-regulating their behavior, difficulty trusting teachers and using them as a secure base, and less knowledge and skills to build upon (Watson, 2003). Teachers play a crucial role in helping students to form attachments that create the context for successful school experiences.

One way to help address the associated challenges with student misbehavior is responsive, knowledgeable school leaders and counselors to help balance the safety of all members of a classroom and the misbehaving child. Another way to confront the challenges is to provide education to educators about attachment theory, underlying reasons for student misbehavior and ways to foster secure and nurturing relationships that will help improve the social context of the classroom for students and teachers. A community-based counselor trained in parent-child interaction therapy (Spruijt, A. M., Dekker, M. C., Ziermans, T. B., & Swaab, H. (2020) would help address the increasing demand by parents for parenting skills and mental health support for young children. Last, school leaders could reassess school-wide discipline policies and practices and mechanisms for intervening to ensure consistency and to take a primary role in building trusting relationships with teachers and students.

Consider Beliefs About Student Learning

The research on the impact of trust between teachers and students is supported by learning science literature and has substantial implications for educators as they grapple with ways to improve student achievement. The Gestalt Framing of Learning: The Inevitable, Reciprocal Dynamic Between the Individual and the Social-Ecological Context (Myran, October 2021) in Figure 3 illustrates for educators the significance of the context for student learning. Therefore, the change begins in the classroom, which is in the primary context for instruction, where teacher interact with students. When teachers believe their students are competent and reliable, they create a learning environment that promotes students success. When students trust their teachers, they are more likely to take risks for new learning. Trust is reciprocal, not a one way-process (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; 2013). Research has shown us that student learning can only be achieved when teachers cultivate trust with their students and schools create a culture that celebrates academics and fosters student identification with school (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2013). "Educators and researchers need to understand more about the mechanisms that link trust and achievement," (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2013, p. 12).

Figure 3

Adaptation of Gestalt Framing of Learning: The Inevitable, Reciprocal Dynamic Between the Individual and the Social-Ecological Context
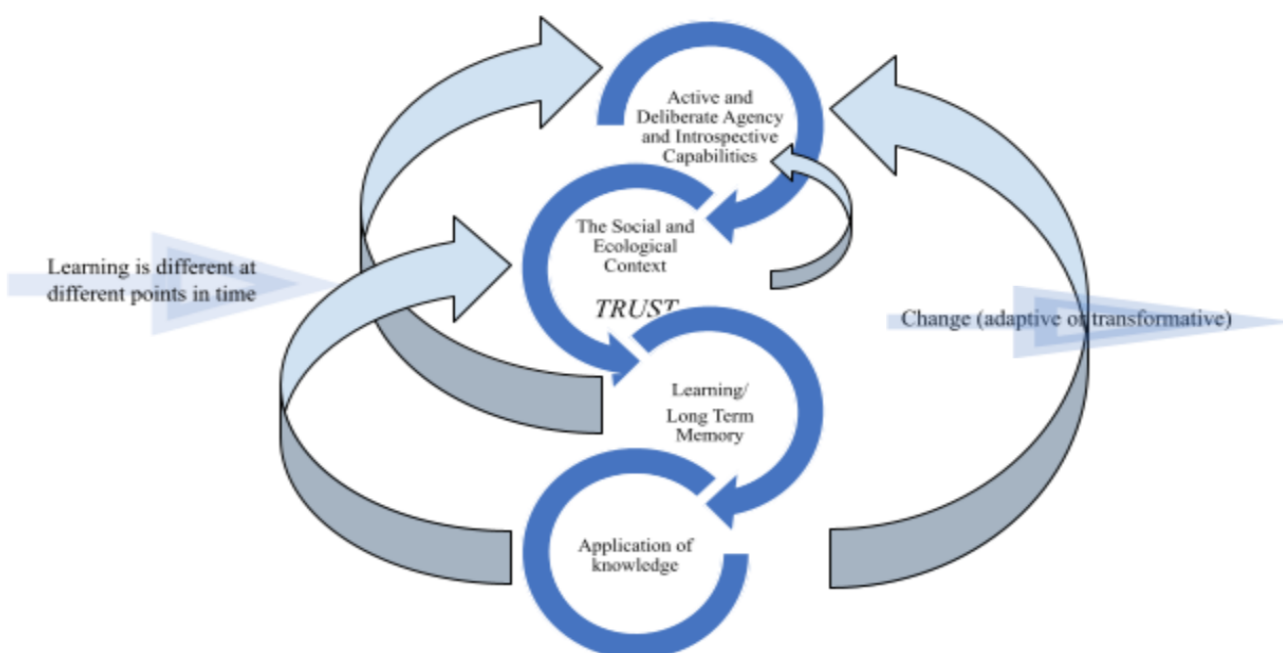
Note: This figure is adapted through the addition of the TRUST element. The original was shared in a classroom lecture by S. Myran, October 2021

Helping educators see the significance of the teacher-student relationships in the classroom and the impact on student learning is the first step to creating a conductive social and ecological context. The active, deliberate agency of the learner fosters student engagement. Furthermore, the attention to social-emotional learning is a good indication that educators recognize the nature of education for the whole child rather than a narrow view of a learner as a receiver of discrete bits of knowledge.

Foster Trust Between Parents and Teachers

The traditional role of families in the educational process has been to support their children by sending them to school ready to learn – rested, fed, clothed, and with completed work. Now, parents view their role as advocating for their children when they feel a school or district is not meeting their children's needs. And, in the current political climate, there is

increased attention to parents' roles in the curriculum and school policies. These situations may put parents in conflict with school personnel who are trying to meet the needs of many students. The teachers' interview responses mostly describe the challenges for teachers to trust parents they perceived as entitled, demanding, unrealistic in their expectations, blaming others for problems, and disrespectful. However, we heard from at least one teacher that when there was shared commitment to acting in the best interests of their children, the teacher was willing to extend that trust to the parents.

Teachers are the first line of communication between a school and families. Parents rely on this communication to monitor their child's progress and is foundational to building trust with families. A parent's willingness to communicate with teachers fosters a sense of trust between teachers and parents. Openness reciprocates a willingness to share information. The opposite of this was evident in teacher interviews. Teachers described parents as discounting or expressing disbelief in what teachers said, blaming the teacher or other students for misbehavior. The lack of openness in a relationship is most damaging because it incites a cycle of all parties being guarded. When there is greater trust between school personnel and parents, teachers are more willing to share authority to address problems (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; M. Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Trust facilitates communication, and principals play an important role in promoting productive connections between families and schools, at regular intervals, by creating the structure for the relationships and modeling trustworthiness. School leaders can help improve sin school-community relationships and foster trust and collaboration among families and school staff to build a foundation for meaningful partnership between home and school (National Policy Forum for Family, School, and Community Engagement, 2010). While the focus of this study was not teachers' trust in the school and district leadership, the interviews reinforced the notion

that principals have a great deal of power within the relationships in a school and, therefore, have a huge influence on the culture of the schools.

Pay Attention to the Currency of Trust in Teacher Perceptions of Working Conditions

Listen to what matters to teachers about working conditions in their schools and utilize the state survey data to make changes. Teachers want a voice to influence teaching and learning positively. When they offer feedback, whether it is the state survey or a conversation, they are giving their assessment of teaching and learning in your school. If no action follows completing a survey or voicing concerns, distrust will build in leadership. Further, when a new teacher joins a school, there is a level of interdependence created through the shared purpose or mission of the school. A new teacher's success and retention depend on forming positive relationships with existing faculty and staff to serve the organizational purpose. New teachers are vulnerable in high trust environments because the encounter stressors that may be different than experienced teachers, like misbehaving students. Trust is a "mechanism through which working conditions support beginning teachers" (Hopkins, 2019, p.2). Trust begins the moment of the new teachers' first meeting and extends until they know their colleagues well enough to predict the other person's values and behaviors. Trust is extended at the beginning of a relationship until trustworthiness is experienced. Take care of teachers new to a school or position. Build a supportive network for them to ask questions and access resources.

Recommendations for Further Research

The areas for potential research involve extending existing research to explore the relationship between teacher trust, working conditions, and teacher turnover. First, the inclusion of additional statements to the Virginia School Survey on Climate and Working Conditions will address aspects of trust between teachers and students and parents as working conditions. This

information will help assess the school's culture and identify areas to create a more satisfying place to work and learn. A revised survey with these trust items will provide a large sample to explore the relationship between the three main variables.

In 2003, Hoy & Tschannen-Moran developed the Faculty Trust in Clients subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale and found that there was little difference between the student and parent scales. They merged the two factors together, known as faculty trust in clients. Teacher-student trust works through teacher-parent trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). In this study, the interviews with the teachers at the case study schools and their responses to specific items on the trust survey did not always align. Research on separate measures for teachers' trust in students and parents is needed.

Managing student behavior was one of the most prevalent working conditions discussed in the teacher interviews. Extending research in this area might provide practitioners with information about teachers' language, behaviors, and classroom management. Specifically, researchers might develop the work of Karakus & Savas, (2012) on Trust in Students, Trust in Parents, and Pupil Control Ideology on Conflict Management Strategies of Elementary Teachers. Folding in a variable of teacher tenure provides some helpful insight.

Another area to extend research is the science of learning. While a definition of learning for the education field is proposed by Myran & Sutherland (2019), future research is needed to identify how educators might build trusting relationships between teachers and students to impact the social-ecological context, incite active and deliberate agency, learning to learn, and the application of knowledge.

Conclusion

Teachers most value benevolence, portrayed as respect, in their relationships with students and parents. In this study, teachers found it hard to trust when students misbehaved or lacked social-emotional skills. However, teachers felt their students cared about one another. Similar to Shann's (1998) research in middle schools, teachers considered their relationships with students more critical in their job than with adults-teachers, parents, or administrators. While teachers felt most parents do a good job, teachers lacked trust in parents' benevolence, honesty, openness, and reliability as partners in their children's education. Helping teachers connect with parents will improve relationships and teacher retention (Allensworth et al., 2009).

Teachers perceived students' competence, the second most coded facet of trust, to be more about students' behavior and their reliability to follow school norms than academic performance. When teachers discussed student competence in terms of academics, they attributed learning deficits because of COVID or the unmet needs of English Language Learners or children with disabilities. This study confirmed the research of (Adams & Forsyth, 2013) that teachers' trust in students and parents is moderately related to student achievement, even when socioeconomic status was controlled.

Teachers' trust in students and parents was closely related to teachers' perceptions about the working conditions at their schools. Two measures of the state survey, Relationship Among Students and Relationship Between Students and Adults, were positively related to teachers' assessment of trust in students and parents. The daily contact between teachers and students and their relationships are also associated with student engagement. Rigorous instruction and managing behavior were other measures related to teacher trust in students and parents.

The working conditions of Student Engagement, Relationship Among Students, Relationship Between Students and Adults, and Parent Involvement were all strongly related to teacher turnover. A moderate, negative relationship existed between Student Engagement and average teaching years of experience. Turnover depresses student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorenson & Ladd, 2018) and negatively impacts climate, which works against trusting relationships among teachers, students, and families (Simon and Johnson, 2015). In this study, the school average teacher years of experience and retention rates did not reflect teachers' perceptions of their trust in students and parents.

Public Schools in Virginia continue to face teacher shortages, and policymakers and leaders are seeking ways to address low job satisfaction and pay. More than 15% of Virginia teachers told the Joint Legislative Audit Review Commission they would definitely or likely leave their teaching position by the end of the 2022-2023 school year, compared to 9 percent in a survey by the Virginia Department of Education (Austin et al., n.d.). Most teachers cited the COVID pandemic as the primary culprit to lower morale, reduced job satisfaction, and higher workload as reasons for leaving. Nationwide, the data suggest "spiking stress levels, student behavior challenges, and a harsh political spotlight have all taken their toll on many American teachers" (Barnum, 2023). A certain amount of turnover in schools is healthy, but it can harm student learning where students lose relationships with trusted educators, inexperienced teachers are brought on as replacements, and in some cases are left with long-term substitutes. So, what is it that helps teachers feel satisfied with their working conditions and stay at their schools? Teacher trust significantly impacts perceptions of working conditions, it seems indisputable for schools and district leaders to examine how to strengthen trust in schools and stop the cycle of increased turnover.

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APPENDIX A

Currency of Teacher Trust in Working Conditions for Teacher Retention Data

Elementary School	Class	Class Probability	Location Type	Achievement Gap 1 low 2 med. low 3 med. high 4 high	EL Gap 1 low 2 med. low 3 med. high 4 high	Black & Hispanic Quartile	Economically Disadvantage Quartile	Free & Reduced Eligibility	Chronic Absenteeism Rate	Student Behavior # of Reported Events to VDOE	Black & Hispanic Enrollment	Reading Performance (Passed)	Math Performance (Passed)
Gingko	2	0.966	City, Small	3	3	1	1	26.50	5.90	1	13.00	73	84
Maple	2	0.867	Rural	4	3	2	1	21.30	12.10	23	25.10	77	80
Magnolia	4	0.700	City, Small	4	3	1	2	32.80	18.40	32	4.90	84	82
Mulberry	4	0.864	Rural, Fringe	3	2	1	1	10.40	5.30	7	6.10	85	80
Cedar	1	0.794	Suburb, Large	2	3	0	3	53.00	14.90	64	52.20	70	67
Oak	4	0.957	Suburb, Large	2	2	3	2	30.70	13.40	9	40.50	72	64
Holly	4	0.780	Rural	2	2	2	1	11.90	7.70	98	13.50	78	73

Elementary School	VWC Student Engagement	VWC Relationship Among Students	VWC Relationship Between Students & Adults	VWC Rigorous Instruction	VWC Managing Student Behavior	VWC Parent Involvement
Gingko	93.25	94.50	96.60	82.17	68.23	87.25
Maple	83.50	95.25	91.00	71.33	59.69	83.75
Magnolia	65.50	88.75	86.00	63.17	55.54	78.75
Mulberry	72.00	77.25	88.20	69.33	45.31	63.75
Cedar	87.75	92.50	91.40	68.17	74.77	83.50
Oak	73.50	93.00	92.60	80.50	72.46	87.25
Holly	93.25	93.75	93.00	81.33	80.69	93.00

Elementary School	Teaching Experience 1-3 years, Novice	Average % Teaching Experience	School Teacher Retention Rate	Continue teaching at current school.	Continue teaching in division, leave school	Continue teaching, leave division	Continue teaching in state other than VA	Conitnue working in education but a non-teaching role	Leave education, retire	Leave education to work in non-education field	Leave education for other reasons
Gingko	28.60	14.00	88.5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maple	10.30	17.30	89.5	89	6	0	0	3	0	0	3
Magnolia	21.90	14.30	83.9	71	3	0	6	3	0	10	6
Mulberry	18.50	15.30	76.2	62	15	8	8	0	0	8	0
Cedar	15.20	10.10	80.4	87	0	3	0	7	0	3	0
Oak	12.20	15.50	73.5	66	9	3	0	9	5	9	0
Holly	15.70	12.60	84.3	92	0	3	3	0	0	3	0

APPENDIX B

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 29-Nov-2022
Expiration Date 29-Nov-2024
Record ID 52326352

This is to certify that:

Jeanette White

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of
certification through CME.

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
(Curriculum Group)
Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
(Course Learner Group)
2 - SBR 101 refresher
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Old Dominion University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2b353e1a-bc52-468c-9222-dd9bc34a332a-52326352

VITA

JEANETTE WHITE

EMPLOYMENT

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES AND LOWER SCHOOL   2005 TO PRESENT
Saint Patrick Catholic School   *Norfolk, Virginia*

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL   2002 TO 2005
Bay View Elementary, Norfolk Public School,   *Norfolk, Virginia*

DIRECTOR   1998 TO 2002
Human Relations and Staff Development Department, Norfolk Public Schools   *Norfolk, Virginia*

EDUCATION

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY   2023
Old Dominion University   *Norfolk, Virginia*
Educational Leadership and Higher Education
120 Education Building
4301 Hampton Blvd., Suite 2300, Norfolk, VA 23529

EDUCATION SPECIALIST   2002
Old Dominion University   *Norfolk, Virginia*
Educational Leadership and Higher Education

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION   1993
Old Dominion University   *Norfolk, Virginia*
Elementary and Middle School, Curriculum and Instruction

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION   1985
Old Dominion University   *Norfolk, Virginia*

PROFESSIONAL LICENSE, CERTIFICATES, AWARDS, HIGHLIGHTS

* AERA, SIG Co-chair Graduate Student Representative, May 2021
* Certified in Choice Theory and Reality Theory, July 2013
* Quality Assurance Review Team Member, AdvancED and SAIS, 2009-present

PRESENTATIONS

* Green Generation Summit, *Caring for Creation Together*, May 2021
* William Glasser Institute International Conference, *Growing a Quality School,* July 2014
* Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, *Providing Support for National Board Certification of Teachers*, 2002
* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Annual Conference, *Principal Leadership for Urban Schools*, 1998
* National Science Teachers Association, *Discover the Beauty of Geometry in Nature*, 1994