

New to the State and New to Teaching:
Creating Authentic Resilient Educators (C.A.R.E.) Utilizing Digital Narratives

by

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ABSTRACT

This action research study focused on the beginning teacher attrition issues plaguing schools today. Specifically, this project explored a way to support out-of-state beginning teachers, who are traditionally difficult to retain. While there is literature on teacher retention, the retention of out-of-state teachers has not been well examined. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Bandura's self-efficacy theories provided a foundational understanding of this group's needs.

This study utilized interactive support sessions for six out-of-state beginning teachers that had five face-to-face sessions and required the teachers to submit weekly reflections between sessions using an iPad and app that allowed teachers to design their reflections using digital images, words, and/or narration. These weekly digital reflections, mapping activities collected during the support sessions, a pre- and post-innovation questionnaire, and interviews provided insights on the impact of these supports, as well as changes that occurred in self-perceptions.

The results of this study indicate the challenge and complexities of being an out-of-state beginning teacher. The data showed that the teachers must first have had their basic needs met before they could fully explore and settle into their new identities and role as the classroom teacher. The data also indicated that intentionally teaching these teachers strategies around resiliency, stress management, and self-advocacy was useful for navigating their first semester. The supportive community that developed within the group emerged as a significant finding, and showed the importance of support structures for new teachers, especially for those who are struggling with both a new job and new community.

DEDICATION

On the first day of kindergarten, I came home and told my mom I was going to be a teacher and subsequently began collecting every “extra” worksheet, strategy, and idea for my one-day classroom. I could have never imagined that this was going to be my journey, filled with twists and turns, moves and changes. I am so grateful for the amazing mentors, teachers, colleagues, and friends that have inspired me along the way. This dedication is my opportunity to express my love and gratitude.

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Chapter 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

National Context

If we are committed to making sure that no child is left behind, school districts across the country will need to develop successful strategies both to support new teachers and to keep veteran teachers in place.

Joftus and Maddox-Dolan, 2002, p. 7

Retaining high quality teachers is critical for student success. “Research shows that teacher subject-matter knowledge is greatly associated with student learning. In this era of high standards and high expectations, having a highly qualified teacher has never been more important” (USDOE, 2009). Teachers have been living in the shadows of *No Child Left Behind* with a focus on ensuring highly qualified teachers in every classroom. The reality of standardized testing pressures, the certification process itself, and the recent roll-out of national standards (Common Core) have created complexities not seen before in education (Smethem, 2007). Consequently, teachers have been leaving at alarming rates or as Kain (2011) puts it “...America’s teacher dropout problem is spiraling out of control” (p. 1). Improving retention is important because evidence suggests that the number of years of teaching experience may be positively related to student achievement (Hightower, Lloyd, & Swanson, 2011). It would seem that retention would, therefore, be the most critical educational issue consuming this nation. However, in an era of high stakes testing and accountability, teacher retention was pushed to the back of educational issues. Darling-Hammond and Berry (1999) noted,

Recruitment is ad hoc; teacher preparation is uneven and often insufficiently aligned with the needs of contemporary classrooms and diverse learners; selection and hiring are too often disconnected from either specific school district goals or a more complex and rigorous image of quality teaching; induction and mentoring

are frequently scattershot and likely to be the first programs to be eliminated when districts cut their budgets. (p.3)

Teacher retention has become a national, state, and local issue with far-reaching implications.

Retention is a fiscally staggering and professionally draining issue. In fact, the cost of attrition is approximately \$7.3 billion a year (Hallam, Chou, Hite, & Hite, 2012). Teacher retention is more than just a fiscal issue though; it impacts the learning of students, infects teacher morale, and rattles the trust of the community (Ingersoll, 2002; Stockard, 2004). The reality is that beginning teachers (those who are new to the teaching career) have been leaving at alarming rates, with nearly 30% leaving within the first three years (Ingersoll, 2012, Fisher, 2011).

The Effects of Teachers Leaving

Research has shown that up to half of all new teachers leave within the first five years in the United States (Ingersoll, 2012, Fisher, 2011). The teacher attrition problem is “most acute” in the highest minority, highest poverty, and most struggling academic schools (The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2007; Earley & Ross, 2006); in these schools, teacher turnover is 50% higher (Ingersoll, 2001). Closing the student achievement gap is the constant struggle because they could not close the teacher quality gap with the constant rebuilding of their staff. Research indicates that the level of student learning was also affected by the experience level of the teacher, indicating that the lesser the experience, the lesser the level of student academic growth (Watkins, 2003; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). Therefore, the neediest of students had teachers with the lowest level of experience. This led to the lowest achievement gains.

According to Carroll and Foster (2008), the established teaching occupation is literally disintegrating at the beginning stages of career building. Teachers are leaving their profession at the initial years of their budding careers rather than persevering through the bumpy first years. Experts on this issue state that the problems in schools today are twofold: attrition from those leaving the teaching profession and migration from those moving to teaching jobs at other types of schools (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Regardless, the loss of teachers in the classroom is impactful.

The overall impact of beginning teacher attrition on schools is staggering.

Within an organization where employees work as closely as teachers do, high turnover rates begin to affect morale, development of relationships among and between co-workers, and the sense of community that is important to the success of a school begins to diminish. (Joiner & Edwards, 2008, p.49).

This means that in many places there has been a ripple effect. Veteran staff get overwhelmed with additional expectations due to the inexperience levels of those around them. Administrators spend additional time reviewing procedures and policies rather than focusing on and recruiting new teachers. Support staff get consumed with assisting new teachers with understanding site and district expectations. Staff developers try to cram in curricular initiatives and catch the new teachers up on professional development. Then, at the end of the year, the beginning teachers leave and this cycle repeats (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). The morale crumbles and an unwillingness to connect seeps in with those teachers who remain or an ambivalence to the beginning teachers' plight emerges (Buchanan, Schuck, & Aubusson, 2013). Rollins (2008) notes that the school climate becomes a "hotbed of negativity" which perpetuates a sink or swim mentality that continues to cycle year after year. Smethern (2007) noted, "It is during this crucial career stage, when new teachers are constructing and re-constructing their sense of professional

self (the values, purposes and practices that make up their identities as teachers), that they are most vulnerable, especially to a negative environment” (p. 467). This negative climate then festers continuous staff turnover.

Building and district administrators struggle with this turnover as well. It has been a challenge for principals to establish a productive culture in their building without consistent staffing and quality teaching to maximize student learning (Hallam et al., 2012). Administrators are often unaware, or uncertain as to how to support new teachers or manage the reasons that cause teachers to abandon their teaching positions in their building (Esch, 2010; Hallam et al., 2012; McNulty & Fox, 2010; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). With the intensity of the initiatives in schools today, the administrators at the district and site level are consumed with parent and student issues and are not able to focus on altering climate and culture to influence retention (Walsh, Ed, & Battitori, 2011; WestEd, 2005). District and building administrators are unaware as to why new teachers have been leaving, and more importantly they do not understand why those who do stay remain. Given this, Joiner and Edwards (2008) purported, “An initial evaluation must be conducted to determine what is causing teachers to leave the profession or transfer out of a specific school division” (p. 12). When recruiting and hiring, administrators are unaware of how to gather information from potential candidates to indicate if they have the internal skills to demonstrate resilience and perseverance to sustain their careers. The dynamics between the new teacher and principal are crucial. The principal’s leadership and practices have been found to predict beginning teachers’ retention (Devos, Dupriez, & Paquay, 2012). Therefore the intentional relationship between the beginning teacher and the principal is a critical factor from the initial

interview throughout the first year. “Effective leaders spend time developing relationships with novice teachers” (Vanderslice, 2012). Exploration of these key relationships is a critical component to explore for any changes to occur.

Entire communities, including those beyond school walls, have felt the weight of the turnover of teachers. Parents are uncertain and apprehensive about the focus of a school with significant turnover (Walsh et al., 2011). The community surrounding a school questions the lack of consistency and inability to connect with staff that come and go each year.

Given these effects, exploring the reasons why beginning teachers leave teaching and developing an innovation to impact beginning teacher retention was a critical need.

Why Teachers are Leaving

Beginning teachers entering the profession in 2015 faced a new level of expectations that were much different than the past. The federal mandates requiring highly qualified status of NCLB, the rigors of the certification process itself, the high-stakes testing culture where teachers’ pay is often connected to student testing performance, along with the roll-out of rigorous national standards (Common Core), created complexities not seen before in education (Smethem, 2007). These complexities included a more laser-focus on teacher evaluation and accountability of the individual classroom teacher. Smethem noted, “...[the] increasing marketization of education and intensification of teachers’ work challenge teachers’ ‘moral purpose’ and professional identity and adversely affect not only their retention but also new teachers’ intentions to remain in teaching” (p. 465). Neophytes were being compelled to leave because of obsolete foundational practices and insufficient professional recompense” (Esch, 2010, p.

308). The intensity of the classroom expectations seemed to be driving teachers away and beginning teachers were the most vulnerable.

The reasons beginning teachers have given for leaving are complex and multifaceted. They have reported administrative challenges, issues with work-life balance, feelings of isolation, and being overwhelmed with the workload and complexities of teaching (Devos et al., 2012; Esch, 2010; McNulty & Fox, 2010; Schlichte et al., 1999; Williment, 2003). Teachers have also noted the complexities of dealing with student discipline problems (Esch, 2010). Unrealistic expectations of teaching embedded within the toxic climate and cultures of some schools have added to the challenges of retention (Smethem, 2007; Turner, 2009). As beginning teachers try to define themselves as a teacher and construct who they are professionally (including their values, practices, and purpose), they are exceptionally impressionable and vulnerable to negativity that can be found within the schools (Smethem, 2007). Beginning teachers report a sense of culture shock when transitioning from pre-service experiences into classrooms of today and share that the intensity of isolation and lack of personal development challenges them (Williment, 2003; Gossom, 2004; Rollins, 2008; Sharplin, O'Neill, & Chapman, 2011). Related to beginning teacher retention was encouraging and sustaining an interest and passion for teaching (Yonezawa, Jones, & Singer, 2011). Considerations on how a school or district supports their teachers emotionally, nurtures beginning teachers, and focuses on ongoing professional renewal are areas worth exploring. Beginning teachers are searching for districts and schools that provided a support system to enhance their first year teaching journey.

Current Attempts to Remedy Retention

Across the nation, schools and districts have worked to maximize beginning teacher retention (Turner, 2009). Some of the most common methods have included developing mentoring programs (assigning a colleague to a new teacher), formal professional development (sessions designed to enhance classroom performance or introduce strategies), or induction programs (intentional support sessions targeting new teacher needs typically offered when beginning teachers first arrive).

In Smith and Ingersoll's (2004) study of induction and mentoring programs, it was found that while there is a relationship between beginning teachers receiving support and their retention rate, the strength of that relationship depends on the type of support and the number of supports received (Joiner & Edwards, 2008, p. 3, 2008).

Support models have varied greatly across the nation for these novice teachers and even internationally there has been a newer body of literature exploring methods and ideas to retain.

One support method that has been commonly used by districts is beginning teacher induction the day before the school year started. One day inductions provide new teachers with a common experience and sometimes increased connectivity to their beginning teacher peers. The typical objectives of this induction include personal skill development, socialization into the profession, an assessment of teaching effectiveness, and support in modifying practices or strategies (Martin, 2011). However, one day sessions may not be as impactful as ongoing induction opportunities (Wechsler & Humphrey, 2010). Induction that also includes professional collaboration and a focused on site-based socialization has been shown to impact beginning teacher retention (Gossom, 2004; Schlichte et al., 2005; Martin, 2011). "In addition to increasing teacher

learning and student achievement, professional collaboration further increases teacher job satisfaction” (Devos et al., 2012; Martin, 2011; Schlichte et al., 1999). Districts with rich induction systems in place have noted an impact on the retention of beginning teachers (Ingersoll, 2012; Turner, 2009).

Another factor that has impacted the success of beginning teacher retention as noted in the literature has been a focus on the culture and climate of the school site and the leadership by the principal to establish a nurturing environment where a new teacher feel supported and appreciated (TNTP, 2012; Turner, 2009). “If the climate and the culture of a school building do not support the induction activities of mentoring, collaborating and growing professionally, then new teachers will not be successfully socialized into the school organization” (Joiner & Edwards, 2008, p. 5). Teacher socialization and staff team building opportunities have been neglected components in the climate of NCLB, the implementation of the *Common Core* national standards, increased teacher evaluations, and high stakes testing. How could a district intentionally capitalize on support systems and relationships in the midst of a high accountability and an instructionally focused learning environment? This staff and administrative connectivity is especially critical when teachers are joining a staff without additional supports, i.e., family, friends. Arizona is one state that has been recruiting significant numbers of teachers from out of state and attempting to retain them.

State Context

Arizona has been impacted by the attrition crisis. “Superintendents, across the state have, for several years, reported that approximately 30% of new teachers leave Arizona’s school districts in their first three years, and 50% leave within five years”

(Tirozzi, Carbonaro, & Winters, 2014, p. 3). According to the National Council on Teacher Quality (2008), Arizona received a grade of a D+ in regards to retaining effective teachers. The grade was generated from a comparison of research of best practices in new teacher retention (mentoring, induction, targeted professional development) along with the reality of what was happening in the state captured through teacher and administration surveys. The report indicated that Arizona's grade was generated due to the "lack of a state policy requirement of clearly articulated induction and mentoring programs" (p. 5). The recommendations in the report included pairing carefully selected and trained mentors to support new teachers, along with providing significant release time to observe the new teachers and provide feedback. Specifically, Arizona only met a portion of these requirements in the state policy, resulting in a barely passing grade. Arizona also had no mechanism for reporting out on beginning teachers' perceptions of support and how these may impact their decision making. In addition, Arizona did not have an approved statewide beginning teacher curriculum that defined specific skills and strategies or a personal self-efficacy focus (belief in self and the resilience to persevere; Shaughnessy, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) that could provide a level of statewide consistency to ensure that beginning teachers' personal and professional needs were addressed during their first year experience. The report indicated that there was not an overall statewide focus to develop or retain beginning teachers. Arizona was in a crisis to find teachers to fill its' classroom openings (personal communication, Executive Director of Human Resources, Beginning Teacher School District, August 3, 2013).

The loss of teacher talent issue is further elevated by the ASRS projection that 25,500 public school staff will be eligible for “normal retirement” in 2018. Considering that a significant percentage of these retirees will be teachers further exacerbates the future difficulty of staffing Arizona classrooms. Also, consider that the “normal retirements” do not include the projected early departure of teachers in their first five years—elevating the crisis level for a teacher shortage in the state. (Tirozzi, Carbonaro, & Winters, 2014, p.4)

There were not enough graduates from the local colleges (Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, Grand Canyon University) to fill all of the teaching positions in Arizona because many students were choosing jobs in other states. This phenomenon led to an influx of out-of-state recruiting to fill local Arizona teaching positions. In addition, at the state level, Arizona did not have a reporting mechanism to capture exit information when beginning teachers did leave. The Arizona Department of Education was not able to present any data on the reasons that beginning teachers left. Without specifically knowing why beginning teachers were leaving or why those who remained stayed, it would be a challenging endeavor to determine and customize support structures to improve retention across states.

The literature overall does not specify the dynamics or differences in how it defines the beginning teachers group. i.e., whether they were new to the state, their age, gender, or backgrounds. The literature also does not specify if out-of-state beginning teachers require different supports. This was an area of need and investigation in my context, as the district had a large influx of out-of-state beginning teachers and no real knowledge or plan on how to support and retain them.

Personal Context

The targeted school district was consumed with a beginning teacher retention crisis. Thirty-six percent of beginning teachers in the 2012-2013 school year resigned at the end of the year, and 63% of this group was from out-of-state (Human Resources Department staff, BTSD, personal communication, December 1, 2013). I worked as a Professional Development Coordinator at this district comprised of eight K-8 schools. One component in the scope of a Professional Development Coordinator was beginning teacher support. Monthly professional development seminars were conducted for 25 new teachers at the district office. Within that group in the 2014-2015 school year, six of those teachers were from out-of-state. Each monthly professional learning session was customized to the needs that emerged from the group themselves and followed the phases of new teacher research, as designed by Ellen Moir (2011). These monthly beginning teacher sessions were typically one-hour interactive sessions that provided intentional modeling on multiple identified instructional strategies, along with time for new teacher sharing and self-reflection. In addition, monthly email updates were provided to the administrators at the district and site, as well as the master and mentor teachers (instructional coaches who are evaluators) as to the content explored in the new teacher sessions

The district had not provided consistent support for beginning teachers for several years. Previously, about 90% of teachers hired in the district would remain (personal communication, October 9, 2013). The district had not specifically tracked beginning teacher retention nor out-of-state beginning teacher retention. With NCLB and the culture

of higher expectations and more individual accountability for student achievement, the classroom may have seemed to be a less appealing place to work long-term. This retention crisis had sparked attention from the community, school board, and administration to further explore the factors that contribute to beginning teacher retention. It was clear that many teachers from all over the country had been willing to move to Arizona and teach. Over the past two years, the district had recruited in Michigan, as well as in Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Utah. During that time, the district hired over 35 out-of-state teachers, and 85% of those in the group were beginning teachers. The challenge was less about recruitment and more about retaining those teachers over time (typically 2 years) and generating a willingness to stay and raise their families in Arizona. Cochran-Smith's (2004) research that indicated that, "...recruitment was both the wrong diagnosis and a phony cure for the teacher shortage" (p. 387). It was not just about recruiting. It was about retaining the right teachers for the district climate and clientele of students. In fact, in the current group of new teachers, 6 of the 25 new teachers were new to the state, so it is evident that these teachers were willing to move to the district but would they be willing to stay? What were the factors that would encourage or extend their retention in the district? How could a district identify the skills and traits needed for success as a beginning teacher? Could support provided at the district level impact a beginning teacher's view of themselves, increase their professional resiliency, and encourage greater retention?

Over the past nine years, I had worked in multiple districts across the state and with over 800+ teachers as a professional developer with various titles and various roles (e.g., school district, university level). The majority of this work had been around

beginning teachers. Through that time, the support provided included monthly professional development seminars, teaching a research-based new teacher curriculum, as well as classroom visits, observations, and reflection sessions with these new teachers. In some of the districts, additional training was provided to orient veteran teachers with the needs of new teachers. I also provided them with training on the skills needed to work effectively with adults and a variety of coaching models. A variety of these districts also included a monthly or quarterly principal/district office administration training to connect administrators with the needs of new teachers.

The demographics and populations served in these districts was significantly diverse. The goal to try and retain beginning teachers was the common factor. The ability to retain quality teachers after investing in yearlong professional development sessions targeted for new teacher needs and providing them with instructional coaching or mentoring was a frustration for principals and district office administrators throughout these years. As a staff developer and coach, it had been an ongoing personal challenge to determine what the “right” support model looked like at the site and district level to maximize beginning teacher support. Personally, I had consistently felt that I had not been able to do enough to support these new teachers to grow personally and professionally as well as to stay in teaching. In response to those concerns, I had modified my content, strategies, and support every year based on the needs of these groups, and yet a significant portion still have left teaching.

Personally, I moved to Arizona fourteen years ago from the Midwest. I understood and empathized with the challenges of being a beginning teacher in a new community. This perspective shaped my work over the years with new teachers. I had

often wondered what internal core skills sets or strengths new teachers who remained in teaching possessed. How could these skill sets be enhanced? In the beginning teacher literature, the themes of resiliency, persistence, self-efficacy, stress management, and coping skills emerge in article after article. Yet, how to address these big constructs around teacher affect, identity, and ultimately impact retention rates was unclear. With significant numbers of new teachers in my district being from out-of-state and the lack of clarity on the difference between out-of-state and in-state retention data, this was an area that required additional exploration.

The Current Situation

In addition to facilitating professional development sessions, my role also included advising and making recommendations to the district administration regarding solutions and innovations around beginning teacher retention. Our district, as well as neighboring districts, have continued to try to find the magic formula to decrease attrition through induction programs, coaching positions, and other creative support networks. In fact, the 2010-2011 Annual District Monitoring Report submitted to the Arizona Department of Education captured the challenge even from three years prior, when the attrition rate had dipped to 88% noted that, “We continue to struggle with data on specific reasons why employees leave because of the lack of participation on the exit survey” (2011, p. 5). Exit interviews were the common method used to determine why beginning teachers who had resigned were leaving; yet this practice seemed to be underutilized and underanalyzed. “The results of the surveys cannot be disseminated by years of experience, more than a range of 1-3 years, therefore we do not have clear data specific to new teachers” (personal communication, Executive Director of Human Resources,

Beginning Teacher School District, October 6, 2013). Programming and curricular decisions on supporting and retaining new teachers continued to be developed and altered yet without any targeted data to monitor its effectiveness.

In my work, I too had modified, revised, and restructured my own curriculum, supports, and mentoring models to try and decrease the attrition of the groups with whom I was working. In my ten years of working with new teachers, I had found that many of the younger teachers had never really struggled with anything related to school. They were typically good students themselves, viewed all with the title of “principal” or “administrator” as competent and the ultimate authority, and assumed that their teammates on their grade level/content area team would be embracing and encouraging. My years of interviewing beginning teachers and providing support in their first year journey had revealed that when there was a disconnect between what the beginning teacher imagined his/her first year experience to be and the reality of the classroom, this seemed to be where an internal crumbling of the beginning teacher began. Some of the beginning teachers had not faced adversity or challenges and may not have had the opportunity to experience coaching/mentoring from others as well. This combination of a new context, new levels of personal and professional responsibilities, and reliance on personal and professional supports created a complexity for which beginning teachers were not consistently prepared. I had seen success when a beginning teacher group was provided focused training and support through conversations, reflection structures, personal and professional goal setting, and awareness of beginning teacher “typical” experiences and challenges, and personal connection with others. I saw this crumbling of self-belief and self-confidence intensified with one teacher group and noted a heightened

sense of crisis within the out-of-state teachers group. In fact, one year, five out-of-state beginning teachers had quit mid-year, abandoned their students, and confused and overwhelmed their remaining colleagues.

Principals reported being overwhelmed by the influx of new teachers on their campus, noted the tremendous challenge of the intensity of support and time that was required of this group. Financially, the district was swamped with the costs of recruitment trips out of state and their increased presence (with incurred costs) at local job fairs, in addition to paying for ongoing professional development for district curriculum and initiatives. The impact to the morale of the campuses could not be ignored. Principals and teachers reported an infection in their climate. Based on conversations and climate survey results, students and parents noted that they did not feel connected to the schools as they were unsure who the staff may be or noted that new staff did not have the same understanding of how to endear themselves to the site. Due to the lack of consistency in staff, veteran staff reported to be less likely to connect with new staff as they were concerned that the new staff would not return.

Cycle 1 – Reconnaissance

As a researcher, I had the opportunity to conduct previous investigative cycles of action research with other new teachers in nearby districts. In the first cycle of research, I utilized data from a group of beginning teachers to whom I was providing monthly professional development sessions focused on beginning teacher needs. These participants were 20 beginning teachers in a West Valley school district. This was the largest group of beginning teachers that the district had ever had and the administration was concerned and committed to determine what supports could be developed to ensure

retention. I collected data with surveys, focus groups, and formal and informal interviews. I met with principals and district administrators to explore their experiences and insights as to the impact of the beginning teachers and retention issues on their campuses. I analyzed the data, searching for common themes and trends using the transcripts and information gathered. I learned that the beginning teachers wanted an opportunity to share their experiences and process through their day-to-day challenges with a helpful and empathetic listener. I gathered evidence through the data that the greater their perception of support, the greater their willingness to persevere through the day-to-day challenges. In addition, the out-of-state new teachers reported that they struggled with making connections and their level of isolation and lack of community connectivity was significantly higher than the in-state beginning teachers.

Cycle 2 – Mini Innovation

Based on the reconnaissance and information I gathered in Cycle 1, I developed a mini-innovation in the same district. I looked at a sub-group of the beginning teacher group, five teachers who were interested in meeting with me off-site, in an informal context, to discuss their weekly challenges and successes. They were motivated to collaborate with each other and explore their colleagues' experiences. Four of the five teachers in this group were from out-of-state. I collected data through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and work sample analysis. I analyzed the mapping activities that the beginning teachers developed in five informal collaboration support sessions at a nearby coffee shop on Saturday mornings. In addition, I analyzed these maps and developed a coding system with common themes and trends. I also analyzed the

transcriptions from the focus group and interviews to identify key concepts and trends within the group of five beginning teachers.

Through my analysis, I learned that if new teachers perceived support, then their attitude and demonstration of persistence, belief in their own abilities, and resilience (ability to bounce back with day-to-day challenges) also increased. A resounding theme with beginning teachers groups was the lack of connectedness with colleagues and administration that was a critical component for new teacher success and retention. Hill-Carter notes, "To keep new teachers, district and administrators need to realize that people crave connection" (Hill-Carter, 2010, p. 15). In addition, out-of-state new teachers reported that they struggled with making connections and feeling like they are part of the community. Their insights prompted my interest in further study and exploration into the varying experiences of Arizona beginning teachers from in-state versus out-of-state and consideration of how that support may need to be customized or differentiated to better meet those needs and increase retention.

Cycle 3 –Mini Innovation

In the third cycle of action research, I investigated the factors that the out-of-state teachers indicated were reasons that they chose this district and were willing to move across the country. Using semi-structured interviews and focus groups, I gathered insights into the impact of the continual turnover from the principal perspective. Using surveys, I collected input from the beginning in-state teachers and out-of-state beginning teachers on how the support provided by the district impacted their decision to remain in teaching, as well as how their views of themselves as a resilient and persistent educator had evolved through the year. Data analysis indicated that the informal support provided

through monthly off-site meetings at a coffee shop was regarded as an effective support. In addition, it emerged that many of the out-of-state beginning teachers felt unconnected at times and searched for opportunities to feel successful and know they were making a difference. The data also indicated that many beginning teachers felt unprepared for the day-to-day challenges and variation in culture from Arizona to their home state and student teaching experience.

The results also showed that the beginning teacher group developed a stronger reliance on each other as support for their journey, as well as an increased awareness that the phases (Moir, 2011) they were experiencing during the first year were “normal,” which provided them with relief that they were not the only ones going through challenges. Increased belief in themselves and perceptions that they were able to ride the waves of a tough teaching day and still be a successful teacher was another finding.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study was to explore the impact of informal support sessions focused on personal and professional skills of everyday resiliency, including stress management, coping skills, and awareness of support structures, and was grounded in the phases of beginning teachers’ research (Moir, 2011). These sessions explored how the view of out-of-state beginning teachers changed throughout their first semester teaching journey. These sessions utilized the strategies of mapping activities, where beginning teachers created visuals to capture their feelings, needs, and perceptions. Teachers documented their first fifteen weeks in the classroom by capturing digital images that reflected their weekly reality. These images provided beginning teachers with more tangible evidence to help reflect and retain a complex and often indescribable

experience. These strategies were designed to provide them with a forum to express their successes and challenges. It was also intended to provide the district with vital information on how to continue to better customize support to ensure out-of-state beginning teacher retention. The ultimate goal was to understand how support staff might alter a beginning teacher's perceptions of their own persistence and resilience in dealing with the challenges of the classroom to reduce beginning teacher attrition. The second goal was to develop creative and innovative methods, strategies, and programming to support this group.

Despite an exhaustive search of the literature, there were no specific recommendations on how to better customize the support for out-of-state beginning teachers. Utilizing the insights from previous cycles of action research provided foundational ideas on how to alter the programming for the next group of beginning teachers. The issues that were most important to my work as a researcher and staff developer included addressing emotional support needs, reducing feelings of isolation, and increasing personal coping strategies.

An innovation was developed in response to the specific needs that emerged. The purpose of this qualitative action research study was to explore the needs, perceptions, and feelings that influenced out-of-state beginning teachers and explore how their journey into teaching aligned with the attitudes of beginning teachers (Moir, 2011). The goal was that when this group was provided support sessions that targeted, explored, and enhanced resiliency strategies, they would be more likely to remain in teaching and experience their own personal growth. This innovation was designed with a focus on care. The level of social isolation with beginning teachers who have moved from out of

state was significant. Providing a designated support group, with reflective practices as a foundational component was critical. Addressing this group's affect (feelings) was designed to help them develop their own sense of purpose and satisfaction. Their responses to challenge also shaped how they continued interacting in their social isolation, ideally exploring outward to increase connectivity, confidence, resiliency, esteem, and efficacy. The overarching goal of this innovation was to explore how support sessions could be developed around the four phases of beginning teachers (anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection) utilizing a C.A.R.E. (Creating Authentic Resilient Educators) model. Given these, my research questions were:

Research Questions

1. How did the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching?
2. To what extent did this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection?
3. What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIP

Kang and Berliner (2012) noted, “Simply offering various induction activities is not enough to persuade beginning teachers to stay. Understanding beginning teachers’ needs should be the very first step to take and then we could support them wisely” (p. 281).

Chapter 1 provided the national context for this study and through this review showed there is a problem with beginning teacher retention and how the ongoing lack of staffing can crumble a site or district. From my own context and previous cycles of action research with beginning teacher groups, it was noted that in my local context, a true retention crisis existed, especially for out-of-state beginning teachers.

This chapter presents what is known and unknown about beginning teacher retention, including proposed solutions to stop the staffing hemorrhaging, especially in regards to the sub-group of out-of-state beginning teachers. This chapter also includes several theoretical perspectives as a foundation to determine how the research might best influence the beginning teacher retention concerns in the district. The literature focused on retention illuminated several themes around challenges and potential solutions. These included: fiscal and climate challenges stemming from the cycle of attrition, the personal factors that caused beginning teachers to leave education, and programmatic attempts of schools and districts to remedy the situation. A newer sub-set of the literature have specifically denoted the importance of resilience as a trait that could be acknowledged and nurtured in teachers.

Numerous studies and reports over the past ten years, show that 15% of beginning teachers leave within the first year of their teaching and 40 to 50% leave within the first five years (Devos et al., 2012). “This translates to approximately, 157,000 U.S. teachers leaving the teaching profession every year, with an estimated 232,000 teachers who change schools for better working conditions or for wealthier, higher performing schools” (AEE, 2008, p. 5). In recent years, there has been a wider body of worldwide data on beginning teacher retention data (especially reported in Australia and the United Kingdom) and studies focused on beginning teacher experiences, which has confirmed the statistics of one-third resigning within the first year of teaching. There was consistent agreement across the globe that new teacher retention is of critical importance (Ingersoll, 2012; Miner, 2010; Turner, 2009).

Globally, the literature has presented various studies and considerations exploring the factors that encouraged beginning teachers to remain in the profession long-term. Key questions that had been raised in the field include: How do some beginning teachers manage to defy the accepted attrition statistics and persevere through the day-to-day challenges of a first year teaching experience? What are the factors that encouraged retention, especially in the beginning teacher sub-group of those who had moved from out of state and seemingly had less support structures surrounding them? What are the personal skill sets that succeeding beginning teachers have, or how could a school or district enhance those skills through specific support networks and strategies to encourage personal success and retention?

Beginning teacher retention is very contextually based. “Studies have shown an important connection between teacher retention and contextual factors within the school,

especially administrative support, staff associations, teacher impact, student performance, safety, and facilities” (Hallam et al., 2012, p. 4). With the interrelatedness of multiple factors, leaders have asked what solutions could slow the flux of beginning teacher turnover? As a staff developer in a school district plagued by beginning teacher turnover, my area of interest was how to create systems and structures within a school district to enhance out-of-state beginning teacher retention and empower new teachers with strategies to enhance their personal resiliency to ensure a greater likelihood to persevere through the challenges of a first year teacher and remain in my school/district.

Complexities of the Turnover

The educational community has been studying the retention rates of beginning teachers and how teacher mobility impacts the students, staff, and community. The literature revealed the intricacies of the impact. Miner (2010) suggested that the complexity of issues currently facing new teachers cannot be over simplified, noting that there is not one solution. Others like Ingersoll (2001) have denoted a sense of complicity about the retention. In his words, “...policy makers have become comfortable with a certain level of teacher turnover” (Earley & Ross, 2006, p.7). This kind of thinking suggests that policy makers believe it is less costly to replace a portion of teachers each year than to invest funding to investigate and target the reasons that cause teachers to leave, as well as consider the factors that may have supported them staying. Briggs (2011) noted that the only way to confront the issue of retention was to spend time identifying ways to better support new teachers that would lead to a greater likelihood of retention. This identification was critical for changing the retention rates for beginning teachers within the context of this work with new teachers and my study.

The complexities of the beginning teacher “revolving door” caused a multitude of challenges. These included fiscal, climate/culture issues, and dissolving of confidence of new teachers. Varying investigators have determined the tremendous costs associated with replacing teachers who leave the profession to be around \$2 to 7 billion per year (Earley & Ross, 2006, Wiebke & Bardin, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2010). However, it is more than financial. When new teachers leave, morale and climate issues erupt in schools (Ingersoll, 2002; Stockard, 2004). The entire school community struggles to stay connected and unified. The impact of the turnover is felt at the community level with parents and stakeholders, and even in the classroom itself. Ongoing turnover influences teacher morale and student learning (Gossom, 2004). Throughout the nation, districts have made varying attempts at improving their own teacher retention, yet with inconsistent success. For those sites/districts with a significant number of beginning teachers, mentoring and induction were frequently proposed solutions.

Impact of Mentoring and Induction

Studies have shown that, “there is growing evidence of the positive impact of induction programs on teacher retention, costs, teacher quality, and student learning” (Russell, 2006, p. 2). Mentoring and induction were two terms that were oftentimes used interchangeably when discussing support for beginning teachers. However, in the literature, they had different meanings. New teacher expert, Harry Wong (2004), defined a mentor as a person whose function was to help a new teacher. Whereas Wong defined induction as a “...comprehensive, sustained professional development process” (p. 14). These were the definitions that were utilized in this study.

Evidence from Anthony et al. (2006) has suggested that participation in comprehensive induction programs could cut attrition in half. Smaller studies have supported the findings that participation in mentoring and induction programs has had a positive impact on teacher retention, though the size of the impact varied by study. There was also evidence that induction programs actually saved money for school districts. “It has been estimated that for every \$1.00 invested in induction, there is an estimated payoff of nearly \$1.50” (Russell, 2006, p. 3).

Researchers on beginning teachers, Ingersoll and Smith (2004), noted that formalized teacher induction programs surged in the 1990s with 4 out of 10 beginning teachers reporting participation in these programs. In 2000, only 8 out of 10 beginning teachers reported this support. In the year 2000, 7 out of 10 teachers also reported being formally assigned a mentor in the same content/grade level for support. These researchers found that these numbers matter, as there was an association between participation in formal induction and mentoring programs and the decreased likelihood of turnover. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) concluded that the strongest factors for reduced turnover was having a trained mentor with a common planning and regularly scheduled collaboration time, along with being part of an external network of beginning teachers. In addition, the more support components that were added (i.e., ongoing formalized induction seminars, supportive communication, common planning time), the less turnover was noted. Their recommendations included a multi-layered approach of “bundling” or “packaging” support for beginning teachers.

Yet, this multi-layered support system is not often a reality. Because of the focus on greater teacher accountability, increased formalized testing, and reduced federal

funding for education, there has been less formalized induction and mentoring programs available and reduced staffing at the site and district level. Pamela Hallam, Po Nien (Felipe) Chou, Julie Hite and Steven J. Hite (2012) conducted a recent study of two different mentoring models. One mentoring model for beginning teachers was implemented by district level coaches and the other model utilized in-school mentors. The study mainly focused on the mentoring relationship, the sources and type of support, and the impact of the mentoring over time. The conclusion was similar to Ingersoll and Smith's (2004) recommendations. The "constellation" approach to mentoring, especially the various roles and participants provided support at the district, site, and administrative levels, provided the greatest impact to retaining beginning teachers. Regular collaboration and informal social networks were necessary to help support and retain teachers (Hallam et al., 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

In order for mentoring to impact new teachers while supporting and developing their skills as quality educators and enhancing their belief in themselves (self-efficacy skills), mentors assigned to these new teachers must be trained and intentional about their support (Russell 2006; Wong, 2004). Many districts claim to have a mentoring program in place that achieves this goal; however, when investigated more deeply, it was revealed that what was thought of as a support "program" was really just an assignment of a more veteran teacher to a new teacher. There was no training for the mentor, no expectations of how frequently the pair would meet, or how to best support the new teacher. Effective mentoring could be a renewing process that could help solidify identities for both the new teacher and their mentor (Watkins, 2003). Unfortunately, as Russell (2006) noted, too many mentors were under-trained and over extended. With their personal expectations

for their own classrooms, mentors too often viewed the new teacher as another thing to manage and many even grew resentful of the expectations placed upon them. There was typically no additional pay or recognition for these veteran teachers, which continued to fester the apathy of new teacher retention (Esch, 2010). This apathy quickly shifted into negativity and began to infect the new teachers themselves as many of them were missing the personal skill set they needed to know how to manage their new position. Negativity from mentors created self-defeating views in new teachers. Thus, the cycle of attrition continued. Beginning teachers who were being “mentored” by negative or untrained mentors may actually be stuck in a “self-defeating and demoralizing cycle of failure” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This low teacher efficacy contributed to low levels of perseverance and retention as well. Therefore, the “right” mentor and purposeful relationship is a critical component for beginning teacher success (Turner, 2009).

Mentoring may serve as the foundation of many formalized induction programs, however induction typically referred to more formalized support sessions of professional development for beginning teachers. One study conducted by Weschler and Humprehy (2010) found significant variation in the topics that were presented to beginning teachers in induction sessions. The commonalities did include instructional techniques, evaluating and reflecting on their teaching practice, creating a positive classroom environment, and classroom management. The topics that were least frequently addressed in induction included meeting the needs of diverse learners and instructional techniques for English language learners (ELLs). They also found that though many beginning teachers had mentors, other leaders facilitated the induction sessions and the mentors were unaware of the session content/topics being presented to the beginning teachers with whom they were

working. This caused a disconnect of support for beginning teachers and lack of follow-up and application into the beginning teacher classroom. From self-report, this study determined that induction opportunities do provide beginning teachers with an increase in their self-efficacy and professional growth. This study indicated that multiple layers of support, including full-time release mentors, training for beginning teachers and mentors, communication systems, as well as induction supports were important. The work of Weschler and Humphrey (2010) could not directly correlate retention to these supports; however they did recommend that the induction programming directly connect to school site initiatives and that site climate/culture (context) be considered for maximal beginning teacher support. “This research suggests the ability of beginning teachers to raise student learning beyond traditional expectations is ultimately about changing the culture of teaching and is the responsibility of the entire school community” (p. 42).

Another study published in 2012 by Kang and Berliner noted that there were “three induction activities” that had an impact on the “likelihood of leaving.” These included beginning teacher seminars, common planning time, and receiving extra classroom assistance. Kang and Berliner noted, “Simply offering various induction activities is not enough to persuade beginning teachers to stay. Understanding beginning teachers’ needs should be the very first step to take and then we could support them wisely” (p. 281). Therefore the professional development or activities offered to beginning teachers must be customized support that incorporates research-based high-impact content, along with a willingness to be responsive to the needs that emerge from the beginning teacher target group. In this context, the most challenging retention issue was that the beginning teacher group was from out of state.

In the literature, there was a gap in providing recommendations on the specific mentoring criteria or strategies that could maximize beginning teacher retention. In addition, the literature did not programmatically address the affective domain of beginning teachers, including feelings and consequent reactions to those feelings that dominated first year teaching including isolation, uncertainty, guilt, and fear (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Specifically, the research surrounding beginning teacher retention also did not delineate personal self-efficacy skills, stress management, or coping skills. The feelings of self-doubt could lead beginning teachers to despondency and even despair (Mckenzie, 2005). Without addressing the realities of the feelings that emerged in beginning teachers and strategically addressing them, districts and schools completely missed key components to retaining beginning teachers.

Impact of Self-Efficacy Training/Personal Development Skills

Teaching is an emotion-driven and very personal profession (Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012). Beginning teachers are expected to experience positive emotions when doing their work, to be and to feel effective in their teaching, and to remain in the profession (Devos et al., 2012). When the feelings generated from work did not align with what new teachers believed they should be experiencing and feeling, there is increased stress and self-doubt. “A factor often considered as an antecedent of persistence and performance is self efficacy” (Devos et al., 2012, p. 29). A teacher’s self-efficacy, or belief in their own abilities and ability to make a difference, influenced their own behaviors and engagement in teaching, as well as impacted their students’ achievements and motivation (Devos et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Beginning teachers' views of themselves could critically infect or impact the classroom and ultimately alter their decisions to stay or leave the profession.

The strongest predictors of self-efficacy beliefs were found to be productive working relationships with colleagues, the school culture, and the leadership shown by the principal (Devos et al., 2012). The studies on self-efficacy indicates that new teachers do experience a decline in their self beliefs during their first year (Devos et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In most districts and schools, there were no systematic tracking of the beginning teachers' beliefs in themselves as the year progressed. Research indicated that teachers with higher self-efficacy skills visualized success in the classroom when they had positive models and support systems (Bandura, 1993). Those who doubted their self-efficacy failed to visualize themselves achieving success in the classroom and dwelled on what could go wrong. In the case of beginning teachers, it would be difficult to achieve more in the classroom when fighting self-doubt. This would be especially evident with beginning teachers who are lacking their own personal support structures at home or who are struggling with their own team of colleagues or administration. Teachers who were new to a state or area, who were single and may be without a strong family or friend were more apt to continue struggling with self-doubt and lost the determination to stick it out. Facing the day-to-day challenges of teaching were too overwhelming so teachers quit.

Focus on Resiliency and Personal Efficacy

Determining specific skills and strategies could enhance a beginning teacher's experience to ensure greater likelihood of retention, but even more than that, increase a beginning teachers' personal sense of commitment and developed personal and

professional skills to help them maintain success over time with students. Beginning teachers who enjoyed positive early experiences (including encouragement, feedback, and identification of successes) were found to have an increase in their personal belief that they could persevere and maintain in teaching, along with a greater commitment to teaching (Roness & Smith, 2010). In fact, a large-scale longitudinal research study found that teachers' commitment, identity and resilience were closely associated with levels of student achievement (Day et al., 2006). It was more than just student learning though with which the educational community needed to be concerned. It was also imperative to provide intentional care and targeted support for beginning teachers.

Less was written about the “human strengths” (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003, p. 13) that beginning teachers demonstrated when they confronted and overcame the challenges of the classroom. There was a relationship between resilience and two related personal skills of efficacy and emotional competence. In fact, Benard (2004) listed self-efficacy as one of the characteristics of a resilient person, and similarly, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) suggested that people with high levels of personal efficacy possessed strong resilience. Resilience and personal efficacy differed however, in the ways they impacted action, although high performance resulted from both. “Personal efficacy is a future-directed human strength linked to action. Whereas highly resilient individuals are reactive to stressful situations, highly efficacious individuals are proactive” (Tait, 2008, p. 59). In addition Bobek (2002), noted that,

New teachers can enhance their resilience by fostering productive relationships with people who understand the trials and tribulations of teaching, who reinforce the value of what teachers do, and who offer insight into various options available for dealing with a variety of teaching situations. (p. 59)

The question that emerged then was how to enhance or encourage a growth in resiliency, including a belief in self and ability to monitor his/her own progress through the journey of the first year of teaching.

Resilience was also linked to emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995), which was an umbrella term that captures a broad collection of individual skills and dispositions, usually referred to as soft skills or inter- and intra-personal skills, that are outside the traditional areas of specific knowledge, general intelligence, and technical or professional skills. (Keirstead, 1999)

Focusing on the soft skills has been negated as being “fluffy” or extraneous or not necessary work with educators with the current climate of high-stakes testing and teacher accountability. Tait (2008) notes that social and emotional support was extremely important in developing resilience and mediating the negative effects of stress (p. 70). Beginning teachers who had support structures, coping skills, self-reflection ability, and a sense of resiliency were more likely to be able to focus on student learning and testing. Ignoring the importance of resiliency was ignoring the reality of the beginning teacher experience. Teaching resilience strategies and resilience-building activities with beginning teachers addressed the needs of “...self-assessment, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills” (Tait, 2008, p. 64). Research indicated that beginning teachers should be encouraged to recognize and talk about their resilient responses to events, both to increase their sense of efficacy and to support their colleagues. “Good communication skills are the most useful means to relieve stress and address the psychological needs of novice teachers” (p. 70).

Resilient attitudes and responses to teaching challenges could conceivably be valuable predictors of success in and commitment to a teaching career. Because it is very expensive to recruit, train, and induct a teacher, an argument could be made for trying to

select teacher candidates who have the greatest potential for success and long-term commitment. A person who demonstrates resilience is able to regulate his or her emotions and interact more effectively in social environments. Resilience can be nurtured, developed, and mobilized in times of stress. Beginning teachers, given the right kinds of social, emotional, and professional support, could work towards developing resilient responses and behaviors, such as finding and maintaining balance in life, seeking and nurturing supportive relationships, persevering to achieve their goals and working through difficult situations, sustaining an optimistic outlook, and rebounding after a setback. “Resilience, linked to the development of teacher efficacy and underpinned by emotional competence, appears to play an important role in new teacher success” (Tait, 2008, p. 72). In addition, factoring in the needs of the beginning teacher group in a school or district to differentiate support was another important consideration.

Specifically tailoring support systems to address out-of-state beginning teachers needs was notably absent in the literature. It did not denote if a beginning teacher was new to a state or community, rather only that he/she was new to the profession. Exploring the needs of out-of-state beginning teachers was an area of interest to determine how this study could help frame recommendations for districts/schools as to how to more closely align support to meet this group’s needs.

Phases of Beginning Teachers

The New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, California, has been working with beginning teachers since 1998 to help provide support, including mentoring and induction services. They have researched and tracked new teacher retention over fifteen years. Ellen Moir’s (2011) article on the Phases of First-Year Teaching (Figure 1) was a

foundational structure indicating the typical developmental attitudinal phases that new teachers go through over the course of their first year. It provided recommendations of how to best support beginning teachers. These phases included *Anticipation*, where beginning teachers may have a romanticized view of teaching filled with excitement, transitioning into another phase, *Survival*. The *Survival* phase was where many new teachers indicate that they are consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching and are focused on trying to keep up with daily tasks. There was little time or energy for reflection, and they were overwhelmed with the day-to-day challenges that arise. The next phase that Moir (2011) notes was *Disillusionment*. This phase varied in the length and intensity experienced by a beginning teacher, depending on their coping skills, support systems, and contextual experience. Beginning teachers experienced low morale during this phase, questioning their competence and commitment. In addition, they experienced physical challenges such as sickness, as well as feeling overwhelmed with the level of responsibility in juggling parents, paperwork, colleagues, students, and planning. Typically, classroom management arises as a tremendous source of stress during this phase. Eventually, most beginning teachers move into the next phase, *Rejuvenation*. This phase typically begins in January after teachers have had a chance to rest over the holiday break. Ideally, beginning teachers have found some work-life balance, developed supportive relationships, and feel more confident in their own abilities. Moving toward the springtime though, many beginning teachers' confidence again begins to wane and wear down as students anticipate spring and teachers feel the stress of high-accountability, evaluations, parent conferences, and standardized testing. Finally, beginning teachers experienced the *Reflection* phase. During this phase,

beginning teachers tend to reflect on their successes and challenges through the year and begin anticipating what changes he/she would make for the following year. Moir (2011) noted that recognizing the phases that beginning teachers experience helps provide a framework for support. This framework also provides a timeline of when different support may be most beneficial.



Figure 1. Phases of first year teachers (Moir, 2011). "Copyright New Teacher Center. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of New Teacher Center."

Veteran teachers, administrators, and support personnel need to consider how to intentionally support new teachers in their self-efficacy beliefs. Utilizing the Phases of First Year Teachers helps provide a visual and structure to the self-belief changes that beginning teachers experience in their first year. Knowing that the intensity of the self-efficacy beliefs were influenced by the level of supports that new teachers experience guided the support structures put into place at the district and site level. Teachers were able to handle challenging work conditions and workloads when they were given support

from their administrators, and therefore experienced less stress and detriment to their personal self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1993) noted that social comparisons and competition negatively impacted self-efficacy. Therefore, intentionally planning, refining, nurturing, and massaging a welcoming and personal school climate was essential if it was to be a place for teachers to increase their self-efficacy and continue to make the decision to remain in the profession. Teachers, especially new teachers, wanted to be recognized and have their accomplishments celebrated.

Teachers work within an interactive social system with an important belief system that define a culture (Bandura, 1993). Strong leaders in a building and district excel in the ability to get staff to collaborate with a strong sense of purpose and belief that their collective capabilities can surpass their challenges around them. Staff who are heavily weighted by a larger number of new teachers and have low self-efficacy, view themselves as powerless to combat against challenging cultures. Ultimately, the high needs and challenges of students serve by this staff suffered losses in their own personal efficacy and this loss ultimately impacted their academic progress (Bandura, 1993). The self-efficacy of a teacher hits the classroom at the self-belief and achievement level of the students (Ozder, 2011).

It was the intersection of the new teacher's perspectives about themselves, their colleagues, their perceptions of support and the "feeling" tone of the environment (climate/culture) that ultimately influenced decisions about remaining in teaching. One of the strongest predictors that impacted teachers' efficacy and resilience to stay in the teaching profession was productive, working relationships with colleagues, the leadership of the school principal, and the characteristics of the school culture (Devos et al., 2012).

This innovation blended these components to create a system of support where out-of-state beginning teacher needs were acknowledged, noting that the ongoing growth in self-belief and willingness to persevere and be resilient through the first year challenges was acknowledged and supported. Utilizing both formal and informal interactions with beginning teachers was intended to help establish a supportive space to deconstruct their professional experiences to further empower them. Ongoing, informal conversations were also intended as valuable tools for analyzing the complex issues of teaching (McNulty & Fox, 2010).

In addition, utilizing digital narratives to document their journey of their beginning teaching experience allows teachers to represent some of the intangible qualities/moments and personify their teaching, week-by-week (Robin, 2006). The Center for Digital Storytelling noted, “The process of creating digital work is just as meaningful as the stories created” (University of Houston, 2013). Layering the foundational understanding of the Phases of Teaching (Moir, 2011) along with a framework of resiliency develops a rich experience designed to enhance the out-of-state beginning teachers’ ability to remain in the classroom.

A Unique Data Collection Strategy

“Digital storytelling is an emerging art form of personal, heartfelt expression that enables individuals and communities to reclaim their personal cultures while exploring their artistic creativity.” Bernajean Porter (n.d.)

Historically, researchers have typically used interviews, oral histories, anecdotes, personal and reflective journals, biographies, autobiographies, along with case studies in order to hear and understand the voices and lives of teachers (Butt, Raymond, McCue, &

Yamagishi, 1992; Cole & Knowles, 2000; Cortazzi, 1993; Knowles, 1992; Nelson, 1992; Webster & Mertova, 2007). According to Hatch and Pointer Mace (2007), there were now, "...new technologies that —offer unprecedented opportunities for practitioners, researchers and the general public to explore and examine teaching and learning in settings inside and outside the classroom" (p.1). These "new technologies" included digital narratives. A digital narrative combined digital photographs with a reflection in which participants described what is captured in each photograph (Smith, Frost, Albayrak, & Sudhakar, 2007). Participants found digital pictures online to represent their thoughts and ideas or took their own pictures. Digital narratives were a unique and innovative data collection strategy that allowed abstract ideas or concepts to be captured through the use of these visuals.

McCann and Johannessen (2004) noted that a "major difficulty that beginning teachers face is the challenge to define for themselves their teacher persona" (p. 139). They go on to state that before entering teaching, novice teachers have assumed many roles, son/daughter, student, employee, but the role of teacher is a new one. Utilizing digital images with their own reflections and accessing familiar technology tools (iPads) provided the beginning teacher with a forum to explore their complex experiences and perceptions using more tangible tools. These visuals allowed them to create metaphors or analogies for their current experiences and helped define and recognize themselves as educators.

Utilizing these types of images then provided the participants with a forum for discussion. Kress (2007) noted,

...creating visual images to convey meaning is much more than mere illustration. Rather, when used in complementary fashion with verbal language, images extend meaning because those who are creating meaning are engaging in a different kind of cognitive action and engagement with the world than happens when they are generating ideas using words alone. (p.70)

Siegel (1995) also made a similar case and indicated that,

...the process of translating meaning from one sign system (such as language) into another (such as pictorial representation)...because they promote the kind of thinking that goes beyond the display of received meaning to the invention of new connections and meanings. (p. 456)

Digital narratives allowed participants to conceptualize their thinking so they could make connections to their needs, belief in themselves, and identification of strategies they could use or hone to assist them in their journey. In addition, the commonalities revealed among the groups completing these tasks allowed for a deeper face-to-face connection with their peers (Killeavy & Moloney, 2010). These “visual metaphors” become more accessible for the participants and others observing the visuals that can help foster new insight and communication (Bailey & Van Harken, 2014). Digital narratives were the primary foundation for data collection during the innovation in this project. This was intended to provide beginning teachers the opportunity to develop more concrete representations of their complex perceptions, feelings, needs, and experiences as they navigated through the phases of beginning teachers and explored resiliency strategies. Digital storytelling (narrative) expert Tom Banaszewski (2002) noted, “Everyone has a story about a place that is important to her or him, and that by using multimedia to develop and share those stories, we strengthen our understanding of our communities.”

Theoretical Frame

Three overarching perspectives provided the theoretical framework for this action research project. The theoretical perspectives included Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954/1970), Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977/2008), as well as Parker and Martin's resiliency framework (2009). These theories provided considerations for supporting beginning teachers at the district and school site level. The theories were inter-related and intertwined. A beginning teacher's first priority was to have his/her needs met (Maslow), the highest of these needs is considered the belief in your own abilities (Bandura), and in order to be successful through the challenges of the classroom, a beginning teacher must demonstrate resiliency (Mansfield, Price & McConney, 2012).

Hierarchy of Needs

One of the theoretical frameworks being utilized in this study was Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954/1970). Maslow's theory was developed in psychology to identify the typical patterns that human motivations move through. Maslow's model denoted that there were six interrelated needs. These needs included physiological, safety and security, love and affiliation, esteem, knowledge and understanding, and self-actualization. His hierarchy indicated that basic needs, such as clothing, food and shelter, must be satisfied before an individual can strive for higher needs including belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. His ideas were relevant to the study of beginning teacher retention. If a teacher's basic needs were not met, he/she was not likely to be satisfied in their job and this led to teachers leaving (Williment, 2003).

Multiple studies have indicated that beginning teacher attrition could be explained through personal needs not being met at their schools. For example, Gossom (2004) studied 120 new teachers to determine the relationship between school culture and basic need satisfaction. She found that when beginning teachers had to spend more time and energy acclimating to a school culture/climate than focusing on teaching and students, they were more likely to leave teaching. In other words, when basic needs such as safety and belonging were not met at beginning teachers' schools, they were less likely to remain in teaching.

In a similar study, Williment (2003) studied high attrition rates in northern Saskatchewan utilizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as the conceptual framework. Williment's goal was to discover why beginning teachers were quitting. His conclusion was that teachers would remain employed if their basic needs were being met and would resign if they were not. Overall, "Teachers are motivated by the fulfillment of their personal needs" (p. 67). In order to ensure retention, care must be taken to customize support to meet beginning teachers' needs. This included considering the needs of those who move to Arizona from out-of-state without any support structures such as friends or family.

In research studies conducted by Gosson (2004) and Williment (2003), along with Hill-Carter (2010), the parallels from Maslow's theory to the actual new teacher experience included the following. Physiological (Maslow) translated to salaries (financial security), housing, and feeling of safety within the building and the community. Safety (Maslow) translated to new teachers receiving support with discipline issues, as this is a major source of stress, as well as a perceived principal support in

helping develop the new teacher's self-efficacy about their classroom management

Belongingness (Maslow) translated to typical feelings of new teachers, which included isolation, homesickness (teachers who have moved from out of the area/out of state), and experience culture shock. The connection with the colleagues were critical and an area that sometimes principals assume will develop organically, but without support failed to improve and grow. Esteem (Maslow) translated to new teachers feeling that they were being supported administratively, had shared leadership opportunities, were recognized, and perceived as valuable by colleagues, parents, and students. The impact of beginning teachers receiving principal recognition repeatedly emerged in the research to be of critical importance (Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011; Watkins, 2003; Weller, 1982). And finally, self-actualization (Maslow) translated to teachers need opportunities for advancement, professional development time, and time and support to apply their learning. This allowed teachers to see themselves growing professionally and developing their own sense of worth (Weller, 1982; Williment, 2003; Gossom, 2004; Hill-Carter, 2010; Walsh & Battitori, 2011).

Intrinsically (based on Maslow) teachers needed to feel satisfied with their work and the organization in order to remain in teaching. Beginning teachers needed to find their own meaning in the workplace. Self-directed employee behavior was the prescription for self-fulfillment and therefore retention. The importance of staff recognition was noted as a critical component in order to retain beginning teachers (Weller, 1982; Gossom, 2004; Hill-Carter, 2010). "Resilient teachers derived deep personal satisfaction in their work and relied on an extensive network of support involving teacher colleagues, family and friends, and church groups" (Castro, Kelly, &

Shih, 2010, p. 623). It was critical to identify a balance of personal identities, school situations, and professional values and beliefs throughout their teaching career. This was an area that was not noted within induction/mentoring frameworks, but was included as an idea in the innovation.

This conceptual framework provided an insight as to the importance of security, belonging, safety and was used to create a foundation for working at the district level to improve the beginning teacher retention. It was vital to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of their own needs being met. In the innovation, there was purposeful support designed for the out-of-state beginning teachers who may have greater struggles with their basic needs being met since they were leaving their homes to move across the country and re-establish themselves as a teacher. They initially had to find a physical home (physiological), along with being on their own (financial/security), and acclimating to a new culture (belonging) in a new state and school. As the researcher, it was imperative to consider what support systems could most effectively assist this group to address these basic needs and then encourage opportunities for growth in esteem and belief in self (self-actualization). In addition, it was important to watch for increase in beginning teacher self-belief and identify individual support systems so that they could see themselves as capable of success as a teacher. Ideally, they would also remain in the profession.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory originated from social cognitive theory and was another foundational theory for this action research surrounding beginning teachers. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy officially as, "beliefs in one's capabilities to

organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (p. 2). For the ease of reference in this study, the working definition of self-efficacy was the belief in self to be able to succeed in specific situations. This belief determined how individuals think, feel, and behave (1994). Bandura indicated that there were three main factors that influenced self-efficacy: behaviors, environment, and personal/cognitive factors. Self-efficacy developed through perseverance and overcoming obstacles and setbacks (resilience), as well as observing others succeed through sustaining efforts. The main difference in the working definition between self-esteem and self-efficacy was that efficacy was a perception of a person’s ability to reach a goal, whereas esteem was a person’s sense of worth.

Bandura noted,

People are likely to engage in activities to the extent that they perceive themselves to be competent at those activities. With regard to education, this meant that learners would be more likely to attempt, to persevere, and to be successful at tasks at which they have a sense of efficacy. When learners fail, this may occur because they lack the skills to succeed or because they have the skills but lack the sense of efficacy to use these skills well. (Bandura 1993, p. 1)

This idea applied to both students and teachers. Teachers with a higher sense of self-efficacy created classrooms where similar feelings of success and productivity existed for students as well. Self-efficacy impacted motivation. Those who regarded themselves with high self-efficacy attributed challenges to low effort. Those with low self-efficacy attributed challenges to their own low ability. Those with low self-efficacy also have higher stress, lower motivation, and increased levels of depression when faced with difficult situations.

This translated directly into the classroom. Teachers who do have a higher sense of self-efficacy see stressors as challenges, rather than threats (Doney, 2012). When faced

with adversity in teaching, those with a strong self-belief will double their efforts to master the challenges (Bandura, 2000). Beginning teachers reported being surprised by the level of stressors they experienced over the course of the day in dealing with students, parents, and colleagues. Those beginning teachers who innately have a strong belief in themselves to manage and persevere through the professional stressors were more likely to remain in teaching. Some beginning teachers do not innately have this belief and this is where intentional nurturing and practice through induction and mentoring assisted. “Teachers need the strength of self-efficacy beliefs; and conversely, their sustained effort and perseverance in the face of difficulty will strengthen their sense of efficacy and result in a stronger sense of resilience (Gu & Day, 2007).

Beginning teachers may be more likely to stay in the profession and persevere if they have a higher sense of self-efficacy, whereas, those teachers are struggling with classroom management or feeling unsuccessful at connecting with others, they are more likely to continue internalizing that they do not have the skills needed and end up resigning. Districts, schools, and administrators should consider how to provide opportunities for success and note personal self-efficacy attempts to support beginning teachers. Supporting beginning teachers within the turbulent climate of standardized testing, high accountability, and teacher evaluation, without considering how the support options acknowledge self-efficacy could lead to a crumbling of self-belief and in some cases, resignation.

Resiliency Framework

Focusing only on the factors of why beginning teachers leave, rather than why they stay does not provide educators with the critical support and structures to shape the

system that at least 15% are leaving within the first year (Devos et al., 2012).

Investigating, supporting, and continuing to develop the personal characteristics of beginning teachers was an essential component for decision making and support systems. Shifting the thinking from just attrition to resilience offers greater potential for more effective systems and interventions for beginning teacher support. Indeed, building teacher resilience is viewed as a possible way of addressing teacher attrition (Tait, 2008) and promoting “quality retention” (Gu & Day, 2007, p. 1314). Teachers who are experiencing stress must be taught resilience and a first year of teaching is consumed by stress (Roselle, 2001).

In fact, the term resilience first emerged in the 1970s in the psychiatry and psychology field, specifically around the concept of “at-risk” students (Garmezy, 1974). Resilience was then perceived as a set innate trait. It then grew into a theoretical frame that included “...a complex interplay between individual and environment resulting in successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990, p. 424).

In searching for resilience theories and resilience research for beginning teachers, there was little literature upon which to build. A significant portion of the research on resilience was focused on student resilience, specifically on how students have overcome trauma and adverse conditions in their lives. There were a small group of studies narrowing in specifically on teachers and how these type of resilience ideas applied to the classroom. These studies viewed resiliency as complex, multi-faceted, and dynamic process (Gu & Day, 2007). Specific resilience studies focused solely on teachers are a new and emerging field in the literature. Teacher resilience had been described as a

“quality” enabling teachers to “maintain their commitment to teaching” (Brunetti, 2006, p. 813). Grotberg (1997) defined resilience as the “human capacity to face, overcome, and even be strengthened by experiences of adversity” (p. 13). For this study, the working definition for resiliency is the ability to bounce back or adapt to stressful situations.

In the past, resilience was viewed as innate trait that students (teachers) either possessed or did not possess. More recently, the idea that resiliency can be taught, encouraged, and developed has emerged (Gu & Day, 2007; Mansfield et al., 2012). Roselle (2001) noted, “Leaving resiliency development up to teachers once they get into the field is a gamble when trying to maximize retention” (p. 3). This study’s innovation utilized the concept and that it can be nurtured, developed, and enhanced. Resiliency frameworks specifically focused on beginning teachers seemed to be somewhat elusive in the literature and challenging to define how to best capture or fully examine the construct around beginning teacher support. How was beginning teacher resiliency enhanced, nurtured, supported? How did resiliency impact a beginning teacher’s decision to remain in teaching? How did identifying resiliency as a critical component of teaching impact a beginning teacher’s awareness of the skill within himself or herself?

The literature suggested that a resilience framework included the personal qualities of teachers (Brunetti, 2006), strategies they might use in adverse situations (Castro et al., 2010), and the capacity to rebound or ‘bounce back’ from challenging situations (Mansfield et al., 2012; Sammons et al., 2007; Sumsion, 2004). These were components of the researcher innovation. Teachers defined as resilient were perceived to have specific qualities or strengths that allowed them to overcome challenges. In

addition these teachers possessed, "...emotional management and a focus on positive emotions have been associated with resilience and the capacity to 'bounce back' from challenging circumstances" (Mansfield et al., 2012, p. 12). Many beginning teachers, especially those who were younger, had not experienced significant life challenges or adversity before entering the classroom. Their ability and practice in "bouncing back" when faced with these challenges was less frequent, and therefore the challenge was perceived as more significant and impactful. Those beginning teachers who experienced distress were less likely to seek assistance unless they were naturally resilient teachers who recognized their struggle and reached out for help (Castro et al., 2010). "Aspects such as being reflective, and the ability to distance oneself emotionally so as to 'not take things personally' do not feature in the teacher resilience literature" (Mansfield, Price, & McConney, 2012). Again, these were areas that were addressed in my researcher innovation.

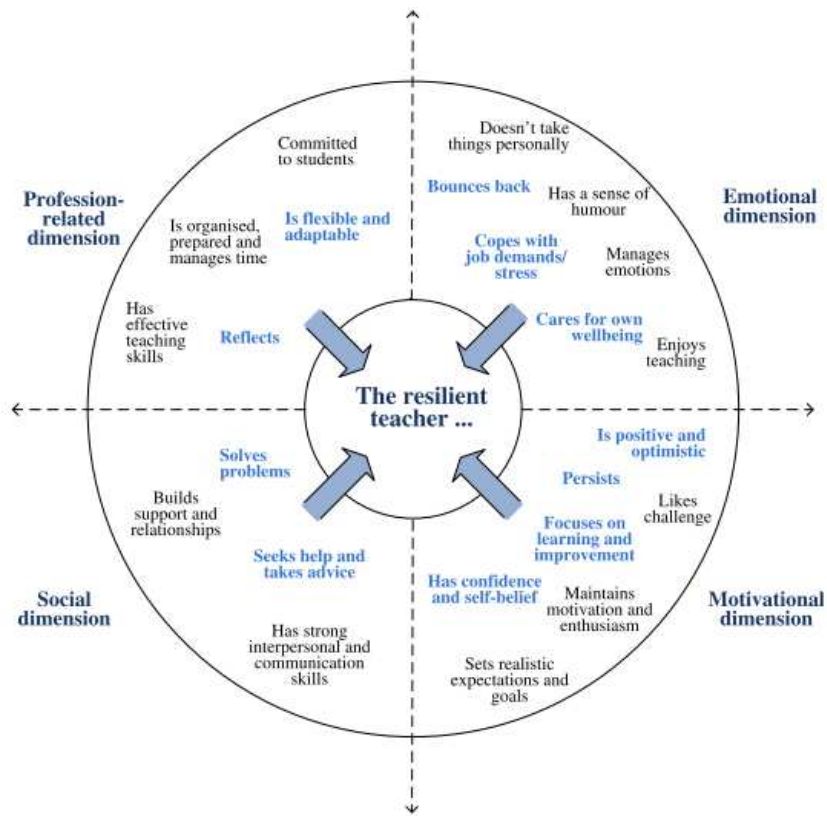


Figure 2: Four Dimensional Framework of Teacher Resilience (Mansfield et al, 2012). Permission to reproduce, see Appendix I.

Mansfield et al. (2012) suggested a four dimensional framework based on the study of over 250 pre-service and beginning teachers to fully conceptualize resiliency in teachers. This framework was based on Karol Kumpfer’s (1999) framework for at-risk children, which highlighted the profession-related dimension, the emotional dimension, the motivational dimension, and the social dimension. The profession-related dimension involved considerations around the actual practice of teaching including organization, preparation, use of effective teaching skills, and being reflective. The emotional dimension involved emotional responses to teaching experiences, emotional

management, and coping with stress. The motivational dimension included self-efficacy, continual improvement and learning, perseverance, and persistence. Aspects related to the social dimension included the environment at work, developing a support network, asking for assistance, and a willingness to take advice. None of these factors or components functions in isolation so the framework model (Figure 2) showed dotted lines indicating potential overlapping concepts, arrows highlight the interconnected and multi-dimensional view, and the words in bold indicated the themes that most frequently appeared in the study data.

This Resilience Framework had been utilized in the “Keeping Cool: Building Teacher Resilience” project out of Murdoch University (Western Australia), Curtin University (Western Australia) and RWTH Aachen University (Germany). This study constructed an interactive website (<http://www.keepingcool.edu.au>) to support the development of resilience in pre-service teachers and beginning teachers. This study developed a curriculum for pre-service teachers to build their resiliency to greater insulate them from the challenges they will face in their first years (Mansfield et al., 2012)

Also emerging from Australia is a newer concept called “buoyancy for teachers” that connected resilience in the literature and was introduced by Parker and Martin (2009). These researchers have hypothesized that this concept actually encompassed the foundational ideas from Maslow, Bandura, and Mansfield. Buoyancy was defined as, “...an individual’s ability to overcome struggles, challenges, and setbacks that are a characteristic of everyday work or life” (Parker & Martin, 2009, p.6 9). Intentionally identifying coping strategies to help combat everyday setbacks was important to ensure

work/life satisfaction as well as perceptions of self-worth and satisfaction. Parker and Martin noted that resiliency was a part of buoyancy yet these two concepts were more distinct as buoyancy dealt with the typical daily challenges a teacher faced, whereas resiliency tended to be more episodic. The authors' study of 515 Australian teachers focused on teaching direct coping skills to deal with teacher attrition, well-being, and engagement.

Mansfield et al.'s 2012 study discovered a range of attributes identified for resilient teachers,

...strong intrinsic motivation (Sinclair, 2008), self-efficacy (Day, 2008), perseverance and persistence (Yost, 2006), optimism (Le Cornu, 2009), sense of humor (Bobek, 2002), emotional intelligence (Chan, 2008), willingness to take risks (Sumsion, 2003), and flexibility (LeCornu, 2009). Similarly skills of resilient teachers were noted, such as problem solving (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2009), active coping skills (Chan, 2008) and teaching skills (Bobek, 2002, Kilda, 2009). Resilient teachers had significant supportive relationships (Bobek, 2002; Patterson, Collins & Abbot, 2004) in their personal and professional lives. These skills and attributes acted as protective factors to moderate the effects of potential threats to teacher resilience. (p.13)

Mansfield and colleagues (2012) also noted that the threats to teacher resilience included personal challenges such as

...difficulty asking for help (Mantilla & McDougal, 2009), conflict between beliefs and practices (Flores, 2006), health concerns (Day, 2008), and reduced self-efficacy (Itching, Morgan & O'Leary, 2009), unsupportive colleagues (Sumsion, 2004), lack of resources (Flores, 2006), geographical isolation (Jenkins, Smith & Maxwell, 2009) and difficult schools (Goddard & Foster, 2001). (p. 14)

Utilizing Mansfield's et al.(2012) framework for resilience which encompassed Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Bandura's theories of self-efficacy was the foundation for this innovation. It was critical to determine how the district and school site could utilize these theoretical pillars as the foundation to develop a system of support that

encompassed beginning teachers', their colleagues, and administrators as key factors in beginning teacher retention, with a special focus on out-of-state beginning teachers.

Summary

Beginning teacher attrition rates continue to be alarming. "Few experiences ... have such a tremendous impact on the personal and professional life of a teacher as does the first year of teaching" (Gold, 1996, p. 548). Researchers have painted a pathetic picture for beginning teachers' retention over the past 15 years (Ingersoll, 2001; Buckley, Schneider & Shang, 2004; Johnson, Berg & Donaldson, 2005; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Scheriff, 2008; Smethem, 2007) with no real end in sight. The reality is that beginning teachers continue to quit and choose to not make education their long-term career. Most beginning teachers no longer have formalized induction or transitional support as they begin their new journey of teaching (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Turner, 2009; Wechsler & Humphrey, 2010). They were left on their own to figure things out and struggled to devise their own coping strategies (Keogh, Garvis, Pendergast, & Diamond, 2012). "Evidence suggests the need for improved professional and emotional support to buffer and minimize the potentially traumatic initial challenges that are common to beginning teacher experiences" (Keogh et al., 2012, p. 3). Beginning teachers, especially those who are dealing with being new to the state at the same time as being new to the profession, need some protective layers added to their personal tool bag to buffer their first year journey, especially targeting coping skills to increase perseverance and maintain their own resiliency (Keogh et al., 2012; Turner, 2009a; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005; WestEd, 2005). This action research study explored the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers as they began their

first year of teaching in Beginning Teachers Elementary School District (BTESD). Their journey was explored within the lens of the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, and reflection (Moir, 2011). The innovation provided these teachers with interactive support sessions where they investigated and demonstrated resiliency skills including self-awareness, life-work balance, stress management, perseverance, communication, and problem solving. The entire innovation was built on the model of care, showing empathy and a strong interpersonal connection.

New teacher turnover continues to be a critical issue with far reaching implications. Efforts to build resiliency and self-efficacy aimed at increasing teacher retention should be considered to address the high numbers of teachers leaving the profession within the first few years. Stressors such as high levels of accountability, rigorous evaluation systems, and disconnectedness felt in new environments have impacted the ability of new teachers to develop the fortitude to remain in the field. The turnover rate continued to result in the loss of instruction, inability to build culture, and decreased effectiveness in achievement. In order to combat these challenges and promote new teachers who not only are willing and interested in staying in the profession, but also demonstrated personal growth, with an increased ability to navigate the challenges of day-to-day life in schools, intentional support and structures must be developed at the site and district level.

Targeted professional development opportunities for leaders to foster development of innovative and supportive leadership skills were required. The focus of these sessions were ways to nurture teacher empowerment and promote individual self-efficacy to decrease stress, burnout, and reduce the intent to quit (Sass et al., 2011). The

goal was to be prepared for the internal crumbling that new teachers will experience through lessening the direct impact to the classroom and creating a nest within the building for teachers to rejuvenate and repair. "Teachers who perceived greater administrative support were more inclined to believe they could make a difference in their students' education" (Sass et al., 2011).

Developing processes were essential to gain insight and reflection of beginning teachers specific to self-monitoring of self-efficacy skills, coping, resiliency, and perseverance. Practicing reflection about the day-to-day challenges of the classroom was exceptionally empowering. Teachers who distrusted their own self-efficacy tried to avoid dealing with their problems and turned inward to relieve their own emotional distress. This pattern of withdrawal coping contributed to occupational burnout and impacted retention decisions. Those with low self-efficacy showed an increase in negative thinking and increased isolation. Those with higher self-efficacy sought out and cultivated social relationships that provided models on how to manage difficult situations. These relationships helped cushion chronic stress and bring greater life satisfaction (Bandura, 1993).

In addition, the more layers of support for new teachers, the greater likelihood that they would remain in the profession. This support could include pairing them with a trained mentor, monthly support sessions, intentional administrator connectivity, and reduced expectations. The hope was that the innovation in this research would not only impact student learning and new teacher retention but also increased personal life skills to enhance a new teacher's life satisfaction.

Chapter 3

METHODS

In today's fast-paced world, what's the primary trait we should cultivate to lead happier, more balanced, and successful lives? Andrew Weil, M.D., says it is resilience--and our need for this vital characteristic applies to body, mind and spirit. "The term resilience signifies the ability to take in and appreciate the best that life offers, and bounce back quickly from negative circumstances. The best thing about resilience is that it can be cultivated," he says. (Yoga Journal Events, 2014)

Chapter 2 provided supporting scholarship into the past and current research surrounding beginning teacher attrition, the impact of this attrition on schools and districts, along with possible solutions that others have attempted. This chapter presents the research design, methods, and the tools used in this study. The foundational and philosophical perspective for utilizing action research, the context of the study, its theoretical underpinnings, and the innovation (intervention) are explored here as well.

Methods Approach

Action Research

The goal of this 15 week innovation was to understand the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers as they began their teaching journey in an Arizona school district while simultaneously working to enhance their resiliency strategies through interactive support sessions, including weekly reflection opportunities using a digital narrative strategy. These support sessions addressed the development of an awareness of beginning teacher needs and attitudes, understanding teacher stressors and support structures, identification of personal skills, and consideration of how these feelings impacted their views of themselves. This innovation used mapping activities in the face-to-face sessions and digital reflections as a means to enhance the participants'

own awareness of resiliency and focus on their personal development along with the ultimate goal of retaining these teachers in the district and teaching. Ideally, these strategies provided the teachers with a greater self-awareness and encouraged a support network to deepen their roots in the district. The overarching goal of this innovation was to explore how support sessions could be developed around the four phases of beginning teachers (anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection) utilizing a C.A.R.E. (Creating Authentic Resilient Educators) model. The concept of care and demonstrated caring, considering the affective needs of this group was an essential component of the innovation.

Given this focus, action research was an appropriate method to utilize. Action research was defined as

...a form of investigation designed for use by teachers to attempt to solve problems and improve professional practices in their own classrooms. It involves systematic observations and data collection which can be then used by the practitioner-researcher in reflection, decision-making and the development of more effective classroom strategies. (Fletcher & Beringer, 2009, p. 4)

In this study, action research was utilized to solve a problem of practice at the district level, increasing retention of out-of-state beginning teachers. Mills (2007) states “Action research has the potential to be a powerful agent of educational change” (p. v).

Utilizing a qualitative research focus allowed the researcher to fully explore the innovation and articulate the journey of the out-of-state beginning teachers in the district. Data were gathered from interviews, questionnaires with both closed and open-ended items, digital narratives, visuals, and mapping activities. A Likert-scale was used in the questionnaire and provided basic quantitative data to measure the viewpoints of the beginning teachers regarding their perceptions of their personal resiliency, their

awareness of their needs, and their belief in themselves. This innovation had a significant focus on utilizing innovative techniques to capture the thoughts of the participants through various visual means, including drawing of maps in the face-to-face sessions and creating reflections using digital images on the iPad. Using visual imagery made sense for this study because as Kress (2007) notes,

...creating visual images to convey meaning is much more than mere illustration. Rather, when used in complementary fashion with verbal language, images can extend meaning because those who are creating meaning are engaging in a different kind of cognitive action and engagement with the world than happens when they are generating ideas using words alone. (p. 70)

Using narrative was a natural extension of the innovation as it had the ability to "...capture a high degree of complexity and to convey deeper understanding of how particular events or factors impact each other" (CLT, n.d., p. 4). Narrative lent itself to honoring the multifaceted aspects of the out-of-state beginning teachers' experiences, personalities, backgrounds, values, and perspectives. This approach "...facilitates the building of the trust and confidence essential to the collection of good data" (Dali & Bakar, 2012, p. 5). Dali and Bakar noted that narrative may be a particularly appropriate approach to use with novice teachers. Narrative and visuals connected the experiences of these teachers, with the existing research, while allowing each teacher to tell their story through multiple data sources to fully develop clarity on how the district support sessions were valued by this sub-group of beginning teachers.

Setting

The study took place in Beginning Teacher Elementary School District (BTESD). BTESD was in the West Valley of Phoenix, Arizona, approximately 25 miles from downtown. It was situated in a low-income neighborhood. The District consisted of

seven kindergarten to eighth grade schools, one alternative placement school, and one fifth through eighth grade school. The district had approximately 5,600 students. The student population of the district was considered high poverty, and all schools were designated as Title 1 schools. Overall, the district average was 84% free and reduced lunch. Roughly, 13% of the students qualified for special education services and 11% had been identified as English Language (EL) students. The District had a C rating as designated by the Arizona Department of Education with one school considered to be an F school.

Over the previous five years, the district maintained an 88 to 95% retention rate of staff. However, in the three years before this study, this had changed significantly. The district lost 2/3 of its staff to other districts, retirements, returning to home states, or leaving the profession all together. Administration had speculated that the turnover could be attributed to several major factors: the increase in teacher accountability, frozen salaries due to waning enrollment, and the subsequent adoption of the Teacher Advancement Protocol (TAP). The first factor of adopting TAP increased the number of teacher evaluations from one or two formalized observations per year to four formal evaluations, along with ongoing informal and walkthrough observations throughout the year.

BTESD had done out-of-state recruiting, as in-state staffing became a challenge to fill all positions. In the 2012-13 school year, 54 beginning teachers were hired with 19 of them arriving from out-of-state. Thirty-six percent of them resigned and of that group, 63% of those who resigned were from out-of-state. In 2013-14, around \$9,000 was spent to recruit in job fairs at five Michigan colleges, Oklahoma, Texas, as well as in Arizona.

In 2013-14, 98 beginning teachers were hired and 33 were from out-of-state. That cost increased for the 2014-1015 recruiting trips, with a budget of over \$12,000 designated for out-of-state trips. In 2014-15, there were 27 out-of-state teachers hired, 2 of the teachers were veteran, 25 of them were beginning teachers (with no teaching experience) and 6 of those were from out-of-state.

Participants

The participants in this study were chosen by meeting the criteria of being new to the state and new to teaching. This was a purposeful sample as this group of teachers were chosen because of meeting specific criteria, in this case new to Arizona, not alternatively certified, and new to teaching with a focus on utilizing their insights for understanding their individual experiences (Ivankova, 2013). The rationale for selecting this type of beginning teacher was that there were greater retention issues with the out-of-state sub group of beginning teachers in BTESD, and knowing that additional recruiting would be taking place in the next school year, it was additionally important to determine a support structure that would be more likely to retain this group. In addition, the literature does not separate this group as an intentional sub-set of beginning teachers or specifically provide recommendations on how to better meet the needs of this group. In the past cycles of action research, this group emerged as having different and more intense needs for support.

There were six teachers who met the qualifications and participated in this study. These teachers represented kindergarten through eighth grade and taught in five of the eight schools in the district. The District Human Resources office initially identified these teachers, following the criteria of out-of-state and new to teaching. The

qualifications to be a part of the study included being new to teaching (0 years of experience in a classroom) and new to the state (having been in Arizona less than 3 months). These teachers were all hired in 2014 and began induction in July 2014, where they were presented with the opportunity to be a part of the study, with my role as facilitator and researcher. The participation expectations were communicated with their principals as well in July. Consent forms were given to the beginning teacher group, as well as an explanation of the study and expectations of the participation in the study. Teachers meeting these qualifications were given the information and consent forms to sign if they wanted to be a part of the intervention (Appendix F). Teacher names were changed to code letters to maintain confidentiality. The teachers signed the forms and these were retained in a locked drawer at the researcher's home office. Figure 3 provides a complete list of the demographic information about each participant.

Identifier	Gender	Age (years)	Teaching Assignment	School Description	Housing	Previous Moving Experience	Previous Residence (Region of the United States)
Teacher A	Female	22	Primary (K-2)	47% Free & Reduced	Apartment with roommate	Yes	Plains State
Teacher B	Female	25	Primary (K-2)	63% Free & Reduced	House with significant other	No	Eastern State
Teacher C	Female	24	Intermediate (3-5)	66% Free & Reduced	House alone & then later with family	No	Western State
Teacher D	Female	27	Special Area (3 schools)	71% Free & Reduced, 66% Free & Reduced, 96% Free & Reduced	Apartment with significant other	Yes	Midwest State
Teacher E	Female	28	Intermediate (3-5)	98% Free & Reduced	Apartment with roommate	No	Midwest State
Teacher F	Female	26	Special Education	96% Free & Reduced	Apartment, alone and later with roommate	Yes	Western State

Figure 3. Teacher demographics.

Action Plan

This study focused on addressing the following research questions:

1. How do the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching in the district?

2. To what extent does this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection?
3. What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

The innovation to address these research questions took place over a 15 week time period beginning in July 2014 through December 2014 (Figure 5 & 6). Each beginning teacher in the group was provided with sub release time to attend the support sessions and an iPad to complete the digital reflection homework. This innovation was conducted by myself as the researcher. The group was comprised of 6 teachers. There were 5 face-to-face support sessions (3-1/2 hours each) with 13 at-home reflection opportunities (digital homework; Figure 4 & Appendix C). The homework provided the teachers with a platform to apply the strategies, concepts, and ideas discussed in the support sessions by digitally creating or capturing their understandings using a provided iPad (Table 2, Appendix B). The teachers utilized the iPad app, *Explain Everything*, to respond to the 13 at-home reflection prompts and ultimately created a digital story/representation at the end of their sessions to demonstrate their half-year experience as an out-of-state beginning teacher in the district. This specific iPad app allowed the teachers to take a picture, or find a picture online that represented their thinking/response. They had the option to then narrate their explanation of the picture(s) or type on the pictures.

Measures

The following measures were utilized in this study to provide data and evidence from the innovation (Figure 4).

- Measure 1- Pre and Post Innovation Questionnaire (Appendix A)
- Measure 2- Session Mapping Activities (Appendix B & Appendix E)
- Measure 3- Digital Reflections (Appendix C)
- Measure 4- Post Innovation Interviews (Appendix D)

Appendix A	Measure 1: Pre & Post Innovation Questionnaire	Participants completed this electronically during Week 1 and Week 15, in the face-to-face Session 1 and Session 5 utilizing <i>Google Forms</i> and <i>Google Drive</i> .
Appendix B	Measure 2: Mapping Activities	Participants completed these visual representations of their thinking (Mapping Activities) during the face-to-face sessions in Weeks 1, 3, 6, 9, and 13
Appendix C	Measure 3: Digital Reflections	Participants utilized the iPad app, <i>Explain Everything</i> , and responded to prompts each week as homework. Within the app, participants took a picture or created a picture, using pictures from the Internet, and saved it to their Google Drive folder with their name on it and the date. These were completed in Weeks 1-14. In Week 15, the participants put all of their digital reflections together into a <i>PowerPoint</i> presentation.
Appendix D	Measure 4: Post Innovation Interviews	Participants responded to questions in face-to-face interviews with the researcher in Week 13-15. Participants responded to the 10 questions, along with follow-up questions in about 20-40 minutes.
Appendix E	Phases of Beginning Teachers	Participants charted their current phase of beginning teachers using individual charts and placing a sticker on their current phase, during the face-to-face sessions in Weeks 1, 3, 6, 9, and 13. In addition, the prompts for the Digital Reflections in Weeks 6 and 11 also captured the phase that the participants perceived themselves to be experiencing.

Figure 4. Data collection measures: Appendix, measure, and explanation.

Measure 1: Pre and Post Innovation Questionnaire

To explore the first research question on how the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influenced their first half of year of teaching, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix A) at the beginning and end of the innovation. This measure also addressed the third research question, exploring what the teachers found valuable about the support sessions, including reflecting on their own personal self-growth around resiliency dimensions. This survey was administered to the beginning teaching group during the initial session and after the final support session using Google forms.

The questionnaire was eight open-ended questions on a Google form that addressed the research questions around the constructs of resiliency and the phases of beginning teachers with open boxes for responses to be entered. The form also included 15 Likert-scale items that were organized by the constructs (resiliency-emotional, social, motivational, and self-efficacy). The survey had open response boxes where answers were entered and radio buttons where participants chose their responses (*Strongly Agree-Agree-Disagree-Strongly Disagree*). A sample open-ended question was, *Describe what skills and traits you think will be important to succeed as a beginning teacher.* A sample Likert-scale item is, *I am aware of my personal stress levels. Choose: Strongly Agree-Agree-Disagree-Strongly Disagree.*

To respond to the question prompts, teachers clicked on the survey and the window opened for them to read the questions and type in their replies or choose the response that matched their selection. This survey was conducted in Google forms online

and teachers were provided the link by email to complete the survey in the first and last session of the innovation (Week 1 and Week 15, see Table 1).

Measure 2: Session Mapping Activities

Mapping activities (see Appendix B) were used to find an answer to the Research Question #1, *How do the needs, perceptions, feelings, and experiences of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their first year of teaching in the district?* This measure also addressed Research Question #2, *To what extent does their journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, and reflection* (Moir, 2011)?

As the researcher, I facilitated all five of the face-to-face support sessions where the beginning teachers completed the session mapping activities. The participants responded to the prompts given by the researcher. In each session, the teachers were given an 11" x 17" piece of paper and markers and crayons. The directions were to represent their responses to prompts visually on the paper. The prompts connected the concepts being discussed in the sessions. A sample prompt included the questions: *"Represent your support structures. Who provides you with support? Whom do you rely on to help you to be successful as a beginning teacher?"* To respond to the concept mapping prompts, teacher drew, mapped, listed, or created their reactions to the prompt. They then shared their visuals with the group by describing their creation.

Then the teachers were asked to place a sticker on the phases chart (each teacher had their own chart) as to which phase they perceived themselves to be in at that point in time (See Figure 1 & Appendix E). This placement of the sticker allowed the participants to track their changes in attitudes over the five support sessions. Each sticker was then

marked with the date. The teachers shared out contextually what was happening that has impacted their choice of where they placed themselves and noted their current phase.

The researcher, or the district Professional Development Coordinator, took notes during the descriptions. These visuals and sticker placement were created during the support sessions. Both components were estimated to have taken 45 minutes to complete, but in reality they took about an hour and a half, including the sharing out of each participant.

Measure 3: Digital Reflections (Appendix C)

To address Research Question #1, *How do the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching in the district?* the measure of the digital reflections homework was utilized.

Each week the participants responded to prompts provided to them as their opportunity to reflect and capture their journey (first semester of teaching). These prompts were located on the Out-of-State Beginning Teacher Google drive folder and a hard copy was also provided to the participants at the first face-to-face session. This work required the teachers to use the iPad app of Explain Everything in order to respond to the activity prompt. In addition, calendar reminders were emailed to the teachers so that each week, the teachers received a popup reminder to complete the reflections homework. The prompts aligned with the previous session's strategies, concepts, and ideals that were focused around exploring, developing, and enhancing resiliency skills and how that work may change self-perceptions. One sample prompt was, *What best represents your month experience in Arizona?*

The process to complete the prompts was that the teachers took a photo using their iPad camera or found a photo online (e.g., using Google images) that best represented their needs, perceptions, or feelings and responded to the prompt with words or voice to explain their selection. Many of the participants used multiple images, some that they took themselves and used in combination with online images or quotes. The reflections resembled more of a collage look with images and quotes. The teachers then saved their work using the iPad app and then saved it to their folder, saving it by date. This allowed me as the researcher to view the digital reflections and also allowed the teachers to be able to review all of their previous creations. These digital reflections were created nine times in Weeks 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14 (Table 2). The reflections were also shared at the face-to-face support sessions, and explained by each participant.

At the end of the innovation, the beginning teachers combined their digital reflections homework and created a final digital story (PowerPoint) that represented their fifteen-work journey. They utilized the images or collages collected through the weeks. These presentations were shared at the final session (Week 15, Table 1).

Measure 4: Post Innovation Interviews (Appendix D)

This measure was used to gain insights into all of the research questions. It included Research Question #1, *How do the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their first year of teaching in my district?* This measure also addressed Research Question #2, *To what extent does their journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, and reflection (Moir, 2011)?* It included Research Question #3 as well,

What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the beginning teachers. There were ten questions asked in the interviews, along with probing questions. One sample question was, *Describe how the support sessions impacted your first 15 weeks of teaching.*

Each teacher was visited in her classroom(s) at a mutually agreed upon time. These interviews were audio recorded using an iPhone. Teachers were asked the questions and subsequent follow-up or probing questions. These 20 to 40 minute interviews took place between Week 13 and 15 in the Innovation timeline (See Table 2).

Data Analysis

- Measure 1: Pre and Post Innovation Questionnaire (Appendix A)
- Measure 2: Session Mapping Activities (Appendix B & Appendix E)
- Measure 3: Digital Reflections (Appendix C)
- Measure 4: Post Innovation Interviews (Appendix D)

The Pre and Post Innovation Questionnaire Session Mapping Activities and Digital Reflections provided multiple sources of data to determine what changes occurred or insights gained by the beginning teachers over their first 15 weeks. All of these sources generated qualitative data that were analyzed and explored for recurring themes and addressed the research questions. Given this goal, grounded theory (Creswell, 2009) was utilized, where initially preliminary codes were noted. As these codes emerged from the data (open coding), categories aligned with the theoretical models (axial coding) developed and were represented using supporting quotes. The goal was to extract the

story from the interconnectedness of these codes and data. These themes helped to divulge the story of the first half of the year for these out-of-state beginning teachers. In addition to coding, another researcher was used to review 30% of the data collected as an additional layer to determine if the codes/themes that emerged were similar to the researcher. This ensured “intercoder agreement” (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). This also helped to determine consistency in the coding process. There was a significant level of agreement noted for it to be considered as a reliable theme. If there were discrepancies in the perceived coding, relying on the data connected to the literature to provide the themes would be utilized. There were not significant differences noted between the co-coder and the researcher.

Reliability/Credibility/Validity/Trust

To ensure that there was reliability and validity to the findings utilizing a variety of measures and data tools were essential. Qualitative validity is described by Creswell (2009) as “...the means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures” (p. 190). Incorporating multiple validity strategies enhanced the researcher’s ability to assess the accuracy of the findings and convey this accuracy to the reader. These strategies included triangulating the data to examine the evidence from all of the measures to “build a coherent justification for themes (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). Utilizing member checking to determine the accuracy of the findings by sharing them with the participating beginning teachers to ensure that their insights and perspectives were accurately captured. In addition, as the researcher, I have written descriptively and revealed the bias that I bring to this study.

Several possible threats to external validity are noted. These included the Hawthorne effect and experimenter effect. Noting these before the study began, the goal was to better navigate and consider these possible effects. The Hawthorne effect can occur when participants feel they are being singled out and made to feel special. In the case of the innovation, it was intentionally designed to single out the sub-group of only a portion of the out-of-state beginning teachers and purposefully make them feel special. To control for this issue as the researcher, I encouraged my participants to respond as naturally as possible and that in order to determine how this innovation truly impacted them, I needed authentic and genuine responses. It was also explained to the participants that they had the opportunity to impact the field of beginning teacher research and customize the future support systems for out-of-state beginning teachers in the district.

The experimenter effect occurs when the researcher's bias, myself in this case, influences the participants. In the innovation, I was aware of this threat to validity as I have strong feelings of advocacy for this group and wanted them to feel supported. It is important that the results generated were not specific to my passion and care but rather are truly reflective of the group of teachers who responded authentically to the innovation.

This study was very specific to my district context and the stories represented are limited to this out-of-state beginning teacher group who experienced the support sessions at a particular moment in time. The strength in utilizing the narrative approach for this study was that there were significant details and insights that were generated although the challenge is that these may not be necessarily transferrable. My hope is that there will be

strategies, insights, and lessons learned from this sub-group that can benefit others in the field moving forward with similar groups.

Figure 5 represented the phases of the study that occurred during the fall 2014. This included the tools that were utilized during each week as well.

Week	Session Focus	Phases of Beginning Teachers	Tools
1	Emotional Tenet Meeting Your Needs	Anticipation	Pre-Innovation Questionnaire Mapping
2	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
3	Motivational Tenet Belief in YOU	Anticipation & Survival	Mapping
4	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
5	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
6	Social Tenet	Survival & Disillusionment	Mapping
7	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
8	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
9	Emotional Tenet Needs & Self Belief	Disillusionment	Mapping
10	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
11	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
12	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
13	Overall Growth as a Resilient Out-of-State Beginning Teacher	Rejuvenation	Mapping
14	Digital Images & Reflection		Capture tool & Reflection
15	Overall Growth as a Resilient Out-of-State Beginning Teacher		Post Assessment Questionnaire Final Digital Reflection Post Innovation Interviews

Figure 5. Sessions by week, including focus and beginning teacher phase.

Figure 6 included an overview of each session and the area of focus that was included in the session. It also noted the specific resilience area of focus and strategy for the session. Each session included beginning teacher homework through the use of the iPad digital image capture and reflection.



Session	Phases of New Teachers	Resiliency Tenet Focus	Task	Strategy	Connect to AZ	Digital Capture/Reflection Homework		
1	Overview & Anticipation	Overview (Social, Emotional, Motivational, Professional)	Mapping-Journey to LESD	Identification of Needs	Community of XXXXX	Personal & Professional Celebrations		
2	Survival	Motivational	Mapping-Support Structures	ID Stressors-in & out of control	Resources Nearby	Stressors & Challenges	1 st Month as Teacher Celebration	
3	Disillusionment	Social	Mapping-Personal Skills	ID Personal & Professional Relationships	Neighborhood Resources for Kiddos	Successful Personal & Professional Relationships	Signals of Surviving or Disillusioned	
4	Disillusionment	Emotional	Mapping-Resiliency	ID life/work balance	Fun to do in AZ	Accomplishments so far	Bringing you JOY	Journey of Teaching
5	Rejuvenation/Anticipation	All Tenets	Mapping-Journey	Reflection	Exploring West Valley & Nearby Towns	Journey of 1 st Year Teaching	Final Product-My Digital Story of My 1 st Semester of Teaching as an Out-of-	

Figure 6. Timeline for innovation.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The ultimate goal of this study was to determine how and to what extent additional support sessions for new teachers impacted the participants' experience in their first semester of teaching and ultimately their view of themselves. In addition, data were collected to examine a new teacher's support structure and how it plays a role in the view of him or herself as a confident professional. Appendix G indicates the various data collection tools that were utilized in this study. In addition, this table provides information on the categories developed, codes generated, and examples of how the codes are included in the table. The overarching goal of this innovation was to explore how support sessions could be developed around the four phases of beginning teachers (anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection) utilizing a C.A.R.E. (Creating Authentic Resilient Educators) model

The following research questions were examined:

1. How did the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching?
2. To what extent did this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection (Moir, 2011)?
3. What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

Research Question #1 Results

To examine Research Question #1, *How did the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching?* the

teachers' weekly digital homework reflections using the iPad (capture), field notes from the five face-to-face sessions, the mapping activities during those sessions, interviews, and pre/post questionnaires and interviews were all examined. Each type of data was examined individually, and then comprehensively to answer this research question.



Figure 7. Examples of digital reflections.

In reviewing participants' digital reflections, an overall inventory was taken of the key words and pictures utilized to respond to each week's prompt. The key words that

emerged included friends and family, as well as feeling words about the transition from the teachers' home states to Arizona, including overwhelmed, excited, and exhausted. See Figure 7 for examples of participant's weekly digital reflections (capture). The first example from Teacher F, Week 3, indicated her focus/need. The second example was from Teacher A, Week 10, demonstrating her feelings.

All of the nouns and adjectives found in the digital reflections were entered into the online website, *Word It Out*. This site denoted the most frequently used words and created a visual word cloud with the larger words indicated by frequency count. Word clouds were created by participant response and then by prompt across the entire group. For example, all of the nouns and adjectives from Teacher F, and Teacher F's Week 12 and 14 digital reflections were typed into the *Word It Out* site. Figure 8 is the visual word cloud that emerged from this analysis strategy for two teachers within the group. Notably for Teacher F, *friends* was the word that was most repeated in her reflections. For Teacher E, *overwhelmed* and *family* appeared the most often in her reflections (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Samples of *Word It Out* word clouds for Participants F and E.

In order to determine the teachers' identified needs, feelings, and perceptions for all of the 12 to 14 iPad reflections, the terms in Research Question #1 needed to be operationally defined. The operational definitions utilized to categorize the pictures, nouns, and adjectives listed on the digital reflections were:

- Needs-a deficiency that the participants wanted to be met (example: financial security, friends)
- Perceptions-the way a participant interprets their feelings, needs, experience (example: lack of support, lack of understanding of curriculum)
- Feelings-adjectives that were listed describing how the participant interpreted their experiences (example: lonely, exhausted, tired)

Using these operational definitions, all of the digital reflections were examined. Individually, needs, perceptions, and feelings were recorded for each participant. Next, these terms were put into *Word It Out* in order for the additional coding to emerge based on the word count across all participants. Figure 9 shows the visual word cloud that represents the needs of all of the participants over the course of the study. The codes that emerged under Needs were: F-Friends, T-Time, and S-Support. The codes that emerged under Feelings (Figure 10) were: L-Lonely, E-Exhausted, S-Stressed, P-Proud, and T-Tired. Codes that emerged under Perceptions (Figure 11) were B-Balance, C-Confidence, S-Support, K-Knowledge, and H-Hope.



Figure 9. Participant needs identified throughout the study.

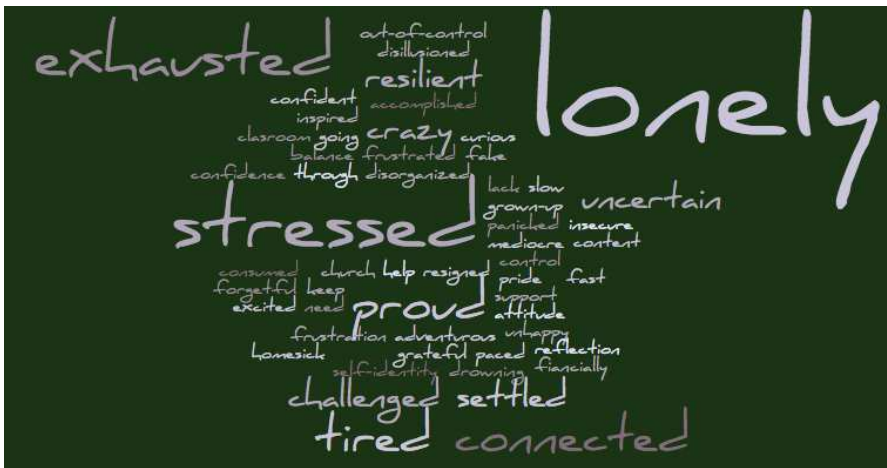


Figure 10. Participant feelings identified throughout the study.



Figure 11. Participant perceptions identified throughout the study.

Field notes from the face-to-face sessions were also examined to answer question one.

These notes were written during the session, noting specific quotes or making note of a participant’s needs, feelings, or perceptions (Figure 12).

Session	Note	Need, Perception, Feeling	Example Quote
1	3 participants cried	Need-connection Perception-alone Feelings-lonely, overwhelmed	"I may become one of those statistics. My significant does not understand how hard this is...I did not know it would be this hard."
2	2 participants cried	Needs-support, health Perception-not being connected with other teachers Feelings-frustrated, lonely, overwhelmed	"I had no idea that I was not alone in feeling like this."
3	2 participants cried	Needs-support Perception-not connecting with administration Feelings-tired, overwhelmed	"Do I have to go back or can we stay all day?"
4	4 participants cried	Needs-support, connection Perception-alone Feelings-exhaustion, excitement for break	"I did not know I would feel so dumb so often."
5	1 participant cried	Needs-support Perception-uncertainty about teaching here/grade level Feelings-tired, overwhelmed, ready for break	"I am thinking of starting over. What else can I do with a teaching degree? I Google that like once a day."

Figure 12. Field notes examples for Research Question #1.

The mapping activities completed during the face-to-face sessions also highlighted the participants' needs, feelings, and perceptions during their initial semester of teaching as the group shared aloud the maps they created and made anecdotal comments about their experiences. The maps provided a visual representation of the participants' thinking when responding to prompts that were connected to the resiliency strategies discussed in the face-to-face sessions. For example, the map that Teacher F created here was a reflection in the fourth session on how she viewed her resiliency after exploring the four dimensions (Figure 13). Another example from Teacher F showed her

life experiences and the beginning of her journey to teach, including how she chose to move and teach in Arizona (Figure 14). These maps provided insight into participants' needs, feelings, and perceptions as another source of data to triangulate to address Research Question #1.

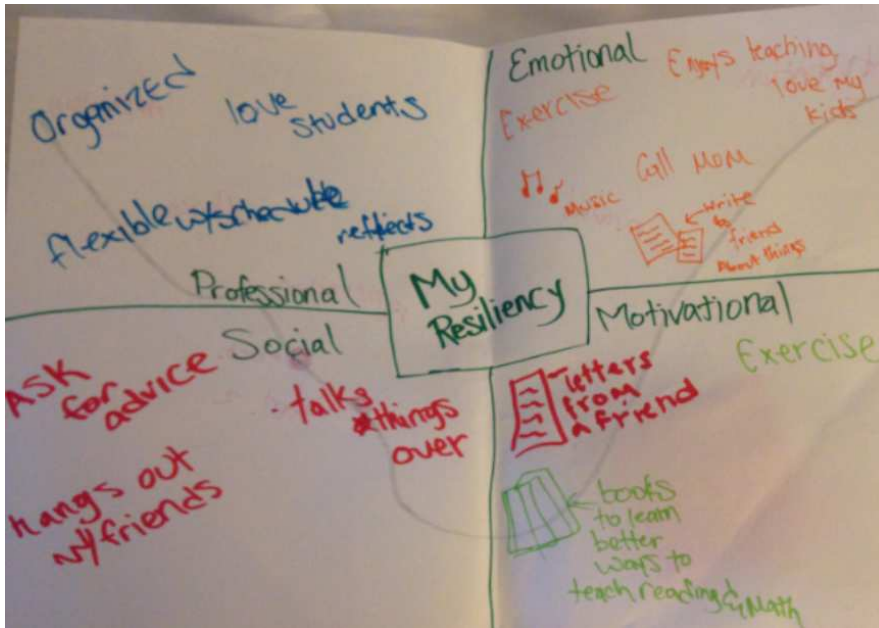


Figure 13. Teacher F views her resiliency.

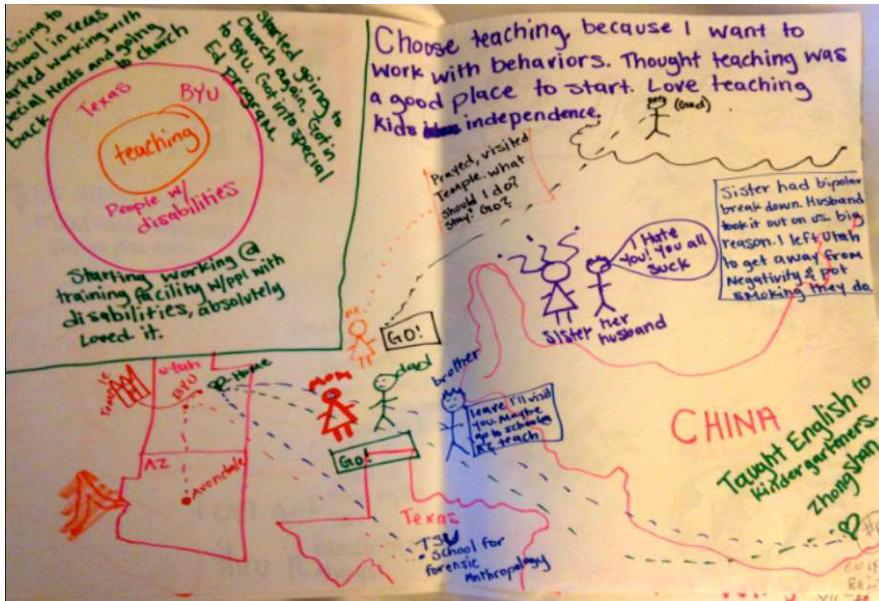


Figure 14. Teacher F journey to Arizona.

The pre and post innovation questionnaire and interviews were another source of data used to gather information around the first research question. The interview transcripts provided insight as to the participants' perceptions of their experiences over their first 15 weeks of teaching, as well as the changes in themselves they had experienced. They also reflected on how their experiences aligned with the Teacher Phases research (Muir, 2011) and how their experiences were similar or different to other beginning teachers, considering that they were all coming from out-of-state. Participants noted that their experiences over their first semester of teaching were “rough,” “challenging,” “exhausting,” and “shocking.” Teacher A noted, “I knew it was going to be rough going into it, but with being from out of state, I just had no idea it would be so hard.” Participants indicated that they did not realize how emotional the first semester would be. Teacher C indicated, “I was surprised at how emotional I have been. I don't

know if I've ever cried so much in my life.” The intense emotions caused several of the participants to question their choice in career and moving across the country. Teacher D expressed, “I feel like I go back and forth every hour whether or not I even want to be a teacher. I Google, on a regular basis, what else can I do with a teaching degree.”

Teacher A remarked, “I don't know, it's like I miss home more than I ever thought I would. I don't know if I can stay another year without my family.” The interviews also provided a purposeful pause for the participants to consider how they have feelings, needs, and perceptions impacted their experiences and aligned with the phases of beginning teachers.

Research Question #1 Summary of Results

Across the teacher journal reflections, field notes, and end of study questionnaire and interviews, it was evident that participating teachers in this study were overwhelmed for most of their 15 weeks. For example, the most frequent words that appeared in the iPad reflections were lonely, exhausted, and stressed. In triangulating the multiple data sources, the trends that were evident for all six participants were the level of stress, the exhaustion, and the isolation they experienced. Each data source confirmed their feelings of incompetence, insecurity, loneliness, and an ongoing search for connections. All participants indicated that they were looking for new friendships and yearning to feel like they fit in and belonged in their new state of Arizona, new town, new school, and new grade level. For example, Teacher D said, “I know I need to make new friends, but that is the last thing I want to do after I put so much energy out with these kids all day is to have to sell myself to others.” Teacher A noted, “Everything is new here and it's exhausting. We are getting used to a new environment and a new school at the same

time. I mean it's semi-warm outside and December so I'm even getting used to a new climate!" The level of social isolation that emerged from the data was confirmed through multiple sources of data. This isolation impacted all areas of their personal and professional life, including how they responded to attention at their school site.

The participants' experiences at their six different school sites were varied as far as how connected and supported they felt at the end of the study, depending on friendships that had developed and their relationships with their administration. Several of the participants made personal connections with work colleagues that filled the void for friends and encouraged the feelings of belonging and connection. "I have a few more people I can rely on than I did in July for sure. I feel like it is another challenge of being new though, I have to work so hard to connect with people, which can be draining. It's hard to always try to be the best me I can be," said Teacher B. Others have gotten comfortable with their independence and at least made one or two personal connections through school and/or church that have helped them feel supported and connected.

The needs of the participants that emerged were around the areas of friends, support, and time. These were all things that they felt like they did not have enough of. Basic needs, such as housing, including roommate situations, as well as financial concerns dominated the first few months of school for several participants. These themes surfaced in the iPad reflections. (See Figure 15). Figure 15 is the data that emerged when all participants' responses were combined in *Word It Out*. Money and house were the largest words that indicated the most repeated ideas.



Figure 15. Most frequently mentioned from all participants' responses.

The participants' perceptions of themselves shifted over these 15 weeks. Participants were surprised at the level of stress and feelings of being overwhelmed, yet all noted pride in themselves for moving across the country and persevering through their first semester. "It's exhausting and yet I am here every day for my kids because I am committed to them," stated Teacher F. Teacher D revealed that she was not prepared for the stress of the job,

I am so mentally exhausted at the end of the day that there are times I don't plan at all, I just go to bed and wing it the next day or frantically plan as I drive in. I don't know how teachers have the stamina and energy to keep up with this. I can only see myself doing this for a few years. How can anyone do this for 30 years? It's draining and exhausting.

Teacher C shared, "Some days I feel like a complete failure and yet I get up the next day and think-well, good for me...I am acting like a grown up and moved across the country and I am a teacher." The participants' view of themselves, their personal confidence and belief in their own abilities to be resilient, shifted throughout their first semester, depending on their work and life balance.

In addition, as personal issues, such as sickness, disagreements, or family challenges arose, participants reported being more overwhelmed and stressed professionally, even though the issues were personal. In each instance where there was a personal issue, the participants ranked their attitude about teaching and their belief in themselves (self-confidence) lower (see Figure 16). Figure 16 shows Teacher E's reality of Week 11, where she was struggling through a personal issue and struggled with work/life balance.

Participants also did not perceive that they were as able to persevere through the challenges (resilience) that they were faced with. Personal and professional feelings were reflected as being completely intertwined in these teachers' first semester of teaching. This lack of self-confidence infected the classroom as well. Most of the participants reported that when they were feeling poorly about their abilities to teach or were consumed with a personal issue, their students also behaved poorly. They did not explicitly see how their affect would or could infect their classrooms until it was discussed in the face-to-face sessions. Teacher E said, "Wow-that's scary...it's really true that if I am having a bad day, my students probably have a worse day. Everything is connected." The personal and professional identities of the participants were completely intertwined.

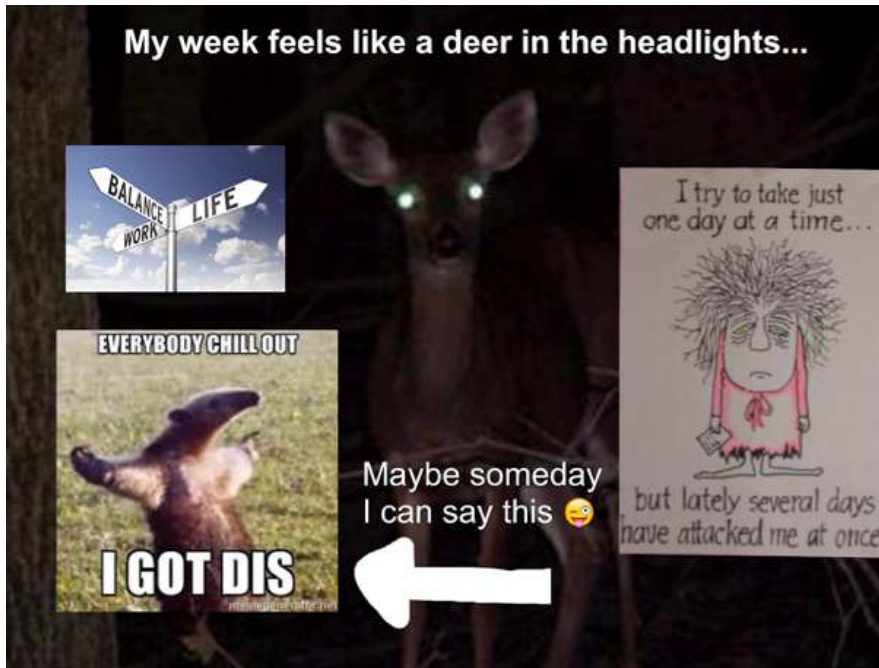


Figure 16. Teacher E's reality in week 11.

Participants did notice positive changes in themselves as well (see Figure 17). Figure 17 showed Teacher E's reflection in Week 5 which denoted an increase in her phase of disillusionment and pride in her confidence with her students. Figure 18 showed Teacher A's (Week 7) awareness of the support she was receiving from her team and self-advocacy abilities to reach out to her friends and family.

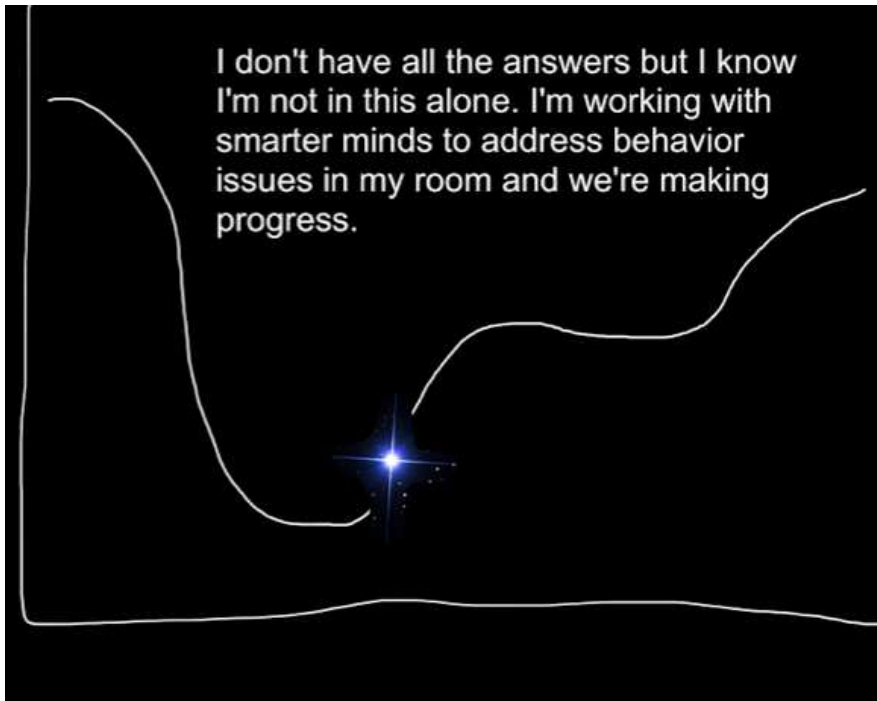


Figure 17. Teacher E (Week 6).



Figure 18. Teacher A (Week 7).

Teacher C indicated, “Being adaptive has helped me a lot and I’ve had lots of things thrown at me. I’ve been very flexible with a lot of things.” She also noted, “I think that I have always been a person that can bounce back but calling attention to it [support sessions] has been helpful. I have noticed it more in myself.” Teacher B was proud of her perseverance and resilience as well, “Certain things I am proud of like I have pulled it together and been successful with my students.” Teacher A said, “Yes, I know now that I am resilient. I can use that term with confidence now. I mean, I put on a happy face for my students. It’s not their fault that I moved 22 hours from home and miss my family.” The participants’ ability to articulate their feelings, needs, and perceptions while utilizing the specific skills and strategies utilized in the C.A.R.E. sessions were evident. Participants expressed their feelings using words like “resilient,” “self-confidence,” “advocate,” and “persevere.”

Overall, the participants’ needs, perceptions, and feelings were very similar to one another. They experienced the initial culture shock of the state, climate, and orientation to teaching. Over the semester, they made progress in transitioning into feeling more comfortable in their new home state and school and mildly proud of their personal resiliency and perseverance. In the final face-to-face support session at the mid-year point of their first year, the overall group was still struggling with deciding if they had made the right career choice and decision to move across the country to Arizona to teach (see Figure 19). Teacher B’s reflection from Week 9 indicated that the variation in her thinking and experiences which translated into uncertainty on staying in the profession. Teacher D (Figure 20) captured her uncertainty using the grumpy cat picture along with her recent Google search in Week 13 as a reflection of doubts on the profession.

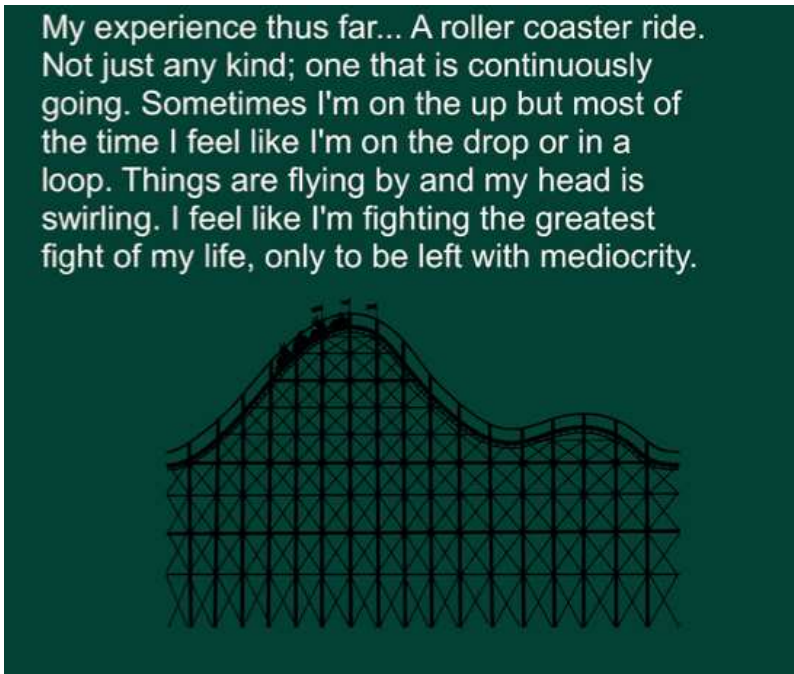


Figure 19. Teacher B reflection (Week 9).

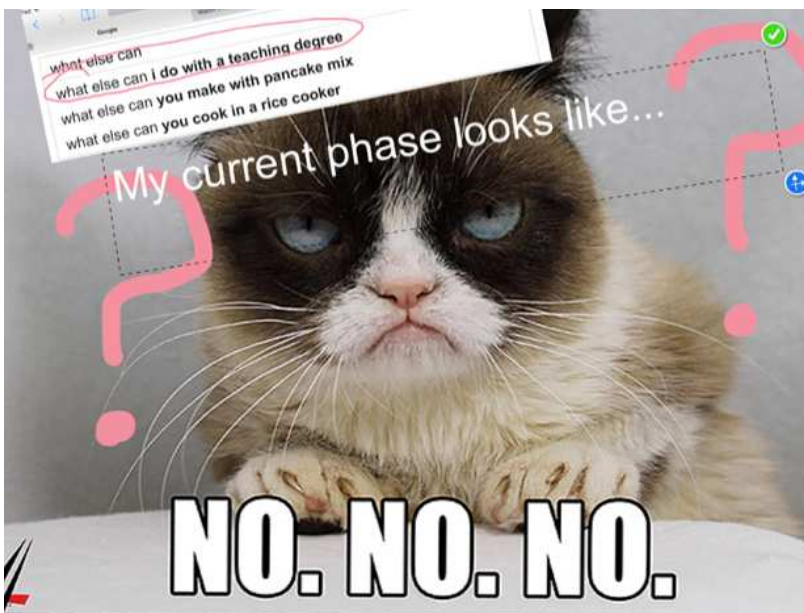


Figure 20. Teacher D reflection (Week 13).

Of the six participants at the mid-year point of their first year of teaching, five of them were still uncertain about remaining in their current teaching assignments. The uncertainty they were experiencing was often connected to not feeling connected at their school site or with their administrator and/or missing their families and friends at home.

Research Question #2 Results

To explore Research Question #2, *To what extent does this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection?* the chart that corresponds with the attitudes of beginning teachers from the New Teacher Center (Moir, 2011) was used to help teachers chart their attitude in the five face-to-face sessions (see Figure 21). In addition, the teacher responses to the iPad reflections on weeks six and eleven were analyzed as another data source as those questions were around the attitudes toward teaching.



Figure 21. Phases of teaching (Moir, 2011). "Copyright New Teacher Center. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of New Teacher Center."

After participants read the article about the phases of beginning teachers, each participant placed a sticker on their own personal chart indicating where they perceived themselves to be in these phases and noted the month during each face-to-face session. Each phase was assigned a number (10=Anticipation, 9=Reflection, 8=Survival, 7=Rejuvenation, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1=Lowest Disillusionment) to chart these responses together. This information was then plotted onto a graph, with each participant in a separate color to show their experiences, as compared to the trend line based on the research (Moir, 2011; See Figure 24). Teacher F's chart indicated her phase during the five face-to-face sessions, as noted by the stickers and the dates (Figure 22).

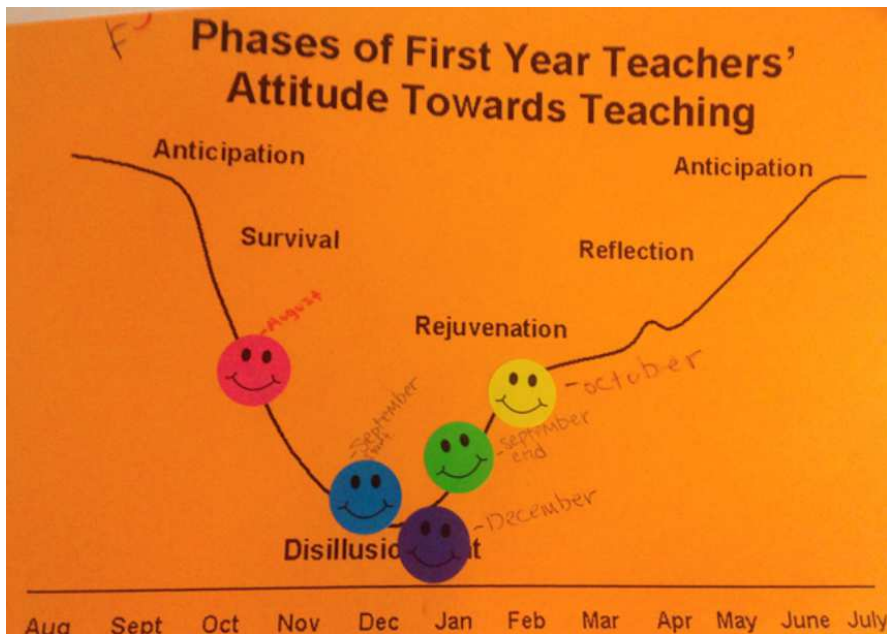


Figure 22. Teacher F Phases of Teaching.

In addition, the digital reflections were used as another source to confirm the phase that the participated indicated they were experiencing at that moment in time. For example, in December, Participant F indicated that she was in low disillusionment on her phase's chart. By looking at her iPad reflection for the same time period, it has a picture of a cartoon character (minion) who is overwhelmed and crazy (see Figure 23).



Figure 23. Teacher F reflection.

During the interviews at the end of the study, teachers were asked about how the phases of information and charting impacted their experience. Teacher B reflected, “Knowing the phases helped me because it illustrated and gave me information about what I might be going through and so it was a good heads up and it was especially helpful

for my significant other too.” Teacher D shared, “Knowing about the phases-yep, I am following it. It helped me to know that this is typical so don’t freak out.” The phases helped the teachers understand that there is a general expectation of the feeling, or affect, that they would experience over their first year in teaching.

Research Question #2 Summary of Results

In comparing the researched phases (Muir, 2011) and overlaying the participants’ charts, it is evident that they did not follow the exact theory line (See Figure 24). The teachers chose their phases based on what was happening in both their personal and professional lives. The support they were or were not receiving factored into the phase they chose during the face-to-face support sessions. If the teacher was experiencing a personal crisis (for example, a fight with a roommate), the participant indicated a greater challenge in her attitude professionally. For example, Teacher B started the year feeling overwhelmed and began the year in the *Survival* phase, rather than the expected *Anticipation* phase, due to the shock of the state after moving here from the East Coast and challenges with her living arrangements. She then slid immediately into *Disillusionment*, faster than the phases model suggested.

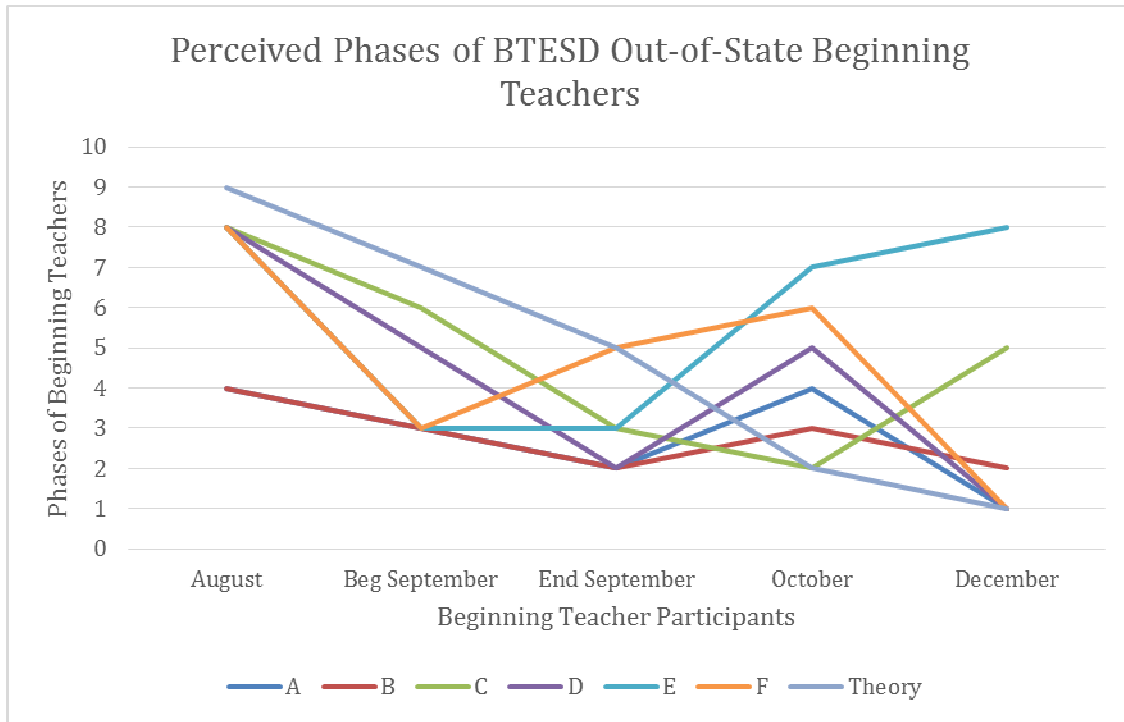


Figure 24. All participants' phases charts combined.

Each participant, as noted in Figure 24, followed a slightly different curve than the research but all started at an upward point and gradually slid in a downward path, except for Teacher E. Her upward movement in December was due to her reflection about whether she wanted to teach in a different grade level. Considering making that change inspired and excited her so that she took a dramatic upward turn in her attitude. With the data collection ending in December, the results indicated that half of the group (Teachers A, B, D, and F) were at their lowest perceived phase (disillusionment), which also aligned with the research. Two of the teachers were in the process of determining their next steps and making concrete plans about next year, which was reflected in higher attitudes about teaching recorded in *Survival* and *Reflection* phases (Teacher C and E).

Overall, the teachers' attitudes only deviated slightly from the theoretical model, as all but one were in a downward trajectory over their first few months of teaching.

Research Question #3 Results

The final research question examined what beginning teachers found valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies around the concepts of confidence, esteem, and efficacy. The innovation itself was designed around the C.A.R.E. model whereas care was provided to this group and is the underlying foundation of the support. The pre and post questionnaires and post-innovation interviews provided insight into the face-to-face support sessions, weekly iPad reflections, and noted any changes in their personal awareness of their own resiliency.

Homework

Participants reported that homework helped created a tangible way to capture a semester's worth of teaching. Through the interviews, participants reflected on the impact of the homework. Participants shared that they viewed the homework to be important to increasing the belief in themselves and provided them a visual reflection of their first semester of teaching.

Teacher A noted, "Looking for pictures that showed my mood was cathartic and I really liked working on the iPad." Teacher B shared, "Doing the weekly reflections using pictures allowed me to be creative and capture my experiences using whatever 'medium' I wanted...a combo of quotes, words, phrases, pictures, drawings. I could choose how to express my feelings and experiences." Teacher D responded, "It wasn't too much work but it made us think about how we were feeling and what was going on." Teacher E revealed,

When I had to upload them, I had to go back and look at them. I would scroll through them all...it was cool to see how I changed. It was a mental release. If I hadn't had the homework, I would not remember what this journey had been like. I needed these not only as a way to document but as a creative outlet...where else do I get that in education?

Overall, the response to the homework was positive, and it created a forum to capture the reflections, thoughts, and feelings of the participants and encapsulate their experiences into a weekly visual product.

C.A.R.E. Support Sessions

Interviews also provided insight into how the support sessions, which included the mapping activities and charting of the phases of teaching, as well as participants sharing, impacted them. Teacher A noted, "They've really helped me. I didn't really care what we talked about. I just wanted to be there. It made me feel important and special and cared for. It helped me to be with others who were in the same situation as me." Teacher D shared, "The support sessions were the best thing we have had all year." Teacher C said, "It felt safe to say whatever I was thinking or feeling. Everyone in our group was so helpful and would listen and be there. I felt less weird to know that I was going through the same things as the others were." Teacher E revealed, "With the support sessions and how small the group was-that was better and it was a relaxing atmosphere." Teacher F shared, "It was good to be a part of a group where everyone understood what everyone was going through. Like we are all very different-do different things and come from different places-yet all understood that we were going through the same thing." Teacher E indicated,

Being pulled from the classroom adds a different aspect to the sessions because it doesn't cut into after work planning or weekend relaxation, I can still get those things done...I cannot place a value on getting to hear other teachers going through the same issues I am, knowing that I am not alone in the journey. Each

session opened with a reflection question of which we could answer with words, pictures, or a combination of both. The art aspect was relaxing and allowed us to clear our minds before beginning on that day's agenda.

The participants shared similar reflections about how the sessions provided them with a purposeful pause and a safe place to share their experiences. Their connections with each other provided them with a supportive community that they had not yet established being new to the state.

Impact of the Study on the Participants

Initially, the narrative questions in the pre and post questionnaire were reviewed by each individual participant's response, highlighting key words. Then, the responses were examined by question, noting similar trends across participants and highlighting big ideas. The initial codes were developed around feelings, needs, and perceptions to triangulate data around what participants found valuable about the study itself.

Across all participants, the most common words found in the narrative questions were noted. These included stress, overwhelmed, family, parents, friends, flexibility, organization, communication, patience, and support. In narrowing these codes, the major themes that emerged from the pre and post questionnaire resulted in the following codes: S=Stress, F=Family, FR=Friends. This indicated that the participants' feelings throughout the semester were consumed with stress of new jobs and moving, along with the search for friends, belonging, and connectedness.

The Likert-scale items were reviewed from the pre and post questionnaire first by participant response, and then by question. The categories of *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree* were then converted into numerical equivalents. (*Strongly Agree*=4, *Agree*=3, *Disagree*=2, *Strongly Disagree*=1). The frequency of each type of response for each

question was identified. These notations were translated into percentages to explore the trends of this information onto the concept of self-perceptions. For example, 50% of participants *Strongly Agreed* that they had a network of emotional support. Fifty percent of participants *Strongly Agreed* that they had overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge, and 50% of participants *Strongly Agreed* that they finished what they started.

These pre and post intervention questionnaires provided insight to the participants' views as to the value of the support sessions, along with how their own level of personal awareness may or may not have changed. For example, a change in the participants' pre and post questionnaire responses indicated a change in self-awareness.

- Four out of six (66.6%) participants changed their responses to the statement, I am aware of my personal stress levels.
- Five out of six (83.3%) participants changed their responses regarding their physical well-being is a top priority for me.
- Four out of six (66.6%) participants changed their responses to the statement, I consider myself to be resilient.
- Five out of six (83.3%) participants changed their responses regarding overcoming setbacks.
- Four out of six (66.6%) participants changed their responses to the statement, I am able to communicate my needs.

A change in self-perception, whether an increase or decrease in the Likert-scale indicated a change in self-thought. Either an increase or a decrease in the self-perceptions (as shown in a change from *Strongly Agree* to *Agree* or *Agree* to *Disagree*) indicated that the participants' view of their own abilities or their priorities shifted. For

example, the participants who showed a decrease in their response to question 22 on the questionnaire, “physical well-being is a top priority” indicated that priorities and self-perceptions at the beginning of the study changed as the reality of the classroom and move to a location set-in. For example, Teacher E noted that she used to run, walk, or do something physical every day and that she viewed her health and physical activity level as a top priority for her. Her decrease in priority, reflected by a change from *Strongly Agree* to *Agree*, she explained by saying, “I realized that what I thought was important to me-like running or going to the gym-is less of a big deal now...mainly because I do not have the time or energy to manage that on top of all of the other things I am doing. I know it’s important-but who has time?” Therefore, changes in the Likert-scale are noted in the results.

The questionnaire provided another layer of information regarding the impact of the innovation on the participants. In the narrative questions, teachers specifically noted the changes in themselves. For example, Teacher C reflected that, “...this [support sessions] really helped me get out of my shell.” Teacher A said, “In July I was very gung-ho about this whole ‘I’m moving 22 hours away from home and I will love it’ thing. And now, I would move home tomorrow if I wasn’t tied down by a contract.” Teacher D stated, “The fact that I thought I would be able to handle the workload and stress of work better. I didn’t know how much work would affect every aspect of my life. I hope that I start to feel more confident and satisfied.” Teacher F noted, “I think of myself as stronger and more resilient. I think I can do challenging things and grow from my experiences.” The support sessions, homework, and mapping activities gave the

participants the opportunity and intentional pause to reflect and consider how they were changing personally and professionally.

Research Question #3 Summary of Results

The final research question examined what beginning teachers found valuable about interactive support sessions by exploring their reports of not only their opinions about the innovation, but also their awareness of their own resiliency strategies, confidence, esteem, and self-efficacy. The interactive support sessions were designed around the C.A.R.E. model whereas care was provided to this group and is the underlying foundation of the support. Data suggested that that participants did note changes in how they perceived themselves as a result of the innovation and found the study to be beneficial for their own personal and professional growth. In some cases, participants realized they may have been over-confident or self-assured in their ability to navigate the complexities of the classroom and initially negated the impact that moving from across the country would have on them. The reality of their first semester in a new state and new job stunned them and that translated into a change in their self-perceptions noted on their questionnaires and in their interviews. The complexities of navigating a new state, new school, and new job were significant.

In other cases, participants noted that they developed a greater self-awareness of their own resilience and stress management abilities. The interviews revealed an authentic sense of camaraderie, friendships within the group, and a community, which developed through the support sessions. Overall, the participants noted that these sessions provided them with a place to come where they felt safe and comfortable to share their experiences, needs, feelings, and perceptions. In addition, the homework

provided them with a way to capture their semester of teaching and illustrated their feelings and experiences in a reflective manner. Participants expressed a greater self-awareness and deliberate consideration of their feelings and experiences as an out-of-state beginning teacher because of the structures that were set-up through the intervention.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The focus of this study was to explore the impact of face-to-face support sessions conducted over 15 weeks which were designed to enhance the personal development and resiliency skills of beginning teachers who had recently moved to Arizona and were beginning their careers and lives in a new state. The study also utilized weekly digital reflections captured through an iPad app that provided the teachers with an opportunity to express their thoughts, needs, perceptions, feelings, and experiences using pictures and words.

Overall, the study was viewed by the participants as a highly engaging and meaningful experience, and appeared to change their perceptions of the profession, as well as themselves across the five face-to-face sessions and ten weeks of self-reflection. While teachers still felt they were struggling in their new teaching positions and getting acclimated to the state of Arizona, they reported feeling more connected with their colleagues, understood the natural ups and downs of the teaching profession through the phases of teaching, and were hopeful about their future in the profession while developing greater self-awareness and self-advocacy skills.

In this study, the following research questions were examined:

1. How did the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching?
2. To what extent did this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection?

3. What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

Research Question 1

Research Question #1 was, *How did the needs, perceptions, and feelings of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching?*

Over the 15 week study (August through December), the out-of-state beginning teachers were overwhelmed, stressed, and very lonely. They were searching for connections within their new home state and new occupation. Being overwhelmed in their personal lives as they attempted to acclimate to their new living situations and fiscal responsibilities dominated their quest for professional stability. This group was consumed, in their thoughts, actions, and time, by their classrooms, especially around balancing the complexities of their new life as a “teacher,” while still trying to get settled in their personal lives. When reflecting back to the beginning of the study, Teacher E noted, “Yeah-at some point, I thought I have no idea why I decided I wanted to do this.” The search for identity as an Arizona teacher was evident.

Before the first 15 weeks of the semester started, these teachers moved from their home states to Arizona during the hottest month of the year. None of the teachers had family in Arizona and only half of the group moved with a special friend or significant other, whereas the other half came completely alone, with none of them having ever seen their school before. Their initial needs were around finding a suitable house/apartment, concerns over money, and feeling insecure about their surroundings, including using GPS to get everywhere. Teacher A noted, “Everything is new...everything...and it’s exhausting!” The level of social isolation since these teachers were mainly alone in their

personal and professional worlds was noteworthy. Their reason for moving was for their job, and their job consumed their mental and physical energies.

Maslow's (1954; 1970) theory on their hierarchy of needs seemed to best explain the initial findings of these teacher's needs, feelings, and perceptions in their first semester of teaching. These teachers were consumed with their basic physiological and safety needs after moving across the country, before they were able to move into considering their belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs. Their focus on getting settled with their living conditions, money, and making friends dominated their thinking and conversations, their mapping activities, and their weekly reflections. They felt excited, fatigued, terrified, and also exhilarated as they were launched into their new identity as an Arizona teacher. They all predicted that the year would be challenging and yet empowering, without even knowing what their students and parents looked and sounded like or what complexities Arizona classrooms may have compared to their student teaching experiences.

Williment (2003) indicated that if basic needs are not met, a teacher will not likely be able to be content in his/her job and will choose to leave the classroom. In this study, it was evident that once the participants got their personal lives settled, then they were able to shift their focus to the classroom and meeting their students' needs. In other words, they were unable to fully attend to their students and their work until they had managed their lowest level of needs, physiological and safety. After getting their basic needs met, utilizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954; 1970), these teachers then began subtly shifting their focus to the needs of belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. These translated to new friendships, relationships with students and parents, and their

administrators. The participants began exploring their desires for their own professional development, resources for their classrooms, along with opportunities that allowed them to feel like valuable and contributing member of their staff.

Notably, schools with high rates of attrition have a tendency for teachers to feel powerless to make change or impact the culture (Easley, 2000). It was important then that these participants had opportunities to feel like their enthusiasm and ideas as a rookie teacher were valued at their site. Providing teachers with opportunities for leadership can motivate teachers and contribute to a feeling of commitment (Williment, 2003). Through the face-to-face sessions, along with the weekly reflections, it was evident that the teachers who were connected with their teammates and whose administration and veteran teachers recognized them as important members of their grade level/content area team reflected a more positive belief in themselves (See Figure 25). Figure 25 denoted positive feelings from Teacher A and showed how important the opportunity for outside of the school day connectivity is for out-of-state beginning teachers. Figure 26 captured Teacher C's reflection on how she was acclimating to Arizona and recognized the need for connection to her new state and friends. These needs consumed her thinking and reflection more than her classroom at this point in time.

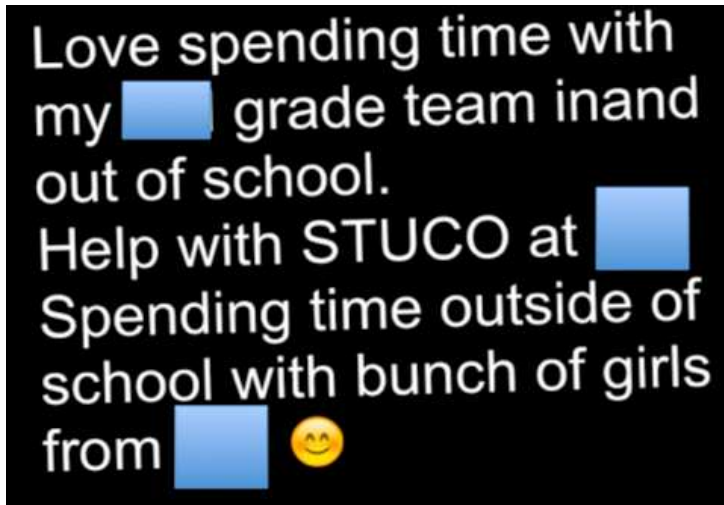


Figure 25. Teacher A reflection.

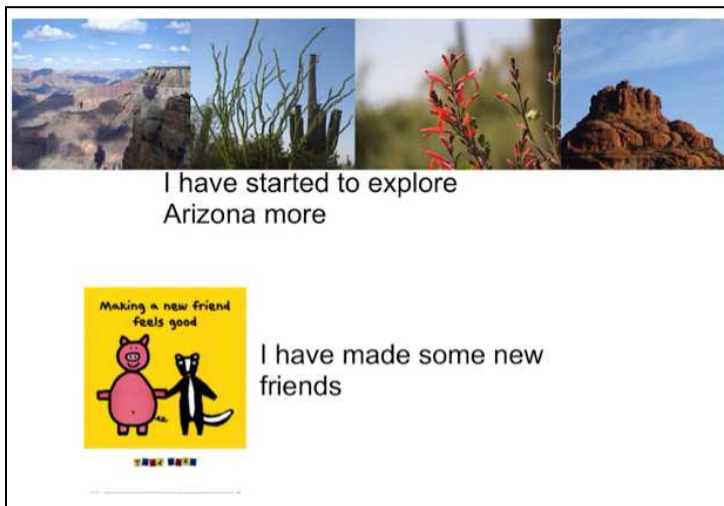


Figure 26. Teacher C reflection.

Research Question 2

Research Question #2 is, *To what extent did this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection?*

Overall the out-of-state beginning teachers' journey aligned with attitudes of beginning teachers with some slight variation. All of the teachers started with higher perceived feelings about teaching as noted on Moir's chart (2011) and declined over time, with the majority of the teachers being at their lowest perceived point around December. Contextually, each teacher's actual journey (as noted on their phases charts) looked different due to a variety of factors. For example, Teacher A did not have significant administrative support and struggled with a challenging personal life, along with being exceptionally homesick. She did not perceive her colleagues to understand the challenges of being new to the state and new to teaching, so was often frustrated with the lack of help regarding curriculum (see Figure 27). As time progressed, Teacher A felt more disillusioned as she was uncertain that anything was improving and uncertain that she would want to stay next year in Arizona without her family.

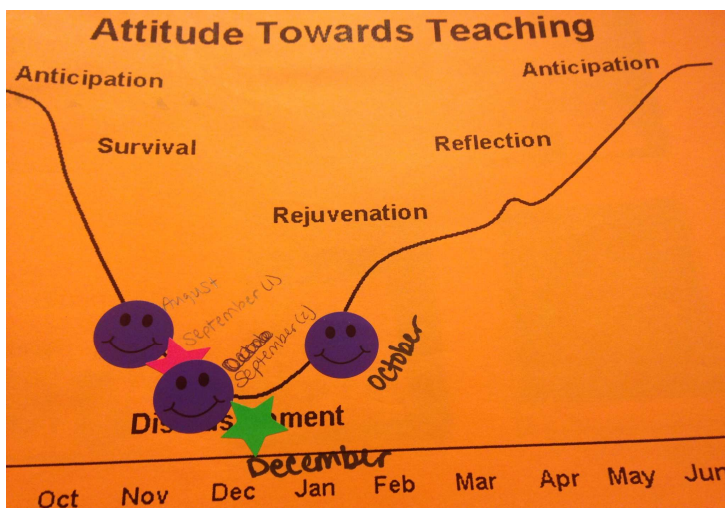


Figure 27. Teacher A attitude toward teaching chart.

Each teacher's chart told the story of how the complexities and nuances of their contexts impacted their attitudes. Teacher C came into the state and classroom with very high expectations of herself and assumed that she would feel happy though most of the year. Her experiences with her administrators and colleagues were supportive and positive. Once the isolation of not having her family close by and the realities of dealing with some significant student and parents issues emerged, she quickly dropped to disillusionment and struggled to maintain her positive outlook, which was reflected in her chart. (Figure 28).

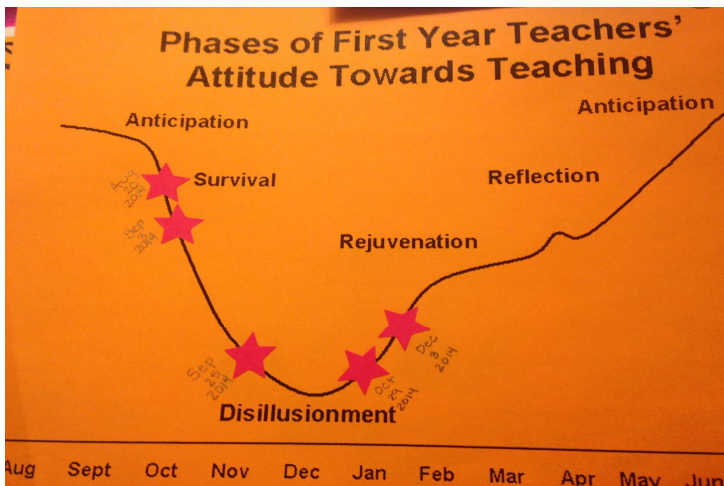


Figure 28. Teacher C attitude toward teaching chart.

Teacher E ended the study at the highest level, *Reflection*. Unfortunately, this was not due to a surge of confidence in her perception of teaching. Rather, she was in a reflective phase, where she was personally considering whether she wanted to stay in teaching and/or stay in her current school and grade/level. When she considered the

option of leaving or a change from her current situation, she reported feeling encouraged, and this led to her higher rating on her attitudes about teaching.

Each teacher's experiences and journey was reflected with stickers on the Phases charts. Contextually, they shared out what caused them to choose where on the line they placed themselves. Overall, the teachers at BTESD did follow the downward trajectory from the start of the school year to the middle of the school year, as indicated by the research (Moir, 2011). Any nuance within that data represented the contextual perception of support, and the challenges of balancing personal issues along with navigating a new professional identity.

Research Question 3

Research Question #3 was, *What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?*

Overall, the interactive support sessions investigating and exploring resiliency strategies impacted the out-of-state beginning teachers by developing greater self-awareness and a purposeful focus on advocating for themselves and providing time, opportunity, purpose, and strategies for self-reflection. These teachers pushed through the challenges of social isolation, and increased connectivity, confidence, resiliency, esteem, and efficacy. The support sessions were developed around the four phases of beginning teachers (anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection) utilizing the C.A.R.E. (Creating Authentic Resilient Educators) model with the foundational idea of these sessions being care. Out-of-state beginning teachers noted that they were cared for through this innovation. Teacher F said,

I think the support sessions made my entire experience WAY better. If I didn't have them, I think I would feel less like I could really do this and I might not have come back. I knew there were 5 others who were thinking the same thing and kinda trusting and relying on me too...that's a big deal.

The participants grew and developed through the face-to-face sharing at the support sessions, the mapping and charting activities, and the weekly reflections over 15 weeks.

The first support sessions in the beginning of their year were filled with tears and the participants shared how much they missed home, their friends, and family. They were overwhelmed with figuring out living situations and not having financial stability as no paychecks were coming for three more weeks. Teacher C shared, "This is the first time I have been away from home and my first big move. I am trying to keep myself balanced and organized and trying to get settled but I didn't know what I was doing here." As time progressed, these teachers stabilized their home and personal lives and began concentrating on connecting with their students, colleagues, parents, and administrators. Each teacher had different experiences, successes, and challenges, depending on their school. Some principals and instructional coaches made intentional efforts to connect these out-of-state beginning teachers with others in their building or made purposeful attempts to connect with these teachers to ensure that they were getting settled, feeling included, and fitting into the culture of that school's community. Several of the other participants felt isolated and unconnected in their building, lacking a purposeful welcome and were challenged with feeling that there was not an understanding of what it must be like to be a beginning teacher who moved 2,000 miles away from home and was starting a new career and new life in a new location.

By the third and fourth support sessions, it was evident that these teachers were struggling more with managing their students in the classroom, balancing grading and

planning, along with negotiating paperwork, meetings, professional development, and their personal lives. It was clear that there was safety and comfort within the group to share their feelings and experiences. Teacher D reflected, “I guess in my building I see people in passing but I don’t really have a chance to have a long conversation or talk about how we are feeling. And it was nice to know that we had time to talk and I was not the only one feeling this way.” They often times cried during these sessions, sometimes regarding their personal lives and other times, it was about managing students or the fears of evaluation. The group quickly developed relationships within the support group and began connecting with each other outside of these sessions. They texted each other, met for lunch and outings on the weekends, and provided each other with new friends to combat the loneliness they were experiencing.

By the end of the sessions, these teachers continued to grow reflective and introspective, considering whether they had made the right decisions in moving and in teaching. They developed a greater self-awareness and appreciation for their decisions to move and teach. This shift in their focus connected directly to the literature around self-efficacy.

Self-belief and reflection was an important component of this study. A theoretical foundation of this innovation was around self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977/2008). Bandura (1993) noted that teachers who have a higher sense of efficacy would persevere through the challenges of the classroom. These types of teachers were more likely to stay. The face-to-face support sessions focused on developing self-awareness, problem solving skills, and self-advocacy (to reach out for help when needed). The teachers reported in the final reflection interviews and questionnaire that this awareness of believing in

themselves and relaying that belief to their students was powerful to their personal self-development. Teacher F said, “I just rely on myself more than I ever did in the past. It’s good to be away from my comfort zone and have to grow up a little bit and see if I can hack it in the real world. I think I am. I guess I am proud of me.” Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, and Hoy (1998) argued that teacher self-efficacy is the most important teacher characteristic related to improving student achievement. The teacher’s belief in his/herself impacts student learning. It is imperative that the participants in this study understood that the work they did at each face-to-face session and with their weekly reflections did transfer to the classroom. Their self-reflections, and ideally increasing belief in their abilities, impacted their student achievement as well.

Depending on how settled and stable these teachers’ personal lives were also impacted how successful they perceived their professional life to be. Those struggling with roommates or money also seemed to struggle with finding satisfaction and success in their classrooms.

The face-to-face sessions were also composed of exercises to bring awareness to resiliency as this emerged as a significant theme in the literature. Tait (2008) noted that building teacher resilience was a way to address teacher attrition. Developing the ability to bounce back from stressful situations was an important component of first year teaching as there were many stresses that emerge. Research has indicated that the idea of resiliency has developed as a trait that is not fixed and can be taught, encouraged, and nurtured. Utilizing Parker and Martin’s resilience framework (2009) and the Four Dimensional Framework (Mansfield et al., 2012), the support sessions focused on teaching the participants about the different dimensions of the resilient teacher, including

emotional, motivational, social, and professional. The activities and discussions in the face-to-face sessions were around building relationships, problem solving, goal setting, realistic expectations, persistence, humor, managing emotions and stress, and work/life balance. Teacher E said, “Oh yeah, my view of myself as resilient has changed...all those different components that make it up. I haven’t really been in this type of stressful situation before. I’ve learned how to cope with the stress and new things and plans changing.” She also noted, “In the sessions, we pinpointed what those stressors were (it was not EVERYTHING!) and that helped.” The weekly reflections also revealed a greater awareness of work/life balance and resiliency dimensions as noted in these two examples (Figure 29 and 30) In Figure 29, Teacher A captured in Week 5 what she is most proud of and recognized the need for finding work/life balance represented with her empty bag picture. Teacher C reflected in Week 7 that she was aware that she could be resilient and found a plant picture pushing through dry soil.

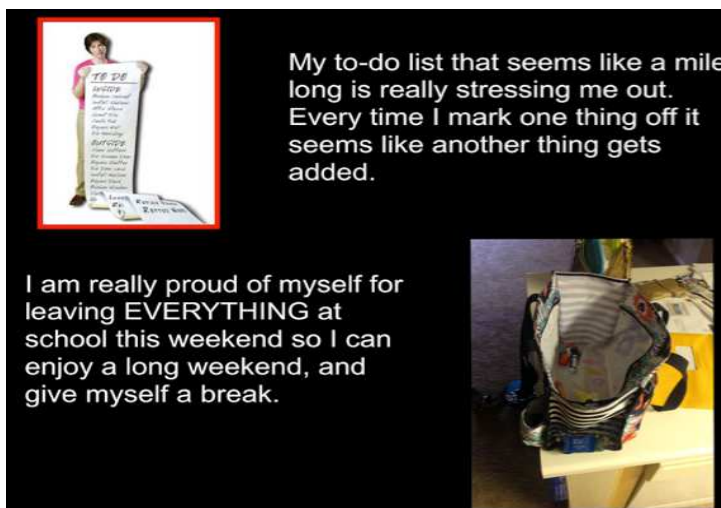


Figure 29. Example of digital reflection regarding resiliency.



Figure 30. Another example of digital reflection regarding resiliency.

The data collected indicated that with the theoretical tenets explored through the face-to-face sessions on resiliency strategies, developing an awareness of life/work balance, self-reflection, and self-advocacy along with the attitudinal phases of beginning teachers provided a level of belonging and perceived support.

Implications

The implications of this study are essential for beginning teacher retention and how to customize support for out-of-state beginning teachers. The literature indicates that beginning teacher retention is critically important for students in the classroom. Darling-Hammond noted (1999), “Over the next decade, the United States will need to hire 2 million teachers due to rising enrollments, growing retirements, and high rates of attrition for beginning teachers”, (p. 2). Notably, that study was over sixteen years ago and the crisis continues. In fact, in Arizona,

Superintendents, across the state have, for several years, reported that approximately 30% of new teachers leave Arizona's school districts in their first three years, and 50% leave within five years. There is also a growing concern that a very high percentage of the state's young teachers leave, and will continue to leave, the teaching profession. (Tirozzi et al., 2014, p.4)

The importance of recruiting out of state teachers was a critical issue to note.

Arizona does not create enough teachers to fill all of the teaching positions that exist in the state and/or those teachers leave to go to other states. More importantly, out-of-state teachers bring a richness to the culture and climate of Arizona students. They provide new perspectives, experiences, and diversity to Arizona classrooms. Therefore, the recommendations and implications generated from this action research innovation were important for different audiences.

Policy Makers

If students are to be successful, schools must be able to recruit teachers who are effective in the classroom and who will stay in teaching long-term. The challenge surrounds how to support and retain beginning teachers. Tirozzi et al. (2014) note, "Arizona's public schools are losing a treasure trove of young teaching talent" (p. 4). This study was designed with considering the literature for "solutions" and considering how it would contextually fit in with BTESD in Arizona. In the literature, typically mentoring and professional development were the usual suggestions for any beginning teachers. Since there was no literature specifically around supporting beginning teachers who have also made the change of moving to a new state, these considerations were combined with personal development ideas as well to maximize the impact on the beginning teacher and students.

To retain beginning teachers, districts and schools need to have support from policy makers who understand the challenges of recruiting and retaining quality teachers. Public support around the value of teachers would be an essential step for support. In addition, policy makers could assist schools and district with supportive policies around licensing, teacher evaluation, and navigating the educational system of Arizona. Budget cuts have drastically reduced induction and mentoring/support programming for teachers. The estimate cost for implementing an effective retention and induction program is \$6,000 per teacher in Arizona (Tirozzi et al., 2014). Providing fiscal consideration to fund education would be imperative to impact this state crisis. “Underfunding is a significant contributor to Arizona’s low academic performance and its diminishing ability to promote excellence in teaching” (Tirozzi et al., 2014, p.8). Policy makers could play an important role in impacting beginning teacher retention in Arizona.

District Leaders

In addition, there were so many contextual considerations and affective conditions that have to be customized to each beginning teacher depending on their experiences navigating challenge and stress. Most importantly, feelings of belonging and emotional exhaustion mediate school context variables which underscore the value of distinct and individualized factors in retaining and sustaining teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). This study, since it was conducted at the district level, could not directly impact the contextual experiences of each teacher at their school site but could create an overall focus and awareness of out-of-state beginning teacher retention. The district should be responsible for creating clear structures around beginning teacher support. They can also

prioritize funding around beginning teacher retention, especially considerations around out-of-state teachers, which add an additional fiscal burden at the district level.

The implications of these findings for others in education focus around the importance of developing customized personal and professional support for out-of-state beginning teachers. The literature and theory around beginning teachers does not specify or differentiate for beginning teachers who are learning a new job and a new community. Therefore there was no set “road map” on how this sub-group can best be supported to better ensure their retention and professional growth. This study does provide critical components that could be considered when creating a district-level plan.

Through this study, the data denotes that the creation of a small and intimate community of learners and established a cohort of teachers who were going through similar challenges was beneficial. In the interviews, participants noted that they felt supported and validated by sharing their experiences with others who experienced similar challenges, as well as making new connections and friends, since that is one of the areas that they felt the most overwhelmed. Teacher E shared, “Being pulled out of the classroom to go to a support session that was set up to be relaxing was so helpful to me. In the sessions we pinpointed what those stressors were...that helped.” The professional learning community that emerged in this study was a critical attribute for districts to consider.

The literature indicated that the needs of the beginning teachers are special and specific support systems should be developed for them. Recent studies around beginning teacher retention and resilience in Australia have revealed that different types of support were valued by beginning teachers and appeared to influence the teachers’ view of their

own personal resilience (Mansfield & Beltman, 2014; Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014)

These supports included

being listened to and emotionally supported, being offered advice and professional knowledge, being acknowledged and appreciated, having the realities of teaching confirmed and being professionally challenged. All of these forms of support appeared to be crucial to facilitating the early career teachers' resilience. By receiving these types of support they reported feeling more confident and competent in their teaching role. As a result they were able to successfully assume a positive teacher identity. (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014, p. 111)

The needs of out-of-state beginning teachers are similar to beginning teacher needs and yet different enough that a separate support group was shown to be beneficial. Based on the feedback from this group, as collected in the interviews, the most utilized and appreciated topics included acknowledging and acclimating the group to the state and local community, including community resources, businesses, and opportunities to explore the area and fun events.

In addition, supports should also acknowledge the typical attitudinal phases of beginning teachers, as the group noted that it helped to address that teachers' feelings were expected to vary over the course of the year. Teacher B shared, "Knowing the phases helped me because it illustrated and gave me information about what I might be going through and so it was a good heads up for me and my significant other." Teachers reported that understanding that the first year was a journey filled with ups and downs was expected. Teacher D reflected, "Knowing about the phases I guess I am following it. I guess I have been in disillusionment way longer than I expected. It did help to know that it's typical." A skilled facilitator who understands the phases that beginning teachers would experience would be another consideration for district administration.

Ideally, someone who understands, empathizes, and is willing to listen to the teachers' stories and experiences, without solving every problem for them, could facilitate the support sessions. Teacher F said through her tears, "Your support continues to be amazing, like you really get it." The focus of the facilitator's rapport was about empowering and coaching the teachers to advocate for themselves and ask for help and direction when needed. The support also focused on increasing self-efficacy and developing confidence to explore problems. Personal and professional lives are so intertwined for beginning teachers that it is important to find a facilitator who truly understands the duality of this group's experience in being new to the state and new to the profession. "All of the significant relationships in which the early career teachers engaged provided a variety of support, the nature of which crossed traditional boundaries of the personal and professional; school and home, and; face-to-face and online" (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014, p. 112). The underlying foundation of the C.A.R.E. model was caring, compassion, and empathy. The personality and skills of the facilitator would be a critical attribute for district support.

School districts can intentionally structure supports to include multiple layers including the district and site. Papatraianou and Le Cornu (2014) found that,

Schools need to promote informal staff interaction. This allows new teachers to develop relationships with colleagues to promote the exchange of various social supports. Further, systems need to acknowledge and invest in the provision of informal support and learning opportunities for early career teachers. (p. 112).

The importance of informing and communicating with principals about beginning teachers' needs would be another consideration. Site support, with administrators who were committed to establishing positive relationships with beginning teachers, was important.

Principals

At the site level, administrators need to be fully informed and committed to differentiating support for out-of-state beginning teachers (Williment, 2003; Schlichte et al., 1999; Weller, 1982). Administrators can also assist with communication about upcoming initiatives, i.e., parent conferences. By front-loading information to this group of beginning teachers and giving them strategies for success, they continue to build relationships and empower beginning teachers to feel as if they are contributing members of the staff. This connects with the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954; 1970). Teachers started with needing the basics, such as housing and financial security, and then moved to a desire for belonging and connectedness. Beginning teachers wanted to feel that their input and insights were valuable to their administrators and staff. "Providing opportunities that foster continuous professional growth and development for teachers is a primary responsibility of the school principal" (Weller, 1982, p. 34). The principal's acknowledgement and recognition of the beginning teacher cannot be overstated.

Administrators can also protect their beginning teachers from taking on too many afterschool assignments, teams, or clubs (Gossom, 2004). Beginning teachers struggle with life/work balance and gaining a balance in lesson planning and grading is initially challenging. The challenge is that beginning teachers tend to struggle financially so the additional income from afterschool opportunities seems appealing. The additional work however can add an additional burden and stress. Considerations should be taken at the site level to try and avoid over-working this group. Partnering beginning teachers with veteran teachers with shared responsibilities should also be considered. Administrators can also align beginning teachers with positive and encouraging staff members who are

willing to provide guidance and mentoring (Tait, 2008). The decisions administrators make around their beginning teachers will impact the ultimate decision on the retention and self-efficacy of this group.

Digital Narratives

Another implication of this study was the importance of documenting the experiences and reflections of the beginning teachers using digital narratives. This group reported that having the reflective homework was helpful and increased their personal awareness of their needs, perceptions, and feelings. Teacher B shared,

I liked the homework. It helped me a lot. It helped me to think about my story or journey. I liked thinking about my first year as a journey with unusual twists and turns. I would not have remembered it if I hadn't put it down.

By capturing their reflections in a simple and quick way, using the iPad and a simple app like *Explain Everything*, the digital pictures and collages they created provided a visual representation of their experiences and captured their feelings about themselves and teaching. This type of work also gave them an opportunity to be creative, which they reported relieved stress in itself. Teacher F said, "The iPad project was a weekly mental release. I could take what was in my mind, create something and show it to someone else. I needed these not only as a way to documents but as a creative outlet." The literature confirms this idea as well, The Center for Digital Storytelling notes, "The process of creating digital work is just as meaningful as the stories created" (University of Houston, 2013). Having the pictures as a memento to be able to reflect on their first semester of teaching provided the teachers with the ability to re-live their moments of despair and frustration, along with highlighting their successes and personal and professional triumphs.

C.A.R.E. Model for Districts

This model (see Figure 31) is composed of the key considerations for districts and sites to utilize when creating a support plan or induction considerations for out-of-state beginning teachers. The overlapping concentric circles indicate the importance of each factor of the model. The model of C.A.R.E. requires an informal setting with skillful facilitator that meets face-to-face with the group of participants. The district focus around the importance of support and retention of beginning teachers, along with the administrative commitment is crucial. The sessions themselves focus on developing personal affective skills, including self-efficacy, acknowledging work/life balance with stress management, increasing confidence, and developing self-advocacy skills. An overall central focus of this support is around resiliency, while acknowledging critical needs, as identified using Maslow's hierarchy. Digital narratives and reflection opportunities are an essential component to provide the participants with a purposeful reflection of their experiences.

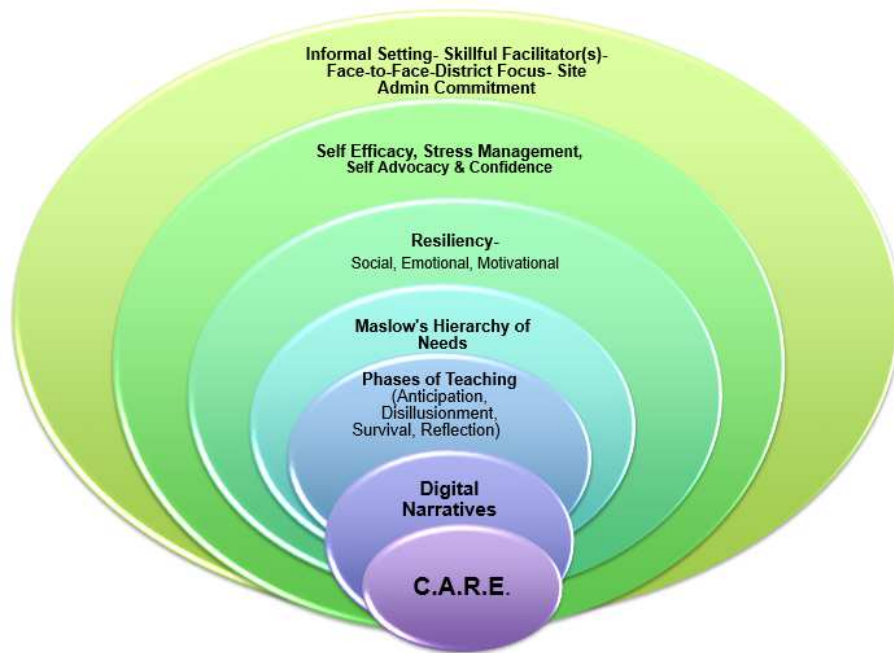


Figure 31. Out-of-State Beginning Teacher Support Model-A Community of C.A.R.E. (Creating Authentic Resilient Educators).

Limitations

There are certainly limitations to this study and the caution here is to not over-generalize this work. This work was a starting point for creating a more effective model of beginning teacher support for out-of-state teachers. This model could be adapted to the local setting to see if the experiences of the beginning teacher would be similar. Through three years of research and cycles of action research with different groups of teachers there certainly were bright spots to capture and replicate. It is important to understand the limitations that could vary in a different context.

One of the main considerations was that the size of the group was very small. This was a critical component that did enhance the success and community of the group, however it does limit the ability to generalize the findings. This study was contextually based on BTESD and the idea that these six teachers were recruited from out-of-state and all worked at different schools within the same district.

Another limitation of this study, which could impact some schools/districts, may be the ability to provide substitute release time for the support groups, so that these teachers were able to participate in these support sessions during their workday. Asking already stretched thin and exhausted beginning teachers to come to support sessions after school hours may not provide the best options for learning as they are typically tired and stressed about planning for the next day.

A limitation in regards to collecting data in this study was also not video/audiotaping the entire 3.5-hour support sessions. There may have been quotes or moments not able to be fully documented or captured. Participants felt uncomfortable about recording sessions. Instead, a second recorder taking notes during the sessions, as well as debriefing after each session was an effective way to capture and verify the majority of content of the sessions.

Another consideration was the relationship between the facilitator (myself as the researcher) with the group, which participants reported was an essential component of success. Having worked with new teachers for the past ten years, my understanding of their needs and typical experiences and trends played a role in the intervention. If future facilitators did not have those experiences, they may have different outcomes, as they would be learning the needs and feelings of new teachers at the same time as they were

experiencing them, whereas an experienced facilitator would be able to anticipate some of these challenges to help navigate the beginning teacher through them. The relationship that was formed between the researcher as facilitator and the out-of-state beginning teachers was of critical importance. Therefore, it does need to be considered as a possible reliability issue as there is some chance that the teachers were trying to please the researcher in the final interviews and questionnaire.

Future Directions

This is just the beginning of this work. The goal was to create a systemic model of support for out-of-state beginning teachers to maximize the potential that this group would remain in teaching. It was more than just about retention however. This innovation did change self-perceptions and increase resiliency in the out-of-state beginning teacher group. Their ability to reflect, be aware of their own self-confidence, advocate for themselves, navigate stressors, and develop into a supportive community was important. However, there are suggested changes to the innovation if it were to be used in the future.

The timeline to capture the needs, feelings, perceptions, and experiences of this group would be better to capture for the entire first year of teaching. In order to know if the innovation truly impacted retention, the study must extend to the end of the school year. In that way, the end of the innovation interviews could include a question about plans for next year. At the end of this study, in the middle of the year, the beginning teachers were at their lowest point (as expected) and were uncertain about their plans for next year. So, the actual impact of the intervention on retention remains unclear.

The time of the sessions themselves could also be shortened. Each session was 3.5 hours. The idea of this being a support session, rather than true professional development, was to create an informal setting to develop personal relationships and genuine conversations. The 3.5 hour support sessions were too long, based on the feedback from the beginning teachers and the researcher's field notes. There was a need to try and fill the time with content rather than organically allow conversation and brainstorming to occur. The length of time lent itself more to formalized professional development. Ideally, these sessions would have been an hour and a half and could have occurred at a coffee shop to reinforce the focus on personal connection and sharing, rather than in a more formal training room with a PowerPoint presentation.

Extending the audience for this study would be another consideration. It has been recognized that school leaders may need direct professional learning on creating a collaborative culture that enhances resiliency (Mansfield et al., 2012). The administrators in the district need counsel through professional learning and input on the critical role that they play with developing relationships with their beginning teachers that impact retention decisions. The principal creates the culture in their school. All teachers benefit from a positive school culture but the novice teacher is even more sensitive to positive and collaborative environments (Mansfield et al., 2012). The leadership must be informed and committed to retaining and supporting their beginning teachers, with a special focus on the out-of-state cohort. Including an administrative component in this study could be another way to enhance the impact of the study. Ongoing professional development for the principals and district leadership that includes a sharing out of

beginning teacher trends around the needs, feelings, and perceptions, along with ideas and strategies for developing purposeful relationship could be an effective extension.

Another consideration would be extending the theoretical frame to include teacher identity. These beginning teachers were struggling to find their way through their transition from student teacher and relying on their parents to being a grown up and identifying themselves as a teacher. Utilizing a theoretical foundation around identity might help to better customize the content of the sessions to support and reinforce new learning for beginning teachers.

In regards to the broader educational practices, the literature has not addressed the sub-group of beginning teachers who are from out-of-state or those who have moved and experiencing a life change, while also starting a new career. The literature does not specify the content of professional development topics to address. Ideally, focusing on the socio-emotional aspect of beginning teacher development, including self-advocacy, self-reflection, and stress management can add to the considerations for beginning teacher support.

Conclusions

Singapore retains nearly 97% of its teachers annually (Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2011). Other places, such as the United States, the United Kingdom (Ofsted, 2001), and Australia (Skilbeck & Connell, 2011), struggle to retain teachers, particularly beginning teachers. In the United States, the rates are extraordinarily low; only 50% of teachers remain in the classroom after five years (AEE, 2004; Chang, 2009; Ingersoll & Perda, 2012). These retention rates continue to drop in the United States, particularly for first-year teachers where the retention rate has decreased 3.4% from 90.2% in 1998 to

86.8% in 2008 (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 2012). This study supported out-of-state beginning teachers, and gave a voice to a subgroup of beginning teachers who continue to be recruited and hired and yet who struggle to remain in Arizona after their first year. Increasing self-awareness and personal resiliency has the potential to create a ripple effect as the study was about more than just retention; it was really about building personal skills and growing teachers who are more likely to persevere, ask for help, connect with others, and consider their own life/work balance while impacting students and their community or Arizona.

In moving forward, it will be imperative to continue to hone and refine BTESD's support structures with out-of-state and in-state beginning teachers to ensure that data is being collected to accurately measure retention rates and impact. "High quality preparation, induction and mentoring programs lower attrition rates for new teachers and can enhance teacher effectiveness" (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Utilizing interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups provide schools/district with an intimate picture of what their support and retention efforts are producing. Exit interviews and exploring factors of why certain beginning teachers remain and others do not is important, although administrators and educators could potentially learn more by studying the beliefs of teachers who remain during the most turbulent years. This area of research may further illuminate mechanisms that help these teachers adapt and cope, and, subsequently, buffer the challenges of the first years of teaching. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that the more support teachers receive, the greater probability of retention, with basic induction plus collaboration and extra resources resulting in the greatest outcome. It is my personal and professional commitment to continue working with BTESD's administrative teams to

explore and customize our support to meet the needs of our beginning teachers to ensure optimal personal development and ultimately teacher retention.

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APPENDIX A

PRE- AND POST-INNOVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Measure 1- Pre and Post Innovation Questionnaire (Utilized before and after the innovation to capture and determine the impact of the innovation on the teachers)

Open-Ended Items

1. Pre: What do you anticipate your first 15 weeks will be like as a beginning teacher? Post: What were your first 15 weeks like?
2. Pre: Describe what skills and traits you think will be important to succeed as a beginning teacher.
Post: How do you think these influence your first year of teaching?
3. How do you perceive being an out-of-state first year teacher different from being a local first year teacher?
4. Describe the phases you believe you will experience over the course of your first year. Post: How was your experience the same or different from the phases?
5. Tell me about the support structure you currently have.
6. Tell me about your biggest supporters. Post: Tell me about the support structure you now have. Tell me about your biggest supporters. Have these changed since the support sessions began?
7. Resiliency is defined as the ability to bounce back from challenges. It has been noted in the beginning teacher research to be a skill set that is critically important that can be enhanced and developed in a teacher. Describe how resiliency currently plays a role in your professional life. Post: How do you see resiliency as a part of your professional life now (if there was a change)? Did the support sessions influence this change?

8. How do you anticipate that these support sessions will impact you? What do you believe that the biggest benefit of these sessions on you? Post: How have these support sessions impacted your experience? How has what you learned and experienced in these sessions impacted your view of yourself?

Likert Inventory items (*Strongly Agree – Agree – Disagree - Strongly Disagree*)

Emotional Resilience

1. I am aware of my personal stress levels.
2. I am aware of how I respond when I get stressed.
3. I know how to cope when I am stressed.
4. My physical well-being is a top priority for me.
5. My mental well-being is a top priority for me.

Motivational Resilience

6. I consider myself to be resilient (I have the ability to overcome day to day challenges).
7. I consider myself to be persistent (stick with it) when faced with challenges.
8. I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.
9. I finish what I start.
10. I aim for work/life balance.

Social Resilience

11. I have a network of social support.
12. I have a network of emotional support.
13. I build relationships easily.
14. I am able to communicate my needs to my supporters.
15. I have individuals I can talk to when I need support.

APPENDIX B

MEASURE 2- MAPPING ACTIVITIES

Session 1-Mapping-Journey

- Why did you choose BTESD?
- How did you get here?
- What experiences led you to teaching?
- Who influenced your choices?

Session 2- Mapping-Support Structures

- Who are your biggest supporters?
- How do you view the support-personally & professionally?

Session 3-Mapping-Personal Skills

- What skills do you have the help you be a successful teacher?

Session 4 Mapping-Resiliency

- Social-Emotional-Motivational: How do you currently demonstrate resiliency in these areas?
- What does it look like as it plays out in your life?

Session 5-Mapping-Journey

- Draw your 15 week journey
- How does it align with the Phases of Beginning Teachers?
- Where does your support structure appear the most influence?
- Where do you note your own view of yourself changing?

APPENDIX C

MEASURE 3 - DIGITAL REFLECTIONS

Week 1-Personal and Professional Needs

- What do you most need personally?
- What do you most need professionally?

Week 2- Stressors and Successes

- What is stressing you out?
- What are you proud of?

Week 3-1st Month as Teacher Celebration

- What represents your month experience in AZ?

Week 4-What represents who you really are?

Week 5-How have you connected in AZ?

Week 6-My current phases looks like...

Week 7- Personally-I need Professionally-I need...

Week 8-Mid-point in your 1st semester-what represents your experience?

Week 9-Successful Personal & Professional Relationships

- What represents your support?

Week 10-I love....about AZ but I missabout _____

Week 11-My current phase looks like...

Week 12-I have changed the most in regards to...

Week 13-Resileincy in me looks like....

Week 14-My beginning teacher journey thus far....

Week 15-Final Product-My Digital Story of My 1st Semester of Teaching as an Out-of-State Beginning Teacher in BTESD

APPENDIX D

MEASURE 4 - POST INNOVATION INTERVIEW

1. Tell me about your experience as a first year teacher so far.
2. Explain how your experience as an out-of-state teacher might add complexity to starting a new teaching career.
3. Describe how the support sessions impacted your first 15 weeks of teaching.
4. Talk about what parts of the support sessions themselves that you found the most helpful. Were the mapping activities helpful? Why/why not? Were the digital reflections homework and final product you created helpful? Why/Why not?
5. What parts of the sessions or activities were not helpful?
6. Did your 15 week journey align with the phases of new teachers-why or why not?
7. What has most surprised you about yourself?
8. How has your view of yourself changed over these 15 weeks?
9. How has your sense of your own ability to succeed changed?
10. How do you see resiliency playing a role in your life as a beginning teacher?

APPENDIX E

MEASURE 5 - PHASES OF BEGINNING TEACHERS



(Moir, 2011)

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APPENDIX F
CONSENT FORM

Title of research study:

Isolated, Out-of-State and New-Oh My!: An Action Research Study Aimed at Enhancing the Resiliency and Retention of Novice K-8 Teachers in Arizona and Investigating the Effects of this Effort

Investigator: Dr. Rotheram-Fuller: Principal Investigator & Kelly Olson-Stewart: Study Researcher

Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?

We invite you to take part in a research study because you are a beginning teacher in BTESD School District who is new to the state of Arizona, within the last three months.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of the research is to provide specialized support to BTESD School District’s out-of-state beginning teachers. Turnover of new teachers is significant, as 50% of beginning teachers leave the teaching profession within five years, and 30% leave within the first year. The turnover of beginning teachers from out-of-state is even greater. In BTESD, the district continues to try to develop new and innovative strategies to better support and retain their beginning teachers. The support sessions that this study will provide are intended to help participants develop self-reflection skills and identify needs, perceptions, feelings, and experiences and align these with the typical phases that beginning teachers experience.

How long will the research last?

This is a 15-weeks project, which will take approximately 1 hour per week during ten weeks of the intervention and 3 hours per week during five weeks of the intervention. The total time expected over a fifteen-week period will be a maximum of 30 hours.

How many people will be studied?

We anticipate that approximately 10 people will participate in this research study.

What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?

You are free to decide whether you wish to participate in this study. Even if you do not choose to participate in this study, you will receive monthly support sessions with all beginning teachers. However, if you participate in this study, you will attend five 3-hour in person sessions with the study researcher and other out-of-state new teacher participants (over the 15-week period), as well as receive an *iPad* that you will utilize to do “homework” in weeks between sessions. You will need to return the *iPad* at the end of the study.

What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

You can leave the research at any time it will not be held against you.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

While every effort will be made to maintain your confidentiality, because these are group sessions, it is possible that others could overhear or repeat and discuss things you have said.

Will being in this study help me in any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include greater feelings of support. In addition, you may increase in your self-reflection skills, ability to work with others, and an increased belief in your ability to navigate the complexities of your first year of teaching. You may experience greater collegiality with other participating beginning teachers from out-of-state as well. Your experience in using the digital camera of your *iPad*, as well as utilizing visuals to represent your experience and describing your journey as a beginning teacher may help you better understand your first semester of teaching.

What happens to the information collected for the research?

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information to people involved in the study who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the University board that reviews research (and Federal Agencies) who want to make sure the researchers are doing their jobs correctly and protecting your information and rights.

Your actual names will not be used in study documentation and all efforts will be made to reduce any identifiers. Data will be stored in an encrypted computer file, that is password protected. No actual participant names will be utilized, rather pseudonyms will be used to identify participants in the dataset. The list of participants' names with their pseudonyms will be stored in a locked file cabinet in a locked office maintained by the principal investigator. Data will be stored for 7 years after the completion of the study and then will be destroyed (shredded). Access to the data will only be possible through the study researcher.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, talk to the research team at:
Erin Rotheram-Fuller, Ph.D.: erf@asu.edu or 480-965-6156 or Kelly Olson-Stewart:
Kelly.stewart@asu.edu or 623-221-5825





This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Behavioral IRB. You may talk to them at (480) 965-6788 or by email at research.integrity@asu.edu if:


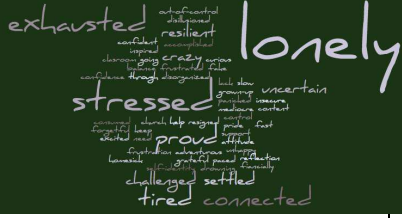

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

APPENDIX G

OVERALL DATA COLLECTION, PROCESSES, CODES DEVELOPED, EXAMPLES

Collection Method	Description of Process	Codes	Examples
<p>Appendix A- Measure 1: Pre & Post Innovation Questionnaire-online through Google Forms in Google Drive</p>	<p>Reviewed narrative questions by person, highlighting key words; reviewed questions noting similar trends & highlighting big ideas Noted feeling, need, perception</p> <p>First Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By question-big ideas/trends <p>Analyzed questions across by question</p> <p>Second Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most common words-stress, overwhelmed, family, parents, friends, flexibility, organization, communication, patience, support <p>Reviewed Likert scale questions by person, translating Strongly Agree-Strongly Disagree into numerical equivalents Strongly Agree=4 Agree=3 Disagree=2 Strongly Disagree=1</p> <p>Noted Strongly Agree (most repeated response) by question Noted Disagree Responses by participant</p>	<p>S=Stress F=Family FR=Friends</p>	<p>Prediction about my first semester: <i>I believe they will be overwhelming at times. Full of fun and excitement for the unknown. A very informative and joyful experience.</i></p> <p><i>A zoo :) I anticipate my first 15 weeks being overwhelming and stressful.</i></p> <p>Phases Prediction: <i>I've already gone through about 3 stressed beyond compare phases, I've been nervous, excited, sad, scared, emotional, lonely, but I have also been welcomed by just about everyone that I have met. Everyone is so nice and willing to help with anything! I'm pretty sure these things are just going to cycle through the entire year.</i></p> <p>Prediction about the support sessions: <i>I am really looking forward to meeting and having a group of people to confide in who are going through the same experience as I am. I also like the fact that the support group is relatively small, so I can get to know people individually. I am hoping that through this group that we can support one and another.</i></p> <p>Resiliency: <i>Resiliency is important for growing. As a first year teacher it is important to be able to grow from challenges. you have to be able to grow and learn from the things that happen to you.</i></p> <p>Likert Scale Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 84% participants Strongly Agree that they are aware of how they respond when they get stressed. 33% of participants Strongly Agree that they know how to cope when they are stressed, whereas 33% Agree and 33% Disagree. 67% participants Agree that their physical well-being is a top priority. 67% participants Agree that their mental well-being is a top priority. 50% of participants Strong Agree that they consider themselves to be resilient. 83% of participants Strongly Agree that they are persistent when faced with challenges. 50% of participants Strong Agree that they have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge. 50% of participants Strong Agree that they finish what they start. 33% of participants Strongly Agree that they aim for work/life balance. 67% participants Agree that they have a network of social support. 50% of participants Strong Agree that they have a network of emotional support. 67% participants Agree that they build relationships easily. 67% participants Agree that they are able to communicate their needs to their supporters. 83% of participants have someone to talk to when they need support. Teacher B & Teacher A do not know how to cope when stressed Teacher F does not have a social network of support. Teacher F & E do not build relationships easily. Teacher F & E are unable to communicate their needs to their supporters.

Collection Method	Description of Process	Codes	Examples	Collection Method
<p>Appendix B: Measure 2-Mapping activities conducted at face-to-face sessions</p>	<p>4 Maps-</p> <p>First Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall inventory-key ideas from each person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words/Pics <p>Second Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key words from each map plotted on Word It Out site (nouns, verbs, adjectives) Most frequently repeated noted <p>(Note: the larger the word, the more frequently it was repeated)</p> <p>Third Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coding the Trends using Theoretical Frame (Maslow) B- Belonging E-Esteem N-Needs 	<p>Map 1 Trends (<i>Word it Out</i>) (Note: the larger the word, the more frequently it was repeated)</p>  <p>Family, Love, Connecting, Friends, Challenges</p> <p>Map 2 Trends Friends@school, Family, Significant Others,</p>  <p>Support Group</p>	<p>Map 3 Trends Previous moving experience, Parents, Flexible,</p>  <p>Adventurous, Organized</p> <p>Map 4 Trends Friends, Persistence</p> 	<p>Map 1-4 Codes</p> <p>B-Belonging (Ex. Family, Friends)</p> <p>E-Esteem (Love, Connected)</p> <p>N-Needs (Extracurriculars, Advice)</p>

Collection Method	Description of Process	Codes		Examples
<p>Appendix C-Measure 3: Digital Reflections- Completed by participants as homework each week (Capture)</p>	<p>Overall inventory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key Words-trends by each week's prompt ○ Key words (nouns, adjectives) put into Word It Out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Word cloud developed by participants ▪ Word cloud by prompt <p>Second Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identified Needs, Feelings, Perceptions by participant for all 12 capture reflections ○ Operational Definitions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs-a deficiency that the participants wants to be met (example: financial security, friends) ▪ Feelings-adjectives that are listed describing how the participant interprets their experiences (example: lonely, exhausted, tired) ▪ Perceptions-the way a participant interprets their feelings, needs, experience (lack of support, need for mentoring) <p>Third Cycle: Coding Needs, Perceptions, Feelings using Theoretical Framework (Maslow)</p>	<p>Codes:</p> <p>Needs:</p>  <p>A word cloud on a dark background with words in various sizes and colors. The most prominent words are 'time', 'friends', 'support', 'confidence', 'organization', 'acceptance', 'perseverance', 'math', 'money', 'family', 'church', 'connectivity', 'sleep', 'work', 'live', 'connections', 'connection', 'job', 'relief', 'attitude', 'make', 'self-care', 'place', 'brother', 'mentor', 'self', 'professional', 'nourishment', 'procedures', 'normal', 'affirmation', 'people', 'break', 'traditions', 'management', 'self-forgiveness'.</p>	<p>Feelings:</p>  <p>A word cloud on a dark background with words in various sizes and colors. The most prominent words are 'lonely', 'stressed', 'exhausted', 'tired', 'connected', 'proven', 'challenged', 'settled', 'uncertain', 'resilient', 'help', 'need', 'support', 'confidence', 'perseverance', 'math', 'money', 'family', 'church', 'connectivity', 'sleep', 'work', 'live', 'connections', 'connection', 'job', 'relief', 'attitude', 'make', 'self-care', 'place', 'brother', 'mentor', 'self', 'professional', 'nourishment', 'procedures', 'normal', 'affirmation', 'people', 'break', 'traditions', 'management', 'self-forgiveness'.</p>	
		<p>F-Friends T-Time S-Support</p>	<p>L-Lonely E-Exhausted S-Stressed P-Proud T-Tired</p>	
		 <p>A word cloud on a dark background with words in various sizes and colors. The most prominent words are 'ability', 'support', 'help', 'confidence', 'knowledge', 'balance', 'need-for-organizational-help', 'willingness', 'lack-of-real-depth-of-connection', 'success-with-one-parent', 'lack-of-ability-to-bounce-back', 'artificialness', 'connections', 'journey', 'challenge', 'exhaustion', 'grown-up', 'pace', 'priorities', 'bumpy', 'imbalance', 'alone', 'accept', 'lack-of-support', 'deep', 'connection-to-home', 'grow', 'line', 'some-connections', 'financial', 'time', 'essay', 'connection', 'self', 'each', 'acceptance', 'story', 'to-do', 'lack-of-personal-time', 'professional', 'fast-pace', 'procedures', 'traditions', 'never-ending', 'attitude', 'of/students', 'work-life', 'church', 'life', 'inspiration', 'need-for-money', 'perseverance', 'intentional', 'need-for-time', 'need-for-organization', 'forward-movement', 'lack-of-desire-to-grow', 'progress-as-a-teacher', 'coaching-as-an-asset'.</p>		
		<p>Perceptions:</p> <p>B-Balance C-Confidence S-Support K-Knowledge H-Help</p>		

Collection Method	Description of Process	Codes	Examples																																																
Appendix D-Measure 4: Post Innovation Interviews (Transcribed)	First Cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall inventory-key ideas, common terms/ideas/phrases (by participant) • Open codes-axial codes-compared by question-developed codes of trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ P-Phases ○ H-Homework ○ S-Support ○ SS-Support Sessions ○ O-Out of State 	Example Quotes: “These sessions helped me..it felt safe to say whatever I was thinking or feeling. If I would say it here at school-I think no one would know what to do or say but if I said something in our group-everyone was like-Right-we get that.” “To know that I am not the only one who is feeling this way made a difference for me. The support sessions are the best thing we have had all year.”																																																
Appendix E-Phases of Beginning Teachers (Completed at each face-to-face session on orange charts)	First Cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Inventory on individual participant charts-recorded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each Phase Assigned a Number (10=Anticipation, 1=Lowest Disillusionment) • Reviewed Capture reflections to add in additional information reflective of the Phases (noted consistency in Phases) 	Chart	<p>The chart displays the perceived phases of beginning teachers over time. The Y-axis represents the number of phases (0 to 10), and the X-axis represents the time points: August, Beginning of September, End of September, October, and December. Six individual participants (A-F) and a theoretical line are tracked. Most participants start with a high number of phases (around 8-9) in August, which generally decreases by the end of September and remains low through December. Participant A shows a notable increase in October.</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Approximate data from the chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Participant</th> <th>August</th> <th>Beg September</th> <th>End September</th> <th>October</th> <th>December</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>8</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>8</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Theory</td> <td>9</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td>8</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Participant	August	Beg September	End September	October	December	A	8	4	2	7	2	B	8	3	2	3	2	C	8	4	2	2	5	D	8	3	2	4	2	E	8	3	2	6	2	F	8	3	2	2	2	Theory	9	6	3	8	8
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Data Collection Measures:

Appendix A-Measure 1: Pre & Post Innovation Questionnaire

Appendix B-Measure 2: Mapping Activities

Appendix C-Measure 3: Digital Reflections

Appendix D-Measure 4: Post Innovation Interviews

Appendix E-Phases of Beginning Teachers

Research Questions

1. How do the needs, perceptions, feelings, and experiences of out-of-state beginning teachers influence their initial semester of teaching in the district?
2. To what extent does this group's journey align with the attitudes of beginning teachers: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, and reflection (Moir, 2011)?
3. What did beginning teachers find valuable about interactive support sessions exploring resiliency strategies?

APPENDIX H
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



EXEMPTION GRANTED

Erin Rotheram-Fuller
 Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - Tempe
 -
 Erin.Rotheram-Fuller@asu.edu

Dear Erin Rotheram-Fuller:

On 7/17/2014 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Isolated, Out-of-State and New-Oh My! An Action Research Study Aimed at Enhancing the Resiliency and Retention of Novice K-8 Teachers in Arizona and Investigating the Effects of this Effort
Investigator:	Erin Rotheram-Fuller
IRB ID:	STUDY00001314
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewart_Consent.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Stewart_Updated IRB_July (2).docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Olson_stewart_measure 2.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • olson_stewart_measure 1.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Kelly Stewart.pdf, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 7/17/2014.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Kelly Olson-Stewart
 Kelly Olson-Stewart

APPENDIX I

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE FIGURES

Figure 2

From: Caroline Mansfield <Caroline.Mansfield@murdoch.edu.au>
Date: March 5, 2015 at 5:53:31 AM MST
To: "Kelly Olson-Stewart (Student)" <Kelly.Stewart@asu.edu>
Subject: Re: permission

Dear Kelly,

How wonderful that you are almost finished! Yes, you can most certainly use the diagram in your dissertation, with the reference of our paper. I have attached a paper that we had published last year as well, which develops the framework further.

You can also find the framework developed in the first BRiTE module -
<https://www.brite.edu.au/BRiTE/Module1/WhatMakesAResilientTeacher>
We have trialled the modules and are in the process of reviewing to prepare the final version – I shall send you an update and newsletter soon!

Best wishes for a successful dissertation -
Kind regards,

Caroline

From: "Kelly Olson-Stewart (Student)" <Kelly.Stewart@asu.edu>
Date: Thursday, 5 March 2015 8:41 pm
To: Caroline Mansfield <caroline.mansfield@murdoch.edu.au>
Subject: permission

Hello Dr. Mansfield-

Hope you are well! :)

I am 3 weeks out from my defense! I cannot believe how much I have learned in this journey and am still so interested in work.

Can I get permission from you to use this figure in my dissertation? I need to get permission from you or the publisher.

Thanks for your help!

Kelly

Figure 2
14 Attachments
Preview attachment B5738630-EFA4-406C-94FD-3F2CE6838CB2.jpg

Figure 1, Figure 21, and Appendix E

From: Chiara Garonzik <cgaronzik@newteachercenter.org>

Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 10:55 AM

To: NTC Products <products@newteachercenter.org>, Kelly Stewart <kelly.stewart@asu.edu>

Subject: Re: Copyright permission

Hi Kelly ,

Thank you for your request to use the Phases of First-year teachers' attitude graphic. You may absolutely use it in the publication of your dissertation. We ask that you use the following attribution:

"Copyright New Teacher Center. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of New Teacher Center."

If you need to attribute in a different way due to APA requirements, just let me know what that would look like. Please confirm receipt of this email to acknowledge the attribution requirements.

Thanks for contacting us at NTC and best wishes with your work,
Chiara

Chiara Garonzik, J.D.
Counsel & Strategic Advisor
New Teacher Center
110 Cooper Street, Suite 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

831-600-2289