Role of Principal Leadership
In Increasing Teacher Retention:

Creating a Supportive Environment

CHARLOTTE ADVOCATES FOR
EDUCATION

February 2004

Role of Principal Leadership in Increasing Teacher Retention:
Creating a Supportive Environment

Table of Contents

Role of Principal Leadership in Increasing Teacher Retention:
Creating a Supportive Environment
Executive Summary

Each year between 15% and 20% of the teachers in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) leave their classrooms. That percentage is even higher for teachers who have less than three years of experience. High teacher turnover rates result in:

- Deficit of quality teachers for every classroom and thus lower quality of instruction.
- Loss of continuity within the school. School reforms require sustained and shared commitment by a school's staff. This is difficult to achieve with continual staff turnover.
- Time, attention, and funds being devoted to attracting new teachers and not to the classrooms. It is estimated each teacher turnover costs our system $11,500.

In searching the national, state, and local literature, Charlotte Advocates for Education (CAE) found consistently teachers cite working conditions as a major factor in determining whether they stay at a school. Principal leadership was often given as the key component in creating this positive working environment.

Project Objective
Charlotte Advocates for Education sought to understand this relationship between principals, culture, and retention of teachers. Relying extensively upon work completed by the West Mecklenburg Collaborating for Educational Reform Initiative and Governor Easley's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative, we designed a study to discover:

- What specific skills, training, experiences, and characteristics affect a principal's ability to be an effective leader who creates a supportive environment
- What specific strategies principals have implemented to impact the shaping of the working and learning environment in their schools
- What support can be provided to principals in becoming more effective – including training and continual professional development

Study Design
Charlotte Advocates for Education studied the traits and strategies of principals within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, particularly those in high needs schools, who had been most successful in retaining teachers while continually improving student achievement. Using pre-determined criteria, twenty principals were identified. To begin identifying principal traits and successful strategies used by them, surveys were designed and sent to these principals. Results revealed common themes. For more in-depth understanding of these common characteristics and strategies, these principals were invited to participate in a focus group centered on key issues identified in the survey results. Information from the surveys and focus groups were then analyzed.

Key Findings and Implications
While CAE understands this study does not provide a comprehensive analysis enabling scientific conclusions, it does provide valuable input into the process of making certain we have effective principals in our schools – principals focused on raising student achievement and retaining teachers.

Overall Key Observations and Implications

The following are key observations based upon the questionnaire and focus group responses. In addition, implications of each observation are given.

- **Principals who have been more successful in retaining teachers have characteristics of successful entrepreneurs**.

  – They are visionary leaders who possess the ability to conceptualize goals for their schools as well as the ability to operationalize the necessary plans.

  – They are risk-takers – cautious risk-takers who value research and data, can analyze this data rapidly, synthesize important information, and make good decisions quickly.

  – They are self-motivated and tenacious in doing what it takes to make their school successful.

  – They are problem-solvers.

  – They are committed to and passionate about their profession.

  > *Implication:* *Relying only on principal development and training is not the entire answer. We must ensure we recruit and hire individuals who have not only excellent education backgrounds, but also specific innate qualities. We then must continue to support and foster the growth of these individuals.*

- **These successful principals believe strong, instructional, operational, and strategic leadership in their school are equally important. However operational issues dominate much of their time, leaving too little time available for instructional leadership.**

  > *Implication:* *The traditional leadership structure within our schools needs to be re-examined to determine if in fact it is the most effective and efficient structure to meet the needs of teachers and students. A single individual may not be able to provide the leadership in as many areas as are required.*

- **These successful principals understand the value of people. They value teachers as individuals and sincerely want them to succeed and grow. The most successful strategies for these principals are those that give direct assistance to teachers.**

  These principals provide continual feedback to their teachers and find ways to provide teachers with professional development opportunities, both in-house and off campus. They ensure teachers have the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers and to increase leadership abilities. They also demonstrate their valuing teachers by actively involving them in meaningful decision-making.

  These principals understand the most effective use of discretionary dollars is to provide additional personnel who support and assist teachers in being successful with their students. Providing material things alone never surfaced as a successful strategy.

  > *Implication: Principals must be provided professional development to assist them in understanding strategies that strengthen relationships, help teachers grow, and enable teachers to be successful in improving student achievement. Principals then should be held accountable for using these strategies.*

- **Principal preparation and continuing professional development must include practical information, the nuts and bolts of being a principal, as well as theory.**

  > *Implication: To be successful, principals must have received appropriate and effective adult education concerning the operations of leading a school (e.g. creating a budget and developing master schedules). CMS and institutions of higher learning must be willing to work together to develop programs that will prepare our principals for all their roles and will enable them to continue to grow. Principals are the crucial element in the school. Therefore having high quality on-going continuous leadership development that is appropriately funded is a necessity.*

Next Steps:
Based upon the *Key Observations and Implications*, these potential next steps are being recommended for future consideration.

- Review all CMS policies and procedures for identifying and recruiting principals. Ensure there is a process in place to evaluate demonstrated evidence of key characteristics of a successful principal.

- Continue building relationships with area institutions of higher learning enabling CMS to "recruit" top graduates for principal/assistant principal positions within the school system.

- Organize principal representatives to develop a list of skills and knowledge needed to be a successful principal in today's environment.

- Develop a task force including representatives from institutions of higher education, CMS principals, and CMS Professional Development Center to analyze current principal training/development programs alignment with needed skills and knowledge principal representatives have indicated as crucial. Perform a *gap analysis.*

- Develop an action plan to close any identified gap, determining what needs to be provided, who should provide the information and training, and the best way to deliver it. Included may be recommendations for CMS Central Office, institutions of higher learning (IHE), Principal Leadership Academy, and Professional Development Center. The plan should include a timeline and resources needed.

- Develop a list of key successful strategies for creating a working environment conducive to retaining teachers. Use a task force of successful principals, IHE, and CMS staff to develop the list and analyze the alignment of this list with existing professional development that will develop the skills needed to implement these strategies.

- Review all CMS policies and procedures for providing feedback to principals, including Annual Performance Appraisals and other feedback throughout the year, to ensure there is a process in place for evaluating demonstrated evidence of successful implementation of strategies designed to retain teachers while increasing student achievement.

- Begin to research the most efficient and effective leadership structures for schools. This may include having both an instructional leader as well as an operational leader. Report on other systems' experiences – giving format, the pros and cons, lessons learned, and challenges overcome. Determine preliminary costs (including salaries/benefits as well as related costs). Analyze whether additional studies should occur.

- Develop the plan to evaluate the changes. Develop any needed tools and ensure mechanism is in place to monitor and evaluate progress and to report the findings.

With the innate ability, appropriate skill set, proper support and feedback, and the desire to be a strong and effective leader, these principals can create an environment where teachers with the same passion and commitment will want to teach and can be successful. Only then will job satisfaction and resulting teacher retention rates increase.

Role of Principal Leadership in Increasing Teacher Retention:
Creating a Supportive Environment

Background

Ensuring each classroom has a quality teacher has been a top priority for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This became even more imperative with No Child Left Behind mandating a "highly qualified" teacher in every classroom by 2005-06. That is a daunting task considering the need for teachers exceeds the supply of active certified teachers. It is estimated that over the next 10 years North Carolina will need to hire approximately 12,000 new teachers a year. Yet our state's schools of education are graduating approximately 3,200 new teachers a year; estimates indicate that only 2/3 of those will teach in the state.

While we must continue to recruit new teachers, we must also retain our teachers. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) the increasing student population (over 3,000 new students each year) demands more teachers. But the impact of teacher turnover presents an additional challenge.

According to NC Dept. of Public Instruction, CMS teacher turnover rate is higher than the North Carolina rate and other urban North Carolina systems:

	2002-03	*5-Year Average*
CMS	16.73%	19.25%
Wake County	10.22%	10.55%
Guilford County	9.95%	10.75%
North Carolina	12.44%	13.10%

Teacher turnover is particularly high among new teachers - those most dependent upon principal leadership and support. For example, in CMS during 2001-02, of the 1329 teachers who left, 81.4% were non-tenured teachers with generally less than three years of experience. The type of school also impacts teacher turnover. In a recent study Eric A. Hanushek, John Kain, and Steven Rivkin found that in Texas, the percentage of teachers leaving low performing schools (20%) is significantly higher than high performing schools (15%). ("The Revolving Door," *Education Next. Winter 2004.* http://www.educationnext.org)

These high teacher turnover rates result in:

- Deficit of quality teachers for every classroom and thus lower quality of instruction.

- Loss of continuity within the school. School reforms require sustained and shared commitment by a school's staff. This is difficult to achieve with continual turnover of staff.

- Time, attention, and funds being devoted to attracting new teachers and not to the classrooms. It is estimated each teacher turnover costs our system $11,500.

These conditions lead to lower student achievement, deterioration of teacher morale and lowering of public perception of CMS.

For CMS to provide the opportunity for all students to learn and achieve, we must provide quality teachers for all by recruiting effectively and increasing teacher retention. However, before we can advocate for changes needed to increase teacher retention, we need to understand more clearly the

root causes of turnover and determine what solutions can be put in place to alleviate the constant, high turnover of teachers.

As Susan Moore Johnson and others stated, "Clever incentives may attract new teachers, but only improving the culture and working conditions of schools will keep them." ("Retaining the Next Generation of Teachers: The Importance of School-Based Support," <u>Harvard Education Letter: Research Online</u>, *Insights, July/August 2001*)

Based upon his analysis of federal survey data for more than 50,000 teachers nationwide, Richard M. Ingersoll of the University of Pennsylvania indicated that 42 percent of all those leaving the profession report they did so because of job dissatisfaction. When asked why they were dissatisfied, lackluster support from school administration, low salaries, lack of teacher influence over decision-making, lack of discipline all factored into the decision. Ingersoll also found that "poor working conditions and lack of significant on-the-job training and support" were the major reasons why teachers left the profession within their first five years. ("Teacher Turnover and Teacher Shortages." *American Educational Research Journal.* Fall 2001.)

Studies have shown that indeed increasing salary alone will not increase teacher retention. In the study cited earlier, Eric Hanushek et. al. determined that a teacher's decision to teach in a school may be influenced less by increases in salaries than many may believe. In fact these researchers revealed that in Texas it has been determined that substantial boosts in salary (25-43%) would be needed to retain teachers in low-achieving, high minority urban schools at rates similar to suburban schools. The findings also indicate that salary differentials are nearly irrelevant for women teachers with 10 or more years of experience. As a result, they conclude that "improving working conditions of teachers may prove both more effective and more realistic" in retaining teachers. Included in these working conditions are things such as safety, discipline, and principal leadership. ("The Revolving Door: A Path-Breaking Study of Teachers in Texas Reveals That Working Conditions Matter More Than Salary." *Education Next.* Winter 2004.)

These various studies revealed that working conditions do make a difference. Believing that the principal plays a key role in these working conditions, Charlotte Advocates for Education designed a study to examine more deeply the traits and strategies of principals who have shown higher teacher retention rates and high achievement scores in schools with high concentrations of high needs students.

This paper includes a description of our research project, key findings, and recommendations.

Project Overview

Charlotte Advocates for Education (CAE) is an independent, 501(c)3 organization located in Charlotte, North Carolina. The organization's mission is to define issues and advocate for changes necessary to permanently improve the quality of public education in Mecklenburg County. Reducing teacher turnover has been identified as a key component in ensuring access for all to quality public education.

To begin looking at this issue, CAE formed a working committee comprising members of the Advocates for Education Board of Directors, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools staff, individuals from institutes of higher education, interested community members, and CAE staff. The committee members were interested in looking at the impact of certain factors on teacher retention – factors that perhaps had not been examined as closely as some others.

The committee began by examining what the literature was saying were major contributing factors to teacher dissatisfaction and thus higher turnover.

Building on Previous Work

As noted earlier, Richard Ingersoll and others found many teachers cite poor working conditions and "lackluster" administrative support as reasons for leaving the teaching profession. Other researchers focused on what makes a good working environment.

Thomas Sergiovanni, senior fellow at the Center for Educational Leadership and the founding director of the Trinity Principals' Center, wrote numerous articles and books stating that creating a *community* culture is key to working conditions conducive to teaching and learning. Dr. Terence Deal, professor of education leadership at Peabody College – Vanderbilt University and author or coauthor of numerous books, takes this a step further by indicating that no one occupies a more influential position from which to influence a school's culture than its principal. Dr. Deal states that to create this positive culture, a successful leader must address four aspects of their organization with effective strategies:

- *Human resources*
  Nurturing students and employees
- *Structure*
  Building an organization that produces quality products – student achievement and maturing students
- *Politics*
  Understanding the political nature of schools
- *Symbolic awareness*
  These are elements that create and reinforce a school's culture – such as sense of *teamness*, parental involvement, etc.

The CAE working committee examined local research to see if teachers in North Carolina concur that a school's culture, the working conditions and support, are significant factors in deciding whether to leave their teaching positions.

The committee looked at one such study focused upon working conditions within North Carolina schools. In May, 2002, N.C. Governor Mike Easley launched the Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative with the goal of keeping good teachers in NC classrooms. As part of that initiative, a survey was sent to every licensed public school-based educator in NC asking about working conditions in five categories within the schools. The released results of the *Teacher Working Conditions Initiative Survey* show concern about the working conditions within the schools. (Governor Mike Easley's *Teacher Working Conditions Initiative: Preliminary Report of Findings From a Statewide Survey of Educators* is found in Appendix A)

Charlotte Advocates for Education also examined research completed by West Mecklenburg Collaborating for Educational Reform Initiative (WM-CERI) Partnership. Their findings indicated that for CMS teachers working conditions within a school is a major factor in determining whether a teacher stays at a school. When teachers and former teachers within the West Mecklenburg Feeder Area (WMFA) were asked what would/did entice them to remain teaching in one of the WMFA schools, positive and supportive working conditions surfaced as a major factor and principal leadership rose as the key component in creating a positive working environment.

Thus, working conditions appeared to be key and there seemed to be a causal relationship between principal leadership and teacher retention.

Research Question To Answer

Advocates for Education sought to validate and build on these studies and to learn more about this relationship, specifically to discover common characteristics and strategies of effective principals enabling them to create a working environment conducive for retaining teachers. Therefore, by conducting its own primary research, CAE sought to answer *how can principal leadership positively impact the working environment to increase teacher retention.*

Project Objectives

To begin understanding how the principals can impact the working environment, CAE focused on identifying common characteristics and strategies of principals within CMS (particularly those in high needs schools) who have experienced higher than expected teacher retention rates in their schools while maintaining high student achievement.

To achieve this overall objective, Advocates for Education sought to identify:

- Specific skills, training, experiences, and characteristics that affect a principal's ability to be an effective leader who creates a supportive environment

- Roles principals play in creating a good, supportive working environment

- Specific strategies principals implement to impact the shaping of the working and learning environment in their schools

- Support structures principals believe are critical in retaining teachers

- Specific district or state support systems that help principals run a strong day to day operation and to become effective school leaders

Project Design

The research methodology used to accomplish our objectives included administering a survey to the identified principals and conducting a focus group. The following gives a brief overview of each step.

(1) **Identify CMS schools with high teacher retention and high student achievement**, particularly in high needs schools using designated criteria. Over the past few years, with the beginning of the *Choice Plan* for student assignment within CMS, there have been numerous changes in student demographics of schools, principal leadership, and even the type of programs offered in the schools. The criteria took these changes into account. Twenty principals were identified. These included principals of 10 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 5 high schools. *(For specific information about the algorithm used in identifying the principals, see Appendix B.)*

(2) **Administer survey to the principals of these 20 identified schools.** Survey was designed to begin identifying common traits and strategies. In cooperation with KPC Research and UNC Charlotte, Advocates for Education designed a survey incorporating results of the *Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative Survey* as well as results of other studies such as the WM-CERI project, both cited previously.

Each of the 20 identified principals was sent the survey and invited to participate by completing the survey. Sixteen (16) returned the completed survey to us.

(3) **Design/conduct focus group discussion based upon survey results**. All twenty principals were invited to participate in the two-hour focus group session, which was held Thursday evening, November 20, 2003, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at the KPC Research facility on East Blvd, Charlotte, NC. Gregory W. Chase, Project Director with KPC Research, facilitated the group.

The focus group discussion centered on key issues identified in the survey results. The questions were designed to assist us in having a deeper understanding of these common characteristics and strategies. Seven (7) principals - representing elementary, middle, and high schools - actively and enthusiastically participated in the session that evening. Because several of the principals could not attend, but indicated a real desire to be part of the study, a written version of the Discussion Guide was developed and sent to all principals who were not able to attend. These principals were asked to complete the survey and return to Advocates for Education. One principal did complete the written survey.

(4) **Combine information gathered from both survey and focus group** to begin understanding

   a) Common training, experience, and characteristics of these principals

   b) Successful strategies these principals use to create good working environment

   c) Keys to graduate and continuing education principals believe are essential in developing effective principals

(5) **Present key findings and recommendations** related to principal development and support to CMS senior staff as input into the Human Resources Strategic Plan, Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education, and institutions of higher education.

Project Limitation

This study does not provide a comprehensive analysis that would enable scientific conclusions. Yet, the study does validate on a local level the findings of other researchers and provides valuable input into the process needed to ensure effective principals in our schools – principals focused on raising student achievement and retaining teachers.

Findings: Principal Survey

The survey administered to the 20 principals was designed to explore the background of the principals and to identify the strategies the principals perceive as most effective in retaining teachers.

Sixteen of the 20 principals completed the survey. (A copy of the survey is found in *Appendix C*.)

Key Results

Principal Experience

The vast majority of the 16 principals had extensive experience as both a teacher and an assistant principal prior to becoming a principal. (67% had taught at least 10 years and 75% had been an assistant principal) While the average number of years as a principal was 7.4 years, only 3 of the 16 had 10 or more years of experience as a principal. Over 50% had 5-10 years experience as a principal.

Principal Use of Time

Of the 16 principals, 63% (10) stated they feel most comfortable as an *Instructional Leader*

Most (80%) felt Central Office expects them to spend at least 70% of their day as an *Instructional Leader*; yet ½ of principals felt they spent 50% or less of their time in that role, with the remainder of their day being spent in an *Operations Manager* role.

Principals felt being an *instructional leader* comprised helping their teachers be better teachers. Among other things, this includes

- Providing additional support for new teachers
- Assisting teachers develop effective lesson plans and delivering these plans
- Modeling teaching practices
- Ensuring quality curriculum
- Helping teachers understand the latest education research
- Keeping up with student achievement data and helping teachers understand and use this data
- Providing appropriate customized professional development

Principals considered tasks needed for day-to-day operations of the school as the *operations manager* role. These included tasks such as budgeting, scheduling, transportation, facilities, hiring staff, public relations and marketing their school/programs to the community, parents, and students.

Principal Preparation

Ten of the 16 principals (63%) responding to the survey received their graduate degree in school administration from UNC Charlotte, indicating UNC Charlotte plays a major role in *shaping* our principals. Because the vast majority of the respondents attended UNC Charlotte and too few attended other institutions of higher learning, it is impossible to know whether there were real differences in graduate training experiences.

Principals were asked to rate various components of their training to become a principal – a "4" being *very important* and a "1" being *not important*. The following is the rank order of the mean ratings of the perception of importance in principal development (in order from *most effective* to *least effective*).

- On the job training as a principal
- Experience as a teacher
- Self-directed professional development
- Innate characteristics
- Experience being an Assistant Principal
- Networking with others and mentoring
- Graduate education in Administration
- Undergraduate education
- Formal Professional Development

Key Effective Strategies for Improving Working Conditions and Retaining Teachers

Principals were given seven categories of *working conditions* teachers have indicated in various studies as key to their decisions to remain in the profession. Within each category, many possible strategies used by principals were listed. The principals were asked to indicate the three strategies within each category they felt were most effective in retaining teachers. They could add others.

The following lists by category the 3 or 4 strategies named most often by these principals. (The first five categories are the working conditions categories found in that order in the Teacher Working Conditions Initiative Study. The last two were additional categories based upon our research.)

Identified Effective Strategies: By Category

Use of Time
- Provide teachers with time set aside specifically to collaborate with other highly effective teachers*
- Provide every teacher with a daily individual planning time within the school day*
- Have team meetings*

Facilities and Resources
- Use of personnel to provide teachers with additional human resources supporting classroom instruction*
- Involve teachers in determining resource needs and allocation
- Implement specific strategies to assist teachers without a traditional classroom

Leadership
- Create goals, objectives, and priorities for school and actively maintain urgency in meeting them
- Provide each staff member with the standards and expectations you have for them
- Create and/or actively maintain a vision for the school that is supported by the staff and the parents
- Informally visit classrooms of new teachers

Empowering Teachers
- Involve teachers in meaningful decision-making*
- Provide ways for teachers to be recognized for a job well done – both formally and informally*
- Establish teacher leadership positions (e.g. lead teacher, mentor, team leaders, representatives to key district committees)*

Professional Development
- Provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders*
- Provide opportunity for teachers to visit other classrooms – both within school and at other schools *
- Provide specific opportunities within the school for teachers to learn continually (e.g. peer coaching, study groups)*

New Teacher Support
- Provide all new teachers with an effective mentor*
- Have special orientation for new teachers prior to the opening of school in your school
- Provide opportunity for the new teacher and mentor to work together during the school day – both inside and outside the classroom

Instructional Leadership
- Assist teachers in knowing how as a team to develop an assessment system that analyzes student achievement, develops appropriate instructional assignments, and assesses whether these assignments have produced changes in student achievement
- Tap into expertise of experienced teachers or district resources to guide teachers
- Hold faculty meetings for educational instruction purposes
- Personally provide one-on-one guidance and assistance to teachers enabling them continually to improve instruction and student learning

---

* Over 50% of the 16 principals completing the survey indicated this strategy as one of the most effective strategies within the category.

Findings: Principal Focus Group

Based upon results of the Principal Survey, CAE designed and conducted a focus group to which all 20 identified principals were invited; 7 principals in person and 1 in writing participated. The focus group discussion centered upon questions seeking to understand more clearly:

- The specific innate characteristics these principals believe contribute to their success.
- How principal training/development could be more effective in preparing successful principals.
- Those strategies which almost every principal indicated had positively impacted the working environment within their schools.

*(*See Appendix D for *Focus Group Guide)*

Key Results

> *Note*: as with all focus groups, findings are qualitative in nature and should not be considered as scientific evidence that can be generalized to entire groups of principals. However the purpose of the Focus Group is to provide additional guidance and understanding.

The following includes key points from the Focus Group. For a more complete listing of the answers see Appendix E *Focus Group Responses.*

Key Characteristics of an Effective Principal

An effective principal has attributes of a successful entrepreneur. He or she has the following characteristics:

- Ability to be a visionary leader who can conceptualize a vision and goals for his or her schools and can take steps necessary to make that vision reality.
- Ability to synthesize
  Ability to glean information from various resources (including graduate school, reading, seminars, etc.) and experiences in order to create programs that will make a more effective school
- Ability to be intrinsically motivated
- Critical thinker – ability to ask the right questions
- Ability to make good decisions quickly
- Analytical thinker/problem-solver
- Ability to self-reflect
- Possession of strong organizational skills
- Ability to articulate clearly
- Ability to *prioritize* and know what is important: time-management, knowing how to pick your battles
- Confident, not arrogant, in ability to lead
- Ability to gain trust and respect from others
- Risk-taker in leading school communities towards being effective learning community
- Perseverance – tenacity to do what it takes
- Driven to continually learn
- People skills – ability to develop meaningful relationships with others
- Sensing and perceptive
- Listening skills
- Sense of humor

Principal Preparation – What Principals Would Like To Have Learned Prior To Becoming a Principal - Graduate School or Early Professional Development

- Time-management skills: Understanding the 3 to 5 areas within the school that will have the most impact and therefore on which a principal should center most of his or her time.

- How to build teams within schools

- How to work effectively with students, staff, and parents in diverse schools. This includes diversity of race, cultures, economics, philosophies, working styles etc.

- How to work effectively with parents and volunteers – how to partner with home, school, community

- How to work effectively with the community and build strong networks

- How to build good relationships with staff while still getting needed tasks done

- Understanding of the "nuts and bolts" issues such as building a budget, building a master schedule, navigating the "system," organizing classrooms, hiring quality staff that *fit in*.

- Understanding policy, procedures, and practical information specific to CMS. This includes the *how to's,* who to call for needs, lines of communications, etc. (A quick reference guide)

- Understanding the network of support within District and State – who to call on for what

- How to provide highly effective professional development to staff in an efficient manner

- Understanding ALL the roles a principal must play. Not only must a principal be the instructional leadership and operations manager, at times the principal will be mother or father, maintenance personnel, teacher, security officer, etc.

- Understanding leadership can be lonely – guidance on combating the loneliness

- Practical steps in how to market school and ideas to parents, students, and staff

Note: Several of these have now been addressed, but were not available when these principals received their graduate education and/or their principalship.

Principal Preparation – Suggested Ways to Deliver Effective Preparation

- Using hypothetical case studies, role play "real" situations – such as challenging parent conferences, conflict resolution among staff, etc.

- Have more hands-on practical applications: building and working with school budgets, building master schedules

- Have successful existing principals work with those "in training" to help principal understand what being a principal means – the roles they must play etc.

- Build in year-long residency program under successful principals

- Have a strong, active mentor program

Most Important Strategies in Achieving Higher Teacher Retention Rates

Those hired to be a principal need to have key innate characteristics. They also need to have the appropriate preparation for the job and they need to continue to grow professionally. However, to impact teacher retention, they also need to put in place key strategies that will create the environment where teachers will want to remain. The following are some of those strategies that these successful principals believe are most important in retaining teachers:

- Demonstrate strong leadership – leadership that is not afraid to take a risk

- Build appropriate relationships with staff so they know the principal is a caring team member
  - ✓ Knowing teachers as individuals
  - ✓ Having an *open door*
  - ✓ Creating social opportunities within staff to build a sense of family
  - ✓ Meeting with new teachers personally at least once a month

- Support teachers
  - ✓ Ensure teachers believe the principal is their advocate and the principal is here to "work for them," not visa versa
  - ✓ Remove barriers so teacher can be successful in class – e.g. policies, parents, behavior issues
  - ✓ Provide resources (often creatively) needed for teachers to be successful
  - ✓ Keep "stressors" at bay: keeping extra duties and paperwork to a minimum
  - ✓ Publicly support teachers
  - ✓ Continually and publicly recognize teachers for "job well done"
  - ✓ Give small tokens and notes to say *thank you*

- Include teachers in decision-making – making certain they understand the *negotiables* vs. *non-negotiables*; always asking "what is in the best interest of the students?"

- Empower staff – knowing when it is proper to "give power" and how to do it effectively

- Continually build leadership capacity within school

- Provide opportunities for teachers to grow in their profession – including giving teachers outstanding professional development in-house (designed specifically for needs of teacher and school) and the opportunity to go off site for training and to observe master teachers

- Be accessible for teachers: open-door policies for teachers to share with principal

- Provide both individual and team structured planning time for teachers – protect that time

- Ensure within the team planning there is a mixture of new and veteran teachers

Overall Key Observations and Implications

The following are key observations based upon the questionnaire and focus group responses. In addition, implications of each observation are given.

- **Principals who have been more successful in retaining teachers have characteristics of successful entrepreneurs**.

  – They are visionary leaders who possess the ability to conceptualize goals for their schools as well as the ability to operationalize the necessary plans.

  – They are *risk-takers* – cautious risk-takers who value research and data, can analyze this data rapidly, synthesize important information, and make good decisions quickly.

  – They are self-motivated and tenacious in doing what it takes to make their school successful.

  – They are problem-solvers.

  – They are committed to and passionate about their profession.

    Implication: Relying only on principal development and training is not the entire answer. We must ensure we recruit and hire individuals who have not only excellent education backgrounds, but also specific innate qualities. We then must continue to support and foster the growth of these individuals.

- **These successful principals believe strong, instructional, operational, and strategic leadership in their school are equally important. However operational issues dominate much of their time, leaving too little time available for instructional leadership.**

    Implication: The traditional leadership structure within our schools needs to be re-examined to determine if in fact it is the most effective and efficient structure to meet the needs of teachers and students. A single individual may not be able to provide the leadership in as many areas as are required.

- **These successful principals understand the value of people. They value teachers as individuals and sincerely want them to succeed and grow.   The most successful strategies for these principals are those that give direct assistance to teachers.**

  These principals provide continual feedback to their teachers and find ways to provide teachers with professional development opportunities, both in-house and off campus. They ensure teachers have the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers and to increase leadership abilities. They also demonstrate their valuing teachers by actively involving them in meaningful decision-making.

  These principals understand the most effective use of discretionary dollars is to provide additional personnel who support and assist teachers in being successful with their students. Providing material things alone never surfaced as a successful strategy.

    Implication: Principals must be provided professional development to assist them in understanding strategies that strengthen relationships, help teachers grow, and enable teachers to be successful in improving student achievement. Principals then should be held accountable for using these strategies.

- **Principal preparation and continuing professional development must include practical information, the nuts and bolts of being a principal, as well as theory.**

    Implication: To be successful, principals must have received appropriate and effective adult education concerning the operations of leading a school (e.g. creating a budget and developing master schedules). CMS and institutions of higher learning must be willing to work together to develop programs that will prepare our principals for all their roles and will enable them to continue to grow. Principals are the crucial element in the school. Therefore having high quality on-going continuous leadership development that is appropriately funded is a necessity.

Recommendations

Ensuring every school has an effective principal who is able to create a working environment conducive to retaining teachers is not the sole responsibility of the administration of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The community, the institutions of higher education, CMS, and the principals themselves all have a role to play. While the community must provide the resources and support needed for these principals to be successful, institutions of higher education such as UNC Charlotte, CMS, and the principals must work hand in hand to build a program necessary to develop and maintain effective principals.

This includes working collaboratively from the time an individual is identified as a potential leader, through graduate school, through recruiting and hiring, during their first few years on the job, and throughout their careers. Professional development should be continuous and seamless and must include relevant information that assists principals in honing their skills and being effective. Built-in must be the mechanism to provide feedback to the principal, both in the annual performance assessment and throughout the year.

The following includes specific recommendations for actions that can positively impact this entire process.

Identifying, Recruiting, and Hiring Effective Principals

- Develop strong relationships with institutions of higher education enabling CMS to identify and recruit outstanding students who are ready to graduate from their masters in administration program

- Ensure those identified as a potential principal (graduate students, teachers, assistant principals, students in graduate programs, or individuals outside CMS) in addition to having education expertise also possess those traits identified as essential. Create a rubric that assesses principal candidates against these traits of an effective principal

   ✓ Being a *visionary* individual who can both think strategically and understand the ultimate goal as well as can create and implement the action plan needed to reach that goal

   ✓ Ability to critically analyze information, conclusions, and points of view

   ✓ Ability to synthesize information from a wide variety of sources

   ✓ Analytical problem-solver

   ✓ Quick, effective decision-maker

   ✓ Self-motivated; not in constant need of feedback and praise

   ✓ Risk-taker

   ✓ Perseverance and tenacity

   ✓ Confident, but not arrogant

   ✓ Strong team player

   ✓ Ability to lead by example and influence others

   ✓ Strong listening skills

Preparing Effective Principals: Institutions of Higher Education

- Partner with CMS to review curriculum for their Masters of School Administration program to ensure the completeness of content based upon successful principals input

- Revise graduate courses as needed to ensure the "business of running a school" is taught. Include "nuts and bolts" topics:
  - ✓ Financial basics – include components in building an effective budget
  - ✓ "Sales and marketing" – how to effectively sell your philosophy and program to parents, teachers, students; how to effectively market your school
  - ✓ Effective internal and external communications
  - ✓ Effective time-management
  - ✓ Building an effective, efficient culture

- Revise graduate courses as needed to provide additional practical sessions:
  - ✓ Include extensive role-playing in classes using "real experiences" – difficult people, building teams
  - ✓ Have present CMS principals speak to class about "life of a principal" – the expected and the unexpected, how to cope with "it's lonely at the top," how to build effective staff relationships, understanding all the roles a principal must assume, how to maneuver the political aspects of the job, how to effectively network with other principals

- Include a 1-year residency program where prospective principals would work closely with successful principals over the course of at least one year

- Periodically survey principals as to what traits and skills are needed for their job and use this list to refine courses and other professional development

Supporting New Principals Within CMS

- Develop a list of skills and information needed by an individual to be successful in today's environment as they begin their career as a principal. List should be based upon recommendations from present successful principals in the system

- Using this list, create an orientation program that will shorten the *learning curve* for new principals and will enable them to focus more time on the things that matter most

- Include more extensive hands-on training in the "nuts and bolts" of being a principal in CMS; including extensive use of case studies and role playing
  - ✓ Budgets – how to create a budget, making the budget effective for a variety of diverse schools
  - ✓ Creating master schedules
  - ✓ Building effective teams within the school
  - ✓ Learning how to hire effective teachers who will fit the culture you want to have in the school
  - ✓ Understanding how to communicate most effectively with Central Office; understanding how a bureaucracy works
  - ✓ Learning effective conflict resolution techniques – parents, students, staff
  - ✓ Learning to work effectively and collaboratively with parents
  - ✓ Learning to utilize volunteers effectively
  - ✓ Learning to build networks within the community

- Provide principals with specific information about the community they serve – the demographics

- Appropriately matched principals and schools, making certain the principal's leadership qualities match the needs of the specific school where he or she is being placed
  (May entail use of tools relied upon throughout the corporate world – such as the Gallup Strength Finders.)

Continuing Support and Professional Development for Effective Principals

- Ensure new principals have effective, structured formalized mentoring program for the first years.

- In continuing professional development support for principals, address specific topics principals have identified as needed or that they have found valuable in their own self-directed studies. Topics should include:

  ✓Effective time-management techniques

  ✓How to build effective teams within the school – structural and operational tips

  ✓How to structure effectively team planning and other set times for collaboration among highly effective teachers

  ✓How to deliver effective training for staff

  ✓How to obtain, manage, and effectively use additional human resources -- including retired educators, parent advocates, teacher aids, volunteers

  ✓How to involve teachers in meaningful decisions

    - How to determine *meaningful decisions* for teachers
    - How to establish ground rules – *negotiables* vs. *non-negotiables*
    - How to make concessions and yet maintain leadership
    - How to design effective professional development opportunities for teachers

  ✓How to use research, data, needs assessments to develop strategic and operational plans to improve school. How to use data to monitor the progress

  ✓How to create an effective action plan that enables the school to reach its vision - including use of discretionary funds

  ✓How to get teachers to use research and use data in developing lessons for their students and to evaluate the effectiveness of these lessons

  ✓Principles from successful leadership in the business/corporate world that can be transferred to principal leadership

  ✓Best practices in collaborative learning

  ✓Best practices in specific content area

  ✓Teaching children of poverty

  ✓Effective *after school* programs

- Develop ongoing professional development for principals on creating supportive working environments.

  ✓How to build and nurture trust and personal connections with and among staff

  ✓How to provide meaningful support to teachers in their first few years

- Regularly survey principals as to how well ongoing training is meeting their needs. Ensure principals understand what they are expected to learn/know to be evaluated as an effective principal.

- Consider alternative delivery mechanisms for professional development that will enable principals to receive customized information and to receive it *just in time*. Survey principals as to type of delivery (e.g. face-to-face, online training, place, time, and frequency) that is most effective for them.

- In addition to support staff and leading national experts, tap into the expertise of current principals to provide peer-provided professional development sessions.

- Utilize outside agencies/entities, such as local corporations, in developing strong leadership qualities within principals. *(Training should be provided also for the staff in order for them to understand.)*
  - ✓ Building capacity within staff
  - ✓ Understanding your own leadership style and how to maximize it
  - ✓ Developing effective personal relationships; developing effective relationships with staff
  - ✓ Organizational development

- Provide principals with regular information on available professional development throughout the region that supports CMS principal standards. Encourage principals to take advantage of opportunities such as the Principals Executive Program in Chapel Hill.

Leadership Structure within Schools

Explore alternative leadership structures within schools to determine the most effective. For example study the feasibility of creating two lead administrators positions at a school - both an *operations leader* and an *instructional leader* in schools–beginning first with secondary schools.

Bradley Portin with the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington has indicated that no matter the type of school, schools need leadership in seven critical areas. However it may *not* be necessary for a single individual to be responsible for *all* these areas. Indeed it may be more effective to have an "orchestra leader" directing various leaders. The areas that must be addressed:

Critical Area	Action
Instructional Leadership	Assuring quality of instruction
Culture Leadership	Tending to the *symbolic* resources of the school: climate, traditions, etc.
Managerial Leadership	Tending to the operations of the school – budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security, and transportation
Human Resources Leadership	Recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting, and mentoring teachers and administrators; developing leadership capacity and professional development opportunities
Strategic Leadership	Promoting a vision, mission, goals, and developing a means to reach them
External Development Leadership	Representing the school in the community, public relations, recruiting students and volunteers, advocating for school interests
Micropolitical Leadership	Buffering and mediating internal interests and maximizing financial and human resources

Source: Bradley Portin et. al. *Making Sense of Leading Schools: A Study of the School Principalship.* Center on Reinventing Public Education, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington. September 2003.

Next Steps:

Based upon the *Key Observations and Implications*, these potential next steps are being recommended for future consideration.

- Review all CMS policies and procedures for identifying and recruiting principals. Ensure there is a process in place to evaluate demonstrated evidence of key characteristics of a successful principal.

- Continue building relationships with area institutions of higher learning enabling CMS to "recruit" top graduates for principal/assistant principal positions within the school system.

- Organize principal representatives to develop a list of skills and knowledge needed to be a successful principal in today's environment.

- Develop a task force including representatives from institutions of higher education, CMS principals, and CMS Professional Development Center to analyze current principal training/development programs alignment with needed skills and knowledge principal representatives have indicated as crucial. Perform a *gap analysis.*

- Develop an action plan to close any identified gap, determining what needs to be provided, who should provide the information and training, and the best way to deliver it. Included may be recommendations for CMS Central Office, institutions of higher learning (IHE), Principal Leadership Academy, and Professional Development Center. The plan should include a timeline and resources needed.

- Develop a list of key successful strategies for creating a working environment conducive to retaining teachers. Use a task force of successful principals, IHE, and CMS staff to develop the list and analyze the alignment of this list with existing professional development that will develop the skills needed to implement these strategies.

- Review all CMS policies and procedures for providing feedback to principals, including Annual Performance Appraisals and other feedback throughout the year, to ensure there is a process in place for evaluating demonstrated evidence of successful implementation of strategies designed to retain teachers while increasing student achievement.

- Begin to research the most efficient and effective leadership structures for schools. This may include having both an instructional leader as well as an operational leader. Report on other systems' experiences – giving format, the pros and cons, lessons learned, and challenges overcome. Determine preliminary costs (including salaries/benefits as well as related costs). Analyze whether additional studies should occur.

- Develop the plan to evaluate the changes. Develop any needed tools and ensure mechanism is in place to monitor and evaluate progress and to report the findings.

Summary
Outstanding principals, who believe all children can learn and who have the passion and commitment to do whatever it takes to make that happen, are key to the success in our schools and to increasing teacher retention.

To lead our schools, it is absolutely critical we tap the brightest individuals who think and act with an entrepreneurial spirit. Equally important we must provide appropriate training and support for these individuals so they may be successful in building a school culture that fosters high expectations, high student achievement, and a strong sense of community. Then we must hold these individuals accountable and we must provide rewards to and recognition for our effective leaders.

With the innate ability, appropriate skill set, proper support and feedback, and the desire to be a strong and effective leader, these principals can create an environment where teachers with the same passion and commitment will want to teach and can be successful. Only then will job satisfaction and resulting teacher retention rates increase.

Appendix A
Governor Mike Easley's
Teacher Working Conditions Initiative

Governor **Mike Easley**'s

Teacher Working Conditions Initiative
Preliminary Report of Findings
From a Statewide Survey of Educators

March 2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May of 2002, Governor **Mike Easley** launched the Governor's **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative** with the goals of keeping good teachers in the classroom and improving education for all children. In partnership with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission, with assistance from the NC Association of Educators, and with funding from BellSouth-NC, the Governor sent a survey on working conditions to every teacher, principal, and licensed professional in the state's public schools. Over 42,000 voluntary responses were received from nearly 1,500 schools in 115 of the state's 117 school systems.

This is a Preliminary Report on Findings from the survey conducted by the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University. Among the findings:

- Overall, teachers are not satisfied with their conditions of work and feel least satisfied with the amount of time they have to do their jobs.
- Teachers are most satisfied with school leadership but harbor mixed sentiments on issues of facilities, teacher empowerment, and professional development.
- With the exception of issues related to time, elementary teachers are more satisfied with their conditions of work than their middle and high school peers.
- Educators in smaller schools are more satisfied than their colleagues in mid-range and larger schools.
- There are striking differences in perceptions between principals and teachers.

> In addition to the statewide results, the Governor's Initiative has distributed School Reports and District Reports to all principals and superintendents. These reports contain in-depth information on responses from personnel to each of the 39 statements on the survey. This information allows schools and school systems to address specific working conditions in their schools.

Governor Easley is committed to retaining high quality teachers in our schools. In addition to this preliminary report, the **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative** will conduct further research into the relationships between working conditions and schools. He will develop profiles on schools with exemplary working conditions. The Governor will continue to engage the voices of educators and report findings to state and local education leaders and policymakers.

INTRODUCTION

North Carolina is experiencing a teacher shortage. The state's public schools hire over 10,000 teachers each year and will need to hire between 70,000 and 80,000 teachers by 2010. The state's schools of education produce roughly 3,300 graduates per year, with only 2,200 filling teaching positions the next school year in North Carolina. That leaves a major gap schools must work to fill each year with a mix of lateral entry candidates, teachers from other states, and teachers returning to the profession after time away.

Recently, groups ranging from Governor Easley's Education First Task Force to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future have suggested that state and local educational leaders refocus their efforts on teacher retention as a key strategy to mitigate the teacher shortage.

In recent years, North Carolina has put into place accountability for teacher education programs, mentoring programs for new teachers, and has boosted teacher salaries in an effort to attract and retain quality teachers. Even with these important efforts, the state's teacher attrition rate stands at 13% annually, with a number of school systems experiencing attrition rates of 20-30% each year and school-level attrition averaging 20-25%.

In order to ensure that North Carolina is doing all that it can to address the retention of quality teachers, Governor **Mike Easley** launched a **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative** in May 2002 in collaboration with the NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission.

Supportive working conditions are recognized by practitioners and researchers as critical to keeping good teachers in the classroom. Consistently, working conditions rank as one of the top reasons why teachers decide to remain or leave the public schools. The goal of the Initiative is to improve working conditions and increase the retention of quality teachers for all of North Carolina's children.

THE TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS SURVEY

The Governor's **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative** expands on a NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission pilot project in 2001. With the support of the State Board of Education, the Commission adopted working conditions as a primary focus. The Commission, through research and focus groups, developed 30 working conditions standards for schools in five broad categories. The standards were validated by focus groups and by more than 500 teachers. The Commission then developed a survey based on the standards.

In the fall of 2001, this survey was administered in a pilot study to 2,300 teachers and administrators in 60 schools throughout the state. The pilot provided important feedback on the working conditions in participating schools. Based on these results, Governor Easley expanded the initiative to encompass every public school-based educator in the state.

In May of 2002, in partnership with the Commission, assistance from the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE), and support and funding from BellSouth-NC, the Governor sent out surveys to every licensed public school-based educator in North Carolina. The goals of the survey were to

1) hear from teachers and administrators about what they identify as areas in need of improvement,
2) understand what school characteristics appear to affect those perceptions, and
3) provide data on working conditions to local school leaders and state policymakers.

The Survey

The survey includes 39 statements about working conditions in five categories:
1. Time Management
2. Facilities and Resources
3. Leadership
4. Personal Empowerment
5. Opportunities for Professional Development

Educators were asked to respond to each of the statements with a value of "1" through "6" with "1" representing "Strongly Disagree" and "6" representing "Strongly Agree." All statements are written to indicate a positive description of the school environment (*e.g.,* "The principal is a strong, supportive leader" and "Adequate and appropriate time is provided for professional development"). Therefore, higher scores always indicate a more positive opinion of the school environment.

Surveys were completed and returned voluntarily by 42,209 educators from 1,471 schools in 115 of the state's 117 school districts. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the schools had a response rate of 50% or higher.

Survey Analysis

The Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University conducted preliminary analysis on the data. The findings represented in this report are those of the Center. The Center's analysis provided two kinds of reports on the data:

1. **Average Reports**. These reports provide the average response for each statement by each group of respondents. They also depict the summary score for each category of statements:
   • Time
   • Facilities
   • Leadership
   • Empowerment
   • Professional Development

As a higher average score for a statement means greater satisfaction with that statement, a higher average summary score for a category indicates more overall satisfaction with that category. All average reports show the difference between the averages, and an asterisk indicates that this difference is statistically significant, or too large to attribute reasonably to chance factors.

2. **Frequency Distribution Reports**. For each statement from the survey, the Frequency Distribution Reports provide the percentage of responses for each of the values, 1 through 6 (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Frequency reports provide a view of the range of values that educators might ascribe to a given statement—not just the average value of the responses to that statement. In the Appendices, Frequency Reports depict this comparison for every value (1-6) of every statement (1-39).

The Center has also begun an effort to examine the relationship between teacher, student and school characteristics and with working conditions. The Governor's Office plans to continue that effort and provide additional reports with findings to the public and policymakers as the research is completed.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ON STATEWIDE RESULTS

The following are preliminary findings on the results of the Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Findings are based on analysis of the overall statewide results and comparative data on the responses from
1) teachers, principals and other licensed personnel,
2) educators in elementary, middle and high schools, and
3) educators in different size schools.

The Appendices include both the Average Reports and Frequency Reports for the Statewide Summary for all Educators (Appendix B), Summary by Job Title (Appendix C), Summary by School Type (Appendix D), and Summary by School Size (Appendix E).

• **Overall, survey results show little satisfaction with working conditions**. Only one of the five categories had an average score of more than 4 (out of 6) and no statement on the survey received a rating of higher than 4.57. Thus, while there were some positive findings, the results demonstrated a great deal of room for improvement in the working conditions for educators.

• **Educators are most positive about School Leadership**. Of the five categories of working conditions, respondents gave Leadership the highest average score (4.2). Within this domain, respondents gave the highest values to statements describing leaders as strong and supportive, holding teachers to high standards, and providing a strong shared vision for the school. At the same time, respondents were less positive about principals' efforts to shield them from disruptions, address concerns about leadership and give priority to supporting teachers.

- **Educators are least positive about Time, with teachers particularly critical of the time they have to do their jobs well**. Teachers were least positive about the time provided to them to work on curriculum, classroom management and individual instruction, time to work with colleagues and mentors, and time for professional development. Additionally, teachers were not positive about the demands on their time by duties such as paperwork and lunch duty that interfere with teaching and preparation.

- **Educators' views of Facilities, Empowerment, and Professional Development are mixed**. Statewide, the scores fell under an average of four on the six-point scale. Educators were relatively positive about the safety and cleanliness of their schools, the avenues for parent involvement, and leadership's effort to provide professional development focused on school goals. However, they were less than positive about their role in decision-making, the incentives for risk-taking, their access to clerical assistance and resources for instructional supplies, the resources available for professional development, and the respect for different types of professional learning.

- **Teachers and principals have strikingly different views of teacher working conditions, with principals more satisfied in every category**. Teachers are less satisfied with every aspect of the school environment than are their peers in non-teaching jobs. The gap between how teachers view working conditions versus their principals is greater than the gap between teachers and other licensed personnel. The difference between teachers and principals is greatest in the domains of Time and Empowerment, but gaps between teachers and principals are statistically significant for every statement on the survey. Inside the domains, there are some particularly large discrepancies. Principals and teachers have vastly different perceptions of the time that teachers have to collaborate with colleagues (difference of 1.11); whether teachers have funds to purchase supplies (difference of 1.12); whether leaders shield teachers from disruptions (difference of 1.15); the role of teachers in decision-making (difference of 1.25); and whether professional development is based on teacher and school goals (difference of 0.87).

- **Elementary school staff are more satisfied with most aspects of their working conditions as compared with their middle and high school peers—except on the issue of Time**. For each statement in the Leadership, Empowerment, and Development categories, elementary school personnel are much more satisfied than middle or high school personnel. Elementary teachers are more satisfied about professional development in their schools and administrator's role in supporting their learning. Middle and high school personnel are less likely to believe that teachers are centrally involved in decision-making, that their administrators support teachers, shield teachers from disruptions, and communicate state initiatives to teachers. But, their perceptions reverse on the issue of Time. Elementary teachers are much less satisfied about time to work on curriculum, classroom management, and individual instruction than their middle and high school colleagues.

Page 7

• **Generally, educators in smaller schools are more satisfied than their peers in larger schools**. The school size results compare schools with fewer than 500 members to those with 500 to 750 members and to schools with more than 750 members. In general, those in small schools tend to feel more satisfied with their working conditions than those in medium-sized schools, who tend to feel more satisfied than those in large schools. The comparison of small schools to large schools shows that for every statement in Leadership, Empowerment, and Professional Development, those in small schools are much more satisfied than those in large schools are. The Facilities category has mixed results: those in medium-sized schools feel most satisfied, followed by those in small and large schools.

• **Preliminary analysis also appears to show that factors such as years of experience in education, the percent of students who are ethnic minorities, and the percent of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch do not appear to have a significant relationship to working conditions satisfaction, while factors such as the ABCs status of schools and the percent performing at grade level do**. Further research is planned to more fully examine the relationships between working conditions and these student, teacher and school characteristics.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEVEL REPORTS

In addition to the statewide summary of results, the Governor's **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative** compiled reports for all participating schools and districts. School and District reports were sent to principals and superintendents in late January.

Individual School Reports. School's Reports were generated for all schools where 40% (for reasons of statistical reliability) or more of licensed personnel responded to the survey. There were 1,103 school reports (1,471 schools were represented in the results). School reports show results for teachers only and provide frequency distribution results (percentages responding at each value, one through six, for each of the 39 statements). School reports compare the results of the school with those of the district and the state for each of the 39 statements.

School District Reports. Each district with schools responding to the survey received a District Report. The report includes an Average Score Report and a Frequency Distribution Report that compares the school district with the state. There are 115 district reports.

In addition to their school and district reports, principals and superintendents received an **Exemplary Schools Report**. This report lists the ten exemplary schools (schools with the highest index scores) in each of the five categories of working conditions. This list is included in Appendix F.

NEXT STEPS

The findings released in this report represent the first step of Governor Easley's **Teacher Working Conditions Initiative**. In addition to the data included in this report, the Initiative will undertake the following:

- Develop in-depth profiles of exemplary schools that are making growth in student achievement and have high teacher satisfaction with working conditions;

- Conduct additional research into the relationships between perceptions of working conditions and variables such as student achievement, school resources, student characteristics, teacher experience and quality;

- Continue to survey teachers and other licensed personnel on their perceptions of working conditions;

  - Communicate findings to the policy community and work with policymakers to address working conditions issues.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Survey place the voices of teachers and educators at the center of the debate about how to keep good teachers in the profession. The statewide results and the school and district reports provide state and local education leaders with current, comprehensive information about teacher working conditions that need attention. Perhaps the most important work building on this survey will occur in schools where teachers, principals and other school personnel come together to take stock of their responses and develop a consensus action plan for improvement.

Ensuring outstanding teachers in public school classrooms across the state is one of North Carolina's most important jobs. If we are to make dramatic gains in education and build the kind of schools that our children deserve and our economy demands, then North Carolina must remain committed to aggressive teacher recruitment and retention efforts.

North Carolina has taken important steps in teacher recruitment and put in place successful and nationally acclaimed programs. Now, the state must intensify its focus on teacher retention and solve the teacher shortage by keeping high quality teachers in our classrooms.

Appendix B
Identification of CMS Principals for the Study

Identification of CMS Principals for the Study

Charlotte Advocates for Education sought to identify those schools with higher than expected teacher retention while maintaining high student achievement. Because the teacher retention rates tend to be even lower in high needs schools, the percentage of students on *free and reduced lunch* was also included in the formula to identify those schools with higher teacher retention.

How the Schools/Principals Were Chosen
The following algorithm was used to select the schools and thus the principals:

1. **The following data were gathered for all schools within CMS:**
   - ❒ *Performance Scores (based upon EOGs and EOCs):* 1999-2000 through 2001-2002
   - ❒ *Percentage of Students on Free/Reduced Lunch*: 1999-2000 through 2001-2002
   - ❒ *Teacher Retention Rates:* 1997-1998 through 2001-2002

2. **The following calculations were made for each school:**
   - ❒ *Average annual teacher retention rate* (1997-1998 through 2001-2002) after the minimum and maximum retention rates for that school were eliminated.

   - ❒ *Continual improvement in teacher retention rates:* after the minimum and maximum retention rates were eliminated, a school was considered as continually improving if the retention rate increased each year.

   - ❒ *Average percentage of free and reduced lunch* students for 1999-2000 through 2001-2002.

   - ❒ *Average percentage of students scoring at or above grade* level for 1999-2000 through 2001-2002.

   - ❒ *Percentage of increase for the performance scores* from 1999-2000 to 2001-2002.

3. **Using the above calculations and the following criteria, a list was created comprising schools with at risk students that appeared successful in retaining teachers and improving student performance.**

   Schools that had:

   - ❒ Percentage of students on free or reduced lunch that was in at least the 40th percentile for the specific level of school:
Elementary schools:	>=42.3%
Middle schools:	>=35.2%
High schools:	>=17.1%

   - ❒ Average teacher retention in top 50th percentile for level of school:
Elementary schools:	>=83.1%
Middle schools:	>=76.3%
High schools:	>=82.7%

OR
Had continual improvement in teacher retention rates

❑ Percentage of students at or above grade level that was in at least the 40th percentile for the specific level of school:

Elementary schools:	>=70.7%
Middle schools:	>=72.1%
High schools:	>=60.5%

OR

Percentage of increase of students at or above grade level from 2000 to 2002 must have been greater than the average increase for level of school:

Elementary schools:	>=10.54%
Middle schools:	>=10.80%
High schools:	>= 6.59%

4. **The Choice Plan and other events dramatically changed the make-up of many schools throughout CMS; the list was modified to reflect those changes.**

A few schools were eliminated and a few schools were added due to vast changes in student population demographics, faculty, and/or leadership. This was necessary since the criteria had been applied to data for schools and school populations that in several cases no longer represented the present school.

In addition, two schools that had been in existence for only one or two years, but who exhibited the set criteria in their short history, were added.

Principals Selected – The Results

Twenty schools met the above criteria: 10 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 5 high schools. Principals of these schools for the 2002-03 school year (no matter their present assignment for the 2003-04 year) were invited to participate in both the survey and the focus group portions of the project.

Appendix C
Principal Survey

Principal Survey

Thank you for completing this survey. Feel free to add any other comments on additional sheets.

Please Note: Charlotte Advocates for Education is an independent non-profit organization dedicated solely to defining education issues and advocating for the changes required to permanently improve the quality of public education in Mecklenburg County. Advocates for Education is independent and is not affiliated in any way with CMS or any other organization or business.

No one except the Advocates for Education representative will see your individual responses and we will maintain confidentiality; so please be as candid as possible.

Don't hesitate to call Cheryl Pulliam at Charlotte Advocates for Education (704-335-0100) if you have a question about any of the items. We need the completed questionnaire by **September 5, 2003**.

Questions:
General/Introduction

❒ General information:

➤ How long have you held a position at your school? _____ (1)

➤ How many of those years have you been the principal? _____ (2)

➤ In total how long have you been a principal? _____ (3)

➤ Were you ever an assistant principal? _____ (4)

- If so, on what grade level? _____ (5)

- Where?_____ (6)

- How long? _____(7)

➤ Have you ever taught? _____ (8)

- If so, on what grade level? _____ (9)

- What subject(s)? _____ (10)

- How long? _____ (11)

Principal Training
❒ Where did you receive your undergraduate education?_____ (12)

➤ What was your major? _____ (13)

➤ Did you receive a teaching certificate? _____ (14)

If so, on what level was your certification?_____ (15)

❒ Where did you receive your graduate degree in administration? _____ (16)

❒ Indicate any other degrees you may have and note from which institution you received them.

_____ (17)

❒ How important has each of the following "preparation" components been to your effectiveness as a school leader? (Circle the appropriate rating.)

    4—Very important
    3—Important
    2—Somewhat important
    1—Not important
    NA—Not applicable

Preparation Component	Very Important		→	Not Important		
Undergraduate education	4	3	2	1	NA	(18)
Graduate education	4	3	2	1	NA	(19)
Formal professional development sessions (i.e., conducted by the district or other organizations)	4	3	2	1	NA	(20)
Self-directed professional development (e.g., personal reading and research)	4	3	2	1	NA	(21)
Networking / mentoring relationships with other school leaders	4	3	2	1	NA	(22)
Experience as a school teacher	4	3	2	1	NA	(23)
Experience as an assistant principal	4	3	2	1	NA	(24)
Experience on job as a principal	4	3	2	1	NA	(25)
Innate characteristics (e.g., perseverance, sense of humor, assertiveness, etc.)	4	3	2	1	NA	(26)
Other:	4	3	2	1	NA	(27) (28)
Other:	4	3	2	1	NA	(29) (30)

Working Environment Factors

Below are some categories the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission has identified as comprising *working conditions.*[1]   In addition, based upon research and field experience, Advocates for Education has included two additional specific categories: *New Teacher Support* and *Instructional Leadership.*

Within each category, some example strategies are listed. We are interested in understanding which, if any, of these strategies you have used and which ones you believe are effective in helping to retain teachers.

We realize limited resources and/or other circumstances often prohibit your implementing strategies you believe would be effective. We can discuss those during the interview. For now, we would like a better understanding of those strategies you have **been able to use.**

To understand strategies you *have been able* to use:

1. **For each listed strategy under each category, indicate with a check (✔) all those you *are using or have used*.** There is space for additional strategies you may have used. If you need more space, use the back of the sheet. (In some categories, you will also be asked to note how often you employ a particular strategy.) Certainly not all strategies are applicable to every grade level.
2. **Then in the column entitled *Indicate the 3 Most Effective Strategies* rank the three (3) strategies in EACH major category (e.g. *Use of Time*) you consider to be most effective in retaining teachers. A one (1) would be the *MOST EFFECTIVE* strategy in that category.** We will want to learn more about these strategies when we talk with you.

Use of Time

Strategies for Use of Time	✔ Strategies Used	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Provide every teacher with a daily individual planning time within the school day			(31) (32)
Provide teachers with time set aside specifically to collaborate with other highly effective teachers			(33) (34)
Provide teachers with duty-free lunch period			(35) (36)
Have *team* meetings			(37) (38)
Employ structuring mechanisms such as written objectives, written agendas and minutes for *team* meetings			(39) (40)
Have *grade level* meetings, which are different from *team* meetings			(41) (42)
Employ structuring mechanisms such as written objectives, written agendas and minutes for *grade level* meetings			(43) (44)
Enable teachers to have fewer than 4 *different* preparations per day			(45) (46)

---

[1] Though there is no universal definition of what comprises *working conditions,* the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission developed a set of benchmarks that schools can use to assess whether the working environment supports high quality teaching. The benchmarks include indicators in the following categories: *Use of Time, Facilities and Resources, Leadership, Teacher Empowerment, and Professional Development.*

Strategies for Use of Time	✔ **Strategies Used**	**Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*:** 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Rotate teacher planning periods (e.g., switch planning times so that the same group of teachers will not always have planning during first period)			(47) (48)
Other:			(49) (50) (51)

Facilities and Resources

Resources are limited and must be stretched. Indicate any strategies you have been able to use.

Strategies for Stretching Resources	✔ **Strategies Used**	**Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*:** 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Implement strategies to provide teachers with a place to work quietly and individually			(52) (53)
Implement specific strategies to assist teachers without a *traditional* classroom. (e.g., *floating teachers* or teachers who teach in spaces not originally designed to be a classroom – such as a stage or part of a multi-purpose room.)			(54) (55)
Provide teachers assistance for clerical aspects of their jobs			(56) (57)
Use of personnel to provide teachers with additional human resources supporting classroom instruction (May include Assistant Principals for Instructions working with teachers, literacy teachers, technology teachers, parents, retired educators, other volunteers.)			(58) (59)
Create community and/or business partnerships that provide support for the learning environment			(60) (61)
Involve teachers in determining resource needs and allocation			(62) (63)
Other: Specify what you have provided and how you have provided it.			(64) (65) (66)
Other: Specify what you have provided and how you have provided it.			(67) (68) (69)

Leadership: Understanding Your Environment

Note we are interested in understanding those actions in which you yourself participate. Accordingly, for the purposes of this survey, do not *count* those actions performed by a principal designee. As an illustration, you **would** count your actions if they were part of a collaborative effort *(e.g. performing a needs assessment, conducting a teacher survey)*, but you **would not** count those actions done with only limited *oversight (e.g. directing the assistant principal to perform teacher observations.)*

Strategies for Leadership	✔ **Strategies Used**	**How Often?** (daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, annually)	**Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*:** 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Perform a formal comprehensive needs assessment for your school, including areas such as student achievement, staff development, school governance, facilities, resource allocation, parent involvement, staff and parent satisfaction, school climate, etc.				(70) (71) (72)
Perform needs assessment for a specific area, such as student achievement *or* staff development *or* resource allocation, etc. If *yes,* please specify which individual areas you assess.				(73) (74) (75) (76)
Refer to School Plan in decision-making				(77) (78)
Review specific individual students achievement (and other) data				(79) (80) (81)
Solicit teacher input (e.g., through surveys, conversations, etc.); *this is in addition to the CMS survey*				(82) (83) (84)
Solicit parent input (e.g., through surveys, conversations, etc.) *this is in addition to the CMS survey*				(85) (86) (87)
Solicit student input (e.g., through surveys, conversations, etc.) *this is in addition to the CMS survey*				(88) (89) (90)
Have regularly scheduled staff meetings				(91) (92) (93)
Informally visit classrooms of new teachers				(94) (95) (96)
Informally visit classrooms of teachers needing extra assistance				(97) (98) (99)
Informally visit classrooms of veteran teachers				(100) (101) (102_
Formally observe new teachers				(103 (104) (105)
Formally observe classrooms of teachers needing extra assistance				(106) (107) (108)

Strategies for Leadership	✔ Strategies Used	How Often? (daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, annually)	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Formally observe veteran teachers				(109) (110) (111)
Formally recognize students for a "job well-done"				(112) (113) (114)
Formally recognize parents/community members for their contributions to the school				(115) (116) (117)
Create and/or actively maintain a vision for the school that is supported by the staff and the parents				(118) (119) (120)
Create goals, objectives, and priorities for school and actively maintain urgency in meeting them				(121) (122) (123)
Provide each staff member with the standards and expectations you have for them				(124) (125) (126)
Lobby the district office for school needs				(127) (128) (129)
Other:				(130) (131) (132) (134)

Teacher Empowerment

Strategies for Empowering Teachers	✔ Strategies Used	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Involve teachers in *meaningful* decision-making			(135) (136)
Provide teachers with an avenue to express their concerns and their solutions			(137) (138)
Offer *structured* opportunities for teachers to share their knowledge in mini *professional development* sessions			(139) (140)
Establish teacher leadership positions (e.g. lead teacher, mentor, team leader, representative to key district committees)			(141) (142)
Offer opportunities for teachers to lead meetings			(143) (144)
Provide ways for teachers to be recognized for a "job well done" – both formally and informally			(145) (146)
Other			(147) (148) (149)

Professional Development

Strategies for Professional Development	✔ Strategies Used	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Provide opportunity for teachers to visit other classrooms – both within school and at other schools			(150) (151)
Provide opportunity for teachers to attend workshops, conferences, etc. – *in addition to the ones required by district*			(152) (153)
Actively encourage teachers to be involved in formal advanced training			(154) (155)
Provide specific opportunities within the school for teachers to learn continually (e.g. peer coaching, study groups, etc.)			(156) (157)
Provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders			(158) (159)
Other:			(160) (161) (162)

New Teacher Support

Strategies for New Teachers	✔ Strategies Used	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Have special orientation for new teachers prior to the opening of school in your school			(163) (164)
Differentiate class size or workload for new teachers			(165) (166)
Differentiate class composition for new teachers			(167) (168)
Provide all new teachers with an *effective* mentor			(169) (170)
Have written mentor guidelines and/or training for mentors, *other than what the system provides*			(171) (172)
Provide opportunity for the new teacher and mentor to work together during the school day – both inside and outside the classroom			(173) (174)
Provide specific times during the year for all mentors and new teachers to meet			(175) (176)
Provide other special support throughout the first year			(177) (178)
Provide special support throughout the 2nd and 3rd years			(179) (180)
Provide special training, workshops, or planning sessions for the new teachers			(181) (182)
Provide the opportunity to visit other classrooms or even other schools			(183) (184)
Differentiate type of support for new graduates, lateral entry teachers, and those transferring into your school			(185) (186)
Other:			(187) (188) (189)

Instructional Leadership

Strategies for Instructional Leadership	✔ Strategies Used	Indicate the 3 *Most Effective Strategies*: 1=Most effective, 2= Next most effective, etc.	
Personally provide one-on-one guidance and assistance to teachers enabling them continually to improve instruction and student learning			(190) (191)
Tap into *expertise* of experienced teachers or district resources to guide teachers			(192) (193)
Specifically encourage research-based planning by your teachers			(194) (195)
Assist teachers in knowing how as a team to develop an assessment system that analyzes student achievement, develops appropriate instructional assignments, and assesses whether these assignments have produced changes in student achievement			(196) (197)
Personally create a lesson plan and use it to model good instructional practices			(198) (199)
Personally facilitate Team Meetings or Grade Level Meetings or Subject Area meetings focused on improving instruction			(200) (201)
Hold faculty meetings for *educational instruction* purposes			(202) (203)
Personally review observation results with individual teachers			(204) (205)
Personally review the written Professional Assessments with individual teachers to help them become more effective			(206) (207)
Other:			(208) (209) (210)

❐ A principal must be both an instructional leader and a manager of the school.

- What percentage of your time would you estimate is spent in your role as an *instructional leader*? _____ (211) as a *school manager*? _____ (212)

- What percentage of your time do you feel Central Office would like for you to spend as an *instructional leader*? _____ (213) as a *school manager*? _____ (214)

- In which of these roles do you feel most comfortable and most effective? *Circle your answer.* *Instructional Leader* *School Manager* (215)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it by **Sept. 5, 2003** in the enclosed envelope addressed to:
  Cheryl Pulliam
  Charlotte Advocates for Education
  Two Wachovia Center
  301 S. Tryon Street, Suite 1725
  Charlotte, North Carolina 28282

To provide more in-depth insight into your strategies and your suggestions for increasing teacher retention, KPC Research will be helping us conduct Focus Groups for you and other principals who have been asked to complete this questionnaire. We will call you about the Focus Groups after school starts in the fall so that you may choose one most convenient for your schedule. The group session should last approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email Cheryl at cpulliam@advocatesfored.org or call her at 704-335-010

Appendix D

Charlotte Advocates For Education
CMS Principal Focus Group
KPC Research Discussion Guide

CMS Principal Focus Group
KPC Research Discussion Guide

Number of groups: One
Date and Time: Thursday, November 20, 2003, at 5:00 p.m.
Location: KPC Research Focus Group Facility, Charlotte, NC
Participants: CMS principals

Respondent Characteristics:

- CMS high school, middle school, and elementary school principals who have had higher teacher retention rates compared to other CMS school principals.

1) *Examine Perceptions of and Attitudes toward Formal Training vs. Informal Training*

2) *Top-of-Mind Discussion about School's Higher Teacher Retention Rates*

3) *Examine Attitudes toward Involving Teachers in Meaningful Decision-Making*

4) *Examine Attitudes toward Use of Personnel to Provide Teachers with Additional Human Resources Supporting Classroom Instruction*

5) *Examine Attitudes toward Providing Teachers with Time Set Aside Specifically to Collaborate with Other Highly Effective Teachers*

6) *Examine Attitudes toward Provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders*

I. (5:15, 10 min) Intro: Explain process and generate initial interaction

A. Introduction: Facilitator for focus group discussion

B. Topic: Discuss a little bit about what you believe makes a difference in retaining good teachers and help us better understand some of the results of the survey you participated in for the Charlotte Advocates for Education

C. Participants: CMS principals in schools with significant number of Free and Reduced Lunch students who've had success in retaining teachers while increasing student achievement

D. Goal: Gain some insight from you

E. Ground Rules: Focus Group is directed discussion
                      Viewed by interested people
                      Taped for purposes of report **(AUDIO)**

                      Need to hear from everyone, every opinion is important
                      Don't tell us what you think we want to hear

                      Need to move forward, stay on schedule
                      Assure complete confidentiality or responses and identity
                      The remainder of the discussion will take about 75 minutes

F. Warm-up   Introduce yourself **(BELOW ON FLIP CHART)**

                      Name

                      Where you're from

                      How long you've been in this area

                      Did you teach? What did you teach and grade level?

                      Were you an assistant principal? Where were you an assistant principal?

                      CMS school where you were last year

II. (5:25, 15 min) *Formal Training vs. Informal Training*

You completed a survey a couple of months ago that asked how important you felt some preparation components have been to your effectiveness as a school leader. You were asked about formal components, such as your undergraduate education, graduate education, and formal professional development (conducted by the district or other organizations). You were also asked about informal components, such as innate characteristics (perseverance, assertiveness), your experience, and self-directed professional development. Differentiate high school, middle school, and elementary school.

- **(WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT**) – "When I first was a principal, I needed to know or should have known . . ."

GO OVER RESPONSES.
- Which items do you think came out as more important – the formal components or the informal components? Why?
- What <u>one</u> innate characteristic, if any, do you feel an individual <u>must</u> possess in order to be an effective principal? Why?
- Now I'd like you to think about your formal, <u>graduate-level</u> education. Knowing what you know now, what, if anything, do you feel <u>should have been</u> included in graduate school but <u>wasn't</u> included? Why?
- Knowing what you know now, what, if anything, did you learn in graduate school that has been <u>absolutely critical</u> to your job as a principal but wasn't really emphasized in graduate school? Why is that important?
- What is the single most important thing you learned from graduate school?
- If you were assigned the task of improving the graduate degree program, what changes would you make?
- I'd like you to think about your self-directed professional development - things such as personal reading and research). What have you found so helpful on your own that you feel it should be included in your formal education and/or formal professional development?

III. (5:40, 10 min) *Top-of-Mind Discussion about School's Higher Teacher Retention Rates*

You were chosen to participate in this project because the schools you were in last year had comparatively higher teacher retention rates than other schools.
- What are some of the reasons you think there were higher teacher retention rates at your school?
- What was different about your school compared to other CMS schools?
- What do you think is the single most important factor in keeping teachers in your school?

IV. **(5:50, 15 min)**   *Examine Attitudes toward Involving Teachers in Meaningful*
Decision-Making

The survey you completed a couple of months ago asked about seven factors that have
been found to be related to teacher retention. You were asked to indicate the first,
second, and third most effective strategies in each of those categories.   The categories
were use of time, facilities and resources, leadership, empowering teachers, professional
development, new teacher support, and instructional leadership. I'd now like to discuss
some of the strategies that you as a group said were effective strategies. As we discuss
these strategies, I'd like you to think about strategies that you use that are over and above
those required by CMS. (e.g., SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM COMPRISED OF
TEACHERS, PARENTS, BUSINESS LEADERS IS REQUIRED)

- One of the strategies many of you had used fell under the category of **Empowering**

  Teachers. It was:

  - **Involve teachers in meaningful decision-making**
    - What do you consider "meaningful" decision-making?
      - What are some types of "meaningful" decisions that you have made teachers a
        part of?
    - What are some of the criteria you use to distinguish between a "meaningful" decision
      that you would include the teachers in and one that you would <u>not</u> include the
      teachers in?
    - When you include teachers in decision-making
      - Do you use a structured process (vote in meeting, etc.) or an unstructured
        process?
        - What are some of those processes?
      - Which teachers do you include? Why?
        - If some teachers are excluded, which ones? Why?
        - What do you do to reduce or eliminate those negative effects?
    - What are some of the benefits you have seen when you include teachers in decision-
      making?
    - What are some of the negative effects of including teachers?
      - What do you do to reduce or eliminate those negative effects?

V. **(6:05, 15 min)** *Examine Attitudes toward Use of Personnel to Provide Teachers with Additional Human Resources Supporting Classroom Instruction*

- Another strategy fell under the category of **Facilities and Resources**. This category is:

  - **Use of personnel to provide teachers with additional human resources supporting classroom instruction**

Again, I'd like you to think about strategies that you use that are <u>over and above</u> those that are required by CMS.

- What are some of the criteria you use to determine if teachers need the additional support?
- What types of support will you supply?
- Is there some form of support that a teacher might request that you would not supply? Why?
- What are some types of personnel that you provide teachers?
  For each listed category, ask:
    What type of support they can give
    Available to everybody or only specific teachers (e.g., new vs. veteran)
  - Assistant Principals for Instruction to work with teachers (MANDATED)
  - Literacy teachers
  - Technology teachers
  - Parents
  - Retired educators
  - Other volunteers
- Do you feel you have more volunteers, on average, than other schools?
  - If yes, how do you recruit volunteers?
- Which types of support do you think teachers value most? Why?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of these resources?

VI. **(6:20, 15 min)** *Examine Attitudes toward Providing Teachers with Time Set Aside Specifically to*

Collaborate with Other Highly Effective Teachers

- The next item has to do with **Use of Time**. This category is:

- **Provide teachers with time set aside specifically to collaborate with other highly effective teachers**

Again, I'd like you to think about strategies that you use that are <u>over and above</u> those that are required by CMS.
- How do you structure this time?
  - Extra planning periods, common planning periods, day set aside for planning, etc.
  - How are you able to accommodate this?
- How do you determine who will work with whom?
  - Does this ever create any problems – pairing an "ineffective" teacher with an "effective" teacher? If so, what are the problems? How do you overcome them?
- Whose responsibility is it to make sure they follow through – the "effective" teacher or the teacher they're working with?
  Who sets up the time? Place? Etc.
- Do you provide guidelines to help teachers use the time effectively? If so, what are the guidelines?
- How do you measure effectiveness?

VII. **(6:35, 15 min)** *Examine Attitudes toward Providing Additional Training or Opportunities for Those*

Teachers Identified as Potential Leaders
- The fourth category is in **Professional Development**. That strategy is:

- **Provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders**

Again, I'd like you to think about strategies that you use that are <u>over and above</u> those required by CMS.
- First of all, how do you identify potential leaders? (IF ASKED TYPE OF LEADER, DEFINE AS LEADER IN THE SCHOOL)
  - What criteria do you use?
- What types of training or opportunities have you provided?
  - Which ones do you feel have been most effective?
  - Which ones do you feel teachers value most or have found most effective?
  - What type of training or opportunity have you provided in the past would you definitely not offer in the future? Why?
- Have any of these opportunities required special funding?
  - Which ones?
  - How were you able to get the special funding?
  - Is there some opportunity that you feel teachers would definitely benefit from that you cannot offer because the cost is too high? What is it?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of these opportunities?

VIII. **(6:50, 10 min)** *Wrap-up*

Now, thinking about all that we have discussed, I'd like you to think again about what you think is the single most important factor in keeping teachers in your school. Now I'd like you to write that one thing down.

Appendix E
Focus Group Responses

Focus Group Responses
November 20, 2003

1. **When I first became a principal, I needed to know or should have known . . . . . .**

   ❒ What makes an effective school

   ❒ Team-building skills in a diverse school. Diverse school means diverse student body, parents, and teachers. [Education field doesn't tend to be collaborative.]

      ➢ Philosophies in approaching education

      ➢ Race

      ➢ Economic status

   ❒ CMS Budget procedures

      ➢ Had been taught about school budgets from a macro level

      ➢ Did not have an understanding about individual line items on a school budget as well as the actual procedures for "moving money around" etc. That is what money can be moved from what accounts to what accounts

   ❒ How lonely the position is – the principal is an island unto himself or herself

   ❒ How many roles would have to play – all these other roles as a manager, as a financial officer, etc. would take away from what most thought they were: Instructional Leader

   ❒ Time-Management skills – understanding you can't do it all and being able to live with that realization [This was a unanimous response]

   ❒ How to build staff relationships

      ➢ How to even introduce self to staff

      ➢ How to get to know staff better

      ➢ Balancing act with staff: building those personal relationships while also getting tasks accomplished

   ❒ Support system from other principals

      ➢ While there are now principal mentors, quality and consistency are not always there

      ➢ [Principals were unanimous in wanting to make certain this is in place]

   ❒ How to work with parents

   ❒ How to work with and effectively utilize volunteers in schools

2. **What one innate characteristic, if any, do you feel an individual must possess in order to be an effective principal?**

- ❐ Listening skills

- ❐ Sense of humor – knowing you can laugh and laugh at yourself

- ❐ Intrinsically motivated – knowing you will not receive kudos often in the job, having the drive for you and your school to do well

- ❐ Perseverance and willingness to do what it takes

- ❐ Drive to continually learn – particularly learn what's going to make things work

- ❐ Ability to make good decisions quickly

- ❐ Knowledge of how to lead and motivate

- ❐ Task-analyzing

- ❐ Ability to self--reflect

3. **Knowing what you know now, what if anything, do you feel should have been included in your graduate-level education that wasn't? Are there ways you would have restructured your graduate studies?**

- ❐ Have much more "nuts and bolts" topics within program. Need to have practical experience as well as theory

  - ➢ How to draw up master schedules

  - ➢ How to organize classrooms

  - ➢ How to build teams – and relationships

  - ➢ How to hire effective teachers who will fit into the culture you want

  - ➢ How to build networks within the community

  - ➢ How to work effectively and collaboratively with parents

  - ➢ Conflict resolution: staff, parents, students– dealing with difficult people

  - ➢ How to build budgets

  - ➢ How to task-analyze what happens in classroom in order to benefit student learning

- ❐ How to build an effective school culture – not just how important is a school culture; how to change the culture if it's not what you want it to be

- ❐ How to really interface effectively with students

- ❐ How to build a network of support – understanding wider school community

- ❐ How to maneuver the political aspects of the job

- ❐ Practical steps in public relations

- ❐ How to effectively market your school

- ❐ How to be an effective salesperson – to students, staff, parents – must be able to "sell" staff on ideas and that school is number 1

- ❐ How to provide effective training for staff

Suggestions for methodologies

❒ Have hypothetical case studies; need to have role-playing with real day situations such as dealing with difficult parents

❒ Have practical applications such as working with a school budget

❒ Have "real principals" come talk to the class about "real job" – that is what's it like in the day of a principal. Have very focused questions for principals to answer

❒ Have year-long apprenticeships built into program – extremely valuable when working under a top-notch principal

❒ Address issues of how principalships are/can be different depending upon type of school: Title I, A+, E+, urban vs. suburban

❒ School systems then need to have way of "matching personalities and strengths" with schools – ensure principals are where they can be most effective

❒ Programs through which the student's ability to be a good principal is assessed through hypothetical "in-basket" type of situations.

4. What are some of the things you are presently doing in your own "self-directed professional development" that you believe have been very helpful?

❒ Reading – Best practices in . . . . . . ; best practices in focused collaboration; best practices in professional development for specific theme for year

❒ Reading books and articles about leadership in the business and corporate world – knowing schools are more and more like businesses and need to be understood as such

❒ Networking and peer mentoring - Informal time of sharing among principals around a specific issue, such as improving school climate

❒ Seminars and other programs such as Principal Executive Program in Chapel Hill and conferences on such issues as teaching children of poverty

5. What are some of the reasons you think teacher retention rates are higher at your school compared to others?
I . . . .

❒ Let my teachers know I'm here to work for teachers, not visa versa.

❒ Create a picture of myself that says to the teachers: "I am not on a power trip. I value teachers, listen to teachers, and pass no judgments."

❒ Pick my battles

❒ Am a good listener

❒ Willing to concede in some issues

❒ Have a completely open door – teachers can and do come in and discuss anything

❒ Am able to empathize

❒ Let my teachers know they're the best, they are important

❒ Let the teachers know they are special – do a lot of little stuff for them. Includes such things as:

- ➢ Drawing for small prizes at faculty meetings

- ➢ Giving out small goodies

- ➢ Rewarding with "early bird passes" where teachers do get to leave early with permission (comp time) and with provisions for classes to be covered by other teachers

- ➢ Recognize my teachers in public

- ➢ Starts every faculty meeting with a special "thanks to," "good job to"

❒ Send my teachers places to further their own professional development. I encourage their going to conference etc. to reinforce they are professionals. [Principals acknowledged that Title I schools have more funding available to do this than other schools.]

❒ Support the teachers

- ➢ Have two retired educators on staff to handle teacher issues. This includes one retired individual who takes care of all licensure issues

- ➢ Constantly support teachers in discipline and working with parents

- ➢ Assist teachers in creating their lesson plans (working one-on-one and team efforts)

- ➢ Assist teams of teachers in creating plans and in working together

- ➢

❒ Build understanding that principal is their advocate – with parents, Central Office, community

❒ Provide opportunities for my staff to do things together outside school – parties and even going to beach together

❒ Provide support for teachers:

- ➢ Act as a buffer between teachers and "Central Office" – working to prioritize administration requests

- ➢ Act as a buffer between teachers and some parents

- ➢ Keep stressors at bay for teachers

- ➢ Keep extra duties and paperwork at a minimum

- ➢ Not loading class rosters

❒ Create team among all staff – ensure teachers believe principal is part of that team

- ➢ Even cover classes if teacher has emergency as opposed to having them wait for a substitute

- ➢ Work together in creating lessons, school themes, etc.

- ➢ Teach demonstration lessons

- ➢ Make certain staff understands principal is part of team, just has different role

❒ Empower my teachers – building capacity within them

- ➢ We have established teams that work on issues affecting the schools. Staff may be appointed to these teams or they may hear that a team has been established and want to be on these teams. You must be willing to "abide" by these team decisions if you do in fact establish them.

- ➢ Grant department chairs "power" – indicate to them that the department is theirs to run. Build within them leadership capacity.

Overarching themes: Building relationships with your staff, supporting staff, empowering them

---

6. **One of the strategies that most of the principals indicated was key in retaining teachers was "Involve teachers in meaningful decision-making." What do you consider "meaningful" decisions? What are the criteria for meaningful decisions?**

❐ Meaningful decisions are any decisions which affect the lives of the teachers – could be issues within classroom or broader issues such as tardies policy. One principal related that the teachers had been part of the decisions to do "hall sweeps" for tardies. After the initial administration sweeps, principal discovered one grade had taken the initiative to continue with it within "their division." They were fully implementing the sweeps.

❐ Meaningful decisions could include budget decisions, master scheduling decisions, placement of students in interventions.

❐ Before you offer teachers the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process, you must be willing to "let go" and "go with" the decision of the teachers.

❐ All decisions at our school are made with the question – "What is in the best interest of the students?"

7. **When do you include teachers in these meaningful decisions? How do you include them – an informal method or do you have a more formal method? How do you determine which teachers to include?**

❐ Include teachers in the problem or issues whether or not there is a decision to be made by them. Seek input and ideas from teachers about various problems or issues. Then even if they did not make the decision, they know they had a part in it.

❐ Process for including teachers varied:

➢ Some identified teacher leaders and went to them – "how should we do this"

➢ Some rotated who they "consulted with" on matters

➢ One elementary school had a more formal process – established a separate Advisory Committee (not School Leadership Team) to meet regularly to discuss specific issues

➢ Several use Department Chairs

➢ Some used School Leadership Team

➢ One principal used grade chairs and department chairs. Email was used to let these chairs know when a decision needed to be made. Then the chair could get their group together for discussion. Outcome of these meetings is then passed to the principal.

➢ All indicated the importance of making certain everyone knows and understands the "negotiables vs. the non-negotiables." Many indicated they literally draw circles showing where the various issues lie

❐ Group acknowledged the process is time-consuming, but the value outweighs the cost where possible

❐ Group felt there are differences in elementary, middle, and high school teachers and how they "interact with decisions": they felt elementary teachers tend to be "passive aggressive"; middle school teachers are feisty in giving some push-back; high school teachers are more direct in indicating they will not do XYZ.

8. **Another strategy most of you indicated as being key was "Use of personnel to provide teachers with additional human resources supporting classroom instruction." Thinking about those human resources you provide that are over and above those required by CMS, what types of support do you provide? (i.e. extra literacy facilitators, retired educators, content coaches, tutors, reading teachers etc.)**

- ❑ Reiterated that additional positions need to reflect specific needs of school

- ❑ Have special parent advocate who speaks Spanish

- ❑ Put my staff into teams – by mixing new teachers with veterans, provides that extra support and help

- ❑ Have some retired educators

- ❑ One had had content coaches

- ❑ Use Title I money to "buy people not things" (Was acknowledged that Title I schools tend to have more flexibility in this area). Some extra personnel includes:
  - ➢ Social Worker
  - ➢ 2nd parent advocate
  - ➢ Additional reading teachers
  - ➢ Additional math teachers
  - ➢ Tutors
  - ➢ Additional TD teacher
  - ➢ Computer lab teacher
  - ➢ 2nd literacy facilitator

- ❑ Have deployment schedule for these "extra resources" so that all can see the schedule for services on ALL grade levels

- ❑ Use of volunteers
  - ➢ Have over 125 volunteers – from business community; that principal indicated her/his school was comprised entirely of low-income parents and as a result these parents have little to no time for volunteering. That's why all volunteers are from the business community
  - ➢ Have 140 a year. They are lunch buddies, read to students, do work for classroom teachers, assist with PTA activities, assist in Media Center, assist with special programs occurring in school, School Leadership Team, parent advocacy.
  - ➢ One principal has no volunteers
  - ➢ Have a lot – and they can make you crazy. There is a need to ensure you get out of volunteers what you want and need, not their own agenda. Unless you do this, volunteers may simply create another role for the principal.
  - ➢ One principal actually has one AP whose responsibilities include volunteers. The AP is to train them and then coordinate, organize, and schedule them
  - ➢ Must find strengths of the volunteers and maximize those – no matter how big or how small

9. **Another strategy many indicated as being essential is "Provide teachers with time set aside specifically to collaborate with other highly effective teachers." Explain what this collaboration time "looks like" and how have you been able to accomplish this for your teachers?**

□   All these principals indicated they have set aside specific "protected" time for the teachers to work together and collaborate.

□   Every principal indicated that teachers were unhappy when this "structured" time was first set up; now all indicated their teachers consider it some of the most valuable time in the day.

□   Most of the principals have an "agenda" for the time spent together – although most of the agenda is at a very, very high level.

□   Most believe the way they set these collaborative times up is one tangible way to support staff

□   Over-riding theme – building a community within school

□   All principals reiterated that while "planning time" is mandated; the way it is structured is not. Each principal felt his/her helping structure the planning time had made tremendous difference.

□   One principal indicated he/she had positioned this planning time as something Central Office had given teachers in order to be more successful and he/she was going to protect that time for the teachers.

□   How it looks:

➢   One school: Very structured

▪   One day – Grade Level Department Meetings
- Agenda is set: what will you be doing this week, what do you need from principal to help

▪   Next Day – Parent Conferences

▪   Another Day – Subject Level

▪   Another Day – Team meetings

▪   One Day of Week – individual plan

➢   One School

▪   Department meetings serve this purpose

➢   One School

▪   Have department meetings on A days

▪   Have interdisciplinary cadres on B days that address "staff development" issues such as collaborative learning communities

➢   One School

▪   Separate K-2 from 3-5 in planning: different issues

➢   One School

▪   Grade levels must get together for a solid 90 minute block during the school day one day a week. This is for curriculum planning. An administrator is present

▪   Other for days, teachers have 45 minutes to meet with other teachers on their grade level – purpose to look at data and plan

▪   After school – have only 1 staff meeting a month

▪   Have suggested planning forms and an administrator is there to help

10. How do you measure the effectiveness of the collaboration time?

❒ Success is always based upon what is happening in the classroom – achievement and teacher and student enthusiasm/buy-in

❒ Classroom observations, quarterly tests

❒ In addition, teacher buy-in is viewed as a "success factor."

11. Most of you indicated you "provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders." What types of training or opportunities have you provided? What do you think have been the most effective ones?

❒ Give teachers the opportunity to "learn" away from the school – Title 1 money enable this.

❒ Encourage teachers to further their education – masters program and National Board Certification

❒ Have staff lead in service sessions.

❒ Others, particularly those without extra funding, were very creative in developing professional development for their teachers – 10 hours needed for credit

➢ Had set courses (10 hours for credit): Asking higher level questions, Thinking Maps; reading in the content area

➢ Some principals developed professional development that is tailored for specific needs: K-2 may have sessions on developmental needs of children, reading readiness skills, Open Court, Imagination Station, etc. 3-5 may need Open Court, Corrective Reading, specific subject areas, etc.

❒ Most focused on a single topic for the year – working with the ESL student, etc. understanding cultures, working collaboratively, etc.

❒ One principal had "required book reading" in the summer and then sessions were held on these books.

❒ As much as possible some principals do provide training off site to remind the teachers they are professionals

❒ Other topics indicated – principals often teaches them herself/himself

➢ Teaching children in poverty

➢ Learning collaborative skills

➢ Models for Teaching:

▪ How to teach for 90 minutes

▪ How to teach reading in the content area

▪ Simulations of classrooms – how to handle certain situations

❒ One principal does a faculty needs assessment each year to determine what faculty wants and needs. This year indicated wanted to learn how to design own website. CMS in-house personnel will conduct this.

12. How do you fund these training opportunities?

❐ Use of discretionary funds – particularly Title 1 schools

❐ In-house development – takes a lot of resources (time) to do this. Many of principals are the developers and the teachers of these sessions.

13. "Having outstanding leadership qualities" has been identified over and over as the key to a successful school – for students and for teachers. Over and over we have heard that formal principal training often does not adequately address how to truly be that great leader. Is there anything you believe could be provided to you from an outside agency or corporation that would assist you in developing your own leadership qualities?

❐ Developing personal relationships – how to develop effective ones with staff

❐ Building capacity within staff

❐ Understanding leadership styles

❐ Organizational development

14. What is the single most important factor in keeping teachers in your school?

❐ Building relationships – ensuring teachers know you too are part of team; knowing "things" about the teachers so that you can interact personally with them showing them you care about them as a person (such as asking about sick parents)

❐ Removing barriers so teachers can be successful in classrooms; barriers include parents, district office, behavior problems, etc.

❐ Belief that teachers are making a genuine impact on the life of a child – an impact that is successful, worthwhile, reachable, and within reason

❐ Publicly valuing and supporting the work the teachers do

❐ Providing support for teachers both in discipline and in teaching practices – how they teach in the classroom

❐ Support, accessibility, and recognition

❐ Assimilating all teachers into the school culture – creating a "family"

Appendix F
Teacher Quality: Principal Leadership Study Work Team

Teacher Quality: Principal Leadership Study Work Team

Special thanks to all the members of Charlotte Advocates for Education's *Teacher Quality: Principal Leadership Study Work Team.* Over the past months, the following people have given many hours to helping us design and implement our research project, analyze the findings, and write the report.

Dr. Mary Ellen Bafumo
Jeanne Brayboy
Katie Walter Esser
Dr. Frances Haithcock
Richard (Jake) Jacobsen
Faye Jones
Thomas H. Jones
Leslie McCarley
Terry Robertson
Toni Robinson
Stoney Sellars
B.J. Smith
Dr. Denise M.Trauth
Louise Woods

Charlotte Advocates for Education Staff:
Margaret Carnes, Managing Director
Cheryl Pulliam, Director of Research and Administration

Bibliography

Archer, Jeff. (2002, May 29) Novice principals put huge strain on N.Y.C. schools. *Education Week,* 38 (21), pp. 1, 15.

Berry, Barnett. (2002, Feb 7) *Teaching quality reforms & the promise of ESEA* [Presentation]. Atlanta, GA: The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality.

Booth, Herb. (2002, April 16) Teacher recruiting reaches frenzied pace. *The Dallas Morning News,* p. 1A.

Bowie, Liz. (2002, July 17) Suburban administrators to lead 3 failing city schools. *The Baltimore Sun,* p. 1A.

Cornett, Lynn M. and Gaines, Gale F. (2002) *Quality Teachers: Can Incentive Policies Make a Difference?* Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board.

Deal, Terrence E. and Bolman, Lee G. (2003) *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*, 3rd Ed.

Deal, Terrence E. and Peterson, Kent D. (2003) *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership*.

Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University. (2003, March) *Governor Mike Easley's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative: Preliminary Report of Finding From a Statewide Survey of Educators.* North Carolina: Office of the Governor at the State of North Carolina.

Hanushek, Eric A.; Kain, John F.; and Rivkin, Steven G. (2004, Winter) The revolving door: A path-breaking study of teachers in Texas reveals that working conditions matter more than salary. *Education Next,* pp. 76-82.

Ingersoll, Richard M. (2001, Fall) Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal,* 3 (38), 499-534.

Institute for Educational Leadership. (2000, October) *Leadership for student Learning: Reinventing the Principalship.* Washington, DC: Author.

Johnson, Susan Moore; Birkeland, Sarah; Kardos, Susan M.; Kauffman, David; Liu, Edward; and Peske, Heather G. (2001, July/August) Retaining the next generation of teachers: The importance of school-based support. *Harvard Education Letter: Research Online.*

Johnson, Susan Moore and Kardos, Susan M. (2002, March) Keeping new teachers in mind. *Educational Leadership*, 6 (59), 12-16.

Keller, Bess. (1998, November 11) Principal matters. *Education Week*, 11 (18), 25-27.

KPC Research. (2001, June) *West Mecklenburg Feeder Area Teacher Focus Groups:*
Summary Report. Charlotte, North Carolina: West-Mecklenburg Collaborating for
Educational Reform.

KPC Research (2003, December) *CMS Principal Focus Group Summary Report*. Charlotte,
North Carolina: Author.

New Leaders for New Schools. (2002, July) *Curriculum philosophy*. Retrieved from:
http://www.nlns.org/be_1c_1a.htm

Olson, Lynn. (2000, January 12) Policy focus converges on leadership. *Education Week*, 17
(19), 1, 16-17.

Portin, Bradley; Schneider, Paul; DeArmond, Michael; and Gundlach, Lauren. (2003,
September) *Making Sense of Leading Schools: A Study of the School Principalship*.
Seattle, Washington: Center on Reinventing Public Education at University of
Washington.

Public School Forum of North Carolina and The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality.
(2001, October) Recruiting teachers for hard-to-staff schools: solutions for North
Carolina & the nation. *Teaching Quality in the Southeast Policy Brief.* Chapel Hill,
NC: Author.

Seremet, Collen; Ward, Bonnie; Williamson, Carol; and Seikely, Lani Hall. (2002, May)
Performance Indicators for Effective Leadership in Improving Student Achievement.
Retrieved from: http://www.mdk12.org/process/leading/p_indicators.html

Stoel, Carol F., and Thant, Tin-Swe. (2002, May 18) *Teachers' Professional Lives – A View*
from Nine Industrialized Countries. Washington, DC: Council for Basic Education.

Thompson, Scott (editor). (2001, February) The school leadership challenge. *Strategies*, 1
(8), 1-16.

Viadero, Debra. (2002, April 10) Researcher skewers explanation behind teacher shortage.
Education Week, 30 (21), 7.

Voke, Heather. (2002, May) Understanding and responding to the teacher shortage:
Attracting and retaining quality teachers. *ASCD Infobrief*, 29.

Water, Tim, Ed.D; Robert J. Marzano, Ph.D; and Brian McNulty, Ph.D. (2003) *Balanced*
Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on
student achievement. Aurora, Colorado: Mid-Continent Research for Education and
Learning. (McREL).