Teachers Leaving the Profession:
The Influence of Violent Student Behavior on Teacher Attrition as
Perceived by School District Administrators in Pennsylvania's Public Schools

by

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A Dissertation

Approved by the Department Educational Administration

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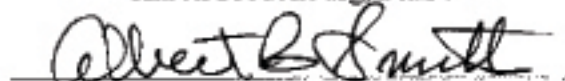Robert C. Cloud, Ed.D., Acting Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
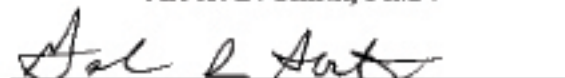Requirements for the Degree
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This study was conducted to develop a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts relative to their perception of violent student behavior's influence on teacher attrition in their district. Guiding the study were five research questions: (a) What do school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive to be the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools? (b) What perceptions do school district administrators responsible for human resources management have on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools? (c) How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public schools? (d) What is the role of human resources management in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools? (e) What current and/or future plans exist in Pennsylvania's public school districts for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its affect on teacher attrition?

Study participants were school administrators responsible for human resources management from 186 selected public school districts in Pennsylvania. Analysis of archival data obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools provided a framework for selection criteria. From 2000 through 2004 school years selected participants maintained an average of 2% or above violent student behavior incidents, 2% or above violent student offenders, and 1 or more staff assaulted by student offenders.

Administrators responsible for human resources management in 186 selected Pennsylvania public school districts were invited to participate in the study through a web-based survey sent via email with the option to volunteer in a follow-up interview. Of the 84 administrators who responded to the web-based survey, 26 volunteered to participate in the follow-up interview.

Data analysis exhibited frequencies and percentages indicating major themes relative to the topic. Findings revealed that Pennsylvania's public school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive violent student behavior has little influence on teacher attrition. Study participants believe intervention programs, staff training, safety awareness, and ongoing communications have reduced violent student behavior and teacher attrition in their district.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thought I could not go another mile, his patience and wisdom raised my level of confidence.

Dr. Betty Jo Monk graciously introduced me to the Baylor Scholars of Practice Doctoral Program in January 2001. Her knowledge and enthusiasm increased my awareness level of servant leadership and the importance it plays educational administration. Thank you Dr. Monk, for your inspiration.

My thanks go to fellow Scholars of Practice Cohort members. I especially appreciate the support and encouragement from Elizabeth Veloz, Walter Jackson, Lorena Barreno, Cyndi Short, Louise Powell, and Diann Dillon who have each shared the good and bad times with me throughout this journey. Individually and collectively, they not only exemplify the true meaning of collegiality, but the bond of friendship, as well.

I owe everything to my wonderful family. Without their love, support, and understanding, this goal would not have been complete.

My parents, Travis and Doris Moye, taught me the value of education, the importance of being yourself, and most of all, gave me so much love. My regret is they are no longer here to share in this special milestone. Somehow, though, I sense they are among angels sharing the joy of my achievement.

My brother and sister-in-law, Brooks and Judy Hamilton, have always encouraged my endeavors both personal and professional. Unknowingly, they have been my role models. Together, they have always shown interest in my progress and continue to always be there for me with their love and support.

I have been truly blessed with the best son and daughter a parent could ever want. Jason and Lauren Desselle have been very patient and understanding for the past fourteen

years while their mom worked and went to school. My hope is I have been able to instill the same love and support in their own endeavors in the same manner their grandparents instilled in me.

My daughter-in-law, Tomi Desselle, and my grandsons, Taylor and Travis, have given me much love and happiness, especially at times when I needed it the most. I look forward to many good times of love and happiness with all of you.

Finally, to my husband, John "Sandy" McPherson, who is the love of my life and best friend. You have been my source of strength throughout this process. When I no longer thought I could get through another day, you said and did all of the right things to make me believe in myself. You have unselfishly stood by giving me the space I needed to reach my final destination. I am very proud and honored to be your wife. Whatever road leads to the future, I am very blessed to share that journey with you.

DEDICATION

To the memory of my parents,
Travis and Doris Truett Moye
who taught me to fly high with the eagles,

and

To the honor of my husband,
John "Sandy" McPherson,
who is the wind beneath my wings.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The manner in which America's schools function has significantly changed due to a variety of issues and concerns facing educators. Concerns over school safety and the influence it may have on increasing teacher attrition rates each year are among these concerns. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) addresses school safety by proposing a solution to initiate programs promoting a safe school environment for students and teachers that offers protection, enforcement of discipline policies, encouragement of personal responsibility, and prevention of illegal drugs (NCLB, 2002). Teacher attrition, especially in inner city and rural schools, has been further challenged by NCLB's requirements to staff all classrooms in schools with "highly qualified teachers" (Darling-Hammond, 2003). It is a demanding task for public school district administrators, in particular, those responsible for human resources management, to retain highly qualified teachers without losing them to other schools, other school districts, or other professions due to unsafe working conditions. Replacing teachers who leave the profession is further compelled by the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) prediction that between 2 million and 2.5 million teachers will need to be hired by the year 2006.

An increasing challenge every year for public school districts is creating equitable disciplinary procedures for all students to provide a safe learning and working environment for everyone. Enterprising administrators must begin to make the difference to return America's schools to safe learning and working environments by redirecting disruptive and threatening student behavior problems and establishing a strong support

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system for our teachers. The increase in violent student behavior is creating such a wave of uneasiness among our nation's educators that the manner in which they go about the task of carrying out the school's daily functions has changed. A noticeable change implemented by public school districts is heightened school security that includes installation of metal detectors and emergency alert systems, hiring armed law enforcement officers, and implementing "probable cause" searches of students' lockers and backpacks (Miles, 2001). Another noticeable change in many public school districts are revised crisis plans that provide guidelines for teachers and other school staff members on how to deal with emergencies such as snipers and bomb threats. Many districts reinforce this effort by requiring teachers to attend staff development sessions on lock-down drill procedures, how to confront and disarm a student carrying a weapon, and alertness to strangers in the building (Vail Times, 1999, cited in Miles, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

Indicators of School Crime and Safety (2003), published by the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES), indicate that out of all nonfatal crimes committed in schools from 1997 through 2001, 1.3 million of the reported victims were teachers. In *The Metropolitan Life Survey of The American Teacher* (2001), 75% of urban public school teachers reported they do not feel safe in their school. Increasing violent student behavior in our public schools decreases the sense of security among teachers within those schools. As more teachers become victims of violent student behavior, teacher attrition rates will be affected.

Many studies have acknowledged an increase in severe student behavior problems in America's schools, especially inner city schools. Attrition studies have identified

causes for teachers leaving the profession, especially within the first five years of teaching. Over the past two decades, America's schools and classrooms, especially inner city schools, have experienced an increase of disruptive and threatening student behavior problems that impede the process of learning and teaching. Teachers' efforts to protect their students from disruptions and threats to their safety must now include efforts to protect themselves.

Seven years before the NCLB Act, Governor Tom Ridge signed into law Act 26 of 1995, the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act. As a result of this legislation, all public schools in Pennsylvania are required to report any acts of violence, weapons possession, alcohol and/or drug-related incidents, and assaults on staff that occur during the school year. Each public school building in the state must file this information in the *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapon Possession* and forward to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Office of Safe Schools by July 31 each year. The Safe Schools Act also requires Pennsylvania's public school districts to expel for one year any student who brings or is in possession of a weapon on school property. The school district's superintendent or chief administrative officer must also report any weapons violation to local law enforcement authorities. In the event the weapons violation incident involves a student of exceptional needs, school district administrators must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the discipline process.

Upon reviewing the effectiveness of the Safe Schools Act, the Pennsylvania legislature determined that schools had limited authority to obtain resources and materials necessary for establishing a safe learning environment. As a result, legislation of Act 36

in 1999 provided public school districts throughout Pennsylvania the authority to

establish, implement, and maintain programs and technology that promotes a safe

building for students to learn and teachers to instruct.

As Pennsylvania's public school districts developed programs to improve

building safety, the impact of NCLB's Unsafe School Choice Option provision in 2001

mandated the adoption of additional standards to identify "persistently dangerous

schools" (PDE, 2001). The standards describe "persistently dangerous schools" as

> any public, elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the
> following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the
> two years prior to the most recent school year: (1) for a school whose enrollment
> is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents; (2) for a school whose enrollment is
> between 250 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2%
> of the school's enrollment; or (3) for a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20
> or more dangerous incidents (PDE, 2001).

The PDE's Office of Safe Schools is responsible for identifying schools meeting

these criteria as persistently dangerous through analysis of current data available from the

Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession. Once a school is identified

as persistently dangerous, the Office of Safe Schools provides assistance to develop and

approve a plan of action designed to improve the safety of the building. Through

numerous site visits throughout the school year, the school is re-evaluated with an end-of-

year report to determine if the school meets the standards to remove the "persistently

dangerous school" label.

Based on the 2004 *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession*,

the following schools were identified by PDE's Office of Safe Schools as Persistently

Dangerous Schools for the 2004-2005 school year:

Schools with 250 or less students and 5 or more total violations –

- Daniel Boone School in Philadelphia City School District

- Shallcross Day School in Philadelphia City School District

Schools with 250-1000 students and total violations at least 2% of enrollment –

- H. Edwin Vare Middle School in Philadelphia City School District

Schools with over 1000 students and 20 or more total violations –

- John Bartram High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Roberto Clements Middle School in Philadelphia City School District

- Samuel Fels High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Frankford High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Germantown High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Kensington High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Martin Luther King High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Lincoln/Swenson High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Olney High School in Philadelphia City School District

- Overbrook High School in Philadelphia City School District

- West Philadelphia High School in Philadelphia City School District

It is not surprising that nearly half of all teachers electing to leave the profession within the first five years of teaching are from inner city schools (Ingersoll, 2003). As more teachers elect to leave the profession of teaching, our nation as a whole is experiencing a teacher shortage. Pennsylvania's public schools, unlike the nation, do not have a shortage of teachers with the exception of some content areas.

In contrast, Philadelphia City School District continues to have difficulty getting teachers to apply in their district. A two-year study by the Philadelphia Education Fund revealed in 2002 that two key reasons teachers gave for not applying in the Philadelphia City School District are problems with student discipline and fears about personal safety (Useem & Neild, 2001, p. 3). Reinforcing the Philadelphia Education Funds' data are the overall statistics from PDE's *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession* over the last four years as well as the fact that all schools identified as persistently dangerous for the 2004-2005 school year in Pennsylvania are located in the Philadelphia City School District.

School safety and severe student discipline problems are not only concerns of America's teachers, but the community expresses their concern, as well. Public opinion about America's schools continues to show general satisfaction as indicated in *The 35th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools* (2003). Each year the poll presents to the public the question, "What do you think are the biggest problems that the public schools of your community must deal with?" Lack of student discipline was a consistent answer in the first 15 years of this poll. Since 1985, the public considers lack of financial support as the biggest problem followed by lack of discipline. In 2003, lack of discipline was identified by 16% of the respondents as the biggest problem.

The 35ᵗʰ Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public School (2003) also presented the following question to the public: "The following list of reasons have been suggested as to why students fail to learn. How much do you think each reason contributes to learning failures in the public schools in your

community – a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all?" The list of reasons were lack of home or parental support, lack of interest by the students themselves, lack of discipline in the schools, lack of good teaching, lack of funding, or lack of community emphasis on education (Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup, 2003). Considering the number of violent incidents occurring in America's schools in recent years, it is not surprising that 84% (60% - "a great deal" plus 24% - "a fair amount") of the respondents feel that "lack of discipline in the schools" contributes to learning failures in the public schools. This reason ranked third behind "lack of home or parental support" at 93% (74% - "a great deal" plus 19% "a fair amount") and "lack of interest by the students themselves" at 90% (60% - "a great deal" plus 30% "a fair amount") (Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup, 2003). As student violence against other students and teachers in America's schools continues to increase, public confidence decreases, once again, placing lack of student discipline as one of the biggest problems facing public schools.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

Even though national crime statistics show violent crimes have decreased in our neighborhoods, many of our nation's teachers feel unsafe in their work environment (Aronson, 2000, p. 99). With acts of violent student behavior on the rise over the past decade, it is a reasonable request by teachers to ask their districts' school administrators to propose policies to the school board in order to reduce the risk of violence in their work environment. A key function of the school district administrator responsible for human resources management is facilitating collective bargaining discussions between teacher organizations and school boards regarding provisions in the teaching contract including the professional right to personal safety and security.

The purpose of this research was to assess how school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceive the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. The research focused on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety, violent student behavior, and public school human resources management. Comprehensive research including ERIC searches, books, journals, abstracts, magazine and newspaper articles, and websites reveals very little information is available on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. Several studies and surveys, however, offer relevant data on teacher attrition, causes for teacher attrition, violent student behavior, and causes for violent student behavior. Three studies discussing teacher attrition and causes for teacher attrition are: 1) *Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools* (2001) by Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania, 2) *The 35th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools* (2003) conducted by Lowell C. Rose and Alec M. Gallup, and 3) *Teacher Staffing in the School District of Philadelphia: A Report to the Community* (2002) by Linda Useem and Ruth Curran Neild for The Philadelphia Education Fund. Two studies conducted jointly by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education, *Indicators for School Crime and Safety* (2001) and *Indicators for School Crime and Safety* (2003) discussed violent student behavior statistics. A third study, *Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth 2000 Report #1: Violence, Guns and Alcohol* (2000) by The Josephson Institute of Ethics, discusses violent student behavior and causes for violent student behavior.

In reviewing the six studies mentioned, some connections found among the studies focus on (a) teacher job dissatisfaction as it relates to teachers leaving the profession, (b) teacher experiences with violent student behavior, (c) causes for violent student behavior as perceived by teachers, and (d) attributes and frequency of violent student behavior. Based on connections among the six studies and the impact of all other literature pertinent to how violent student behavior influences teacher attrition as perceived by school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools, the objectives for this study were:

1. to determine the reasons for teacher attrition as perceived by school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools;

2. to determine the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition through teachers leaving the profession altogether in Pennsylvania's public school districts;

3. to identify the role of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in establishing policies and procedures concerning violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public schools;

4. to identify the role of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in establishing policies and procedures to create and maintain a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools; and

5. to determine Pennsylvania public school districts' current and/or future plans for proactive interventions against the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition.

Significance of the Study

No previous attempt has been made to assess how school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive the influence of violent student behavior as a reason for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools. The

researcher believes this study offers distinct input to human resources management administrators as it relates to public school districts.

As public schools continue to experience increasing acts of violent student behavior against teachers, how will school district administrators responsible for human resources management encourage teachers to remain? How will school district administrators responsible for human resources management influence change in school district policy regarding a safe working environment for teachers? What intervention measures can public school districts implement to decrease and ultimately prevent acts of violent student behavior against teachers?

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study examined the perception level of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in selected public school districts in Pennsylvania. While participants in this study represent a select group, the responsibilities of school districts administrators responsible for human resources management are comparable across the United States. Therefore, the findings in this study may be useful to a broader group of public school districts.

According to Farber (1991), it is considered to be a bad reflection on the school administration when too many student suspensions transpire as a result of numerous student disciplinary actions. "Instead of attacking the problem [of violent student behavior] head-on, supervisors and administrators hide behind the bureaucratic hierarchy that keeps track of only the most serious offenses and tries to keep even these figures from the public" (Saltzman/*New York Times* cited in Farber, 1991, p. 55). Even though the study focused on selected public school districts in Pennsylvania, the school district

administrator responsible for human resources management may have been unwilling to divulge the requested information due to the nature of the acts of violent student behavior and the poor reflection placed upon their administrative ability in their respective school district. Moreover, the influence of the teachers unions in Pennsylvania could have significantly impacted the willingness or unwillingness of the human resources management administrator to respond to questions about violent student behavior and teacher attrition issues in their district. According to Bascia (2003), when teachers' concerns are conveyed by their unions to district administrators, the result is often a "common situation where unions and district decision makers are caught in a seemingly irresolvable dynamic" (p.29). Given these factors, the results of the study may be affected in a manner unpredictable by the research design.

Individuals surveyed may not have reflected that of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in other school districts outside of Pennsylvania's public schools. Therefore, the study's validity may be limited. Since the participants in the study voluntarily responded to the requested information based on self-awareness, the generalizability of the study may also be limited.

The findings revealed in the review of literature or predicted in the research design may not have been supported by the study participants' perception, understanding, and observations of specific acts of violent student behavior in association with teacher attrition rates within their respective school district. This would have affected the quality of survey responses and limited the results of the study.

Definition of Terms

1. *Academic Year*: A position where the individual works from approximately September 1 to June 1 or 187 calendar days. These dates or days may vary from state to state depending on the legislative mandate for number of academic school days.

2. *Attrition:* Leaving the profession. The term can also refer to leaving or transferring to a position or different field in education at another school or district. For the purpose of this study, it will be referred to as leaving the profession.

3. *Culture:* School and school district cultures consist of those attitudes, policies and values, feelings, and opinions better shared by a significant number of their influential members and that are communicated to others (Rebore, 2003, p. 156).

4. *Human Resources Department:* The department within the organizational framework of a school district responsible for staffing/hiring, retaining, developing, inspiring, and providing consistent and equitable values for all personnel in order meet the mission of the district.

5. *Human Resources Director:* The primary responsibility of this individual is administering and monitoring human resources policies and procedures to the school board. This individual will also work closely with the district's Superintendent and attorney making certain the district complies with federal and state human resources laws and procedures.

6. *Human Resources Management:* A function of management that includes staffing needs, recruitment and hiring of employees to fill those needs, professional development for all employees ensuring high performance of those employees, employee benefits and compensation, maintaining all employee records and personnel policies, dealing with performance issues, and assuring personnel management practices and procedures conform to regulations and standards.

7. *Incident:* Involves acts of violence and all cases involving weapons possession reported by the school district (PDE, 1995).

8. *Intermediate Units:* Established by the Pennsylvania State Legislature in 1970, these regional educational service agencies provide support to local school districts, expand educational services, and provide cost savings to tax payers by eliminating repetition of services. Governed by boards of directors composed of school board members from member school districts, each Intermediate Unit is led by an Executive Director. Twenty-nine intermediate units exist in Pennsylvania.

9. *Intervention:* A practice or program of skills, behaviors, interactions, routines, and operations implemented to improve positive student discipline and the management of an effective learning environment.

10. *Job Dissatisfaction:* An expressive reaction to an individual's work environment or situation. In the teaching profession, dissatisfaction is primarily associated with low salaries, lack of administrative support, student discipline problems, and lack of influence in decision-making.

11. *Leavers:* Teachers who do not return to the same school or district the following academic year. May also refer to teachers leaving the teaching profession altogether (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 147).

12. *Movers:* Teachers who move to teaching jobs in another school in the same district or outside of the district the following academic year (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 147).

13. *Offenders:* Individual students and others committing an act of violence or are in possession of a weapon on school property, which is defined as public school grounds, any school-sponsored activity, or any conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity (PDE, 1995).

14. *Persistently Dangerous Schools:* Any public, elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the two years prior to the most recent school year: (1) for a school whose enrollment is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents; (2) for a school whose enrollment is between 250 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2% of the school's enrollment; or (3) for a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20 or more dangerous incidents (PDE, 2001).

15. *Retention:* Remaining in the profession. The term can also refer to returning to the same position in a different school or district.

16. *Superintendent:* The individual within the organizational framework of a school district who functions as the primary administrator, consultant, and advisor to the school board on all school district matters. In this role, the superintendent is responsible for providing information and making recommendations to the school board.

17. *Systemic Violence:* Any institutionalized practice or procedure that adversely impacts disadvantaged individuals or groups by burdening them psychologically, mentally, culturally, spiritually, economically, or physically (Marshall and Vaillancourt, 1993, cited in Epp & Watkinson, 1997).

18. *Teacher Stress:* "The experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (Kyriacou, 2001, cited in Hansen & Sullivan, 2003, p. 611).

19. *Transfer:* A teacher who moves to another teaching assignment in the same school or another school in the same district the following academic year.

20. *Turnover:* Number of vacancies in a school or district in one academic year. The term generally refers to a ratio or percentage.

21. *Victimization:* Teachers and/or students become victims when (1) a violent act is committed against them, or (2)they are threatened with a violent act.

22. *Violent Criminal Offense:* Any serious violent act against a student or teacher including the following crimes: kidnapping, robbery, aggravated assault, rape, sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual activity, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, attempted murder, homicide, or voluntary manslaughter (PDE, 2003).

23. *Violent Student Behavior:* Any act committed by a student on school or school district property that includes any of the following behaviors: (1) physical attacks against other persons, with or without weapons; (2) violent destruction of property, including arson; (3) self-injury; (4) forcible sexual attacks; or (5) behavior intense or severe enough to cause considerable harm to person(s) or property without intervention (Allen, 2002).

Organization of the Study

The study to assess how school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceive the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition is presented in the following five-chapter format: Chapter One disclosed the limited amount of research on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. This chapter identified the problem, stated the objectives, significance and limitations of the study, and defined terms used in the study.

Chapter Two reviewed the related literature focusing on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety, violent student behavior, and public school human

resources management. The broad review of literature revealed very little research is available on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition.

Chapter Three outlines the research methods and includes the format used by the researcher to conduct a survey of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools. This chapter describes the research design, research questions, participants, the instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures used in the study.

Chapter Four presents the results of this study. This chapter is organized into sections describing the findings of the study and descriptive results based on the survey and interviews.

Chapter Five provides conclusions, a discussion of the study including a statement of the problem, review of the methodology, summary of findings, interpretation of findings, a descriptive profile of a school district administrator responsible for human resources management, and recommendations for additional research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The purpose of this research was to assess how school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools. The review of literature focused on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety, violent student behavior, and public school human resources management. These classifications were used to develop a conceptual framework combining practical and theoretical approaches as they pertain to school district administrators responsible for human resources management perception of the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition.

Teacher Attrition

Attrition is experienced in all professions. In the education profession some attrition rates are natural and expected as teachers retire from the classroom or advance administrative positions. Employee turnover can be a good thing. According to research on national employee turnover conducted by Richard Ingersoll (2003), Associate Professor of Education and Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, it is normal for a well-managed organization to experience some employee attrition (p. 146). Successful organizations promote from within, remove incompetent employees, and hire newcomers who exhibit the potential for innovation and growth within the framework of the organization. On the other hand the organizational productivity of a school district relies

heavily upon the interactive communications among staff members who are committed, connected, and unified towards a common goal of successful student learning. A high rate of turnover in a school district, therefore, will influence its climate and ultimately the overall performance of teachers and students.

The solution to a high teacher attrition rate is not recruiting new teachers. Instead, the solution is looking at the source of the problem and implementing strategies to correct the problem. If the teacher attrition rate continues increasing year after year, administrators must understand how to solve the problem. To illustrate the crisis of rising teacher attrition rates over the past decade, Ingersoll (2003) uses the analogy "of a bucket rapidly losing water because of holes in the bottom. Pouring more water into the bucket will not solve the problem if the holes are not first patched" (p. 151).

From the early 1990s through the year 2000 the number of teacher resignations nationwide has grown from 175,000 to 280,000 annually. These exit numbers surpass the numbers of entrants into the teaching profession. Of these numbers, less than 20% represent teachers who elected to retire (Henke, Chen, & Geis, 2000; Ingersoll, 2001 cited in Certo & Fox, 2002, p. 3).

As more teachers are threatened and become victims of violent student behavior, the existing problem of increased attrition rates becomes worse when these teachers elect to resign and/or leave the profession of teaching. In a 2001 study of seven school divisions in Virginia on teacher attrition and retention, Janine Certo and Jill Fox conducted a series of interviews with teachers who resigned at the end of the 1999-2000 school year. Of the 42 teachers interviewed, 16% reported that discipline and student attitudes were the primary reason for leaving. Certo and Fox (2002) stated in their report,

"student discipline was highlighted more in the telephone interviews than in teacher focus groups, supporting focus group reports that teachers who leave often have trouble maintaining student discipline" (p.13).

Schools in New Mexico are also losing teachers due to student discipline problems. Bill Donovan, staff writer for the Gallup Independent newspaper, reports on concerns expressed by the head of the local teachers union regarding the increasing rate of teacher turnover in the Gallup-McKinley County school system in New Mexico. According to Tom Payton, president of the McKinley County Federation of United School Employees, it is reported that the lack of proper training and failure to address teacher concerns are the key reasons why the district is losing 125 to 130 teachers annually. Payton said, "The district wouldn't have to spend so much time and money on recruiting if district officials paid a little more attention to how the teachers they have are treated" (Donovan, 2000, p. 3). One of the key reasons teachers give for leaving the district is stress due to the "lack of training on how to handle discipline in their classrooms. As a result, many teachers are forced to send disciplinary problems to the principal's office to handle. In some cases, the students are sent back to the classroom and the teachers are told to handle their own problems" (Donovan, 2000, p. 3).

These issues of concern in the Gallup-McKinley County School system reinforce Ingersoll's (2001) "leaking bucket" theory (p. 151). Instead of seeking resolutions from within, the district recycles the problem by focusing efforts on recruitment of new teachers. New teachers are hired, given a teaching assignment, and expected to manage the classroom without any training or support. By the end of the year teachers'

frustration levels are to the point of hopelessness and the administrators take on the attitude of "writing them off" (Donovan, 2000, p. 3).

Ingersoll's (2001) research on teacher retention and attrition utilized the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics' *Schools and Staffing Survey* (SASS) and its supplement, the *Teacher Follow-up Survey* (TFS). In Ingersoll's 2001 report the total number of teacher turnover data is identified in two categories: *"movers"* – teachers who move to teaching jobs in other schools; *"leavers"* - teachers who leave the teaching profession (p. 147).

Based on Ingersoll's (2001) research of national data on employee turnover rates compiled by the Bureau of National Affairs, from 1991 through 2001, the average attrition rates of employees and occupations and industries were consistent at 11.9% per year. In comparison, data compiled through the TFS for a similar period of time show teacher attrition rates as follows:

- 1988-89 – 14.5%

- 1991-92 – 13.2%

- 1994-95 – 14.3%

- 2000-01 – 15.7%

Considering the fact that teaching is an occupation making up 4% of the workforce nationwide, the percentage of teacher attrition in the past decade indicates schools experience a high proportion of teachers "flowing into, through, and from schools each year. The image these data suggest is a revolving door" (Ingersoll, 2003, p. 151).

In summarizing the statistical analysis of the SASS and TFS, Ingersoll (2001) ranked by percentage the following reasons for teacher attrition:

- 40.0% - Family or personal

- 28.5% - Dissatisfaction

- 26.8% - To pursue other job

- 20.4% - School staffing action

- 12.5% - Retirement

Of the five reasons listed, the only cause with a significant influence on school

administrators is dissatisfaction. Therefore, determining the reasons contributing to

dissatisfaction were further analyzed in the TFS. The teachers surveyed reported the

following reasons:

- 54.3% - Poor salary

- 42.7% - Poor administrative support

- 22.9% - Student discipline problems

- 16.9% - Lack of faculty influence

- 14.6% - Poor student motivation

- 7.4% - Classroom intrusions

- 6.5% - Class sizes too large

- 5.5% - Inadequate time

Given the fact poor salary ranks as the primary cause for job dissatisfaction,

followed by poor administrative support, these factors are cause for concern among

school district administrators. Numerous studies conducted on both of these issues

provide research data for school district administrators to consider. However, review of

research literature provides limited research on student discipline problems as it relates to

affects on teachers and their dissatisfaction with teaching to the point of resigning or

leaving the profession altogether. In regards to student discipline problems, Ingersoll (2003) points out one key reason for teacher attrition is based on the amount of input teachers are allowed to provide in the development of school policies on student discipline and consequences for student infractions of behavior expectations (p. 148). The research further revealed schools allowing teachers to provide input concerning student discipline issues experience fewer altercations between students and staff resulting in lower rates of teacher attrition.

Within the framework of the school organization, professionalism is nurtured and evolves into a state of mind. It is not about the level or quality of preparation one has received prior to entering the teaching profession. Instead it is about one's ability to be subtle, effectively manage the workload, utilize resources, and being a team player in the decision-making process. According to Conley & Cooper (1991), professionally managed teachers are those who, with the support of colleagues, are allowed some degree of independence, the ability to organize their work to meet all students' needs, and opportunities to make collaborative school-wide decisions (p. 7).

Frequent replacement of teachers who resign each year compounds the problem for school district administrators and teachers who remain. For instance, according to Choy, et al., (1993) when many teaching vacancies occur in a school or district, many new teachers are hired to fill the vacancies (p. 24). Depending on the content areas where the vacancies occur, some of the new teachers begin the assignment with an emergency certification. Some of the new hires are first-year teachers who are certified, but are inexperienced. As this cycle continues year after year, the academic progress of students may suffer due to the inconsistency within the school's staff. As students' academic

progress declines, levels of frustration rise creating an environment prone for more discipline problems. The National Education Agency (NEA) 1979 poll indicated 75% of teachers nationwide believe ineffective teaching is partly due to student discipline problems. The same NEA poll reported that annually approximately 70,000 teachers throughout the nation are victims of robbery, rape, beatings, or assaults committed by students on their campus or within the district. Even more alarming is the fact that the school district's administrators do not report many of the violent acts because this information reduces the district's accountability with the state education agency that oversees school funding.

Barry Farber (1991) reports that *The Metropolitan Life Survey of Teachers* conducted in 1985 by Lou Harris and Associates confirmed earlier studies' findings that teachers do leave the profession early in their career. Statistics from the 1985 survey show that 46% of the teachers with less than ten years classroom experience left the profession. Of this 46%, two-thirds of the teachers were men, who left the profession primarily due to financial and social factors. Since men are considered the primary wage earners in most family structures, the economic and social pressures create an atmosphere that is more conducive for men to acquire better career options. Regardless of the gender of those individuals leaving the profession, *The Metropolitan Life Survey of Teachers* lists the top five reasons based on frequency of response for teachers leaving the profession as follows:

1. poor salary

2. unsatisfactory working conditions

3. student behavior problems

4. lack of administrative support

5. lack of respect

As a follow-up to *The Metropolitan Life Survey for Teachers*, teachers still in the

profession, along with those who left the profession, were asked to identify what schools

and school districts can do to improve efforts to attract and retain teachers. A consensus

among respondents expressed the following changes should occur:

1. higher salaries for teachers and increased budgets for school systems;

2. greater respect for teachers;

3. increased opportunities, such as teaching highly motivated students and taking advanced study sabbaticals;

4. reduced responsibility for non-teaching duties;

5. upgrading the status of teaching by tightening admission standards for education majors; and

6. requiring prospective teachers to undergo a supervised internship before certification (Farber, 1991, p. 117).

Even though the country is experiencing a teacher shortage, most school districts in

Pennsylvania do not have a shortage of teachers with the exception of certain subject

areas. The Philadelphia City School District is an urban district that has experienced

teacher shortages primarily due to "special conditions that discourage teachers from

applying to and staying in its public schools" (Useem & Neild, 2001, p. 3). In a study of

new teachers conducted by the Philadelphia Education Fund from 1998 through 2001,

data indicated that two reasons given for not applying in the district were problems with

student discipline and fears about personal safety.

According to Wendy D. Puriefoy, President of the Public Education Network,

Of all the problems confronting urban schools – poverty, violence, high dropout rates, students who don't speak English, unqualified teachers, dilapidated buildings, and the lack of resources and textbooks – the shortage of qualified teachers may be the most damaging to the students (cited in Useem, 2001, p. 2).

Some key factors contributing to Philadelphia City School District's high rate of teacher turnover include classes without permanent teachers, fewer teaching applications, an increased need for emergency-certified teachers, and a critical shortage in math, science, bilingual education, and special education (Useem & Neild, 2001, p. 3). This is further clarified in Linda Darling-Hammond's (2003) report that high poverty schools experience a teacher turnover rate 50% higher than low poverty schools due primarily to low salaries, teacher inexperience, lack of administrative support, limited resources, inferior working conditions, and the stress associated with addressing diverse needs of low-income students and families (p. 7).

The most common attrition-related terms used in various studies are *transfer*, *exit*, and *turnover*. However, the fact that these terms are not used consistently in studies on attrition indicates limited agreement on their definition.

After reviewing numerous studies researching teacher retention and attrition, Bonnie Billingsley (1993) identified three major categories: teachers returning to the same position (returns), teachers transferring to other positions or fields in education (transfer attrition), and teachers leaving the profession (exit attrition) (p. 138). The second category, teachers transferring to other positions or fields in education, is divided into two subcategories: teacher position transfers and teaching field transfers. In a teacher position transfer, for example, a math teacher who transfers to another math teaching position either within or outside the district is considered a loss to the campus

or the district. It is not considered a loss to that particular teaching field. A teaching

field transfer occurs when a teacher elects to leave one area of education for another.

For example, a special education teacher requests a transfer to a general education

teaching position on the same campus, another campus within the same district, or

accepting a general education teaching position in a another school district. While this

type of transfer is not considered a loss to the teaching profession, it represents a loss in

a particular field of teaching.

Teachers leaving the profession, the third category, are subdivided into seven

"exit categories." Six of the seven categories representing "non-education related

activities" are homemaking/childrearing, retirement, return to school, employment

outside of teaching, unemployment/seeking work, and other (i.e. active military duty,

death). The seventh category represents "non-teaching positions in education." For

example, a teacher leaves the classroom for an administrative position.

In order to validate findings, Billingsley (1993) indicates the need for researchers

to make a distinction between the attrition terms "voluntary" and "involuntary" (p. 140).

By distinguishing these terms, it is clarified if some teachers were forced to either leave

the district or request a transfer to another teaching position. It is further suggested "that

those leaving voluntarily and permanently for outside employment usually constitute less

than one-third of teachers leaving a district; however, 'the quality of those leaving should

be of concern'" (Grissmer and Kirby, 1987, cited in Billingsley, 1993, p. 141).

Teacher Dissatisfaction/Stress

Teacher dissatisfaction develops for a variety of reasons. A sense of failure can

often occur among teachers working with emotionally and/or economically deprived

children. In an effort to meet the needs of these children, the teacher is compelled to take on a parenting role. Increasing class size and the addition of mainstreamed learning-disabled students add to the teachers' frustrations.

In analyzing the literature on teacher dissatisfaction, many studies focus on two of the primary contributing factors: low salary and the lack of administrative support. Specific studies on the influence student discipline problems have on teacher attrition, which is also a primary contributing factor, are not found. Literature indicates, however, that increasing teacher stress caused by student discipline problems augments teacher dissatisfaction.

Many educators agree that the occupation of teaching is very stressful. In their report on common causes for teacher stress, Jo-Ida Hansen and Brandon Sullivan (2003) discuss the severe implications high stress levels have on the "healthy functioning of individual teachers and schools, and entire school systems" (p. 611). The report implies that before any attempt to reduce or eliminate stress, a full evaluation of the various types and causes of stress is warranted. A definition of teacher stress is "the experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (Kyriacou, 2001, cited in Hansen & Sullivan, 2003, p. 611).

According to Hansen & Sullivan (2003), understanding the three components of stress enable better recognition of types and causes. The components are defined as:

- Stressor: An event or series of events occurring in the work environment. (Example: loud and disruptive students in classroom)

- Strain: The mental and physical effects of the stressor on the person. (Example: tense muscles due to frustration and anger over increased class size)

- Appraisal: Influences person's reaction to the stressor. (Example: teacher unable to motivate students sees this as a personal failure, perceives situation as threatening, and develops high level of strain)
  (Hansen & Sullivan, 2003, p. 612).

According to Farber (1991), the highest rated items in teacher stress surveys (i.e. 1979 *New York State Survey*, Goodlad's 1984 *Nationwide High School Survey*, Gallup and Elam's 1989 *Nationwide Survey*) involve the management of disruptive students in the classroom (p. 100). In a 1978 study conducted by a UCLA psychiatrist, affects of violence sustained by teachers were compared to combat neurosis symptoms of anxiety, insecurity, nightmares, fatigue, irritability, headaches, ulcers, hypertension, and other emotional and physical dysfunctions. A number of teachers described their schools as "battle zones" (Bloch, cited in Farber, 1991, p. 52).

Another interesting fact discovered in a study conducted by Ianni and Reuss-Ianni (1983) was teachers' fear of becoming victims of student violence even though the level of crime in schools is not increasing. The overall school climate does, however, influence the teachers' fear of being attacked (Farber, 1991, p. 152).

Also contributing to the teachers' stress level is the apathetic attitude of the administrators towards student discipline problems. According to Farber (1991), it is considered a bad reflection on the school administration when too many student suspensions transpire because of numerous student disciplinary actions. "Instead of attacking the problem [of student violence] head-on, supervisors and administrators hide behind the bureaucratic hierarchy that keeps track of only the most serious offenses and tries to keep even these figures from the public. Meanwhile, the psychological damage being done to children and educators is incalculable…what can be more basic to a free

society than the absolute right of teachers to teach and students to learn, free from fear?"

(Saltzman/*New York Times* cited in Farber, 1991, p. 55).

It is not surprising that student discipline problems top the list on teacher stress

surveys. Farber (1991) states, ". . . nothing gets teachers so worked up and so ready to

leave the profession as this issue" (p. 53). As a result, after years of encountering

frequent bouts of violent student behavior and disruptions, teachers begin to create a self-

imposed status reduction.

Administrative understanding and assessment of stress factors begin with a well-

established system of communication. Patterns of communication have a significant

influence on teacher dissatisfaction. Cooper & Conley (1991) discovered in their

research that among the most frequently discussed topics between teachers and

administrators are motivating or controlling specific children and improving student

discipline (p. 97). Many teachers experience a feeling of isolation due to the lack of

limited opportunities to communicate and exchange ideas with other teachers/staff

members. Schools that place a priority on collegiality and ongoing opportunities for

improvement through professional development are more likely to create a positive and

successful working environment. Based on Thomas Hobbes' philosophy that the

perception of harmony requires trust, Ronald Rebore (2003) defines communication as "a

process through which information is generated that elicits a response in people

concerning the message and the sender" (p. 142).

One aspect of human communication is the reality that all communication results

in a consequence. This occurs particularly in verbal communication, which transpires

with little or no thought. Once something is said, especially something inappropriate, the

resulting consequence can be monumental. Therefore, it is essential for the administrator

to develop a strategy of "self control in communicating" with others in order to avoid this

situation (Rebore, 2003, p. 141). Moreover, the focus of the communication's content

should be on subjects and issues about which she or he is most knowledgeable.

Effective communication by administrators is based on the ability of awareness

and understanding of a school and school district's culture, which establishes the

condition to alter or change the culture. In this context Rebore (2003) defines culture as

follows:

> School and school district cultures consist of those attitudes, policies and values,
> feelings, and opinions better shared by a significant number of their influential
> members and that are communicated to others (p. 156).

Analysis of a school or school district's culture is complex and requires more than relying

on what people have to say about it. One method is through a logical framework analysis

focusing on attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and opinions or conclusions based on another

person's experience. Another method is using a qualitative phenomenological approach,

which consists of four dimensions: describing, listening, reading, and observing.

(Rebore, 2003, p. 140).

School Safety and Violent Student Behavior

Research indicates that teacher attrition rates tend to be higher in schools

identified as unsafe due to student behavior problems, especially behaviors resulting in

violent acts. Over many generations communities throughout the United States

considered the local school as a safe place where dedicated teachers taught their children.

Some students, especially those in the inner city, regard school as their safe haven from

external stress factors that include extreme emotional distress, drug abuse, and violence.

Today, disruptive students confront teachers as well as other students with increasingly

violent acts. As a result, the community school, once considered a safe place, no longer

offers the same sense of security.

Each year the Gallup Organization conducts a public opinion poll about public

schools. *The 35th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward*

the Public Schools was conducted from May 28 to June 18, 2003. For the survey, adults

(ages 18 and over) were selected through a random-digit procedure of both listed and

unlisted telephone numbers stratified into four regions of the United States. The survey

sample in this study was comprised of 1,011 adults. In regards to public concerns about

teachers and student discipline, Lowell C. Rose and Alec M. Gallup (2003), authors of

the survey found the collected data to support the following conclusions:

1. Sixty-one percent of the public said that schools in their community
    have difficulty getting good teachers and 66% think those schools cannot keep
    good teachers.

2. Fifty-nine percent of the public said teacher salaries are too low and 65%
    support incentive pay increasing salaries for those teaching in more
    challenging/at-risk schools.

3. Regarding issues affecting student discipline problems (violence, fighting,
    gangs, drug abuse, overcrowding, poor quality teachers, and lack of
    administrative control), 48% of the public said this was one of the greatest
    problems in public schools.

Today's teachers are confronted with many challenges including accountability

for curriculum and instructional strategies that produces well-educated students who will

pass standardized proficiency exams, limited or no time to pay attention to the school's

social climate surrounding the school, and availability to help resolve student conflicts

and redirect misunderstandings that evolve into violence (Aronson, 2000. p. 99).

Teachers' attempts to meet these challenges by instructing students who otherwise fear

for their own safety soon discover that no matter how experienced a professional they

may be, the ability to instruct becomes thwarted as their own safety is threatened within

the school building.

   Indicators for School Crime and Safety: 2001 conducted by the U.S. Department

of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education's National

Center for Education Statistics revealed the following findings regarding teachers as

victims of student violence:

- From 1995 through 1999, teachers were the victims of 1,708,000 nonfatal crimes at school and including 1,073,000 thefts and 635,000 violent crimes including rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault (NCER, 2001).

- During the 1993-1994 school year, of all teachers in elementary and secondary schools, 12% (341,000) were threatened with injury by a student, and 4% (119,000) were physically attacked by a student (NCER, 2001).

In a more recent survey, *Indicators for School Crime and Safety: 2003* revealed the

following findings:

- From 1997 through 2001 teachers were the victims of nearly 1.3 million nonfatal crimes at school and including 817,000 thefts and 473,000 serious violent crimes including rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault.

- During the 1999-2000 school year, of all teachers in elementary and secondary schools, 9% (305,000) were threatened with injury by a student, and 4% (135,000) were physically attacked by a student (NCER, 2004).

While these findings indicate numbers slightly decreased in the 2003 report compared to

the 2001 report, the numbers of teachers victimized by student violence are still alarming

and cause for concern.

   The term "systemic violence" has emerged in recent years in association with

violent student behaviors. Systemic violence occurs when institutional practices or

procedures negatively affect disadvantaged individuals or groups with psychological, mental, cultural, spiritual, economical, or physical responsibilities (Epp and Watkinson, 1997 p. 198). "Educational systemic violence results from the practices, procedures, and education conventions that prevent students from learning, thus harming them" (Epp and Watkinson, 1997, p. 5). Freire (1970) wrote that dehumanization "is a distortion of being more fully human, sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so" (cited in Epp and Watkinson, 1997, p. 5).

Another form of systemic violence, according to Epp and Watkinson (1997) occurs through discrimination (p. 5). This results when the environment of education "blocks and impedes learning through conventional policies and practices that appear neutral on their face but result in discriminatory effects" to those who are identified or labeled as part of a group. Administrators and teachers who believe they are providing fair and equitable learning opportunities for all students, are in fact operating from an archaic system that "is incapable of meeting the needs of students" (Epp and Watkinson, 1997, p. 5). Until all members of the school organization (administrators, teachers, policy makers) recognize the diverse needs of students and understand that this type of system hinders learning, a systemically violent school culture will evolve.

According to Watkinson (1994) and Watkinson (1995b), "educators who understand and care about the 'differences' of others are moved to lessen their burden and improve their learning opportunities" (cited in Epp and Watkinson 1997, p. 5).

Based on an analysis made by the U.S. Department of Justice in the late1990s, it was disclosed that violent crimes are committed by males six times more often than by females. The violent crimes committed by males are far more serious. Aronson (2000)

states that "young males are often most prone to become violent when they sense that an important social connection is eroding whether with their family, a girlfriend, or their school" (p. 99). So, it is not surprising to the general public when a news report about a school shooting identifies the person committing the violent offense is male.

The Josephson Institute of Ethics' *Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth 2000 Report #1: Violence, Guns and Alcohol* surveyed students in randomly selected middle and high schools across the nation. The survey, which yielded 15,877 responses, reported the following:

- 39% of middle school boys and 36% of high school boys (one in three) do not feel safe at school.

- 43% of high school boys and 37% of middle school boys think it is okay to hit or threaten a person who makes them angry…19% of high school girls (one in five) agreed.

- 75% of all boys and 60% of all girls admitted to hitting someone in the past year because they were angry.

- 21% of high school boys and 15% of middle school boys (one in five) took a weapon to school at least once in the past year.

- 60% of high school boys and 31% of middle school boys indicated that if they wanted to they were able to get a gun.

- 69% of high school boys and 27% of middle school boys indicated that if they wanted to they were able to get drugs.

- 19% of high school boys and 9% of middle school boys admitted to being drunk at school at least once in the past year (NCER, 2004).

Elliot Aronson (2000), University of California at Santa Cruz, writing about issues confronting teachers in the aftermath of the Columbine High School shootings, indicates that the basis of the behavior causing this violent offense is considered to be the structure of society overall. Yet, when such an event occurs in a school, the

responsibility to address the problem and take measures to prevent future occurrences falls on the school. Aronson reports that while "roots of violent behavior are surely in the society at large . . . it is a problem that schools must deal with and ultimately prevent" (p. 99). Within the structure of the schools' organization, administrators should be the ones to take this responsibility and demonstrate preventive measures. Unfortunately, in most instances, teachers are actually the ones who endure most of this responsibility with limited administrative support.

Structuring the foundation of our nation's schools today is a social as well as political impetus to turn out well-educated students with the skills to pass standardized proficiency exams. As a result of this momentum, teachers are compelled to direct their efforts on curriculum and instructional strategies that will produce well-educated students. It also leaves little or no time for teachers to pay attention to the school's social climate surrounding the students.

Public School Human Resources Management

Within each public school system, human resources management carries out the function of managing employees. Depending on the size of the district this function is the responsibility of either an Assistant Superintendent/ Director of Human Resources in central office or other administrators within the organization. The overall focus of human resources management is " to achieve the objectives of the school district and to help individual staff members maximize their potentials and develop their professional careers" (Rebore, 2003, p. 49). This focus is put into practice through the following human resources functions:

1. *Human Resources Planning*: generate a long- and short-range plan for staffing requirements.

2. *Recruitment of Personnel:* enlist highly qualified personnel vital to the process of effective education of all students.

3. *Selection of Personnel:* long- and short-range staffing requirements are executed through a selection process and techniques.

4. *Placement and Induction of Personnel:* develop a mentorship program and plan to assist new employees and the school district to assist in meeting each other's goals.

5. *Staff Development*: coordinate and implement programs assisting employees to meet district goals as well as providing opportunities for professional growth and development.

6. *Appraisal of Personnel*: establish an appraisal process and technique that fosters individual professional growth and assists achievement of district goals.

7. *Compensation of Personnel:* develop incentive programs that reward employees based on quality performance.

8. *Collective Negotiations:* providing opportunities to participate in the negotiation process on issues affecting employee professional and personal welfare.

9. *Employee Benefits:* seeking and providing employees with the best possible compensation for life and health insurance, retirement plans, and employee assistance.

10. *Worker's Compensation*: establish and maintain a program providing reimbursement to employees injured or disabled while performing an on-the-job function.

11. *Credentials and Certification*: verification through the state education agency that district employees have appropriate credentials and certification (Rebore, 2003, p. 49-50).

Teachers who resign are asked by their district to give an exit interview or complete a written questionnaire explaining the reason for leaving. Human resources management oversees this process. Despite the debate of this information's validity, it

does provide a source of data that can increase a previously limited source of knowledge in school district human resources management. For example, previously unexplained turnover increases on a particular campus may reveal a problem with teacher morale. This alerts district administrators to investigate further the cause of this particular problem and to seek resolutions to improve morale and decrease the turnover rate. Teacher turnover can result due to job dissatisfaction, circumstances in one's personal or family life, or economical reasons. Human resources administrators and principals have very little control over teacher attrition due to personal or family matters. Yet, collecting information on the reasons for teacher resignation due to dissatisfaction is necessary to understand more clearly the origin and consequences of attrition.

According to Seyfarth (2002), "turnover generally refers to employees who leave a company or district altogether, but information about teacher transfers can also give clues about teacher motivation"(p 100). The primary reasons teachers request a transfer within the district are to seek improved working conditions or a more convenient location. While an in-district transfer does not have an overall effect on the district's teaching force, it can have a considerable affect on the campus teaching force and the effectiveness of instructional quality especially when an inexperienced teacher is hired to replace an experienced teacher. School administrators, especially those responsible for human resources management, confronted with numerous requests for a teacher transfer need to investigate further the actual causes for these requests.

Proactive efforts by school districts to alleviate teacher turnover establish a foundation from which administrators and teachers work together to address problems that often lead to teacher dissatisfaction and stress. For example, school district human

resources management often base content of teacher induction programs on teacher

surveys identifying needs and problems. Some of this content may also be acquired

through exit interviews or questionnaires completed by teachers who resigned. In

1984,Veenman compiled his findings from a comprehensive review of 83 studies in

North America, Europe, and Australia. Listed in the order of frequency are the top 10

perceived needs and problems of new teachers:

1. Classroom discipline

2. Motivating students

3. Dealing with individual differences

4. Assessing students' work (tie)

5. Relations with parents (tie)

6. Organization of class work (tie)

7. Insufficient materials and supplies (tie)

8. Dealing with problems of individual students

9. Heavy teaching load resulting in insufficient preparation time

10. Relations with colleagues (Veenman, 1984, cited in Seyfarth, 2002, p. 110).

Seyfarth (2002) points out the data collected from teachers in exit interviews,

questionnaires, and studies such as Veenman's may be an indicator of the problems

teachers believe are imperative to being successful as opposed to those problems for

which they seek help (p. 110). There is some evidence that teachers new to the

profession have a tendency not to seek help because it may be interpreted as

incompetence. This lack of willingness to seek help, especially in matters of classroom

discipline, often escalates a sense of frustration and isolation with novice teachers. An

alert human resources management administrator who recognizes this lack of willingness by new teachers to seek help can assist principals and experienced teachers to discover that unsolicited assistance is openly welcomed and appreciated by the novice teacher.

The human resources management function of providing opportunities for collective bargaining plays an important role in discussions between teacher organizations and school boards regarding provisions in the teaching contract to the professional right to personal safety and security. Not only is this concern justifiable for the teachers, but also for the students with whom they work.

There is always the possibility a violent attack can occur in a school. Considering the number of violent acts that have occurred in America's public schools over the past decade, it is a reasonable request by teachers to ask school boards to implement policies that reduce the risk of violence. The school board, however, cannot take legal action against perpetrators of violence. That falls within the jurisdiction of civil authorities, not the school board (Seyfarth, 2002, p. 226).

Summary

Ronald D. Stephens (2004), Executive Director of the National School Safety Center, states,

> Without safe schools, it is difficult, if not impossible for learning to take place. No task is more important in creating safe learning environments for our nation's children. A safe school is a place students can learn and teachers can teach in a warm and welcoming environment free of threats, intimidation, violence and fear (p. 1).

Given the fact national crime statistics show violent crimes have decreased in our neighborhoods, many of our nation's teachers feel unsafe in their work environment (Aronson, 2000, p. 99). The purpose of this research assessed how school district

administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public

school perceive the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. The review

of literature focused on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety,

student behavior, and public school human resources management. Sources for this

review included ERIC searches, books, journals, abstracts, magazine and newspaper

articles, and websites.

A review of literature reveals very little research is available on the influence of

violent student behavior on teacher attrition. Several studies and surveys, however, offer

relevant data on teacher attrition, causes for teacher attrition, student violence, and causes

for student violence. Three studies discussing teacher attrition and causes for teacher

attrition are: 1) *Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools –

2001* by Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania, 2) *The 35th Annual Phi Delta

Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools* (conducted by

Lowell C. Rose and Alec M. Gallup), and 3) *Teacher Staffing in the School District of

Philadelphia: A Report to the Community – 2002* by Linda Useem and Ruth Curran Neild

for The Philadelphia Education Fund. Two studies conducted jointly by the U.S.

Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education,

Indicators for School Crime and Safety: 2001 and *Indicators for School Crime and

Safety: 2003* discussed student violence statistics. A third study, *Report Card on the

Ethics of American Youth 2000 Report #1: Violence, Guns and Alcohol* by The

Josephson Institute of Ethics, discussed student violence and causes for student violence.

 In reviewing the six studies mentioned, some connections found between the studies

 focus on 1) teacher job dissatisfaction as it relates to teachers leaving the profession, 2)

teacher experiences with violent student behavior, 3) causes for violent student behavior

as perceived by teachers, and 4) attributes and frequency of violent student behavior.

Based on the connections between the six studies and the impact of all other literature

pertinent to the perception of human resources directors in Pennsylvania's public schools

regarding violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition, research

questions for this study were based on the following:

1. to assess what school administrators responsible for human resources management perceive as reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts;

2. the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition through transfers, moving to another district, or leaving the profession altogether in Pennsylvania's public school districts;

3. the role of school district human resources management in establishing policies and procedures concerning the student code of conduct (i.e. violent student behavior) in Pennsylvania's public schools;

4. the role of school district human resources management in establishing policies and procedures creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public school districts; and

5. Pennsylvania public school districts' current and future plans for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods and Procedures

Case studies are defined as a form of qualitative research that "explores a single entity or phenomenon ('the case') bounded by time and activity (a program, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time" (Creswell, 1994, cited in Leedy, 1997, p. 157). The "phenomenon or case" explored (violent student behavior) determined its influence on "something else" (teacher attrition). This study provides a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their districts.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition as perceived by school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools. To accomplish this the researcher implemented a case study methodology utilizing multiple sources of evidence collected through exploratory, descriptive, and interactive inquiry. Multiple sources of evidence in a case study typically combine collecting of data from several entities and analyzing the data for replication. Data collected from multiple sources in a case study is "often considered more compelling" (Herriott and Firestone, 1983, cited in Yin, 2003, p. 46). To determine whether the case study was or was not a suitable method for this

research, the researcher considered Yin's (2003) five components for a case study's

research design:

1. *Study questions* - "How" and "why" questions are most likely appropriate for clarifying the research strategy.

2. *Study propositions* - Proposed purpose of the study "directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study."

3. *Unit of analysis* – Defining the case or "unit of analysis" correlates to the research objectives.

4. *Linking data to propositions* – Collected data reveals corresponding patterns relating to the purpose of the study.

5. *Criteria for interpreting the findings* – Determines how close corresponding patterns must be to relate to the study's purpose (p. 21).

While the first three components focus on what data is to be collected, the last two

components reflect how the data is analyzed and interpreted. Therefore, it was also

important for the researcher to establish which strategies for data collection and analysis

would be useful in interpreting the influence of violent student behavior on teacher

attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts. Yin's (2003) research strategies are

distinguished by three conditions:

1. The "how" and "why" research question is posed,

2. The extent of control the investigator has over events, and

3. The degree of focus is on contemporary as opposed to historical events (p. 5).

Focusing on the phenomenon of violent student behavior and examining its influence on

teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts, this study set forth to develop a

descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources

management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the

influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their respective districts.

An analysis of archival data created a list of participants for the study based on "how many" incidents of violent student behavior occurred over a four-year time span from 2000 through 2004. A web-based survey sent to participants asked "what," "why," and "how" they perceived the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in their respective public school district. Survey participants volunteering for a brief follow-up interview conducted by the researcher responded to open-ended "what," "why," and "how" questions. Participants' responses to the survey and follow-up interview questions were not within the researcher's control. Guiding this research was the belief that participating public school district administrators responsible for human resources management continually engage in day-to-day communications with all staff members. Human resources management administrators' awareness of staff concerns is enhanced through this ongoing communication. Therefore, based on Yin's criteria, the researcher determined the most suitable design for conducting this research was the case study.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research:

1. What do school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive as the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

2. What are the perceptions of school district administrators responsible for human resources management relative to the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

3.   How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public schools?

4.   What is the role of human resources management in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools?

5.   What current and/or future plans exist in Pennsylvania's public school districts for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its affect on teacher attrition?

Participants

Participants for this study were school district administrators responsible for human resources management from selected public school districts in Pennsylvania. Public school districts were selected utilizing a descriptive inquiry analysis of archival data collected from the following Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) documents:

1. *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession* from 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years. This document identifies schools with the highest number of incidents due to violent student behavior, number of offenders, and number of assaults on staff as reported by the school district and local education agency for a particular school year.

2. *Public Schools: Summary of Enrollments* from 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years. This document provides the number of students enrolled and attending publicly funded schools in Pennsylvania as of October 1 of the school year as reported by the school districts and local education agency for a particular school year.

3. *Public Schools: Professional Personnel* from 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years. This document provides current data on personnel employed by the public schools as reported by the school district and local education agency for a particular school year.

Descriptive inquiry, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), "simply describes an existing phenomenon by using numbers to characterize individuals or a group" (p. 3). This method of inquiry analyzes the data based on "existing conditions and characterizes something as it is" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p. 3). Since this study focused on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition as perceived by administrators in Pennsylvania's public school districts, the three reports listed provided documented data reported to PDED by Pennsylvania's public school districts as a basis for the "existing conditions" of violent student behavior, annual student enrollment, and professional staff employment from 2000 through 2004.

After conducting a descriptive inquiry analysis of PDE's documented data, the researcher discovered three specific data in the *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession* relating to the focus of this study. The three data were: (1) number of violent student behavior incidents, (2) number of violent student offenders, and (3) number of staff assaulted by violent student offenders. Findings from this PDE document showed the average percentage rate from 2000 through 2004 of violent student behavior incidents and offenders involved in those incidents to be two percent of the annual student enrollment. Additionally, the report revealed an average of one assault by a student on a professional staff member occurred annually from 2000 through 2004. Considering the fact that enrollment varies among the public school districts in Pennsylvania, ranking by percentage the incidents of violent student behavior and student offenders committing those incidents offered a more suitable comparison of districts. Professional staff members assaulted by a student were reported by number of victims (staff members) and not ranked by percentage.

The researcher developed the following criteria for selecting public school district participants:

- Violent student behavior incidents represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school years (2000 – 2004),

- Violent student behavior offenders represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school years (2000 – 2004), and

- A student assaulted at least one professional staff member during four school years (2000 – 2004).

Criteria were based on the researcher's findings from the descriptive analysis of PDE's documented data as well as the standards for "persistently dangerous schools." The standards describe "persistently dangerous schools" as

> any public, elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the two years prior to the most recent school year: (1) for a school whose enrollment is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents; (2) for a school whose enrollment is between 250 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2% of the school's enrollment; or (3) for a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20 or more dangerous incidents (PDE, 2001).

By selecting only those districts meeting the criteria, a common attribute among participants was established regarding percentage of violent student behavior incidents, offenders, and the number of professional staff members assaulted by students. Out of 501 public school districts in Pennsylvania, 201 exhibited all criteria over a period of four consecutive school years from 2000 through 2004.

Instrumentation

Pennsylvania public school district administrators' opinions about the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in their respective districts were assessed through multiple data sources. After reviewing the literature, the researcher developed a

conceptual framework focusing on teacher attrition, violent student behavior, and the role

of public school human resources management in each of these areas. Ultimately, survey

questions were obtained from a survey instrument used in a 1999 study conducted in

Colorado on human resources directors' perceptions of serious school violence and its

effects on teacher retention and recruitment. Shirley Miles, who designed and conducted

the 1999 survey, gave written permission to use the original survey questions (Appendix

A). Utilizing the framework matrix developed by Miles (1999), the researcher modified

and organized the survey and follow-up interview questions to align with the specific

research objectives of this study (Appendix B).

The validity of a survey questionnaire determines how well the questionnaire

measures what it sets out to measure (Litwin, 1995). Content validity is defined as "the

degree to which the sample of test items represents the content that the test is designed to

measure" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 250). Ary et al, (1990) outlined a process to ensure

content validity:

> Some attention must be given to the validity question – that is, whether the
> interview or questionnaire is really measuring what it is supposed to measure.
> The most obvious type of validity evidence needed is content-related, which may
> be gathered by having some competent colleagues who are familiar with the
> purpose of the survey examine the items to judge whether they are adequate for
> measuring what they are supposed to measure and whether they are a
> representative sample of the behavior domain under investigations (p. 434).

Prior to distributing the web-based survey instrument to selected school district

participants, the questions were reviewed by a panel of experts. The panel was

comprised of a university researcher on K-12 violent student behavior, two staff members

from the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Safe Schools, and two

Pennsylvania public school administrators not selected as participants in the web-based

survey. Panel members were asked to review the questions for the web-based survey instrument and follow-up interview protocol and offer their comments regarding each question's accuracy of measurement of school district administrators' perceived influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. Panel members' comments included, "The concept of relating the perception of student on teacher violence to teacher attrition is intriguing, and would be interested in your results." and "While the overall interview protocol questions are effectively worded, one question starts with the statement regarding the 'increase in violence' may predispose the interviewee to answer in a more negative manner. Suggest using toward the end of the discussion, if needed, or removing." As a result of the validation review, one interview protocol question was moved to the end of the list of questions with the option to delete during interview.

A web-based survey instrument (Appendix C) was used to collect data for this study. While web-based surveys have advantages and disadvantages similar to those found in traditional surveys, they also present some new benefits and concerns. Some advantages of the web-based survey include low operating cost, saving time, and reducing errors from coding (Dominelli, 2003; Umbach, 2004). Another key advantage of a web-based survey is the researcher's ability to survey a large number of participants, which is helpful when studying a group in a population that is underrepresented (Umbach, 2004, p. 25). When deciding to use a web-based survey, the researchers must be aware of some concerns associated with this method. Issues concerning Internet use, according to Dominelli (2003), include participation in the web-based survey, burden of responding, and security of the data. Additionally, concerns regarding inaccurate email

addresses can result in non-delivery of surveys and reduction in participation rates

(Dominelli, 2003, p. 412).

Interactive inquiry is a mode of qualitative inquiry utilizing a personal approach

often in the form of an interview. Open-ended follow-up interview questions (Appendix

D) were structured to align to those in the survey questionnaire (Leedy, 1997, p. 199). In

the same manner, consideration was given to the development of a survey questionnaire.

The researcher considered some of the guidelines suggested by Gall, Borg, and Gall

(1996), cited in Leedy (1997) in the development of the interview protocol. The

guidelines included:

1. *Assure interviewee of absolute confidence before beginning the interview.*

Prior to each follow-up interview, the volunteer participant was given a Subject Consent

Form for Participation (Appendix E) to read and sign. In order to reinforce the assurance

of confidentiality to the interview participant, interview responses were not recorded.

Responses to questions during the follow-up interview were collected only in writing by

the researcher.

2. *Explain potential benefits of the study to the interviewee.* Each volunteer

participant received a copy of the Follow-Up Interview Protocol (Appendix F) explaining

the purpose of the study and definition of terms used throughout the study.

3. *Ask questions containing a single idea. Avoid closed-form questions.* Open-

ended follow-up interview questions gave the researcher an opportunity to address further

the participant's responses to online survey questions.

4. *Save complex or controversial questions for latter part of the interview.* If the

participant's response on some interview questions offered considerable insight into a

particular area of focus, towards the end of the interview the researcher would go back to that particular question and ask the participant to explain further.

Role of the Researcher

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) state that the role of qualitative researchers "varies from the more traditional neutral stance to an active participatory role, depending on the selected research approach." Typically, a qualitative researchers' role is that of active communicator who collects data, records observations, and interacts with participants. In educational research, the importance of data collection by a "skilled, prepared person rather than a single instrument" is emphasized by academic researchers (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p. 396).

In this study, the researcher's role was that of collector, evaluator, and interpreter of data collected from selected participants who were also professional colleagues. The researcher's professional experience as a public school building level and district administrator, as well as human resources management emphasized this role. Twelve years working directly with students, teachers, and administrators in public schools enhanced the researcher's awareness of the levels of fear and frustration that result from violent student behavior. Additionally, five years working in human resources management made the researcher aware of the regulations and issues encountered in maintaining successful employee relations.

The researcher realized that as a practicing administrator in public school education with established biases, the role of active communicator interacting with participating colleagues to collect data raised the question of ethical standards. When conducting a qualitative case study, it is the researcher's responsibility to assure the study

is implemented and distributed in an ethical manner. According to Leedy (1997) this can

be accomplished by the researcher who establishes basic parameters that

> . . . resolve into a simple consideration of fairness, honesty, openness of intent, disclosure of methods, the ends for which the research is executed, a respect for the integrity of the individual, the obligation of the researcher to guarantee unequivocally individual privacy, and an informed willingness on the part of the subject to participate voluntarily in the research activity (p. 116).

The researcher attentively followed these guidelines by conducting the study in a manner

focusing on the issues based on research, without personal biases.

Data Collection

The most common multiple data collection methods typically utilized by

researchers are a combination of archival sources, surveys, and interviews. Eisenhardt

(1989) states, "the triangulation made possible by multiple data collection methods

provides stronger substantiation of constructs" (p. 538). Data collected for this study

through descriptive and interactive inquiry methods utilizing archival records, a web-

based survey, and follow-up interviews were organized into categories for identifying

similar or duplicate patterns.

Due to the exploratory characteristic of the case study approach, data collection

and data analysis emerged simultaneously throughout the research process. Establishing

an organized framework or "protocol" is recommended by Yin (2003) to assure the

study's value. Using a protocol, according to Yin (2003), "is a major way of increasing

the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying

out the data collection" (p. 67). Through the use of a detailed protocol, the researcher

was able to duplicate systematically the process of collection from all participants. Yin's

(2003) data collection protocol components used in this study were developed as follows:

1. *Overview of the Case Study* began with a review of relevant literature on various topics associated with teacher attrition, violent student behavior, school safety, and human resources management. Objectives for the study were developed based on this review.

2. *Case Study Questions* were developed from objectives. Questions were submitted to a panel of experts in the field of human resources, violent student behavior, and public school administration for validation.

3. *Procedures* for conducting the study were established through selection of participants and presentation of credentials. Participants were selected through a detailed analysis of archival data collected from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

4. *Permission to conduct the study* was obtained on August 4, 2005, from the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research (Appendix G).

5. *A Guide for the Case Study Report* included a survey sent to participants through a web-based survey/assessment tool called Perception, and a brief one-on-one follow-up interview. All participation in the study was voluntary. Web-based survey data were collected and secured electronically through Baylor University's Perception tool web server by the researcher. To assure confidentiality of interview responses, participants were not recorded during the interview. Responses were collected in writing only by the researcher.

6. *Timeline for Conducting the Study* was developed by the researcher as follows:

- Acceptance of proposal by dissertation committee

- Validation of survey instrument and interview protocol by panel of experts: 2-3 weeks

- Obtained permission from Baylor University's Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research: 3-4 weeks

- Transmission of web-based survey instrument, consent forms, request for interview to selected participants: 1 week

- Collection of data from online survey instrument: 4-5 weeks

- Identify, contact, and interview volunteer participants for follow-up interview portion of study: 3-4 weeks

- Analyze data and complete written report: 4-5 weeks

Procedures Used

After obtaining approval to conduct the study from the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research (Institutional Review Board, or IRB), survey participants were initially notified electronically through the researcher's Baylor email account assisted by Baylor's Electronic Library Online Teaching and Support Staff. The purpose for conducting an online survey is to provide participants ease of accessibility and a quick turn-around of responses to the researcher. Notification of survey participants via electronic methods was based on Umbach's (2004) following suggestions:

1. Use multiple e-mail contact by sending out a minimum of two messages, the initial message and a reminder.

2. Keep the message format simple.

3. Keep the content of the e-mail message similar to a paper survey. Be sure to include a deadline and inform the respondent how long it will take to complete the survey. Also, indicate that the recipient is one of a small group selected for the study.

4. If possible, personalize the e-mail message. The research on the effect of personalization is mixed; however; current software packages can make it relatively easy to personalize the message.

5. Again, if possible, keep the survey short. Pilot test the survey in order to provide concise directions on how long it will take to complete.

6. Do not feel pressure to offer an incentive to survey respondents. The effects of incentives with web-based surveys are mixed and most researchers cannot afford to offer incentives (p.33).

The survey instrument was administered using a Web-based survey/assessment tool called Perception. The Perception tool provided confidentiality and anonymity of the data.

Contents of the initial notification included the Informed Letter of Consent (Appendix H) with a paragraph addressing data security and confidentiality of participant information. Participants were given three weeks to respond to the survey. To increase the response rate for participation, ten days after sending the initial notification, a follow-up e-mail notification (Appendix I) was forwarded only to those participants who had not responded.

Participants electing to respond to the survey connected through an Internet link provided in the initial notification. The web-based survey included an introductory statement identifying the purpose of the study, the definition human resources management, violent student behavior, and teacher attrition (as defined throughout the study). Comprising the web-based survey were a total of 15 items: four demographic questions requiring one numerical answer, ten perception questions requiring short answer written responses, and one statement giving the participant a Yes/No option to participate in a brief follow-up interview with the researcher. Those participants

responding "Yes" provided his/her name, email address and/or telephone contact

information in order to enable the researcher to schedule a time to conduct the interview.

Due to the distance and time involved, the researcher and all volunteer

participants agreed to conduct the follow-up interview over the telephone at a pre-

arranged date and time. Prior to the follow-up interview, the volunteer participant

received through an email attachment or fax transmittal the Subject Consent Form for

Participation. Additionally, the follow-up interviewee received a Follow-Up Interview

Protocol containing a written statement assuring confidentiality, the definition of violent

student behavior, teacher attrition (as defined throughout the study), and human resources

management.

Fifteen follow-up interview items aligned with the online survey items focused on

the role of public school district human resources management and safety concerns in

regards to violent student behavior and teacher attrition. Each item was formatted as an

open-ended question giving the researcher an opportunity to address further the

interviewee's responses to online survey questions. Responses to questions during the

follow-up interview were collected only in writing by the researcher. In order to

reinforce the assurance of confidentiality to the interview participant, interview responses

were not tape-recorded.

Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data is "primarily an inductive process of organizing

data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories"

(McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p. 461). The analytical strategy procedures utilized

by the researcher in this study are described as follows:

1. *Retrieve electronic survey data and transcribe interview data*. Survey participants' responses were recorded and stored on the Perception Web server through Baylor University's Electronic Library. Since the researcher was required to enter a password for access to the questionnaire data, the Perception web server provided data security. Follow-up interviews were conducted solely by the researcher. In order to reinforce the assurance of confidentiality to the interview participant, interview responses were not tape-recorded. Participants' responses to questions during the follow-up interview were collected only in writing by the researcher.

2. *Code data according to applicable categories or concepts in the data.* Leedy (1997) recommends the researcher develop a structural framework in order to avoid problems during the data analysis process and clarify the research plan and design. Based on those recommendations, the framework matrix utilized to organize survey instrument items served as the researcher's guideline to categorize and clarify data responses retrieved from Perception web server.

3. *Group data by categories or concepts.* Survey data retrieved from the Perception web server were exported into a spreadsheet format and organized into five categories based on each research question. Interview responses were transcribed by the researcher and organized into the same categories. Utilizing the Perception web server provided a manageable system for such a large amount of data as well as quick access to requested information. It was ultimately the researcher's decision to guide the data analysis into a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management based on the perceived influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania.

Written Report

According to Miles & Huberman (1994), one guideline for structuring a good written report of qualitative research is that it "should provide basic data, preferably in focused form . . . (organized narrative, data displays) . . . so that the reader can, in parallel with the researcher, draw warranted conclusions" (p. 304). First, a brief narrative was presented explains the acquisition and organization of archival data used to determine the selection of participants in the study. Next, survey findings presented in a narrative format address each of the five research questions. Visual representations of survey responses displayed in tables support narrative interpretations. The third section presents follow-up interview findings in narrative format organized by the four themes that emerged from web-based survey responses. Some direct quotes from participating school district administrators offer additional information supporting each theme.

Zeller (1991) states that qualitative research reports "serve as corpus from which the researcher actively selects, transforms, and interprets the material at hand . . ." (cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 298). Collectively, this information allowed the researcher to interpret and transform findings into a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their respective districts.

CHAPTER FOUR

Report of Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to assess how school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceive the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. This chapter presents a report of data analysis systematically addressing the five research questions. Guiding the organization of the findings was the assessment matrix (Appendix B). An analysis of web-based survey and interview responses is presented in a narrative format addressing each of the five research questions. Visual representations of survey responses displayed in Tables 1 through 9 support narrative interpretations. Summative information concludes each research question analysis. A narrative analyzing follow-up interview responses focuses on each of the four themes that emerged from web-based survey findings.

Archival Data

Data collected and analyzed from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools archival documents supported the development of selection criteria utilized in determining study participants. After organizing documented archival data into categories, the researcher established the criteria for selection of the study's participants. While no specific outcome emerged, the analysis of archival data over four school years from 2000 through 2004 identified participating districts that exhibited the following criteria:

- Violent student behavior incidents represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school years (2000 – 2004),

- Violent student behavior offenders represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school years (2000 – 2004), and

- A student assaulted at least one professional staff member during four school years (2000 – 2004).

Criteria were based on the researcher's findings from the descriptive analysis of PDE's archival data as well as the standards for "persistently dangerous schools." The standards describe "persistently dangerous schools" as

> any public, elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the two years prior to the most recent school year: (1) for a school whose enrollment is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents; (2) for a school whose enrollment is between 250 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2% of the school's enrollment; or (3) for a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20 or more dangerous incidents (PDE, 2001).

The researcher accessed archival documents through the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) website. Published annually by PDE's Office of Safe Schools, Division of Data Services, and Bureau of Human Resources, respectively, the documents reviewed by the researcher from 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years were: *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession in Pennsylvania's Public Schools, Summary of Enrollments,* and *Public Schools: Professional Personnel.*

Also, influenced by the literature review, analysis and categorization of archival documents supported the conceptual framework utilized in the development of questions for the web-based survey and follow-up interview. This was accomplished by combining practical and theoretical approaches as they pertain to perceptions of school district

administrators responsible for human resources management related to the correlation

between teacher attrition and violent student behavior.

Survey Findings

Prior to sending the web-based survey, the researcher verified contact information

through either the selected school district administrative office or the Intermediate Unit

supporting the school district. Verification of contact information revealed that out of the

201 selected school districts, 14 districts were in the process of either seeking or

appointing a new superintendent. Those 14 districts asked that they not be included in

the survey process at this time due to administrative transition. Another large urban

district required a detailed approval process in order to conduct a research study in their

district. After reviewing the process, the researcher discovered the process would take a

minimum of six weeks and could take up to four months to complete. Considering this

would result in a considerable delay of the research process, the decision was made to

eliminate this district from the list of selected participants.

Administrators responsible for human resources management from the remaining

186 selected districts were invited on August 12, 2005, to participate in the study through

an introductory notification via the researcher's Baylor email account. A total of 84

(45.2%) survey responses encompassing 28 out of 29 of Pennsylvania's Intermediate

Units were returned by September 23, 2005. Of the 84 survey participants, 14 notified

the researcher they were unable to access the web-based survey. Each indicated an

interest in participating in the survey and requested a hard copy of the survey document

to complete and return. In response to these 14 requests, a MS Word version of the

survey document was transmitted via email attachment. All 14 documents were

completed and returned to the researcher via the Internet, facsimile, or U.S. mail.

Four demographic questions in the web-based survey provided additional

information in the development of the profile of school district administrators in

Pennsylvania's public school districts. Responses to the first three questions provided

information regarding each participating administrators years of experience in public

education, as an administrator, and as a human resources management administrator. The

size of each school district was determined from the administrator's response to the

fourth question regarding the average annual student enrollment in their district. The

results of the web-based survey demographic responses is shown in Appendix J.

Research Question 1

What do school administrators responsible for human resources management

perceive as the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

Two of the ten web-based survey questions focused on reasons for teacher

attrition as perceived by the school district administrator responsible for human resources

management. Survey Question 1 asked what the school administrator perceived to be the

key reasons for teacher attrition in their school district over the four school years

encompassing 2000-01 through 2003-04. Table 1 illustrates the key reasons for teacher

attrition as perceived by school district administrators in Pennsylvania's public schools.

Regarding job dissatisfaction as a key reason for teacher attrition, one district's

administrator perceived the "inability to establish a positive classroom environment" as

leading to the resignation of one or two teachers. Another district administrator cited

"dissatisfaction with a career in education" as a likely reason for some teachers leaving

the profession. Two administrators made reference to the term "teacher burnout" as a

reason for some teacher attrition in their respective districts.

Focusing on the same four-year time frame from 2000-01 through 2003-04 school

years, the Survey Question 2 asked district administrators if they knew of any teachers

who resigned from their district with the intent of leaving the teaching profession and the

specific reasons given for resigning. Of the overall survey responses, nearly 53%

indicated their district had not experienced teacher attrition during those four consecutive

school years. The remaining 47% of school administrators were aware of teachers

Table 1

*Key Reasons Perceived by School District Administrators for
Teacher Attrition in Pennsylvania School Districts*

Reason	% Response
Retirement	44.9%
Better salary and benefits	22.4%
Family obligations	20.6%
Job dissatisfaction; burn-out	12.1%

resigning with the intent of leaving the teaching profession. Specific reasons given for

the resignations are presented in Table 2. While no response made a direct reference to

violent student behavior as a reason for any teacher leaving the professions, some

responses mentioned issues related to student behavior as a possible cause. One school

district administrator stated, "I am sure some have [left due to student discipline

problems], but I do not have first hand knowledge of their reasons." Another commented

Table 2

*Reasons Given to School District Administrators for Leaving the
Teaching Profession byTeachers Resigning From Their District in Pennsylvania*

Reason	% Response
Dissatisfied with teaching/burnout	39.2%
Career change/more money	37.3%
Family reasons	13.7%
Return Fulltime to Graduate School	3.9%
No Reason Given	5.9%

that one teacher gave "disrespectful students" as a reason for leaving the teaching

profession. In contrast, a reason for leaving was based on the teacher's dissatisfaction

with previous administrators. The administrator responded, "Yes, only know of one that

left due to being upset about the way the previous administration treated troubled kids."

Summary of Findings for Research Question 1

As shown in Chapter 2, Ingersoll's (2001) summarization of the U.S. Department

of Education National Center for Education Statistics' *Schools and Staffing Survey*

(SASS) and its supplement, the *Teacher Follow-up Survey* (TFS) statistical analysis

ranked by percentage the following reasons for teacher attrition:

- 40.0% - Family or personal

- 28.5% - Dissatisfaction

- 26.8% - To pursue other job

- 20.4% - School staffing action

- 12.5% - Retirement

Further analysis of the TFS revealed the top three reasons contributing to teacher

dissatisfaction were poor salary (54.3%), poor administrative support (42.7%), and

student discipline problems (22.9%). Numerous studies conducted on poor salary and

poor administrative support issues have provided research data for school district

administrators to consider. However, limited research is available on student discipline

problems as it relates to the influence on teachers and their dissatisfaction with teaching

to the point of resigning or leaving the profession altogether.

Responses by school district administrators in Pennsylvania to questions focusing

on perceived reasons for teacher attrition included most of the reasons revealed in the

SASS and TFS findings. However, the percentage rankings differ between the two

studies. For example, Pennsylvania school district administrators surveyed ranked

"Retirement" first at 44.9% compared to the SASS and TFS findings, which ranked

"Retirement" last at 12.5%.

In comparison, reasons for leaving the teaching profession as told to school

district administrators by teachers resigning from their district in Pennsylvania show a

similar alignment to the SASS and TFS results. Based on the school district

administrators' responses, the top two reasons given by Pennsylvania's teachers, "career

change for salary increase" and "dissatisfied with teaching," matched closely with the

SASS and TFS reasons "dissatisfaction" and "to pursue other job," which ranked second
and third, respectively.

Research Question 2

What perceptions do school administrators responsible for human resources
management have on violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition in
Pennsylvania's public schools?

Survey Question 7 asked the school district administrators responsible for human
resources management how he/she perceived the influence of violent student behavior on
teacher attrition in their district. Then, each participant was asked in Survey Question 8
to describe how their job had been influenced by violent student behavior over the four
consecutive school years from 2000-01 through 2003-04.   A comparison of responses to
both questions is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Influence of Violent Student Behavior from 2000-01 through 2003-04 School Years as
Perceived by Pennsylvania Public School District Administrator
Responsible for Human Resources Management in regard to:

	Teacher Attrition	Administrator's Job
No Influence	68.7%	31.2%
Little or No Influence	22.9%	12.5%
Did Influence	8.4%	56.3%

Based on the information in Table 3, school district administrators responsible for

human resources management do not perceive violent student behavior as an influencing

factor on teacher attrition in their district. Yet, the majority of school district administrators' responses indicate that violent student behavior does have a considerable influence on their own job. Overall, school district administrators reported that two key aspects of their job have been influenced by violent student behavior incidents in their district. Approximately 56% of the responses indicated more job responsibilities were encountered through the creation of various district committees for safety planning, security, emergency response, and crisis management. Along with staff development planning for curriculum and instructional opportunities, many administrators reported more time is needed to plan for additional workshops on crisis training, cultural awareness, and stress management. Another key aspect influencing administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools districts were the increasing interactions with law enforcement agencies, the juvenile justice system, and attending or conducting more expulsion hearings. Thirty percent of the responses showed that over the four-year period from 2000-01 through 2003-04 additional staffing of schools with law enforcement personnel in their district was warranted. One human resources management administrator said, "We had to hire local police officers for two of our schools in order to transition from being reactive to becoming proactive. The law enforcement personnel continue to be part of our district staff."

Summary of Findings for Research Question 2

In a 2003 report on common causes for job-related stress in the education profession, Jo-Ida Hansen and Brandon Sullivan discuss the severe implications high stress levels have on the "healthy functioning of individual teachers and schools, and

entire school systems" (p. 611). Considerable agreement exists among educators that the occupation of teaching is very stressful. In fact, job-related stress in the education profession is most often associated with teachers, not administrators. Cooper & Conley (1991) discovered in their research that among the most frequently discussed topics between teachers and administrators are motivating or controlling specific children and improving student discipline (p. 97).

Based on the findings of the survey questions addressing the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition, school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceive it has no influence. However, the influence of violent student behavior incidents significantly impacts their job as an administrator.   A contrast between the administrators' perceived influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition versus the influence on their own job indicated more stress exists at the administrative level.

As previously stated in Chapter 2, based on Thomas Hobbes' philosophy that the perception of harmony requires trust, Ronald Rebore (2003) defines communication as "a process through which information is generated that elicits a response in people concerning the message and the sender" (p. 142). Many of the survey responses indicated changes that occurred were additional administrative responsibilities on the part of human resources management involving additional communication between administrators and teachers. For example, some survey responses indicated that through the establishment of district committees focusing on safety and security issues, the communication link between administrators and teachers is strengthened through collaboration. School districts that place a priority on collegiality and ongoing

opportunities for improvement, whether it is through district committees, professional

development, or even the perceived influence of violent student behavior, are more likely

to create a positive and successful working environment.

Research Question 3

How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a

result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public school districts?

Issues pertaining to changes in district human resources policies and procedures

were addressed in two survey questions. Survey Questions 5 and 10 addressed two areas,

violent student behavior and teacher turnover rate, that can result in human resources

management policy and procedures changes. Responses to Survey Question 5 are

illustrated in Table 4 below:

Table 4

Human Resources Management Policy and Procedure Changes Relative to
Issues Concerning Violent Student Behavior in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts
from 2000-2001 through 2003-2004 School Years

Responses	Changes in Policy	Related to Violent Student Behavior
No	31.3%	62.7%
Yes	68.7%	37.3%

School district administrators' responses indicated that more changes in human resources

policy and procedures did occur during the four consecutive school years addressed in the

study. However, when asked if the policy and procedure changes were related to violent

student behavior, approximately two-thirds of the responses indicated they were not. In

districts where policy and procedures changes were the result of violent student behavior some key reasons included increased incidents of bullying, greater awareness of drug/alcohol related incidents among students, and more aggressive behavior among students.

Over the four years encompassing the 2000-2001 through 2003-2004 school years, 81.0% of the school district administrators responsible for human resources management reported no significant change in turnover rate had occurred in their district. The remaining 19.0% who did report a significant change in their district's turnover rate indicated much of the rate increase was due to retirement. School district administrators' responses reported that factors other than retirement contributing to increasing changes in turnover rates were leaving for better salary and benefits, relocation of spouse or another family member, issues associated with student behavior problems, and contract issues. Table 5 presents these findings.

Summary of Findings for Research Question 3

According to Seyfarth (2002), "turnover generally refers to employees who leave a company or district altogether" (p.100). As discussed in Chapter 2, any factor or factors causing an increase in the turnover rate in a public school district alert the district's administrators to further investigate the cause of this particular problem and to seek resolutions to improve morale and decrease the turnover rate. A common resolution in most public school districts is changing policies and procedures associated with those areas causing concern. Human resources policies and procedures do affect public school district employees at every level.

Table 5

*Pennsylvania's Public School District Administrators' Perception of Factors
Other than Retirement Contributing to Changes in Turnover Rates
from 2000-01 through 2003-04 School Years*

Factors Other than Retirement	% Response
Relocation	37.5%
Better salary and benefits	25.0%
Student Behavior Issues	18.7%
Contract Issues	18.7%

While the majority (68.7%) of the district administrators responding to the survey indicated that changes had occurred in human resources policies and procedures in the four years covering the 2000-2001 through 2003-2004 school years, most of these changes (62.7%) were not related to violent student behavior. Many reported that the majority of changes were regulatory in nature. For example, changes in Act 34 and Act 151 of the Pennsylvania School Code a few years ago regarding criminal record checks on anyone seeking employment in any public school district resulted in changes in school districts' human resources policies and procedures. Most administrators did report that some changes made to human resources policies and procedures were based on recurring issues in their respective district. Those changes often resulted in more staff development opportunities for employees.   A review of factors other than retirement contributing to increasing turnover rates reveals that only one, student behavior issues, emerged in school district administrators' responses regarding policy and procedure changes.

Research Question 4

What is human resources management's role in creating and maintaining a safe

working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools?

Two survey questions were directed at the role of human resources management

in creating and maintaining a safe working environment in Pennsylvania's public school

districts. Survey Question 6 asked the district administrator responsible for human

resources management to identify programs and/or staff development opportunities that

were currently offered or planned to be offered to assist teachers in their district on how

to deal with violent student behavior. School district administrators were asked in Survey

Question 7 to describe human resources management's role in creating and maintaining a

safe working environment for teachers in their district.

Responses to Survey Question 6 indicated that 71 out of 84 (84.5%) of

administrators who participated in the survey currently offer or plan to offer

programs/staff development opportunities in their district to assist teachers on how to

deal with violent student behavior. These opportunities are identified in Table 6.

Administrators from the remaining 13 districts (15.4%) reported programs/staff

development opportunities on how to deal with violent student behavior are currently not

offered in their respective district. There were three district administrators who said they

are currently looking at some programs on how to deal with violent student behavior and

plan to include these in future staff development. Two of the district administrators

responded that time constraints due to NCLB demands did not allow for implementation

of these programs. Eight replied that their district had no future plans to include these

programs/staff development opportunities because violent student behavior was not an
issue.

District administrator responses to Survey Question 7 were similar to those in
Survey Question 6. When asked to describe their role as the administrator responsible for
human resources management in creating and maintaining a safe working environment
for teachers in their district's schools, 72 (85.7%) said they did play a key role, while 12
(14.2%) indicated that was not a function of human resources management in their
district. Five of the 12 did clarify, however, that their district did address school safety;
they were just not part of the process.

Table 6

Current or Future Planned Programs/Staff Development Opportunities
To Assist Teachers on How To Deal With Violent Student Behavior in
Pennsylvania's Public School Districts

Program/Staff Development	% Offered
Student Assistance Programs/ Behavior Management	28.7%
Crisis Prevention Intervention	21.8%
Restraint Training/Assisting Students w/Emotional Disorders (offered to Spec. Ed. Teachers)	18.4%
Bullying Awareness	11.5%
Safety Security Training (by local law enforcement agencies)	8.1%
Gang/Drug/Alcohol Awareness	6.9%
Cultural Diversity Awareness	4.6%

In describing human resources management's role, each of the 72 respondents
identified a variety of programs and strategies implemented in their district to create and

maintain a safe working environment for their teachers. The majority of the programs

mentioned focus on staff safety. A small number of districts included curriculum

strategies that specifically address creating safety awareness among students. Table 7

lists the programs and strategies ranked in the order of most frequent use by

Pennsylvania's public school districts.

Summary of Findings for Research Question 4

A review of literature reveals teacher attrition rates tend to be higher in schools

identified as unsafe due to student behavior problems, especially behaviors resulting in

violent acts. Throughout many communities in the United States, previous generations

Table 7

Programs and Strategies Implemented to Create and Maintain a Safe Working
Environment for Teachers in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts

Program or Strategy	% Implemented
Develop District Safety Plan and/or Emergency Response Plan	50.0%
Installation of security equipment in all buildings	15.7%
Review/update student/employee handbooks	12.9%
Safety Awareness Training for all teachers	10.0%
Staffing schools with licensed law enforcement personnel	10.0%
Update curriculum to include Character Education (Elementary), Second Step Program (K-8), and EXCEL (Secondary Pro-Social Behavior)	1.4%

considered the local school as a safe place where dedicated teachers taught their children.

Public school districts throughout Pennsylvania are located in all types of communities –

rural and urban, generational and transient. District administrators responsible for human

resources management who responded to this survey represented a good cross section of

all types of communities in Pennsylvania. Their responses indicated an overwhelming

majority (85.7%) are aligned with the concern about safety in our community schools and

are dedicated to a plan of action to reinstate the local school as a safe place for teachers to

work and students to learn.

Research Question 5

        What current and/or future plans do Pennsylvania's public school districts have

for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher

attrition?

        Addressing Research Question 5 are two survey questions. Current and/or future

plans for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on

teacher attrition are the focus of Survey Question 8. Responses to this question are

illustrated in Table 8.

        Currently, 62 out of 84 districts (73.8%) that participated in the survey stated they

currently have in place proactive intervention programs that address issues related to

students who have either exhibited or show tendencies towards violent behavior.

Administrators responsible for human resources management from each of these districts

also indicated they continue to look at other programs that can be added to enhance

existing ones. Twenty-two district administrators responded they currently do not have

any programs in place that proactively intervene against violent student behavior. Of the

Table 8

Current and/or Future Plans for Proactive Interventions Against Violent Student Behavior in Pennsylvania's Public School District

Current Programs Offered	% Response
Yes	85.2%
No	14.8%
Future Programs Planned	% Response
Yes	83.8%
No	16.2%

22 districts, 16 stated they had no future plans to implement such programs. While some expressed lack of funding and time constraints as a primary cause for not including proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior in their district, most said they were not needed because violent student behavior was not an issue. Each of the remaining six districts' administrators responded they did plan to implement this type of program as early as next school year.

Specific proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior currently implemented or planned by responding district administrators are identified in Table 9.

Survey Question 9 asked participating administrators to identify measures taken by their district to decrease or alleviate the effects on teacher attrition. Interestingly, an overwhelming majority of responses (73.6%) indicated nothing had been done to alleviate the effects on teacher attrition. The remaining 26.3% reported overall two types

of measures taken in their districts to alleviate the effects of teacher attrition were

mentoring of new teachers and establishment of a wellness program that offered

counseling services.

Table 9

Specific Proactive Intervention Programs Against Violent Student Behavior Currently Implemented or Planned in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts

Current Programs Offered	% Response
Intervention	74.1%
• Student Assistance Program	
• Anger Management	
• Restorative Strategies for Schools	
• Crisis Intervention/Emergency Response	
• Safety Plan	
• Guidance Counselors	
•	
Enforcement	10.6%
• Student Code of Conduct	
• School Resource Officers (licensed law enforcement officers)	
•	
Awareness	15.3%
• Bullying Awareness Program/Training	
• Harassment Policy	
•	

Summary of Findings for Research Question 5

As discussed in Chapter 2, measures to decrease or alleviate teacher attrition

involve determining the cause and implementing strategies that resolve the problem. One

of the key reasons teachers give for leaving the district is stress due to the "lack of

training on how to handle discipline in their classrooms. As a result, many teachers are forced to send disciplinary problems to the principal's office to handle. In some cases, the students are sent back to the classroom and the teachers are told to handle their own problems" (Donovan, 2000, p. 3). Lack of understanding at the administrative level more often than not leads to frustration at the teaching level, which ultimately leads to teachers leaving.

Responses to Survey Questions 8 and 9 suggest district administrators responsible for human resources management do address measures to resolve teacher attrition issues in the same manner they resolve violent student behavior issues. Based on the majority of administrators' responses, mentoring new teachers tends to be the common "cure all" in most districts.

More detail was given in responses focusing on proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition. Aligned with the vast array of proactive interventions mentioned by the district administrators was their intense focus to assure these measures were continually monitored and maintained in order to foster a secure sense of trust with the students.

Interview Findings

Concluding the web-based survey was a question asking the participant if he/she would be willing to participate in a brief follow-up interview with the researcher. The number of "yes" responses determined the number of volunteer follow-up interview participants.

Twenty-six (31.0%) of the 84 survey respondents volunteered to participate in a follow-up interview. Nineteen administrators were Superintendent, four were Assistant

Superintendent, one Director of Human Resources, one Business/Personnel Manager, and one Director of Curriculum and Instruction/Personnel comprised the group of follow-up interview participants. Based on the availability of the 26 school district administrators who volunteered, specific dates and times were set over a three week timeframe for the researcher to conduct each interview. Due to the considerable distance and time involved in traveling to each interviewee's office, the researcher and each participant mutually agreed to conduct a telephone interview.

Findings from responses to the four demographic questions in the web-based survey revealed that together, the interview participants represented an average of 27 years experience in public education, 15 years experience in public school administration, and 7.5 years experience in public school human resources management. Geographically, the 26 public school districts participating in the follow-up interview were evenly dispersed throughout Pennsylvania in a combination of urban, suburban, and rural settings. School districts ranged in size from small (900 students) to mid-size (2100 students) to moderately large (5600 students). Appendix K presents a visual representation of demographical data collected on follow-up interview participants.

Prior to each interview, review of each volunteer participant's survey response allowed the researcher to identify key points for further discussion in relation to the interview questions. In some instances, one or two interview questions were eliminated based on "not applicable" survey responses. In order to assure anonymity of participants, each set of interview responses was coded with a number randomly assigned by the researcher. Instead of using a tape recorder, the researcher recorded all interview

responses in handwritten format. Following the interview, responses were transcribed by the researcher into a spreadsheet format organized thematically by assigned number. Data from the follow-up interviews were categorized by themes.

Throughout the interview process, it became evident to the researcher the themes that emerged from the web-based survey responses also emerged from the follow-up interview responses. Interview responses and findings regarding Pennsylvania's public school districts were organized by the following themes: (1) violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition, (2) role of human resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of violent student behavior, (3) increased awareness and implementation of security measures occurred in most districts, and (4) current and planned proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior are ongoing.

Each follow-up interview participant was also questioned about the rapport between teachers and students in their district, availability of employee assistance programs and types of counseling services offered. Concluding the follow-up interview, the researcher asked what discoveries, if any, were made regarding violent student behavior and teacher attrition in their respective district as a result of participation in both the web-based survey and the interview.

Theme One

Violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition. Interview responses regarding teacher attrition aligned with survey findings. Only two out of 26 administrators responsible for human resources management made some reference to student behavior problems as a cause for teachers leaving their district.

District 22. "No. One teacher currently on staff has issues with students. It was more of the teacher's problem than the student's."

District 23. "No. Only one teacher I know of left recently due to difficulty with classroom management."

Discoveries made by four interview participants indicate teacher attrition in their district as well as other districts could be influenced by student behavior problems, but not necessarily violent student behavior.

District 3. At first I thought the survey did not apply to our district. Then, it made me take a look at studies on teacher attrition and causes. I was surprised to discover how many teachers are leaving inner city schools due to student behavior and moving to suburban and rural areas to teach.

District 6. Participating in the survey "made me think more about teacher attrition in our district. In retrospect, my instinct is that we have had some teachers leave because of problems with students."

District 10. "Need to know more about teacher attrition, especially those who retire early. Why aren't we doing more to encourage teachers not to retire early? … an exit interview would be appropriate to get a better handle on what is causing them to leave and make us ask ourselves, 'Could there have been more we could have done?'"

District 21. "We discovered we are a stable school district. No teacher attrition has occurred due to the influence of violent student behavior. We do have some students dealing with anger management due to home environment issues. This could lead to problems if we do not deal with it now."

Theme Two

Role of human resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of violent student behavior. The organizational structure of human resources management in most small to mid-size public school districts in Pennsylvania is one of a management team comprised of the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent and/or the Business Manager, and building principals. Interview participants represented

school districts ranging from small (900 students) to mid-size (5600 students) to large

(16,000 students).

The overall focus of human resources management is " to achieve the objectives

of the school district and to help individual staff members maximize their potentials and

develop their professional careers" (Rebore, 2003, p. 49). When interviewed,

administrators from several of the smaller districts described their role as the only district

human resources management administrator, who wears many hats. Given the

differential in both size and level of responsibility of human resources management in

many of the interview participants' districts, the role each played in responding to

incidents of violent student behavior varied from district to district. The overall response

indicated the role played was one of indirect involvement.

> *District 1.* "Response occurs at the building level by the principal. If the incident
> involves violent or aggressive [student] behavior that may require law
> enforcement officers on the scene, then the Superintendent gets involved."

> *District 4.* "Most student behavior issues are dealt with at the building level. If it
> is a Level 4 (serious) offense, then the Supt. becomes more directly involved. If
> the Supt. deems an expulsion is warranted, then it is taken to the school board.
> All incidents, regardless of level of offense, are reported to the Superintendent's
> office."

> *District 5.* "Not much, only when it involves a teacher getting injured as a result
> of an incident. Then, our Business Manager makes certain that teacher is
> informed about Workman's Comp procedures, receives medical attention (if
> needed), knows his/her legal rights, etc."

> *District 7.* Superintendent "serves as a witness during expulsion hearings when a
> parent "waives their rights."

> *District 10.* "Collaborate with other administrators [on human resources
> management team] when something occurs. If incident involves legal action, then
> we meet with our school district solicitor (attorney) to discuss further."

> *District 14.* "Human resources' role is as follows: (1) Initially receive a call from
> building administrator to inform of incident and to assure they are following

policy and correct procedures. (2) Sometimes, a second call is received requesting a second opinion on decision."

District 19. "All matters related to student behavior goes through my office. Expulsion is handled at this level."

District 26. "Not involved. Superintendent would get involved only if expulsion hearing takes place."

While the overall impact role responsibility played in response to violent student behavior is indirect, most district administrators responsible for human resources management indicated they were directly influenced on a personal level. Each interviewee was asked if the increase in violent student behavior in school had influenced them personally. The 68% of interview "yes" responses were similar to the nearly 60% "yes" responses given in the survey.

District 1. "I have become more conscientious… always closing doors, windows for security. Where we could once not worry about leaving doors unlocked and windows opened, that is something we cannot do anymore.

District 2. "Yes. Job responsibility is greater - added another facet. Any kind of threat was always addressed, but I am even more aware now."

District 4. "Moved me to the point of paranoia -- have become more aware and alert to these issues. My #1 concern is the safety of all our students. Have become even more proactive than before."

District 6. "Yes. When these situations occur and must be dealt with, I do a lot of soul searching. Often, as the Superintendent, I'm caught in a 'cross-fire' between what is best for the student and what others think should be done. It is often a lonely position to be in."

District 7. "Yes. It sensitizes me more to students' personal issues as well as cultural transition of different ethnicities moving into our community. Also, I realize I must be the gatekeeper of student information on what should and should not be divulged to our teachers."

District 8. "Made me educate myself more about school law, local law enforcement agencies. Then, I am more apt to share my knowledge with administrative staff."

District 13. "Somewhat stressful. Issues with our students are more drug-related behavior than violent behavior. The county where our district is located and the community we serve is very conservative. The community and our district is on the verge of problems that currently exist in a nearby urban area."

District 17. "Yes. By hearing of gun violence in other schools, it causes me to question my procedures and interactions with parents, students, and teachers. I have become more aware of my 'zone of responsibility.'"

District 22. "Yes, it has had a definite affect not only on me, but our administrative team overall. It has caused us to be more aware and use a team approach to design a plan of response. Overall, people (staff) want a guarantee that they have a safe environment to work in."

District 24. "Only to the point of being more alert."

District 26. "Media coverage has made us become more alert."

Theme Three

Increased awareness and implementation of security measures occurred in most districts. A predominant fact in the survey and most all of the interview responses to security measures was the implementation of a Safety Planning Committee in each district. Overall responses indicated administrators' reasons for establishing this type of committee was based on feedback received from teachers as well as an increased awareness of issues associated with escalating student behavior problems. Almost all districts participating in the study have either implemented or are in the process of implementing security measures.

District 3. [I have become] "very actively involved in safety program and proactive interventions. Attending more safety, security conferences."

District 4. "Columbine warranted some changes be considered in schools nationwide. While we had not experienced any problems, it gave us reason to certainly think about taking measures to assure this did not happen in our school district. A committee comprised of school district staff members and community members, including parents, was formed in an effort to basically interact with the community on this area of concern. Many of the community members did not

want many changes, which included student ID's, security cameras, and locked doors with security buzzers. Ultimately, these changes did occur primarily due to the pressures brought forth by post- Columbine studies."

District 14. "We have a district safety committee. Our schools are as safe as can reasonably be expected. If students hear/know of someone carrying a weapon, they would inform a teacher. The elementary school has at least one security in front of the building. Middle school has eight to twelve security cameras inside/outside the building. The high school has a computer-controlled system that links to police department. Also, there are two full-time security guards on staff at the high school."

District 15. "As Business Manager who is also responsible for human resources management in our district, I have become directly involved in overseeing district building projects, installation and operation of security equipment."

District 17. "Our schools are very safe. We have improved on safety in our buildings by adding security cameras, controlled building access, and by having more students educated off campus in Alternative Education."

District 20. "As a result of post-Columbine policies and our Safety Planning Committee, we now have metal detectors installed in our schools. We have outlined very clear expectations on student behavior. Also, the culture at our high has been redesigned, which is in its second year with a new administration."

District 23. "Yes, we have safe schools. Implemented school resource officer at our Junior/Senior High School (Gr. 7-12). We also review annually Student Codes to determine if changes are needed."

District 24. "Very safe both for students and teachers. Yes, renovations included swipe cards. This is the very first year we have added four police officers at the HS. The officers, however, divide their time with other schools in the district."

District 26. "The school is the center of attention of the whole town. Community takes a lot of pride in the school building. We are very careful here to assure safety is maintained by issuing ID tags to all employees (color coded by floor). Visitors also check in and receive ID tags when entering the building."

Theme Four

   Current and planned proactive intervention programs against violent student

behavior are ongoing. According to Conley & Cooper (1991), professionally managed

teachers are those who, with the support of colleagues, are allowed some degree of

independence, the ability to organize their work to meet all students' needs, and

opportunities to make collaborative school-wide decisions (p. 7). Even though the

responses of most school district administrators responsible for human resources

management responses indicated violent student behavior does not influence teacher

attrition in their district, the same districts are actively developing, implementing, and

maintaining ongoing programs and staff development opportunities for teachers on how

to deal with violent student behavior. Some interviewee's responses provided

information on what they would do if this became an issue in their district. Others

responded more directly by stating what was currently being done as well as plans for

additional programs in the future.

> *District 4.* "Yes, we currently offer the following programs and staff
> development: (1) bullying awareness (2) teachers have been trained in protection
> techniques, physical restraints (3) students and teachers have been surveyed on
> incidents of bullying they have observed."

> *District 8.* "If this became an issue, as Superintendent, I would do the following:
> (1) address this issue with the administrative team by looking at our discipline
> policy at the district and school level as well as addressing the manner in which
> teachers are managing the classroom. (2) address the cause for the increase in
> violent student behavior.   (3) determine what we can do to work with our
> teachers on how to deal more effectively with these incidents and how to manage
> their own stress level. Basically, we would take a 'grass roots approach.' One
> thing I am beginning to notice is the large influx of students transferring into our
> small rural district from the urban areas. This is gradually changing the climate of
> our student population and could eventually lead to student behavior problems."

> *District 9.* "We work a lot with new teachers during the induction process.
> Otherwise, building principal will address specific topics/issues directly to their
> building staff."

> *District 12.* "This is a topic we talk extensively to our teachers about. Before it
> becomes a problem, we have implemented the Expectation Theory, which is also
> part of the Induction process in our district. The Expectation Theory is one of
> clear expectations: (1) consistency is important (2) students know what
> behavioral expectations are.   …each year the student handbook and code of

conduct goes before the school board for review to determine if updates are warranted. Everyone must agree on any changes or no changes."

District 20. "We have provided regularly in-service training over the years and continue to increase offerings. Programs include: (1) Program for teachers on how to diffuse situations before getting out of hand. (2) Improving communication/technology techniques in a crisis situation."

District 23. "We have implemented a new discipline management program in our district, T-Base Discipline from Dan Richerson of Lazor and Richerson Inc. Dan Richerson comes to our district providing firsthand ongoing staff development annually. The program has proven to be very successful and well received."

District 25. "Depending on the need, we keep a notebook of programs available. Currently, we offer to all teachers Bullying Awareness through the Crime Victims Council."

Two districts have added cultural diversity awareness training as part of the staff development program. This is primarily due to the increasing population of non-English speaking families moving into the community. Both districts are located in small rural communities comprised of families who have resided there for generations.

District 15. "We have implemented diversity awareness as part of the staff development plan to assist our staff on how to deal with behavior issues, especially those associated with an increasing transient population."

District 18. "Over the past year or two, most of our aggressive student behavior issues have been the result of some of our ESL students' increasing level of frustration at not being accepted by other students. Frustrations transcended into aggressive behavior that resulted in several physical altercations involving our students. Since adding a cultural diversity awareness program to both our staff development and classroom curriculum, we are beginning to see a decrease in this type of behavior."

Summary

Chapter 4 reported an analysis of the web-based survey data and follow-up interview responses. Five research questions were addressed along with responses to the web-based survey questions. Tables 1 through 9 displayed visual representations of the

survey responses supported by narrative interpretations. Evidenced by frequencies and percentages, several themes emerged from the survey responses. The themes were: (a) violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition, (b) the role of human resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of violent student behavior, (c) increased awareness and implementation of security measures occurred in most districts, and (d) current and planned proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior are ongoing.

The same themes also emerged from the follow-up interview responses. All responses from 26 participating public school district administrators responsible for human resources management who volunteered for the follow-up interview were presented verbatim supported by narrative analysis.

It was the researcher's goal to reveal practices as well as procedures that could eliminate or reduce the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts. As the findings from the web-based survey and follow-up interviews revealed, school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts did not perceive violent student behavior as an influencing factor on teacher attrition in their respective district. Pennsylvania's school district administrators responsible for human resources management did perceive that implementation of proactive intervention programs for students and ongoing in-service training programs for teachers had reduced incidents of violent student behavior and teacher attrition in their districts.

Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study. Also, the findings are discussed in relation to implications for policy and practice and suggestions for additional research.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations

As an aide to the reader, this final chapter of the dissertation restates the research

problem and reviews the major methods used in the study. The major sections of this

chapter summarize and discuss the findings. Additionally, this chapter provides a

descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management

in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the influence violent

student behavior has on teacher attrition in their district.

Statement of the Problem

Many studies have acknowledged an increase in severe student behavior problems

in America's schools, especially inner city schools. Attrition studies have identified

causes for teachers leaving the profession, especially within the first five years of

teaching. Over the past two decades, America's schools and classrooms, especially inner

city schools, have experienced an increase in disruptive and threatening student behavior

problems that impede the process of learning and teaching.   Moreover, teachers' efforts

to protect their students from disruptions and threats to their safety must now include

efforts to protect themselves. Even though national crime statistics show violent crimes

have decreased in our neighborhoods, many of our nation's teachers feel unsafe in their

work environment (Aronson, 2000, p. 99). With acts of violent student behavior on the

rise over the past decade, it is a reasonable request by teachers to ask their districts'

school administrators to propose policies to the school board to reduce the risk of violence in their work environment. A key function of the school district administrator responsible for human resources management is facilitating collective bargaining discussions between teacher organizations and school boards regarding provisions in the teaching contract including the professional right to personal safety and security.

Literature focusing on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety, violent student behavior, and public school human resources management reveals very little information on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. A review of several studies and surveys, however, offers relevant data on teacher attrition, causes for teacher attrition, violent student behavior, and causes for violent student behavior. Some connections found among the studies focus on 1) teacher job dissatisfaction as it relates to teachers leaving the profession, 2) teacher experiences with violent student behavior, 3) causes for violent student behavior as perceived by teachers, and 4) attributes and frequency of violent student behavior.   One study conducted over a two-year period by the Philadelphia Education Fund revealed in 2002 that two key reasons teachers gave for not applying in the Philadelphia City School District were problems with student discipline and fears about personal safety (Useem & Neild, 2001, p. 3). Reinforcing the Philadelphia Education Funds' data are the overall statistics compiled over the last four school years from PDE's *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession* that nearly half of Pennsylvania's public school districts have annually an average of at least one teacher assault by a student and a minimum of two percent violent student behavior incidents based on annual student enrollment.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to develop a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their district. The following questions guided the research:

1. What do school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive as the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

2. What are the perceptions of school district administrators responsible for human resources management relative to the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

3. How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public schools?

4. What is the role of human resources management in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools?

5. What current and/or future plans exist in Pennsylvania's public school districts for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its affect on teacher attrition?

Review of the Methodology

The objectives of this study assessed how school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceived the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. To accomplish this the researcher implemented a case study methodology utilizing multiple sources of evidence

through exploratory, descriptive, and interactive inquiry; collecting data from several entities; and analyzing the data for replication.

Participants in this study were school administrators responsible for human resources management from 186 selected public school districts in Pennsylvania. A descriptive inquiry analysis of archival data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapons Possession* from the 2000-2001 through 2003-2004 school years established criteria for selection of participating public school districts. The researcher discovered three specific data in the report relating to the focus of this study. The three data were: (1) number of violent student behavior incidents, (2) number of violent student offenders, and (3) number of staff assaulted by violent student offenders. Findings from the report showed the average percentage rate from 2000 through 2004 of violent student behavior incidents and offenders involved in those incidents to be two percent of the annual student enrollment. Additionally, it was revealed that an average of one assault by a student on a professional staff member occurred annually from 2000 through 2004. Considering the fact that enrollment varies among the public school districts in Pennsylvania, ranking by percentage the incidents of violent student behavior and student offenders committing those incidents offered a more suitable comparison of district. Professional staff members assaulted by a student were reported by number of victims (staff members) and not ranked by percentage.

The researcher developed the following criteria for selecting public school district participants: (a) violent student behavior incidents represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school years (2000 – 2004), (b) violent student behavior

offenders represent an average of at least 2% of student enrollment during four school

years (2000 – 2004), and (c) a student assaulted at least one professional staff member

during four school years (2000 – 2004).

Criteria were based on the researcher's findings from the descriptive analysis of

PDE's documented data as well as the standards for "persistently dangerous schools."

The standards describe "persistently dangerous schools" as

> any public, elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the
> following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the
> two years prior to the most recent school year: (1) for a school whose enrollment
> is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents; (2) for a school whose enrollment is
> between 250 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2%
> of the school's enrollment; or (3) for a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20
> or more dangerous incidents (PDE, 2001).

By selecting only those districts meeting the criteria, a common attribute among

participants was established regarding percentage of violent student behavior incidents,

offenders, and the number of professional staff members assaulted by students. Out of

501 public school districts in Pennsylvania, 201 exhibited all criteria over a period of

four consecutive school years from 2000 through 2004.

Multiple data sources were used to assess how public school district

administrators responsible for human resources management perceive the influence of

violent student behavior on teacher attrition in their district. The administrator

responsible for human resources management in each participating school district

received via email an initial letter from the researcher explaining the purpose of the study

as well as the potential benefit of their volunteer participation. The email also included a

link to the web-based survey "Teacher Attrition in Pennsylvania" that consisted of four

demographic and ten survey questions. Utilizing a web-based survey was advantageous

based on "low operating cost, saving time, and reducing errors from coding" (Dominelli, 2003; Umbach, 2004) as well as offering the "ability to survey a large number of participants, which is helpful when studying a group in a population that is underrepresented" (Umbach, 2004, p. 25). Concluding the web-based survey was the option for the administrator to volunteer for further participation in a follow-up interview. The researcher contacted each volunteer participant to pre-arrange a convenient date and time to conduct the interview.

In this study the researcher's role was that of collector, evaluator, and interpreter of data collected from selected participants who are also professional colleagues. The researcher's professional experience as a public school building level and district administrator and human resources management emphasized this role. Twelve years working directly with students, teachers, and administrators in public schools enhanced the researcher's awareness of the levels of fear and frustration that result from violent student behavior. Additionally, five years working in human resources management made the researcher aware of the regulations and issues encountered in maintaining successful employee relations.

As a practicing public school district administrator in Pennsylvania, the researcher realized interactive communication with participating colleagues to collect data raised the question of ethical standards. To assure the study was implemented and distributed in an ethical manner, the researcher attentively followed Leedy's (1997) suggested guidelines. The guidelines focused on being fair, honest, open, respectful, discreet, and the participant's informed willingness to continue or withdraw from the research.

Summary of Findings

Survey Findings

Administrators responsible for human resources management from 186 selected

districts were invited to participate in the web-based survey on August 12, 2005. Each

participating administrator accessed the web-based survey through a link provided in the

email notification. A total of 84 (45.2%) survey responses encompassing 28 of the 29

Intermediate Units in Pennsylvania were returned by September 23, 2005. Of the 84

survey participants, 14 notified the researcher they were unable to access the web-based

survey. Each indicated an interest in participating in the survey and requested a hard

copy of the survey document to complete and return. In response to these 14 requests, a

MS Word version of the survey document was transmitted via email attachment. All 14

documents were completed and returned to the researcher via the Internet, facsimile, or

U.S. mail.

All web-based survey responses were transmitted and securely stored in the

Baylor University Perception web server.   The researcher's Perception web server

account login allowed secure access to the web-based survey data. All collected data

from both the web-based survey and MS word documents were exported to a spreadsheet

format and categorized by each of the five research questions. Careful analysis of the

data produced frequencies and percentages revealing the following themes: (1) violent

student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition, (2) the role of human

resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of violent

student behavior, (3) increased awareness and implementation of security measures

occurred in most districts, and (4) current and planned proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior are ongoing.

Interview Findings

Twenty-six of the 84 survey respondents who volunteered to participate in a follow-up interview provided the researcher with contact information at the conclusion of the survey. Specific dates and times were set over a three-week timeframe based on the availability of the 26 participating district administrators. Due to the considerable distance and time involved in traveling to each interviewee's office, the researcher and each participant mutually agreed to conduct a telephone interview. In order to assure anonymity of participants, each set of interview responses was coded with a number randomly assigned by the researcher. Instead of using a tape recorder, the researcher recorded all interview responses in handwritten format. Following each interview the researcher transcribed all responses into a spreadsheet format, similar to the survey response format, and organized by each of the five research questions.

All 26 participants interviewed were either the district administrator responsible for human resources management or a member of the district human resources administrative team. Nineteen Superintendents, four Assistant Superintendents, one Director of Human Resources, one Business/Personnel Manager, and one Director of Curriculum and Instruction/Personnel comprised the group of follow-up interview participants. Together, the interview participants represented an average of 27 years experience in public education, 15 years experience in public school administration, and 7.5 years experience in public school human resources management.

Collectively, district administrators interviewed represented 16 of 28 Intermediate Units within the Pennsylvania Department of Education's public school system. Geographically, the 26 public school districts participating in the follow-up interview were evenly dispersed throughout Pennsylvania, serving a combination of urban, suburban, and rural communities. Student enrollment in the 26 participating districts ranged from 900 students (small) to 2350 students (moderate) to 5600 students (large). Specifically, district administrators from eight small, eight moderate, and ten large size districts were interviewed. Given the fact that Pennsylvania Department of Education's statistics report 77.4% of their public school districts had an average student enrollment of 3642 students over the four school years from 2000 through 2004, follow-up interview participants represented a good sampling of selected districts in this study.

Interview questions about human resources management policies and procedures focused on issues surrounding teacher attrition, violent student behavior, safety and security, intervention programs, and administrative support of staff. Specifically, each interviewee was asked about the rapport between teachers and students in their district, availability of employee assistance programs and types of counseling services offered, and the influence of violent student behavior on them personally. Concluding the follow-up interview, the researcher asked what discoveries, if any, were made regarding violent student behavior and teacher attrition in their respective district as a result of participation in both the web-based survey and the interview.

Throughout the interview process, themes that emerged from the survey responses were also evident in the interview responses. Findings from the interviews with school district administrators responsible for human resources management were organized by

the same four themes that emerged from the survey responses. The themes were: (1)

violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition, (2) the role of

human resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of

violent student behavior, (3) increased awareness and implementation of security

measures occurred in most districts, and (4) current and planned proactive intervention

programs against violent student behavior are ongoing.

Discussion of Findings

This study included Pennsylvania public school district administrators responsible

for human resources management. Responses from 84 web-based surveys and 26 follow-

up interviews guided the researcher to establish a descriptive profile of school

administrators responsible for human resources management based on their perceived

influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania.

Nearly 78% of Pennsylvania's public school districts have an annual enrollment

ranging from 900 to 3650 students. Typically, a district has four school buildings: one

high school (grades 9-12), one middle school (grades 6-8), one intermediate school

(grades 3-5), and one elementary school (grades K-2).

The findings of this study imply that the role of those who function as the public

school administrator responsible for human resources management varies among

Pennsylvania's public school districts. In most districts, especially those serving small

rural communities, the responsibility is generally shared between the Superintendent and

Business Manager. Districts in suburban and urban areas are more likely to have one

administrator, either the Director of Human Resources or Assistant Superintendent for

Personnel, who supervises both a district office staff and building administrators in day-

to-day implementation of human resources policies and procedures.   The Director of Curriculum and Instruction in one district was responsible for human resources management due to this individual's previous human resources experience in business and industry.   While the majority of the participating administrators responsible for human resources management believed violent student behavior did not influence teacher attrition in their respective school district, among them exists an increasing awareness of the potential for this to become an issue if proactive measures are not in place.

In contrast, an analysis of both survey and interview responses revealed that more than half of the same participating administrators do believe violent student behavior influences their job with added administrative responsibilities. Development, implementation, and monitoring of policies and procedures are a key aspect of human resources management. District administrators responsible for human resources management recognize that although they may not have direct involvement with student behavior incidents in their district, numerous legislative changes mandating changes in student discipline codes as well as responding to community concerns are challenging and adding more hours to their already extended workday.

Conclusions

Highlighting this section are the conclusions related to the five research questions that provided the framework for this study. It should be noted, however, that given the fact that this study consisted of volunteer participants from selected public school districts in Pennsylvania, it might not be appropriate to generalize the results in other situations.

Research Question 1

What do school administrators responsible for human resources management perceive as the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

Analysis of responses by Pennsylvania's (PA) public school district administrators responsible for human resources management revealed their perceived reasons for teacher attrition in their respective district aligned to the top three reasons given in the U. S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2001 survey on teacher attrition were: dissatisfaction (28.5% - NCES; 28.7% - PA), family/personal reasons (40.0% - NCES, 14.2% - PA), and pursues other job/more money (26.8% - NCES, 36.7% - PA). "Retirement," another reason given in both surveys, ranked first in the PA survey at 36.6% and last in the NCES survey at 12.5%.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of school district administrators responsible for human resources management relative to the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?

This study revealed that Pennsylvania's public school district administrators responsible for human resources management do not perceive violent student behavior as an influencing factor in teacher attrition in their district. However, what is implied is the administrator's perception of the influence violent student behavior does have on their job. In a report by Hansen and Sullivan (2003), they discuss the severe implications high stress levels have on the "healthy functioning of individual teachers and schools, and entire school systems" (p. 611). Job-related stress in the education profession has focused on teachers with little or no regard to the influence it has on administers. It was

revealed in 57.1% of the survey responses and 68% of the interview participants that the influence of violent student behavior significantly impacted their job as an administrator.

Considering the distinct contrast in the perceived influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition versus the administrator's job, an increased level of stress at the administrative level may have an influence on the ability to recognize actual reasons for teacher attrition in these districts. School administrators are ultimately accountable for implementation of policies and procedures in their school district. When a high rate of student disciplinary actions occur resulting in too many student suspensions and expulsions, it is a bad a reflection on the school administration. Farber (1991) states,

> "Instead of attacking the problem [of student violence] head-on, supervisors and administrators hide behind the bureaucratic hierarchy that keeps track of only the most serious offenses and tries to keep even these figures from the public. Meanwhile, the psychological damage being done to children and educators is incalculable . . . what can be more basic to a free society than the absolute right of teachers to teach and students to learn, free from fear?" (Saltzman/*New York Times* cited in Farber, 1991, p. 55).

The administrator responsible for human resources management can reduce his/her own level of stress through effective management practices. Deal (1991) believes effective human resources management involves investing in the people within the organization (p. 119). Key ideas include employing the right people for the job, rewarding them, offering job security, and continually providing staff and professional development. For example, establishing and maintaining a strong teacher induction and mentorship program lays the foundation towards a collegial working and learning environment. An effective administrator not only monitors these programs, but becomes an active participant, as well.

Research Question 3

How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public school districts?

Approximately half of the administrators responding to the survey indicated regulatory changes in human resources management policies and procedures did occur, but most of the changes were not related to violent student behavior. Although the general consensus among the study's participants that violent student behavior was not an issue in their districts, it did become an issue in two districts when it directly involved one teacher in each district being injured as a result of a violent student behavior incident. During the follow-up interviews, after more thought on this question, administrators indicated that some policy and procedural changes that did occur were directly related to an increased awareness level of violent student behavior occurring in other districts. Discussed were changes in policies and procedures addressing Workmen's Compensation, Employee Assistance Plans, Crisis Intervention Plans, and development of a district Safety Planning Committee.

Research Question 4

What is human resources management's role in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools?

As evidenced in this study, human resources management school administrators in Pennsylvania understand they play an important role in creating and maintaining a safe working environment in their school district. Almost all (85.7%) of the survey participants indicated that they are aligned with the concern about safety in the community's schools and exhibit a dedicated effort to develop, implement, and monitor a

plan of action that assures the local school is a safe place for teachers to work and students to learn.

This study reveals Pennsylvania's public school district human resources management administrators direct involvement include each of the following: (1) Through collaborative efforts of human resources management school administrators, teachers, students, and community members, district safety plans and/or emergency response plans are developed. (2) Implementation begins through effective staff development programs for teachers and administrators on Safety Awareness Training. (3) In some districts, especially those in which the Business Manager is responsible for human resources management, facilitating the installation of security equipment in all buildings is another aspect of this role. (4) Continued monitoring occurs through human resources management with ongoing staff development/in-service training opportunities, updates to safety policies and procedures in student/employee handbooks, and staffing buildings with security personnel.

Research Question 5

What current and/or future plans do Pennsylvania's public school districts have for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition?

Equally important to current programs in place for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools are plans for future programs. Reactions nationwide to the events surrounding the Columbine tragedy and 9/11 attacks demonstrate an ongoing awareness level to implement and maintain such programs. Based on the survey and interview responses

from participants in this study, district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania' public schools are focused on proactive interventions in an effort to alleviate incidents of violent student behavior that could lead to teachers in their district leaving the profession. The study also suggested that the majority of administrators believe that mentoring new teachers tends to be the common "cure all" in most districts throughout Pennsylvania to resolving teacher attrition before it escalates into a major problem.

Theme One

   Violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition. Interview responses regarding teacher attrition aligned with survey findings. Only two out of 26 administrators responsible for human resources management made some reference to student behavior problems as a "possible" cause for teachers leaving their district. The overall consensus of the other 24 interview participants was that most teachers in their respective district left teaching for another career because they wanted to earn more money. Four interview participants stated that after completing the web-based survey, further review of some teacher attrition studies prompted more thought about this topic as it related to their own district. Of these four participants, two did not believe this to be a problem in their own district, but were surprised at the large number of teachers leaving urban districts in the past four years due to violent student behavior and moving to rural districts in Pennsylvania. The other two participants, after some reflection, indicated that possibly some teachers in their district who retired or left the profession for another career within the past four years did so as a result of student behavior problems.

Theme Two

The role of human resources management varied among districts when responding to incidents of violent student behavior. The organizational structure of human resources management in most small to mid-size public school districts in Pennsylvania is one of a management team comprised of the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent and/or the Business Manager, and building principals. Interview participants represented school districts ranging from small (900 students) to mid-size (2100 students) to moderately large (5600 students). The overall focus of human resources management is " to achieve the objectives of the school district and to help individual staff members maximize their potentials and develop their professional careers" (Rebore, 2003, p. 49). When interviewed, administrators from several of the smaller districts described their role of being the only district human resources management administrator as one who wears many hats. Given the differential in both size and level of responsibility of human resources management in many of the interview participants' districts, the role each played in responding to incidents of violent student behavior varied from district to district.

The overall response indicated their role was one of indirect involvement. While the overall impact of role in response to violent student behavior is indirect, most district administrators responsible for human resources management indicated they were directly influenced on a personal level. Each interviewee was asked if the increase in violent student behavior in school had influenced them personally. The high frequency of interview "yes" responses aligned to the nearly 60% "yes" responses given in the survey.

Theme Three

Increased awareness and implementation of security measures occurred in most districts. A predominant fact in the survey results and most interview participants' responses regarding security measures was the implementation of a Safety Planning Committee in each district. Overall responses indicated administrators' reasons for establishing a Safety Planning Committee was based on feedback received from teachers as well as an increased awareness of issues associated with escalating student behavior problems. Nearly half of the interview responses made reference to post-Columbine reactions and the 9/11 attacks as key reasons for increased levels of awareness and installation of security equipment in district buildings. Almost all districts participating in the study have either implemented or are in the process of implementing security measures based on concerns about external acts of violence as opposed to internal acts of violent student behavior.

Theme Four

Current and planned proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior are ongoing. According to Conley & Cooper (1991), professionally managed teachers are those who, with the support of colleagues, are allowed some degree of independence, the ability to organize their work to meet all students needs, and opportunities to make collaborative school-wide decisions (p. 7). Even though most school district administrators responsible for human resources management responses indicated that violent student behavior did not influence teacher attrition in their district, the same districts are actively developing, implementing, and maintaining ongoing programs and staff development opportunities for teachers on how to deal with violent

student behavior. Some interviewee's responses provided information on what they would do if this became an issue in their district. Others responded more directly by stating what was currently being done as well as plans for additional programs in the future.

Profile of School District Administrator Responsible for Human Resources Management

Analysis of all survey and interview responses guided the researcher to establish a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management based on their perceived influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania. Four demographic questions in the web-based survey provided additional information in the development of the profile of school district administrators in Pennsylvania's public school districts. Responses to the first three questions provided information regarding each participating administrators years of experience in public education, as an administrator, and as a human resources management administrator. The size of each school district was determined from the administrator's response to the fourth question regarding the average annual student enrollment in their district. School district average annual enrollment presented from highest to lowest and each administrator's years of experience presented from most to least are presented in Appendix J (web-based survey participants) and Appendix K (follow-up interview participants).

Results of this study indicate that school district administrators or administrative teams responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools exhibited the following:

1. The perception that violent student behavior has little or no influence on teacher attrition in the majority of Pennsylvania's public school districts.

2. A realization that the role of human resources management, though challenging and often stressful, is significant in effectively communicating and collaborating with all staff members in matters concerning violent student behavior and the influence it may have on teachers.

3. Evidence of their own professional development in order to increase and maintain a level of awareness and implementation of safety and crisis intervention plans in their district assuring a safe environment for teachers to work and students to learn.

4.   Consistent communication with community leaders, local government agencies, and service organizations concerning matters of safety and security both inside and outside the school district.

5. Maintain current proactive intervention programs against violent student behavior as well as plan to update current programs and add new ones.

Relationship of the Current Study to Previous Research

Given the fact national crime statistics show violent crimes have increased in our neighborhoods, many of our nation's teachers feel unsafe in their work environment (Aronson, 2000, p. 99). This research assessed how school district administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools perceived the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. The review of literature focused on teacher attrition, teacher dissatisfaction/stress, school safety, student behavior, and public school human resources management.

A review of literature revealed very little research on the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. Several studies and surveys, however, offered relevant data on teacher attrition, causes for teacher attrition, student violence, and causes for student violence. Three studies discussed teacher attrition and causes for teacher attrition: 1) *Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools – 2001* by Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania, 2) *The 35th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools* (conducted by Lowell C. Rose and Alec M. Gallup), and 3) *Teacher Staffing in the School District of Philadelphia: A Report to the Community – 2002* by Linda Useem and Ruth Curran Neild for The Philadelphia Education Fund. Two studies conducted jointly by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics and U.S. Department of Education, Indicators *for School Crime and Safety: 2001* and *Indicators for School Crime and Safety: 2003* discussed student violence statistics. A third study, *Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth 2000 Report #1: Violence, Guns and Alcohol* by The Josephson Institute of Ethics, discusses student violence and causes for student violence.

In reviewing previous research from the six studies mentioned, some connections between the studies focus on 1) teacher job dissatisfaction as it relates to teachers leaving the profession, 2) teacher experiences with violent student behavior, 3) causes for violent student behavior as perceived by teachers, and 4) attributes and frequency of violent student behavior.   In essence, the review of literature implies the solution is looking at the source of the problem and implementing strategies to correct the problem. If the teacher attrition rate continues increasing year after year, administrators must understand how to solve the problem.

The findings of this study do indicate that teachers are leaving the profession due to job dissatisfaction. Although administrators in Pennsylvania's public school districts do not believe violent student behavior is a factor influencing teacher attrition in their district, evidence shows incidents of violent student behavior continue. The study does reveal that administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts have developed a level of awareness that violent student behavior does exist. Through this level of awareness, administrators' efforts to problem solve are emerging through implementation of proactive intervention programs that reduce or eliminate the influence of violent student behavior.

Implications for Practice and Policy

Since the implementation in 1995 of the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act (Act 26), all school districts in Pennsylvania are required to report any acts of violence, weapons possession, alcohol and/or drug-related incidents, and assaults on staff that occur during the school year. Each public school building in the state must file this information in the *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapon Possession* and forward to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Office of Safe Schools by July 31 each year. Most school districts generate this report through either the office of the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. Over the past four years, PDE's Office of Safe Schools has recognized the need to clarify specific terms relating to various violent student behavior acts by establishing a simplified system of codes that is now implemented statewide. In doing so, the clarification has allowed school district administrators to develop a more definitive understanding about what is considered to be a violent act committed by a student. This has also increased awareness among school

administrators in Pennsylvania's school districts that regardless of how "immune" their respective district may be against acts of violent student behavior, proactive measures must be implemented to maintain that level of immunity.

This research suggests that more public school district administrators responsible for human resources management are becoming more receptive to the idea to incorporate proactive intervention programs addressing the needs of those students who exhibit the potential of becoming violent. Moreover, the level of awareness is expanded through professional development opportunities by training teachers and other administrators in the area of safety awareness, crisis intervention, peer mediation, restraint of problem students, pro-social behavior, and cultural diversity. Administrators and school boards are also reviewing and updating human resources policies and procedures to include exit interviews, employee assistance programs, and annual staff surveys. Pennsylvania school districts that have addressed and implemented these changes are discovering an improved culture for learning, a decrease in incidents of violent student behavior, and better morale among staff members.

The need for such efforts is best summarized by Ronald D. Stephens (2004), Executive Director of the National School Safety Center, who states,

> Without safe schools, it is difficult, if not impossible for learning to take place. No task is more important in creating safe learning environments for our nation's children. A safe school is a place students can learn and teachers can teach in a warm and welcoming environment free of threats, intimidation, violence and fear (p. 1).

Recommendations for Additional Research

This study developed a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their

perception of the influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their respective district. Additional benefits to the field of education may include the following research.

First, the participants for this study were public school districts in Pennsylvania selected on the basis of criteria established through an analysis of archival data collected from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) *Annual Report on School Violence and Weapon Possession.* Although selected districts were dispersed throughout PDE's 29 Intermediate Units, some Intermediate Units exhibited a greater number of selected districts with high percentage rates of violent student behavior incidents than others. An additional study comparing cultural demographics among various Intermediate Units would be helpful in determining the influence of cultural diversity on high rates of violent student behavior incidents.

Second, a majority of participating administrators in the web-based survey and follow-up interview indicated the influence of violent student behavior made their job more stressful. Yet, the same administrators responded that violent student behavior did not influence teacher attrition in their district. Conducting a study to determine teachers perceived influence of violent student behavior on administrative support in their district would provide research from a different point of view on this topic. This could help school district administrators as well as classroom teachers to determine what communication gaps exist and possible solutions to close those gaps.

Third, several proactive intervention programs for future consideration were mentioned numerous times in both survey and interview responses by administrators. One program mentioned frequently is Restorative Strategies for Schools, part of the Safer

Saner Schools Program developed by the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Three Pennsylvania public school districts located in the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit that have piloted this program at the secondary level are Springfield Township School District, Lower Merion School District, and Souderton School District. A case study analyzing the results of this intervention program in each school district would provide constructive information to other districts considering implementation of Restorative Strategies for Schools in their district plan of action. This study would identify the effectiveness of teacher-student interactions, changes in acts of violent student behavior, and changes in teacher attrition in each district.

Fourth, some district administrators participating in the survey and follow-up interview made mention of numerous state and federal grants available to school districts for intervention programs, safety equipment, and staffing of security personnel. The research would focus on one or more of these various types of grants and their effectiveness in reducing or eliminating the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition in public school districts. This study could provide district administrators with potential opportunities to acquire funding for programs that would otherwise be dropped due to limited state and local funds.

Fifth, a comparison study on the effectiveness of proactive intervention programs at elementary, middle school, and high school levels would enhance the level of understanding of administrators and teachers at all levels in regards to what needs are being met as well as the successes and failures with each program. This study would be especially beneficial to school district administrators who are developing or revising proactive intervention programs in their district.

Sixth, a replication of this study in another state may yield additional information that would enhance the understanding of school district administrators responsible for human resources management in regards to their perception of violent student behavior on teacher attrition.

Summary

After providing a brief overview of the study, this chapter detailed the findings by summarizing the results of the web-based survey and follow-up interview responses from volunteer participants from selected school districts.   A discussion of the findings from this study guided the researcher to establish a descriptive profile of school administrators responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public school districts based on their perception of the influence violent student behavior has on teacher attrition in their respective district, the relationship of the current study to previous research, and implications for practice and policy. Finally, recommendations for additional research were provided.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter of Consent to Use Original Survey Questions

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patrm32@msn.com

May 18, 2005
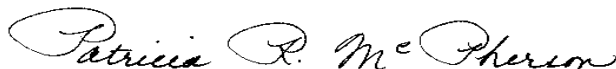
Dr. Shirley Miles, Superintendent
Tempe Union High School District
Benedict Education Ctr.
500 W. Guadalupe Rd.
Tempe, AZ 85283

Dear Dr. Miles,

I am currently a doctoral student at Baylor University and am working on my dissertation in Educational Administration. The purpose of my study is to develop a descriptive profile of school administrators' responsible for human resources management in Pennsylvania's public schools. As part of this study, I will be assessing school administrators' awareness of violent student behavior and its effect on teacher attrition. I have reviewed the survey instrument you developed and used in your dissertation, "Human Resource Directors' Perceptions of Serious School Violence and Its Effects on Teacher Retention and Recruitment." I would like to use some of the questions you developed as part of my study. Attached you will find the questions that I would like to include. Please note that some of the questions have been slightly modified to align with the specifics of my study. If allowed to use these questions, I will credit you in my dissertation and provide a copy of the reprint if requested.

Please indicate that you give permission for my use of your questions by signing below. I have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

With regards,

Patricia R. McPherson

Patricia McPherson
Doctoral Student
Baylor University

1 Attachment

I, Shirley Miles, grant permission for Patricia McPherson to use the attached questions for use in her dissertation study on school administrators' awareness of violent student behavior and its effects on teacher attrition.

Shirley Miles

Shirley Miles, Ph.D.

Assessment of Violent Student Behavior and Its Influence on Teacher Attrition

1. Is staff development part of the human resources management function?   If no, who (position not name) is responsible for staff development?

2. What types of in-services/staff development are provided for teachers to help them deal with violent student behavior. Please be specific.

3. Are exit interviews given to employees who leave the district? If yes, what percentage of certified (teachers) employees referenced fear of violence or fear for their safety as a reason for leaving?

4. How many job openings for teachers do you normally expect for each school year?

5. In the last three years, what has been the average teacher turnover rate per year? Please state by percentage for the following school years: 2003-04, 2002-03, and 2001-02

6. If your district's teacher turnover rate has increased in the last three years, in your opinion, was it due to increased violent student behavior? If yes, please state increase by percentage.

7. In your opinion, has your district experienced an increase in the number of retirements due to increased violent student behavior? If yes, what is the percentage increase, due to the awareness of increased violent student behavior?

8. In your opinion, has your district experienced an increase in the number of staff/sick leaves due to increased violent student behavior? If yes, what is the approximate percentage increase?

9. To your knowledge, in the last few years have any teachers filed for Workmen's Compensation due to an injury caused by violent student behavior?

10. To your knowledge, has any teacher requested a transfer to another school in the district due to safety concerns at their present school?

11. Have you seen an increase in violent student behavior in your school district within the last three years? If yes, give approximate percentage increase.

12. To your knowledge, have any teachers left your district as a result of a specific violent incident? If yes, how many?

13. To your knowledge, have any teachers in your district left the teaching profession as a result of overall violent student behavior? If yes, how many?

14. As the administrator responsible for human resources management in your district, what specific role do you and/or your department play in responding to violent student behavior? What specific steps have been taken?

15. Due to the awareness of violent student behavior, what suggestions would you have for the district to reduce or eliminate the effects of violent student behavior on teacher attrition? (i.e., teacher induction/mentoring programs, provide various in-services, offer employee assistance programs). Please be specific.

16. In your opinion, how safe are your districts schools? (On a scale from 1 to 10; one being not safe and 10 being very safe.)

17. What is your level of awareness in regards to the line of communication between the schools in your district and the community?

18. What is your level of awareness of the overall rapport between the teachers and students in your school district?

19. Describe the line of communication between the schools in your district and human resources management.

20. Has your district seen an increase in the number of teachers who access counseling services? If yes, approximate percentage increase. How much of the percentage increase, in your opinion, can be attributed to violent student behavior?

21. Has there been any indication of behavioral changes in teachers, i.e., increased anxiety, lack of motivation or enthusiasm due to increased awareness of violent student behavior? If yes, please describe the types of changes?

22. Does your district provide specific programs assisting teachers to deal with violent student behavior? If yes, please describe the programs.

23. Due to increasing violent student behavior, have you changed the manner in which you deal with teachers/administrators over the last few years? If so, why?

24. Does the district have an EAP (employee assistance program)? If so, does the EAP offer any specific programs to help teachers manage stress?

25. Has the increase in violent student behavior in school affected you personally?

26. Over the past few years, would you describe your job as being more stressful? If yes, is the increased stress due to your awareness of violent student behavior? If yes, please describe how?

APPENDIX B

Assessment Matrix

	What do I need to know?	*Who has the info?*	*Specific Survey/ Follow-up Interview Questions*	*How will it be reported?*
1	What do school administrators responsible for human resources management perceive as the reasons for teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?	School District Administrator responsible for Human Resources Management through surveys and follow-up interviews	*Survey:* 2 – reasons for leaving the teaching profession 1 – specific perception question *Follow-up Interview:* 5, 6, 16	Narrative in findings and conclusion
2	What perceptions do school administrators responsible for human resources management have on violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public schools?	School District Administrator responsible for Human Resources Management through surveys and follow-up interviews	*Survey:* 3 – specific perception question 4 – specific question about influences on HR job *Follow-up Interview:* 7, 8, 15, 16	Narrative in findings and conclusion
3	How have human resources management policies and procedures changed as a result of violent student behavior in Pennsylvania's public school districts?	School District Administrator responsible for Human Resources Management through surveys and follow-up interviews	*Survey:* 5 – general information questions about HR 10 – turnover rates tracked annually by HR *Follow-up Interview:* 1, 2, 3, 10, 13	Narrative in findings and conclusion
4	What is human resources management's role in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in Pennsylvania's public schools?	School District Administrator responsible for Human Resources Management through surveys and follow-up interviews	*Survey:* 7 – role of HR 6 - specific programs to assist teachers *Follow-up Interview:* 6, 9, 14	Narrative in findings and conclusion Issues for further study
5	What current and/or future plans do Pennsylvania's public school districts have for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition?	School District Administrator responsible for Human Resources Management through surveys and follow-up interviews	*Survey:* 8 – district plans for future 9 – district programs in place to assist teachers/alleviate attrition *Follow-up Interview:* 4, 11, 12	Narrative in findings and conclusion Issues for further study

(S. Miles, 2000)

APPENDIX C

Web-Based Survey Instrument

The purpose of this study is to assess how Pennsylvania's public school district administrators responsible for human resources management perceive the influence of violent student behavior and on teacher attrition in their respective district.

The following definitions were used throughout this study to describe violent student behavior and teacher attrition. As you respond to the questions, please use the following terms as references:

- Human Resources Management: A function of management that includes staffing needs, recruitment and hiring of employees to fill those needs, professional development for all employees ensuring high performance of those employees, employee benefits and compensation, maintaining all employee records and personnel policies, dealing with performance issues, and assuring personnel management practices and procedures conform to regulations and standards.

- Teacher Attrition: This term refers to leaving the profession as well as leaving or transferring to a position or different field in education at another school or district. PLEASE NOTE: For the purpose of this study it will only be referred to as leaving the profession of teaching.

- Violent Student Behavior: Any act committed by a student on school or school district property that includes any of the following behaviors: (1) physical attacks against other persons, with or without weapons; (2) violent destruction of property, including arson; (3) self-injury; (4) forcible sexual attacks; or (5) behavior intense or severe enough to cause considerable harm to person(s) or property without intervention (Allen, 2002).

If you would like to discuss with me your responses to the following four demographic questions and the ten short answer survey questions, please let me know a convenient time to reach you. You may contact me at Patricia_McPherson@baylor.edu (email address), 215-830-1586 (office phone number), or 610-361-8053 (home phone number).

Thank you,
Patricia R. McPherson
Doctoral Student
Baylor University

Demographic Information:

How many years experience do you have in education? _____

How many years experience do you have in public school administration: _____

How many years experience do you have as a district central office human resources management administrator? _____

Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year and ending with the 2003-2004 school year, what is the overall four-year average student enrollment in your district? _____

Survey Questions:

1. Over the past four years, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year through the 2003-2004 school year, what do you perceive as the key reasons for teacher attrition in your school district?

2. To your knowledge in the four-year period from 2000-2001 school year through the 2003-2004 school year, have any teachers resigned from your district with the intent of leaving the teaching profession? What specific reasons were given for these resignations?

3. What is your perception of the effect of violent student behavior incidents on teacher attrition in your school district?

4. Describe how your job has been affected by incidents of violent student behavior from 2000-2001 school year through the 2003-2004 school year?

5. From the 2000-2001 school year through the 2003-2004 school year, how has your district's human resources management policies and procedures changed? How did these changes relate to issues concerning violent student behavior?

6. Since the 2000-2001 school year, what program and/or staff development opportunities have been offered in your district to assist teachers in dealing with violent student behavior? If none are currently offered, what plans does the district have to provide these programs for the teachers?

7. In the four years covering the 2000-2001 through 2003-2004 school years, please describe human resources management's role in creating and maintaining a safe working environment for teachers in your school district?

8. What current and/or future plans does your school district have for proactive interventions against violent student behavior and its affect on teacher attrition? (i.e. intervention programs for at-risk students, counseling/group sessions for students with persistent incidents of violent student behavior).

9. As a result of the perception of violent student behavior in your district over a period of four consecutive school years beginning 2000 through 2004, what measures have been taken by the district to decrease or alleviate the effects on teacher attrition? Please be specific.

10. How has teacher turnover rate in your district from the 2000-2001 through the 2003-2004 school years changed?   What factors do you perceive as contributing to the changes in the turnover rate?

I would be willing to participate in a brief follow-up interview. YES ___   NO ___

Researcher (Patricia) can contact me at:

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer these survey questions!

APPENDIX D

Follow-Up Interview Questions

1.   Describe the working relationship between the schools in your district and human
       resources management.

2.   Does your district conduct exit interviews? If yes, which person or persons
       (position not name) are responsible for conducting the interviews?

3.   What role does human resources management play in responding to violent
       student behavior?

4.   What suggestions would you have for the district to reduce or eliminate the
       influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition?

5.   To your knowledge, has any teacher left your district due to violent student
       behavior?

6.   To your knowledge, has any teacher requested a transfer to another school in the
       district due to safety concerns at their present school?

7.   To your knowledge, over the four years encompassing school years 2000-01
       through 2003-04 has there been an increase in the number of days of staff sick
       leave due to the awareness of violent student behavior?

8.   What is your perception of the overall rapport between the teachers and students
       in your school district?

9.   In your opinion, how safe are the schools in your district? How safe are the
       teachers? How has the level of safety changed for either from the 2000-01 school
       year through the 2003-04 school year?

10.   How have human resources management policies and procedures changed in the
       from the 2000-01 school to the present as a result of violent student behavior in
       your district?

11.   Are you aware of any in-services or staff development for teachers or
       administrators that directly relate to dealing with violent student behavior?

12.   To your knowledge, has the district implemented or have future plans to
       implement any type of intervention program that proactively reduces or eliminates
       incidents of violent student behavior? Please describe the program.

13. Does the district have an EAP (employee assistance program)? If so, does the EAP offer any specific programs to help teachers manage stress?

14. To your knowledge, have more teachers accessed counseling services because of the fear of violent student behavior? Are the numbers being monitored?

15. Has the increase in violent student behavior in school influenced you personally?

16. As a result of your participation in both the online survey and this follow-up interview, what have you discovered about violent student behavior in your school district? …about teacher attrition?

17. Do you have any additional comments or any areas of concern regarding violent student behavior or teacher attrition that were not addressed in this follow-up interview?

Thank you for taking the time to answer these follow-up interview questions.

APPENDIX E

Subject Consent Form for Participation

Patricia R. McPherson
198 Nottingham Court, Glen Mills, PA 19342-2022
(610) 361-8053
Patricia_McPherson@baylor.edu

Dear Colleague,

Due to your willingness to participate in a follow-up interview, you will be asked to respond to some questions designed to gather additional information regarding the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. More specifically, the purpose of this research project is to assess school district administrators' perception of the influence violent student behavior may have on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts.

It is important to note that there are no known physical risks to participating in this follow-up interview. You may elect, either now or at any time during the research process, to withdraw your participation. You should understand that your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

The expected duration of follow-up interview is approximately 15-20 minutes.

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. The researcher will write all data collected during the follow-up interview. The follow-up interview will not be recorded electronically. There will be no identifying information on the data collected. An assigned code number designed to assist with data retrieval will identify all records. In the end, the person in charge of the study, my faculty advisor and dissertation committee will have access to the data. Upon completion of the study, the researcher will shred all written documentation collected during the interview.

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Patricia McPherson, a graduate student at Baylor University at 610-361-8053 or at 198 Nottingham Ct., Glen Mills, PA 19342. At the same time, an alternative contact by phone at 254-710-6112 is Dr. Weldon Beckner, faculty advisor to Patricia McPherson and professor at the Department of Educational Administration, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798.

If you have any questions about your rights as a person who is participating in a research study, contact the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. The Chairman is Dr. Matthew S. Stanford, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Research, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97334, Waco, Texas 76798-7334. You may also contact Dr. Stanford by phone at 254-710-2236 or email at Matthew_Stanford@Baylor.edu.

Your consent will be signified by your signature below indicating that you have read and understood this consent form and were aware of your rights as a subject, as well as your agreement to participate in this experiment.

A printed copy of this informed consent form will be provided for your records. Again, I thank you in advance for you participation in this exciting educational research endeavor.

Sincerely,

Patricia R. McPherson
Doctoral Student
Baylor University

Authorization: I have read and understand the foregoing descriptions of the research for this doctoral study. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand.

I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX F

Follow-Up Interview Protocol

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The purpose of this study is to assess how school administrators responsible for human resources management perceive violent student behavior and its influence on teacher attrition in their respective district.

The following definitions were used throughout this study to describe violent student behavior and teacher attrition. As you respond to the questions, please use these as references.

- Human Resources Management: A function of management that includes staffing needs, recruitment and hiring of employees to fill those needs, professional development for all employees ensuring high performance of those employees, employee benefits and compensation, maintaining all employee records and personnel policies, dealing with performance issues, and assuring personnel management practices and procedures conform to regulations and standards.

- Teacher Attrition: This term refers to leaving the profession as well as leaving or transferring to a position or different field in education at another school or district. PLEASE NOTE: For the purpose of this study it will only be referred to as leaving the profession of teaching.

- Violent Student Behavior: Any act committed by a student on school or school district property that includes any of the following behaviors: (1) physical attacks against other persons, with or without weapons; (2) violent destruction of property, including arson; (3) self-injury; (4) forcible sexual attacks; or (5) behavior intense or severe enough to cause considerable harm to person(s) or property without intervention (Allen, 2002).

If you would like to discuss your responses to the follow-up interview questions with the researcher at a later time, she can be reached at Patricia_McPherson@baylor.edu (email address), 215-830-1586 (office phone number), or 610-361-8053 (home phone number).

Thank you,
Patricia R. McPherson
Baylor University

APPENDIX G

Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research Internal Review Board (IRB) Approval to Conduct Survey and Follow-Up Interview

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW

Patricia R. McPherson
198 Nottingham Court, Glen Mills, PA 19342-2022
(610) 361-8053
Patricia_McPherson@baylor.edu

Dear Colleague,

Due to your willingness to participate in a follow-up interview, you will be asked to respond to some questions designed to gather additional information regarding the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. More specifically, the purpose of this research project is to assess school district administrators' perception of the influence violent student behavior may have on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts.

It is important to note that there are no known physical risks to participating in this follow-up interview. You may elect, either now or at any time during the research process, to withdraw your participation. You should understand that your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

The expected duration of follow-up interview is approximately 15-20 minutes.

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. The researcher will write all data collected during the follow-up interview. The follow-up interview will **not** be recorded electronically. There will be no identifying information on the data collected. An assigned code number designed to assist with data retrieval will identify all records. In the end, the person in charge of the study, my faculty advisor and dissertation committee will have access to the data. Upon completion of the study, the researcher will shred all written documentation collected during the interview.

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Patricia McPherson, a graduate student at Baylor University at 610-361-8053 or at 198 Nottingham Ct., Glen Mills, PA 19342. At the same time, an alternative contact by phone at 254-710-6112 is Dr. Weldon Beckner, faculty advisor to Patricia McPherson and professor at the Department of Educational Administration, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798.

If you have any questions about your rights as a person who is participating in a research study, contact the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. The Chairman is Dr. Matthew S. Stanford, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Research, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97334, Waco, Texas 76798-7334. You may also contact Dr. Stanford by phone at 254-710-2236 or email at Matthew_Stanford@Baylor.edu.

Your consent will be signified by your signature below indicating that you have read and understood this consent form and were aware of your rights as a subject, as well as your agreement to participate in this experiment.

Revised 12/08/04   9

IRB APPROVED
AUG 0 4 2006
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Informed Letter of Consent for Interview
Page 2

A printed copy of this informed consent form will be provided for your records. Again, I thank you in advance for you participation in this exciting educational research endeavor.

Sincerely,

Patricia R. McPherson
Doctoral Student
Baylor University

Authorization: I have read and understand the foregoing descriptions of the research for this doctoral study. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand.

I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signature _____

Date _____

IRB APPROVED
AUG 0 4 2006
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY
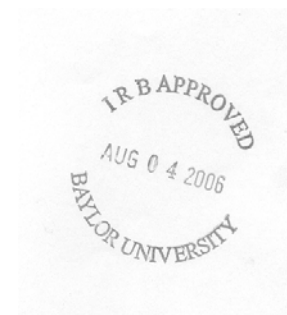
APPENDIX H

Initial Email Message with Informed Consent Letter for Online Survey

INITIAL EMAIL MESSAGE OF 8-12-05

Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral student at Baylor University and a fellow public school district administrator in Pennsylvania. I would appreciate a few minutes of your time. Below is a link to a survey on The Perceived Influence of Violent Student Behavior on Teacher Attrition in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts. This is a relatively new strand of research and has the potential to offer distinct input to school administrators as it relates to public school districts not only in Pennsylvania, but in other states, as well.
Below is a copy of my informed consent letter. After reading the informed consent letter, if you agree to participate in the survey, please click on the link below and enjoy the process. It is a perception survey and will take approximately 10 to 20 minutes.

http://www.baylor.edu/TeacherAttrition_in_PA

The Baylor Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee approved this research study on August 4, 2005.

I appreciate your time and attention in this matter.

Sincerely,
Patricia R. McPherson
~~~~~~
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Dear Colleague,

Due to your position as the school administrator responsible for human resources management in your district, you are being invited to participate in a survey designed to gather information regarding the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. More specifically, the purpose of this research project is to assess school district administrators' perception of the influence violent student behavior may have on teacher attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts. The significance of this study is to offer distinct input to human resources management administrators as it relates to teacher attrition in public school districts not only in Pennsylvania, but in other states, as well.

It is important to note that there are no known physical risks to completing the attached survey. You may elect, either now or at any time during the research process, to withdraw your participation. You should understand that your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

The expected duration of the subject's participation is approximately 10-20 minutes.

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. There will be no identifying information on the data collected. An assigned code number designed to assist with data retrieval will identify all records. All data will be locked in computer files. In the end, the person in charge of the study, my faculty advisor and dissertation committee will have access to the data.

The use of electronic mail as a method of data collection generates important questions about data security and confidentiality of participant information. Please be advised that electronic mail may be subject to interception, legally by your employer or illegally by another party. Within the scope of this research, this factor is not under the control of the researcher. However, please note that the information requested is not of a sensitive nature.

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Patricia McPherson, a graduate student at Baylor University at 610-361-8053 or at 198 Nottingham Ct., Glen Mills, PA 19342. At the same time, an alternative contact by phone at 254-710-6112 is Dr. Weldon Beckner, faculty advisor to Patricia McPherson and professor at the Department of Educational Administration, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798.

If you have any questions about your rights as a person who is participating in a research study, contact the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. The Chairman is Dr. Matthew S. Stanford, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Research, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97334, Waco, Texas 76798-7334. You may also contact Dr. Stanford by phone at 254-710-2236 or email at Matthew_Stanford@Baylor.edu.

Your consent will be signified by your submission of a completed on-line survey (copy attached). In fact, your submission will demonstrate that you have read and understood this consent form and were aware of your rights as a subject, as well as your agreement to participate in this experiment.

Please, print a copy of this informed consent form for your records. Again, I thank you in advance for you participation in this exciting educational research endeavor.

Sincerely,
Patricia R. McPherson
Baylor University

I have read and understand the Informed Letter of Consent, am aware of my rights as a subject for this study, and agree to participate by completing an on-line survey on *The Influence of Violent Student Behavior on Teacher Attrition as Perceived by School District Administrators in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts.*

_____   _____
Signature   Date

APPENDIX I

Follow-Up Email Message with Informed Consent Letter for Online Survey

Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral student at Baylor University and a fellow public school district administrator in Pennsylvania. On August 12, 2005, you received a web-based survey on The Perceived Influence of Violent Student Behavior on Teacher Attrition in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts. If you have already responded to the previous message by completing the survey, thank you. If not, I would appreciate a few minutes of your time to complete this survey. Every response is important and has the potential to offer distinct input not only to Pennsylvania's school administrators, but in other states, as well.

Below is a copy of my informed consent letter. After reading the informed consent letter, if you agree to participate in the survey, please click on the link below and enjoy the process. It is a perception survey and will take approximately 10 to 20 minutes. Please complete this survey by September 2, 2005.

Once you are at the web site, the survey will appear one question at a time.

http://www.baylor.eduTeacherAttrition_in_PA

The Baylor Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee approved this research study on August 4, 2005.

I appreciate your time and assistance in this research.

Sincerely,
Patricia R. McPherson
~~~~~~
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

 Dear Colleague ,

Due to your position as the school administrator responsible for human resources management in your district, you are being invited to participate in a survey designed to gather information regarding the influence of violent student behavior on teacher attrition. More specifically, the purpose of this research project is to assess school district administrators' perception of the influence violent student behavior may have on teacher

attrition in Pennsylvania's public school districts. The significance of this study is to offer distinct input to human resources management administrators as it relates to teacher attrition in public school districts not only in Pennsylvania, but in other states, as well.

It is important to note that there are no known physical risks to completing the attached survey. You may elect, either now or at any time during the research process, to withdraw your participation. You should understand that your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate.

The expected duration of the subject's participation is approximately 10-20 minutes.

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. There will be no identifying information on the data collected. An assigned code number designed to assist with data retrieval will identify all records. All data will be locked in computer files. In the end, the person in charge of the study, my faculty advisor and dissertation committee will have access to the data.

The use of electronic mail as a method of data collection generates important questions about data security and confidentiality of participant information. Please be advised that electronic mail may be subject to interception, legally by your employer or illegally by another party. Within the scope of this research, this factor is not under the control of the researcher. However, please note that the information requested is not of a sensitive nature.

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Patricia McPherson, a graduate student at Baylor University at 610-361-8053 or at 198 Nottingham Ct., Glen Mills, PA 19342. At the same time, an alternative contact by phone at 254-710-6112 is Dr. Weldon Beckner, faculty advisor to Patricia McPherson and professor at the Department of Educational Administration, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798.

If you have any questions about your rights as a person who is participating in a research study, contact the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. The Chairman is Dr. Matthew S. Stanford, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Research, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97334, Waco, Texas 76798-7334. You may also contact Dr. Stanford by phone at 254-710-2236 or email at Matthew_Stanford@Baylor.edu.

Your consent will be signified by your submission of a completed on-line survey (copy attached). In fact, your submission will demonstrate that you have read and understood this consent form and were aware of your rights as a subject, as well as your agreement to participate in this experiment.

Please, print a copy of this informed consent form for your records. Again, I thank you in advance for you participation in this exciting educational research endeavor.

Sincerely,
Patricia R. McPherson
Doctoral Student
Baylor University

I have read and understand the Informed Letter of Consent, am aware of my rights as a subject for this study, and agree to participate by completing an on-line survey on The Influence of Violent Student Behavior on Teacher Attrition as Perceived by School District Administrators in Pennsylvania's Public School Districts by clicking on the above link.

APPENDIX J

Web-Based Survey Participants Demographic Data
Ranked by Average Annual Student Enrollment 2000 - 2004

	#1 (1): How many years experience do you have in education?	#2 (4): How many years experience do you have in public school administration?	#3 (6): How many years experience do you have as a direct central office human resources management administrator?	#4 (10): Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year and ending with the 2003-2004 school year, what is the overall four-year average student enrollment in your district?
1	28	11	5	36250
2	4	4	4	16,000
3	4	4	4	8500
4	2.5	2.5	2.5	7600
5	3	3	3	6900
6	20	10	10	6500
7	7	7	7	6476
8	16	10	10	6000
9	41	31	28	6000
10	5	5	5	5600
11	32	16	1	5600
12	34	28	24	5500
13	29	24	8	5000
14	30	21	13	4900
15	25	15	7	4900
16	32	14	3	4780
17	38	27	4	4700
18	15	2	2	4500
19	22	14	0	4250
20	27	13	0	4200
21	37	28	6	4062
22	20	10	2	4000
23	38	20	7	4000
24	15	5	1	3890
25	30	5	5	3800

	#1 (1): How many years experience do you have in education?	#2 (4): How many years experience do you have in public school administration?	#3 (6): How many years experience do you have as a direct central office human resources management administrator?	#4 (10): Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year and ending with the 2003-2004 school year, what is the overall four-year average student enrollment in your district?
26	30	21	7	3800
27	15	5	1	3675
28	34	15	1.2	3500
29	26	9	5	3400
30	39	34	34	3356
31	24	11	1	3200
32	23	7	2 mos	3200
33	39	36	14	3200
34	36	18	5	3200
35	16	5	5	3100
36	32	15	3	3000
37	34	29	12	2900
38	35	18	9	2600
39	15	9	1	2600
40	17	5	5	2600
41	18	13	14	2500
42	28	0	0	2500
43	2	2	2	2500
44	28	2	2	2500
45	31	21	1	2500
46	28	12	8	2500
47	28	22	6	2450
48	29	17	4	2380
49	16	8	2	2362
50	19	13	2	2350
51	18	4	1	2340
52	37	29	7	2300
53	33	25	10	2259
54	33	25	10	2259
55	25	8	5	2100
56	35	15	15	2100
57	41	41	7	2100
58	32	27	22	2000
59	30	19	5	1975
60	23	6	2	1950
61	35	30	20	1900

	#1 (1): How many years experience do you have in education?	#2 (4): How many years experience do you have in public school administration?	#3 (6): How many years experience do you have as a direct central office human resources management administrator?	#4 (10): Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year and ending with the 2003-2004 school year, what is the overall four-year average student enrollment in your district?
62	14	6	2	1875
63	33	21	7	1800
64	26	14	2	1795
65	34	19	3	1625
66	15	5	1	1600
67	32	10	7	1600
68	12	6	1	1525
69	32	19	3	1500
70	26	12	6	1450
71	32	13	3	1400
72	36	28	11	1381
73	33	18	13	1380
74	15	8	0	1375
75	30	8	8	1200
76	23	13	1	1200
77	35	26	9	1100
78	37	24	6	1050
79	38	15	7	1000
80	17	10	3	1000
81	35	9	4	915
82	18	5	2	900
83	30	6	0	900
84	33	15	8	800

APPENDIX K

Follow-Up Interview Participants Demographic Data
Ranked by Average Annual Student Enrollment 2000 - 2004

	Years Exp in Education	Years Exp in Public School Administration	Years Exp as HR management administrator	Avg 4 year student enrollment
26	32	16	1	5600
25	29	24	8	5000
23	30	21	13	4900
24	25	15	7	4900
22	27	13	0	4200
21	15	5	1	3890
20	39	34	34	3356
19	24	11	1	3200
18	16	5	5	3100
17	32	15	3	3000
16	35	18	9	2600
13	18	13	14	2500
14	28	2	2	2500
15	28	12	8	2500
12	35	15	15	2100
11	32	27	22	2000
10	30	19	5	1975
9	35	30	20	1900
8	33	21	7	1800
7	12	6	1	1525
6	32	19	3	1500
5	26	12	6	1450
4	15	8	0	1375
3	23	13	1	1200
2	38	15	7	1000
1	18	5	2	900

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