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## Supporting Beginning Teachers Through Mentorship

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Supporting Beginning Teachers Through Mentorship

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ED 590: Research & Complete Capstone Cohort 782

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## Abstract

Beginning teachers are not always aware of the difficulties in teaching. It can be common for beginning teachers to feel overwhelmed, inadequate, and toil with emotions for the first few years of their career. Mentoring programs are established to help support beginning teachers. When the needs of beginning teachers are met, self-efficacy can be developed. Beginning teachers who are self-efficacious believe that they can achieve goals, accomplish tasks, and manage challenges in their practice. They are more competent and confident in the classroom. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods studies found that supporting the emotional needs of teachers can positively impact beginning teachers' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can lead to more positive student interactions, management of students, and student achievement. When teachers are more self-efficacious, they can cope with the difficulties presented in the classroom. This confidence leads to student success, which in turn leads to teacher retention and job satisfaction.

*Keywords:* beginning teachers, self-efficacy, support, mentoring programs

## Supporting Beginning Teachers Through Mentorship

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

Teacher retention has been an issue that has impacted schools around the world (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2004). Statistics show that 20% of all beginning teachers leave the classroom within three years of teaching (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF], 2007). Even more startling, statistics reveal that 50% of new hires in urban districts leave the teaching profession during the first five years (NCTAF, 2007). Teacher attrition within the United States has grown 50% since 1992 (NCTAF, 2007). With more and more responsibilities placed on teachers, the first years can be a struggle. Some beginning teachers struggle with confidence, student behaviors, and workload stress (Collie, Shapka, and Perry, 2012). In a recent study by Herman, Hickmon-Rosa, and Reinke (2017), it was found that 93% of elementary teachers experience high levels of stress. High levels of stress are associated with low student outcomes, such as student misbehaviors and poor academic achievements. As teaching challenges continue, stress grows, and burnout sets in (Kosir, Tement, Licardo, and Habe, 2015).

Pre-service teachers are well educated and prepared, but most of their learning develops within the first few years of teaching (Gilbert, 2005; Rice, 2003). Students are affected if teacher quality declines, as more new teachers leave the profession before their full capabilities are developed (Hong, 2012). External and internal factors contribute to teacher attrition. Career practices and decision-making processes are associated with teachers' construction of understanding and their internal belief systems (Hong, 2012). Teachers are unique and respond in various ways. Some teachers have learned how to manage and cope with stressful situations while others have not. Some teachers are more sensitive and unable to deal with challenging

conditions (Hong, 2012). In order to retain teachers, components need to be identified that support beginning teachers.

### **Scope of Research**

The review of literature explored elements that affected beginning teachers. This review examined self-efficacy, resilience, coping skills, beliefs, stress, workload, school climate, exhaustion, burnout, and job satisfaction as critical factors to determine their role in the retention of beginning teachers (Alhija, 2015; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Dicke et al., 2015; Helms-Lorenz, Slof, & Grift, 2012; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Kosir, Tement, Licardo, & Habe, 2015; Shen et al., 2015; Smetackova, 2017). Mentorship models and emotional support programs were also explored in the research and reflected a social-emotional connection (Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, Bonus, & Davidson, 2013; Hallam, Chou, Hite, & Hite, 2012; Jennings et al., 2017; Lejonberg, Elstad, & Christophersen, 2015; Lopez, 2013; Tan, 2013).

Studies selected in this review used a qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach in gathering data. Researchers used inductive analysis, metanalysis, latent change analysis, qualitative analysis, factor analysis, multivariate analysis, statistical analysis, outcome analysis, and cross-case analysis to analyze data. The studies took place in the United States, Canada, Netherlands, Germany, Israel, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Singapore, and Norway. Since teacher retention is a global issue (OECD, 2004), there are many similarities regarding effective beginning teacher support. This support is essential in growing competent teachers who are satisfied in their professions (Flook et al., 2013; Hallam et al., 2012; Jennings et al., 2017; Lejonberg et al., 2015; Lopez, 2013; Tan, 2013).

Most studies occurred over one year and measured teachers' perception of stress, self-efficacy, and coping skills. The development level of teachers spanned from pre-service teachers to experienced teachers with 23 or more years in the teaching profession. The grade-levels of teachers included in the studies ranged from elementary to secondary teachers. The mentorship studies examined coaching, collaborative mentoring, mentor selection, frameworks, and mindfulness practices. Peer-reviewed articles from professional journals were also used to offer insight into the topics.

### **Importance of the Study**

Developing mentorship programs that support beginning teachers' self-efficacy is imperative to the retention of teachers. Beginning teachers are often left to either succeed or fail on their own. This neglect results in isolation and short-term positions (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Lack of teacher retention results in the instability of staff and administration and the loss of school morale (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Mentorship, along with induction programs offer supports to beginning teachers as they acclimate to their schools' initiatives, culture, and processes. Identifying the most effective supports is vital to the development of beginning teachers. Emotions play an essential role in the growth of self-efficacy. When teachers are unable to cope, they develop negative stress responses that lead to mental and emotional worries, lack of pleasure, and decreases in job commitments (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). A negative stress response leads to burnout and attrition (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012).

Beginning teachers need mentors who exhibit the qualities of trust, confidentiality, and the ability to empower mentees. The mentor and mentee must have a personal relationship. This relationship is critical for successful mentoring and is a connection that builds over time (Hallam



et al., 2012). Five key features comprise effective mentoring relationships. To build this relationship, a mentor must model positive interactions, ask open-ended questions, paraphrase to show understanding, offer non-judgmental statements, and provide think-time (Boogren, 2015). Mentorship that supports the beginning teachers' self-efficacy along with supporting emotional needs ensures that the teacher feels support through stressful and challenging times. When beginning teachers feel support and success, they stay in the teaching profession.

### **Research Question**

This review examined research that affects the retention of beginning teachers and provided insights into the importance of self-efficacy in beginning teachers. The review also investigated the impacts of emotions and their connection to self-efficacy. The question posed in this review asked, how might the development of self-efficacy in beginning teachers be supported through the mentorship process?

### **Connection to Grand Tour Question**

Supporting beginning teachers through mentorship connects to the program essential question, in light of what is known about how children learn and educational policy and practice, how shall educators best lead in educational settings today in order to impact student learning? Mentorship programs are used to support the emotional needs of beginning teachers. Self-efficacy builds when mentor support fosters and meets emotional demands. When this happens, professional learning can take place, and job satisfaction can occur (Boogren, 2015; Collie et al., 2012; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). Beginning teachers who establish self-efficacy have higher job satisfaction and make positive impacts on student achievement (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007).

## Definition of Terms

*Beginning teachers* are those in the first five years of their teaching careers. Beginning teachers are recent college graduates and have not had much experience independently with students in the classroom. Many unique and challenging situations arise that cause the teacher to lose confidence, feel overwhelmed, and at times become physically and emotionally exhausted (Dicke et al., 2015; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012).

*Self-efficacy* is the belief in one's own capability to produce a desired result or effect. Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory highlights this term. The theory claims that self-efficacy plays a vital role in how a teacher may approach goals, tasks, and challenges. Self-efficacy is essential to a teacher's professional practice and has positive effects on student learning (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007).

*Support* is the process through which beginning teachers receive help in the areas of content instruction, student management, guidance, professional development, and socialization (Hallam et al., 2012). Beginning teachers may receive support through mentorship, professional learning communities (PLCs), or grade-level teams. Support empowers beginning teachers and helps build self-efficacy (Helm-Lorenz et al., 2012).

*Mentoring programs* support the needs of beginning teachers who are new to school districts. How a school supports, empowers, and connects with beginning teachers is essential in their cultivation and retention (Boogren, 2015). Benefits of mentoring programs show that beginning teachers who receive support (e.g., mentor in the same content, collaboration, planning time with teacher teams, and supportive communication with school leaders) are less likely to leave at the end of the school year than those who did not receive support (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

## **Summary**

Studies show that beginning teachers who have self-efficacy are better able to handle emotional situations, manage student behaviors, and increase student achievement (Collie et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). It is necessary that a mentoring program contains supportive elements to assist in beginning teachers' beliefs in themselves and their capabilities. These supportive elements must consider the negative results of burnout, exhaustion, and stress and its relationship to the overall well-being of the beginning teacher.

Chapter Two reviews studies that highlight the key elements that support the self-efficacy, social-emotional well-being, and retention of beginning teachers. The articles discuss teacher self-efficacy, emotions, collaboration, and components of mentoring programs. Finally, this chapter analyzes the social-emotional elements essential in supporting beginning teachers' self-efficacy in the first few years and looks for components that enhance mentoring programs. Overall, this knowledge brings emotional support and mentorship, which creates an environment that can help build self-efficacy in beginning teachers.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

A beginning teacher's first year is the most important (Boogren, 2015). During this year, the teacher must implement strategies from teacher preparation programs and student teaching experiences (Boogren, 2015). Beginning teachers are also learning the realities of new schools, curriculum, and students (Boogren, 2015). This new learning often results in high stress and challenging situations (Ingersoll, 2012; NCTAF, 2007). High-stress levels that are ongoing can impact the beginning teachers' decision to continue teaching (Hong, 2012; Kosir et al., 2015; Smetackova, 2017). Ingersoll (2012) states that 50% of beginning teachers during the first five years of employment are leaving the profession. High attrition rates correlate with high

additional recruiting costs and management of teachers, along with disruptions to the continuity of programming and planning, which impacts the effectiveness of schools (Hong, 2010).

### **Impact of Self-efficacy in Beginning Teacher Development**

In Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, he defined self-efficacy as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance" (p. 391). Bandura (1977) claimed that environment, ability or skill, and external power did not affect the performance of an individual. Outside influences did not affect peoples' capabilities in tasks. According to Bandura (1977), internal beliefs affected peoples' motivation, affective states, and actions. Self-efficacy beliefs support what individuals achieve with the skills and knowledge they have. Self-efficacy can play a significant role in how teachers approach goals, responsibilities, and challenges. Teachers need to have a role in the decisions they make regarding their professional learning. Having someone tell them how to teach was not as effective as experiencing the learning for themselves. In a study that investigated the reasons teachers stay or leave, teachers who left the profession identified the challenges and acknowledged their need for developing self-efficacy, especially with student misbehaviors and classroom management (Hong, 2012). Beginning teachers did not always know how to handle student and classroom management effectively (Collie et al., 2012).

Additionally, Klassen and Chiu (2010) examined the effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction in a qualitative study. The study found that teachers' self-efficacy was affected by years of experience in a relationship that was nonlinear, with three components (classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement) of self-efficacy that increased with experience for the beginning and mid-career stage teachers, and then declined for the late-career stage teachers (Klassen & Chui, 2010). Smetackova (2017) uncovered that self-

efficacy beliefs in beginning teachers were significantly lower than teachers with experience.

The research supported that self-efficacy needed to be developed in beginning teachers early in their careers so that student needs were addressed (Dicke et al., 2015; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chui, 2010, Smetackova, 2017). Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy stayed in the teaching profession (Dicke et al., 2015; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chui, 2010; Smetackova, 2017).

**Emotional impacts on self-efficacy.** Review of the research suggested that there were connections between self-efficacy and how teachers handled their emotions (Collie et al., 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Themes identified the negative impacts on self-efficacy, which included emotional exhaustion, teacher stress, and burnout. Themes also revealed that there were positive impacts on self-efficacy that included resilience, coping skills, and job satisfaction. Many reviews suggested that student behaviors caused considerable amounts of stress and impacted teachers' self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Smetackova, 2017).

In a study by Collie et al. (2012), school climate and social-emotional learning examined the impact of stress on self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Teachers needed to acquire skills for effective student management that reduced the effects of student behavior stress (Collie et al., 2012). Findings from this study were essential in considering the relationship between teachers' sense of stress and self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012). Klassen and Chiu (2010) learned that teachers in intermediate or secondary grades had lower self-efficacy concerning classroom management and student engagement. This learning changed for primary teachers. Teachers who taught kindergarten and elementary school children had higher levels of self-efficacy for student engagement and classroom management (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). The authors noted that

minimal research was studied that showed how grade levels and content areas influenced teachers' self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

The findings from this study showed that teachers with more significant classroom stress had less self-efficacy in classroom management (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that teachers who encountered higher levels of classroom stress from student misbehavior, such as rude and noisy behaviors, had lower self-confidence to handle disruptions due to unsuccessful past experiences with behavior management. A key factor by Collie et al. (2012) identified the importance of supporting beginning teachers as they acquired new skills. Collie et al. (2012) stated that when beginning teachers were effective working with students in the classroom, they did not experience high levels of student misbehavior. If a teacher showed stress from student behaviors, they showed lower teaching efficacy. Smetackova (2017) concluded that professional self-efficacy prevented burnout syndrome in teachers.

***Emotional exhaustion.*** Dicke et al. (2015) investigated teacher candidates during their induction program (Referendariat), which began after university. The study took place in Germany and focused on beginning teachers' self-efficacy, emotional exhaustion, and the influence of professional knowledge. Results confirmed that the emotional exhaustion of beginning teachers increased during the first year of teaching (Dicke et al., 2015). As teachers took on new responsibilities, the demands of teaching increased. This result explained the increase in job demands (Dicke et al., 2015). Dicke et al. (2015) stated that beginning teachers who exhibited significant increases in emotional exhaustion were inclined to exhibit small increases or declines in self-efficacy. Unlike beginning teachers who showed a decline or little increase in emotional exhaustion, they showed more increases, in self-efficacy (Dicke et al., 2015).

In environments that sheltered beginning teachers such as Referendariate, teachers found and built their self-efficacy beliefs (Dicke et al., 2015). The study also stated that challenges and difficulties during Referendariate buffered the chance to increase self-efficacy if beginning teachers had not experienced independence (Dicke et al., 2015). Beginning teachers needed a gradual release of teaching independence in order to develop their self-efficacy (Dicke et al., 2015).

**Job stress.** Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that gender impacted teacher stress. It was found that females experienced higher workloads and more classroom stress (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). This conclusion was also drawn from a study by Alhija (2015), whose results focused on the relationship between stress levels of teachers and their perceptions of influence. This connection contrasted with coping strategies concerning the job and personal attributes. The results displayed the multiple effects of personal and job characteristics on teachers' ideas of various coping strategies and stressors. Outcomes suggested that gender offers a compelling effect on workload, which showed that women encountered a higher level of stress because of workload (Alhija, 2015).

In contrast to men, the study reported that women sought out social support more often and distanced themselves from work, which indicated a want for behavior change (Alhija, 2015). Gender differences associated with different roles and social norms affected gender-related behaviors (Alhija, 2015). Alhija (2015) found that student misbehaviors caused job stress in teachers. The findings suggested that experienced teachers have lower levels of stress caused by colleagues and higher levels of stress caused by student misbehaviors (Alhija, 2015).

Hong (2012) identified that beliefs held a critical role in job stress. Teachers who left the profession believed that not all students learned the same way (Hong, 2012). Teachers who chose

to stay also held this same belief. Differentiating for student learning was a difficult concept for beginning teachers (Hong, 2012). Teachers who left the profession believed that they were fully responsible for the education of students. They did not believe that students held a role in their learning. For example, a former biology teacher who left the profession stated that the teacher felt completely responsible for students' learning and spent numerous hours preparing lessons and interactive games. For those who left, the perception of the teachers' role imposed a burden on the instructor. The burden caused teachers to utilize exhaustive measures in planning instruction, creating materials, and finding resources to support student learning. This fatigue led to high stress, exhaustive workloads, and an overwhelmed sense of responsibility (Hong, 2012).

***Burnout.*** Shen et al. (2015) considered the relationship between teacher burnout and student motivation. The purpose of the research examined the relationship between burnout and students' autonomous motivation. The autonomous motivation was interpreted as an inner drive regarding student motivation. The analysis of data supported that teacher burnout was an essential environmental aspect related to students' motivation. The research revealed that classrooms led by teachers who had high perceptions of emotional exhaustion were less likely to autonomously support their students (Shen et al., 2015). The research also found that there was a direct connection between teacher depersonalization and students' autonomous motivation (Shen et al., 2015). Teachers who felt indifferent or conveyed cynical attitudes towards students damaged students' autonomous motivation development (Shen et al., 2015). Burnout not only impacted beginning teachers but affected students as well (Shen et al., 2015).

In a study conducted by Kosir et al. (2015), rumination and reflection were considered as predictors of teacher stress and burnout. The article discussed two modes of stress responses, both rumination, and reflection. Rumination was a negative response, and reflection was a



positive response. Rumination was a way of thinking about one's feelings and problems that did not lead to productive problem-solving strategies that might have changed the situation.

Reflection, on the other hand, was used as a professional development tool and was believed to be vital for preventing burnout (Lyons, 2010). Data suggested that rumination was a crucial predictor of stress while reflection was not (Kosir et al., 2015). The study showed that less reflective teachers with high perceptions of colleague support reported minimal levels of stress whereas less reflective teachers with minimal colleague support reported the highest levels of stress (Kosir et al., 2015). This finding demonstrated the importance of colleague support (Kosir et al., 2015).

In a quantitative study by Smetackova (2017), research suggested that men and women did not differ in their scores regarding burnout. The study found that males expressed emotional burnout, and females reported more physical burnout (Smetackova, 2017). The study revealed that teachers with 6 to 15 years of experience reported the strongest burnout related to physical and emotional factors (Smetackova, 2017). Research implied that this group of teachers were at risk, and the results were connected to teachers' family lives or other responsibilities at work (Smetackova, 2017). Smetackova (2017) also concluded that professional self-efficacy prevented burnout syndrome in teachers. The conclusion affirmed the importance of self-efficacy development early in beginning teachers' careers.

Hong (2012) found that when interviewing teachers, those who left the profession took their emotional burnout experiences home with them and thought about them the following day. It was also found that teachers' negative experiences that were taken personally induced emotional burnout (Hong, 2012). Teachers who reported more burnout also reported lower self-efficacy, and vice versa (Smetackova, 2017). Studies suggested that high, on-going teacher

stress, can lead to burnout and teacher attrition (Hong, 2012; Kosir et al., 2015; Smetackova, 2017).

**Resilience.** Emotions have an essential role in the self-efficacy of teachers (Hong, 2012). Hong (2012) wanted to know how resilience impacted teachers' decisions to stay in the profession. Data suggested that there was a connection between those who stayed in the profession which related to administrative support (Hong, 2012). For example, an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade physics teacher stated during an interview that when faced with a discipline issue, the administrator was there to help. This sense of trust between the beginning teacher and administrator allowed the teacher to feel safe and know that someone was there to support them. The finding highlighted the importance of establishing administrative support for beginning teachers so that self-efficacy can take place in a safe environment. This belief ultimately affected the commitment and resilience that allowed beginning teachers to stay in the teaching profession (Hong, 2012). Hong (2012) identified that teachers who chose to stay knew how to get over emotional burnout without challenges when it was experienced. Teachers who stayed reported that they established emotional boundaries, which helped to reduce stress and burnout (Hong, 2012).

**Coping skills.** The school environment was found to be essential because it impacted teachers' perceptions of their working context. These perceptions influenced their well-being and motivation (Collie et al., 2012). Alhija (2015) stated that teachers with experience exhibited more stress than beginning teachers due to students' misbehaviors and educational policy, that resulted from the loss of tolerance due to burnout. The research suggested that experienced teachers found more benefit in behavioral changes and emotional self-control (Alhija, 2015). Teachers that identified with this self-help strategy found it to be more effective when coping

with stressful situations (Alhija, 2015). Teachers also acknowledged help and support from others as a coping strategy (Alhija, 2015).

Smetackova (2017) investigated self-efficacy and burnout in teachers. Findings showed that emotional burnout had a weak correlation with general burnout, but emotional burnout strongly correlated with self-efficacy (Smetackova, 2017). Consequently, emotional burnout showed a unique feature, which connected to the capability of emotional regulation and teachers' beliefs (Smetackova, 2017). Beginning teachers believed in their ability to cope with challenges that they experienced. Mentor teachers who were assigned to these mentees supported their beliefs because mentor teachers had similar experiences that related to the difficulties faced by beginning teachers (Smetackova, 2017).

**Job satisfaction.** Findings from Collie et al. (2012) supported the idea that social-emotional learning (SEL) positively impacted students but influenced teachers as well. SEL had shown a positive influence on teacher outcomes such as stress, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012). Teacher perception was an essential aspect of student relations. Teachers who perceived better student behavior and more motivation found higher levels of self-efficacy, lower behavior stress, and more job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012). Findings from this study were relevant to educators and administrators because teachers' perceptions of students connect with teachers' experiences of stress, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012).

Collie et al. (2012) also found that self-efficacy and workload stress impacted teachers' sense of job satisfaction. The research suggested that there was an indirect relationship between job satisfaction and student behavior stress, which mediated professional self-efficacy. When it was just student behavior stress that impacted the teacher, student behavior stress was not detrimental to job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012). When a reduced sense of self-efficacy

combined with student behavior stress, job satisfaction was impacted (Collie et al., 2012). Results showed that when feelings of inadequacy merged with student behavior stress, stress negatively impacted job satisfaction. On the contrary, if feelings of low confidence did not add stressors, then the results were acknowledged as a challenge, and job satisfaction was not affected (Collie et al., 2012).

**Connection of self-efficacy, emotions, and mentorship.** Helms-Lorenz et al. (2012) conducted a quantitative study with 143 beginning secondary teachers located across the Netherlands. The study focused on the effects of comprehensive induction arrangements (program), beginning teachers' emotional processes, and an understanding of the type and amount of support provided by the induction program. A group of teachers was selected and assigned to either a control or experimental groups. The experimental group devoted a school year to the development and implementation of the induction program. The induction program included eight collaborative meetings where a school-based educator, beginning teacher, director, and human resource representative participated. All activities in the experimental group were required.

The induction program supported workload reduction, instructional strategies, professional development, and the awareness of colleagues, policies, and rules. At the beginning of the school year, results showed that both groups experienced similar levels of stress and self-efficacy, but also reported the same levels of job dissatisfaction and stress (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). By the end of the school year, the research uncovered that those in the experimental group who went through the induction program felt less stressed and more confident (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012).

Findings also showed that beginning teachers in the control group left the school or profession more often than beginning teachers who went through the induction program (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). Helms-Lorenz et al. (2012) stated that schools who supported their beginning teachers had higher retention rates than those who did not. The research identified the supports needed to build capacity, confidence, and self-efficacy to retain beginning teachers (Hong, 2012). Research showed that beginning teachers who were resilient and could cope with high levels of stress were more likely to become self-efficacious in their practice and found satisfaction in teaching which ultimately impacted student achievement (Helms-Lorenz, 2012; Hong, 2012; Shen et al., 2015).

### **Impact of Mentorship on Beginning Teachers**

Throughout research literature, different mentorship models and processes revealed the benefits of such programs. The research demonstrated the importance of mentoring beginning teachers for improved retention and reduction of teacher attrition (Brill and McCartney, 2008; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Beginning teachers were often isolated and abandoned, which encouraged a culture of solitude and limited employment (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). As with other mentoring structures in non-educational settings, beginning teachers experienced higher levels of attrition because mentoring structures were not set up for success (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Studies in this review further examined program models, mentor characteristics, collaboration, and professional development opportunities which connected to the support of self-efficacy in beginning teachers through the mentorship process (Flook et al., 2013; Hallam et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Jennings et al., 2017; Lejonberg et al., 2015; Lopez, 2013; Tan, 2013).

**Models of effective mentorship.** A mixed-method study by Hallam et al. (2012) examined contrasting support models that offered insights into the needs of beginning teachers and analyzed the components and characteristics of coaching versus mentoring models. Two school districts in a three-year study used two different mentoring models to provide support to their elementary teachers. The Dane School District used instructional coaches for the first year and designated mentors for the second and third year. The Asher School District used mentors all three years for their support of beginning teachers. All 23 participants were interviewed and completed surveys during year one and year three of teaching.

Beginning teachers identified the components of success in this mentorship program. More than 80% of beginning teachers in both districts determined that an approachable personality, along with a caring and trustworthy relationship were important mentoring characteristics (Hallam et al., 2012). In the current study, Asher teachers reported more personal relationships developed during year one. Dane teachers did not report the same type of relationship with their district coaches. By year three, Dane teachers reported that 73% felt that district coaches were unnecessary and had not been a common source of support during year one. The study confirmed that in-school mentors were more accessible and closer in proximity, whereas district coaches were not (Hallam et al., 2012). District coaches in Dane's model lacked closeness and strength in proximity and communication (Hallam et al., 2012).

The study also examined the relationship between emotions experienced, and support received by mentors. In year three, beginning teachers across both districts reported that emotional experiences correlated with how beginning teachers perceived autonomy, confidence, job satisfaction, and stress (Hallam et al., 2012). Hong (2012), in a qualitative study, asked secondary teachers who left the profession about their capabilities within the classroom.

Teachers who left stated that their beliefs, challenges, and difficulties in the area of self-efficacy showed clearly through the way they managed their classroom and handled behavioral issues (Hong, 2012). Data showed that teachers who left the profession took negative situations personally and carried their emotions home (Hong, 2012). This challenge resulted from a lack of guidance and scaffolding for beginning teachers (Hong, 2012). This understanding affirmed the idea that mentorship was a valuable piece of support for beginning teachers' development (Hallam et al., 2012; Hong, 2012).

**Mentor Selection.** Hallam et al. (2012) reported that mentor selection was a crucial component of mentoring programs. Tan (2013) stated in a qualitative study that beginning teachers who received assuring emotional support had mentors who intentionally positioned themselves as providers of emotional support. Mentors who personally and professionally enjoy mentoring positioned themselves as enjoying learning from mentees (Tan, 2013). Conversely, Tan (2013) also suggested that a less satisfying mentee experience featured mentors who positioned themselves as emotionally and physically unavailable. Tan (2013) inferred through the study that good teachers do not always make good mentors.

Hong (2012) recognized that teachers with experience might provide vital information and evidence for beginning teachers who were still cultivating their perception of self and adapting to the environment of teaching. Feedback from experienced teachers provided insights for beginning teachers (Hong, 2012). Experienced teachers had gone through this stage of teacher development previously and could relate to the challenges that beginning teachers encountered (Hong, 2012).

Lejonberg, Elstad, and Christopherson (2015) conducted qualitative research on mentors' beliefs about mentoring. Findings suggested that mentors with high levels of self-efficacy in

mentor roles were more likely to have evaluative beliefs in mentoring beginning teachers. Rhodes and Fletcher (2013) stated that an unrealistic self-image resulted from high self-efficacy. Based on this knowledge, the study concluded that mentoring relationships were affected, and the receptiveness of mentees was impacted (Lejonberg et al., 2015). Hallam et al. (2012) found that beginning teachers who stayed in the profession received more support for their development and had stronger communication with mentors. This idea differed from those who left the profession. Those that stayed reported more autonomy (100%) and more confidence (67%) in themselves with mentor support (Hallam et al., 2012). Mentor characteristics were critical components considered in mentor selection and were identified in successful mentoring programs (Hallam et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Lejonberg et al., 2015; Tan, 2013).

**Administrative Support.** Strong administrative support was a factor that supported beginning teachers and their decision to stay in the teaching profession. Teachers who stayed noted that they received 30% more support from their principals than those who left (Hallam et al., 2012). A significant finding from Hallam et al. (2012) supported three essential suggestions for principals concerning the development and sustainability of effective mentoring for beginning teachers. The supports included school culture, direct support of teachers, and mentor selection (Hallam et al., 2012). A contribution was made to school culture when there was a clear purpose for mentoring beginning teachers (Hallam et al., 2012). The principal was identified as the primary contributor to school culture regarding mentorship programs (Hallam et al., 2012). The study emphasized that mentoring was best when the school community was responsible for inducting new staff into the school culture (Hallam et al., 2012). Research indicated that principals need to provide direct and intentional support for both beginning teachers and mentoring programs at the start of the school year (Hallam et al., 2012). Direct support was



shown to beginning teachers in the form of encouraging words, drop-ins, and early interventions in order to provide the support essential for growth (Hallam et al., 2012). Lastly, the study showed that mentor selection was vital to the beginning teachers' development (Hallam et al., 2012).

Data from the study by Hong (2012) found regular patterns across responses from teachers who stayed in the profession. Teachers who stayed reported that principals provided support concerning the significant difficulties they encountered (Hong, 2012). When interviewed beginning teachers reported that when challenges arose with student discipline, the administrator was there to support the beginning teacher (Hong, 2012). Those who stayed reported that strong administrative support helped them to develop an awareness of self-efficacy and safety in the classroom (Hong, 2012). Both Hallam et al. (2012) and Hong (2012) provided evidence of the importance of administrative support, which played a crucial role in the retention of teachers.

**Collaboration.** The review of research found that collaboration was an essential element in the support and retention of beginning teachers (Hallam et al., 2012; Lopez, 2013). Hallam et al. (2012) stated that the mentoring and inducting of beginning teachers was critical work which involved all stakeholders. Collaborative teams played a vital role in beginning teacher support (Hallam et al., 2012). Professional learning communities (PLCs) provided spaces for beginning and veteran teachers to share professional learning experiences. Hallam et al. (2012) identified PLCs as stress reducing for beginning teachers in both studies modeled.

Lopez (2013) conducted a qualitative study that focused on mentoring relationships that involved critical conversations between the mentor and mentee. The study examined a critical discussion regarding the knowledge development of equity and diversity. Collaborative mentoring allowed the mentor and mentee to learn from one another and take risks. Research

indicated that mutual rapport, respect, and trust were needed to establish honest conversations (Lopez, 2013). Just as Lopez (2013) suggested that space and time for collaboration were vital, so stated, Hallam et al. (2012) regarding time and space for the collaboration of PLCs. Time needs to be designated for beginning teachers and colleagues to work and learn from one another in collaboration (Hallam et al., 2012; Lopez, 2013). Teachers learned over time to improve their practice, which helped build self-efficacy and resiliency (Hong, 2012).

Helms-Lorenz et al. (2012) noted that beginning teachers in an experimental group who went through an induction program reported less stress and more confidence by the end of the school year (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). The impact of the induction program on beginning teachers showed that reducing workload and offering supportive professional development (through collaborative meetings) had a positive effect on beginning teachers which caused them to perceive less stress (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012). The studies showed that collaboration was vital for beginning teachers because it promoted collegiality, allowed time to gather, giving space to discuss difficult topics, and reduced stress (Hallam et al., 2012; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Lopez, 2013).

**Professional Development.** Hong (2012) recognized in research that pre-service teachers need to develop beliefs that supported their success in the classroom. Emotions impacted how teachers managed stressful conditions. Hong (2012) stated that professional development for beginning teachers focused on social-emotional components, especially resiliency and coping skills. Participants in the study stated that they did not experience any professional development sessions that dealt with emotions or learned how to work through emotional trauma in the classroom. Hong (2012) indicated that if beginning teachers participated in professional development opportunities which allowed them to share their feelings and find ways to address

situations where emotions are high, teachers might have chosen to stay in the profession. Klassen & Chiu (2010) suggested that using professional development opportunities to enhance skills and self-efficacy lowered job stress and increased satisfaction in teaching.

Dicke et al. (2015) identified that emotional exhaustion increased over the first year of induction. Teachers became more independent and recognized the realities of the profession. Beginning teachers attain small amounts of self-efficacy in an induction environment where there was a gradual release of duties (Dicke et al., 2015). Beginning teachers who were supported by experienced teachers and received additional professional development through seminars were better able to manage stressful situations that arose in teaching (Dicke et al., 2015). Research supported that seminars improved the beginning teachers experience but were unable to identify the specific types of professional development requested by beginning teachers (Dicke et al., 2015).

Two professional development programs examined mindfulness connections that support beginning teachers (Flook et al., 2013; Jennings et al., 2017). Both studies considered the effects of social-emotional needs, stress, burnout, and self-efficacy on teachers. Flook et al. (2013) implemented a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction approach, which taught teachers how to regulate emotions, focus on the present, and recognize the body's reaction to stressful situations. Questionnaires, reflection logs, observations, and cortisol levels measured and analyzed the teachers' results to determine the impacts of the intervention. The pilot study suggested that mindfulness interventions boosted self-compassion and reduced attentional bias, psychological symptoms, such as burnout, and increased effective teaching behaviors (Flook et al., 2013).

A change occurred between the pre and post interventions which correlated with improvements to burnout, psychological symptoms, and sustained attention in the intervention

group (Flook et al., 2013). An increase in self-reported non-reactivity was associated with a reduction in both psychological symptoms and depersonalization (Flook et al., 2013). The results also indicated an increase in sustained attention (Flook et al., 2013). Findings suggested that teachers who did not receive mindfulness interventions during the school year were prone to psychological stress that increased, which reflected higher cortisol levels and decreased personal accomplishments (Flook et al., 2013). Flook et al. (2013) concluded that mindfulness interventions served as a buffer for teachers against the effects of stress on cortisol levels that might otherwise occur during the school year.

Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) was a professional development program that Jennings et al. (2017) examined to measure the impact on the implementation of the program towards teachers' self-efficacy, emotional regulation, mindfulness, psychological symptoms, and physical distress. Compared with teachers in the control group, teachers who took part in the CARE for teachers' program showed higher levels of regulating their emotions, mindfulness, and lower levels of psychological distress and time urgency (Jennings et al., 2017).

Flook et al. (2013) and Jennings et al. (2017) identified that both programs led teachers to become more adaptive in regulating emotions, mindfulness approaches, and coping with challenging emotions in the classroom. Studies showed that professional development was a crucial factor to beginning teachers' development and retention in the profession (Dicke et al., 2015; Flook et al., 2013; Hong, 2012; Jennings et al., 2017).

## **Conclusion**

The second chapter of this work reviewed literature that examined self-efficacy, emotional factors, and mentorship for the support of beginning teachers. Themes included the

impact of self-efficacy, emotional effects on self-efficacy, and identified components of effective mentorship processes, which included mentorship models, mentor selection, administrative support, collaboration, and professional development in support of beginning teachers. Chapter Three examines the proposed problem, the importance of the topic, and also provides a summary of the main points of the literature review.

### **Chapter Three: Summary**

Chapter Two reviews the literature that affects the retention of beginning teachers and presents an awareness of the importance of self-efficacy in the role of teacher support. The review also examines the emotional needs of beginning teachers and their relationship to self-efficacy. Chapter Three examines the proposal of the problem, the importance of the topic, and provides a summary of the main points of the literature review.

### **Review of the Proposed Problem**

Teaching is a challenging, high-stress profession where 50% of beginning teachers leave the profession in the first five years (Ingersoll, 2012; NCTAF, 2007). Teacher retention has been an issue worldwide (OECD, 2014). Not only does attrition financially burden school districts, but also impacts students' achievement as well (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). With more responsibilities given to beginning teachers, teachers struggle with confidence, student behaviors, and workload. Learning for teachers develops over the first few years of teaching. With external and internal factors that contribute to attrition, many teachers leave the profession before they can attain their full capacity as a teacher. Teachers need time to construct new learning and form belief systems.

Self-efficacy is an essential belief for beginning teachers. Self-efficacy allows the beginning teacher to find within themselves the ability to set goals, problem-solve, and manage

classrooms effectively. Emotions can impact beginning teachers, both positively and negatively. Each teacher perceives situations differently and responds in different ways. Some teachers can positively manage and cope with emotional situations, and some teachers cannot. In order to retain beginning teachers, it is essential to recognize their needs and identify supports that can complement current mentoring models.

### **Importance of the Topic**

Developing a mentorship program that supports beginning teachers' self-efficacy and emotional needs is necessary for the retention of teachers. Beginning teachers are often left on their own, which results in isolation. Teacher retention can impact staff administration and the morale of schools. Teacher attrition correlates to high recruiting costs with disruptions to student programming and planning and can impact the effectiveness of schools (Hong, 2010). Mentoring and induction programs are used to support beginning teachers. It is essential to identify which supports are most effective for the growth of beginning teachers. Mentoring relationships with the support of self-efficacy ensures that the teacher feels supported through stressful and challenging times. When beginning teachers are supported, self-efficacy grows. Beginning teachers can manage behaviors and positively impact student achievement. When beginning teachers find success, they report more job satisfaction and are more likely to stay in the teaching profession.

### **Summary of Main Points of the Literature Review**

According to the literature, there is a correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their emotional responses. Emotional exhaustion, teacher stress, and burnout related to negative impacts on self-efficacy. Many studies suggest that student behaviors cause a significant amount of teacher stress and effects self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010;

Smetackova, 2017). Teachers with less classroom stress have higher levels of self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Another factor that impacts self-efficacy is emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion combines with negative student behaviors and lowers teachers' self-efficacy (Dicke et al., 2015). When self-efficacy decreases, beginning teachers report that they feel overwhelmed, incompetent, overworked, and stressed (Dicke et al., 2015).

Job stress is an area also examined. Findings suggest that gender affects teachers' stress levels. Alhija (2015) concludes that women encounter higher levels of stress due to workload but tend to change their behavior to cope with stress. Males report less stress but do not see behavior change as a coping strategy for classroom challenges. Females tend to seek out social support and distance themselves from work. Hong (2012) states that beliefs hold an essential role in job stress. Teachers who leave the profession report that they feel an overwhelming responsibility for students' learning. When beginning teachers hold high expectations for themselves, this can lead to exhaustion, stress, and burnout. When teachers' burn out, they begin to lose personal relationships with students. Burnout leads to depersonalization and apathy towards students (Shen et al., 2015). When students do not feel a connection with their teacher, they begin to lose motivation to learn (Shen et al., 2015).

Resilience, coping skills, and job satisfaction are positive emotional factors which impact self-efficacy. Hong (2012) finds that those beginning teachers are more resilient when administrators offer support. Teachers who stay in the profession report that when they face emotional challenges, they know how to establish emotional boundaries and cope with those challenges. Alhija (2015) suggests that all teachers feel stress due to student behaviors but can cope by changing their teaching behavior and controlling their emotions. Teacher retention relates to job satisfaction. Self-efficacy, plus improved perceptions of student behaviors, results

in job satisfaction. Overall, emotional perceptions of beginning teachers can either have a positive or negative effect on self-efficacy (Alhija, 2015; Hong, 2012).

Identifying the emotional connections between self-efficacy and mentorship is essential for beginning teachers. Schools need to support beginning teachers so that they do not feel isolated as they begin their teaching career. Hallam et al. (2012) find that mentoring is a more effective model than coaching. Relationships, trust, collaboration, and proximity are essential components to support beginning teachers. Tan (2013) states that in order to have a productive mentoring relationship, the mentor must want to mentor and care about the mentee. Mentors should not be in an evaluative role; this negatively impacts the mentoring relationship. Careful selection of mentors by the administration must occur for mentorship to be beneficial for beginning teachers.

Administrative support is vital for developing the practice of beginning teachers. This support helps to build self-efficacy and safety while successfully supporting teachers. The mentorship process allows all stakeholders to build a collaborative and inclusive community. Professional development requires alignment with beginning teachers' needs and considers pertinent elements that address challenging situations for those new to the profession. Collaborative teams and PLCs are also essential to successfully supporting beginning teachers. Social-emotional elements allow for training that teaches beginning teachers how to cope with the stress and strain of teaching. Mindfulness approaches are found to reduce stress and regulate emotions. Results show positive impacts on teachers (Flook et al., 2013; Jennings et al., 2017).

The research examined in this paper finds that there is a correlation between self-efficacy and emotions that impact beginning teachers (Collie et al., 2012; Hong, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Smetackova, 2017). Mentoring programs that support beginning teachers can build self-



efficacy, which can lower job stress. Lower stress leads to increased self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Teachers who report job satisfaction stay in the teaching profession. Chapter Four examines insights, applications, and recommendations for future research on supporting beginning teachers' self-efficacy through mentorship.

### **Chapter Four: Discussion and Application**

Chapter Three reveals the importance of self-efficacy and emotions as they relate to beginning teachers. Negative and positive emotions impact beginning teachers' self-efficacy. Mentorship programs can provide support to reduce job stress and increase self-efficacy. Chapter Four highlights the insights gained through the review of the literature. The chapter also discusses applications and recommendations for future studies.

#### **Insights Gained from the Research**

The first insight gained from the research is that teacher perceptions and behaviors are unique. What one teacher finds to be a stressful situation another teacher may not. Generalizations identify specific components that support the emotional well-being of the beginning teacher. However, in order to provide the support that is differentiated, a mentor needs to establish a personal relationship with the mentee. This relationship is built on trust and kindness and can allow the beginning teacher to grow. This relationship can allow the beginning teacher to become vulnerable and reflective and can help support the self-efficacy of the teacher. Research reviewed identifies the negative and positive emotions that affect self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Negative emotions are found to lower the beginning teachers' self-efficacy. Positive emotions supported by effectively managing classrooms and instruction can increase self-efficacy. Mentorship is a process that supports the emotions and competency of the beginning teacher. This support increases their self-efficacy.

The second insight identified through the research is that student management has a significant effect on the self-efficacy of beginning teachers. When beginning teachers feel success and can effectively redirect students who misbehave, they gain confidence. Learning how to interact with students without allowing negative feelings to enter allows the beginning teacher to learn from each successful interaction. The studies reveal those beginning teachers need time and space to build their practice (Lopez, 2013; Hallam et al., 2012; Hong, 2012). This learning is crucial because teachers who allow student behaviors to affect them emotionally decrease their self-efficacy. When self-efficacy decreases, job stress increases and negative thoughts ruminate, beginning teachers question their decision to teach. (Kosir et al., 2015). Once this occurs, many teachers leave the profession, which has adverse effects on students (Shen et al., 2015).

The third insight revealed that mentor selection is a top priority for beginning teachers. Research implies that good teachers do not always make good mentors (Tan, 2013). Mentors must possess the qualities that support beginning teachers. These qualities include a trusting and caring relationship. Careful selection by administrators needs to occur so that the mentors and mentees are compatible. The mentor needs to want to support the beginning teacher. If the mentor is physically and emotionally unavailable, beginning teachers may not have a positive experience. This negative positioning may have a lasting effect on the beginning teacher and can impact future relations (Tan, 2013). The administration has a role in this relationship. If the relationship is not positive or supportive, the principal has a responsibility to find a new mentor for the beginning teacher. Quick action needs to occur, so beginning teachers can receive support to build self-efficacy in order to create student success.

**Application**

The first application is to create a mentorship program that considers the emotional impacts on self-efficacy. All stakeholders should have a role when introducing the program districtwide. Mentorship should include mentors, administrators, grade level/content teams, specialists, and PLCs. Beginning teachers should report a sense of support throughout the school. This support ties into the supportive culture of the building.

Self-efficacy may be a term that teachers are unaware of through their teacher preparation programs. Teacher workshops should include sessions to educate teachers on the importance of self-efficacy. Collaboration should also be a focus of the mentorship program. Studies suggest that collaboration helps to build self-efficacy in beginning teachers (Hallam et al., 2012; Lopez, 2013). Working with others builds capacity and allows the beginning teacher to be a part of the teaching community. Beginning teachers report less isolation in their practice when they work with supportive mentors and teammates. Mentorship programs should be evaluated to determine if mentor relationships are positive and productive. If there are issues, the administration should step in to resolve the issues.

The second application is to provide professional development that examines the emotional impact on self-efficacy. School districts implement initiatives frequently, but few cover topics, such as the social-emotional learning of adults. Stress causes many negative factors in the lives of teachers (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Alhija, 2015). The studies reviewed discussed the effects of emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and burnout (Collie et al., 2012; Dicke et al., 2015; Hong, 2012; Kosir et al., 2015; Shen et al., 2015; Smetackova, 2017). All teachers need training that teaches them ways to reduce stress, cope with challenges, and manage their

emotions. When teachers can regulate their emotions, they are more apt to support students in managing their own emotions.

Professional development for teachers should include programs such as mindfulness. Programs may have a cost associated with them, and sustainability must also be considered. The costs of the programs outweigh the adverse effects of stress. Teachers who can self-regulate emotions are better able to cope with challenges and develop resiliency. They report better job satisfaction that has a positive effect on self-efficacy ultimately affecting student achievements (Collie et al., 2012; Helms-Lorenz, 2012; Hong, 2012; Shen et al., 2015).

The third application is to share the research on the importance of administrative support for beginning teachers from administrators. The research identified that administrators need to give direct and intentional support to beginning teachers (Hallam et al., 2012). This type of support includes drop-ins, positive words, and support for students who have behavioral challenges. The studies reveal that this type of support is necessary for beginning teachers and allows them to report feeling safe to take chances (Hallam et al., 2012). Administrators should be involved with mentorship programs. When beginning teachers see that administrators value mentorship, they are more willing to participate in the process (Hong, 2012).

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The research examines many aspects of beginning teachers' self-efficacy with mentorship. Evidence suggests that experienced teachers know how to set emotional boundaries, change their teaching behaviors, and handle their emotions. Experienced teachers learn this skill from past knowledge. This understanding connects to teachers' beliefs. Further studies should explore emotional regulation in beginning teachers and ways to build this skill. If beginning

teachers become more resilient and can cope with emotional difficulties and stress, more focus can occur for student learning.

The second suggestion for possible future studies includes investigating self-efficacy and mentor selection. One finding suggests that teachers who show high levels of self-efficacy may not have a realistic idea of their effectiveness (Lejonberg et al., 2015). Having a better understanding of self-efficacy levels in mentors and how that translates to mentor effectiveness could uncover more possibilities of criteria for mentor selection. For instance, if high self-efficacy leads a mentor teacher to believe that there is only one way to instruct, the mentor can provide the mentee with one option for teaching. The mentor is telling the mentee what to do. Instead, the mentor should work with the mentee to build confidence by allowing the mentee to provide ideas on how to problem-solve together. Collaboration builds self-efficacy. This area requires further examination.

The third suggestion for possible future studies involves the impact of collective efficacy on job satisfaction. Studies show that collaboration is critical in supporting beginning teachers. Collaboration allows time for teachers to share their knowledge and practice, and build community together. Teachers who have self-efficacy are satisfied in their work. Future studies might focus on collective efficacy and how it affects job satisfaction. This knowledge can impact building and school climate. If the whole building is involved, more students are impacted and can lead students to higher student achievement.

The results of this study can encourage schools to provide mentorship programs that support beginning teachers' self-efficacy and emotions. The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and emotions and how they relate to mentorship. Teachers are unique individuals who want to make a difference in the world. The stress and strain caused

by teaching require schools to research ways to support beginning teachers. Continual research is necessary to explore mentorship options so that schools can best support the emotional needs of beginning teachers in order to develop self-efficacy. Once teachers find emotional support, teachers can report positive aspects of the profession and find job satisfaction. Students can have teachers who are resilient and able to cope with challenging situations. Teachers can make personal connections with students, manage behaviors, and engage students in learning. Students can achieve at high levels with teachers who are self-efficacious and satisfied in their work.

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