

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Teacher Hiring Practices: A Study of the Teacher Hiring Process Used by Indiana Public School Principals

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Gordon Donaldson, Jr. said, “The best opportunity a principal has to improve teaching and learning in a school is when a teacher is hired.” This is the basic premise from which this study began, and it suggests, that in addition to the day-to-day teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom, the next most important activity of a school district is the hiring of talented, skilled, knowledgeable, and effective teachers. In the next five years, educational leaders will have the opportunity unlike any other in the past to have a dramatic impact on the educational process. Anecdotal information is backed by the statistical data that there will be a major turnover of teachers and a dramatic need for new teachers.

This study examined the hiring practices of a sample of Indiana public school principals to determine the components that school administrators use and consider most critical in hiring effective teachers, and to compare the components to what research indicates is effective practice. This examination identified the most commonly used components of the teacher hiring process across the state of Indiana, identified the most commonly involved stakeholders in the process, and identified what factors, skills, or

characteristics principals utilize and look for most often when making teacher hiring decisions.

Respondents completed a survey with questions based on the related literature to quantify the desired target areas focusing on strategies used in the five steps of the teacher hiring process. The questions were centered on research-based components of an effective hiring process, as well as questions focused on gaining insight from school principals into the steps they utilized and deemed important in the teacher hiring process. Principals were asked to report the extent to which they utilize each strategy as well as the degree of importance they place on each strategy.

The data were presented using descriptive statistics. The findings were discussed and compared to what the literature indicates is best practice in the teacher hiring process. Recommendations for further research were offered as well as recommendations to administrators for practical strategies for creating a strategic and systemic process for recruiting, hiring, and retaining high quality teachers.