

ABSTRACT

SMITH, RALPH CLYDE. Perceived Needs of Lateral Entry Teachers: A Case Study of Three Initially Licensed Science Teachers. (Under the direction of Glenda Carter and John Park)

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived needs of initially licensed Lateral Entry science teachers to acquire an understanding of how university courses and mentoring programs can better meet their needs. Three teachers with zero to two years' experience were selected for this study. Their progress through the continuing licensure process, their responses to the challenges of teaching, and the support they received from their schools were determined from monthly interviews conducted throughout one school year.

This research is a grounded theory study with a prescribed bounded time frame, utilizing an inductive methodology to derive the interpretation of the teacher comments. The teachers indicated issues with required coursework including affordability, convenience, practicality, and repetition of course content. The teachers also indicated the type of support needed from mentors, peers and administrators to further their professional growth.

Universities must take the lead in providing solutions to the problems associated with coursework and provide training for mentors and administrators that will enable them to support Lateral Entry teachers.

**PERCEIVED NEEDS OF LATERAL ENTRY TEACHERS:
A CASE STUDY OF THREE INITIALLY LICENSED SCIENCE TEACHERS**

by

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DEDICATION

To my students:

Without whom I could not teach;

For whom I strive to improve my teaching.

Biography

Ralph Clyde Smith was born in Covington, Kentucky on June 15, 1950, the only son of Roberta Bass Smith and William Ralph Smith. After living in Ohio, New Jersey, New York, and Maryland, he graduated from high school in Raleigh, North Carolina. He attended North Carolina State University and received a Bachelor of Science in Science Education in 1972. Ralph received a Master of Education from Duke University in 1975. He entered the Ph.D. program in Science Education at NCSU in 1993.

Ralph began his teaching career in 1972 at Wayne Country Day School in Goldsboro, teaching physical science, chemistry and physics. He began teaching at Eastern Wayne High School in 1983, where he has taught chemistry, and coached tennis, swimming and soccer. He is the advisor of the Student Government Association and the Technology Student Association.

Ralph has a wife, Teresa, and four children, Heather, Glen, Andrew, and Dustin. He is the organist and treasurer at his church, and also enjoys camping and boating. Ralph currently lives in Goldsboro, North Carolina.

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I wish to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for His presence and strength throughout this process.

Without the support of my wife and family, I could not have spent the hundreds of hours that it has taken to accomplish this task. Without the prayers and encouragement of my friends, I would never have finished.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Traditional teacher education programs have not been able to keep up with the demand for new teachers. Not only is the school-age population increasing, but also "[v]irtually the entire teaching force will retire within about 15 years" (Ashton, 1996, p. 21). In response to these problems, alternative programs for the certification of teacher candidates have developed across the United States over the last fifteen years. Nearly every state has developed procedures for certifying personnel who have not received certification through a university program of teacher education, the traditional method. This is due in part to the inability of teacher education programs to produce the needed numbers of teachers and in part to a lack of confidence in the traditional system. Several problems have been identified relating "to the ways in which the public context of schooling and teacher education have frustrated the emergence of an educational profession with practice grounded in theoretical understanding" (Goodlad, 1999, p. 329). These include the perceptions that teaching is an occupation that requires skills that are easily acquired through apprenticeship, or that previous experience in business or the military is sufficient to prepare one to teach.

Research on alternative methods of licensure is needed because teacher education "programs have become more diverse in structure and content than perhaps ever before" (Ashton, 1996, p. 21). How to best address the needs of persons who decide after receiving an undergraduate degree in a content area to pursue a teaching

career is a unique problem, because the needs of this group may be distinctly different from the needs of those who have participated in traditional education programs.

There are many ways one can go about the licensure process outside of the traditional undergraduate degree program. One way is Alternative Certification programs wherein prospective teachers enroll in a university program designed to license non-education majors in one to two years. This program includes a teaching internship with an experienced classroom teacher and so closely parallels experiences of traditional education programs. The second alternative route to licensure is the Lateral Entry program wherein prospective teachers first obtain a teaching job, then participate in university and school-based preparation. The growth of non-traditional programs that do not parallel traditional approaches, such as the Lateral Entry program, has an important impact on teacher education, for it is filled with issues and contradictions (Bradshaw, 1998). Ultimately, "[t]he question becomes not how we can make it easier for people to become certified but rather how we can ensure that more teachers are qualified to meet the needs of all our children" (Zumwalt, 1996, p. 42).

Meeting the needs of children through the adequate supply of qualified teachers requires meeting the needs of prospective teachers during their teacher preparation programs. In the case of Lateral Entry teachers, these programs usually run concurrently with the teachers' first years of teaching. In fact, most of these teachers have no classroom experience prior to beginning to teach with a full load of classes. The most fundamental aspects of classroom management are presented to

Lateral Entry teachers after they have already been forced to create a classroom routine, whereas traditionally prepared teachers and participants in alternative licensure programs have participated in an internship process. Therefore, the needs of beginning Lateral Entry teachers may be significantly different from those of traditionally and other alternatively prepared beginning teachers.

Because Lateral Entry teachers usually receive their formal preparation concurrently with their teaching experience, availability of time and levels of stress may differ from those of traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers. Non-traditionally prepared teachers may have different financial and social responsibilities outside of the school environment than traditionally prepared teachers. Moreover, the needs of Lateral Entry teachers may change more dramatically over the first several years of teaching than for traditionally prepared teachers, because of their differences in preparation. Lateral Entry beginning teachers might go through more stages of development in less time than traditionally certified teachers, so an awareness of the changes occurring in the needs of these groups of teachers is essential.

In order to secure a teaching license, Lateral Entry teachers must participate in a program prescribed by the state in which they are teaching. In North Carolina, Lateral Entry teachers have a three-year period in which to take designated university courses, participate in Initially Licensed Teacher mentoring programs, prepare a collection of materials based on the ten standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and pass standardized tests such as the Praxis or the National Teacher's Exam. The recommendation of the principal is

also needed for licensure. The value of the courses taken by these teachers and the quality of mentoring provided to them depend on an understanding of what the teachers need to obtain a teaching license and develop into excellent teachers who will remain in the teaching profession.

A responsibility of teacher education programs and school-based mentoring programs is to meet the needs of these Lateral Entry teachers. High quality programs are necessary to satisfy the educational community's desire for adequate recruitment, sufficient retention, and standards-based development of new teachers. In order to create excellent teacher preparation programs, an understanding of the characteristics of Lateral Entry teachers is essential. They bring to the classroom some differences in average age, prior work experiences and reasons for wanting to teach as compared to traditional beginning teachers (Chesley, Wood & Zepeda, 1997, p.28). These characteristics may cause differences in the needs of Lateral Entry teachers as compared to traditionally prepared teachers.

Given the significant number of Lateral Entry teachers among beginning teachers and the differences in characteristics among these groups, the purpose of this study is to determine the needs of Lateral Entry teachers during their first three years of teaching, in order to assist university courses and school-based mentoring programs to better serve this group of teachers.

Therefore the goal of this investigation is to identify potential answers to the following question: How can university courses and mentoring programs better meet

the needs of lateral entry teachers? The following questions are pursued in the course of this investigation:

1. What are the perceived needs of Lateral Entry teachers?
2. Do their perceived needs differ depending on their number of years of participation in the Initially Licensed Teacher program (zero to two years)?
3. What are their perceptions of the Lateral Entry licensure program in which they are participating?
4. What are the effects of other influences such as colleagues, administrators and school culture?

The research question is worthy of investigation for several reasons: (a) the significant contribution of the Lateral Entry program to the number of beginning teachers, (b) the relationship between the design of the Lateral Entry certification program and the development and retention of quality teachers, and (c) the possible influence of other factors in the teaching environment on the success experienced by Lateral Entry teachers. Although much research has been done to determine the characteristics of quality pre-service education programs and mentoring for initially licensed teachers, little has been done to identify the specific needs of Lateral Entry teachers. The changes in the needs of Lateral Entry teachers over the course of their first three years of teaching have not been studied, nor have the possible effects of other sources of influence on their success or failure been explored, such as the Lateral Entry teacher's relationships with other staff members, school administration, or other aspects of the school culture.

The solutions are in the hands of teacher educators, and "the evolution of teacher education is ours to shape if we choose to do so" (Andrew, 1999, p. 345). The findings of this study can influence the design of university courses that Lateral Entry teachers are required to take in order to better assist them in their teaching careers. The school-based mentoring programs in which Lateral Entry teachers are required to participate can become more attuned to the needs of their members through this research. Both programs can benefit from knowledge of how forces outside of these two programs affect the induction of Lateral Entry teachers into the teaching profession. And the educational community in general will benefit from a clearer understanding of the factors that affect the success or failure of Lateral Entry teachers.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter presents current research in six aspects of the Lateral Entry issue. Each section reveals the complexity of the problems facing alternative licensure programs and suggests the need for more study.

Alternative certification programs for Lateral Entry teachers are faced with several problems. At a time when national standards for reform in science education have been established, the acceptance of teachers who know nothing of these standards into classrooms is increasing. Whether Lateral Entry teachers are a force for change or for maintaining the traditional classroom is an important issue.

The significance of mentoring programs for Lateral Entry teachers may be greater than for traditionally prepared teachers. The alternatively certified beginning teachers may have had no classroom experience since they themselves were students, whereas traditionally prepared teachers have already participated in extensive internships. The role of mentoring may be different for these two groups.

Some characteristics of quality teacher education programs have been studied, but usually in the context of traditional programs. Which of these characteristics are most significant to Lateral Entry teachers, and what needs exist for Lateral Entry teachers that are not included in these known characteristics are important questions.

Because of the overall shortage of teachers, recruitment is an important issue. It is significant to determine the characteristics of successful recruitment programs

and determine similarities and differences between those aimed at traditionally prepared teachers and alternatively certified teachers.

Equally important is the retention of teachers, and knowledge of the characteristics of a teaching situation that encourages longevity is crucial. Determining whether the needs of traditionally prepared teachers differ from the needs of alternatively certified teachers in the context of teacher retention is necessary for successfully producing career teachers.

Finally, the quality of teachers is an important issue, and the relationship between teacher quality and the type of teacher preparation program is significant. Whether admissions requirements for traditional or alternative programs are adequate or whether they should be similar to each other is of interest.

The research literature pertaining to these topics has been identified and summarized, and it indicates that more quality research is needed. This conclusion leads to the development of the research herein undertaken.

Standards and the Reform Movement

North Carolina's former Governor James Hunt chaired the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Its report, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," suggests that recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for school improvement, but it has an "overemphasis, mis-emphasis, and uncritical emphasis on standards and standards assessment as the means for producing caring and competent teachers for every classroom" (Andrew, 1997, p. 167).

Because educational reform includes changing the way teachers are educated, research into the use of standards to direct teacher education programs should be useful in determining the significant aspects of such programs whether they are for traditionally certified teachers or whether their findings could carry over into programs for the alternatively certified. One such research project attempted to determine the significance of presenting standards as vision statements rather than performance objectives (Hartzler-Miller, 1999). This case study of the author traced the development of a high school social studies teacher into a teacher educator. Most of the data are reflections made by student interns whose education was the author's responsibility, either as university liaison or as course instructor. The significance of reflection on the part of the teacher educator is stressed, as is the need to confront preconceptions of teaching by the teacher educator as well as the student intern. Alternatively certified teachers may benefit from this approach to standards-based teacher programs as well.

Several authors have expressed concern about the ability of alternatively certified teachers to address the directives of the reform movement in education (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1999; Stoddart, 1995), while others see alternatively certified teachers as a force for change (Dill et al., 1999). However, there is also substantial literature indicating that traditionally certified teachers experience difficulty instigating change while trying to cope with the difficulties of beginning to teach (Morey, Bezuk & Chiero, 1997).

Alleksaht-Snider, Deegan and White investigated a school-university partnership that attempted to initiate educational reform in elementary schools in Georgia through student teachers in an alternative teacher education program. It did not specifically address the needs of non-traditional students, but rather recognized the need for reform within the traditional education program. Over a three-year period, three different cohorts of student interns and cooperating teachers worked with university faculty to develop alternative assignments and evaluation techniques. A total of 41 students participated over the course of the study, and data included journal entries and responses to open-ended questionnaires, surveys, and self-reflections. Analysis included using three forms of triangulation and the constant comparative method. Results indicated that communication between the university and elementary schools improved, additional collaborative projects began to develop that could result in reform of the university programs, and student interns became more involved in reflection and growth. While discontinuities continued, they were seen as catalysts for change rather than walls that separated the university and schools. These alternative teacher education program students became positive reform agents due to the collaboration produced by the school-university partnership.

Mentoring

The importance of mentoring beginning teachers is seen throughout the literature, and every successful program includes it. In New Jersey, strong arguments for alternative certification have produced programs that stress mentoring to the extent that it is believed that "it is unimportant whether the novice teacher is placed in

a school classroom by a college preparation program before graduation or by a school district afterward, as long as mentoring support is available" (Klagholz, 2000, p. 13).

While alternatively certified beginning teachers are typically more mature and experienced, there may be important differences in their needs and problems as compared to traditionally certified beginning teachers (Chesley, Wood & Zepeda, 1997).

A survey of 103 first year alternatively certified teachers in Oklahoma resulted in the collection of some data about this group of teachers. However, comparisons with traditionally certified first-year teachers were lacking because no survey of traditionally certified first-year teachers was made. The results of the survey indicated characteristics and attitudes of the alternatively certified teachers, but could not compare them with the needs of traditionally certified teachers since those needs were not determined. The survey found that the alternatively certified beginning teachers had prior other-job experience, received no intensive training before teaching, reported that their first year of teaching was not what they expected, were highly frustrated, had too few materials, found students unmotivated and undisciplined, and had difficulty with paperwork and classroom management. They suggested areas of training in pre-classroom teaching which included planning, using a variety of teaching strategies, addressing heterogeneity issues, and developing classroom management. They indicated that the relationships with the principal, the consultant teacher on the entry-year assistance committee, and the mentor were the keys to success. The conclusions of the research indicated that alternatively certified

first-year teachers might benefit from a developmentally appropriate induction program and help from the principal and mentor teacher. The only comparisons to traditionally certified teachers came from numerical information about Oklahoma first-year teachers that showed that alternatively certified teachers had a higher percentage of males and ethnic minorities, were older, and had a greater rate of failure to meet minimum expectations for first year teachers.

Other Characteristics of Quality Teacher Education

Many of the aspects of a good alternative certification program are the same as those that make a quality traditional program: rigorous screening processes, high-quality pre-service training, well-supervised induction period, ongoing professional development, and post-induction training (Duhon-Haynes, 1996). "Mentoring, tying theory and practice closely together, using active learning principles, and structuring cohort groups of teacher education students" (Eifler & Potthoff, 1998, p. 193) are strategies that are useful in any teacher education program.

Of particular interest is research done on a Lateral Entry program for mathematics and science teachers in eastern North Carolina (Hawk & Schmidt, 1989). Sixteen candidates participated in the experimental program, selected from 37 applicants. Their average age was 31 years; four were males and twelve were female, of whom two were black. They spent six weeks in training at East Carolina University prior to teaching at least three classes a day at a rural school for one year. Weekly two-hour seminars were conducted throughout the year, and a one-week concluding session was held at the university after the school year ended. The initial

six-week sessions included information about the nature of the learner, management of instructional time, management of student behavior, instructional planning and presentation, instructional monitoring and feedback, students with exceptionalities, and interactions in the educational environment. During the first half of the school year, the seminars were opportunities for the teachers to share experiences and concerns, and to continue with the professional development that began in the summer. During the second half of the year, social, historical, and philosophical foundations of education were presented. After school ended, workshops on teaching thinking skills, improving classroom management, and participating in professional organizations were presented, and evaluations of the program were completed. The principal data collected were the results of the NTE Math and/or Biology Area Exams, the NTE Professional Knowledge Exam and the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument. NTE scores were gathered for 18 traditionally prepared math and science teachers who graduated the same year from the same institution, and TPAI ratings were obtained for 53 math and science teachers who had completed their first year of teaching. A t-test showed no statistically significant difference between Lateral Entry program teachers and traditionally prepared teachers on any of the NTE testing measures. Comparison of TPAI ratings showed traditionally prepared teachers at higher levels than Lateral Entry teachers in all categories except instructional monitoring. Collaborative effort among university faculty, program relevance, student maturity, and group support were factors that may have contributed to the success of this Lateral Entry program. Changes in the future of the

program might include hosting monthly four-hour Saturday morning seminars during the school year, observing high school summer school during the initial summer phase, and removing the history and philosophy of education lessons from the seminars. Limitations to the research included the small sample size, the limitation of the study to math and science teachers, and the lack of inter-rater reliability on the TPAI. Finally, this research was done early in the Lateral Entry program, and a study of its present effectiveness and ability to produce teachers with longevity would be useful.

Recruitment of Teachers

Motivation, requirements for licensing, testing requirements, selection of teacher preparation programs, and ways to find employment are concerns of those who want to make a career change into the teaching field (Ferraro, 1998). Several specialized programs are available, including *Teach for America* and *Troops to Teachers* (Ferstritzer, 1998). Milwaukee Public Schools has created its own program specializing in preparing urban teachers (Haberman, 1999). Another successful alternative program has been developed in California. Teaching internships there have produced more diverse teachers who have staffed hard-to-fill positions, have stayed in the schools longer, and have taken leadership positions faster (McKibbin, 1999).

The need to actively recruit people into the teaching profession is being met by a variety of means. The *Become A Teacher Program* attempts to recruit and train future science and mathematics teachers in New York (Gafney & Weiner, 1995). The

program makes an effort to recruit public high school students as well as college science and math majors. It includes several seminars specific to certification requirements, and tutoring for and by selected students. It also includes a problem-solving approach to teaching as recommended by reform literature. Research conducted on the fifty participants was based on a written questionnaire that was followed by individual interviews. Analysis included numerical groupings for demographics, and establishing a four-point scale on questions that could be compared so that a linear regression analysis could be done. Survey demographic results showed ages, favorite courses, and preferred careers, while survey scaled results showed that those who were likely to become teachers corresponded with those who had previous teaching experience. Interviews indicated that students felt that they could relate well with people, they enjoyed guiding others in the learning process, and they felt the program was beneficial especially in that its objectives, requirements, and the support it offered were seen to be useful. This research indicates that science and mathematics majors may become successful teachers with the right encouragement and support. While these are not alternatively certified teachers, they are people who had not originally planned to become teachers as their first career.

There are many strategies for increasing the quality and quantity of teaching candidates. The most obvious is to pay for them. "If teachers were offered high salaries and better working conditions, we would not have the problem" (O'Laughlin,

1999, p. 31). But it is unlikely that significant change will happen in the near future. Therefore nontraditional programs and candidates should be considered.

Recruitment of teachers is becoming so important that it may be helpful to be able to screen candidates for alternative certification programs according to personality types. Differences in personality types between those who participate in alternative certification and those who follow traditional paths to certification have been compared (Meisgeier & Richardson, 1996). Ninety-two interns participated in an alternative certification program in Texas, during which the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and a survey were used to obtain needed information. Comparison data for other groups of educators were obtained from the MBTI Atlas compiled by the Center of Applications of Psychological Type. Demographic data included ethnicity, professions and degrees, gender, and age of alternatively certified teachers. Surveys also showed that alternatively certified teachers chose teaching because of previous job dissatisfaction nearly as commonly as for altruistic reasons. Type results showed that interns in the alternative certification program preferred sensing, thinking and judging, while traditional program teachers preferred intuition, feeling and judging. Few significant differences were determined for extrovert/introvert scales. These findings may help determine which future teachers may have the personality types necessary to succeed in teaching.

Retention of Teachers

Retention of teachers is nearly as important as their recruitment, as it does little good to encourage people to enter teaching as a career if they do not stay in the

classroom. The sense of isolation, school administrators' lack of receptivity to the innovations of thoughtful teachers, egalitarian compensation schemes, and lack of recognition of good teachers as professionals are four key areas that must be addressed (Weld, 1998).

A study of how alternatively certified teachers perceived alienation compared to traditionally certified teachers has been made (Shoho & Martin, 1999). "The more alienated teachers feel, the less likely they are to be effective and the more likely they are to leave the profession" (ibid., p. 12). Two hundred twenty-eight teachers in grades K-12 who studied at a public university that offered both a traditional and an alternative graduate program were assessed using the School Alienation Scale. A significant difference was found in the alternatively certified teachers' feeling less isolated. This may have been due to the on-going mentoring that supported their professional development. No significant difference was found in levels of normlessness, powerlessness, meaninglessness, nor in total alienation, despite the levels being high for both groups. It may be that if alienation is a cause of teacher attrition, the type of certification program is less a determinant than is the working environment of the schools. Further study of individual alternative certification programs should be carried out on a state-by-state basis without lumping results nationwide, and longitudinal quasi-experimental designs are suggested. Finally, further research should determine if both certification programs are providing instruction that produces quality student learning.

Several studies have dealt with the aspect of efficacy (Cole, 1995). They have shown that teacher retention is related to self-efficacy, and that alternatively certified teachers show no significant differences as compared with those traditionally prepared.

Another study of science teachers in North Carolina focused on the relationship between subject-matter knowledge and retention of teachers (Shugart & Hounshell, 1995). A concern for quality teachers of science has resulted in a demand for higher scores on standardized tests such as the *National Teachers Examination Biology* and *General Science Subject Area* tests. This study of 83 individuals certified to teach science during a four-year span compared the test scores based on three categories of teaching longevity: zero years (those who chose not to teach) designated as nonrecruits, one to ten years (those who quit after teaching for some number of years) designated as defectors, and those who entered teaching within one year of certification and remained teaching throughout the study period designated as career teachers. Demographics showed that NTE scores were higher for whites than non-whites, males than females, graduates of white institutions than black institutions, and public institutions than private institutions. The logical regression model was used to analyze the data that showed highest scores for nonrecruits and lowest scores for career teachers. These results would indicate that raising test score standards for teachers might be counterproductive toward recruitment. Limitations to the study include the small sample size and lack of data on individuals' reasons for

leaving or not entering teaching at all. How many of the teachers tested were of traditional preparation and how many were alternatively certified was not determined.

Teacher Quality

Standardized test scores are usually a determining factor in teacher licensing. In Texas, teacher candidates must pass the ExCET, a standardized test that measures teaching knowledge, and results have been positive for alternatively prepared candidates (Shepherd, 1999). However it does not measure creativity, sensitivity, nor commitment to teaching, and more study is needed.

One reason teachers may appear to be unqualified may have nothing to do with their academic knowledge or standardized test scores. In fact, alternatively certified teachers may score as well as traditionally prepared teachers on such tests. But if qualified teachers are assigned to teach classes not in their field, they may find themselves unqualified for the task. The extent of out-of-field teaching has been researched using the *Schools and Staffing Survey of 1993-94* for the data (Ingersoll, 1999). A qualified teacher was defined as one with a major or minor in subject matter or education. This does not mean that a qualified teacher is actually a good teacher, but that he/she meets this standard of reference for this study. Findings showed that 20.3% of all U.S. secondary school (grades 7 - 12) science teachers were not qualified, with 56.5% of physical science teachers being not qualified. High poverty schools, small schools, and private schools showed higher nonqualified percentages in nearly every field. Teacher union nonmembers and teachers with less than five years experience also showed higher percentages of nonqualification.

Overall, 16.5 percent of U.S. secondary public school students were taught by nonqualified teachers, and low-track students and seventh and eighth grade students were significantly more often taught by nonqualified teachers. Three reasons for out-of-field teaching are suggested: poor teacher training, teacher union policies and teacher shortages. All three suggestions are attacked and discarded. An alternative suggestion yet to be researched is offered, that "many principals find that assigning teachers to teach out of their fields is often not only legal but more convenient, less expensive, or less time-consuming than the alternatives" (ibid., p. 34). The management and mismanagement of schools and the continued treatment of teaching as semi-skilled work are likely to continue to put qualified teachers in teaching assignments which cause them to be numbered among the unqualified. "Recruitment and alternative training programs that lower training and hiring standards contribute to the underlying problem by further eroding the already-low status of teaching" (ibid., p. 34). This researcher sees alternative certification as a program that lowers the value of the teaching profession by proving that its members do not need expertise and skill.

Traditional education programs have been attacked for admitting inferior students and contributing little to their ability to teach. This attitude has strengthened the growth of alternative programs that get teachers into the classrooms faster and allow them up to three years to become certified. The quality of the traditional education experience has been compared to that of an alternative program in New Hampshire (Jelmsberg, 1996). A survey of a random sample of 492 of 660 teachers in

New Hampshire who had no previous certification resulted in 236 usable responses. Two hundred thirty of these gave permission for their principals to rate them on a second survey, and 136 usable responses were obtained. Demographic results were similar for traditionally prepared and alternatively prepared teachers in gender (mostly female), school type (rural), and college major (non-education). They differed in school level (elementary for traditional, secondary for alternative), college location (in-state for traditional, out-of-state for alternative), and years of experience (two or three years for traditional, five or six years for alternative because they had full teaching responsibilities for three years before they were certified). Principals rated traditionally prepared teachers significantly higher on instructional planning and instructional skills. A significantly higher number of traditionally prepared teachers rated teaching methods and education foundations courses as being valuable. A significantly higher number of traditionally prepared teachers had more positive responses to supervision in every question except that alternatively prepared teachers had a more valuable evaluation of district staff. Traditionally prepared teachers had more child-oriented career motivation than alternatively certified teachers whose motivations to teach were based on high job demand and interest in the subject matter. Overall results of both surveys indicated that traditionally prepared teacher programs were superior to the state-sponsored alternative program in every category but one, the value of district staff. This may have been due to the assignment of district staff to supervision responsibilities in the alternative program. The teachers

in this study were from elementary and secondary schools, and taught math, science, English/language arts, and social studies.

Other analyses of the *Schools and Staffing Survey 1993-1994* have been conducted to compare 13,602 traditionally certified and 1,119 alternatively certified teachers (Shen, 1997 and Shen, 1998). A wide range of issues was studied for significant differences between the groups. Results showed no significant differences in gender, age or response to the question, "If you could go back to your college days and start over again, would you become a teacher or not?" Some of the significant differences that were revealed included that more alternatively certified teachers were non-white, had been in educational positions in the previous year, had no degree, had associate or bachelor's degree, taught in secondary schools, taught in large cities, taught in schools with large numbers of minority students, taught math and science, and were not sure how long they would continue teaching. Fewer alternatively certified teachers had a master's degree, or planned to stay in teaching until they retired. This data was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, and it did not distinguish among alternative certification programs, nor among individual states. Neither did this study inquire into the teaching quality of the two groups of teachers.

Quality Research Needed

Studies of an alternative certification program for middle-grade teachers attempted to address some of the problems with research done in the past (Miller et al, 1998). "Alternative certification is here to stay; researchers should investigate not whether such programs work, but which ones work best" (ibid., p. 166). In the first

study, 70 prospective middle-grade teachers enrolled in an alternative certification program in Georgia; 67 completed the program and were placed in classrooms that fall. Three years later, 41 of them were teaching at accessible schools where they were matched with 41 traditionally certified teachers who began teaching in the same year, and taught the same subjects at the same grade level in the same school. A fifteen-item, four-node rating scale to evaluate observed lessons for specific dimensions of instruction was used to examine differences in teaching practices between these groups of teachers. MANOVA procedures were used, and no important differences between the groups were found for the behaviors investigated. In the second study, out of the teachers in the previous study, only those teachers working in self-contained fifth and sixth grade classrooms were selected. The achievement outputs of their students were examined using pre- and post-test results from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. There were 188 students taught by alternatively certified teachers and 157 students taught by traditionally certified teachers, and five subsets of the test scores were compared. No important differences were found. Finally, a qualitative study was conducted to determine self-perceptions of teaching abilities within each group. The 82 teachers in the first study were interviewed in face-to-face meetings with a developed protocol that probed three major areas: the teachers' perceptions of their preparation level three years earlier, their current level of competency, and problems they encountered during their three-year career. No observable differences were found in the perceptions of the teachers in these two groups; therefore, this research was not able to detect any differences in traditionally

prepared teachers and those prepared by this particular alternative certification program. Perhaps some particular characteristics of this program were significant in producing equally prepared teachers.

Many questions remain to be answered regarding the improvement of teacher education and the role of alternative certification. Many types of research have been done on various aspects of the problems, but no firm conclusions have been determined.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This research consists of a collective instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) in which the perceived needs of three Lateral Entry teachers are determined, compared, and analyzed. Three cases are used to provide replication (Yin, 1993), and to provide a complete picture of the three-year process. A case study is the ideal choice of methodology because “(a) the context is important and (b) events cannot be manipulated (as in an experiment)” (Yin, 199, p. 39). This methodology best suits the design of this research because “[i]t is the direct policy implications of their research that sets those who do case studies apart from other qualitative researchers” (Lancy, 1993, p. 140). The project is similar to a grounded theory study with the exception that data is not collected to saturation, but rather to a prescribed bounded time frame (Creswell, 1998). An inductive methodology moving from the detailed description of the cases to the broader, more abstract themes is utilized (Creswell, 1998). The study is appropriate to the theoretical frameworks of qualitative research, recognizing “the multiple nature of reality, the close relationship of the researcher to that being researched, the value-laden aspect of inquiry, the personal approach to writing the narrative, and the emerging inductive methodology of the process of research” (Creswell, 1998, p. 73).

The purpose of this study was to determine the needs of Lateral Entry teachers and to identify ways that university courses and mentoring programs can better meet those needs. Because the needs of Lateral Entry teachers may be related to years of

teaching experience, case studies of three teachers at different experience levels were done. One teacher had no years of experience, one had one year, and one had two years of experience. All three teachers taught science in public school, and all had degrees in mathematics or science. Interviews with these teachers revealed their feelings and concerns as they taught during one school year.

Selection of Participants

The study took place in eastern North Carolina in a rural county public school system where I teach. I met with the county personnel director who gave permission to conduct the study, and I met with the county Lateral Entry teacher coordinator and explained the purpose and methods of the study. At the New Teacher Orientation Meeting at the county central office on July 23, 2001, I was introduced to the group and given an opportunity to explain the study to the teachers. I read this statement:

Hello, my name is Ralph Smith, and I am working on a doctoral program at N.C. State University in the College of Education. I am studying the needs of teachers participating in North Carolina's Lateral Entry program in order to better understand how university courses can help Lateral Entry teachers. If you are participating in the Lateral Entry program and would be willing to serve as the subject of a case study, please complete this questionnaire. Your commitment would be for the next ten months and would involve monthly interviews and allowing me to read your journal entries.

I passed out the following questionnaire (Figure 1), and invited them to fill it out if they were interested in participating. I told them that I would call them if they fit the necessary criteria, and I thanked them for their help. Twenty-four questionnaires were returned, but only five were from Lateral Entry science teachers. Of the five, three teachers had no experience, one had one year, and one had two years of experience.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

School where you will be teaching: _____

Grades you will be teaching: _____

Courses you will be teaching: _____

Degree(s) you have earned: _____

Area of your degree(s): _____

Are you in the Lateral Entry program? _____

Number of years you have been involved:

This will be my first year in L.E. _____

This will be my second year in L.E. _____

This will be my third year in L.E. _____

Figure 1. Questionnaire for New Teachers

Both of the teachers with experience were teaching in high schools, and when I called them, they were both happy to participate in the study. We experienced no problems arranging times and places to meet for our initial interviews. One of the three beginning teachers was also working at a high school, so, for consistency, he was my first choice as a teacher with no experience. However, when I called him, he had reconsidered his willingness to participate and declined, identifying time constraints as his reason. The other two teachers without experience were working in middle schools, and I contacted the one who had a degree in science. She also declined, stating that she did not believe she would have time to participate. The third beginning teacher had a math degree and was teaching math and science in a middle school. She said she would be happy to participate, and we scheduled our first interview. All three teachers signed human subjects permission forms, and copies were offered to the county personnel director.

Design and Procedures

Each teacher was interviewed with audiotape six times at approximately six-week intervals, beginning near the start of a school year, and ending immediately after the end of that school year. Table 1 shows the dates and locations of each interview session. When possible, the interviews took place soon after meetings of Initially Licensed Teachers at the county office, in order to capture what had occurred at those meetings. A protocol of questions was used during the first and last interviews, but an open flow of discussion was encouraged at all six sessions. The location of the interviews varied with each teacher but was chosen to facilitate

conducting the interviews. Most of the interviews took place after school, but a few occurred during the school day.

Table 1

Interview Schedule

Interview Number	Lateral Entry 1	Lateral Entry 2	Lateral Entry 3
1	10/18/01 principal's office	09/02/01 county office	09/21/01 interviewer's classroom
2	10/25/01 principal's office	11/01/01 county office	10/24/01 interviewer's classroom
3	12/14/01 principal's office	12/17/01 LE two's classroom	01/10/02 interviewer's classroom
4	03/21/02 LE one's classroom	03/13/02 LE two's classroom	03/21/02 interviewer's classroom
5	04/29/02 LE one's classroom	05/01/02 LE two's classroom	04/26/02 interviewer's classroom
6	05/30/02 LE one's classroom	05/30/02 LE two's classroom	06/05/02 interviewer's classroom

Observation documents prepared by administrators and mentors, as well as Individual Growth Plans were used to triangulate findings (Stake, 1995). These documents were made available to the investigator with written permission from the participating teachers. Figure 2 shows the format of the county's Beginning Teacher

Individualized Growth Plan. Two Focus Standards are selected from the INTASC Standards, and one goal is selected under Key Indicators for each Standard. Two Activities and three Resources are chosen for each Key Indicator.

Figure 3 shows the format of the county's Formative Observation Data Analysis. This sheet is used to analyze and present the data that is collected during an observation, usually done by an administrator. Several lines of comments are recorded for every category.

Data Analysis

The eighteen taped interviews were transcribed and analyzed to answer the research questions. Each interview was read carefully, and significant statements were listed. Concerns that were important to the teachers, items that were repeated in several interviews, and comments that directly answered research questions were sought. A within case approach was used to examine changes in responses of each teacher over time. An across case approach was used to identify common themes and also differences in perceived needs related to experiences. Gradually, three categories of concerns were revealed: progress toward licensure, classroom challenges, and support from school community. These became the categories that gave the analysis organization.

BEGINNING TEACHER INDIVIDUALIZED GROWTH PLAN (IGP)

School Year: _____ ILP Year: 1 2 3 (Circle)

Name: _____ Subject Area: _____ School: _____

Initial _____ Lateral Entry _____ Provisional _____ Emergency Permit _____

Mentor: _____ Subject Area: _____ School: _____

INTASC Standards for Beginning Teachers Focus Standards:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Content Pedagogy | 6. Communication and Technology |
| 2. Student Development | 7. Planning |
| 3. Diverse Learners | 8. Assessment |
| 4. Multiple Instructional Strategies | 9. Reflective Practice: Professional Growth |
| 5. Motivation and Management | 10. School and Community Involvement |

Key Indicators	Activities (Strategies)	Resources	Target Date	Completion Date	Evidence of Completion
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Beginning Teacher's Summative Assessment

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mentor's Summative Assessment

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal's Summative Assessment

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Figure 2. Document used by beginning teachers to plan growth activities for one year.

Teacher's Name _____

Date of Observation _____

Formative Observation Data Analysis (FODA)

Based on your observations, address each function using statements which accurately reflect the quality of performance documented by your data

MANAGEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION

INSTRUCTIONAL MONITORING

INSTRUCTIONAL FEEDBACK

FACILITATING INSTRUCTION

COMMUNICATING WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

PERFORMING NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES

From the classification of raw data, on this sheet list the strengths observed in this observation cycle and prioritize the areas for improvement.

Strengths:

Areas for Improvement (Prioritize):

Figure 3. Document used to record analyses of observations of beginning teachers.

Colorful or illustrative comments were selected for inclusion in the stories to provide additional insights for the reader. Individual stories of each teacher were prepared, presenting their backgrounds, their reflections and their concerns. Member checking (Stake, 1995) was accomplished by having each teacher read her story to verify the accuracy and appropriateness of the transcription and analysis of her interviews; thus providing reliability and validity described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as “credibility” and “trustworthiness” in qualitative research.

In addition, the formative observation notes taken by administrators, and the Beginning Teacher Individualized Growth Plans were studied. Assistant principals had observed each teacher, and their observation notes were analyzed to determine the Strengths and Areas for Improvement for each teacher. These conclusions were compared with the teacher interviews to confirm the conclusions that were drawn from the interviews. Beginning Teacher IGPs were also studied and compared with the teacher interview analyses to confirm their validity. This document’s Focus Standards and Key Indicators identified areas of concern for each teacher as determined by mentors and principals. In the cases of all three teachers, the agreement between the conclusions drawn from the observations and the growth plans verified the conclusions drawn from the interviews.

Interview Protocol

The following questions, asked at the first and last interviews, were designed to probe teachers’ perceptions of their needs, provide information to compare and

contrast the individual teachers, and provide the necessary depth of understanding of each teacher.

- What is your educational and employment background?
- Why have you chosen to be a teacher?
- What aspects of your past will help you to be a teacher?
- What university have you chosen to affiliate with?
- What requirements will you have to fulfill to become certified to teach?
- What courses and grade levels will you be teaching?
- What aspects of your preservice training made you feel prepared to start teaching on the first day of school?
- What major challenges have occurred since you started teaching?
- How could you have been better prepared to face these challenges?
- Did the principal or other members of the administration help you to be prepared?
- What have other teachers done to assist you to begin teaching?
- Are there other people who affected your preparation for teaching?
- What do you feel has been beneficial in the courses or guidance you have received from the university that is assisting you?
- What are the most important things you need at this time, and who can provide them for you?

While I followed the interview protocol for the first and last interviews, I also asked additional questions as was warranted to further probe their perceptions.

During the second through fifth interviews, questions were more related to what had occurred at Lateral Entry meetings the teachers had attended, and what was currently taking place in their classrooms and in their lives. The following questions were asked of each teacher in several interviews.

- What is happening with regard to university coursework?
- What has transpired at central office meetings?
- How has the central office staff affected you?
- What has been going on at your school?
- How have other teachers affected you?
- How has the school administration affected you?
- How has your mentor affected you?
- What are your concerns?

Many other questions were asked that differed according to the number of years of experience the teacher had, and the responses and comments they made. All interview questions were asked for the purpose of producing the description and detail necessary to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The transcriptions of the interviews of each of the three Lateral Entry science teachers were used to assemble the following three narratives, each telling the story of a different Lateral Entry Teacher.

Lateral Entry Teacher One

Interview 1

Background.

It was near the beginning of October before I was able to find a first year Lateral Entry teacher who was willing to participate in this research project. I spoke to Leone on the phone and explained what we would be doing. I asked her to consider participating, and told her I would call her back to see what she thought. When I called her again, she said she would help me and we decided on a time and place to meet. We picked the afternoon of October 18, 2001 in the principal's office of a high school between her school and mine. I arrived first and set up the tape recorder, then waited for her to come from her school.

When Leone arrived, I explained again what we would be doing and began asking her some questions about her background. Leone had graduated from a state-supported university in 1994 with a bachelor degree in mathematics. While she was in college, her mother had encouraged her to get her teaching certificate "so you'll have something to fall back on" but Leone refused to take the necessary courses because she was determined not to be a teacher. Throughout her life many people

encouraged her to teach, but she really did not want to be a teacher, and she was unaware of anyone else in her family who was a teacher. She felt that teaching was definitely not the career she wanted. She had no interest in working with children, and had little respect for teachers in general.

After graduation she worked as a teller at a bank, operated machinery at a chemical manufacturing plant, and did bookkeeping at a check-cashing store. Leone found it difficult to locate jobs related to mathematics, without going into the teaching field. Eventually, she accepted a part-time job at a nearby community college teaching high school Algebra I and II. This position required a degree in mathematics but did not require certification in teaching.

Leone disliked this job so much that she only stayed one semester. She had little interaction with other teachers at the college and did not feel involved with the program. The students were mostly high school dropouts, and one made threatening remarks to her.

At this point she left the work force for a year during which time she had a healthy baby boy. After her son was a few months old she began to consider what she should do about going back to work. During a church service, she went to the altar to pray about her calling in life, and her pastor “spoke the word over me and told me that I would teach.” At this point in her life, she felt that if teaching were what God wanted her to do, she would obey. She tried to get a job with the county school system, but there were no openings. She was able to get a job at a volunteer-services organization, but continued to look for a public school teaching job.

Finally, in March of 2001, Leone accepted a science teaching position at a middle school, the fourth teacher hired for the position during that school year. While it was not a math teaching position, she took it “because I figured that was a way to at least get my foot in the door....” At the time Leone was hired, a substitute teacher had maintained the class for over a month. Her only preparation for taking over the class was observing the substitute teacher for a few days, trying to learn the routine. When she began to teach, classroom management proved to be very difficult. The students were very talkative, did not want to get on task, and did not take her seriously. In fact, they felt that they could get her to leave. Unfortunately, she received little assistance from the principal. “...If he would have come around when I first started working and just showed his face inside the classroom so the students would have seen that support backing me...maybe they’d behave a lot better when they see, OK, she has support from the principal....”

She realized she needed help as a new teacher, stating, “...we really don’t know what we’re doing.” Because she came into teaching near the end of the year, she was not assigned a mentor teacher, and because she had no teaching internship, “...when I came in in March I mean I was really lost...I wasn’t mentally prepared, and I mean it was really hard for me.”

However, Leone persisted and made it to the end of the school year. With no summer income she could not take any classes during summer break to prepare her for licensure. Taking Effective Teacher Training, a required course in her school system, or a university-based class on classroom management or child psychology

might have helped her for the coming year, but she felt that she simply could not afford it. During the summer she was able to study the text books she would use in the fall and write some lesson plans for her new classes, which she knew would be changed to seventh and eighth grade math and science. Moreover, she knew the school would have a new principal when she went back to work.

Support from school.

Before the new school year started, Leone attended some meetings at the central office of the county school system, and on July 24th was given Dr. Harry Wong's book The First Days of School to read. From it she learned to create an assigned seating chart, establish classroom procedures and rules, and make rest room passes. During the teacher workdays before school started, the new principal held a meeting on classroom management for new teachers. Leone appreciated the assistance and stated, "...the main thing for me is classroom management...just getting the students under control so that I can present the material." She also got assistance writing lesson plans and filling out her Individual Growth Plan, identifying a goal of "monitoring student behavior, having consequences for behavior."

She was assigned a mentor teacher who had ten years of teaching experience in science and math, but was new to the school. The mentor's classroom was two doors from Leone's, providing opportunities for contact when needed. She found the other eighth grade teachers on her hall to be very supportive; they shared their problems and listened to each other. I asked if she sensed a positive or negative attitude toward Lateral Entry teachers, and she assured me that she felt no special

reaction from other teachers related to being Lateral Entry. She also found the new principal to be very helpful and open, stating, “You can go there anytime.” In spite of these positive comments, when I asked if she had found her calling, she said, “Honestly, no. I’ll be honest with you; I know I’ve been called to teach, but I don’t think it’s necessarily school. I think it’s something else.”

Progress toward licensure.

Leone realized that she needed to affiliate with a university but had not taken the time to do so. Her preference was to go during the summer, as she felt that attending classes while teaching would be very difficult as a single parent. She was aware of a special program for Lateral Entry teachers at a nearby university, which required five weeks during the summer followed by two classes during the school year. She knew that enrollment in that program was limited and she might not get in. If not accepted she indicated that she would try to take two classes during the summer.

Challenges in teaching.

Leone indicated that problems were already appearing at school, primarily a no-care attitude in the students and a lack of strictness with student behavior. Leone sensed that the students did not care whether they were in school or not, whether they learned, or even whether they passed. Some of the other teachers indicated that this was one of the worst eighth grade classes they had seen, and Leone stated, “...they really don’t seem to care, and I try different methods, but I really don’t know how to get to these kids, I really don’t.” Moreover, she felt that neither the teachers nor the

administration were strict enough. She felt that they "...need to be very strict on these kids," and that there should be harsher repercussions for immature behavior. "There's just these students that serve lunch detention so many times or stay after school so many times, I'm thinking, how many times does it take?"

The time we had allotted for our first meeting was dwindling away, and we agreed to meet again in a week because we had begun so late in the year, and because Leone had a meeting of Lateral Entry teachers scheduled at the central office in just a few days. We thought that information from that meeting might relate to the needs of Lateral Entry teachers.

Interview 2

Challenges in teaching.

We met again on October 25, in the afternoon right after school, in the same principal's office. Leone told me that she had attended the meeting of Lateral Entry teachers at the central office, and that several teaching strategies had been shared with them. One of the strategies she was most impressed with was the effectiveness of letting students know at the beginning of the lesson what the objective of the lesson is to be, by wording the objective as a question. Another recommended strategy was the Venn diagram, which she had already used in a class to compare tornadoes and hurricanes. She seemed to enjoy learning techniques that were new to her, even if she found that they were not new to her students. But she also expressed concerns about how some of the students would respond to some of the recommended activities:

Like one of the activities that we did, people stand up and we actually had to form a circle I think of six or eight people. And we grabbed hands with someone standing across from you and the same thing with the left hand. Now for my high group it worked fine, but I would never try that with one of my low groups because when they stand up, that's it. And then you have to settle them back down, and it's a shame you can't do that because I know they get bored, but I couldn't do it with them.

While Leone was able to apply the strategies she learned with her classes, she observed that the outcome was not always predictable. She described having students use sketchpads and crayons in class to illustrate what they read. She said that the low group was able to handle that task during a class a few days prior to the interview because they had been "pretty much well controlled." They had worked quietly, and had stayed on task. On the other hand, this day had been a difficult day because "they were hard to control, very hard." They had neither wanted to listen to her, nor do their work.

Progress toward licensure.

When I asked her about the process of affiliating with a university, she said, "I haven't even sent off for a course-of-study. I should." I mentioned the possibility of taking classes on the Internet, but she replied that although it sounded like a good idea, she did not have a computer. While the school had Internet access, the building closed an hour after school ended, so she would have little time to be on-line. After a few minutes of informal conversation, we ended our meeting and I told her I would call her in a month to set up another interview.

Interview 3

Our next meeting occurred on December 14, once again in the principal's office of the high school near Leone's middle school. She seemed to be in a hurry that afternoon, and our meeting was shorter than usual. At that time, Leone still had not contacted a university regarding a course-of-study for licensure.

Leone had attended a meeting at which Lateral Entry teachers had been shown novel methods for presenting material, including sharing with a partner student and putting ideas on the board for the class to discuss. Also, letting the students think of names for objectives or categories instead of the teacher always providing them was suggested. She indicated that she enjoyed learning about these different methods of teaching, but was frustrated by other aspects of the job. She did not want to be parent, counselor and disciplinarian, etc. "When do we get to teach?" she asked in exasperation.

I asked Leone how things were going at school and she told me about a specific incident that had transpired since our last meeting. A parent had complained that Leone did not have enough grades on each student, and the parent took the complaint to the principal as well. Leone discussed the matter with her mentor who indicated that she felt Leone had an adequate number of grades, but the mentor had not given Leone any guidelines or help regarding the recording of student marks. The principal was able to satisfy the parent, and promised to help Leone with determining an appropriate number of student marks to be recorded. She was

reassured by the principal's support, but she never made a significant change in her evaluation methods.

Leone felt that the low achieving students were improving behaviorally, but that the high groups were getting wilder. She mentioned that she was very concerned about the lack of parental involvement, and repeated her concern about the students' lack of caring. "If they get a zero, they don't care. If they fail, they don't care." We decided to conclude our meeting, and I promised to call her after the new semester had begun.

Interview 4

Our next meeting took place on March 21, 2002. We decided to meet in her classroom. This was more convenient for Leone, and I wanted to observe her working conditions. Her classroom was quite large, with one wall of windows looking out on a grassy area. The walls were constructed of concrete blocks painted in a light off-white color. She had several posters hanging around the room illustrating a calculator, the solar system, a time-line of inventions, and positive character traits. The desks were the moveable, single-student style, but there were no counter tops, demonstration tables, water, or gas connections. The only storage was a closet that contained rulers, compasses, protractors, and lenses. The building was perhaps thirty years old, but it was in good repair, clean and brightly lit. I set up the tape recorder near Leone's desk and moved a student desk near so that we could talk.

Progress toward licensure.

I asked her if she had made any progress toward her own educational development, and she replied that she had met the Lateral Entry program director from a nearby university at a meeting at the county office. She had sent her transcript to the university and had just received a reply from them on the previous day. They had not yet prepared a course-of-study for her, but they were working on it. This news caused Leone to begin thinking about taking some classes. She thought she might take two courses during second session summer school, either locally or at the university, and maybe an on-line course next fall. She said that her mother would care for her son while she took the classes, but she was very concerned about how she was going to pay for them. Even though there was a consortium that would reimburse her for most of the costs, she was not sure she could pay up front. She summarized her feelings about the required courses by saying, "I don't want to go to school. I know I have to, but I'm not looking forward to it. I really don't want to go." She felt that she had "done her time" at college, and by her senior year she had lost interest and nearly quit without graduating.

Challenges in teaching.

I asked her if she was able to keep up with all the tasks she was expected to complete as a teacher. She said that she felt behind in her paperwork, especially in writing lesson plans. She said she wanted to use the various teaching strategies she had been learning about, but she did not have time to think about how to incorporate them. Her frustration was obvious when she said, "It's not that they don't give us the strategies; it's just a matter of trying to work it in with everything else you have to

do.” Additionally, she felt the pressure of the end-of-grade tests getting closer, and she thought that her students were behind the other teachers’ students. She noticed that her students had trouble remembering things that they were presently doing in class, and wondered how the students were going to remember things that they had done at the beginning of the year. She said that she had communicated with the other teachers about pacing, and that the teachers on her hall worked together. But she still felt certain that her students were behind the students of the other teachers.

Next I asked her about how her students were doing. She mentioned again that the students did not seem to care. They did not have a vision of their future and did not understand how their current actions would have consequences relating to their careers. “I think that all they think about is basketball,” she said. The students went to a computer lab to study career choices, and they all wanted to be doctors and lawyers but they did not realize that would not happen without good grades and a college education. Leone admitted that she probably did not understand about career choices when she was in the eighth grade, and that children change their minds often, anyway. With that comment, we ended our meeting and agreed to meet again in a month.

Interview 5

Progress toward licensure.

Our next interview took place on the afternoon of April 29, in Leone’s classroom. I asked her if she had received a course-of-study from the university, and she replied that she had been evaluated as needing twenty-seven credit hours. She

realized that she was behind in applying, and was concerned about getting too far into debt. However when I asked if she had decided which classes she wanted to take this summer, she dropped a bombshell. “Well, to be honest with you, I’m not coming back to teaching,” she said. She explained that she had made up her mind during spring vacation when she realized what a different person she had become with her son:

I just felt myself declining and I can’t cope with it. I can’t take it. I’m tired of being tired. When I’m here I’m working non-stop; I don’t even take a break. And I think to myself this is probably the hardest work I’ve ever done.... I don’t love it; that’s what I told her (the principal). I mean if I’m going to do something every day, I want to love it. And I feel like with teaching more than any other job, you should love it. You should love coming in to your class every day, and I don’t like working here, you know.

She said that she got up later every day, and dreaded going to work. When I asked if low teacher pay was a part of the problem, she indicated higher pay would not have influenced her decision. “No, there isn’t enough money out there.” She indicated that the courses required for her to be licensed seemed reasonable since all of the courses were in education, and because another Lateral Entry teacher at her school had a plan with forty-four hours required, a significant amount more than Leone’s. However she expressed concern about the Lateral Entry program in general, stating that a person with a degree should not have to go back to school again to get certified:

I think you should have, throughout the year, staff development time. I think there should be something else so that you don’t have to take so many hours and spend so much money just to get certified. I mean I understand you want certified teachers that know what they’re doing, but having certification does not necessarily mean you’re good. I get

the experience here in the classroom, and I think they could follow-up with staff development here or staff development there, but I'm not willing to go back to school.

Challenges in teaching.

Leone said that she did not regret taking this job, and that she was a better person for having had it. Moreover she had learned a new respect and admiration for teachers. "I don't think people realize there's so much involved in teaching. You're a role model, you're a parent, and teachers are not valued for this." She indicated that she had shared her desire to stop teaching with the other teachers on her hall, and that they seemed to understand, and were sympathetic.

I asked her what problems had made her feel that teaching was not enjoyable, and she reiterated that the lack of discipline and students' lack of motivation were the biggest issues. She pointed out that if the students saw more support for the teachers from the administration, the students would be more attentive.

Finally I asked her what advice she would give to someone who wanted to enter the Lateral Entry program. She replied that a prospective teacher needed to know that there is so much more to teaching than just giving a lesson. The students got their motivation to learn (or lack of it) from home, and the parents did not seem to care. Moreover, it was very important to like kids, because that was who you were with all day long. Finally, she felt that "...there's too much emphasis on testing and end-of-grade.... There are other ways we can evaluate their minds, and I think they're

missing other important things in life that pass by them like filling out a job application correctly.”

According to Leone other things may be more important than academics, such as the students carrying themselves with self-esteem, an aspect of character education. She felt this should be taught at home, but is not, and the schools are not doing it either because of the emphasis on academic end-of-grade testing. We ended our interview with a commitment to meet once more before summer.

Interview 6

Our final meeting took place on the afternoon of May 30 in Leone’s classroom. The school year was over and this was a workday. She was getting her personal materials together and cleaning the room. I asked her why she had taken a job in teaching and she repeated that while she has never felt that teaching was something she wanted to do, with a math degree there were not many other opportunities. Many people had told her she would be a good teacher, and her mother had encouraged her to get certified while she was still in college. Ultimately it was her belief that God had called her to teach that caused her to accept this job, although she now believes that if she is to teach, it is not to be in a school classroom. She remembered that when she taught at the community college, she did not like it and said that she would never do it again.

Support from school.

I asked her about which of her past experiences had helped her to be a teacher, and she mentioned working with different types of people and the need for patience.

She said that the other teachers were very helpful and this was the first place she had worked where there was no backstabbing. Previous jobs had helped her to be more mature, and she really tried hard to do a good job. Ultimately, though, she felt that her spiritual foundation meant the most in terms of patience and self-control when working with the students:

If I didn't have a spiritual foundation, I don't know what type of person I would be, I really don't. I think about the type of person I used to be, and if I was that person now, these kids wouldn't be able to stand me. I would treat them so ugly. And I still have to work on what I say to people and how I say it, and if I didn't have that, oh goodness, I can just imagine some of the things I would have said to these students.

She recalled how lost she had felt in March of her first year when she came into the classroom with almost no preparation. She also mentioned how much better teaching was this year under a new principal, and what a difference a principal can make in a school. The new principal had been so much more helpful and encouraging than the previous one, trying to provide instructional leadership and an open-door policy. Moreover, the other teachers were very helpful, and she said, "I think we have the best hall because we all supported each other; we're more like a family." Her mentor was helpful when Leone went to her and would ask, "what are you doing; what type of problems do you have?"

Progress toward licensure.

She felt certain that if she had chosen to stay in teaching, she would have affiliated with the nearby university. She thought that twenty-seven hours of educational coursework was a reasonable requirement for licensure. She said that the

university had responded to her requests promptly and had made several attendance options available. She indicated that had she started a licensure program she would have chosen a psychology course and Effective Teacher Training as first courses.

She thought that staff development sessions should give tips on teaching different types of learners and on motivation. She also pointed out the importance of preparing teachers for the first weeks of class, and indicated that this could be accomplished by having Lateral Entry teachers sit in on the classes of teachers on the year-round schedule. However she warned, “They may make the decision right then and there I don’t want to teach.”

Challenges in teaching.

Leone began to reflect on her greatest challenges during the school year and summarized it with a comment about the low achieving students: “Just getting them to perform, getting them up to grade level, and I never figured out how to do that.” This was very frustrating to her, for she realized that there is only so much one can do against all the influences outside the classroom. She said, “You know, they’re not thinking about education. They have this lure of money out there; if I sell this amount of drugs and this is how much money I’ll make, why do I need education?” Discipline was also an ongoing challenge. While none of the students were actually disrespectful, the continuous talking, which she said never seemed to go away, bothered her. She felt that classroom management was still an area she needed help in, and if she had stayed the principal promised to help her with her grading system

and developing lessons with applications of math in the students' lives, more of an activities oriented, hands-on approach.

In conclusion, Leone felt that she had grown a lot during the time she had been a teacher, and that taking the job had been in God's plan for her, not as a career, but as a step in a larger plan. One of the things she saw happen while at the school was the change that took place in one particular student who was saved and accepted the call to be a minister. While this student had a profound influence on Leone, she also realized that she had made a strong impression on him, and that her presence at the school was definitely a part of the process which resulted in the positive changes in the student's life.

As for the future, Leone hoped to have more time to write poetry and publish her work, and to operate a Bible bookstore. She did not regret taking this teaching job, but knew that she was supposed to move on to something else. "A lot of good things have happened since I've been here. I'm just ready for this chapter of the book to close and to move on; I truly am."

Lateral Entry Teacher Two

Interview 1

Background.

The first time I called Letwo to ask her if she would be interested in participating in a case study of Lateral Entry science teachers, she excitedly said yes, and we decided to meet at the county schools' office building after school on September 20, 2001. I arrived first, received permission to use a room, and set up the

tape recorder. When she arrived, I introduced myself and began to ask her questions about her background.

She told me that she graduated from the high school at which she was now teaching, and had attended a private women's college in a nearby town. While she was in college she was a residence assistant and a member of student government. She graduated in 1999 with a major in biology and a minor in statistics, and began to work in a research lab in the same town. She worked in the lab for approximately one year before taking a science teaching position at her high school alma mater. She had taught there for one full year and was now in the second year of teaching at that school.

After graduation Letwo explained that she was initially very excited about her job in the lab, but soon longed for more interaction with other people, as her job involved working nearly alone all day long. "I was by myself, all I had was a radio, and I just decided that wasn't for me." In addition, her grandmother's health had begun to fail and she wanted to relocate to her former hometown. As these things were transpiring, she heard about a teaching job opening at her former high school, so she called the principal and set up an appointment to interview for the job. He asked her about working with people and she said that her experience as a residence assistant and with student government would help her to take a leadership role in the classroom.

She had to give two weeks notice to leave her lab job, so she was unable to participate in the training session provided by the county office for beginning Lateral

Entry teachers. However, she spent a week prior to the beginning of school working with the head of the science department at her new job site, a woman who had been her teacher in high school. During this time she set up her classroom, worked on lesson plans, and prepared for the first days of school.

Immediately after being hired, Letwo sent her transcript to a nearby public university, and was informed that her course-of-study for licensure would require thirty-two hours of credit. She called the university several times to discuss the plan, but was never able to talk with anyone who could help her. A staff member at the county office suggested a smaller private college that was also nearby, and Letwo sent her transcript there. This college would require twenty-three credit hours for licensure, a significant decrease in coursework. Moreover, the college was a member of a consortium of schools whose tuition was subsidized by the state government, whereas the university was not a member. This meant that tuition was forty dollars per class within the consortium as compared with over six hundred dollars per class at the university. Once Letwo was accepted into the program, she was able to present evidence of prior, related course work, and two hours were dropped from her course-of-study.

Although a representative of the university had spoken to the first year Lateral Entry teachers at a countywide meeting, and had suggested that they not take any classes during the first semester, by spring semester Letwo was ready to begin coursework. She took two classes at a nearby community college and found the work load manageable: "...you go, you do discussions, you have some papers and articles

reviews to do, you maybe have one big project, but most of the things are manageable because they realize you're in a classroom." Letwo also took one class during a summer session after her first year of teaching, so she had completed nine hours when she began her second year of teaching.

Progress toward licensure.

After answering questions about her background, Letwo began describing her current coursework. She had signed up to take two classes, both at a college about an hour away. One class was on Tuesday night and one was on Wednesday night, and both were from six until nine o'clock. "My opinion is I want to get it over with as quick as possible," she said. Moreover, she planned to be married in March of the coming spring, so she did not want to take any classes that semester. Another reason Letwo was trying to get her class work behind her was anticipated cuts in funding for the consortium. The state legislature was discussing drastic changes in the upcoming budget, and Letwo wanted to take as much advantage of the system as possible. She felt so strongly about this that she wrote several letters and e-mails to members of the state government to request continuation of the consortium funding:

So if nothing else, at least I tried, and I don't know what else to do. But that consortium is one thing that for me that's been one benefit. Because if you do have to take so many hours, at least they can help you out, because you're not gonna get a pay increase. It's not like a masters when you get a pay increase.... But I think if they do cut the consortium as far as some people I know that came in as ILTs with us, they're not going to be able...and single parents...they can't afford it.

Letwo spoke very highly of the Lateral Entry coordinator at the county office. "She tells you exactly what you have to do and when you have to do it." Letwo went

on to describe how the coordinator was helpful. She was very knowledgeable of the requirements such as the portfolio and the Praxis. She had asked the new teachers to keep logs of contacts with the principal, assistant principal, mentors, and department members to get in the habit of doing it, as well as to collect chapter notes, handouts, and writing reflections so that they could be pulled together for the product. She mentioned the importance of staying on schedule with coursework and testing. If you do not keep up, you are put on substitute pay and “you don’t want to go there.”

Letwo said that she was scheduled to take the Praxis the following weekend. She was concerned about the general knowledge part, especially the pedagogy section because she had not taken a methods class.

Support from school.

Next I asked Letwo about how things were going at her school. She identified three areas of concern. One problem she was experiencing was a result of the school hiring three science teachers during the same school year. Since there were not enough trained mentors in her department, she was assigned a mentor who was a history teacher. While the mentor could help on general procedures and discipline, she was not able to help Letwo with specifics related to the classes she was teaching. She had to request assistance from either the department head or other science teachers to help with lesson plans and test writing. But her colleagues were willing to help and she said, “We have a wonderful department. I just love it.”

The second problem Letwo identified was lack of communication between Lateral Entry teachers and the administrator at her school who was in charge of

initially licensed teachers. Sometimes there were questions about which teachers had to go to meetings at the county schools' central office. Letwo circumvented this problem by calling or e-mailing the county office to verify whether she was supposed to attend specific meetings, and she acquired a calendar of all the county meetings for ILTs.

Challenges in teaching.

Finally she indicated that it was difficult teaching on the block schedule, especially when a lot of students missed class. She described a recent fourth period class in which half of the students were missing due to a football game, a club meeting, and in-school suspension, "and so you have to kinda revamp and think, OK, well what can we do that those out won't be so far behind because I do have class." She also had a large number of resource students in her classes and "they're a big challenge for me.... You just kinda have to experience and you adapt your lesson plans; you know you may start off one way but you adapt them so that you can hit everybody." She reported trying to use innovative techniques that she learned about at science conferences. She was concerned about getting resource students actively involved in learning science, and was trying "to figure out ways that they can, you know, be doing things...we've been trying to get more games set up...if you want them to get it, and you have to appeal to them, so games do help."

Overall, Letwo felt that things were going well. "I'm OK right now. I was very overwhelmed last year, I think, and I don't know how you could even change

that. I mean it was so much at one time to begin with.” She really seemed to enjoy teaching, and she described the rewards from the students:

This is one wonderful thing: this year I had so many kids like come back from last year and they’re ones that you know, you had to stay on. Or I had a fight in my room last year, like he comes to visit me all the time and it’s so, I guess, rewarding. And I had a girl come to interview me the other day because she’s decided she wants to be a science teacher from last year and she’s asking me, she’s doing this for English class, but there’s just little things like that that make you feel so much better.

She said that it helped somewhat to be able to teach in her own high school, but that this also caused some problems. Some of her students were the younger brothers or sisters of students that had known her, “but overall it was a huge help.” Some of her former teachers dropped by to see how she was doing and to encourage her. Letwo seemed very happy with her job at this time. We stopped this interview and agreed to meet again in about a month.

Interview 2

On November 1 we met again at the central office building. However the conference room was taken and we had to meet in a break room. The drink machines were very loud, and people walked in and out during the interview.

Challenges in teaching.

I asked if she had been to any meetings at the county office, and she said there was a short meeting to help with Individual Growth Plans. Her IGP had been due and she had been keeping up with her contact log: “parent contacts, contact with mentors, department members, administration....”

She indicated that one of the reasons she had been contacting parents was excessive student absences. Several students had missed over ten days of school already, and they did not seem to care. “The biggest problem I have is that when they are out they don’t make their work up. I get real frustrated with that.” They did not ask what they had missed or stay after school to get help, and they were getting further behind. She said she sent home progress reports regularly so that the students could see what they had missed.

Letwo reported that the school was attempting to address excessive absenteeism. The school had scheduled a parent conference night to try to get the parents of students who were in danger of failing to participate in getting the work done. In addition, students who missed more than six days would not receive credit for the course unless they filled out a waiver form to apply for eliminating the absences. Letwo felt this worked against teachers who were trying to get a high class average on the end-of -course test.

That happened to me last year. I had somebody who was not going to get credit but basically if she had not shown up the day of the EOC she wouldn’t have had to take it. But she did show up so therefore she had to take it, and of course she did terrible since she hadn’t been there. It was very frustrating.

The pressures of meeting the needs of her students every day added stress to the job. She was disturbed when a parent told her “...it was my fault that a student wasn’t doing well, not the kid’s fault.” She shared this experience with her department head, an administrator, and a guidance counselor before she was able to

work through it. These other staff members told the principal that this was the kind of thing that was causing schools to lose teachers.

Progress toward licensure.

Letwo is a very energetic person who talks fast and thrives on working under pressure. This day was a perfect example as she was right in the middle of having a lot of work to turn in for her two college classes. “I had two tests last week and two papers due next week and school work...” I asked Letwo if the courses she was taking were helping her to teach and she replied with a serious concern. “A lot of the material overlaps.” She felt there was no coordination between classes, so there was a large amount of repetition. For example, in her Educational Psychology class she studied exceptional children, but she had already taken a class on exceptional children. This overlap had also occurred with the Effective Teacher Training and the Foundations of Education class. “I guess the most frustrating thing, I don’t mind going to class, I enjoy my classes; but the overlap, it’s about to kill me. I feel like I’ve done the same thing over and over.”

She said that taking these two classes had caused a lot of stress in her life, but she felt somewhat revitalized when she learned that she had passed the Praxis test the first time she took it.

At this point we decided to end the interview and to meet one more time before the new semester began.

Interview 3

Progress toward licensure.

On December 17 we met in Letwo's classroom at her school. She was relieved that her two classes were completed and mentioned that she had only three more to take. She felt that the main benefits of the classes were the contacts she had made with other teachers and the ideas she had picked up during discussions. The topics of those discussions were often related to general teaching experiences, and not about the repetitious material in the courses that included an overview of Bloom's taxonomy and behavioral objectives. She wasn't bored by the courses, but she did not expect to use any of the material in her teaching. The classes were "interesting, but I didn't get a lot out of it. I just kind of had to be there." She asked if I had heard that another major state university was going to offer classes at a site in our county. These classes would be part of the consortium, so they would be subsidized, but the state had changed its funding so that the classes cost eighty dollars each rather than forty. She acknowledged that this was still better than paying several hundred, so "That was good for me."

Support from school.

Letwo stated that the new teachers had not had a meeting recently at the central office because it was the end of the semester and students were taking end-of-course tests. "With everything else going, we haven't taken time for meetings." However she reiterated the importance of the support she received from her mentor, who is not in her department, and the other teachers in her department. "My department, everybody is very helpful," she stated.

She said she enjoyed the North Carolina Science Teachers Association annual meeting that she and four other department members attended. They had split up to attend many different sessions, and then shared what they had learned with each other. She was glad that her department encouraged new teachers to attend the conference, but the drawback was missing two days of school and she remarked, “It’s just so hard; I felt like I needed to be here.”

She was very pleased that she had her own room to teach in. It was a well-equipped science room with electrical outlets and water, and it was close to other science classrooms. She had to share equipment such as microscopes with other teachers, as well as audio-visual materials such as the department’s videos. When I asked if she had to teach in more than one classroom, she acknowledged that teaching science would be difficult if she did not have her own room, or if her room was a trailer far away from the rest of the department.

A teacher in another department who had a classroom near Letwo’s room had caused a problem. She thought Letwo had not handled discipline well in one of her classes. “I was doing the very best that I could; I struggled with this class.” She made comments to Letwo three times and also told other faculty members what she thought. “I’ve been dealing with that for a couple of days,” Letwo said. She felt it was very difficult to have a problem with another teacher. However, she said she was getting over it.

Concerns about teaching.

Letwo viewed discipline problems as recurring but minor irritants that just had to be dealt with. She felt that a bigger problem occurred when students did not want to work and there was no support for the teacher from home:

...very frustrating, because I taught my first honors class last semester and I had several in there that were about to drive me bananas. I even met with the principal and the parent came in and everything, the parents just don't think anything he does is his fault. And it's like it didn't get me anywhere. I just dealt with it, because nothing was helping as far as calling home, or sending him out, or getting with his friends or anything else.

She summarized her frustration by stating, "...if nobody at home is going to do anything, there's not a whole lot we could do. Immature tenth graders."

I commented on a piece of equipment that she had on display in her room, and she remarked that toys fascinated her students, but she had to put them away because they were always doing things to them. She even turned her lab tables around because she had gotten tired of the students putting stuff in them. She had painted her lab tables to cover what students had written on them, but now some students spent the period scraping the paint off. "I'll just do it again. It looks better for a little while," she said. She did not really want new desks because they did not seem to be as sturdy as the older ones. "You just have to work around it."

Letwo would be teaching three sections of earth science the next semester, and she was trying to get prepared because she was not currently teaching earth science. "Another teacher...and I got together this morning and...we just did some planning, to get those first two weeks done." Letwo felt very comfortable about the three classes she would be teaching in the spring since she had taught the subject before. "I know what I'm doing. I've got several coming up that I've taught before

so I'm kind of excited about that." I asked about the block schedule, and she said she was used to it because it was in use when she was a student at the school. In contrast to the ease with which she had been able to adapt to this large high school, she recognized how difficult it was as a student to come there from one of several small feeder middle schools. She had known several people from other middle schools because of sports and her parents' activities. "But if you came out here and didn't know anybody it would just be so overwhelming, plus coming from such small schools out to here".

I asked if she thought this applied to teachers also, and she mentioned a new, young teacher who had just transferred to the school from another town. Her classroom was at the end of the wing of one building, and older teachers were in the rooms around her. She had asked Letwo to please spend some time with her. Letwo recognized her responsibility to encourage and welcome new teachers just as she had been encouraged and welcomed. "I have been trying to make an effort to talk to her," but "with everything going on, I don't go out to socialize." With that, we ended the interview.

Interview 4

Progress toward licensure.

Our next meeting took place on March 13, 2002 in Letwo's classroom. She had recently attended a meeting of Lateral Entry teachers at the central office. Two experts on preparing the product, the portfolio required for continuing licensure, spoke to the teachers. The main thing she got from this meeting was that you could

not actually prepare ahead for the product because it changed every year. That is, until teachers are actually working on the product, they cannot be sure what will be expected. This did not seem to bother Letwo because she was confident that the central office would give her the information and support that she needed when the time came. She mentioned that several people had been talking about how the product might be able to take the place of part of the Praxis. She felt that this would be good because, although she had passed it, she knew that some teachers had trouble taking tests, and that the product could show that they knew how to teach. She felt this option would be especially valuable to someone who had to take all three parts of the Praxis.

Letwo said the classes she had left to take were specific to her course-of-study, so she was concerned that it might be more difficult to schedule them or to find them offered through the consortium. This may mean that it will be less convenient to take them and that they may cost considerably more. One class is a master's level technology course and she is excited about taking it. "It's more PowerPoint and learning how to do more specific things to use it in the classroom." She seemed very happy that it was an upper level course, so it would be more advanced and not as repetitious as a basic course.

When asked about support in the process of obtaining licensure, Letwo indicated that the responsibility to keep up with the Lateral Entry program requirements was ultimately with the teacher. "If you're a person that doesn't know what's going on, you're going to get messed up. You're not going to have a job."

She said that she expected her third year to be even easier except for the stress of working on the product. If she did begin to work on it, she felt it would be important to have a mentor in her own department reassigned to work with her.

In spite of the fact that she seemed to be doing very well in the Lateral Entry program, Letwo felt that the process was very difficult:

Long term, I think it takes a long time to get this mess done. It's a lot of, if they really need teachers, I mean I know they don't want anybody coming in off the street, but they make it really hard. I mean I've made A's in all my classes and I've done very well in everything and I've passed my Praxis. And especially your first year, trying to do lesson plans and trying to figure out what's going on and then do grades; it's overwhelming.

Despite her concerns about licensure, Letwo was relaxed this semester, as none of her classes had to take end-of-course tests and she was not taking any classes herself. In addition, she had been notified that she was rehired for next year, and she had just received confirmation that she received credit for the two classes she took in the fall.

Support from school.

Finally I asked about the administration at her school. She said that the principal was available if she needed him, but he had not observed her recently. On the other hand, several other administrators who were trying to get their observations done before the end of the year had observed her. "Every time I've turned around the past couple of weeks, they're coming in," she said. This was stressful, and everyone at the school was about to "go crazy" because there had not been a teacher workday

in over two months. “I need a break and the kids do too, just to kinda get our thoughts together, not be around each other too much.”

Interview 5

Progress toward licensure.

Our next meeting took place on May 1 in Letwo’s classroom. I had heard about some forms being sent to Lateral Entry teachers in the county, so I asked her if she had been sent any paperwork to complete. She said she had recently received two forms that she had to fill out. One was from the state and the other was from the county office.

The form from the state requested information about the number of course hours she had taken and how many were left in her course-of-study. This was to let the state know how many Lateral Entry teachers would be working on their products in the next year. Teachers working on their products attend different meetings from the other Initially Licensed Teachers. She was concerned that she might be the only teacher at her school working on the product next year, and she wanted to have someone else to work with.

The other form provided information for the county lateral entry coordinator. Letwo was asked to rank how she felt about teacher preparation programs, support by mentors, support by principals, etc. “Mostly mine were very favorable,” she stated. But she did indicate her concern that her mentor was not in her department. She felt she would need guidance from a science mentor to prepare the required product. She hoped that one of the science mentors could be reassigned to her, but the school just

lost one of the mentor certified science teachers, so she was not sure how that would be possible.

Letwo wanted to take a class that summer but she only had three to go, and she could not find a college that was teaching any of the classes she needed during summer school. She had agreed to teach summer school at the high school, so she was limited to taking her course during second session. There was a course offered at a nearby university that might fulfill one of the requirements, but that class was actually more specialized than what she needed to take, so she was not sure if it would be accepted. "It's kind of frustrating to only have three left and then not be able to get them."

Letwo said that she had heard that in the future, Lateral Entry teachers might not affiliate with a particular college, but that a central location would prepare everyone's course-of-study and then the teachers could take the classes wherever it was most convenient for them. She was not sure how an appeal process would work, if you disagreed with the course-of-study, and she felt that repetition and overlap of subject matter would continue under such a program.

Challenges in teaching.

Even though she was not taking any classes and her wedding was now completed, Letwo seemed under a lot of pressure as the school year was ending. Having a lot of paperwork to turn in, and making sure that she had prepared her students for their exams were causing anxiety for Letwo:

I've had all my observations; I had all my paperwork. It was just getting up there to get it all signed. I try to make sure that I have

all that right; that's definitely important. It's been kind of crazy around here.

We agreed to meet one more time after exams had been given to summarize the year and we ended the interview.

Interview 6

Progress toward licensure.

Our final meeting took place on May 30 in Letwo's classroom. She reported that she had become more knowledgeable about the alternative licensing center concept since our last interview. Apparently there are three such centers in the state with one in a county about one hour away. The county office was going to send Letwo's records to the center to see if its course-of-study for her would be better, since she was still having trouble finding a second session summer school class for her program. With her current plan she would be certified only in biology, and the center might give her a plan for general science certification. This might give her the option of taking a content course toward general science this summer.

Letwo also felt that the consortium would probably be discontinued after this year, so the center would provide another important option. Since teachers would not be affiliated with any particular college, they would not be required to take a minimum number of courses at any particular college. This would allow Letwo to continue taking classes wherever they were offered, even if there were no consortium. Her plan was to not take any classes this summer, but to take two of her three classes during the winter and spring trimesters next year, and put off the product until the following year. Additionally, the county office was going to offer instruction in their

meetings, so that the county meetings might meet some of the general class requirements. “That’s a very good benefit,” she said.

Support from school.

I asked her many of the same questions that I had asked throughout the year to gain additional insights into Letwo’s experiences and the Lateral Entry process. Letwo began by describing some of her experiences that made the transition to teaching somewhat easier for her. I knew that her mother had been a teacher, but she mentioned that two aunts and an uncle were also in education “so I knew a lot of things coming in that, I guess somebody brand new wouldn’t know some of the ins and outs.”

She felt that the days she spent at school, just before the first day of class, writing lesson plans and getting papers together for the first couple of weeks made the beginning of school bearable, and she reiterated how important it was to have a helpful department. “My department is awesome out here; they help me in so many ways.” She felt that experience is the only real teacher and “...it’s so different this year than it was last year....” The experience she gained during her first year of teaching gave her confidence and self esteem that allowed her to do more than just survive from day to day.

When asked, Letwo indicated that knowledge of laws pertaining to teaching, for example the laws regarding exceptional children, was the most beneficial aspect of her university courses. People outside of teaching were not aware of them, and they could get in trouble by doing something wrong. “Most of the stuff I had in my

classes for me have not been very, I mean they're fine, they're just kind of nothing I can really use." In particular she mentioned the "Reading Within the Content Area" course that had suggested integrating many reading assignments into her curriculum, and she felt that the students would not have time to do those additional assignments.

Letwo again mentioned the difficulty of knowing exactly which meetings to go to at the central office because there were so many different categories of teachers. She felt that she usually was able to keep up with which meetings she was supposed to attend, but often other people would tell her she was supposed to be at a meeting she was not supposed to go to. This meant calling the central office and verifying what she was supposed to be doing. Also, at some of the meetings, teachers had such a wide variety of teaching assignments, experience, and classification, that a lot of time was wasted by individuals asking specific personal questions in the large group setting that could have been better handled one-on-one:

And there were other people there that had done what they were supposed to and there was no reason for us to have to sit there and listen to all those people complaining, I had this, I couldn't take that class. They knew; they signed a contract when they got hired.

The central office staff was making every effort to accommodate each teacher, but they had requirements they had to follow according to state department regulations. She felt that the teachers who had not done the things they were supposed to were rude to the staff, were irresponsible, and were mostly just making up excuses. "You have to look out for yourself some, but I was so frustrated."

Overall, Letwo has found her second year to be much easier than her first, stating:

It's so different this year than it was last year, I think, for me, as far as approaches on things and seeing what works and what doesn't. So, I mean, they can get you ready for it, but until you actually experience a fight or something like that, you don't know how to deal with it. It's just experience.

Lateral Entry Teacher Three

Interview 1

Lethree was a Lateral Entry teacher in her third year of teaching. She was teaching in the same high school science where I was teaching, so it was easy to schedule interviews with her. Our first interview took place on September 21, 2001 in my classroom after school.

Background.

I started the interview by asking her about her background. She had grown up in Pennsylvania and had moved to North Carolina to go to a prestigious private college where she graduated in 1984 with three majors: zoology, physical anthropology, and fine arts design. She wanted to go to graduate school, but didn't have the financial means, so she worked in a lab as a research assistant, then at a car dealership as a public relations manager. After having a child, she began to do catering and to keep business financial records from her home. A few years after the birth of her second child, she decided she wanted to get back into the work force, as she was a single parent at that point.

A friend of Lethree had started several charter schools, and when she opened one in Lethree's community, she asked her to teach there. "She told me I would make a good teacher because I still loved to learn. And she said as long as you love

to learn you can step right in to this.” Lethree had no background in education, but the principal knew how to do the Lateral Entry paperwork, so she became a sixth through twelfth grade science teacher. She had six preparations each day in a school that “had no books, had no worksheets, had no laboratory materials, had nothing, so we had desks and chairs and students and boards to write on and a few hand-me-down text books here and there for people.” Moreover the students “had primarily been thrown out of the regular public school system, being enrolled at the charter school, problem students that they were taking to get their enrollment up.”

This teaching situation certainly was not an ideal one, and Lethree quickly realized it. She said, “Just being a first year teacher even with a fully equipped school is itself stressful enough, let alone a school coming off the ground.” There were only six other teachers and the principal, so it was very difficult to get help. The principal spent a lot of time in the afternoons training the small staff, but there was no mentor assigned to Lethree; in fact, none of the teachers was experienced. Lethree began to look for another job during the Christmas break, and found one almost immediately at a large public high school in the same county. A teacher had left at the end of the first semester, and since the school was on the block system Lethree was able to start out with new classes at the beginning of the new semester. She was pleasantly surprised by the improved teaching conditions at her new job in the public school:

To have been able to teach, to continue to teach, and even to desire to teach after that, and then to walk into a very well equipped school with administrative support and wonderful faculty to be supportive, it became much different and as rewarding as it was before. It was

even more rewarding because it didn't have the toll with the emotional stuff that the earlier part of the year had.

That school had twenty-four hundred students, one hundred-sixty teachers, fifteen of whom were in the science department, and five assistant principals, "and just accessing someone with either some equipment or suggestions or some direction for you was never a problem. And that changed a lot of things." However, she still was not assigned a mentor, because she was hired in the middle of the year. Neither did she do a professional development plan, although administrators observed her a few times.

During that spring she began to pursue a course-of-study and to arrange to take class work during the coming summer. She had great difficulty contacting the Lateral Entry coordinator at the nearby major university, so she registered to take two general courses that summer while she waited for the university to map out her course-of-study:

It took me three weeks to even speak to him by phone with almost daily tries, and that was very frustrating, at which time it was like too late to make meetings to get things signed, to do things; I had to get registered for summer school.

Unfortunately, about this time, the teacher whose position she had taken indicated that she would be returning to school in the fall, so Lethree lost her job:

They didn't even tell me until two weeks before the end of the year that I wasn't going to have a job, which was hard because I did well, and the principal told me he wanted to keep me and knew that almost every year there had been an opening....

She took two courses during the summer; they were the first she had taken since graduating from college about fifteen years before. She reported that she found

the courses both demanding and rewarding. “I really enjoyed it, and it was very stimulating but it was a lot of work because there was a number of papers.” And she added, “There’s no way I could have done that while I was teaching....”

After finding out she would not be rehired, Lethree applied for a job in her own county and was hired right away at another public high school even nearer to her home, and this time she was assigned a mentor. “...We worked, we would talk, we would, we were just great friends, and share a lot of materials and ideas and some things last year; it was such a good thing because I never had a mentor as a first year....” She took a third course that fall, and received an acceptable course-of-study from the university. In addition, she passed the Praxis during the winter.

Although none of the classes she had taken applied directly to the Praxis, Lethree indicated the “Methods of Teaching Science” class she had taken during the fall had prepared her to answer some of the test questions:

His class had helped a lot because we had to do, as part of the content in that class, we had to look at some of our lesson plans and do this sort of analysis that would be required later for the state product. And it just so happens that the pedagogy questions were exactly on the main topic, the general same topic that I had done all of my lessons for in that class, and I was basically just adapting what I had written and how I had reflected on the things, and wrote that down on the written part of the exam.

She went on to identify other positive aspects of the course:

He was sensitive to the fact that he knew we were all teaching and he knew that, so the types of things like he would have us do as part of the class would be, he would give us a research for lesson plans and we would have to do it in our class and then we would have to make our own observations about what was happening in the class....That was really good stuff. It was a good class...it so helped me in the classroom that it more than paid for itself time-wise, in the long run.

She also took two classes in the spring of her second year, but one of these was an Internet-based class and the other was a video class. The Internet-based class only met on the university campus four times; the rest was done on the Internet. “So that helps with the commuting and I could do some things a little more at my convenience.” The on-campus meetings were from seven until ten-fifteen at night, “So it was a little bit late when I got home which made a hardship to get up the next morning.” The other class consisted of 20 videos, which she got from the bookstore on campus, watched at her leisure, and tested on campus:

I think it was a great class because I could sit and listen to the material when I wasn't overly tired.... The fact was that I was able to sit and learn material and learn over until the content was really absorbed by me.... I called and I would schedule the exams at a time that was good for me.... That worked out really, really well, especially for an off campus student with a full-time job, with kids and everything else, that was a good way to take a class.

She also took a class during the summer immediately after her second year of teaching, but found the scheduling problematic. The summer session started before the school year ended, so for the last two weeks of teaching, she had to arrive at the university campus by four o'clock in the afternoon for class, which meant leaving school early. She indicated that this would not have been much of a problem if the principal had been more cooperative, for there were several teachers who were willing to come into her classroom to finish the last class so that she could leave early:

I would think that the principal would be more than willing to let you go, but somehow there's still this sort of guilt trip put on you, that you're asking something special of them. And I just wish there

was a different attitude toward perhaps someone with special needs that lateral entry teachers have.

At the end of the summer, Lethree changed jobs again, accepting a job at a public high school with 1400 students, 100 teachers, ten of whom were in the science department, and three assistant principals. The school was on the block schedule, and she was assigned one class of biology and two classes of marine science.

Support from school.

At the new school, Lethree had a mentor who was the head of the science department, “but now all of a sudden my mentor is just a buddy.” She felt that she needed more than a person to whom she could address a question when necessary. But she indicated that was the attitude that this mentor expressed although she really felt that she needed more from a mentor:

There doesn't seem to be any essence of any sort of development, continued development, and it's like I need to develop more; I haven't gotten to my place of potential yet.... It's not just a question of where do I get a form in this school. It's a question of actual teaching skill. I don't think they realize this about lateral entry; I think the mentors are meant to be, they're meant to be developmental; they're meant to be people who can help you develop. They're not just information sources.

Although she was not receiving the guidance she desired, Lethree was glad that her mentor was in the science department, because she felt that science teaching was “a different sort of task, peculiar enough that you have to have someone else who already knows how to do that sort of craft; it's definitely the craft of teaching, that's a good word.” And she said she enjoyed discussing her teaching experiences with

other teachers. “Like if I talk to you, coming in here and bouncing, this is what I did, I don’t know, this felt good, this didn’t feel good, this, you know, that sort of stuff.” Being able to talk to someone was essential, so Lethree felt disadvantaged that she and her mentor did not have the same planning period.

She suggested that getting a manual for Lateral Entry teachers that was more extensive than a regular faculty handbook would be helpful for Lateral Entry teachers. She reflected on the many school, county and state policies that someone new to teaching had no idea about, yet was legally responsible for from the first day of class. She said she was concerned not so much for herself, but for future Lateral Entry teachers, because she believed that the Lateral Entry system would continue to expand.

Other problems she had encountered that year included the difficulty of getting expenses covered, “everything is so budget oriented,” and the lack of feedback needed for professional development. “You learn in this profession not to expect too much personal attention unless you’re messing up.” Another problem was the necessity that new teachers know how to respond immediately to serious issues:

...they don’t wait for you to learn; it’s like you need to have the right answer...and it could cost you, you know, and so that’s the kind of thing that doesn’t wait for you to learn...an issue you might have with trying to reach a student or maybe a concern about a letter to a parent... because that’s some of the politics of our profession that won’t give tips or anything...

When asked to describe her views of effective science teaching she attempted to tell how science teaching is supposed to be different from the way she had been

taught. She believed that the latest trends in science teaching were to help students construct their own knowledge, which required them to analyze their preconceptions:

...going just hands-on inquiry-based, allowing students to just go in and, even in the part where you would have to go in the room and just ignore them no matter what they ask you, refuse to answer their questions...even to the point where you would deliberately have to not let students have contact with you to force them to have to come to the place of frustration that they needed to be in to sufficiently bring down their own walls....

Progress toward licensure.

I asked her who helped her keep track of her Lateral Entry responsibilities. She replied that the assistant principal in charge of Initially Licensed Teachers had not met with the Lateral Entry teachers, but Lethree had met the county Lateral Entry coordinator, and had attended meetings for Lateral Entry teachers at the central office. She felt that the best way to be informed about important meetings at the central office was to stay on top of the information and the dates herself. “I keep track of my own, but because I just like, so many people when I first started my first year I found out didn’t know about the days. So I started to realize I need to know....” Lethree went on to explain why it was hard to keep track of the requirements for licensure:

There’s been like these changes that have come down like each year; the state changes it all a little bit and it’s not like they notify you of it. So it’s like if I had not gone to that licensure office...by chance to get something, I would have still been trying to sign up for three Praxis exams.

Lethree was not planning to apply for additional years of experience on the pay scale based on her past employment experience. “I was told it had to be directly related to the field of licensure...” and even though some of her employment was in a research lab, “I never applied for credit for other work I had done earlier in my life because I had to go back for so long.... It just seemed crazy getting documentation for a job you had nine years ago....”

Even though she had taken so many classes, passed the Praxis, and had two years of experience, the county was requiring her to take Effective Teacher Training. This upset her because she felt that she was beyond that, and the other counties in which she had previously taught did not require it. She was having trouble finding a time and location to take it, as well.

Lethree was taking an Internet version of a class because the campus-based section was only offered during the day, while she was at school. She had heard that in the future it might be offered in the evening, but “the problem is that four o’clock is not an evening time slot.” She went on to explain that there was no way to get to a four o’clock class on campus if she had to commute from a school where “the bell doesn’t even ring until three ten. It takes twenty minutes to clear the parking lot basically at that point, and you’re like hopeless.”

After this very long interview, we decided to meet again in about a month.

Interview 2

Progress toward licensure.

Our second interview session took place in my classroom on October 24 during our planning period. I began by asking her about the Internet-based course that she was taking. She reiterated some of the advantages she had cited previously: saving time by not having to go on campus, saving money by not having to get childcare, and the flexibility of being able to work on it at her convenience.

However she was concerned about some inequalities resulting from the fact that about half the students were full-time undergraduates and half were Lateral Entry teachers working full time. The full-time students were given different assignments that did not require interaction with a classroom since they were not yet teachers. The teachers were given assignments that they had to use in their classrooms, even though the content had nothing to do with the curriculum of the course they were teaching. This was a real problem for Lethree because she felt the undergraduate assignments were much simpler, and because she was teaching classes that had end-of-course tests. She felt she did not have extra time to spend in class on her own personal course work. "There's no extra time at all to have a light day or to just sort of be off task." She continued to express her frustration with the requirements of the class. "I mentally have been jumping ropes for three weeks on how to fulfill the requirements to satisfy this teacher yet not jeopardize three hours of content material in one of my classes." She was given the option of writing her own lessons to use in her class, but felt that it was unfair that she would have to do the extra work of preparing the lesson plans when others were using the lessons prepared by the teacher:

Maybe there should be an ECI 505L just for lateral entry teachers where she teaches the same content but that when I sign up I know that I'm going to have this kind of requirement. And it's oriented that everyone will have the same requirements and that I'll get graduate credit for it, which would be more in line with this type of requirement being done as opposed to a three hundred level course, not even being a senior level class, requiring me to be in the workplace in order to be able to accomplish the assignments.

Lethree went on to say that the biggest problem was that the assignment raised ethical issues for her:

[This assignment is] putting me in kind of conflict with my values. I don't do my schoolwork while I teach school. I keep my life in order. I don't think it's right during my payroll time to be doing things I'm supposed to be doing on my own time. So I try not to cross that line. That presents an ethical issue for me personally and I think sometimes that lateral entry teachers get stuck in this situation, where the teacher says, oh, well, you're teaching, you can do this. Go into your school; we can use you as a laboratory; you've got your own laboratory. I don't know if that's really right.

I asked her about what she had to do in the Lateral Entry program, and she said her responsibilities this year are to attend four meetings at the county office, keep a log of professional contacts, and fulfill the obligations of her personal development plan. She was disappointed that she would have to pay for her substitute to attend an in-county seminar for first year teachers, which she missed because she was in another system at the time. This staff development was not required for her, but she felt it sounded very beneficial. She was disappointed the county would not support her taking it, although she admitted that she did not really want to miss three days of class. "Maybe Lateral Entry teachers shouldn't have EOC classes for the first couple of years so they don't feel limited like this, you know, that they can't do development."

Lethree still had not resolved the problems associated with taking Effective Teacher Training, but at this point she was hoping to put it off until the summer. “I hope that’ll work out because they said that if you don’t have that training in time, they’re going to reduce your salary to substitute salary.” Also she was concerned about finding the necessary time to do the product, and wished she could just take a test to get licensed.

Support from school.

I asked Lethree about her mentor and she explained that there was some confusion about Lethree’s standing in the Lateral Entry program because, although she was in her third year of teaching experience, she was only in her second year of having a mentor and doing a professional development plan, “so I have this sort of mixed status.” This had caused some concern about the role of her mentor, whether she should be a true mentor or just a buddy teacher, to reemerge. She had been using her mentor to find out what equipment and supplies were available at this school instead of getting the kind of mentoring help she had received at her other school:

And I’m a real materials hands-on person, but the first thing that I’ve got to know is what is available to you to implement into your lesson, and I design the lessons around what I have to use, so I’m still in that place right now where I’m hitting each major topic in the curriculum, I’m running around saying what’s here...But I go into the lessons using what’s here and I completely redesign stuff based on the equipment that we have at this school I didn’t have at the other school, or vice versa, that I don’t have here.

I asked her about her relationship with the administration at this school. She said that several different administrators had stepped into her room to see how she was doing, and that the principal had talked with her about the importance of the

classes that had end-of-course tests. This conversation “really put some pressure on me, which didn’t really help this other situation, having to teach these lessons in other content areas.” She reported that she had been observed so many times that “it almost makes me paranoid that something’s wrong, but there’s no feedback in a negative way...So I guess everything was all right.”

I asked if she had reconsidered applying for past credit for work experience, but she said she was not going to because of the complexity of the process and difficulty of getting documentation. Moreover she felt that “I don’t work for the money; I don’t think anyone does.” But what did bother her was not earning years of credit toward tenure until after she is licensed. This was apparently a policy of this particular county, and she felt that it was unfair to Lateral Entry teachers, compared to initially licensed teachers who have an education degree. It seemed to her to be another example of lack of support for Lateral Entry teachers. We ended our discussion at this point, and decided to meet again at the beginning of the next semester.

Interview 3

Challenges in teaching.

We met again on January 10, 2002 during our lunch hour, and I asked her to tell me more about her work in college. She spoke briefly on how hard she had worked during college to obtain three degrees in just four years, working summers to help pay for school. The year after she graduated, she had wanted to go to medical school, physical therapy, law school or the School of Design, and she was painting

and entering juried art shows. “This was my year of searching. But it was interesting like in life when you start handling responsibilities, all of a sudden other options seem to melt away.... Yeah, circumstances take care of your choices.” Then she began to reflect on the reasons she went into the teaching profession:

In some respects my coming into teaching was logical in a way, as an answer to circumstances, looking at skills and looking at always having a heart for kids. I mean initially my heart was to really be able to help them, to be a surgeon and work on kids. I guess now I just work on them in a different way. Going into teaching, I just figured it’s a skill first of all; I was going to give it a shot. I didn’t know if I could make it as a teacher or not. People had faith in me that knew (me) and said you are OK. But at that point, basically I was a separated parent; it facilitated my income.

She pointed out that the flexibility of the job was important as it allowed her to be off when her children were off, so she was able to work without having to pay for childcare. She projected that she was saving five thousand dollars each year with after school care, “So you can tack that right on the low salary teachers get paid; so this isn’t as un-cost-effective as one might realize because you have to add in all those kinds of things. So this has been a good option for me.”

Progress toward licensure.

She still had not resolved the issue of taking Effective Teacher Training, and needed another three hour course to fulfill her required six hours per year. I asked her if she felt that she could call and talk to the county Lateral Entry teacher coordinator about issues that arose. Lethree described her as being accessible, personable with a good attitude, and helpful. She repeated her need for a handbook

with guidelines on staff development to be provided by the school. The bell rang at this point, and we had to end our interview.

Interview 4

Progress toward licensure.

On March 21, we met and Lethree talked about a workshop she had attended at the county office. She felt that this had been the most beneficial staff development opportunity since attending the North Carolina Science Teachers Convention. She pointed out the benefits of attending the Convention as she brought back “videos and rocks and stuff...ideas and thoughts and things I talked to other teachers about, and that was one of the biggest steps in my development as a teacher was going to that science teachers’ conference.”

She then described the staff development workshop she had just attended at the county office. A representative of the Department of Public Instruction led the workshop, and explained several aspects of the product that teachers would be required to do, especially how to write reflections. Lethree noted the developmental aspect of the process. “That skill is not developed on paper. That skill is developed, I think, by being in workshops, things leading you into reflective practice, and that workshop was good that way.” She also enjoyed being around and talking about teaching with other teachers, “You know, a sharing of minds.”

She learned about five different kinds of reflections and was told “how you applied them to different questions they ask you as you develop the product.”

However Lethree was concerned about having the time and energy to be reflective:

I'm too tired at the end of a teaching day to be able to take the reflective viewpoint, step out and be fresh and look at the forest, so to speak; I'm stuck in the trees by the end of the day. I can't see the forest, and to do these notebooks I have to have that attitude.

She wished that Lateral Entry teachers could be given special workdays to work on their product, or be excused from attending staff meetings on early release days. "I don't know if the principals, how aware they are of an ILT or Lateral Entry teacher needing time." However, she was reluctant to talk to the principal about needing extra help and having trouble keeping up. "I'm on a year-to-year contract and I'm going to go let him know that I'm having to struggle? It's like asking for my contract not to be renewed in a deep sort of way." She reminisced about a great mentor she had at the previous school, and once again described her current mentor as more like a buddy teacher.

Challenges in teaching.

Lethree had begun doing some team teaching with another earth science teacher, taking field trips together, and combining classes when guest speakers came to the school. She said she enjoyed this very much and felt that it helped the students, as it illustrated cooperative learning by example. "Why not go ahead and be synergistic and do division of labor and then pool resources?" She believed that teachers should use their planning periods to help teach when a substitute teacher was covering a class that had an end-of-course test. And she was trying to cover biology ecology topics in her earth science classes to help the students who would be taking biology. "In the beginning of the year they asked us to try to do interdisciplinary things...non-EOC subjects to try to help EOC subjects, so I'm consciously trying to

do this with my earth science courses....” We ended the interview agreeing to meet again in about one month.

Interview 5

Progress toward licensure.

We met again on April 26, and she told me about her plans for the summer. She had found a geology class for teachers, two environmental science institutes, and a session of Effective Teacher Training. What she had not been able to find was a section of Educational Psychology, which was the last course she had to take, unless she took it during second session, or as a video class by mail. She expected to work on her product next year, and be observed by the university prior to being recommended for licensure. She wanted to be licensed as soon as possible so that she could begin to get credit for tenure.

Support from school.

I asked if she was able to stay on top of her responsibilities, and she said her most pressing need was to complete her Individual Growth Plan and turn it in to the county office. She wished she had “some more direction on that, or at least like a pamphlet; this is how you write the IGP up.” She was also concerned about having a conference with the assistant principal who was responsible for observations, and signing the paperwork relating to them, because she felt that she had not been observed as much as she should have been. “Obviously she’s giving me the benefit of the doubt in many respects, and I’m doing the same with her. I think she tries to do a good job, and so we’ll just sign the papers and we’ll go.” In a recent

conversation she had with the principal, he remarked that the state certainly “put you thorough every rope that they can conceive of. He even made me glad to see some of this is a little ridiculous....”

To end the interview on a positive note, I asked Lethree how she felt about teaching, as her third year was ending:

Yeah, I can't see me doing anything else. It's been a hard semester, not just in school, but just life, for me. It's been a really really big time of growth; I really felt I might not make it.... I feel on top of the game, and as I come out of the season I'll see some good.

Interview 6

Our final interview occurred on June 5, after the school year had ended. I reviewed interview protocol with her and listened for comments that were new, or that had changed during the year. She said that one of the main aspects of her past that had helped her to be a successful teacher was being a parent. It allowed her to be sensitive to her students without reacting to every little thing that happened. She also felt that her life experiences had helped because, “I think that if a teacher doesn't have any more to offer students than what is in a textbook, then there's no personalization to it; there's no sharing of your life.”

Other aspects of her past that had helped her included volunteer work with children and people skills she had developed at the lab and the car dealership. “I just think some people are just teachers somehow and some people aren't and I don't think there's any one thing that makes somebody prepared to go in a classroom.”

Progress toward licensure.

She reported that she had an incomplete in the Internet course she took last fall and still had not received credit for it at this point. She mentioned that her course-of-study for licensure required twenty-seven credits, and she was glad she had taken so many science classes in college. She did not have to take many science classes, as most of the required coursework was in education. She was definitely planning to take Effective Teacher Training in July. She was not sure how many other courses she would take during the summer besides an environmental science seminar, so there was a possibility that she would not have to do her product next year. “That’s my primary thing right now to get into a service position where I’m accumulating years toward tenure, and product doesn’t have anything to do with that. So I’d rather get my course work done.”

She mentioned that this year she had taught two classes of marine science and one of biology in the fall, and two of earth science and one of marine science in the spring. Next year she was planning to teach one chemistry class and two marine science classes in the fall and three classes of physical science in the spring. She was very excited about teaching the new classes. “It looks like I’ll be teaching whatever is required, whatever the department needs me to be teaching, which is actually what I want to be able to do; it’s what my license says I should be able to do, and I want to be able to stand in that.”

Support from school.

She felt that having experiences at several different schools had been difficult, but that she had benefited greatly from the variety. “And so I’ve had experience at

these different schools and I think that gives me some sort of insights into maybe different ways that learning happens in a school environment.” She thought that a couple weeks of paid training just before starting to teach would be wonderful for lateral entry teachers, or after the first year, to be able to get licensed in one intensive summer. She reflected on the lack of support and information provided for people entering the teaching profession. “And no private company in the private sector that I know of ever puts an employee to work without giving them the whole layout and structure of the place where they’re coming to work.”

While Lethree felt that in general, administrators are just too busy to be very much help to Lateral Entry teachers, she found other teachers to be “extremely helpful and supportive.” She knew of other Lateral Entry teachers that found it difficult to get help from teachers who had been education majors: “... some teachers I know... they tend to snub lateral entry teachers. That has not been my experience, at least not openly. So, other teachers have been actually the most helpful.”

Another group of people that had been helpful to her had been the students themselves. She felt that they were an indicator of what kind of job a teacher was doing. She believed it was her duty to teach the whole child. “See it’s not just you sit in my classroom and I teach you biology, but I teach you how to be a better human, too, and I teach you how to make decisions...attending to the emotional, intellectual, personal growth of the students in your classroom.”

She identified the university course work she took on developmental adolescent psychology as very helpful. “It made a difference in how I understood the

kids.” She felt the science teaching methodology class was also helpful as “it becomes that class which ultimately becomes the foundation for me understanding what inquiry learning was supposed to be.”

She wished she could go into other teachers’ classrooms and observe, or be observed by the mentor, and have an opportunity to discuss what took place:

You need to be challenged; you need someone in there with you now that’s challenging you to refine your strengths and to maybe see new weaknesses that now have emerged at this new level of what you should be able to do, I mean it’s a constant refinement process.... Like my Website says, teacher under construction.

Finally she suggested that a clear statement of what was required of lateral entry teachers, written by the state and given to administrators and department heads, would help also, even though the system is undergoing continuous change. This might reduce attrition from the program, and make the rules clearer.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Introduction

In this section, an analysis of each teacher's experience is offered. Interpretation of the data provides conclusions about each teacher. Each research question is discussed, and conclusions are drawn to contribute to the understanding of the research question. A summary presents final comments on the study.

Lateral Entry Teacher One

Most people who are beginning a new career expect to enjoy and be successful at it. Leone entered the teaching profession without these expectations. In fact she was quite candid about her doubts that teaching was her calling and that she would enjoy or be successful at it. Therefore, Leone's experiences during her first year of teaching must be viewed with this perspective in mind.

Leone's initiation into precollege teaching occurred under extremely difficult circumstances. Taking over a middle school classroom near the end of the year, after three other teachers had quit and a substitute had been in the position for several weeks, would have been a challenge for the most experienced teacher. The difficulty of establishing authority and focusing the class on their end-of-grade responsibilities in a content area outside of her field was overwhelming. Such an experience was not likely to have had a positive impact on her perceptions of teaching, but rather it further reinforced her initial beliefs.

Leone began her first full year of teaching after three days of staff development. This year some of her course responsibilities were in her content area of mathematics whereas her previous experience had been teaching only science. She had a new principal and was assigned a mentor teacher. While the administration and staff were much more supportive this year, Leone still believed that the students did not care about learning and that they were not interested in behaving. She saw classroom management and student motivation as her biggest problems. She planned to take university course-work during the next summer, because she felt it would be impossible to do so while she was teaching, and because she didn't believe that the courses would assist her since the staff development training had been of little help.

As the year progressed Leone became more frustrated by the lack of caring about academic achievement in her students and the minimal growth in maturity she saw in them. Her reluctance to take college courses resulted in procrastination in becoming associated with a university, and she became increasingly dissatisfied with her career choice. By the end of the year, she had decided to not return to teaching in order to avoid having to go back to college, and because her dislike of teaching and being with children was increasing daily.

In summary, Leone never really wanted to teach, so the difficulties she experienced only reinforced her beliefs that she was not in the right profession. Once she decided that she would not continue in the Lateral Entry program, she was able to recognize some of the positive aspects of the experience, such as her friendships with

the principal and other teachers, increased patience, and an appreciation for the challenges associated with the teaching profession.

Lateral Entry Teacher Two

Letwo was an outgoing, energetic person who enjoyed being with other people. She had enjoyed her undergraduate university experience and had taken some graduate level courses after graduation. She believed that university study was enjoyable and beneficial to her ability to teach, and never found taking classes overwhelming, even while teaching fulltime. She had several relatives in the teaching profession, and had a positive perception of education as a profession. Because her teaching position was at her former high school, she was comfortable and familiar with the school culture, and the faculty members saw her as one of their own and wanted her to be successful. She had enjoyed her first year of teaching, although it had been stressful and challenging at times.

As Letwo began her second year of teaching she was enjoying the university classes she was taking, but she was very concerned about the financial aspects of taking course work and was worried that the consortium system might lose funding. She believed that she was doing a good job, and that this year would be easier and more successful than her first had been, but she had not been given a mentor in her own department and was concerned about how much help this teacher would be able to give her during her second year.

As the year progressed, Letwo began to see the diversity in her students, and realized that she would need to have a variety of teaching techniques in order to reach

all of them. She was learning those methods in her university classes, and was applying what she learned in her teaching. However, she was very frustrated by the amount of overlap of content between different courses. She saw this as a waste of time at a point when she was busy and focused on her teaching, and did not have any time to spare. While her students did not always behave in the manner she would have preferred, she recognized that discipline issues were an ongoing part of teaching. She was frustrated by the students' lack of motivation, but knew that an increased variety of teaching methods would help reach all her students. Excessive absenteeism was a continuing irritant because she had to keep changing her lesson plans and helping students make up missed work. She also became responsible for calling parents and attending parent conferences when students were absent too frequently. She recognized the significance of the support she received from the teachers in her department, and appreciated the caring and nurturing environment.

By the end of the year, Letwo had begun to analyze her teaching methods and reflect on her teaching style. She was concerned about having to work on her product for licensure, but was confident that she would receive the assistance she would require to complete it successfully. She recognized the changing nature of the requirements of the Lateral Entry program, but was proactive in dealing with them. She had developed the organization she needed to keep up with the responsibilities of the Lateral Entry program and her responsibilities as a teacher.

In summary, Letwo entered her second year of the Lateral Entry program with confidence stemming from a successful first year experience. She continued to build

her skills and reflective practice, and was looking forward to being a fully licensed teaching professional.

Lateral Entry Teacher Three

Lethree was very successful in university academics and wanted to go to graduate school, but due to financial limitations and circumstances in her personal life, she spent over ten years away from school. However, she had a love for children as well as education, and thought teaching would be an ideal way to combine her talents, interests, and family responsibilities. She was a self-confident person who believed she would be successful as a teacher.

Lethree's first teaching position was very challenging. She taught six grades of students in a new charter school that was limited in equipment and supplies. The other teachers were new to teaching, and the majority of the students were in the school because they had discipline or academic problems in the traditional school setting. Her administrator tried to mentor all of the teachers while operating the school, but the problems associated with Lateral Entry teachers with no experience trying to start a new school were almost overwhelming. After one semester, Lethree had all the stress and frustration she could take, and left the school for a position in a public high school. She believed that the problems she was experiencing were associated with the circumstances of the charter school and not with the teaching profession. The next year and a half of teaching was quite different from her first experience. She received support through mentoring, became affiliated with a university, and began taking coursework. However, one of her principals was not

supportive in making provisions for her to leave school in the afternoon to get to her university class on time.

When Lethree began her third year of teaching, she had moved to a new town and was beginning the year in a new school in a new system. However, she had confidence she would be successful, as she believed that she was becoming a good teacher, and she enjoyed helping her students. She still needed support from experienced teachers, but was certain she would get the assistance she needed. She discovered, however that her mentor was assigned as a buddy teacher rather than a true mentor, and she felt that her strong desire to grow professionally might not get nurtured.

As the year progressed, Lethree was able to fulfill her responsibilities as a university student at the same time she was fulfilling her responsibilities as a teacher. She found the activities challenging but not overwhelming, but had difficulty getting the classes she needed at times she could take them. In addition, the lack of continuity in licensure requirements across the state caused her to have to take Effective Teacher Training in this county, after she had already taken a number of graduate level education courses. While she received support from her coworkers, Lethree got most of her rewards from her students. She enjoyed seeing them learn and develop. By the end of the year, Lethree had build a rapport with her students that virtually eliminated discipline problems, and she increased the amount of time she spent reflecting on her teaching practices.

In summary, Lethree's experience in the work force and self-confidence helped her overcome difficult circumstances in her first teaching position, but she recognized the value of university coursework in the development of a good teacher. Support from mentors and co-workers was important to Lethree, but her compassion for children, dedication to their education, and strong desire to grow professionally were dominant factors in her success.

Research Question One

Research question one, "What are the needs of Lateral Entry teachers?" is answered by looking at three themes that emerged from the data and are illustrated by the experiences of the three Lateral Entry teachers.

Licensure requirements.

Licensure requirements are one way of controlling the quality of teachers. For middle school and high school teachers, course requirements for licensure are comprised of content courses and education courses. Upon being hired, Lateral Entry teachers are required to contact a university with a licensing program and request an evaluation of their undergraduate program. The university matches its course requirements for licensure with the undergraduate courses taken by the teachers and produces a course-of-study indicating courses not taken. Since each university has its own established curriculum for licensure, teachers who check with several universities may find that some universities require less course work than others. For some teachers, finding a university to evaluate the coursework and respond in a timely fashion is an issue, as was seen in this study.

During the course of this study, alternative licensure centers were established to develop a Lateral Entry course-of-study without affiliation with a particular university. This would allow Lateral Entry teachers to take the required classes from any number of universities as was most convenient in terms of location and scheduling. But because different courses would be taken from different universities, the lack of standardization between similar courses would result in more repetition of content than already exists among different courses offered at the same university. This repetition was frustrating to Lateral Entry teachers in this study.

Accessing courses is a problem for any fulltime worker, as there is often a long commute, so-called evening classes begin too early for them to reach on time, and summer session classes are not coordinated with public school calendars. Video taped courses still require occasional trips to the university campus, and Internet based courses require reliable and convenient access to state-of-the-art computers. These constraints place time and financial burdens on Lateral Entry teachers.

Passing the Praxis is a requirement for licensure, and is a problem for some Lateral Entry teachers. Staff development or university coursework that helped teachers prepare for the Praxis could be useful. Alternative methods of evaluation might be needed for teachers who have learned the content and developed the skills needed to succeed in teaching, but who find it difficult to pass tests.

The product, a portfolio of documents such as reflections, contact logs, and lesson plans that show the development and competence of new teachers addresses this need but is not an alternative to testing; rather it is an additional requirement for

licensure. Lateral Entry teachers are concerned about finding the time needed to develop the product while they are teaching. In addition to the burden of preparing the product, product requirements change from year to year, and there is little help available to assist the teachers in doing the product.

There is also some inconsistency of licensure requirements among school systems such as the requirement of taking Effective Teacher Training. Whereas some counties do not require this particular program at all, the Lateral Entry teachers in this study were not able to schedule taking the instruction prior to working in the classroom, and felt that by the time they were able to schedule it, they did not need to take it. The value of the content was not questioned as much as the scheduling.

Student motivation and behavior.

Motivation is an essential characteristic of human nature with regard to every activity in which one engages. Students must be taught a motivation for learning. Sometimes this teaching is done in the home, within peer groups, or among spiritual communities, but sometimes it is left to the teachers in schools to motivate their students. Few children go to school motivated to do their best in every topic of every course. Teachers must accept the responsibility of convincing their students to learn what the curriculum offers them.

Without proper or sufficient motivation, students will inevitably be discipline problems. It is nearly impossible to sit quietly while someone tries to teach something that is not valued. Lateral Entry teachers often perceive good behavior as passive acceptance of information delivered by a knowledgeable teacher. Without

pedagogical instruction and reflection encouraged by university coursework or staff development, the model learned in their own adolescent experiences will be copied. The INTASC Standards used to develop beginning teachers are required to meet this need and individualize the development of each teacher. Every Initially Licensed Teacher is required to complete a growth plan yearly.

The Lateral Entry teachers in this study selected classroom management, assessment of student learning, modifying instruction for diverse learners, and use of technology to improve instruction as indicators of their development on their Beginning Teacher Individualized Growth Plans. Through the use of a variety of teaching and assessment techniques, teachers can find their students more motivated to learn, and less likely to cause discipline problems.

Job requirements.

The variety and quantity of tasks required of teachers is monumental. With each year, new legislation adds additional responsibilities for teachers to motivate and assess their students, and report on the students' progress. From a time when students were given report cards once every nine weeks, schools have moved to reporting grades every three weeks and having parent conferences four times during a semester for students who are in danger of failing. An increasingly diverse student population demands increasingly differentiated instruction, so professional growth responsibilities have magnified. Standardization of courses through End-of Grade and End-of-Course Testing has increased competition and pressure on teachers to get their students to perform well on multiple-choice exams. School accreditation

committees, club sponsorship, and coaching responsibilities are added on to the need for continued education to obtain or maintain licensure.

Teachers are charged with taking attendance, maintaining order in the classroom, planning lessons and carrying them out, evaluating their students and themselves, keeping current records, accounting for equipment and supplies, and other activities. These are presented to traditionally educated teachers during their internship, but Lateral Entry teachers are usually unaware of the myriad of responsibilities involved in teaching. A person with excellent content knowledge may flounder in the sea of activities that transpire in a school day. Just learning the names of as many as one hundred fifty students is hard enough without having to individualize their instruction every day.

In the face of this plethora of duties it is plain to see that Lateral Entry teachers enter the classroom unprepared for the best of teaching situations, and in the case of a difficult situation, they are woefully at a disadvantage. Only through an active support system can a Lateral Entry teacher successfully build a classroom routine that can sustain them until they have the opportunity to enrich their talents with developmental programs. Persistence and courage are needed to succeed in their newly chosen career, and processes must be in place to assist them, rather than discourage and frustrate them.

Research Question Two

The question "How do their needs change during their first three years of teaching?" does not imply that the needs of teachers will follow the same path, but

that their needs may be different at different points in their experience. This analysis may indicate which needs must be met for a Lateral Entry teacher to remain in the profession.

Beginning teachers cite classroom management and discipline as their most common problems (Miller, McKenna & McKenna, 1998), and analysis of the data shows that the experiences of the teachers in this study are typical. During the first year of teaching, teachers begin to see the differences in the needs of their students and the need for a variety of teaching techniques, but they are primarily concerned with surviving each day. They usually feel unprepared for the classroom experience, and the comments recorded from participants in this study confirm that this feeling during the first year of teaching is also common to Lateral Entry teachers. A review of the interviews conducted with Leone reveals that classroom management was her most pressing problem throughout her first year of teaching and far outweighed issues directly related to instruction.

After a year of experience, teachers feel more prepared to teach, appreciate the help they have received, and have gained some confidence from their on-the-job practice (Miller, McKenna & McKenna, 1998). Establishment of a routine and a feeling of preparedness help them to have fewer discipline problems, which at the same time allows them to begin to recognize the diversity of needs of their students. They recognize the need for a variety of teaching techniques, and begin to develop them. They can begin to apply to their teaching the ideas they learn in their coursework and workshops, but still require significant help from mentors or other

faculty members when writing lesson plans that would best address the needs of their students. In this study, Letwo mirrors the experiences of traditionally prepared teachers as she describes how her second year has been easier for her than her first year, and sees this as evidence that she has developed as a teacher. Teachers with three or more years' experience usually have few problems with classroom management and student assessment, and have a strong feeling of confidence in the classroom (Miller, McKenna & McKenna, 1998). Whether traditionally or alternately prepared, teachers in their third year usually have the same needs, as they become concerned about assessing themselves in light of their students' achievement. This time has been described as a transition from a teacher centered "how am I doing" to a student centered "how are they doing" practice. This shift in focus can be seen in this study as Lethree tries to apply techniques to address different learning styles of the students, but continues to wonder if she is doing the best job she can do. She strongly feels that she needs the help of other teachers with whom she can discuss aspects of her teaching and reflect on her own professional development. Her university coursework has helped her begin developing into a reflective practitioner, a process that is difficult to sustain without appropriate feedback. The commitment to continued education required of Lateral Entry teachers can give them an advantage over traditionally prepared teachers who often do not attend classes during their experience as an Initially Licensed Teacher. Participating in coursework can provide the appropriate feedback to enhance growth as a reflective practitioner.

Research Question Three

Research question three, “What are the perceptions of the Lateral Entry licensure programs in which they are participating?” can be answered by comparing the similarities and differences of experiences of each teacher. All three teachers felt that the licensure requirements for coursework were reasonable but that the county school systems should do more to provide staff development that would take the place of university coursework. Course work is very expensive and Lateral Entry teachers need less costly alternatives to university tuition rates. Even when a university consortium is available, providing lower rates, tuition has to be paid at the beginning of the course, with reimbursement coming later. This can impose financial hardships for many beginning teachers. The teachers in this study also found it difficult to get university personnel to respond to their phone calls about preparing their course-of-study or answering questions relating to their course plan.

These Lateral Entry teachers were also concerned about the difficulty of finding needed courses offered at convenient times, both time of day and time of the year, and they appreciated courses being taught off-campus and on the Internet. They also indicated concern about having time to work on the portfolio for continuing licensure and they were bothered that the licensure requirements change from year to year.

Some concerns about coursework were different for the teachers in the study. Letwo was very concerned with repetitious overlap of content, whereas Lethree was more concerned with ethical issues caused by using the public school classes as labs

for university assignments. In addition, Letwo believed that the assessment of teachers by the product could eliminate the need to take the Praxis, whereas Lethree believed that the product is unnecessary if a teacher passes the Praxis. In essence though, either option would have reduced the number of requirements for acquiring a continuing license.

Research Question Four

The fourth research question, “What are the effects of other influences such as colleagues, administrators and school culture?” brings forth similar answers for all three teachers. Lateral Entry teachers need the support of their colleagues to become integrated into the school setting during their induction process. The friendship and assistance provided by other teachers can make new teachers feel needed, safe, and part of the school. Any experienced teacher can provide logistic and factual information about the operation of the school. Members of the same department can provide information about equipment, supplies, books, and curricula that are unique to the department. Trained mentors are more knowledgeable of the Lateral Entry teacher’s needs, and can help with lesson plans, classroom management, student assessment, and licensure requirements.

Assistance from the administration is needed most by inexperienced teachers, who have the most concerns about classroom management. They need to receive a great deal of help from their principal, who should do observations and hold conferences on a regular basis. Leone learned of her strengths and weaknesses through feedback from administrator observations, and she was given strategies and

encouragement to develop through her individual growth plan. Her principal met with her weekly and worked diligently to help her improve as a teacher, and thus filled the role as an educational leader in her school. Principals can do much to improve the teaching experiences of beginning teachers through their choice of teaching assignments, classroom assignments, mentor assignment, spending priorities, and extra-curricular duties. However, as reflected on by the other two teachers in the study Administrators are often too busy to do more than complete the observation forms and sign off on the required paper work, a system lacking in developmental potential. When members of the administration have not done a thorough job of making observations, teachers will not be given a realistic opportunity to improve.

Lateral Entry teachers expect the county office staff to be knowledgeable of changes in licensure requirements, and need them to provide a system which keeps them informed, including knowing when and where required meeting are being held, and maintaining records of attendance at meetings, course credit, test results and product approval for proper evidence for licensure. Lateral Entry teachers also appreciate worthwhile staff development sessions that are free, convenient, and practical. When these needs are not met, Lateral Entry teachers must develop their own methods to keep up with the activities and documents involved, and find other means of meeting licensure requirements.

School culture plays a role in teacher development, but its impact varies greatly from teacher to teacher. Leone entered a classroom that was out of control,

having lost several teachers within that school year. The students even admitted that they hoped to drive the teacher away. The principal and the mentor were new to the school, and several teachers in addition to Leone planned to leave at the end of the year, indicating a lot of turnover. In another case, Letwo is in the school from which she had graduated, so she is acquainted with many teachers, familiar with the building, and knowledgeable about teacher expectations and school procedures. The fact that the entire science department attends the North Carolina Science Teacher Convention together indicates the support for co-workers that existed at the school. While Letwo's mentor is not in her department, this problem is unavoidable due to a shortage of trained mentors, and the department members step in to assist her in a pro-active manner. Lethree is teaching in her fourth school within a three-year period, and has a good awareness of the differences between charter schools and public schools, and between large, medium-sized and small schools. The culture of her school was such that the importance of mentoring was not valued, as her mentor had a different planning period and took a passive role in Lethree's orientation and development. Therefore she did not receive the guidance she needed in this stage of her development and was well aware of what she was missing.

Summary

The overall research question "How can university courses and mentoring programs better meet the needs of Lateral Entry teachers?" can now be addressed. University courses must be convenient in time and location, be affordable, and be designed with the realization that the students are full time teachers. Responses to

these needs include offering more summer courses, summer sessions aligned with school calendars, and evening classes that begin late enough for teachers to be able to attend. They must have specific curricula to reduce overlap between courses, and should be taught in a practical manner that encourages the teachers to apply the pedagogy in their classrooms without causing the day-to-day action research to conflict with their course content. Classes should be designed for actively employed teachers in separate sections from university students who do not have teaching jobs. They should provide classroom management assistance for new teachers, learning style education and assessment techniques for developing teachers, and self-reflection studies for the emerging teachers. An overall plan of teacher development should be established, rather than assorted individual classes, and responsiveness to program inquiries should be improved. Perhaps a central licensure establishment could best accomplish this. A more permanent set of standards with fewer changes each year might make the certification process easier to navigate. With time, universities should be able to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their Lateral Entry programs.

Mentoring programs must recognize that Lateral Entry teachers have no prior experience such as teaching internships, and therefore must arrange for mentors to work with the Lateral Entry teachers prior to the first days of school. Classroom management problems and legal issues could be diminished with proper preparation. Mentoring should be coordinated with university course work, because universities can offer mentor training to graduate students, and university personnel can become

additional mentors to Lateral Entry teachers when they take coursework (Fox & Duck, 2001). Mentors must be proactive toward their mentees, because new teachers may not be aware of what they need. Second year teachers still need mentoring to help develop lesson plans that address student diversity, and third year teachers need mentors that can help them develop their reflective practices. Staff development at the local level can be a useful assistant to mentoring programs by offering short sessions of free education at convenient sites. Increased numbers of experienced teachers must be drawn into the mentoring process in order to provide qualified, trained mentors for the large numbers of Lateral Entry teachers that are expected to enter the school systems in the coming years.

Suggestions for Further Study

Each year the Lateral Entry program undergoes major changes. Alternative licensing centers are being developed, and the consortium system and the requirement of a product have been revisited due to budgetary problems at the state level. Therefore some of the needs of Lateral Entry teachers will change as well. Analyses of successful Lateral Entry teachers who completed their certification should be compared with analyses of those teachers who did not complete the process. Understanding what personal and professional characteristics are common to Lateral Entry teachers who succeed might help inform persons who are considering teaching as a new profession. Investigations of the preservice training given to Lateral Entry teachers in different school systems might reveal inconsistencies that lead to failure for some teachers. Studies of university course curricula and their coordination

within Lateral Entry courses of study would aid the development of a consistent and efficient system of licensure.

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