

ABSTRACT

MCBURNETTE, VORIS WELDON. The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate and its Impact on the Recruitment and Retention of Public School System Personnel in North Carolina. (Under the direction of Kevin Brady).

The central conservative truth is that it is culture,
not politics, that determines the success of a society.

The central liberal truth is that politics can change
a culture and save it from itself.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Moynihan's words summarize the challenges of Leandro Legislation. Can his "liberal truth" prevail? Can politics change and save an educational culture, thus equipping students to succeed in the 21st century? Increasing demands for accountability and higher academic performance from the surrounding community challenge school officials to provide quality education for all students. Litigation in North Carolina has increased to force leaders to meet these demands. Questions about the state's funding tactics arose fifteen years ago and continue to impact North Carolina's educational funding scenario today. A thorough explanation of the major points of litigation in the Leandro case will illuminate the time and effort that have been devoted to drafting this legislation.

This topic analyzes the equality of educational opportunity in North Carolina. We must understand how this topic was interpreted from several North Carolina perspectives. County initiatives have been instituted to offset years of insufficient funding.

In 2004, the State Board outlined eight strategies developed by its Local Education Agency Assistance Program to address inequities in Hoke County schools (Lee & Ward 2004):

- a recruitment allowance to draw teachers to hard-to-staff schools;
- a continued administrative guidance through the Principal's Executive Program;
- a lateral entry coordinator to support and retain more lateral entry teachers;
- a Project Achieve director to oversee promising teacher retention programs;
- a professional development specialist to assure effective teacher training;
- financial consultation with Hoke County district leadership to help them utilize best practices in using available resources;

DPI assistance to develop a district wide vision statement built upon the district's extensive and complex improvement plan; and most significantly, a variety of supports designed to offer well-designed "personal education plans" to poor, low-performing students.

This study examined the effect of the 2004 North Carolina Supreme Court Leandro decision on funding for North Carolina schools. The study addressed the achievement gap and its relationship to No Child Left Behind legislation. The purpose of this study is to review the Leandro decision from the novice viewpoint. The results of this research explain educational funding inequities in North Carolina counties, and provide some theories about the existing student achievement gap and clarify how the Leandro legal mandate assisted in closing that gap. In 1994, parents, school boards, and students from five low-wealth counties filed a lawsuit

claiming that their public school systems did not receive the same educational funding compared to other school systems throughout the state. This group named the State Board of Education and the State of North Carolina as the defendants. The plaintiffs claimed that the State did not allocate enough money for them to provide quality education for their children. This case, commonly known as Leandro, is named after one of the plaintiffs in the case.

This study ascertained if any of the funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality administrative personnel did in fact retain well-qualified employees in those counties.

Did the allocation of additional funding through Leandro legislation attract quality administrators to work in the designated low wealth school districts? Alternatively, did the additional funds make a difference in an administrator's decision about where to work in the region? Were other factors more important than money? If so, what were those factors and how much money is acceptable?

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The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate and
its Impact on the Recruitment and Retention
of Public School System Personnel
in North Carolina

by
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the love and patience of my family. My wife Nikki and my son Voris Jr. have waited for me to finish this project for years. I will be glad to say that “we” are finished.

BIOGRAPHY

The researcher, Voris Weldon McBurnette, is a forty-two year-old African American male. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1969. He spent his formative years in that area. He grew up in a working class, two-parent home with one older and one younger sibling. He attended four predominantly African-American schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade. He graduated from Overbrook High School in Philadelphia in 1987.

The researcher moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to attend college, enrolling at Shaw University. After an undergraduate transfer, the researcher received his B.A. in History from Saint Augustine's College in Raleigh North Carolina in 1991. The researcher returned to the Philadelphia area to attend the oldest historically African-American University in the country, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, where he earned M.Ed. and M.S. degrees. While earning those degrees, he taught elementary school social studies classes at a variety of schools within the Philadelphia Public School System. The researcher returned to Raleigh after graduate school, where he enrolled in a M.A. degree program at North Carolina State University. At the same time, he began teaching middle school in a rural area of Johnston County, North Carolina.

After being an educator in Johnston County for two years, the researcher was chosen to become an administrator within that school system. In 1996, he began working at the local high school. The researcher served twelve years as an administrator in both the Johnston and Wake County Public School systems.

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This journey is almost complete. It seems so long ago when I first contemplated getting a doctorate. I have been through so much since then. But my committee members have stuck by me over that period and I thank them for that. Dr. Brady, without you this would not have been possible - you have done your good deed. Drs. Bitting and Brinson - you two were there in the beginning. Dr. Caddell, you were there even before that, back when I was a fledgling graduate student in the history department.

There are so many other people to thank that it is probably best to thank everyone without mentioning anyone specific. So many people have been involved with this project in one way or another that everyone's name probably should be mentioned.

The mission of completing this dissertation was very difficult. Often I felt that I had nothing left to give after facing the many obstacles life has put before me. But many people gave encouraging words during this process and I decided to press on - until this day. Thank you all.

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CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

“The central conservative truth is that it is culture,
not politics, that determines the success of a society.

The central liberal truth is that politics can change
a culture and save it from itself.”

Daniel Patrick Moynihan

This quote from the late Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the longtime former Senator from New York, sums up the predicament concerning the Leandro legal mandate. Can the liberal component of this quote prevail? Can politics change a culture of educational funding and save that system from itself, thus producing students who become productive citizens better equipped to handle the issues of 21st century America? Today, the field of educational leadership is faced with unprecedented challenges in preparing leaders. Increasing demands for accountability and higher academic performance from the surrounding community continue to challenge school officials to provide a quality, sound education for all of their students. In light of these demands, litigation in North Carolina has increased to address that need. Efforts to question the state’s funding tactics began fifteen years ago and continue to have a far-reaching impact upon North Carolina’s educational funding scenario today. The reader must have a thorough comprehension of the background of the litigation to have a better understanding of the question that is

being posed. Without a thorough background, one may not fully appreciate the time and effort that has been put forth in this legislation.

Historical Framework Leading to the Leandro Legal Decision

The U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* judgment in 1954 was expected to end the school segregation of African-Americans and Caucasians, but genuine progress toward integration, particularly in the South, did not increase until the early 1970s. Many schools remained segregated because African-Americans generally resided in areas separate from Caucasians. School reformers in the late 1960s initiated testing legal theories in different states with federal lawsuits as an attempt to balance state funding as far as equity is concerned.

Michael A. Rebell is Executive Director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE), a nonprofit group that seeks education reform through increased, equalized spending for "disadvantaged" public schools. In an article entitled "Educational Adequacy, Democracy, and the Courts," Rebell stated his belief that the educational system we have now is "rooted in the traditional pattern of local control of schooling in America...most state systems required much of the funding for public schools to be obtained from local property taxes, a method that inherently disadvantaged students who attended schools in areas that had low property wealth" (Rebell, 2007).

School finance adequacy advocates in the early 1970s first wanted relief from the inequity by using the federal courts to gain a favorable decision. *Serrano v. Priest*, (1971), was a landmark California ruling that required equivalency in school

funding across the commonwealth, in spite of local community affluence.

Traditionally, in California and most other states, school subsidies had been obtained by imposing a tax on local property. This meant that the disproportion in property values between affluent and indigent neighborhoods converted into a similarly disproportionate value in the level of education that could be paid for among school districts. Moreover, as affluence and race are closely related in California and in other states, this predestined a disproportion among races in the quality of public education that was made available. For instance, take into account the amount of funds spent on students in neighboring school districts in the 1968-69 school year. The Baldwin Park School District, for example, spent \$577.49 to educate one pupil. Wealthier public school districts, such as Pasadena spent \$840.19 per pupil, and Beverly Hills spent \$1,231.72 for each pupil. This economic gap among districts with respect to property tax base and school spending meant that economically challenged districts had to tax their citizens at elevated rates to match the spending of more affluent districts.

As the United States Supreme Court stated, "affluent districts can have their cake and eat it too; they can provide a high quality education for their children while paying lower taxes. Poor districts, by contrast, have no cake at all." *Serrano v. Priest* is , the 1976 California Supreme Court decision that found the existing system of financing schools unconstitutional because it violated the equal protection clause of the state Constitution. Ultimately, the Serrano decision did not result in equally-funded school districts across the state of California. However, it did institute a

significant ideology that has framed the ongoing struggle for equity/adequacy in the state.

At the same time, in Texas, a similar case, *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* (1973) was also being waged. It claimed that the Texas public school system for financing education was discriminatory. The three-judge Texas District Court agreed, ruling that education is a fundamental right and that the financing system was subject to strict scrutiny. The case was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court of the United States reversed the Texas District Court's decision. The Supreme Court ruled the merit of the case did not have legitimate legal basis in the federal constitution. The Supreme Court ruled that a school-financing system based on local property taxes was not an unconstitutional violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. The majority opinion stated that the plaintiffs did not provide sufficient proof that education is a fundamental right or that the system in which most schools are financed was subject to strict scrutiny.

Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., who wrote the majority opinion for the case, stated “[No] charge fairly could be made that the system fails to provide each child with an opportunity to acquire the basic minimal skills necessary for the enjoyment of the rights of speech and of full participation in the political process.” In the subsequent years, education advocates and their lawyers adopted the “fiscal neutrality principle,” which claimed that each state “has a constitutional obligation to equalize the value of the taxable wealth in each district, so that equal tax efforts will yield equal resources,” according to Rebell (2007). They succeeded in some states,

including California, under that argument, which led some legislatures to institute policies of redistribution of resources from wealthy school districts to poor ones.

By the mid-1980s, state supreme courts started a trend toward ruling in favor of the states. This shift, begun with the precedents set in the San Antonio case, forged new terminology and strategy in this funding war. To win a case based on fiscal neutrality, or equity, proved difficult after the San Antonio case. Proving merit and enforcing implementation was difficult, and even if the funding gap was reduced, other forces, such as hiring decisions and student makeup mired the effort to accomplish measurable achievement that rivaled the more affluent districts.

In the late 1980s, the strategy changed again, and the lawyers and plaintiffs in education funding cases moved from a strategy of equity to adequacy under state constitutions. The standards-based reform movement, which flourished in the mid-to-late 1980s, led many states to increase their requirements for student promotion and graduation. It provided advocates for poorer quality schools a groundwork upon which they could put together cases that proved students in their districts were failing to get an adequate education. In earlier years, adequate education was an unclear concept that could be understood as a blanket phrase to describe any state education system. The adequate education concept was now gaining considerable visibility.

In New Jersey, *Abbott v. Burke* was filed in 1981 and has since been the catalyst for ten court decisions related to the original case. In the landmark *Abbott IV* (1997) and *Abbott V* (1998) rulings, the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered a set

of education programs and reforms widely recognized to be the most fair and just in the nation. The Abbott "education adequacy" framework includes:

- Rigorous content standards-based education, supported by per-pupil funding equal to spending in successful suburban schools
- Universal, well-planned, and high quality preschool education for all three- and four-year olds
- Supplemental ("at-risk") programs to address student and school needs attributed to high-poverty, including intensive early literacy, small class size, and social and health services
- New and rehabilitated facilities to adequately house all programs, relieve overcrowding, and eliminate health and safety violations
- School and district reforms to improve curriculum and instruction, and for effective and efficient use of funds to enable students to achieve state standards
- State accountability for effective and timely implementation to ensure progress in improving student achievement

The goal of the Abbott programs and reforms is to give every child the opportunity to attain "his or her own place as a contributing member in society with the ability to compete with other citizens and to succeed in the economy" (Abbott IV 1997). Since then, a 2009 decision by the New Jersey Supreme Court ended almost 30 years of Abbott rulings concerning educational funding. The court unanimously upheld the state's plan for school aid. The School Funding Reform Act was adopted

in May 2009 by lawmakers at the urging of then governor Jon Corzine, as "a constitutionally adequate scheme."

Typical of many of the education funding lawsuits, the various decisions reflect negotiations between the state and the plaintiffs over implementation of programs and new laws, as well as the funding for them. The movement in the direction of adequacy proceedings started with the 1989 landmark verdict in *Rose v. Council for Better Education*, in which the Kentucky Supreme Court acknowledged that the state's complete educational organization was unconstitutional and inadequate to realize the educational rights of Kentucky students. Later transformation in the state, attained through the Kentucky Education Reform Act approved by the state legislature in 1990, is among the largest wide-ranging and ground-breaking effects of any school finance litigation. Since 1989, 19 of 29 lawsuits argued on educational adequacy grounds have been won by the plaintiffs, according to statistics compiled by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity

North Carolina's *Leandro* decision, reached in 2004 by the state Supreme Court, was among the successful cases. Nowadays, even if a state Supreme Court determined its education financing system to be unconstitutional, the legal wrangling over policy, procedure, and financial support becomes a continuing escapade. How and when did this escapade begin in North Carolina? Where can the start of this case be pinpointed?

On May 15, 1994, parents, school boards, and students from five low-wealth counties (Cumberland, Halifax, Hoke, Robeson, and Vance) filed a lawsuit against two defendants: the State Board of Education and the State of North Carolina. This

lawsuit claimed that children in these five school systems did not receive the same educational funding as school children in other counties. The plaintiffs from the low-wealth counties stated that the State did not supply enough money for them to provide quality education to students enrolled in those districts. This case is commonly known as Leandro, and was named after one of the plaintiffs in the case. Five predominantly metropolitan school districts also asked to be parties to the Leandro case, declaring that the state funding formula did not provide them with adequate money to educate their at-risk students and students whose first language is not English. Those school systems included Asheville City, Buncombe County, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Durham County, Wake County, and Winston-Salem-Forsyth.

In April 1996, the Court of Appeals dismissed the lawsuit, saying the state constitution does not promise equity or quality in public schools. The State's response to the proceedings was to dispute whether the counties had any legal basis to bring the claim before the courts. Legal action for this issue began, and eventually the matter was heard by the North Carolina Supreme Court.

In July 1997, the Supreme Court gave new life to the case by finding that North Carolina's state constitution guarantees every child in this state an opportunity to receive a sound basic education in our public schools. They overturned the Court of Appeals ruling and restored the case. The Supreme Court ruled that every child has a constitutional right to a "sound basic education." The Court defined a sound basic education as:

- (1) Sufficient ability to read, write and speak the English language and sufficient knowledge of fundamental mathematics and physical science to

enable the student to function in a complex and rapidly changing society; (2) sufficient fundamental knowledge of geography, history and basic economic and political systems to enable the student to make informed choices with regard to issues that affect the student personally or affect the student's community, state, and nation; (3) sufficient academic and vocational skills to enable the student to successfully engage in post-secondary education or vocational training; (4) sufficient academic and vocational skills to enable the student to compete on an equal basis with others in further formal education or gainful employment in contemporary society. (Leandro v. State, 346 N.C. 336, 347, 488 S.E.2d 249, 255 1997)

The case was sent back to Superior Court with instructions for the lower court to assess whether the State had met its constitutional obligation to provide an equal opportunity for a sound basic education.

In September 1999, the Superior Court trial began, with Judge Howard Manning Jr. presiding. He immediately began hearing evidence in the case. On Oct. 12, 2000, Judge Manning ruled that the state system for school funding was adequate and constitutional but left open the question of funding to poorer districts. On Oct. 26, 2000, Manning ruled that the state must provide pre-kindergarten programs for four-year-olds who were at risk for academic failure. Additionally, in March 2001, Manning ordered the state to develop a plan to assist students who were at risk for academic failure. He gave the state one year to devise the plan to address the problem.

In April 2002, Judge Manning issued his fourth memorandum of law in the case, ruling that the responsibility of providing equal education to all students lies with the state. He ordered the state to "remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services" of competent, well-trained teachers, good principals, and sufficient funding.

Prior to the April 2002 ruling, the court issued three opinions that concluded among other things that:

- The minimum academic performance level under Leandro is Level III or above.
- Every school in North Carolina is capable of having 90% of its students at Level III or above.
- At-risk students are entitled to pre-kindergarten programs to provide them with the educational resources necessary to obtain a sound basic education.
- Students who drop out of school are not receiving a sound basic education.

The fourth decision specifically incorporated Judge Manning's three prior decisions. Therefore, the Judge's rulings in his previous three Memoranda of Decision were incorporated into his fourth ruling.

On July 13, 2002, the state appealed Manning's ruling to the state Supreme Court, challenging all parts of Manning's decisions. In response, on August 15, 2002, Manning gave the state ten days to formulate a plan to explain how it would provide Hoke County schoolchildren a sound basic education. A week later, on August 22, 2002, the state Board of Education sent an assistance team to Hoke County to comply with Judge Manning's August 15th order. Early the next year, January 13,

2003, the State's lawyers challenged a court ruling that said students who performed poorly on achievement tests were not on track to get a sound basic education. The lawyers asked the appeals court to overturn Manning's April 2002 order.

A July 30, 2004 summary of the case breaks down as follows:

1. The case breaks down into three contingencies:
 - a. Does the evidence show that the State has failed to provide the Hoke County schoolchildren with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education (SBE)?
 - b. If so, has the State demonstrated that its failure to provide such an opportunity is necessary to promote a compelling government interest?
 - c. If the State has failed to provide Hoke County schoolchildren with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education and failed to demonstrate that its public educational shortcomings are necessary to promote a compelling government interest, does the relief granted by the trial court correct the failure with minimal encroachment on the other branches of government?
2. The defendants (State) raised three issues on appeal:
 - a. The trial court applied the wrong standards for determining when a student has received a SBE. Evidence presented at trial did not show a violation of the constitutional right to a SBE.
 - b. The inappropriateness of the trial court's remedy of mandating pre-K programs for "at-risk" students.

c. The proper age at which children should be permitted to attend public school is a nonjusticiable political question reserved for the General Assembly.

The plaintiff sought relief in the original complaint in the form of:

- Declaration of education rights
- Opportunity to show that those rights were violated
- Upon showing of violation, court remedy for violation

The trial court's task was to:

- Take evidence on whether children denied SBE
 - Determine if evidence showed that children were not receiving SBE
 - Enter judgment granting declaratory relief and other such relief as needed
1. Standards for determining when student has received SBE
 2. Appropriateness of trial court's remedy of pre-k for at-risk
 3. Is the proper age for children to begin attending school a nonjusticiable political question reserved for General Assembly?

Two actions: Rural and urban; only rural heard, limited to Hoke as representative of plaintiff districts. This decision does not preclude urban school districts from having their day in court.

Scope of Leandro and constitution: Applies to all children, not conditioned on age or need; established constitutional right exists for all

Questions SC determined it had to address:

1. Did evidence show rights violated?

2. If so, did trial court properly determine when and how rights were violated, and by whom, and apply right remedy?

The Supreme Court affirmed that the trial court was correct in determining that the evidence presented showed a violation of the schoolchildren's right to SBE. The Court ruled that the State violated their right, and that the trial court's remedies with exception of pre-k were appropriate. The Supreme Court rejected the State's contention that trial court relied solely on test scores to determine if there was a violation. The Supreme Court cited other output evidence reviewed by trial court—graduation rates, employment potential, post-secondary success or lack thereof, and test scores.

Major Conclusions and Holdings of Supreme Court

The Supreme Court affirmed with modifications the rulings of the trial court in the following areas:

1. The State failed its Constitutional duty to provide certain students with opportunity to get SBE.
2. The trial court's remedies for Constitutional deficiencies, including (a) the trial court's order for the State to assume responsibility for and correct educational deficiencies; (b) the Supreme Court reversed the trial court's order for pre-k, because it was beyond the court's authority, and infringes on legislative and executive authority. Further, the Supreme Court was not persuaded that pre-k was the only solution. The Supreme Court did support the trial court's

- contention that the preparation that students bring with them to school must be addressed, but not by the courts at that time.
3. The Plaintiff-interveners' statement of error that the trial court erred in including federal funds in determining if State was meeting its constitutional obligation. The Supreme Court ruled that it was acceptable to include federal funds in determining if State is meeting its constitutional obligation.
 4. The measure of constitutional compliance is Level III on ABCs.

How are schools in North Carolina funded? Public Education in North Carolina is funded through state, federal, and local money. For the most part, state revenues come from personal income taxes, corporate taxes, sales taxes, etc. Local revenues come from property taxes. Property taxes are levied locally, and federal revenues come from federally imposed taxes. The state contributes approximately 68% of the money spent for K-12 education; this percentage does not include state money for capital or building expenses. Local governments contribute approximately 24% of funding, and the federal government provides approximately eight percent.

Local property taxes play a significant role in paying for education in the state of North Carolina. This means that some counties are better able to pay for education for their children than others. Counties with high real estate values and widespread development raise more in property taxes than counties that don't have a lot of real estate development or high real estate values

There are two supplemental funds meant to assist poor counties: the small county fund and the low wealth fund. The small county fund is for counties with less

than 3,150 students or between 3,150 and 4,000, whose property tax base dollar amount per student is less than the state average. The low wealth fund is for counties where the ability to generate revenue per student is below the state average.

How are additional funds allocated to the participating Local Educational Agencies? Furthermore, how is the additional funding implemented in those counties? Is it totally for additional student needs, or is some of the funding allocated for drawing personnel to the county who would not otherwise entertain the idea of working in a low wealth county?

This study attempted to ascertain if any funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality administrative personnel (since the last ruling) was instrumental in fact in keeping these people.

Statement of the Problem

Local property taxes play a significant role in paying for education in our state. This means that some counties are better able to pay for education for their children than others. Counties with high real estate values and wide spread development raise more in property taxes than counties that don't have a lot of real estate development or high real estate values. Judge Manning mandated changes to "remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services of competent, well-trained teachers, good principals and sufficient funding." How exactly is that accomplished? How do Local Educational Agencies recruit and maintain these well-trained educators and good principals?

Moreover, if this goal is accomplished by using additional monies allocated by the Leandro legislation, is that funding allocation all that is needed to retain quality personnel in these low wealth areas?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain if any funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality administrative personnel (since the last ruling i.e. Leandro monies) is actually instrumental in attracting and retaining these employees. This study seeks answers to these essential questions: a) Is supplemental pay in education effective; and b) What are the outcomes of supplemental pay initiatives?

Definition of Terms

An understanding of the several terms related to this study is essential to comprehending this study. As such, definitions of terms integral to this study's research focus are included below.

Achievement Gap: The achievement gap is a persistent, pervasive, and significant disparity in educational achievement and attainment among groups of students as determined by a standardized measure. When analyzed according to race and ethnicity, achievement disparities negatively impact educational outcomes for poor children and children of color on a consistent basis.

At or Above Grade Level (Level III): Achievement Level III established as “at Grade Level” by the State Board of Education based on student end-of-grade test scores.

Students performing at this level on the end-of grade tests consistently demonstrate mastery of the grade level subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next grade level (DPI, 1999).

At Risk Students: Those who, due to circumstances such as an unstable home life, poor socioeconomic background, and other factors, either enter or continue in school from a disadvantaged standpoint, at least in relation to other students who are not burdened with such circumstances. The students who are considered to be among those “at-risk” students raise distinct and separate concerns from other students. Certainly, like all students, “at-risk” students also face the risk of academic failure.

Average Daily Membership (ADM): The official measure used in North Carolina to represent the number of students in a school district for the purpose of calculating state aid. In North Carolina, “number of days in membership” of the total number of school days within a given term or school year that a student’s name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of attendance. ADM is the sum of the number of days in membership for all students divided by the number of school days in membership for all students divided by the number of school days in the term (DPI, 1999).

Community Support and Involvement: Community and parent/guardian communication and influence in the school.

Department of Public Instruction (DPI or NCDPI): The department of Public instruction is North Carolina's state educational agency.

Educational Adequacy: Although no universally accepted definition of educational adequacy exists, when ruling on related lawsuits, state courts have attempted to provide some measurable standards of an "adequate" or "sufficient" education by which legislators can bring their school finance methods into constitutional compliance. Most courts have focused on general notions of the education system's role in developing a citizenry capable of making democratic decisions as well as competing in the workforce (Lefkowitz, 2004).

Facilities and Resources: Availability of instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources to teachers.

Fiscal Neutrality Principle: each state has a constitutional obligation to equalize the value of the taxable wealth in each district so that equal tax efforts will yield equal resources.

Funding Sources: The expenditure data provided by the North Carolina DPI includes state, federal, and local statistics. State and federal expenditures include amounts spent for education from the budgets of state and federal governments, respectively. Local expenditures are all disbursements not funded by the state or federal government; therefore, local expenditures are not synonymous with the amounts expended by the local country government.

Instructional Practices and Support: Data and support available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning.

Good Principals: Certified Principals who are educational leaders and practicing utilizing best practices in schools.

Local Education Agency (LEA): The county and the city school systems in North Carolina which have, or have had since 1991, local school boards. In the state of North Carolina, a LEA also can be defined as a district.

Managing Student Conduct: Policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment.

Per Pupil Funding: (Also referred to as "amount per student") how much money a school, county, or district receives per student from state, local, and federal resources.

Professional Development: - Availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching skills and effectiveness.

Property Taxes: - A tax assessed on real estate by the local government. The tax is usually based on the value of property (including the land) owned by a resident.

Public School Fund of North Carolina (PSF): Provides monies to the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) for the basic education, enrichment, and strengthening of educational opportunities for the children of the State of North Carolina. The PSF is

administered through the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Allotments in the form of dollars are provided to the schools by DPI based on their first month average daily membership (ADM) of student population. Each school receives an amount equal to the State's per pupil allocation for the LEA in which the school resides, multiplied by the LEA's first month ADM. State funds for children with special needs are also included in the State allotment.

Sound basic education: The Court defined a sound basic education as:

(1) Sufficient ability to read, write, and speak the English language, and sufficient knowledge of fundamental mathematics and physical science to enable the student to function in a complex and rapidly changing society; (2) sufficient fundamental knowledge of geography, history, and basic economic and political systems to enable the student to make informed choices with regard to issues that affect the student personally or affect the student's community, state, and nation; (3) sufficient academic and vocational skills to enable the student to engage successfully in post-secondary education or vocational training; (4) sufficient academic and vocational skills to enable the student to compete on an equal basis with others in further formal education or gainful employment in contemporary society.

School Leadership: - *The ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments and address teacher concerns.*

Teacher Leadership: Teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices.

Time: Available time to plan, collaborate, and provide instruction and barriers to maximizing time during the school day.

Validity: Refers to whether the measurement tool (i.e. the survey question) accurately and appropriately measures the concept under consideration (Sue, 2007)

Well-Trained Teachers: Teachers who meet the No Child Left Behind Standards.

Significance of the Study

The study will give insight to the maxim “if you pay them, they will come.” On the other hand, in more plain terms if you pay more money to attract quality Administrators to the area, they will respond and come to work for the low wealth school districts indicated in the Leandro study.

Organization of the Study

Chapter two of this study includes a review of the recent school finance literature in education, paying particular attention to how this ties into Leandro funding for schools. Additionally, chapter two examines the recent school finance research, and, moreover, links that research to the beginning of the Leandro case implications in North Carolina. Chapter three presents the research methodology that will be used in the study.

Chapter four examines the demographics, townships, and geography of the counties affected by the Leandro legal mandate. The chapter also offers a similar view of Wake County, the site of the comparison public school system. The data in chapter four offers a unique perspective of the difficulty of recruiting highly qualified and effective personnel in the Leandro counties. Chapter five encompasses the data

analysis portion of the study. The triangulation (three sides of the study) embodied in that chapter will show county location along with the most recent demographics of the area. It will also compare focus group interviews and give the reader a clearer picture of what the experts close to the Leandro issues think when posed with questions about validity and effectiveness of the mandate when it comes to administrator retention and recruitment. The final side will address the comparison surveys that were conducted on behalf of this study. Current administrators in the five Leandro counties and Wake County were surveyed with questions pertaining to Leandro. These questions ranged from demographic information to why they were working in their respective counties.

Chapter six, the final chapter, will address the conclusions drawn from the research. It will show and reinforce the trends gleaned from chapter four and address the research questions posed in chapter one. These, along with the focus group sentiment, will give the final impression of what the Leandro Mandate means to the recruitment and retention of quality administrators in the state of North Carolina.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed look at the background information that shaped the study. It included a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, definition of terms used, and the study's significance. Hopefully, this allowed even a novice to education to gain a full understanding of the case's merit and why it was so important to North Carolina education. Without this foundation, this basis for

understanding, most readers might not have grasped the long-term implications of the Leandro Mandate. The chapter concluded with a discussion of ethical issues and potential limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review is on the subject of the Leandro decision and its effect on North Carolina schools' finances. This review of the literature begins by exploring the policy process through the lenses of Baumgartner and Jones' (1993) punctuated equilibrium theory and Lacireno-Paquet and Holyoke's (2007) partial reversion hypothesis. It moves next to recall recent scholarship on adequacy-based educational funding and problem definition. The chapter ends with current articles examining the politics of Leandro schools around the state and implications for the leaders of those districts.

The study will center on the author's triangulation research approach and how that relates to Leandro monies and indirectly to No Child Left Behind legislation. For research purposes, this study's approach to the Leandro decision is from a novice perspective. This dissertation will explain the problem of inequities in educational funding in North Carolina counties and give some theories as to why the achievement gap exists and how Leandro will assist in closing that gap.

The literature concerning Leandro specifically is still a relatively new topic and is germane to North Carolina. However, educational finance and how school systems are funded is a topic of vital concern every day across the nation. Its history and key cases were described in Chapter one to bring readers current with those prior cases. They weigh on the mindset and decision-making of the local players as

they attempt to do what they feel is best to address the problem of educational adequacy in our state. School systems struggle to find ways to pay for their programs. A universal reduction of funds in the educational arena has led educational leaders possibly to rethink Leandro funds altogether. Some school systems were aided by President Obama's stimulus package for the 2009-2010 school year. However, this was only a temporary measure; schools have found it necessary to eliminate some programs for the foreseeable future.

Equity to Adequacy

The foundation of educational finance proceedings has shifted from equity and fairness to providing the funds essential to supplying an adequate education to every learner. Grubb and Lazerson (1982), authors of the still timely book *The Concept of Educational Adequacy in Historical Perspective*, note that the history of education has characterized a number of very old discussions over educational adequacy. Recent debates over financial support have touched on whether foundation-type programs of study can assure adequacy despite subsidy discrepancies among school districts. The significance of teacher training and unionization to teacher adequacy is questioned, as is the capacity of a standardized curriculum. Standards for facility adequacy, raised over the years, were at the time, being challenged as irrelevant. The debate over curricular adequacy has focused on whether students do better when offered choices or when required to adhere to rigorous programs. The attainment of education's early purpose of developing a

Christian, responsible, and productive citizenry was measurable only by assessing changes in the quality of the general public.

In recent times, according to Grubb and Lazerson, emphasis has shifted to vocational interests, permitting educational adequacy to be measured in terms of education's effects on individual earning power, though the means for assessing these things remain controversial. Educational history gives several conflicting definitions of educational adequacy, based on widely differing perceptions of both the reason for education and the temperament of the student populace. Society's ever changing needs make it doubtful that any permanent, conclusive definition can be found. The current notion of adequacy will probably just last a couple of generations and then be rewritten by that next generation.

That last article ties in well to the next one which addresses non educational expenses as they pertain to adequacy. In *Educational Adequacy: Its Definition and Prospects for Funding*, Richard P. Koeppel (1982) discusses five past financial trends that appear to be a reliable guide to the prospects for financing education, though these trends will not provide for adequate financing. Four of these trends are common to both the state and federal levels--a preference for categorical rather than general aid, the mandating of costly programs without fulfilling promises for increased funding, attempting fiscal accountability through rules and regulations, and labeling as educational some expenditures there were non-educational. The fifth trend, toward setting often-unrealistic limits on annual budget increases, has been most noticeable at the state level. The federal role in the effort to achieve educational adequacy should include using general aid to help equalize state wealth

and tax effort disparities; using categorical aid to achieve specific national educational goals; not exceeding state-supplied funding; minimizing rules and regulations attached to federal funds; and labeling funding purposes accurately. Treating the issues associated with the concept of educational adequacy requires defining education accurately. The history of public education should be considered when developing this definition, as should the fact that the care and treatment of some people now handled through the schools does not constitute education.

Lascelles Anderson wrote "Toward a Policy Definition of Educational Adequacy" in 1982, and the author's efforts were sponsored by Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), in Washington, DC. Anderson speaks to the call for dealing with the idea of minimum educational adequacy. Anderson provides potential characterizations of adequacy scrutinized from a policy point of view, addresses the issues involved in creating an agenda for surveying the various size and scope of adequacy, and treats the issues affecting formalization of a policy model of educational adequacy.

The Anderson article starts with the contention that adequacy is an aspect of the broader idea of equality of opportunity. Several time-honored ways of instituting equality are scrutinized, and the author concludes that adequacy is looked upon as an approach to safeguarding equitable educational outcomes as opposed to input. The author evaluates several court cases affecting educational finance, examines their policy implications, and creates from these implications a definition of adequacy supported by three criteria: an equalization program, the inclusion of need factors, and the inclusion of cost differentials in determining appropriate levels of bona fide

resources. The policy framework for employing this definition integrates an evaluation mechanism motivated by the realization of applicable output indicators. The author concludes with a depiction of a goal-programming policy model for adequacy-based on educational production concepts.

Written by a host of authors led by Jay Chambers and also published in 1982, *The Issue of Adequacy in the Financing of Public Education: How Much Is Enough?* is a four-chapter book in which the authors examined how other states have defined an adequate education and the funding levels required to provide it in those states. The authors also suggest an approach to the issues of educational adequacy and equity. In the first chapter, the authors defines adequacy in the language of learning services sufficient to meet an objective and suggest that the issue of adequacy cannot be separated from the issue of equity. The second chapter reviews past writings on U.S. education by previous policy makers and scholars to gain insight on how they have conceptualized educational adequacy and equity.

The third chapter is where the authors analyze the changing role of the states in granting educational monies, educational resources, and funding of supplemental programs. This chapter also presents succinct case studies of approaches to adequacy taken in other states (Georgia, South Carolina, Washington, and Connecticut). The final chapter suggests a resource-cost-based approach to adequacy and equity issues. Called the "Resource Cost Model," the recommended framework is a computer mock-up for shaping resources needed by school districts and the costs required from states to provide this adequate education.

“The Issues of Equity, Efficiency, and Adequacy in Midwest Education Finance” (1990) by Grover H. Baldwin appeared in the journal *Planning and Changing*. This article compares the preponderance of like-minded and nonconforming opinions of Midwestern state and federal appellate court justices in school funding cases concerning 1.) the three standards of review under the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution and individual state constitutions; and 2.) the issues of effectiveness, equity, and adequacy. No noteworthy differentiations were found.

This article is similar to the Leandro case in several ways. It is a predecessor to the contemporary Leandro case that started only four years later. The difference, in addition to the fact that these lawsuits took place in the Midwest, is that the State Supreme Court forced the District Court judge to go back and assess the complaint and devise a viable solution.

An outcome of proceedings of the United States Senate, 103rd Congress, First Session, the book entitled *An Examination of the Federal Role in School Finance. Hearings on Examining the Need for School Finance Reform, Focusing on the Adequacy of Educational Finance in the United States and Its Effect on the Quality of Education, before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources*. (1993) contains excerpts of proceedings of hearings that scrutinized the need for educational funding reform, with a center of attention on the adequacy of educational finance in the United States and its end product on the worth of education.

They also investigate if there should be a national responsibility in educational finance, and if so, what that responsibility should be, and what such expectations would necessitate. The book also includes testimonials and prepared accounts made by educators, administrators, education and economics professors, policy analysts, a Congressman, Senators and attorneys, the governor of Colorado, and the mayor of Baltimore. This book further sets the adequacy stage in America for the implementation for the Leandro Lawsuit, which was presented the next year, 1994 in North Carolina.

A policy brief by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC. titled "School Funding: From Equity to Adequacy" (2000) seems to address the shifting sentiment well. The article centers on two main catalysts of the movement. One is the standards and accountability movement that has swept across every state, focusing on student test scores and how they can be improved. The second catalyst is clearer expectations. These difficulties are forcing policymakers to address a complicated subject: What manner and quantity of funds are necessary to allow all students to reach preferred student success levels? The subject of how to finance schools cannot be treated disjointedly from how to improve them. Funding debates and lawful challenges that focused on equity, or how to allocate available funds, must also deal with the more essential subject of adequacy. How much money does it take to educate a child? This brief examines the swing in educational subsidies from equity to adequacy, with community awareness about some of the disputes it raises, including adequacy-based legal issues and court proceedings.

Frank Brown published “Educational Adequacy: State Courts Remedy for School Finance Equity Lawsuits” in 2001. Brown’s work is focused on school finance litigation and how its center of gravity has shifted from equity to adequacy. It discusses two recent North Carolina school finance cases dealing with the concept of educational adequacy: "Leandro," decided by the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1997, and "Hoke County Board of Education," decided by the Wake County Superior Court in March 2001.

In July 1997, the Supreme Court gave new life to the case by finding that North Carolina’s state constitution guarantees every child of this state an opportunity to receive a sound basic education in our public schools. They overturned the Court of Appeals ruling and restored the case. The Supreme Court ruled that every child has a constitutional right to a sound basic education.

Similar Issues Across the Nation

While this is not the first time schools in North Carolina have been short of funding, the circumstances in which the deficit has been accrued may be different. A review of past educational funding issues here is appropriate to guarantee a novice reader’s awareness of current issues across the country and how that litigation may influence decisions made in North Carolina. Paul Chesser (2005) of the *Carolina Journal Online* wrote an article entitled “State Deals with ‘Leandro’ issues: 44 states facing similar issues regarding equitable school funding” in which he addressed the similarities that other states have with funding elementary and secondary schools. The Leandro lawsuit, in which the state Supreme Court ruled that North Carolina had

a constitutional obligation to fund education adequately in its poorer counties, had sibling cases in 44 other states. Almost every state has a constitutional provision similar to North Carolina's, which promises a sound and basic education for all its residents.

According to a documentary article by Michael A. Rebell entitled "Educational Adequacy, Democracy, and the Courts," the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) litigated against New York State for years over school funding adequacy, and the organization also closely tracks similar lawsuits in every other state in the country. According to the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, a nonprofit group that seeks education reform through increased, equalized spending for disadvantaged public schools, to date, every state except Delaware, Hawaii, Mississippi, Nevada, and Utah has had litigation over the constitutionality of its K-12 funding. However, over the last 40 or so years, the lawsuits have taken different forms with varying success. Rebell is executive director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE).

As Judge Howard Manning did with the Leandro case in North Carolina, courts continue to hold hearings long after their decisions so that states are held accountable. In May 2007, the Arkansas Supreme Court heard arguments over whether the legislature had complied with its November 2002 order. Cases also are decided very slowly because both plaintiffs and defendants file challenges under the decisions complaining that their legal opponents are failing to comply with standards set by the courts. Many adequacy suits seem to have no end.

In Wyoming the Supreme Court said that education costs, class size, and educator salaries should be reviewed every five years, and inflation costs reviewed

every two years. In Arkansas, the state Supreme Court ordered the state to conduct a “costing out” study to determine how much money was needed to provide enough resources for a “general, suitable, and efficient system of free public schools” as its constitution requires. The findings released in September 2003 determined that in order to provide adequate resources for its students, Arkansas would need to raise education spending by \$848 million, a 33 % increase over its current spending.

Arkansas was one of only five states in which the studies were ordered by its courts. Similar studies with varying formulas and bases have been conducted in 32 states, 21 of them initiated by the states themselves and the rest commissioned by outside groups.

The findings are usually staggering, often calling for hundreds of millions of dollars in spending increases. A state-ordered study in North Dakota recommended a spending increase of up to \$866 million, a 31 % increase. That would represent an additional \$2,000 spent per pupil in the state. A study conducted by an outside group in Missouri determined that the state needed to raise its education spending by \$913 million, or by 15.7 percent. The author went so far as to call for a statewide property tax to raise additional revenues. No costing study has been ordered in North Carolina — yet. Former governor Mike Easley and the General Assembly attempted to spend just enough to keep Manning satisfied.

The Leandro court decision, *Hoke County Board of Education v. State*, 599 S.E. 2d 365 (N.C. 2004) is well documented in the state and across the country. However, to date there is very little specific literature on how the money was actually implemented to increase the salaries of educators in the counties that will be

examined in this study. Since each of the initial counties devised separate implementation of how the funds should be disseminated among the Local Educational Agencies, it is not clear which existing topic of study is most pertinent. Some topics are closely aligned with educational funding and the equity or lack thereof associated with the funding, and that is where the literary review for this dissertation will begin. Initial articles will focus on the case itself and progress to the more opinionated writings that address items that are more closely related to this study in general. The outcomes of this proposed study would give some enlightenment to the notion of supplemental pay.

The study will give insight to the maxim “if you pay them, they will come.” In simpler terms if more money is allocated to attract quality administrators to an area, those educators will respond and come to work for the low wealth school districts indicated in the Leandro study. Alternatively, is the truer answer that the additional funds really make little difference when an administrator is determining where to work in the region? Are other factors more important than money? Alternatively, are those factors and the amount of money offered judged by the potential candidate on a sliding scale to determine what is acceptable?

School finance is a crucial component in the determination of whether students across the state of North Carolina can get a sound basic education. The earliest equity case involving schools dates back to *Brown v. Board of Education*. A journal article from the *Harvard Law Review*, Volume 118, page 1753 notes that the Supreme Court held that when a state undertakes to provide its citizens a public education, education itself becomes “a right which must be made available to all on

equal terms.” Although the Brown case confronted the inequities caused by de jure racial segregation, activists inspired by the “idea” of Brown have used similar legal strategies for securing educational equality for students of diverse socioeconomic, linguistic, and geographic backgrounds. Using school finance litigation strategies, activists have relied on either the equity or the adequacy theory. The equity theory asserts that students are entitled to equal distribution of educational resources, while the adequacy theory asserts that “all children are entitled to an equal education of at least a certain quality. Many cases, including the aforementioned Hoke County Leandro case, have used this premise to develop their arguments for equity in funding for schools.

This article used the equity theory to analyze the legislative practices within the state on North Carolina. While these outcomes have not been orthodox they have traveled on a path that had been previously uncharted. The author determined that with respect to school finance litigation, state courts should become more discriminating concerning the theories they rely on, and how their beliefs are shaped. The court identified a qualitative standard from which they are basing decisions; however they are not necessarily using the judgment of educational professionals in the enactment of this legislation.

The journal article entitled “The ‘Williams’ Settlement and the Prospects for Future School Finance Adequacy Litigation in California” was written by William Glenn and Lawrence Picus and was published in The Journal of Educational Finance in 2007. The California Supreme Court hearings have catalyzed the passage of school financial reforms, most notably the Supreme Courts funding

proceedings, with its rulings in the *Serrano v. Priest* case. The court ruled that affluence-linked expenditure discrepancies must in effect be eliminated. The legislation required to implement that decision, and the passage of Proposition 13's property tax limitation resulted in dramatically slower increases in education spending in California compared to most other states.

In the thirty years since *Serrano*, petitioners and courts in other states have moved away from the type of equity arguments presented in *Serrano* to cases based on educational adequacy. California appears to be a leading nominee for a thriving adequacy lawsuit given its low-level of funding and its deprived student populace. California courts have not yet considered the merits of adequacy arguments, in part because the state had just recently settled the *Williams v. State of California* case, a lawsuit that at least had the potential to be that state's vehicle for an adequacy ruling by the courts. Glenn and Picus investigate the impact of the *Williams* agreement and its stipulations of increasing subsidies for and improving the quality of schools in California. The authors discuss the scenario for potential adequacy suits in the state. In summation, the state of affairs continues to be desolate for California schools. As a result of the *Williams* case, changes will help all schools report the overall condition of their facilities, the number of ineffective teacher assignments and vacant teacher positions, and the availability of textbooks or instructional materials. More than likely, the *Williams* settlement will offer little more than cleaner, safer schools. It will serve as a desired step forward, but it seems exceedingly unlikely that it will lead to any noteworthy enhancement in the value/worth of education provided by California public schools.

In Efficacy of the North Carolina Low Wealth Supplemental Funding Program in Meeting Goals and Improving School Finance Equity, Denise Bowling (2000) examined the efficacy of the North Carolina Low wealth Supplemental Funding Program to improve per pupil expenditure equity and meet program goals. Bowling interviewed superintendents from Local Educational Agencies named in the school finance litigation, i.e. Leandro, and with administrators of educational special interest groups to identify definitions of low wealth, equity, and program goals.

Furthermore, the study examined the characteristics of Local Educational Agencies based on low wealth status. The findings indicated that low wealth districts, on average, have lower tax bases, lower per capita income levels, higher taxes, and a higher percentage of students with free and reduced lunch status than non-low wealth districts.

Bowling gave pertinent background about why equity needed a second look in the state of North Carolina. Her research provided long-awaited justification that the additional funding actually showed some test score increases in the low wealth districts between 1996-97 and 1998-99. This provides the basis for the research. It is evident that these funds and personnel are needed in these low wealth areas to help them become more proficient and on course with the test scores the state mandates to meet ABC growth parameters.

Another online article from the “Starting at 3” project of the Education Law Center in Newark, New Jersey further asserts this sentiment in using North Carolina legislation that mirrors the outcomes of the Brown decision. Article I of the North Carolina Constitution provides that:

“...the people have the right to the privilege of education. Furthermore, Article IX states, “The General Assembly shall provide ...for a general and uniform system of free public schools ... wherein equal opportunities shall be provided for all students.” The constitution does not contain an age limitation, in actually requires that the General Assembly provides a public education for“...every child of appropriate age.”

The Hoke County case builds upon the earlier challenge of *Leandro v State* (1997). In the *Leandro* case, low-income school districts filed a legal case against the state of North Carolina, charging that the state’s system of educational funding did not provide adequate resources to the low-income districts. Converse to the plain lingo of the State’s constitution, the North Carolina Supreme Court determined that the Constitution “does not require that equal educational opportunities be afforded students in all of the school districts of the state.” However, the Court did find that the state was responsible for providing adequate funding and services to secure a sound basic education for all of the students in the state.

The Education Law Center of New Jersey article gave the results of the most recent decisions by the state to take meaningful action to prepare at-risk students to receive a sound basic education. The litigation had already resulted in pre-school program implementation within the state of North Carolina.

Local Leandro Mandate Implications

An article in the March 27, 2001 edition of the Raleigh, NC *News and Observer* entitled “Ruling gives at-risk students Top Priority” reaffirms the mandate by Judge Manning that school districts must allocate funds to ensure that all

students have access to a sound and basic education. The key points to this ruling were that the State was not meeting its constitutional duty to educate the state's poor children, the students who are most likely to fail their classes. The state was required develop a plan within 12 months using existing funds, to ensure that the neediest students were better educated. Additionally, state and local funding in all districts had to be allocated as effectively as possible before the court considered whether to require additional funding.

In another online article entitled "Judge Manning Educates Forum Audience on Leandro Lawsuit," author Sheria Reid (2008) writes a summary of the Leandro decision. This article gave a brief history of the case from 1994 through 2004 and summarizes the major decisions that came from each facet of the case. Most important in this article was the fact that Leandro rights continued to be violated according to the 2002 Superior Court Decision. After the court handed the case over to Superior Court Judge Manning, he found that there were many students who were still not receiving a sound basic education by court standards. Manning ruled the State of North Carolina was not meeting its constitutional obligation to all students and that it must provide every child with a competent educator; every school with a competent principal; and every school district with the resources necessary to support students, educators, and principals adequately.

The next article, entitled "Educational Finance Litigation in North Carolina: Distinguishing 'Leandro'," (2006) focuses on the argument that the aid distribution system in North Carolina was fiscally inadequate. This was the main factor drawing attention away from the fact that the system was not equal. The financing of public

education in North Carolina and the constitutional provisions for it have been under litigation for more than 130 years. The Leandro legislation clearly holds that all students are entitled to sound basic education. That education is supposed to prepare a student for the workforce at the end of his high school career and obtain meaningful employment. A student should also be prepared to attend a vocational/technical school and succeed academically, or be prepared to attend and succeed in a four- year college or university.

This article really does not offer anything different from the others besides chronicling other attempts to gain equity in educational finance within the state.

Richard Murnane and Randall Olsen (1990) point toward the question that the author is proposing is answered. In “The Effects of Salaries and Opportunity Costs on Length of Stay in Teaching,” Murnane and Olsen show that educators who are paid more stay longer in teaching. They also illustrate that educators with high opportunity costs, as measured by test scores and subject specialties, stay in teaching less than other educators do. The authors emphasize that salaries influence duration of career for educators with high-test scores less often than salaries influence educators with low-test scores. This research is based on a new longitudinal dataset providing information on the career histories of 13, 890 North Carolina educators.

This article is closer to what the author advocates for in his proposal. However, instead of educators, this study will concentrate on the newly acquired administrators in the five original Leandro districts. What brought them to work in those districts? Was it the promise of supplemental funds to increase their salaries?

Alternatively, was it the fact that they were interested in their current positions regardless of the pay?

The federal No Child Left Behind law mandates that every state must assign highly qualified teachers on an equal basis to students of color and low-income students. In the article “What Stands Between North Carolina Students and a Sound Basic Education?” this equity is not happening in North Carolina. Assessing the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction data as of 2004, the researchers determined that in any grade, a black student in North Carolina is more likely than a white student to be taught by a novice teacher. For example, a typical black 7th grader is 54% more likely to have a novice teacher in math than a white 7th grader, and is 38% more likely to have a novice teacher in English than a white student. Judge Manning, who presided over the Leandro litigation recently threatened to close 19 high schools because of low performance.

Many of the pupils attending Leandro district schools are born to minority parents, and many are entitled free or reduced price lunch. Weighed against the state average, the vast majority of these schools had smaller quantities of highly qualified educators, fewer educators with advanced degrees, and fewer fully licensed instructors teaching core academic classes. Highly qualified educators are critical for students to succeed; a good educator inspires students to do their best and works to ensure that all students are learning the subject matter. Numerous research studies show that high quality educators are necessary for student success. Educator quality has been shown to have noteworthy effects on reading and math accomplishment.

Highly qualified educators have good verbal skills, academic ability, knowledge and professional experience as well as enthusiasm, perseverance, and concern for students. Unfortunately, research on educator worth in North Carolina schools shows that not all students have access to high quality educators. A recent study on the distribution of experienced and novice teachers in North Carolina shows that high poverty schools have the greatest percentages of inexperienced teachers, and many of these inexperienced educators graduated from less competitive undergraduate institutions and have non-regular licenses, i.e., a lateral entry or other type of license. Additionally, high poverty schools are more likely to experience elevated teacher turnover rates and have a greater percentage of teachers with no previous teaching experience.

Highly competent school administrators are vital to school success; a great leader has an encouraging effect on any work setting. A good principal would influence school climate, staff morale, and student achievement. Competent principals foster an effective learning atmosphere by attracting and retaining high quality educators, reducing staff turnover and having high expectations for all staff and students. Leandro recognizes what research and practical experience have shown: motivated, experienced administrators are required if schools are to be successful.

Research examining the distribution of highly competent principals found results similar to the distribution of highly qualified educators: high poverty schools are least likely to have well qualified principals. Principals in high poverty schools have low leadership ratings, attended less competitive colleges, have the highest

turnover rates, and are most likely to be novice principals. If North Carolina is serious about improving the quality of education provided to our most disadvantaged students, policies and resources must assure that our neediest schools can attract and retain highly competent administrators.

According to Martha Waggoner (2009), Halifax County's public schools do such a bad job of educating students that they are committing "what Superior Court Judge Howard Manning termed "academic genocide." Judge Manning ordered that a hearing be held on the schools in the northeastern North Carolina County, making it clear that he thought the state should take over their management. "This is academic genocide, and it must be stopped," Manning wrote in a letter to the chairperson of the State Board of Education and the superintendent of the state Department of Public Instruction. "The state of North Carolina is responsible for the schools' sorry state, and it is time for the state and the Board of Education "to exercise direct command and control," he said.

Manning based his statements, in part, on the system's scores on end-of-grade reading tests. More than 71 percent of elementary school students are not proficient in reading, and more than 74 percent of middle-school students are not proficient, Manning wrote. "This is irrefutable evidence of a complete breakdown in academics" in the Halifax County schools, he wrote."

Manning manages a public school funding lawsuit known as the Leandro case, after one of the plaintiffs. He focused much of his attention on high school improvements since the state Supreme Court in 2004 largely upheld his ruling, which found the state is required to provide a "sound basic education" to all public

school students. The judge's order for a hearing is another outgrowth of the Leandro case, originally filed in 1994. Halifax was one of the five original school districts in the case. DPI spokesperson Vanessa Jeter declined comment Wednesday other than to say that DPI would attend the hearing. Keith Hoggard, a spokesperson for the Halifax County schools, told The Associated Press that the system would issue a statement. This public outcry by Judge Manning was followed up by the Superintendent of Halifax County leaving the school system months later.

In the article “Middleton Out: School Chief Resigns will go to Chicago,” reporter Della Batts of the *Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald* revealed that Halifax County Schools Superintendent Geraldine Middleton dropped a bombshell at the end of Monday night’s school board meeting — she quit. Becoming a casualty of Judge Manning’s comments months’ earlier claiming “Educational Genocide” taking place in the county. Board chair Debbie Hardy read Middleton’s announcement saying she wished to step down effective Sept. 18. She requested the district release her from her duties before the 90 days agreed upon in her contract. The board voted unanimously to release her early. Her resignation comes as the school district prepares to begin its first year of operation under the watchful eye of state and court officials concerned about the district’s financial and educational performance — all problems Middleton inherited when she took the superintendent’s job in July 2007.

Middleton has accepted a position as chief area officer with the Chicago Public School System. It is the third largest school district in the United States with 408,000 students in 666 schools. In a press release, Middleton said “Chief area

officer is the equivalent of being superintendent to 30 to 40 schools within that huge district.”

The Halifax County School system was in trouble when Middleton entered the picture in July 2007. Failing test scores for the past five years and a major financial crisis were brought to light shortly after she became superintendent. Middleton took on the crisis and implemented new academic standards. In school year 2008-2009, Middleton found herself before Judge Howard Manning. He declared Halifax County had denied children their constitutional rights by failing to provide them with a basic education.

Middleton spoke at the hearing and developed a working partnership, along with the school board, with the Department of Public Instruction. She implemented new strategies for administration, faculty and students. When to save money the school board shut down three schools, Brawley, Eastman, and McIver, Middleton had a plan she hoped would make the transition as easy as possible on the community. Test scores showed improvement this year, with some schools making expected growth targets.

After the announcement, Middleton addressed parents, educators, and board members at the meeting with a prepared statement:

Two years ago with a vision, a dream and mountains of faith, I accepted the job as superintendent of Halifax County Schools. In this capacity, I served the children and the community tirelessly. I was vigilant in my attempts to raise test scores, create positive learning environments, implement new programs and create the financial stability of the district. Many times I was faced with difficult decisions

and had to perform what seemed the impossible,” she continued, difficult decisions are not always popular; however, if they are made in the best interest of the children, they become challenges you cannot, should not and must not ignore.”

“I will remain committed to cost effectiveness, innovative programs geared to 21st century learning, research-based professional growth and development — all the while dedicated to helping children overcome obstacles and reaching higher levels of achievement. In order to grow, we will always have to ‘navigate the winds of change.’”

Middleton encouraged Halifax County students to strive to be excellent and to continue to grow in their education. “You are the future leaders. As you navigate the winds of change keep in mind if you are prepared intellectually, there is no limit on what you can be.”

She challenged parents to participate in their children’s education. “Underscored in this challenge is that you not just become active in times of crisis incited by politicians, but instead demonstrate responsible actions throughout your child’s school years,” she said. She implored educators to take advantage of the challenges they face and to fully embrace change “because it is incapable of being avoided.”

Finally, she broached the community. “I encourage you to embrace the necessary changes related to declining enrollment, budget cuts and low student achievement as an opportunity to use wisdom versus status quo, excellence versus mediocrity, strength and fortification versus what is politically expedient for someone else and reason versus inappropriate tactics.”

“I was one of the people who didn’t vote for you,” said Board member Faye Young after Middleton’s address. Young shared once she got to know Middleton and learned to appreciate her, “You had a vision, and it wasn’t hard to see that vision. My only regret is you will not be here to see that vision come to fruition.”

Summary

This chapter provided a look at the literature that was reviewed in this study. Local property taxes play a significant role in paying for education in our state. This means that some counties are better able to pay for education for their children than others are. Counties with high real estate values and widespread development raise more in property taxes than counties that don’t have a lot of real estate development or high real estate values. Judge Manning mandated changes to "remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services of competent, well-trained educators, good administrators and sufficient funding." How is that accomplished? How do Local Educational Agencies recruit and maintain these well-trained educators and good administrators? Moreover, if it is by using additional monies allocated by the Leandro legislation, is that enough to retain these “quality” personnel in these low wealth areas?

One recommendation that would assist this research and the adequacy of educational funding in the state of North Carolina is to regulate school funding more efficiently. Specifically addressing the need for a state driven formula that considers the smaller counties and how they will provide an education that is at least adequate to the standards of the counties within the state with the highest tax bases. The

current system that rewards large populations has driven the less densely populated areas to be unsuccessful when trying to compete in recruiting top-notch young educators from the premier colleges and universities within the state.

The disparity in the tax base contributed to years of insufficient funding and a definite support gap that could, in most situations, be translated into an achievement gap. This problem must be solved, and Leandro funding is just a stop gap measure at this point. The North Carolina Supreme Court's acknowledgement of a fundamentally flawed educational funding system really did nothing. The mandate to Judge Manning to find a solution to the issue was a distressing way to shift the responsibility to someone else to solve the problem. While Judge Manning has made some determinations as to what he thinks is needed to offset this situation, he is not an educator, and he cannot just pour some extra money on a couple of counties with lower tax bases and make this problem go away.

The problem of closing the achievement gap goes much farther than that. Funding is but one of the problems that compound the situation. The other issues Judge Manning identified, such as good educators and good administrators, are a bigger part of the problem. Where do you find these people? This state does not produce enough educators and administrators to offset this growing problem. An exhaustive answer to this question is needed. One small answer to this comprehensive question will not solve it. A detailed plan to assist Local Educational Agencies in attracting the type of individuals needed to make the state's educational system work more efficiently is long past due. Allocation of extra funds without mandate is useless to educators who have not a clue as to how to use them.

The budgetary literature in North Carolina does provide a good picture of the disparity in funding that led to the case, however. The chapter concludes by pondering questions concerning choice of employment. The additional Leandro funds that are now being supplied have different uses for each of the affected counties. Judge Manning gave each superintendent the autonomy to use the funds to solve each county's issues. Some of the counties use these funds to offset their ADM funds for students. Others use them for other funding, i.e. additional teaching positions, and others use them to boost recruitment by raising educators' salaries. It is difficult to determine which method is best, which one will show the quickest progress in the schools, but a complete lack of comprehensive action by the state superintendent will definitely lead to more of the status quo in the future.

Chapter three will explore the methods that will be used in this study. It will show how the use of the triangulation method will aid the novice reader in gaining perspective on this issue. Chapter three will review the mixed methods design of the study as well, its use of qualitative research techniques (focus group interviews), along with quantitative techniques (administrative surveys), and how they form a synergetic alliance. It will also show the appropriateness in the design of the research and how these aspects come together to form a fluid research product.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODS

Introduction

In the eighteen years since the Leandro school legislation was introduced in North Carolina, very little has changed in the ways states actually fund schools. Most states across the country still use the same dated procedures to handle our most precious commodity, our children. The more affluent citizens have solved the problem for themselves by abandoning the public schools and opting to pay for a better level of education for their children because they can afford to do so. The Leandro mandate sought to reduce educational inequities for children whose parents are not affluent and unable to remove them from low-performing schools in North Carolina.

This study contributes to our understanding of the public policy process and state educational policy by examining the politics of adequacy-based education in North Carolina. Specifically, this study will examine how the actions and interests have affected the evolution of North Carolina's school finance policy.

This chapter provides the rationale to support the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to pursue this study. If funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality educators and administrative personnel, referred to, since the last ruling, as Leandro monies) is instrumental in fact in keeping these employees within these school systems. Additionally, this study seeks to determine if supplemental pay in education is effective. Moreover, what are the outcomes of

supplemental pay initiatives? The use of interviews as a tool for data collection is supported by literature for several varying types of research. This chapter will describe the investigation using qualitative language with rationale for the proposed methods of data collection, data analysis, and possible issues of validity and reliability.

Explanation of the appropriateness of each approach (qualitative and quantitative)

This researcher is interested in conducting an in depth study in order to unearth the factors that influence North Carolina Leandro county administrators when making decisions. A case study approach is appropriate when the study's purpose is to provide an in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell, 2007). This study will provide a rich contextual look at the budgetary decision-making processes of Leandro administrators. Full descriptions of the host districts and state will be provided in order to contextualize the budgetary decision-making of Leandro administrators and the inadequacies they face considering the funding of a major metropolitan district.

Case study research may employ evidence that is quantitative, qualitative, or both (Eisenhardt, 2002). This study will use quantitative and qualitative evidence for analysis. Lacireno-Paquet and Holyoke (2007) assert that a qualitative analysis is best for exploring the politics of interests.

Since this study focuses on an explanatory query, it does not lend itself perfectly to being answered using survey techniques. While experimental techniques

are capable of answering explanatory questions, their use requires some degree of control over behavioral events. The researcher in this case, however, does not have any such control. For that reason, a case study design is the most appropriate for conducting this study. Merriam (1998) emphasized that the intent of case study research is not the outcome of a specific variable. Its purpose should be to gain an in-depth appreciation of a situation, with an interest in process, or, in “discovery rather than confirmation” (p. 19). Further, Yin (2003) noted that a benefit of case study design is that it is able to provide a holistic comprehensive picture of the case or cases. To that end, the purpose of this study is not to try to forecast what dynamics influence recently certified educators/administrators when making decisions concerning which County they should work in. Rather, the purpose of this study is to examine what influence supplemental pay in education has on the retention of effective school personnel. What is the implementation and outcomes of supplemental pay initiatives within the Leandro counties? The aforementioned questions focus on why they have influence, again discovery, rather than confirmation.

Research Questions

Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers reduce their entire study to one broad, overarching, central research question, and several specific subquestions. In heeding Creswell’s recommendation, this study seeks to answer one central research question and two subquestions. The subquestions chosen may be categorized as issue-oriented questions; ones that “take the phenomenon in the

central research question and break it down into subtopics for examination” (Creswell, 2007, p.109).

The study’s research questions are as follows:

- What factors influence newly certified educators/administrators when making decisions concerning which county they should work in?
- What influence does supplemental pay in education have on the retention of effective school personnel?
- What are the implementation and outcomes of supplemental pay initiatives within the Leandro counties?

Even with the research questions identified, however, Eisenhardt (2002) cautions that in qualitative research it is important to recognize that research questions may shift during the research. According to Eisenhardt, “at the extreme, some have converted theory-testing research into theory-building research by taking advantage of serendipitous findings. In these studies, the research focus emerged after the data collection had begun” (p. 11). Specified research questions therefore served as an essential starting point for this study. The researcher was not limited to answering only these questions. Indeed, the researcher was open to opportunities for theory building that arose during data collection and analysis.

Appropriateness of Design

The rationale to support the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to pursue the study of whether any funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality educators /administrative personnel (since the

last ruling i.e. Leandro monies) is instrumental in fact in keeping these employees within these school systems. This study employs a qualitative case study research design. Yin (2003) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Case studies are a preferred research strategy when the researcher seeks to answer ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 2003). Case studies may be used for various purposes, including providing description, testing theory, or generate theory (Eisenhardt, 2002). The purpose of the research is to provide a triangulation (a three technique approach or layered approach) to answering the research question. With this technique, the approaches used will be historical analysis, focus group or stakeholder interviews, and online surveys.

According to Jennifer Greene and others in *Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-Method Evaluation Designs*, the underlying principle for Triangulation is to seek convergence, corroboration, correspondence of results from the different methods (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989). The justification for its use is specified to augment the validity of constructs sources of variance attributable particularly to innate method bias but also to inquirer bias, bias of substantive theory, biases of inquiry context (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989).

The evaluation instruments were designed to give overlapping and cross checking [triangulation] assessments of the perceptions of those involved. (Peters, Marshall, and Shaw, 1986, p. 16) This logic requires that the

quantitative and qualitative methods be different from one another with respect to their inherent strengths and limitations/biases and that both method types be used to assess the same phenomenon. Methods that are biased in the same direction or that ask/answer different questions can undermine the triangulation logic and result in spurious inferences (Shotland and Mark, 1987). Relatedly, the methods need to be conceptualized, designed, and implemented within the same paradigmatic framework (Greene and McClintock, 1985; Kidder and Fine, 1987). Strong between-methods triangulation is also enhanced when the status of the different methods—that is, their relative weight and influence—is equal and when the quantitative and qualitative study components are implemented independently and simultaneously. Across mixed-method purposes, the recommended independent implementation of the different methods is unique to triangulation (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989).

The historical analysis will show the framework in which Leandro exists and give the reader an in-depth understanding of what the foundations of the case have been built on. The focus group interviews add a special caveat to the study. The interviews themselves will identify other people who have impacted Leandro. They will all be asked the same five to ten questions about the legislation and what it means to them and where it is headed (See APPENDIX F). The researcher has chosen multiple perspectives from distinct groups to draw wide-ranging analyses. They are Court judges, lawyer(s), ministers/civil Leaders, community members, principals, and Central Office administrators (at the state and Local levels). They were all given an interview consent form for their approval to participate (see

APPENDIX D). Of particular interest is whether these community members' responses/ideas about Leandro correlate with those of the school based administrators?

Quantitatively, the researcher will employ the use of online surveys disseminated from the LEAs' central offices to urge participation of the targeted group. These questions will determine if the administrators who are presently working or have worked during the time of the initial Leandro determination (2004) have a thorough grasp and understanding of the legislation and where it is heading. It will test the original Leandro counties along with an urban school district (Wake) to determine if the sentiments are the same or greatly different when dealing with Leandro type issues. What are the self-perceptions of the impact of Leandro monies as they target issues within the district?

In addition to this collection process, an online survey will be given to administrators/educators who fit the window of the study, which covers the years 2004 through 2009. Two versions of the same survey will be used in this process (see APPENDIX G and APPENDIX H).

These questions will be crucial to this study. The online survey is being used in this project to provide the respondents with a quick alternative to answer the needed questions. They were all given a survey consent form for their approval to participate, which was prefaced by a short paragraph from the central office (see APPENDIX M). These two documents combined formed the email consent process for the survey(s) (see APPENDIX E).

Frequently people use the words questionnaire and survey interchangeably when conducting research. However, to use surveys effectively, it is important to understand that a questionnaire is one element of a process that begins with defining objectives and ends with data analysis and reporting results (Dillman, 2000). Online research is still in its formative years. The online survey method has been advertised as the wave of the future, with advocates citing low cost, speedy response, and easy fielding as major benefits, while skeptics throw callous disapproval in relation to the low response rates and assert that samples do not adequately represent populations (Sue, 2007). These kinds of studies center on response patterns and survey design. The survey will be given online using a program/website called Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is a private American company that enables users to create their own free Web-based surveys. Survey Monkey also offers an enhanced paid product and premium services. More than 80% of Fortune 100 companies have used Survey Monkey. This site will be linked to the email sent to the administrators who fit the research window. The survey will be short (20-25 questions).

Dillman (2000) identified a set of design principles that can be applied to web-based questionnaires. These values were an extension of the prior work of Dillman, Tortora, and Bowker (1998). These design principles have been handled in the Survey Monkey tool. It has taken the design guesswork out of the survey. It is a preformatted program that allows the researcher to concentrate on the research instead of the design.

Accessibility will be the key to reducing coverage bias. The online survey must be available to everyone in the target population (Sue, 2007). This will afford the researcher the opportunity to analyze the awareness of the implications of Leandro, if any. Finally, information from teacher satisfaction surveys from the respective counties will also be used to answer any underlying questions related to the study.

The NC TWC Survey is an online survey of all public school educators in North Carolina about their perceptions of their school environments. The North Carolina Survey offers a unique opportunity to collect information about school environments from those whose views matter the most: working educators. The rationale of the survey is to corroborate sound educational policies and practices based on the views of teachers, principals, and other certificated educators in North Carolina's public schools. The respondents were asked for their perceptions on an assortment of concerns related to student achievement and teacher retention, including time, facilities and resources, community support and involvement, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership, professional development, instructional practices and support, and new teacher and principal support.

The outcomes of the survey provide local and district educators along with state policymakers a reference for guidance on what works well, and what could be working better, in North Carolina schools. The researcher requested the use of this database to assist in the study (see APPENDIX C).

Rather, the intent of this study is to provide a holistic picture of the development of North Carolina's Leandro funding and determine what is needed for the next step in Local Educational Administration (LEA) funding in underprivileged areas before the inadequacies of the several past decades leaves a void which cannot be recovered from. As such, a case study design, as defined by Creswell (2007), Eisenhardt (2002), Merriam (1998), and Yin (2003) is the most appropriate choice for this study.

Site Selection and Sample

North Carolina was chosen as the site for this study for two reasons. One, it addressed similar cases that other states have with funding elementary and secondary schools. The Leandro lawsuit, in which the state Supreme Court ruled that North Carolina has a constitutional obligation to fund education adequately in its poorer counties, has had sibling cases in 44 other states. That is because almost every state has a constitutional provision similar to North Carolina's, which promises a sound and basic education for all its residents.

Secondly, the reversal of the N.C. Supreme Court ruling, which sent the case back to Superior Court with instructions for the lower court to assess whether the State had met its constitutional obligation to provide an equal opportunity for a sound basic education. In September 1999, the trial began in Superior Court with Judge Howard Manning Jr. presiding. Judge Manning immediately began hearing evidence in the case. No other Judge had been given such wide-ranging consideration in making a determination in an educational funding case.

Participants in this study will be sampled purposefully from the counties that were cited in the original Leandro counties (Cumberland, Halifax, Hoke, Robeson, and Vance), and one North Carolina Local Educational Administration (LEA) of a metropolitan area (Wake). The total sample will include North Carolina administrators who respond to the survey. Purposeful sampling will be employed to ensure that varieties of administrators from different levels are included. Included in the sample will be elementary, middle and high schools; urban, suburban and rural schools; predominantly minority and predominantly white schools; low socio-economic status schools; gifted, special needs, and general education schools.

Data Collection

This study will employ semi-structured face-to-face interviews with North Carolina community members as a method of data collection. The researcher will conduct sixty- to ninety-minute interviews with focus group / stakeholders; a North Carolina Court judge, lawyer(s), ministers /civic leaders, community members, and Central Office administrators at the state and local levels. Interviews will be audio recorded using a digital recorder. Interviews will enable the researcher to collect descriptive data in the subject matter experts' own words, in order to gain insight into how LEA administrators and subject matter experts interpret school system and state budgetary decision-making process when it comes to schools (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). Using semi-structured interviews, the focus group will be asked questions from an interview guide, but also encouraged to talk in their areas of

expertise. This will enable the researcher to probe more deeply, “picking up on the topics and issues the respondent initiates” (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p.104).

In recent years there has been increasing attention given to the evaluation of survey questions from the cognitive and interactional perspectives. The basic idea is that before a question can be asked in a full-scale survey, testing should be done to find out if people can understand the questions, if they can perform the tasks that questions require, and if interviewers can and will read questions as worded (Fowler, 1995 p.104).

Fowler’s words provide a foundation upon which data collection for survey questions can be judged. No question, no matter how sophisticated it is, should be used if the respondents cannot determine what the question is truly asking them.

Analysis of school level budgets will be used as a secondary data collection method. This secondary method is employed in hopes that data collected during the interview lines up with what is found in school level budgets. The use of both document analysis and interviewing should balance out the limitations within either approach, thus leading us to a closer representation of the budgetary decision-making process.

An initial email soliciting participation in the study will be sent to potential participants. Due to the public nature of their positions, all of their email addresses are available and will be obtained using their respective school websites.

In addition to this collection process, an online survey will be given to administrators who fit the window of the study, the years 2004 through 2011. The

survey will be given online using a program called Survey Monkey. This site will be linked to the email sent to the administrators who fit the research window.

Sue (2007) says that data cleaning deals with data problems once they have already happened. Specific error prevention strategies must be implemented, such as writing clear questions, providing clear instructions for answering questions, program surveys to avoid as many problems as possible. Van den Broeck, Argeseanu Cunningham, Eeckles, and Herbst (2005) view data cleaning as a three-step method involving screening, diagnosing, and editing of supposed data idiosyncrasies.

Data Analysis

For both interviews and archival data, the researcher employed the constant comparative method of ongoing data analysis as described by Creswell (1997) and Merriam (1998). The researcher open-coded both interview transcripts and documents for emerging themes and patterns. Open coding, according to Creswell, involves the researcher examining the data for “salient categories of information” (p. 160). Creswell (2007) contends that “using the constant comparative approach, the researcher attempts to saturate the categories—to look for instances that represent the category and to continue looking (and interviewing)” until new information provides no further insight (p. 160). Finally, categories of data will be collapsed into a minimal number of themes. Collapsed themes in this study included school leadership, funding, facilities, or whatever else is determined to be recurring among the respondents. Creswell (2007) suggests that this will aid the researcher with

developing generalizations about the case in order to compare those generalizations with the relevant literature.

Interview transcripts will be analyzed with the assistance of Atlas Ti (Scientific Software Development, 2004), a qualitative data analysis software package. This software assisted the researcher with organizing and categorizing data, and facilitating the data's accessibility (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007).

Transcribed interviews will be analyzed with the assistance of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), Atlas Ti. This software will assist the researcher as an organizing and categorizing tool, and facilitate the data's accessibility (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007).

All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. Immediately following the interview, voice files will be downloaded to the researcher's desktop computer. The researcher will transcribe all interviews. Interview audio files will be erased from the digital recorder, the desktop computer, and the mini-cassette recorder following interview transcription.

An embedded analysis of the data, focusing specifically on administrators' perceived changes in school level decision-making concerning funding were conducted. Themes will be identified and analyzed by the researcher in order to better understand the complexity of the case (Creswell, 2007). Finally, the researcher will attempt to report the meaning of the case; meaning that comes from learning about the county level budgetary decision-making process of North Carolina Leandro county school level administrators.

Confirmability and Credibility

Qualitative research does not share the expectation with quantitative research that there will be consistency in the results of different researchers or of the same researcher across time (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998). The meaning of reliability to qualitative researchers centers more on “the fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study” (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003, p. 36). Creswell (2007) notes that the qualitative researcher seeks confirmability rather than objectivity in establishing the value of the data; and these are achieved through an auditing of the research process. To ensure that the reader is able to perform such an audit, all of this study’s methods of data analysis will be made explicit in this document.

Eisner (1991) suggested that instead of using the term validity, which has connotations of quantitative research, qualitative researchers should strive to achieve credibility. According to Eisner (1991), “we seek a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility that allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations, and conclusions” (p. 110). Both Eisner (1991) and Merriam (1998) assert that this type of validity may be achieved by using multiple sources of data. This study will use two sources of data: interviews primarily and documents secondarily. Additionally, Eisner (1991) commented on the importance of criticism to achieving credibility. To that end, the data and analysis of this study were subject to the criticism of the members of this dissertation advisory committee.

While generalizability is not a primary goal of much qualitative research, Merriam (2002) contends that when researchers provide thick, rich descriptions of

settings and cases, the reader is put in a position to determine whether cases under study are similar to their own. The researcher endeavored to provide such a case description in this study.

The reasoning for the opinion that triangulation enhances confirmation is that it promotes the elimination of bias. Both qualitative and quantitative research is subject to bias. Because preconception can occur in many different ways, the use of both methods enhances researchers' self-assurance that the biases have been recognized. Social desirability bias, for example, occurs in both qualitative and quantitative research. Studies of response accuracy imply the inclination for respondents to misrepresent responses in ways that will make them look better or will avoid making them look bad (Fowler, p. 28). In face-to-face interviews, a researcher may inadvertently express a particular attitude to a participant through tone, posture, or facial expression. At the same time, the researchers are able to identify questions that make people uncomfortable or evasive. The researchers' presence does not influence the answers in a pencil-and-paper questionnaire, but determining whether the answers were authentic is sometimes difficult (Risjord, Dunbar, and Moloney, 2002).

Quantitative and qualitative methods are accordingly subject to the same bias in harmonizing ways. When the quantitative and qualitative results fluctuate, the results of one can be used to improve the methods of the other. If the results unite or come together, then researchers can be reassured that social desirability bias is not present. Blending theorists conclude that, as this example shows, triangulation increases confidence in results to a higher degree than occurs with the use of either

method alone (Risjord, Dunbar, and Moloney, 2002).

Subjectivity Statement

The researcher, Voris Weldon McBurnette, is a forty-two year-old African American male. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1969. He spent his formative years in that area. He grew up in a working class, two-parent home with one older and one younger sibling. He attended four predominantly African-American schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade. He graduated from Overbrook High School in Philadelphia in 1987.

The researcher moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to attend college, accepting admission to Shaw University. After an undergraduate transfer, the researcher received his B.A. in History from Saint Augustine's College in Raleigh North Carolina in 1991. The researcher returned to the Philadelphia area to attend the oldest historically African-American University in the country, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, where he earned M.Ed. and M.S. degrees. While earning those degrees, he taught elementary school social studies classes at a variety of schools within the Philadelphia Public School System. The researcher returned to Raleigh after graduate school, where he enrolled in a M.A. degree program at North Carolina State University. At the same time, he began teaching middle school in a rural area of Johnston County, North Carolina.

After being an educator in Johnston County for two years, the researcher was chosen to become an administrator within that school system. In 1996, he began

working at the local high school. The researcher has served for twelve years as an administrator in the Johnston and Wake County School systems.

In addition to his career as an educator, Mr. McBurnette also has a parallel career as an officer in the military. He serves the country as a member of the United States Army Reserve. He is currently a field grade officer (Lieutenant Colonel) in the Army Reserves. He has been deployed to Iraq for a year, from June, 2006 to June, 2007, as a Military Advisor to the Iraqi Army. His ten-man team taught US Army military decision-making to the Iraqis to make them a better, more cohesive Army. He has also been deployed to Saudi Arabia for a year, from August, 2010 to August, 2011 as a military advisor to the Ministry of the Interior.

He is a graduate of the Infantry Basic, Advanced, Combined Arms Exercise (CAX) Constructive Credit, Manpower and Force Management, Advanced Force Management, and the Intermediate Level Education Courses. He has also completed the U.S. Army Airborne and Ranger schools, respectively.

Lieutenant Colonel McBurnette has been a Rifle Platoon Leader, Mortar Platoon Leader, Training Officer, Executive Officer, Company Commander, Battalion Assistant Operations Officer, Battalion Logistics Officer, Brigade Personnel Officer, Brigade Assistant Operations Officer, and Brigade Operations Officer/ HSC Advisor. He now serves the 108th Training Command as the Chief of the Force Structure Division.

During his military career, which spans more than 20 years, Lieutenant Colonel McBurnette has received the following awards for his leadership: the Meritorious Service Medal (4), Army Commendation Medal (4), Army Achievement

Medal (3), Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (5), National Defense Service Medal (2), Armed Forces Reserve Medal W/ M Device, Army Service Ribbon, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Overseas Service ribbon, Reserve Overseas Component Training Ribbon, Combat Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, and a Parachutist Badge.

Lieutenant Colonel McBurnette is currently a Battalion Commander in the United States Army Reserve. He is also actively pursuing an Ed. D. in Education Leadership at North Carolina State University and has aspirations to become either a University or Local Educational Administration (LEA) administrator.

Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure the reliability of the study's findings, the researcher will use multiple sources of information and multiple methods of analysis. Data will be obtained through interviews, online surveys, and document sources. Additionally, data will be analyzed using computer-assisted analysis for interview transcripts and analyzed manually for document analysis. This triangulation of sources and methods should ensure reliable results.

The methods used to answer the specified research questions, interviews, and document analysis, are in line with methods used by scholars who study school-based decision-making. Additionally, there is no substitute for actually talking with administrators and subject matter experts when the researcher's goal is to understand how they make decisions.

The researcher assures the reader that the results of this analysis will be forged through careful data analysis. In text excerpts from interviews, collective online survey data, and document analysis will be provided to empower the reader to draw conclusions as well (Creswell, 2007).

Why use triangulation? All research methods have their advantages and disadvantages. The problem comes when a researcher relies on just one method. Each of these techniques can be incredibly useful for giving insight into a particular aspect of the research; however, relying solely on one would not be prudent.

Triangulation is an attempt to plot out, or give details more fully, explaining richness and intricacy of human behavior by examining it from more than one viewpoint (Cohen and Manion, 2000). Triangulation is excellent for minimizing bias, specifically, the problem with relying on just one method to determine your outcome. Combining different techniques that balance each other, including quantitative vs. qualitative, individual vs. group, face-to-face vs. remote, etc., is innermost to the idea of triangulation (Kennedy, 2009).

Role of the Researcher

This study is conducted from a realist epistemological position. Realism contends that “structures creating the world cannot always be directly observed, and when and if they are observable, their genesis is not always clear; thus we also need our creative minds to clarify their existence and then to identify explanatory mechanisms” (Grbich, 2007, p.6). Within the context of this study, a realist stance assumes that our data collection methods are only an attempt to directly observe the

decision-making processes of school personnel as they decide in which school system they will work. The role of the researcher here is to collect the data and present the data to the reader in such a manner that both the researcher and novice reader might be able to draw conclusions and identify an explanation.

The researcher also understands that the ways interviewers affect the reporting of potentially sensitive information has been a matter of some scrutiny. Interviewers can motivate respondents, reassuring them that they are protected, establishing empathy, and by this means improve the likelihood that respondents will respond to questions accurately. On the other hand, presenting oneself through one's responses could intensify the push to distort answers in a positive way (Fowler, 1995, 32).

Fowler noted four general strategies for designing questions to reduce response distortion:

1. Steps can be taken to increase the respondent's sense that a question is appropriate and necessary in order to achieve the research objectives.
2. Steps can be taken to reduce the extent to which respondents feel that answers will be used to put them in a negative light, or a light that is inappropriate or inaccurate.
3. The level of detail with which respondents are asked to answer can be adjusted to affect how respondents feel about giving information.

4. Respondents can be asked to perform a task by which their answers are given in a code that neither the researcher nor the interviewer can directly decipher. (Fowler, 1995, p33.)

In knowing this, the interviewer will take precautions to insure objectivity from the respondent.

Ethical Issues (IRB)

The researcher does not foresee any direct or indirect harm to any party because of conducting this study. The participants in this study will be volunteers. The highest ethical standards were maintained by the researcher in data collection, analysis, and reporting (see APPENDIX J). Usually IRB issues center around the questioning of minors when it comes to the interviewing process for a study. This study will not focus on minors (students) at any point of the project. They will not be interviewed nor will they be asked to complete any surveys in the scope of this venture. This should keep the researcher from encountering any ethical issues as it pertains to them.

Before beginning the collection of data, the researcher obtained the written approval of the North Carolina State University Institutional Review Board (see APPENDIX A). In addition to NCSU's process the comparison county also had stringent research procedures that had to be followed. The researcher also had to gain approval from that county as well, which proved to be at least as tough as

NCSU's process (see APPENDIX K). No direct or indirect harm came to any participant as a result of conducting this study.

The findings of the study are written in aggregate terms and supplemented with individual responses. Participants are not identifiable by their responses. Random identifiers were used to provide confidentiality of participant responses, and no identifying information (e.g. age, race) was used in describing individual responses.

Additionally, the researcher attended the university's Human Subject Ethics Training. This training is a comprehensive ethics training program for researchers conducting research with human subjects. The researcher in data collection, analysis, and reporting of this study maintained the highest ethical standards.

Limitations of the Study

There are several potential limitations to this study. First, not all North Carolina administrators who fit into the targeted category of this study will be interviewed. Purposeful sampling will allow the researcher to choose administrators and others who are representative of most Leandro school systems in North Carolina. Out of the data collection and analysis of this study, we are able to make generalizations that might be true for all North Carolina's Leandro funded schools.

While interviews are an integral component of case study research in general, and of this study in particular, there are weaknesses associated with them. There is inevitably a certain amount of bias based on the wording of questions. The

researcher attempted to overcome this limitation to the greatest extent possible by soliciting the feedback of the dissertation committee on the interview protocol. Also, whenever interviews are conducted, there is always the possibility that informants will not tell the whole truth. Yin (2003) refers to this weakness as reflexivity, where the informant gives the interviewer what he or she believes the interviewer wants to hear. The researcher attempted to overcome this limitation by seeking corroboratory and contrary evidence of what informants provide in interviews.

The use of archival records also presents several limitations. Issues of access may prevent the researcher from obtaining records or documents that may be pertinent to the study. The researcher attempted to overcome this limitation by asking informants to assist with access to relevant materials. However, to the extent that certain documents were not obtained, there exists a certain degree of bias in documents. Likewise, documents in and of themselves are subject to varying degrees of bias from their author.

In addition, the researcher acknowledges his own bias. The researcher worked for 3.5 years as a traditional public school educator, and has 12 years of administrative experience. The researcher believes that by using interviews, questionnaires, and documented resources, the limitations of each method are offset by the strengths of the combined methods.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed look at the methods that were employed in this study. This qualitative aspect used semi-structured, face-to-face interviews as

the primary data collection method, and document analysis as a secondary method. The quantitative aspect used a survey /questionnaire to gain insight on the administrators who comprise the other methodology. It explained the importance of triangulation as a method as well. The appropriateness of both the study and the methods was included, as well as a description of data analysis procedures. The chapter concluded with a discussion of ethical issues and potential limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Introduction

This chapter, while brief, will give a unique perspective of what makes this recruitment of highly qualified and effective personnel so difficult in the Leandro counties. The more the reader understands about the economic disadvantages and embodies this factor into the study, the more the reader can begin to absorb the true plight of the Leandro county inhabitants and what they face in their struggle to educate their school aged children.

This aspect of the triangulation is to assist the reader in recognizing this is one of the most relevant issues to the recruitment and retention of personnel. How much emphasis has the new recruit put into research or has gone into consideration of where they are going to relocate themselves and their families to perform this employment. What quality of life factors are their families going to experience moving to these new areas? If indeed they are from another region of North Carolina or another state entirely, is this new place adequate to the standard of living to which they are already accustomed?

The chapter mainly encompasses data from the last U.S. Census, taken in 2010. It begins with a short North Carolina historical background (no more than key dates), and then proceeds to the demographic backgrounds of the five Leandro counties and the comparison county for the purposes of this study. This information give the reader key insight for the upcoming chapter, data analysis.

North Carolina Background

North Carolina was part of the original territory of the United States. Both North Carolina and South Carolina were included in the charter that established Carolina in 1663. The two areas separated in 1712, a separation that was finalized when the Carolina Colony was dissolved in 1729, with generally the same shared boundary as the present states. However, they did not settle on a final boundary until 1813. North Carolina ratified the U.S. Constitution on November 21, 1789; it was the 12th of the original 13 states to join the Union. North Carolina ceded its territory westward to the Mississippi River, comprising present-day Tennessee, to the United States in 1790, to assume generally the same boundary as the present state (U.S. Census, 2012).

County Background(s)

To understand the overall situation with the recruitment and retention of quality personnel in each of the low wealth districts, the basic census information from the 2010 census is supplied as background. While these counties are mostly rural in nature, their demographics are an integral variable in school funding in North Carolina as it is set up today. The information is based on demographics but it also includes a brief synopsis of the county's founding and geographic information with a figure to display where the county is located within the state. With the information on the low wealth counties given, the report would be incomplete without the reader being apprised of the comparison county's demographics as well.

Cumberland County, North Carolina

Cumberland County was formed in 1754 from Bladen County. It was named for Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721-1765), captain-general of the British army and victorious commander at the Battle of Culloden.

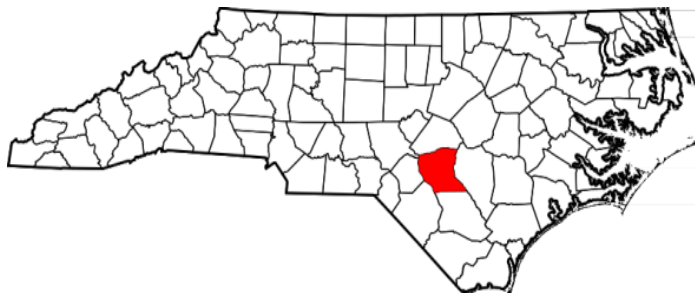


Figure 1 Cumberland County location within the state of North Carolina

In 1771, parts of Cumberland County, Johnston County, and Orange County were combined to form Wake County. In July 1784, the western part of Cumberland County became Moore County; the eastern part became Fayette County in honor of the Marquis de la Fayette, but the name Cumberland County was restored three months later. In 1855 the northern part of Cumberland County became Harnett. Finally, in 1911 parts of Cumberland County and Robeson County were combined to form Hoke County.

Geography

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 658 square miles (1,704.2 km²), of which 653 square miles (1,691.3 km²) is land and 6 square miles (15.5 km²) (0.87%) is water.

Townships

The county is divided into eleven townships: Beaver Dam, Black River, Carvers Creek, Cedar Creek, Cross Creek, Eastover, Gray's Creek, Manchester, Pearce's Mill, Rockfish, and Seventy-First.

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 319,431 people, 117,311 households residing in the county. The racial makeup of the county was 56.1% White, 38.5% Black or African American, 8.9% Hispanic or Latino 3.3% Native American, 4.4 % from some other race other races, and 4.4% are bi-racial.

There were 117, 311 households out of which 39.40% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 52.90% were married couples living together, 15.50% had a female householder with no husband present, and 27.70% were non-families. 22.40% of all households were made up of individuals and 5.90% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.65 and the average family size was 3.11.

In the county, the population was spread out with 27.90% under the age of 18, 13.70% from 18 to 24, 32.90% from 25 to 44, 17.80% from 45 to 64, and 7.70%

who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 30 years. For every 100 females there were 102.30 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 101.90 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$43,834, and the median income for a family was \$50,910. Males had a median income of \$38,932 versus \$30,881 for females.

Hoke County, North Carolina

Hoke County is part of the Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Its county seat is Raeford. The county was formed in 1911 from parts of Cumberland County and Robeson County. It was named for Robert F. Hoke, a Confederate general in the American Civil War.

Geography

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 392 square miles (1,016 km²), of which, 391 square miles (1,013 km²) of it is land and 1 square miles (3 km²) of it (0.29%) is water.

Townships

The county is divided into eight townships: Allendale, Antioch, Blue Springs, Fort Bragg Military Reservation, McLauchlin, Raeford, Quewhiffle, and Stonewall.



Figure 2 Hoke County location within the state of North Carolina

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 46,952 people, 14,232 households, residing in the county. The racial makeup of the county was 45.30% White, 33.50% Black or African American, 9.60% Native American, 1.00% Asian, 0.20% Pacific Islander, and 4.50% from two or more races. 12.40% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

By 2010, 40.80% of the population was non-Hispanic whites. 10.1% of the population was Native American; 36.3% of the population was African-American; 9.8% of the population was Latino; 1.8% of the population reported more than one race (this category excluded Latinos); and 1.0% of the population was Asian.

Between 2006 and 2010 there were 14,232 households, of which 30.20% had children under the age of 18 living with them; 52.70% were married couples living together, 18.20% had female householders with no husband present; and 23.10% were non-families. Of all the households, 19.00% were made up of individuals and 5.80% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.86, and the average family size was 3.22.

In the county, the population was spread out, with 29.80% under the age of 18, 10.70% from 18 to 24, 34.10% from 25 to 44, 17.60% from 45 to 64, and 7.70% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 30 years. For every 100 females, there were 102.00 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 101.30 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$33,230, and the median income for a family was \$36,110. Males had a median income of \$27,925 versus \$21,184 for females. The per capita for the county was \$13,635. About 14.40% of families and 17.70% of the population were below the poverty line, including 22.40% of those under age 18 and 22.00% of that age 65 or over.

Halifax County, North Carolina

Halifax County was formed in 1758 from Edgecombe County. It was named for George Montague-Dunk, 2nd Earl of Halifax, and President of the Board of Trade from 1748 to 1761. In 1774 the southeastern part of Halifax County was combined with part of Tyrrell County to form Martin County.

Geography

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 731 square miles (1,894 km²), of which 725 square miles (1,879 km²) is land and 6 square miles (16 km²) of it (0.82%) is water.



Figure 3 Halifax County location within the state of North Carolina

Townships

The county is divided into twelve townships: Brinkleyville, Butterwood, Conoconnara, Enfield, Faucett, Halifax, Littleton, Palmyra, Roanoke Rapids, Roseneath, Scotland Neck, and Weldon.

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 54,691 people, and 21,590 households in the county. The racial makeup of the county was 53.20% Black or African American, 40.0% White, 3.8% Native American, 0.70% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 0.47% from other races, and 0.71% from two or more races. 2.1% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 21,590 households, of which 31.20% had children under the age of 18 living with them; 44.10% were married couples living together, 20.40% had female householders with no husband present; and 30.80% were non-families. 27.70% of all households were made up of individuals, and 12.00% had someone

living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.51 and the average family size was 3.06.

In the county, the population was spread out with 26.20% under the age of 18, 8.00% from 18 to 24, 27.70% from 25 to 44, 23.20% from 45 to 64, and 14.90% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 37 years. For every 100 females, there were 90.70 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 86.00 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$30,439, and the median income for a family was \$40,569. Males had a median income of \$34,088 versus \$27,215 for females

Robeson County, North Carolina

Robeson County was formed in 1787 from part of Bladen County. It was named in honor of Col. Thomas Robeson of Tar Heel, North Carolina, who was a hero of the Revolutionary War. In 1781, Robeson and 70 Patriots defeated an army of 400 Loyalists at the Battle of Elizabethtown.



Figure 4 Robeson County location within the state of North Carolina

Geography

Robeson County is bounded by the state of South Carolina, and the North Carolina counties of Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland, Hoke, and Scotland. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 951 square miles (2,463 km²), making it the largest in North Carolina. 949 square miles (2,457 km²) of it is land and 2 square miles (6 km²) of it (0.23%) is water. Thus, the topography is mostly level to undulating coastal plain, largely made up of sandhills and coastal dunes with elevations above mean sea level that vary from 60 feet in the extreme southeastern portion of the county to 250 feet in the north, to the west of Parkton, North Carolina. Moreover, numerous swamps that generally flow in a northwest to southeast course characterize the area and eventually drain into the Lumber River. The highest density of swamps is in that part of the county that is most populated by the Lumbee Indian Tribe, recognized by the state of North Carolina.

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 134,168 people, 44,504 households, residing in the county. As of 2010, the racial makeup of the county was:

- 38.04% Native American
- 29.00% White
- 24.3% Black or African-American
- 8.1% Hispanic or Latino of any race
- 0.70% Asian

- 0.06% Pacific Islander
- 2.26% from other races
- 1.41% from two or more races

The Lumbee Indian Tribe of North Carolina comprises more than one-half the state of North Carolina's indigenous population of 84,000. With a population of 58,443, reflecting a 34.5% increase from the 1980 population of 43,465 members, the Lumbee reside primarily in Robeson, Hoke, Cumberland, and Scotland counties. In Robeson County, there are 46,869 Lumbee out of a total county population of 123,339. The Lumbee make up 38.02%, comprising the largest racial/ethnic group in the county.

The Lumbee are the largest tribal nation east of the Mississippi River, and the ninth largest tribal nation in the United States. They are the largest non-reservation tribe of Native Americans in the United States. Several majority-Lumbee communities are located within Robeson County.

There were 44,504 households, of which 37.00% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 46.60% were married couples living together, 20.60% had a female householder with no husband present, and 26.70% were non-families. 22.70% of all households were made up of individuals and 8.30% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.75 and the average family size was 3.20.

In the county, the population was spread out with 29.00% under the age of 18, 10.60% from 18 to 24, 29.30% from 25 to 44, 21.10% from 45 to 64, and 10.00%

who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 32 years. For every 100 females, there were 94.70 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 91.20 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$29,667, and the median income for a family was \$34,788. Males had a median income of \$32,075 versus \$25,553 for females. It is ranked as North Carolina's poorest county despite the presence of Interstate 95 routing through the county.

Vance County, North Carolina

Vance County was formed in 1881 from parts of Franklin County, Granville County, and Warren County. According to the 1955 book, *Zeb's Black Baby*, by Samuel Thomas Peace Sr.,

The formation of Vance County was accomplished largely as a political expediency. It was in 1881 when Blacks in large numbers were voting solidly Republican. Granville and Franklin Counties were nip and tuck, Democratic or Republican. From the Democratic standpoint, Warren County was hopelessly Republican. But by taking from Granville, Franklin and Warren, those sections that were heavily Republican and out of these sections forming the new county of Vance, the Democratic Party could lose Vance to the Republicans and save Granville and Franklin for the Democrats [U.S.] Senator [Zebulon Baird] Vance was a Democrat. He took kindly to this move and thanked the [North Carolina] Legislature for honoring

him with naming the new county after him. At the same time Vance showed his humor by always referring to Vance County as “Zeb's Black Baby.” In the 1890 Census, Vance County was more than 63 percent African American.

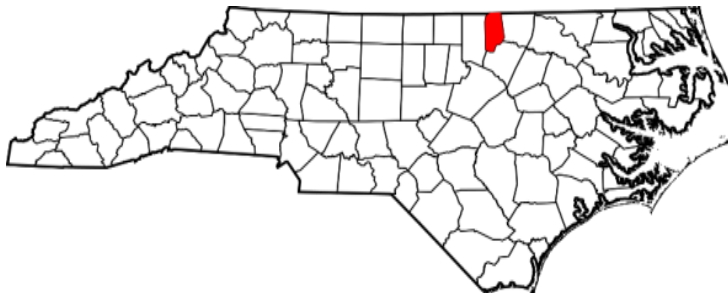


Figure 5 Vance County location within the state of North Carolina

Geography

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 270 square miles (699 km²), of which, 254 square miles (657 km²) of it is land and 16 square miles (42 km²) of it (6.04%) is water.

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 45,422 people, 16,473 households residing in the county. The racial makeup of the county was 44.2% White, 49.9% Black or African American, 0.30% Native American, 0.4% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 2.03% from other races, and 0.84% from two or more races. 6.7% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 16,473 households, of which 33.50% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 47.00% were married couples living together, 20.40% had a

female householder with no husband present, and 28.10% were non-families. 24.20% of all households were made up of individuals and 9.90% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.60 and the average family size was 3.06.

The county had the highest teen pregnancy rate in the state for the year 2005 as reported by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina. The rate was 110.4 per 1000 teens, significantly above the state average of 61.7 per 1000 teens.

In the county the population was spread out with 27.10% under the age of 18, 8.90% from 18 to 24, 28.80% from 25 to 44, 22.60% from 45 to 64, and 12.60% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females, there were 89.70 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 84.30 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$34,025 and the median income for a family was \$41,025. Males had a median income of \$34,126 versus \$27,565 for females.

Comparison County: Wake County, North Carolina

Wake County is a county located in the U.S. state of North Carolina. Its county seat is Raleigh, which is also the state capital. Wake County is part of the Research Triangle metropolitan region, which encompasses the cities of Raleigh, Durham, Cary and Chapel Hill and their surrounding suburban areas. The regional name originated after the 1959 creation of the Research Triangle Park,

located midway between Raleigh and Durham. The Research Triangle region encompasses the U.S. Census Bureau's Combined Statistical Area (CSA) of Raleigh-Durham-Cary.

Geography

Wake County is the 9th fastest growing county in the United States, with the Town of Cary and the City of Raleigh being the 8th and 15th fastest growing cities, respectively.



Figure 6 Wake County location within the state of North Carolina

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 857 square miles (2,220 km²), of which 832 square miles (2,155 km²) is land and 25 square miles (66 km²) of it (2.95%) is water.

Wake County is located in the northeast central region of North Carolina, where the North American Piedmont and Atlantic Coastal Plain regions meet. This area is known as the "fall line" because it marks the elevation inland at which waterfalls begin to appear in creeks and rivers. As a result, most of Wake County

features gently rolling hills that slope eastward toward the state's flat coastal plain. Its central Piedmont location situates the county about three hours west of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina, by car and four hours east of the Great Smoky Mountains of the Appalachian range.

Townships

The county is divided into twenty townships: Barton's Creek, Buckhorn, Cary, Cedar Fork, Holly Springs, House Creek, Leesville, Little River, Marks Creek, Meredith, Creek, Neuse, New Light, Panther Branch, Raleigh, St. Mary's, St. Matthew's, Swift Creek, Wake Forest, and White Oak.

Demographics

As of the census of 2010, there were 900,993 people, 325,486 households residing in the county. The racial makeup of the county was 66.3% White, 20.7% Black or African American, 0.5% Native American, 5.4% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 2.48% from other races, and 1.64% from two or more races. 9.8% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

There were 325,486 households, of which 34.00% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 52.50% were married couples living together, 9.80% had a female householder with no husband present, and 34.40% were non-families. 25.70% of all households were made up of individuals and 5.10% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.51 and the average family size was 3.06.

In the county the population was spread out with 25.10% under the age of 18, 10.70% from 18 to 24, 36.50% from 25 to 44, 20.40% from 45 to 64, and 7.40% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 33 years. For every 100 females, there were 98.40 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 96.50 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$63,770, and the median income for a family was \$81,461. Males had a median income of \$54,928 versus \$41,846 for females.

This purpose of this chapter was to give the reader a snapshot of each county's nuances and operations as of 2010. It showed the disparities in wages, which can directly translate into tax base inequities. These differences have, over the past several decades, led to the widening socio-economic gap and a chasm in the quality of education in certain counties that led to the initial Leandro lawsuit.

This information gives the reader better insight into the challenges of local funding presented against a well-funded, up and coming urban area such as Wake County. While the previous formula provided equal funding through the average daily membership formula, Leandro funds supplement that formula to add additional state infused funds to further assist these five counties to reach their goals of providing a sound basic education to its students.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter will utilize the following format for answering the research questions the study poses. Two methods were employed in this study. First, the qualitative aspect of the study is shown by focus group interviews, then qualitative aspects of the study are shown by focus group interviews. These interviews center on using expert experiences and opinions to give a rich, colorful perspective from several different points of view as they pertain to the research questions, as well as multiple perspectives from distinct groups to draw wide-ranging analysis. They are a Court judge, lawyer(s), ministers / civic leaders, community members, principals, and Central Office administrators at the state and local levels. Of particular interest is whether these community members' responses/ideas about Leandro correlate with the school based administrators online survey answers?

Secondly, the quantitative aspect of the study includes an administrative questionnaire of the initial five low wealth counties with Wake serving as a comparison county. This quantitative tool will attempt to give a view of how the low wealth districts administrators view certain factors associated with Leandro and what, if any correlation does that sentiment share with the well – funded largest district in the state, Wake County.

Qualitative

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews are based on a core of eight questions asked of the participants. Using semi-structured interviews, the focus group was asked questions from an interview guide (see Appendices), and also encouraged to talk in their areas of expertise. This enabled the researcher to probe more deeply, “picking up on the topics and issues the respondent initiates” (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p.104). These interviews were conducted between October and December of 2011.

Question 1: In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration?

The focus group gave their opinions on whether educators or administrators who are considering employment in their district regard supplemental pay incentives as a major motivation? Five out of the nine respondents thought that supplemental pay did have some influence on incoming educators and administrators. While not unanimous, the insight gained from answers to this question is best characterized by this quote:

I think in my opinion, that it makes a difference to a lot of people as to where they go, that's why [a] more wealthy school system in the bigger city has a higher teacher supplement. So, any data we have [for] educators from Franklin County, Vance County who come to Wake county to work simply because the supplement is that much higher in Wake than it is in their

counties. It's the money that makes the difference. And there are people who tell you that the money doesn't make the difference. I don't think it makes a difference in the long run with the teacher, but with all things being equal, they're going to go just like you would go and anybody else would they're going go they're going to migrate to the school to the system is going to be that's going to have more money. Because they're going to have a better equipped classrooms, they're going to have a better resources, and they're going to have a better salary scale than they are for example when you go to Hoke or something and they have a \$200 or \$300 a year supplement versus a \$5000 a year supplement. All things being equal, people are willing to drive on average 60 miles 70 miles a day to pick up the extra money and teaching at a school that maybe has more resources than the schools in another county. Be all and end all for good teacher, no. But, considering where you go, why does Wake, are they able to attract the educators that they have? The people are going to go there because they're going to know they're going to have physical plant (facilities) that probably they're going to have more money and they're also going to be paid more. (Peggy H., 2011)

Responses from this elite/focus group suggest the topic of pay is pretty high on the list of major considerations when they are just entering the profession of teaching or taking an administrative position. According to this group, being treated as though their work is important and valuable, and that they are doing revered and most important work is also high on the list of major considerations for educators.

After careful consideration by the North Carolina legal system, it has been found that the inequities that exist in the Leandro counties cannot continue in this state legally, because its own law says every child is entitled to a sound basic education, as affirmed in the case of Hoke County Board of Education v. State (2004). It does not matter where the students attend school, it doesn't matter what their race is, the students should have the same opportunities. Resources facilitate the leveling of the playing field and make that possible.

Conversely, the work environment may be more important to educators than the location of the workplace or the salary considerations. Administrators may be frustrated by their workplaces sometimes. When the board leadership and the district leadership are not aligned with the DPI assigned turnaround leadership, it can make for a hard place to work and thrive. Of course, not all locations are difficult, and not all administrators feel unsupported. In some instances school boards view themselves as employment agencies, and get involved in who is hired. Administrators in bigger districts, at an intra-district level, make decisions by school. In some of the more rural districts, decisions are made at the inter-district level. Such situations must be considered when low wealth districts are clamoring to find highly qualified personnel. The severity of the situation should become evident.

So in ##### County, for example, schools don't have any teacher salary supplement. The ##### schools and #####schools both offer a salary supplement. What you see when you look at the range of measures of teacher quality, and again those vary, the schools that have the supplements consistently do a better job of recruitment and retention. In the bigger district

for what we've seen where there are individual schools that have because of student assignment patterns either never desegregated or resegregated so we have individual schools with hard concentration of lower performing students or of free and reduced lunch students, higher concentrations of E.S.L.—English as a Second language learners.” After a while of working in these situations and feeling the futility, administrators seek to leave those schools and the districts have to put more resources into those individual schools to recruit and retain educators even among other schools in the same district. So in Wake County for example. Wake County just opened a brand new school this year. So they opened a brand new school, and the school by the student assignment model is going to have a very low proficiency rate and high concentration of... racially and socio-economically isolated. And they offered an incentive assignment bonus effectively to get a principal to take that school... to get a principal within the district. So... I do think those supplements clearly make a difference.” (Amy R., 2011)

The best dissenting opinion is best expressed by Hubert H.:

I don't think salary that's a bloody question. I don't think salary has a damn thing to do with somebody who really wants to teach. If they want salary, they're in the wrong profession. So let's just cut through the— Everybody gets paid; North Carolina people don't realize this. If you got whatever you are, you're going to get paid the same thing. You got a matter's... you'll get paid at a certain level. You got a doctorate in education...

you're going to get paid that way. The only difference in your pay between teaching in Halifax and teaching in Wake is going to be your local supplement. That's your only difference. People don't understand that. If you've got the children, the way the system works... if you got the ADM in the school—the average daily membership, you're going to be funded, salary money is going to be funded by the State. State funds that money, and you'll be paid according to the State rate. It don't say, oh the salary. People don't become classroom educators because you're going to make 26,000 dollars a year. They become classroom educators 'cause they really want to do something... for the most part. And so, that's not the money that drives them. But then when you get passed the fact that everybody's going to get the same thing based on tenure and based on degree and maybe you're in a system where they're going to pay more like Guilford County is going to pay more if somebody teach math in a hard to teach school, but other than those pockets with people are beginning to experiment with how do we put qualified educators who want to teach math and science in a hard to teach school... we're going to have to pay them more. That's not what drives the educators. I disagree that money is what drives somebody. You're not going to teach because you're in it for the money. You make more money as a plumber or HVAC technician than you can as a teacher, classroom teacher. I mean, and that make somebody's willing to go to tech and learn how to do HVAC. Those people are going to make, they work hard they're going to make 49... 50,000 dollars a year with overtime. UPS drivers make more money than school

educators, so it's not the money. Profession that drives them. Not the money that drives them. Now, I stand by that a hundred percent.

Some people go to school, go to college, go home, and they're perfectly content. That's all the job they're going to get in that county, and they're content that they have a job teaching. That does not equate to that person is going to mean that they're going to be a great teacher they got a job and they're happy and if they're not a good teacher, then they're not good teacher. But the ones who really... and I think most of our people are dedicated and I'd say the bulk of them are. They're not in that classroom of 10 months a year because they're going to make 32,000 dollars over 10-month period. They're in there because they love what they do. So, I do not think that money does not drive teaching people into the team... it drives people out. But, it sure doesn't drive them in. Unless it is to the point they're going to be just satisfied to draw a paycheck and some of those unfortunately are in our classrooms in the northeast, and they're all over the place. When you find a teacher that's not performing, and the children are not performing in the classroom, and they have low expectations of those children, educators, you got a teacher who doesn't know how to teach period. And they're drawing a paycheck. All in all it is important to realize that educators are in this job for the love of the profession. (Hubert H., 2011)

Question 2: In your opinion, other than salary, what is the most important factor influencing people to work as teachers or administrators at your district?

The focus group was asked to render an opinion about the most important factors, other than salary, influencing people to work as educators or administrators in their districts. All nine of those who responded gave answers that focused on work environment amenities (i.e. facilities, resources, and technology) associated with or based on the leadership of the school. Their group analysis entertained that if salary was not a factor, their work environment would be their next area of focus. Facilities (physical plant) was a recurring concern, along with resources, from wide ranging central office support mechanisms to being able to afford technology based supplements to normal classroom instruction. While some people may think that all is required to be successful in the 21st century are skilled professional educators, others acknowledge, it takes more than that. The most consistent statement to sum up this sentiment among the group can be seen in this quote:

Oh! All you need is a... you can put people in a barn if you got good educators." You know, that's just ludicrous. You know... that's ludicrous. If that's the case, why don't you put all the folk in the high urban place in that barn? In other words, if all you need is a barn, why do you build a multi-million dollar school in the suburbs, and why do you put all the resources in it, and why do you make sure they get all the money and what not... if all you need is a barn, just a good teacher... educators are human, but they need the support system. You know, and that's what I see the teacher saying. They

already have the heart. They already have the desire. That's why they went to school. But what they want is to know when they go into that classroom... are they smart enough? Is it diverse enough? Is it resourced enough? So that they can give the utmost to the children. (David J., 2011)

What are educators looking for in addition to salary? They are looking for high level access to resources and technology; they are looking for schools that have been shown to have supportive administrations; and they are looking for schools that have fewer disciplinary problems. There are a several factors that administrators are concerned with. Higher resourced communities that have more resources available are very attractive. Places like Wake County or Charlotte-Mecklenburg, generally are better able to appeal to administrators. These factors are shown inter-district and intra-district as well where certain schools have been perceived as having better technology, better access to resources, and fewer disciplinary problems. These factors within environments are where the administrators tend to gravitate.

What are the new challenges of the 21st century? There are neighborhood schools, which are basically resegregated schools. There appears to be a tendency among some educational leaders to pay bonuses to the people who work in schools with high concentrations of low socio-economic students in the same schools. Certain districts found out they couldn't even recruit with that incentive, in part because educators recognize what mechanism works. Educators are trained and they are familiar with what research says. They understand that research says high

poverty and racially identified schools are the direct opposite of student achievement because such schools cause so much stress and strain and powerlessness for educators, who are unable to give their students the kind of time that 'is necessary to make positive changes. They also know that well-resourced schools are healthy and more likely to be successful than poorly resourced schools.

The goal of well-resourced schools is one of the reasons the Wake County superintendent devised a regional plan in 2004. It was successful, but it wasn't successful due to busing, which was a byproduct. The plan's emphasis was upon the creation of healthy schools. The superintendent set a goal where no more than 25% of students are falling below grade level, and no more than 40% are above poverty level, in order to create healthy schools.

One educator expressed the sentiment that

I want to teach and I want to be able to give the best to my student. I want to be able to teach in a diverse way of resourced environment. That's what I find is that, you know, we have said that teachers, in the ##### we believe that eight things you got to do if you want high quality: try to give every child ... [an]... education; stop resegregation; promote diversity; we got to have high quality teachers; smaller classrooms—it's critical... educators look at that; you got to have high quality inspiring leadership—educators look at that. You have to have high quality facilities—teachers will bend over backwards to teach a kid physics but they want the kind of labs that'll enable them to teach it properly, because they want their kid to be successful. They don't want their kids to just pass through...they want ...[a]... fair playing field.

They want... equity in resources. They want their classrooms to look like the world, and they get very bothered when they see systems engaging in patterns of resegregation/isolation, and then undermining and undercutting the resources in a way they know is going to impede them in providing the best education that they can. (David J., 2011)

A lot of job satisfaction for educators comes from their conviction that they are making a difference in their students' lives. When they are faced with a student populace for whom they do not have the tools or resources to serve, their perceived ineffectiveness becomes a huge morale problem. Another focus group member also gave a convincing answer as to what influences personnel.

"We do a lot of team building activities in each school as well as some in the district. That's what educators look for. They want to be treated fairly; they want to be treated as adults especially from the administrators. That's one of the main questions that they ask us. What kind of support am I going to get from my supervisors? Are they going to be fair? Are they going to provide me with the help and the resources that I need as much as possible [?] We have to follow through on it, because if not, you know we can't give them a false impression of what we are about. We'll let them know where the funding is, how much we have and what we need to spend on. Another thing with our new educators who come in we find that they have great talents. They want to do a good job, and we have to involve them in the planning for the year being a part of the school improvement team allowing them to be

involved in the scheduling process so if they have that involvement if they feel they are giving something to the operations of the school, if we keep them involved, then they feel good.”

For example, one respondent answers the question out of experiencing the positive and negative effect of the process:

Yes it is (effective). Because when we interview... nine times out of ten that's going to be a question of the applicant ... is there a supplement? How much? We've even had people who agreed to come and when they get an offer from another system and the supplement is higher then they go to that system. So, supplements make a big difference and because we offer some, I think we've been successful in getting some of the best candidates. (Amy R., 2011)

Question 3: Based on your experience working in the district, student academic success is largely attributed to the work of teachers or administrators?

Among the nine respondents, the unanimous answer to this question was the educators. Six of the nine respondents said that success in a school is largely attributed to the teachers' efforts in the classroom. While all of them acknowledged the educators' role, some of them did say that it was both groups working together for student success that brought about positive results. The one opinion that was the outlier actually made the most sense. It was a choice that was not given, but is a

factor all the same. The group the teacher and the administrator have to affect to gain the desired result is the students.

The teacher was the most common choice, however, among the respondents, and this quote exemplifies that opinion:

I think no question... it's attributed to educators. I think there is you know there's lots of research and surveys and studies that talk about the most important resource determinant in academic success is classroom teacher. Now, obviously the abilities or ... the support these educators get from administrators is critical, but I think ... within schools even within school I think you see the role of the teacher is the most critical and that ... includes a lot... I mean, there's a lot that goes into that, you know, there is... one of the challenges sort of this question of teacher quality, right, or how do you measure who's a good teacher um is that it's not all objective measures. You could look at things like who's licensed, who's, you know, has a master's degree, who, you know, has how many years they have been teaching. There are some objective measures but there also I think a number of subjective components you know and there's issues related to culturally responsive training so that educators have high expectation of students... in that they don't bring any biases into the classroom. And so you know they're able to engage all students at the levels that they need to be engaged at.

I think that one of the challenges when education activists or advocates talk generally and they look at the universe of challenges that we're facing... one that comes up is how do we do a better job recruiting and

training educators you know to do the very challenging work that they do. It's been... troubling because you know the state budget recently cut the teaching fellows program Which was specifically designed at you know recruiting NC top talents, training them and putting them in areas where there is the greatest need... (Peggy H., 2011)

Who doubts this? The credit should be given to the educators because the educators know the subjects that they teach. Administrators work with them on the instructional strategies and best practices, but if educators don't put the strategies into practical application, success is not going to happen. Administrators and central office personnel provide professional development and all of the support for the instructional strategies possible, but it is still up to the teacher to make a difference in the classroom. The relationships they form with students are critical to student success. Teachers have a great deal of influence on the students, and the motivation and confidence they can give to those students is immeasurable. Educators are able to teach the whole child outside of books and the classroom. Educators could assist their students in learning how to make better decisions. The educators are closer to the students, so they know things about the students, and they are able to redirect the children back to academics.

Educators play a vital role in the success of a school system. Administrators also play a vital role. Anyone who has a predominant role in the training of students is all-important. The principal has to help set the stage and set the standard for what the school is going to achieve during the school year. The teacher has to have a

commitment to the program and must try to do everything he or she can to ensure the children's learning.

While the question centered on the teacher or the administrator, the student is the most important part of this equation. One of the respondents summed it up like this:

...the kids. It's the kids. Student academic success is all about how much work they do. Not how hard the teacher works, or how hard the principal works. It's how hard they work the kids. Now, the trick is the teacher has to design the experiences in the classroom to give the kids the opportunity to really do rigorous and high quality work. So, the students are the workers, the educators are designer of the experience and the more effectively the teacher can design the experience, the you know the more engaged the kids will get and the more willing they are to produce high quality work. But the teacher has more to do, the teacher's more important than the administrator. (Peggy H., 2011)

Question 4: Do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified teachers in your district?

Interestingly, this question elicited a wide and varied response: The majority of the focus group respondents answered no to this question. The most interesting reason that a member of the focus group gave was this one:

No, because when I think of high qualified, I think of people who are kind of well versed. You know... I can lead, I can manage, I can teach... and I

don't see that. I mean in some people, but when I think of highly qualified and bringing more people in, I'm thinking people who already had that experience, you know they're ready willing and able to do it and we won't have to spend a whole lot of time with administrator training... if that makes sense.

I know that in everything you still have to bring teach people how you do it in your place. But I think we spend a lot of time teaching the teacher, or teaching the administrator and with that time being directed to those people then and this is my opinion, we're just losing time that could be given to the students. So, again, when I think of highly qualified, I think of people that are already ready willing and able. We don't have to convince them this is why they are here... I think it just depends on the individual and even with the new people that we have now you know some people are able to, well, not able... some people are willing to admit it early, and some people never see it... and so even right now we with the turnover that we've had, we've had some people discover that this is not the person that I need to be working under... so you know they just leave, but if I spend my time convincing you to stay somewhere you already know this is not what you need to be doing, or where you should be not necessarily within this district, but at this particular place, you know... then you know... it just doesn't make sense to me. I think when a person when you're talking about educating a child... that should be something that you should be focused on at all times. I shouldn't have to convince you. You know... if that's what you know that's what you're

supposed to be doing, and that's what you want to do... I shouldn't have to convince you. (John Q., 2011)

Are there more highly qualified educators and administrators in the affected school districts? If so, the different supplemental funding may have aided the districts' ability to recruit and retain them. Ironically, we don't know because the Leandro Mandate was never fully funded. The courts gave a remedy that has never been applied fully, partly because of an ultra-conservative general assembly, and the fiscal situation the nation has found itself in. The General Assembly has been viewed as unsupportive towards public education because they passed a budget that cut one billion dollars from education. That budget was then ruled unconstitutional because of the amount of money it cuts from preschool students by the same judge who ruled on Leandro as an unconstitutional budget. Judge Manning wrote: "The current financial difficulties of the State do not relieve, justify, or excuse the State of North Carolina from its constitutional obligation to provide each and every child in North Carolina an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education." North Carolina's mandated programs are not being funded appropriately, making it very difficult for educators and administrators to render opinions about the situation. There are many factors that are supposed to be present in the implementation of the 2004 Leandro decision, but they have not been funded.

Still, a direct correlation between the 2004 Leandro decision, the state's responses to it, and highly qualified teacher/administrator quality cannot be made. One of the weaknesses in this sort of implementation of Leandro or the post 2004 analysis of that case by policy makers in particular has been that it is only about

funding. The only thing that matters is putting more resources into schools that ideally would be directed to serving these at-risk students at the core of the case. The challenges that were raised with Leandro and what these school districts faced were broader issues than just funding.

In hindsight, the sort of implementation that was called for by this decision has really embraced the broad scope of what should be done. Most in the educational community are not confident that it has been fully embraced. While more funds seem to have been made available in the low wealth districts it's not clear what benefit the funds are serving. There is a certain amount of broad discretion in how these additional these Leandro based funds are spent.

Can you draw a causal connection between those funds and changes in those school districts? Has there been teacher professional development? Yes. Have there have been administrative professional development? Yes. But, how did that training filter down to the individualized classroom experience?

A parent in a community with high teacher/administrator turnover may have a hard time seeing the correlation as well. After a district has spent a certain amount of dollars training faculty and investing time and effort in them to have a greater understanding of their situation within the district, they take that training (all your professional development dollars) and move on to another district. This also contributes to a never-ending cycle where people who are not necessarily as qualified as their predecessors were are continually replacing highly qualified people. Those defecting educators and administrators are also not growing in their positions and where does that leave that low wealth district?

On the other hand, the court has its main focus on test scores. The judge looks at the end of grade (EOG) and end of course (EOC) tests, an adequate yearly progress (AYP) and factors like that as objective measures, or are considered objective measures to determine whether or not the funds are being used appropriately. And that's a fairly narrow basis for assessment. There is a whole number of ways to measure how good a job any school is doing. Those tests scores certainly being one, but things like graduation rates, suspension, discipline, absenteeism, and measures of parental involvement. At the high school levels you have additional factors like advanced placement courses, SAT taken percentages, so there is an opinion that the court has taken an unnecessarily limited view of how it's going to measure the progress in these schools.Starting from that point you know that puts you in sort of narrow box if the test scores aren't going up, the problems are educators.

For instance, Halifax County is in its third year under court supervision. The turnaround plan they are under has given them a lot of additional funds. Those funds have contributed to teacher coaching /mentoring and administrative coaching, but when the North Carolina Center for Civil Rights consults with parents in that community, they don't see the trickledown effect of that in the classrooms. Part of that is because teacher training is important but it should not be the exclusive component of looking at addressing educational issues or student achievement.

Question 5: Are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting educators and administrators?

One of the nonconforming respondent's reflection was that supplemental pay "was not necessary" based on the current economic situation of the United States, which drives people to take a job regardless of salary because of necessity. The other respondent abstained because he or she didn't feel he or she knew enough information to give a responsible answer.

For certain instances it wouldn't make a difference. When you're asking a young new educator to move to a very rural area where there's not a lot going on outside of the school district, the fact that there might be a salary supplement of one or two thousand dollars is not enough to make a difference to say what am I going to do outside of the time I'm at work. So, while they believe the money is important, we have to distinguish there are other considerations as well. It doesn't take into account that community surrounding these schools and what's happening there. Or what's happening in the lives of the kids, what are the community based resources, the school is only one part. That includes support for educators, parents, and economic realities of low wealth communities, rural communities, and communities that have suffered particularly in this recession.

So broadly, while the focus group thinks the salary supplement makes a difference; we know there are places where it's not feasible for the compensation to be high enough to really attract educators to the areas of highest need.

There were a lot of interesting answers from the group on this question. It is better served their voices are heard independently concerning the supplement

question and how they feel about it. Here is another opinion from this scholarly group:

I think it can be... if there's other dynamic like the kind of school diversity, leadership, you know... again, my whole point is we need to just pay for, we need supplemental and then, but when you say I'm going to supplement... Wake County recently... is a prime example of the illogical... the wrongness of the logic. The school board undoes the diversity program. The first school they opened under the policy or the lack of policy... is a high poverty, racially identified, underperforming school—more than 50% of the kids are underperforming... how population is identified... then the next thing the superintendent said, 'now, we're going to find some more money to put into school.' If you think about that for a minute, he said because you know that the school's got challenges now because of high poverty, racially identified and under-resourced. So, here's what it seems like we're focusing here... let's make the school accept sick and then go find some medicine... rather than making the school healthy in the first place. That's the challenge that... so what folks said... supplement, sure the supplement, you know, can have an impact. But, what we should be trying to do... first of all, we should be paying educators more anyway, and then we should be trying to make the school environment healthy (academically) in the first place... and then find ways to supplement. Now, I didn't complete the agreement with LEANDRO that when you have had years of funding inequality... it is right for the courts to order that there is a supplemental pay in order to address the years of

systemic inequality. That's always important, and I think in those systems it does help. You do have some help, but what we should do is... at one time, not to go long ago, that we had thirty-nine failing high schools in NC. And when you disaggregate it, you find out that 99% of them were 80 to 90 to 100 percent re-segregated, high poverty, racially identified schools... which were also under-resourced schools. Now, I tend to say if NC... had found those 39 schools in suburban or well off communities, we would've dealt with it immediately. The reality is they weren't. They mostly were poor, urban, rural communities, and we haven't dealt with them yet in a real way. When the state of NC first applied for the "Race to the Top" plan, they were denied. And the reviewer said because they could not see in their Race to the Top application, which was for supplemental money, any real plan to deal with high poverty, racially identified school. That's in the document. So, with almost the reviewers were saying... if you want supplemental money, but are not going to change the institutional and systemic inequities, then what you're going to do is just get the money but not really correct the problem... they both must go hand in hand. The resources and the restructuring of our school systems, and our classrooms anyway we truly look at addressing high poverty, racially identified schools. (David J., 2011)

One respondent thinks that a supplement is important; however, it is not the only thing that candidates take into consideration when reviewing job offers.

Yes (a supplement is effective), but not by itself. In other words, it does help to be able to offer an attractive salary. But, the salary's not the only variable. Again, I would say the ability to feel that you can do the work almost has paralleled that. If some school districts in the northeast offer salaries that are substantially lower than some of the other districts in the state. If you're at the very, very bottom, I think closing that gap between an average NC salary and what your salary is, is important. Because if principal has a choice to work in a district where they're paid 90,000 and in one where they're paid 65,000, that's such a wide gap. If the gap is less, and it's a matter of 90,000 versus 85,000, I don't think it makes nearly as much difference. So if the gap is wide, it's a big variable, but the narrower the gap, the more important other variables become. (Peggy H., 2011)

While the majority of the respondents thought supplemental pay made a difference you can see they all had different points of reference for thinking what it did. The answers ranged from it helps me individually, it puts a band-aid on a bigger situation to its only one variable in a decision with many variables. All having their unique perspective on the issue.

Question 6: How does your district recruit its educators?

While not all of the focus group participants were members or had been school or education workers, some of them chose not to respond to this question. The others gave answers that ranged from local reputation of the school district, the online application process, advertising through DPI, through the media, newspapers

(in state), and newspapers (out of state, Virginia, and South Carolina) in those states that are near us. They have encouraged staff to talk to people that they know, whether it's word of mouth, whether it's through the media and through the state application process. Principals and administrators are given the opportunity to visit colleges and universities at the end of each school year as well as during the December graduation. The respondents also cited international workers within the school districts in which they work. Recruiters have been used to bring educators from the Philippines and the use of Teach for America, Inc. has supplemented some of the Leandro low wealth districts as well.

One of the respondents gave a detailed answer as to the recruiting process in general for NC state low wealth schools and how these systems perpetuate themselves:

Every district has its own personality. Some districts are very aggressive, and recruit from out of state and have very careful screening procedures to get high quality people. And other districts just wait for who falls in the door. And they take the easy way out. And they hire the first person who presents themselves rather than spending the time to search for high quality person. There are two things missing when that happens. First, the understanding does not seem to exist that the very most important decision that an administrator makes is the teacher he or she puts in the classroom. And so, the more effective teacher the administrator hires, the better outcome through will be for kids. So, the administrator understands that who just isn't satisfied with anybody and digs and may even make decision that may seem

a little odd. Like, letting school open with a substitute rather than putting somebody in ... [who is]... inferior.

The other thing is the really effective principal keeps his eye on people after he's hired them. And if they're not good, he lets them go with the first opportunity whereas the really lazy principal just lets 'em roll. Once he's got 'em, then he lets 'em get career status. Doesn't matter if they're teaching or not. He or she has a warm body, and so it's directly related to how much the principal understands and is willing to work at putting in place high quality people. Now, the districts do some recruiting things to support it, and districts build an applicant pool. But a really good principal, he looks in the district applicant pool and there isn't anybody there, he doesn't wait for the district to solve the problem for him. He gets on the phone and calls around to see who's graduated, he may be haven't found a job yet, they work at it. What I tend to see in some of the districts in the north east is people are just not very smart about what they're doing they don't put that extra energy and extra effort in. and so they ended up accumulating over time faculties really aren't that good. Because number one, they didn't try hard when they hired, and number two they didn't weed out who they needed to get rid of after they've made a bad decision.

The most important decision the principal makes is who they hires as educators. That is the very most important thing a principal that has. And so the principal's ability to hire well is the biggest influence they can have on student achievement. And a really smart principal knows that... then they

have they very few problems too. Because the better they hire, the better discipline runs in the school, the happier parents are. (Hubert H., 2011)

North Carolina has a strong university system, and so many schools focused on developing educators, which is why it's so disturbing to watch the current general assembly cut significant funds from education and put thousands of educators out of work. The General Assembly has also reduced significant dollars from the university system, which has led to schools tightening their fiscal budgets. These moves can be devastating to the HBCU, which if it devastates HBCUs it could undermine one of the major places where we develop minority educators.

One of the respondents (Adrian B.) shared another incident with me centered on relationships and recruitment. He said,

I remembered something on your question about recruitment... we represent a group in ##### County, NC. An African American Coalition and also parents, one of the things they really been pushing is how they recruit educators. Primarily, the school district has an arrangement with #####. For teacher recruitment, so their primary source, ##### is predominantly white so the pool of educators they recruit from is predominantly white women and our clients have been continuing to push saying "why don't you develop this same relationship with one of these historically black colleges, universities that are also turning out educators?... because having that diversity is not just important among the student body but also staff and faculty. And for white students to have African American educators and for African American

students to have African American educators... and again, that kind of ensuring that kind of diverse experience requires at the staff and faculty level as well. And that's a case that was very clear they have this recruiting arrangement that really narrow district perspective." (Adrian B., 2011)

Recruitment and the perpetuation of a good recruitment plan in these low wealth districts would go towards diversifying the system more. Perhaps more examples of a diversified staff would encourage more students to pursue a career in education.

Question 7: In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts, how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students?

Of the nine respondents, a couple of the answers seem very interesting. Granted, everyone is not thinking about the question the same way, so they all focus on a different aspect of the question. All respondents of the group either said no, they did not think these districts currently provided a high quality education in comparison to the other North Carolina districts or they felt they were comparable to average districts. The next two responses show you how people in the same county view issues differently. Asked the same question, the answers were very different.

I would say we are average. We're on an average when I look at other school systems especially school systems who have opportunity to offer courses, opportunities to get people who can teach advanced placement

courses, those kinds of things. We're not there. We're below the average when it comes to that because of the recruitment problems that we may have with those kinds of educators... I think is improving the success of our students. We are collaborating in the classroom more. We're using those kinds of strategies. We're using the exploratory process with our students. We are raising the level of expectation each year with our students and our students are getting used to that. Parent involvement is not good but parents care about their students. When we call on them you know they're here and they're supportive of us. There are things they just don't know what to and how to do with the children... so we try to fill in that gap while we're here at school... so our students are more focused on learning. They see the necessities of learning. We've been involved in the new school's project, and we are a ##### ... and were focusing on integrating those areas into every class that we teach. (Amy R., 2011)

Compare Amy R.'s answer to John Q.'s response. They work in the same district and their perceptions of that district vary. This is more a result of the line of thinking followed by focus group participants. This fosters a cross section or microcosm of society that allows us to get closer to the answers as they present themselves.

Given the world of technology, we do not compare. It's not I mean we have technology when you're just... when our district is just getting to net books and then you have other districts when you go off, they are already beyond net books. You know, they're already on iPad2s androids and all that

and androids and all that stuff. So, quality! I guess we're doing the best we can; we don't have a lot... I'm thinking about technology because this is the 21st century and this is what our children know. They have their things they do at home, but we don't have that to offer them. So, as far as comparison, there is no comparison. We don't have anything to be (compared). I don't have anything for you to compare to because your already two steps ahead of me. (John Q., 2011)

In reality, a district's ability to provide a high quality education varies depending on where you are within the state. The factors of relative wealth of communities and school districts follows fairly closely with their ability to provide a sound basic education. We see that both generally and specifically if you look at the at risk sub groups identified in 2004 Leandro, we continue to see the achievement gap in some places either staying same or widening. Certainly, we have moved forward attempting to close the gap. That is, low wealth district student achievement is a core principle of Leandro. Every student's right to a sound basic education is true across the board, and that achievement gap is in direct contravention of that right. The state is principally failing to meet that challenge in regards with the students in these at risk categories. One of the premises of Leandro that continues to plague funding is this idea that even though the state has this responsibility to provide a sound basic education, the Leandro decision itself recognized and reaffirmed the idea that supplements or the decision to provide additional funding is also constitutional.

Question 8: Is there any aspect of the funding of school funding and or student adequacy that you would like to discuss?

Several of the respondents chose not to answer this final question. Others chose to go into the history of the Leandro decision and how far it's come to present day. Others discussed supplemental funding they received this year and how that was going to help them address some adequacy issues within their districts. The most profound came from the judge of the group. He was discussing student populations and how those groups are judged prematurely.

...It's the same children, there's no difference in population... came from the same trailer next door in the trailer park. Something was different, their parent wanted them to be successful, and they pushed them into that school and signed a contract and they are successful. And I always use to that don't tell me that these children are all stupid and dumb and can't learn, because we got a whole school full of children that all started in the 9th grade and despite what they hadn't gotten by the time they got out of the 7th grade, by the time they got to 7th grade, they made up that deficit. And by the time they got to 12th grade, every one of them went to college. Every single one of them graduated and went to college, got sent to college, and is in college. Don't tell me it's the people. It's not lack of quality classroom instruction, lack of leadership in the damn schools that are preventing these children from reaching their potential. That's my answer; I've given it to you 50 times over and same way every time. I am not changing my mind. It all comes back to the classroom teaching, and it all comes back to the principal's office. And if

you have... if you take the Leandro you know, what Leandro says... There it is. That's it, if you put in 3 things you have to have in each school... you apply that language, you apply that test to the school, that's the answer—three things: qualified principal, qualified teacher...resources. That's where you're supposed to be. And how do we know that you're not? We look at the performance. That's what it is all about. I'm not very patient, that's why I'm not patient about it, because it's not rocket science. You bust your butt, properly train, do your assessment, differentiate your instruction between the children that learn verbally and those otherwise, know your kids and have high expectations... you're going to be successful. (Hubert H., 2011)

Quantitative

Questionnaire / Survey(s)

North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Surveys

The survey is a vital tool for change. It is important for all licensed educators in the state to respond to the survey because research from previous surveys indicates that working conditions do impact student achievement and teacher retention, and that school leadership is important to the success of educators and students. For this reason, the data from the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey is a key artifact in the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System, the only aligned evaluation system in the nation.

Data from the outcome of the survey assist to improve teaching and learning conditions in a school or district in order to be able to recruit and retain the most talented educators in North Carolina classrooms. It also informs parents and the community about what is occurring in their schools.

The survey is intended to measure teaching and learning conditions constructs, and does not ask why a teacher leaves a school (though it did ask about their professional intentions in 2006, 2008, 2010). Important changes were made between iterations. First, the 2008 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey included agreement items on a 5-point scale (strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither disagree nor agree, somewhat agree, and strongly agree). In 2010, the survey was changed to include agreement items on a 5-point scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, don't know). Most of the items in 2008 and 2010 are identically worded, but comparisons need to be made carefully.

Secondly, the survey set up its system to collect data by variable name instead of number, so the 2008 dataset has variable names like Q1.1, Q1.2...Q9.1a, Q9.1b.1, etc. While the 2010 dataset has variable names like dma10position, tml21clssze, etc. This made them harder to match questions exactly from year to year.

Another factor that made this survey mismatched for yielding useable data for this study was that these systems had been changed so much so that a contrast could not be made between the Leandro 2004 decision and present day. Too many changes have occurred in the survey to make a doable comparison. For instance,

only statistics for three of the five Leandro Counties (Cumberland, Roberson, and Halifax) from NC 2004 could be found in the data set matching the districts in 2010 data.

Administrative Online Survey

Between December of 2011 and February of 2012, administrators in six counties (eight school districts) were solicited to participate in this study. Survey participants will be asked to go the survey URL and instructed to complete the survey. Survey Monkey is a private American company that enables users to create their own free web-based surveys. The researchers' use of the enhanced paid product on Survey Monkey will be configured for anonymous submissions. There will be no record of who participates in the survey.

The number of participants to authenticate this study was one hundred participants. This study is a comparison of the Leandro counties (Cumberland, Hoke, Halifax, Roberson and Vance) versus the thoughts and perceptions of their fellow administrators in Wake County. The Leandro counties yielded eighty participants, while the Wake County participants totaled fifty-one. Of great importance in the conclusion is the comparison between the two groups as it pertains to key questions in this triangulated study.

Survey Question 1: In your opinion is the offering of supplemental pay effective in the recruiting of educators?

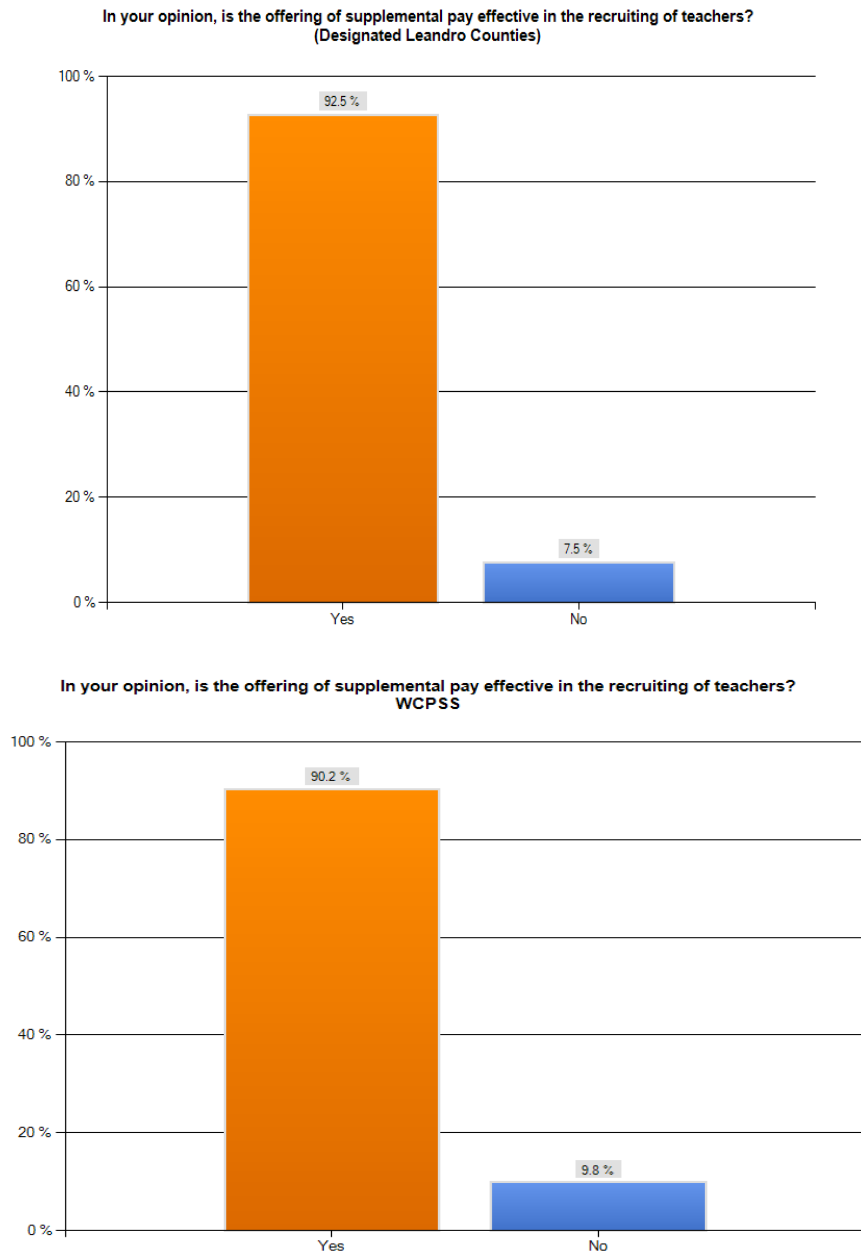


Figure 7 In your opinion, is the offering of supplemental pay effective in the recruiting of teachers?

The Leandro group said yes to this question of the effectiveness of offering supplemental pay, with a resounding 92.5%, while the 90.2% of the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment in their answers. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great impact on the recruitment of educators in each of the six counties.

A county's ability to offer this supplemental pay will have a definite effect on the individual county's recruitment process. All participants acknowledge that supplemental pay does play an important role in recruiting educators. The researcher had little doubt about the results of this question as it was processed. The administrators see the differences caused by supplemental funds when recruiting teachers for both yearlong and summer positions. They also see the same results when movement takes place in administrative positions because that movement is mostly predicated by pay or an increase in salary.

Survey Question 2: In your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting administrators?

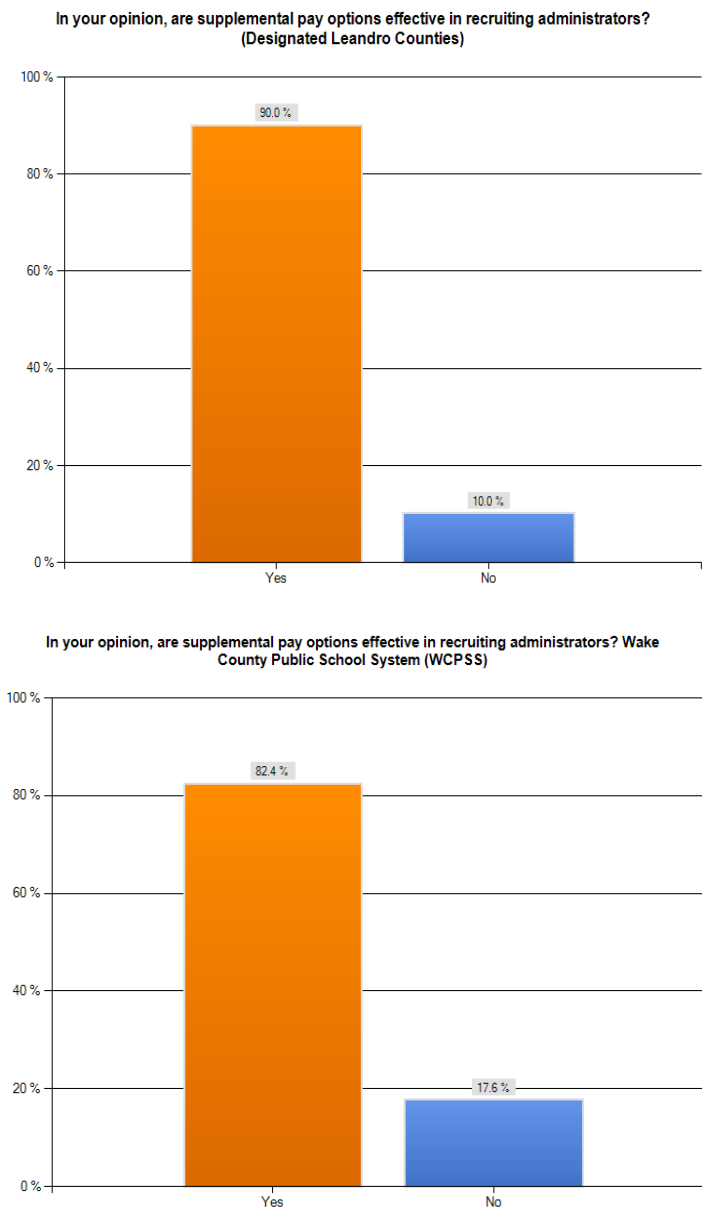


Figure 8 In your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting administrators?

The next question, In your opinion are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting administrators? The Leandro group said yes with a resounding 90.0%, while 82.4% of the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great impact on the recruitment of administrators in each of the six counties as well. However, the Leandro counties view supplemental pay as a more attractive measure than the WCPSS group.

This is probably the case because WCPSS salaries are larger on average than other counties. WCPSS administrators as a group feel less of a need (8.6% difference) to press for supplemental pay in their contracts. But all participants acknowledge that supplemental pay options play an important role in recruiting administrators.

Survey Question 3: In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration?

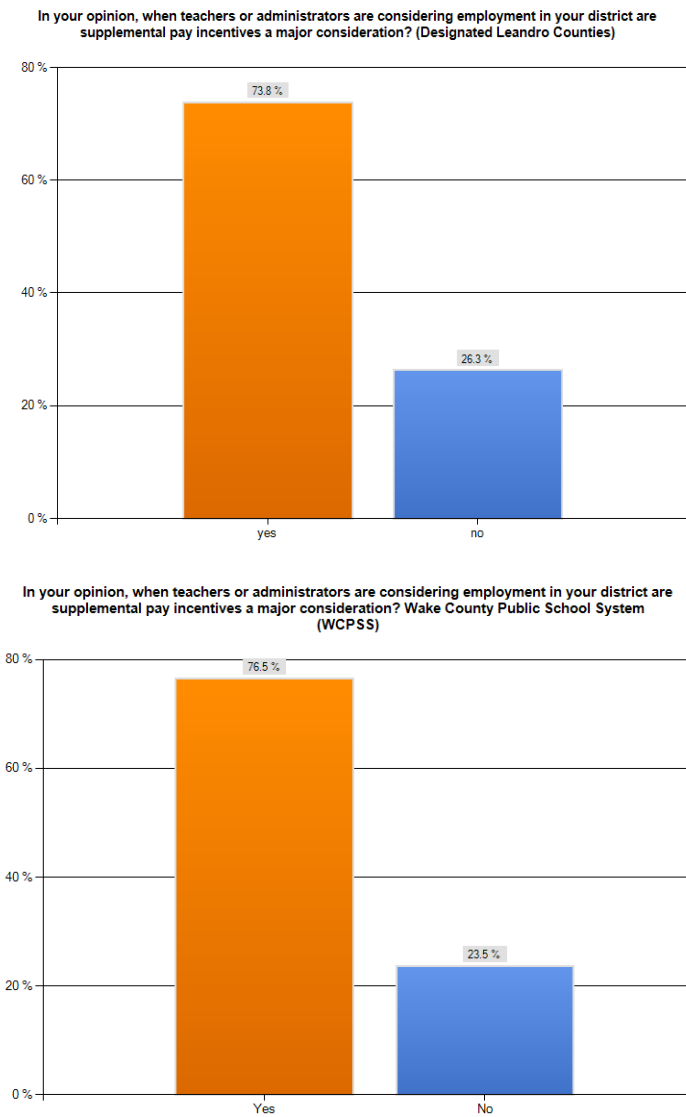


Figure 9 In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration?

The Leandro group responded yes to this question with a resounding 73.8%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment with a 76.5% answer. Administrators thought supplemental pay to be a major consideration when educators or administrators are exploring employment in each of the six counties. Both groups viewed this as an attractive measure at a ratio of three to one.

Survey Question 4: How does your district mainly recruit its educators?

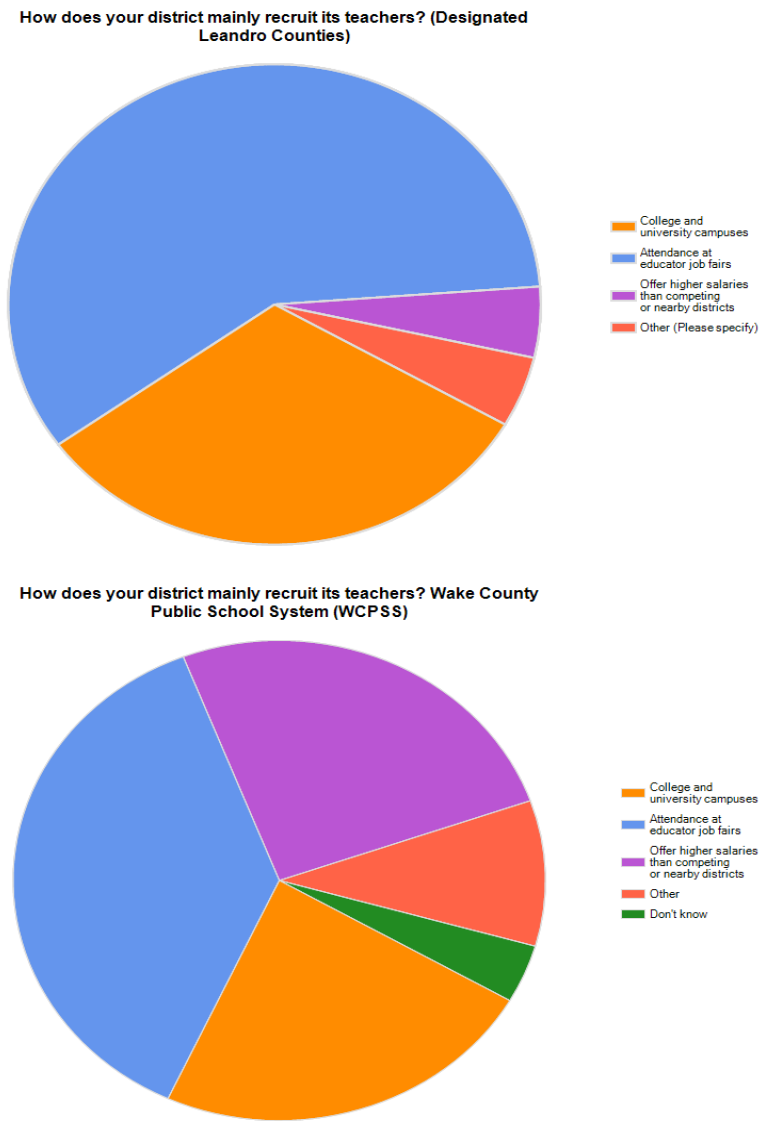


Figure 10 How does your district mainly recruit its educators?

The Leandro group’s eighty participants had some varied responses to the question about the recruitment of educators. While 27.5% said that college and university campuses, another 60.0% said attendance at educator job fairs, another

11.5% said offer higher salaries than competing or nearby districts, while another 11% said their districts used other tactics.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants also expressed some varied responses. While 23.5% said that college and university campuses, another 37.3% said attendance at educator job fairs, another 25.5% said offer higher salaries than competing or nearby districts, another 9.8% said their districts used other tactics while 3.9% did not know.

Educator job fairs seem to be the main recruiting tool for the Leandro group. The WCPSS group also thought that this was their main recruiting tool as well. And while it is clear that is the perceived best tactic to have a great impact on the recruitment.

Survey Question 5: Based on your understanding, who/what is primarily responsible for funding in your district?

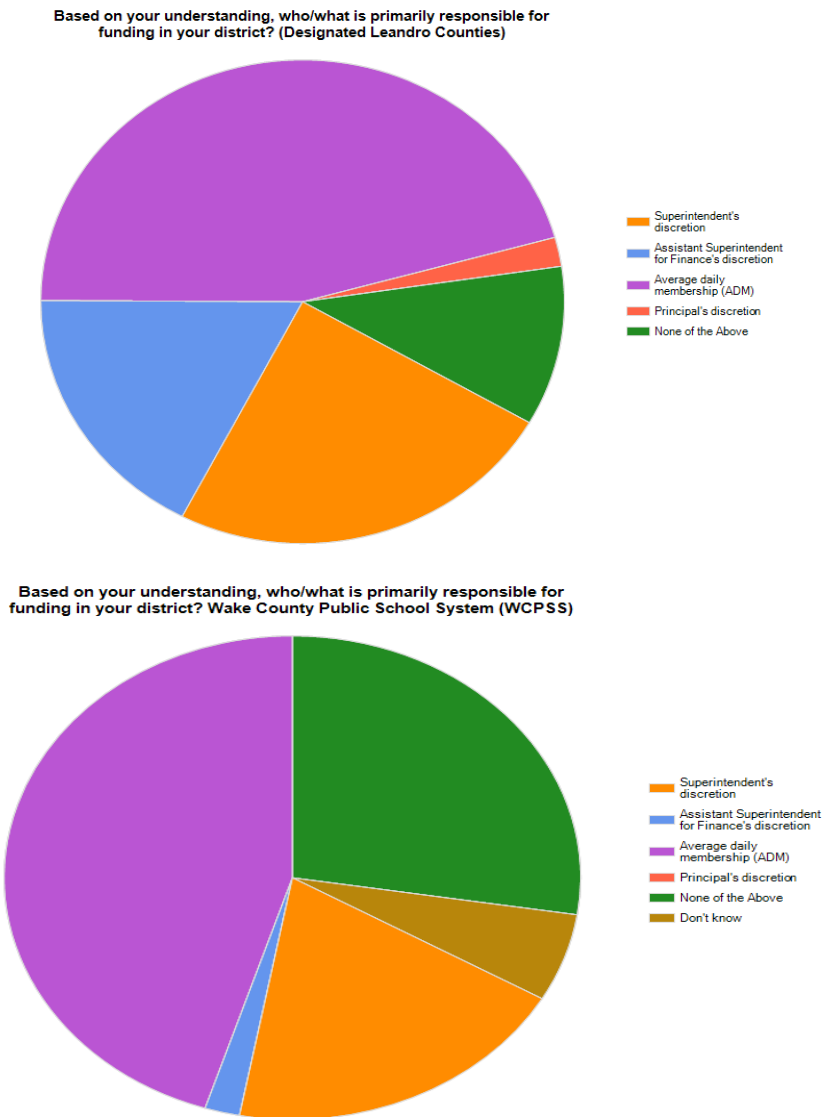


Figure 11 Based on your understanding, who/what is primarily responsible for funding in your district?

The Leandro group’s eighty participants had some varied responses. While 25.0% said superintendent’s discretion, another 20.0% said assistant superintendent

for finance's discretion, another 35.0% said average daily membership (ADM), and another 5.0 % said principal's discretion, while another 15% said none of the above.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants also expressed some varied responses. While 19.5% said superintendent's discretion, another 2.0% said assistant superintendent for finance's discretion, another 45.1% said average daily membership (ADM), and none said the principal's discretion, while another 27.5% said none of the above, while 5.9% did not know.

Average daily membership scored the highest between the two groups. While this is the most common way for resources to be determined across the state, the Leandro counties receive supplemental funds which are at the discretion of other individuals in their districts. So it is understandable that perception of that mechanism would vary between the two groups.

Survey Question 6: How are North Carolina public K-12 schools primarily funded?

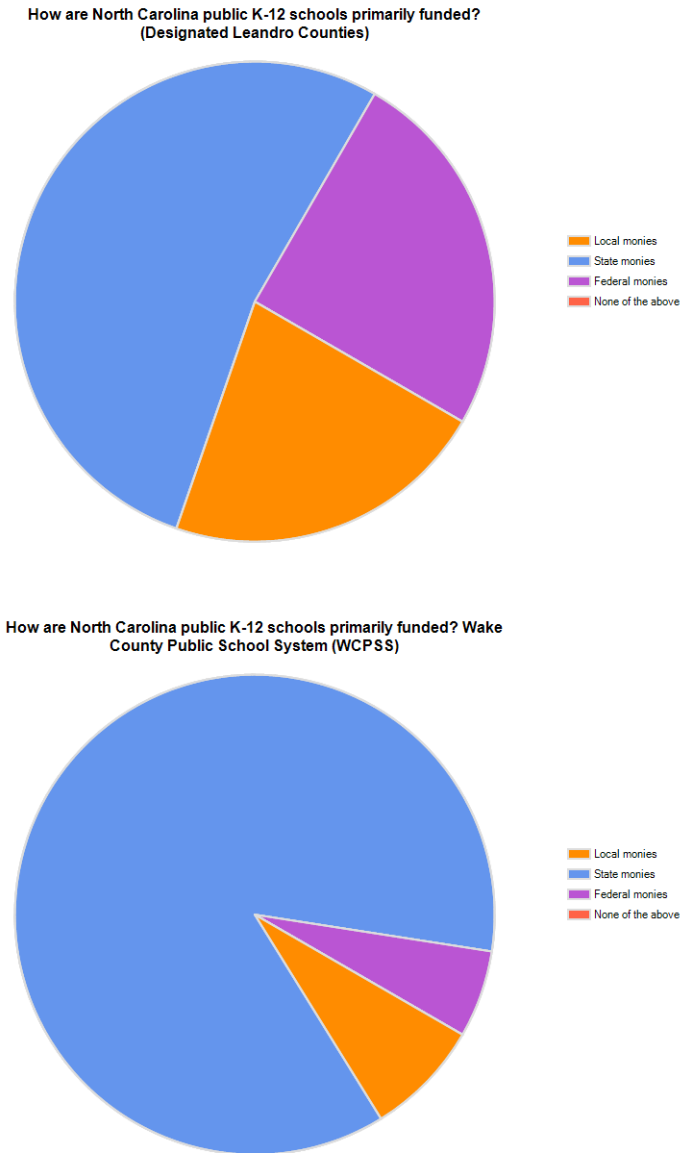


Figure 12 How are North Carolina public K-12 schools primarily funded?

The Leandro group's eighty participants were very straightforward in their answers to this question. While 23.0% said local monies, another 52.0% said state monies; and another 25.0% said federal monies.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants were also straightforward. While 7.8% said local monies, another 86.3% said state monies; and another 5.9% said federal monies.

Again, state funds scored the highest between the two groups. While this is the most normal way for resources to be distributed across the state, the Leandro group thought this at a much less rate. Which is not predictable since more of their funds would come from the state versus a county like Wake, which has a higher local tax base to draw from.

Survey Question 7: What is your race?

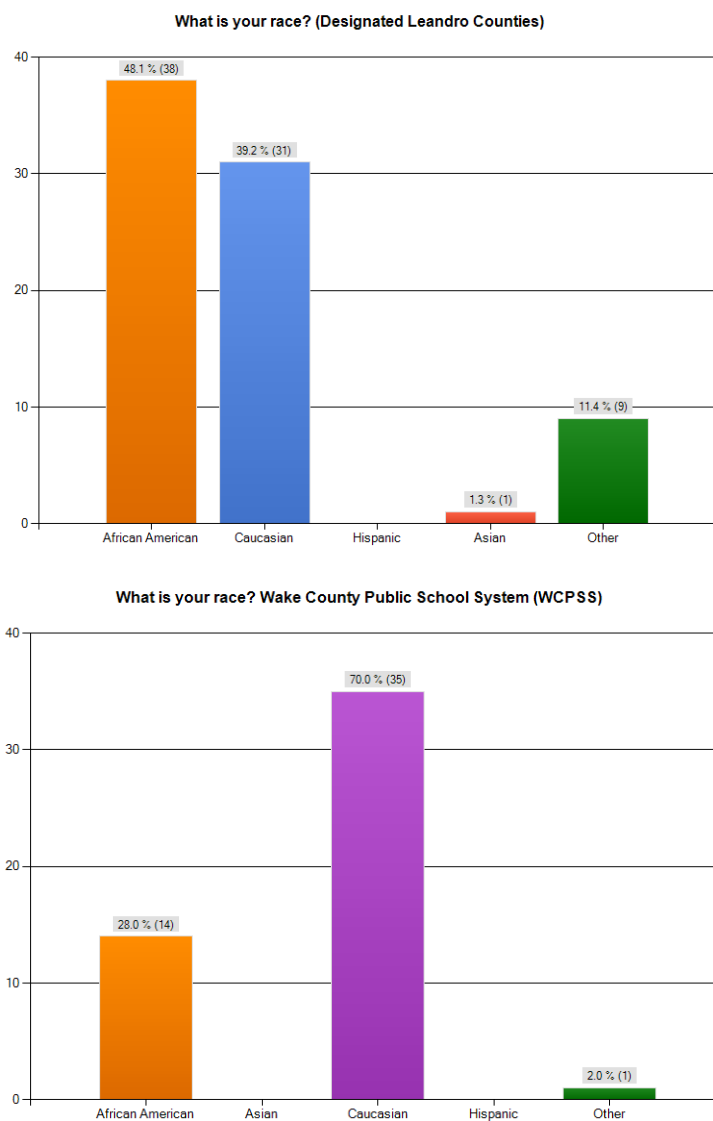


Figure 13 What is your race?

The ethnicities of the Leandro group's eighty participants were quite diverse. While 48.1% were African American, another 39.2% were Caucasian, another 1.3% were Asian, while another 11.4% classified themselves as other. No one who considered himself or herself Hispanic participated in this study.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants were less diverse. While 28.0% were African American, another 70.0% were Caucasian, while another 2.0% classified themselves as other. No one who considered him- or herself Asian or Hispanic participated in this study.

The racial demographics from the study indicate a large gap between African American administrators in the two groups. This may be misleading; Wake County demographics would indicate that approximately 20% of the population is African American, so the represented number in this survey is above the number represented in the general population.

However, the study sample indicated there were some underrepresented groups. No one who considered himself or herself Hispanic took part in either group. The Hispanic population is on the rise in North Carolina and should see more school administrators in the coming decade as these students who are no longer considered migrants begin to enroll and finish college and become educators in the area. Only one person who considered himself or herself Asian participated in the study. Each group should make efforts to attract more Asian Americans to become educators in their communities.

Survey Question 8: What is your gender?

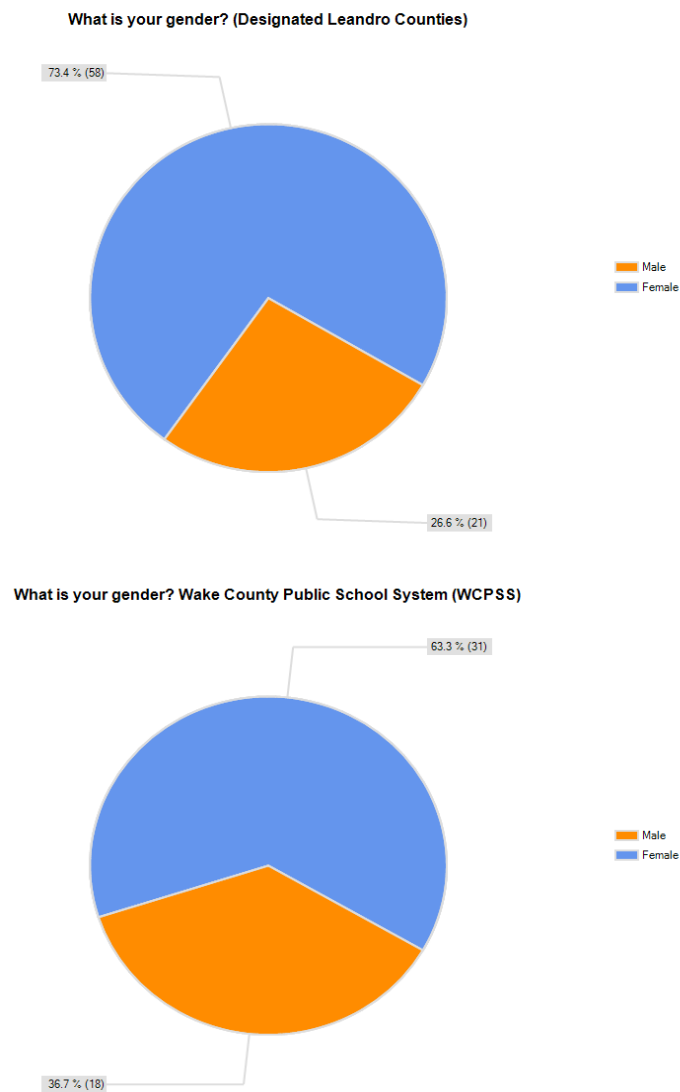


Figure 14 What is your gender?

Of the 80 participants in the Leandro group, 21, or 26.6%, were males. The females in the group totaled 58 or 73.4% of the sample. The female to male ratio of administrators in this sample group was very close to 3 to 1.

The WCPSS group has fifty-one participants. The males in that group totaled 18 or 36.7% of the sample group. The females in the group totaled 31 or 63.3% of the sample. The female to male ratio of administrators in this sample group was very close to 2 to 1.

Survey Question 9: Which district do you work in?

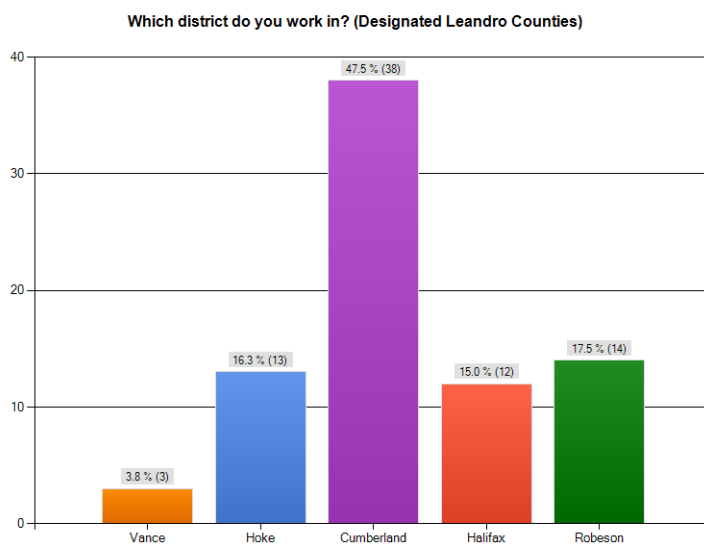


Figure 15 Which district do you work in?

The number of participants totaled 131 for the two groups combined. The WCPSS group was all from the same district so they were 100%. This question was mainly directed toward the Leandro group's eighty participants. The participant break down for the Leandro group: 3.8% were from Vance, 16.3% from Hoke, another 25.0% from Cumberland, 15% from Halifax and 17.5% from Roberson.

Survey Question 10: In your opinion, other than salary what is the most important factor influencing people to work as educators or administrators in your district?

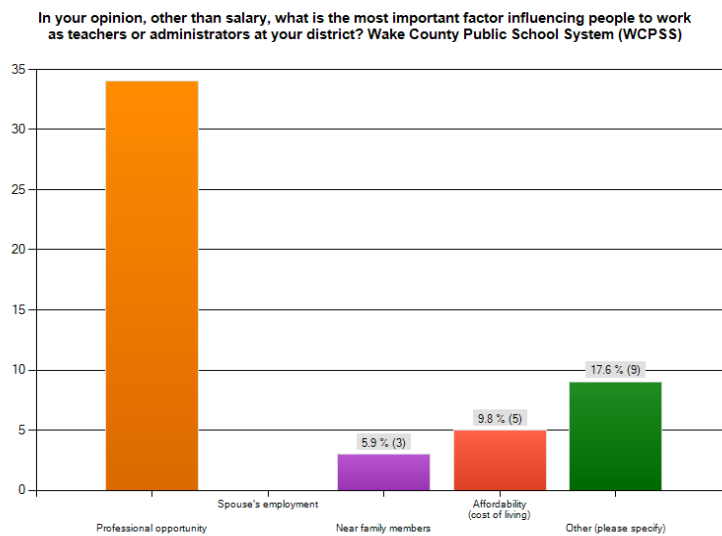
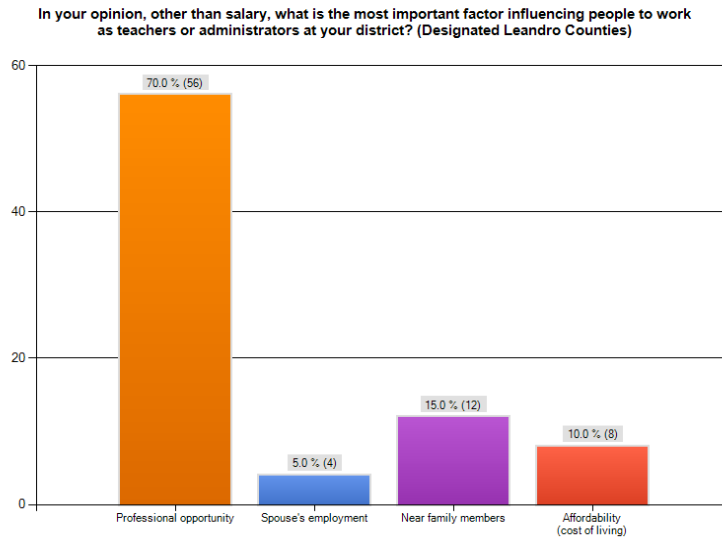


Figure 16 In your opinion, other than salary what is the most important factor influencing people to work as educators or administrators in your district?

The Leandro group's eighty participants' answers were very job/work centric. While 4 or 5.0% said spouse's employment, another 12 or 15.0% said near family members, another 8 or 10.0% said affordability or cost of living, while an overwhelming 56 or 70% said professional opportunity.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants were also very job/work centric. None of the participants said spouse's employment, another 3 or 5.9% said near family members, another 5 or 9.8% said affordability or cost of living, another 9 or 17.6 has other reasons, while an overwhelming 34 or 66.7% said professional opportunity.

Professional opportunity scored the highest between the two groups. This proves that a new title and position are still the top reasons that people go from one job to another if salary is taken out of the equation. While other things weighed in, the largest was a mixed bag of other reasons from the WCPSS group. They ranged from Administrative Support and job satisfaction, community support, Quality of life in the area compared to other places; a desire to give back to community or to make a difference, Professionalism and Quality of School System and Support from central office staff and programs.

Survey Question 11: How are Leandro monies primarily implemented in your district?

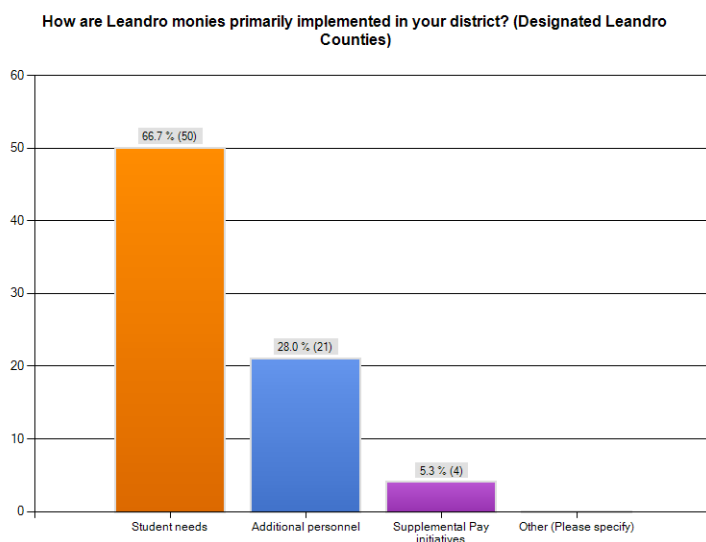
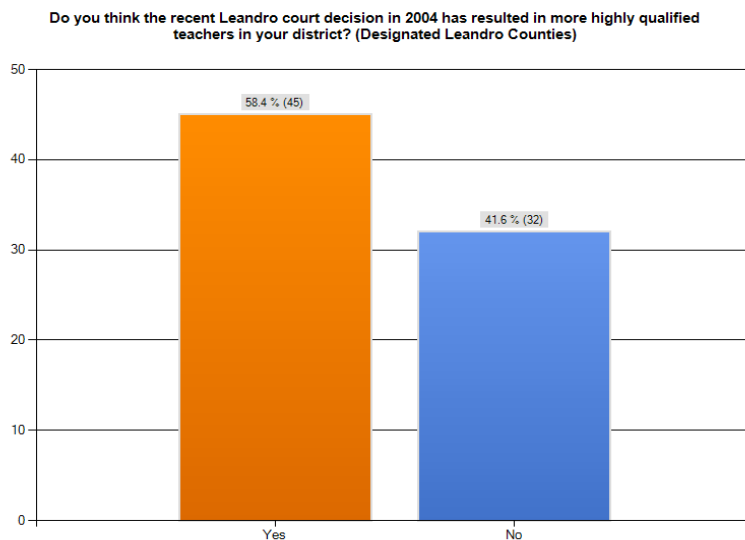


Figure 17 How are Leandro monies primarily implemented in your district?

Since the WCPSS group does not receive Leandro funds, no comparison could be made for this question. The Leandro group's eighty participants' perceptions were straightforward. While 4 or 5.3% said supplemental pay initiatives, another 28.0% said additional personnel, and an overwhelming 66.7% said student needs, while no one answered other.

Survey Question 12: Do you think the recent court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified educators in your district? And Do you think the recent court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified administrators in your district?



Do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified administrators in your district? (Designated Leandro Counties)

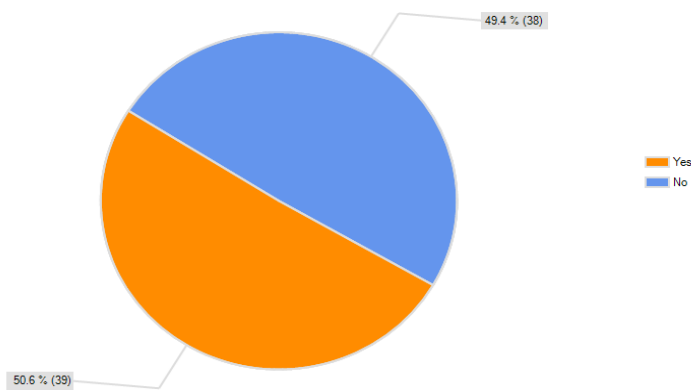


Figure 18 Do you think the recent court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified educators in your district? And Do you think the recent court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified administrators in your district?

Since the WCPSS group does not receive Leandro funds no comparison could be made for this question. The Leandro group's eighty participants' perceptions were surveyed.

The first question, which centered on Leandro mandate (2004) bringing more qualified educators to the district was majority positive. While 45 or 58.4% said yes Leandro did bring more highly qualified educators to the district, another 32 or 41.6% said it did not. This is expected because the mandate was not fully funded to begin with. The administrator perceived outcomes are actually better than most experts and predicted.

The second question, which centered on Leandro mandate (2004) bringing more qualified administrators to the district was statistical even. While 39 or 50.6% said yes Leandro did bring more highly qualified educators to the district, another 38 or 49.4% said it did not.

Survey Question 13: Do you think additional Leandro funds provided to your district have made a notable difference in the recruitment and retention of high quality educators and administrators?

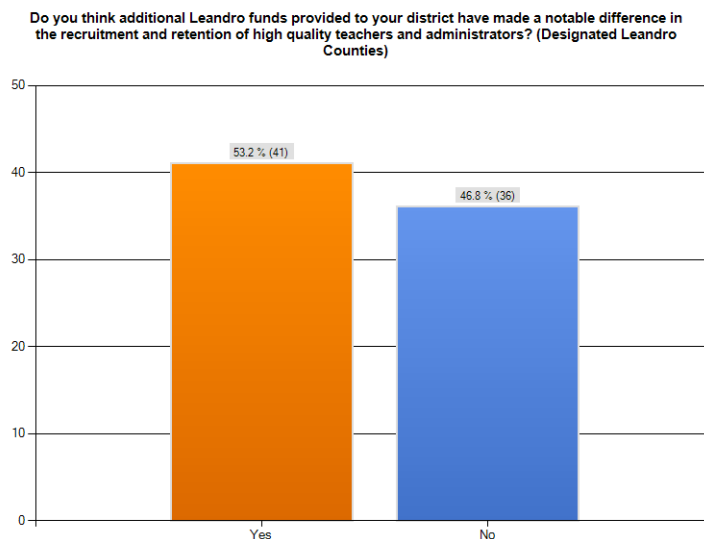


Figure 19 Do you think additional Leandro funds provided to your district have made a notable difference in the recruitment and retention of high quality educators and administrators?

The WCPSS group does not receive Leandro funds; therefore, no comparison could be made for this question. While 41 of the 80 Leandro participants, or 53.2%, said affirmed that Leandro funds provided to their districts made notable differences in the recruitment and retention of high quality educators and administrators, another 36 or 46.8% said the funds did not. Again, this is expected because the mandate was not fully funded. Another factor is that people who do not already live in the region may not want to settle in those rural areas the majority of the Leandro 2004 districts are located in.

Survey Question 14: In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students?

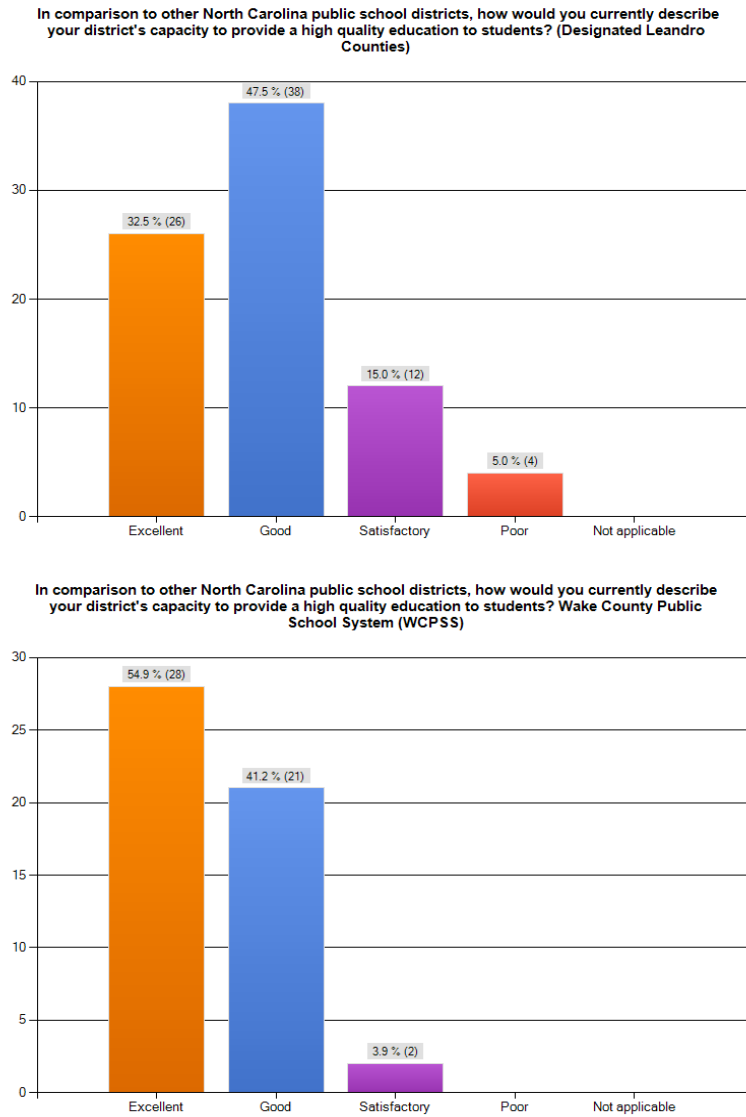


Figure 20 In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students?

The Leandro group's eighty participants' answers were modest. While 4 or 5.0% said poor, another 12 or 15.0% said satisfactory, 38 or 47.5% said good, while 26 or 32.5% said excellent.

The WCPSS group's fifty-one participants were more confident about their district's abilities. None of the participants said poor, 2 or 3.9% said satisfactory, another 21 or 41.2% said good, while an overwhelming 28 or 54.9% said excellent. While "good" scored the highest with the Leandro group, "excellent" scored the highest with the WCPSS group. WCPSS sample group self-rating of excellent was 22.4% higher than their counterparts in the Leandro group.

These scores show a perceived feeling of superiority in the WCPSS group in their ability to provide a sound basic education to their clients. Alternately, the perceived feeling of the Leandro group indicates their uncertainty about their ability to complete the same feat.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed look at the data analysis comprising this study. It includes the three aspects that make the triangulation method effective for this topic. It started by giving background demographics of each of the counties that participated in the study. Then it moved to the focus group interviews that solidify the topic and the questions that are so vital to answering the research. And lastly, it showed the results of a comparative administrative survey that used Leandro county participants and match their thought processes against those of the largest county in North Carolina.

Hopefully, this will allow even a novice to education to gain a full understanding of the case's merit and why it was so important to North Carolina education. With this foundation as a basis for understanding, most readers should grasp the long-term implications of the study and what the results mean to future residents of these counties.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The days of picking principals mainly for their ability to manage operations and keep order were long gone, they told us. If the ABCs and No Child Left Behind had not made this totally clear, Judge Manning certainly had. (NCDPI's Turnaround School Program (2006–2010) Page 37).

Several factors have impacted the low wealth school districts and have contributed to the achievement gap that continues to exist between underprivileged / low socio economic students and their counterparts. According to the NCDPI, this gap has also been aided by a crisis in funding. Other factors stemming from our global economy and “decreased revenues, expiration of a temporary sales tax, expiration of federal program dollars, and increased costs and demands for services combined have formed an economic perfect storm impacting the state’s public schools” (North Carolina Public Schools Funding Crisis April 2011). These issues impact the designated Leandro Counties (for the purpose of this study) ability to recruit “good principals.”

The specific problem of inequities/inadequacy in education has been handled by the judicial systems of numerous states since the late 1960s with unreliable results (Odden & Picus, 1992; Burrup, Brimley, & Garfield, 1999). In North Carolina, courts have been in deliberations for over eighteen years in an effort to remedy the imbalance here in the state’s educational system. Two landmark court cases have

laid out the means to accomplish this, *Leandro v. State of North Carolina* (1997) and *Hoke County Board of Education v. State* (2004). These cases combine to form the core of what is generally referred to as the Leandro Case. Several rulings were handed down that facilitated the shape of the ultimate decision in 2004. These rulings were founded on Superior Court Justice Howard Manning's inquiry into the educational organization of local school districts regionally in the state of North Carolina (Gillenwater, 2006 p.20).

This study determined perceptions about the effectiveness of funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality administrative personnel (since the 2004 ruling, i.e., Leandro monies) were instrumental in gaining and keeping those employees. The study gave insight to the reasoning "if you pay them, they will come." In more plain terms if you pay more money to attract quality administrators to the area, they will respond and come to work for the low wealth school districts indicated in the Leandro study. Or, was the truer answer that these additional funds really made little difference when an administrator is determining where to work in the region? Are other factors more important than money? If so, what are those factors and how much money is acceptable?

This mixed methods study of the research provided a triangulation (a three-technique approach) to answering the research question(s). Triangulation is often used to indicate that more than two methods are used in a study with a view to double (or triple) checking results. This is also called "cross examination" (Cheng, 2005). It looks at the various stakeholders in the Leandro mandate and how their opinions focus on the effectiveness or lack thereof. The idea is that one can be more

confident with a result if different methods lead to the same result. If an investigator uses only one method, the temptation is strong to believe in the findings. If an investigator uses two methods, the results may well clash. By using three methods to get at the answer to one question, the hope is that two of the three will produce similar answers, or if three clashing answers are produced, the investigator knows that the question needs to be reframed (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). This technique employed the approaches of historical analysis, focus group interviews, and online surveys. The historical analysis showed the framework in which Leandro exists and gave the reader an in depth understanding of what the foundations upon which the case has been built.

Qualitatively, the focus group interviews added a special qualification to the study. They were asked the same eight questions about the legislation and what it means to them and where it is headed. The researcher chose multiple perspectives from distinct groups to draw wide-ranging analysis. Of particular interest was the notion of whether these community members' responses/ideas about Leandro correlate with school based administrators' quantitative responses.

Quantitatively an online survey was given to administrators who fit the window of the study (2004-2011). The researcher employed the use of online surveys disseminated from the LEAs Central Offices to urge participation of the targeted group. These questions determined if the administrators who are presently working or have worked during the time of the Leandro determination in 2004 have a thorough grasp and understanding of the legislation. It will test the original Leandro counties along with an urban school district (Wake) as a comparison county to

determine if the sentiments were the same or greatly different when dealing with Leandro type issues. The online survey was used in this project to provide the respondents with a quick alternative to answer the necessary questions.

Initial Questions / Answers

The research questions that were a part of the initial query on this subject (found in Chapter One) will be answered. They are fashioned around school funding, funding allocation, recruitment and retention, and the other factors that drew administrators to their positions. The ten questions give insight into how and why the study is important and what conclusions from the data are relevant to addressing administrator recruitment and retention for these counties in future years.

How are schools in North Carolina funded?

According to NCDPI, the state of North Carolina's two largest sources of revenue contributing to its General Fund are personal income tax and sales tax. North Carolina's public schools are funded on average by 62 percent from state revenues; 23 percent from local funds (County); and 15 percent from federal funds. The state takes into account its Average Daily Membership. ADM for each school month is based on the sum of the days in membership for all students in individual LEAs, divided by the number of days in the school month. To be included in ADM, a student must have a class schedule that is at least one half of the school's instructional day.

Public schools unfortunately do not add per student income as they incur per student costs that continue to mount during a school year. Income for the district at

the local level is determined through local (county) taxes. Income at the state level is appropriated by the General Assembly. Funds at the federal level are allocated based on the U.S. Census that is taken each decade, which, in the case of a rapidly growing state, can introduce delays in much-needed funding (North Carolina Public Schools Funding Crisis April 2011).

How are additional funds allocated to the participating Local Educational Agencies? Furthermore, how is the additional funding implemented in those counties? Is it totally for additional student needs, or is some of the funding allocated for drawing personnel to the county who would otherwise not entertain the idea of working in a low wealth county?

Based on the initial Leandro case, a great deal of consideration went into the thought process about the effect of supplemental funding in schools. In 2004, Governor Easley and the North Carolina Board of Education, working jointly, started a pilot program known as the Disadvantaged Student Supplement Fund (DSSF) to further develop the education of at-risk students. (See appendices) The pilot program provided \$22.4 million to fund school improvements in 16 school districts in North Carolina during the 2004–2005 school year. All of the original Leandro counties were included except for Cumberland.

Legislation passed in House Bill 1473 states, “the disadvantaged student supplemental funding plan shall detail how the funds shall be used in conjunction with all other supplemental funding such as Low-Wealth, Small County, At Risk Students Services/Alternative Schools, and Improving Student Accountability, to

provide instructional support and other services that meet the educational needs of these students” (Session Law 2007-323; DPI Allotment Policy Guide).

The Leandro Group administrators were asked “How are Leandro monies primarily implemented in your district?” The Leandro group’s 80 participants’ perceptions were straightforward. This is how they responded: while 4, or 5.3%, said supplemental pay initiatives, another 21, or 28.0%, said additional personnel, and an overwhelming 50, or 66.7%, said student needs. No one chose to respond with “other,” and six participants chose not to answer this question.

How do Local Educational Agencies recruit and maintain these well-trained educators and good principals?

Moreover, if it is by using additional monies allocated by the Leandro legislation, is that enough to retain quality personnel in these low wealth areas?

The LEAs use supplemental pay or bonuses to attract these good principals. The school systems use these strategies when presenting a less than desirable work situation to an administrative candidate the board feels is worthwhile. However, these newly hired administrators may not have a full grasp on what it takes to work in the new system, especially if they intend to commute daily. That is how LEAs lose administrators each year. The administrators endure long commutes each day, and then another LEA that is both closer and more prominent makes them an offer. The lure of the closer, better paying LEA is too strong to resist, especially if the administrator works at a high school or middle school and he or she has a family. He or she has this long commute each day, and additional afterschool events at which he or she must be present, especially at the high school level. Thus, the less

well-funded LEA is likely to lose the quality administrator to the better funded, more easily accessible LEA.

Recruiting is impacted positively by the funding; however, retention of these quality administrators is, in the long-term, adversely affected by other factors. Usually retention in these situations continues until a better offer or position comes along. This style of revolving leadership is not what the bonus or supplemental pay is intended to foster, but this seems to have evolved into the end result. When the school administrator becomes “trained” or “good” it's time to move on to another, higher paying LEA.

Is supplemental pay in education effective?

a.) What are the outcomes of supplemental pay initiatives?

It clearly depends on whom you elicit a response from. If you ask administrators (by looking at our survey) you would certainly think so. But that answer is deceiving within itself. I would suggest to you that those administrator's answers are based on their benefit and are a little self-serving. If LEAs are offering more money for administrators to do the same work, then most of them are going to take that, provided that all other factors in the work situation are equal.

Administrators may also go to a more “economically challenged” school district provided it is an upgrade in professional opportunity. An Assistant Principal takes a new position in another county to become a principal; they may accept the position to advance. When asked about the teachers, the Leandro group said yes with a resounding 92.5%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same

sentiment with a 90.2% answer. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great impact on the teachers in each of the six counties.

When we asked them about themselves, the Leandro group administrators said yes with 90.0%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment with an 82.4% answer. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great impact on administrators in each of the six counties as well. However, the Leandro counties view supplemental pay as a more attractive measure than the WCPSS group.

What brought them to work at that school? Was it the promise of supplemental funds to make their salary greater? Alternatively, was it the fact that they were interested in the position regardless of the pay?

In questioning the Leandro Group of districts about this very question the answer was yes with a resounding 73.8%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment with a 76.5% answer. Administrators (in all of the study districts) thought supplemental pay to be a major consideration when teachers or administrators are exploring employment opportunities. Both groups viewed this as an attractive measure at a ratio of three to one.

While extra pay may assist a low wealth county in attracting / recruiting an administrative candidate, who exactly is this candidate? Is this a person who is from out of state? If you have used this supplemental pay initiative on an employee that already resides within the county does that fit the purpose of the supplemental pay? Or is this just an added incentive for a person who is already employed by your

LEA? Is this supplement enough to recruit and retain? Or is its use an improper means to an end?

Alternatively, is the truer answer that the additional funds really make little difference when an administrator is determining where to work in the region? Are other factors more important than money? Alternatively, are those factors and how much money is offered judged by a potential candidate on a sliding scale to determine what is acceptable? What specific factors influence Educators and Administrators in choosing what local districts they work in?

The assumption made by the researcher was that more emphasis would be put on “other factors” to decide what was acceptable by the administrative survey group(s). Those assumptions turned out not to be the case. Professional opportunity scored the highest between the two groups. This goes to prove that a new title and position is still the number one reason that people go from one job to another if salary is taken out of the equation. While 4 or 5.0% of the Leandro group said spouse’s employment, another 12 or 15.0% said near family members, another 8 or 10.0% said affordability or cost of living, while an overwhelming 56 or 70% said professional opportunity.

None of the participants in the WCPSS group said spouse’s employment, another 3 or 5.9% said near family members, another 5 or 9.8% said affordability or cost of living, another 9 or 17.6 had other reasons, while an overwhelming 34 or 66.7% said professional opportunity.

History and Demographics

In studying and understanding the basis for the Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate and its Impact on the Recruitment and Retention of Public School System Personnel in North Carolina, it was imperative to understand the history of adequacy-based education and be versed on the differences between the rural and urban settings within North Carolina as well.

Through the use of history, modern adequacy was shown from its infancy. The root of adequacy-based education is equity-based education. The U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* judgment in 1954 was supposed to end schools' segregation between African-Americans and Caucasians. In most states, no real progress toward integration, especially in Southern states, occurred until the early 1970s. Many schools stayed, as you would expect segregated because African-Americans generally resided in neighborhoods, which were distinct from Caucasians. In the south, the railroad tracks would also have divided the blacks from the whites; an added stimulus to social inequality. This segregation line became an idiom in American terminology. Small towns were often separated by the railroad tracks, giving cause to the rise to the phrase "the other side of the tracks."

To a certain extent, we are still dealing with this mentality today. The clear-cut indicators may be gone, but the socio-economic disparities still exist. That's why it is so important to get this notion of a sound basic education right.

We don't see the kind of resources allocated to these schools that would enable these schools to provide the education needed to prepare these students for tomorrow's market. The argument is "they can't learn." Well, we don't know that; we

know that a lot of the students assigned to these schools are really smart and capable of competing on a global scale.

Focus Group Interviews / Administrator Surveys

As a part of the triangulation process this was most important to the justification of whether the questions in common asked of the two groups. These interviews center on using expert experiences and opinions to give a rich colorful perspective from several different points of view as they pertain to the research questions multiple perspectives from distinct groups to draw wide-ranging analysis. They are a Court Judge, Lawyer(s), Minister, Community member, Principal and Central Office Administrator. Of particular interest, is the notion of whether these community members' responses/ideas about Leandro correlate with the school based administrators online survey answers? Focus group interviews are based on a core of eight questions asked of the participants. These interviews and surveys were conducted concurrently between October 2011 and February of 2012.

The first question was whether teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district is supplemental pay incentives a major consideration? Five out of the nine interview respondents thought that supplemental pay did have some influence on incoming teachers and administrators. While the margin is small it is still the majority opinion. When the administrators were asked the same question in comparison groups the response was Leandro group said yes with a resounding 92.5%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment with a 90.2% answer. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great

impact on the recruitment of teachers in each of the six counties. This is a question where the qualitative and quantitative methods convene to give a consensus answer.

The second question the focus group was asked to render an opinion on was, In your opinion, other than salary what is the most important factor influencing people to work as educators or administrators at your district? For this question all nine of the Focus group interview respondents gave answers that focused on work environment amenities (i.e. facilities, resources, technology) associated with or based on the leadership of the school. The Leandro group and the WCPSS group administrators who took the survey said

Professional opportunity was more important to them. The Focus group interview respondents were given open answers to elaborate on, while the administrators taking the survey were given specific choices to choose from for their answers. No ability for consensus on this question.

The third question was, based on your experience working in the district; student academic success is largely attributed to the work of educators or administrators? Why? The unanimous answer was the educators. Six of the nine respondents said that success in a school is largely attributed to the teacher's efforts in the classroom. And while all of them acknowledged the educators some of them did say that it was both groups working together for student success. The administrators' survey groups both agreed with the Focus group experts that the educators were more responsible for student success. This is another question

where the qualitative and quantitative methods convene to give a consensus answer.

The fourth question was do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified educators and administrators in the affected school districts? The majority of the focus group answers point to "no" as the answer to this question. The reasons they say no may differ but no all the same. In asking the Leandro group of administrators did the Leandro mandate (2004) bringing more qualified administrators to the district was statistical even. While 39 or 50.6% said yes Leandro did bring more highly qualified educators to the district, another 38 or 49.4% said it did not. Three people did not answer the question. This is another question where the qualitative and quantitative methods convene to give a consensus answer. If half of the administrators who completed the survey said no it has not resulted in more highly qualified administrators, the perception is that it is not helping.

The fifth question was in your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting educators and administrators? Seven of the nine respondents thought that was an effective strategy. The Leandro group said yes with a resounding 90.0%, while the WCPSS group also expressed the same sentiment with an 82.4% answer. It is clear that supplemental pay is perceived to have a great impact on the recruitment of administrators in each of the six counties as well. This is another question where the qualitative and quantitative methods convene to give a consensus answer.

The sixth question was how does your district mainly recruit its educators? This was a key question in the interviews. While all of the focus group participants were not members or had never been school or education workers some of them chose not to respond to this question. There was no ability for consensus on this question.

The seventh question was in comparison to other North Carolina public school districts, how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students? The nine interview respondents of the group either said no, they did not think their districts currently provided a high quality education in comparison to the other North Carolina districts. One felt they were somewhat comparable to an average district. The answers provided show a perceived feeling of superiority in the WCPSS group in their ability to provide a sound basic education to their clients. Conversely, the perceived feeling of the Leandro group would lead to a feeling of more uncertainty as to their ability to complete the same feat. This is another question where the qualitative and quantitative methods convene to give a consensus answer. The Focus group (interviews) and the Leandro group (surveys) came to the same conclusion about the ability of the districts to provide a high quality education.

Of the seven questions that were virtually the same, the focus group (interviews), and the administrator surveys, five of the questions were able to reach consensus between the two groups. The two questions that did not reach consensus were because of the question design. The survey participant's questions were not open ended like the interviews, therefore the ability to reach the same

conclusions for those questions were challenged from the beginning. But they did yield rich, colorful answers that enhanced the study.

Policy Implications

Taxpayer groups and other opponents have disagreed with increased supplemental funding, mainly because it's implemented through tax increases. They make a case that more money for schools only assures elevated pay for teachers and administrators and not necessarily improved student achievement. This is true. Recruitment of top personnel will need additional funds to support not only recruitment but retention as well. However, this does not guarantee student achievement or a sound basic education.

According to research conducted by the NCDPI Financial and Business Services division, "supplemental funding is having a positive impact in some districts, whereas other districts are showing little or no change in End-of-Course and End-of-Grade Composite Scores" (Cook, Fowler, and Harris, 2008).

This research group also made several recommendations as well:

- DPI must hold districts accountable to their plans
- If school districts fail to direct their resources to their disadvantaged populations, consequences need to be indicated and implemented
- If a district does not outline what they are going to do, the plan should not be approved
- If a district does not perform as the plan indicates,

DPI should implement a policy requiring that a certain percentage of funds be

redirected towards specific staff development.

For future research in this area, I recommend a further breakdown of funding streams in order to analyze more specific areas in which these funding expenditures have an influence on student proficiency levels. In addition, once trends are developed, further qualitative research is necessary to define what is being done in schools that are successful based on how they are spending their allotments. For instance, what does it mean to provide professional development for teachers? This can vary significantly from school to school. Once the numbers identify the trends, it is imperative to define what those numbers mean so that future policies can be assessed and implemented clearly for future resource allocation among disadvantaged student school districts.

Social scientists Donald Tomaskovic-Devey and Vincent Roscigno (n.d.) from NCSU have summed it up in this statement.

As a matter of public policy, the current uneven development of the economic and social resources of the state is linked to the quality of schools. Regional differences in wealth and educational investments have contributed to the contrast between Sunbelt prosperity in Raleigh, Greensboro, and Charlotte and the shadows of poverty in much of the rest of the state. Those inequalities will grow and the state will face a noncompetitive future in a world economy that increasingly chooses its low-educated labor from the poor countries of the world and its high-wage educated labor from those countries and regions that commit resources to educating their children. Bringing all

schools up to the state average will increase equality of educational opportunity within the state.

Equalizing school spending at high levels is fair and good public policy. Preserving destructive inequities in school spending is shortsighted and a disastrous long-run public policy. It may even be unconstitutional.

One of the weaknesses in the implementation of Leandro or the post 2004 analysis of that case by policy makers in particular is that it has been only about funding. And that's the only thing that matters. Giving more resources would, ideally be directed to serving these at-risk students at the core of the case. And I'm not discounting the importance of those funds. But, the challenges that were brought up with Leandro, the challenges that these school districts are faced with, were broader than just funding. I am not confident that this sort of implementation of this decision has really embraced the broad scope that it could. While you do see more funds have been made available, I don't think you can draw a causal connection between those funds and changes in those school districts. Educators are important but they're not they shouldn't be the exclusive components of looking at addressing educational issues or student achievement.

But a lot of people don't understand that. They don't understand that decades of low achievement can't be remedied by, "so they get same amount of money now." It's going to take some time to bring that level because you talking about the same thing we've been talking about before. It's not just the schools. It's the whole community; it's the mindset of education and what education brings to your life and

how it enriches your life because those things still are not being relayed from one generation to another. Occasionally, an educator will encounter a highly motivated student from a family of underachievers or lower achievers. I mean if you're trying to turn this around, then the money probably just shouldn't go to the schools. It should go to the educating parents in these areas as well. Because, when you start talking about where does the school end and when does school begin. Does school when the kid goes home? No. I mean because that kid is probably thinking about coming back to school, and how was that you know there best time during the day is the stuff they do at school, not the stuff they do at home, because they may be parents at home or they may be the older siblings that acts like a parents when they get home and that burden and responsibility, they don't like that. They like being at school where they are more concerned about themselves. So, all of these things are factors in dealing with academic achievement and where students go. And I don't think that anybody's really taking that under consideration.

Recommendations

1. **Appoint a Special Master** – My research leads me to conclude Leandro schools would be much better off if they were afforded the services of a special master. A "special master" is appointed by a court to carry out some sort of action on its behalf. Theoretically, a "special master" is distinguished from a "master". A master's function is essentially investigative, compiling evidence or documents to inform some future action by the court, whereas a special master carries out some direct action on the part of the court. Cases involving special masters often involve

situations where it has been shown that governmental entities are violating civil rights. It would seem that a special master would have been appropriate to report to Judge Manning on the status of the schools receiving funds and even offer direction to schools. Instead, the NCDPI has been afforded the role of a “de facto” special master in this ongoing case.

The low wealth districts have been assigned “Turnaround teams” whose function is to advise the schools in the use of their funds and daily operations and the process of putting low- achieving schools on the path to improvement.

While the Turnaround teams have done an admirable job in this endeavor, the issue still remains; they are still a part of the entity (state education) that is at least, partially responsible for the disparity in the first place. How can they effectively be objective when it comes to education when they are the ones ultimately responsible for providing it?

The court has its main focus on test scores. Looks at EOGs, EOCs, and End of Grade and End of Course tests, an adequate yearly progress (AYP) and other objective measures, or methods that are considered to be objective measures to determine whether or not the funds are being used appropriately. That’s a fairly narrow basis for valuation. There are a number of ways to measure how good a job any school is doing. Tests scores certainly serve as one measure, but other factors, like graduation rates, suspension and discipline, absenteeism, and parental involvement indicators must also be considered. At the high school levels how many students are enrolled in advanced placement courses taking SATs etc., so there are a lot of other factors the court can focus on. There are broader measures

that can be put into place and a special master could help with the facilitation of that. Not just move within the confines of the organization as it exists but, maneuver outside those confines to find what works.

The state entity (NCDPI) is also responsible for the scoring method in which the schools and students are evaluated. They have the autonomy to boost or lessen the cut off for a raw score to adjust achievement within the state. Again, how is it justifiable for them to also determine if these procedures put in place to offset the achievement gap or poor performance by low wealth districts are working when they are the same ones providing the assessment?

This is not to say they would ever abuse this trust that has been placed in them but simply, where are the checks and balances that should be present in this system? Some people are concerned about funding and how it is spent; others are concerned about upward mobility of educators within the state etc. Who is solely representative of the students who are not receiving a sound basic education? At this point I would have to say no one.

2. Socio-Economic Status - All counties has specific concerns they have to deal with that are germane to their location(s). Inherently, low wealth counties have to deal with a lower economic base when funding education. Regional differences in wealth and educational investments have contributed to the contrast between prosperity in some places and the shadows of poverty in others. North Carolina had an unemployment rate of 10.5 percent in January 2011. The national rate for the same time period was 9 percent.

While all states have experienced diminished revenues, North Carolina's

public schools were smacked exceptionally hard because they collect sixty-two percent of their funding from state revenues as compared to the national average of about forty-seven percent. Local funding for public schools has also diminished. North Carolina had the sixth highest growth in 2000-09-population change (U.S. Census Bureau) in the nation and a 16.6 percent growth rate as compared to the nation's 9.1 percent rate during that period. This growth brings increased demands on public schools (N.C. Budget toolkit April 2011).

The economic situation already contributed to a poor economy. This leads you to the question, "how can Leandro or any other judicial ruling produce equity in a society based in a capitalistic system that not only promotes, but also requires classism, and subsequently social class stratification?" (Gillenwater, 2006, pg. 29).

3. Penalty for Early Departure - One of the major implications for success in low wealth counties is a steady constant staff that creates some longevity. People who understand the community and build bonds in that community start to see a rate of success. People who are not vested in the community often do not see these types of changes. The correlation in a community between success and a steady staff is apparent. Where does the money go? After the low-wealth district has spent a certain amount of dollars training its faculty and investing in them they are now ready to be successful. Now imagine if after that first year they leave and take all of that good training with them on to another county. Once they have a greater understanding of their situation within you district, they take that training (all your professional development dollars) and move on.

Newly hired employees contribute to a looping phase where people who are not necessarily as skilled as their predecessors are continually replacing highly qualified people. Those defecting teachers and administrators are also not growing in their positions with you and your district. Where does that leave that low wealth district? Out shopping for a new administrator to come in and fill the void or to promote from within. That probably leads to the hiring of someone who was probably not ready to assume leadership at that time.

“We can’t find qualified teachers and we cannot retain the ones we are able to hire” (Manning, 2005, p. 27). There is evidence to suggest that compensation affects educator retention (Hansen et al., 2004). Leandro does not supply any guiding principles for compensation, so it is left up to the legislature to establish initial pay guidelines, which allow budgetary limits to influence it, and the LEAs to supplement those salaries, perpetuating the imbalance based on property taxes. Obviously, Leandro has not endeavored to revolutionize the economic system, nor has any other judicial ruling on education. It will have to work within the framework of our present economic system.

What about the supplement or “bonus” money the board agreed to pay the new person before they left. Can that money be recovered? Or was it a one-time deal to get them to come? Maybe this supplement or bonus money should be forfeited if the employee does not fulfill their end of the contract. For example, if a new contract is for three years and a bonus is included, then only half of the bonus should be paid at the beginning of the contract. The other half would be contingent upon the successful completion of the obligation. This would have potential new

hires thinking twice before the either accepted a new job or left an old one. Loyalty to the community would have to be a part of accepting the bonus. The research shows that administrators from both the Leandro group and the WCPSS group thought a new job opportunity was only second to supplemental pay when it came to accepting a new position. None of the respondents mentioned community loyalty; however, perhaps such a sense of community would help student achievement in low wealth districts.

4. Administrative concerns – Just offering money to new administrators without other variables being in place is just a waste of money. If regions do not work to make their areas more attractive to the administrators and their families, the revolving carousel of administration in these counties will continue.

The result may be to hire a local person who is stable and has a commitment to the community. In the long term, this may be a better use of funds and a move that promotes longevity and school vision. This, along with intensive training may yield better results than continuing to hire new personnel every year.

5. Explore further dichotomy in the research - Narrow the focus- this study focused on the narrow perspective of the educational administrator for recruitment and retention and how supplemental pay affected it. Further research is needed to broaden our understanding of recruitment and retention as it pertains to the use of supplemental funds to attract and maintain personnel. While there is plenty of research on equity/adequacy-based educational initiatives around the country, there is very little about how those school districts are affected by their ability to recruit or maintain their personnel. As I see it, school systems' ability to maintain their good

employees while they strive for educational excellence will become the driving force in school achievement.

Future studies should focus on distinguishing between the two issues (recruitment or retention) because they are actually very different problems to have. The researcher should narrow the focus even further to either the administrators or just the teachers. This way, the study will be able to get closer to the perceptions of one group by "drilling down" into what they need for sustainment.

Finally, we need research that will impact Leandro districts going forward and yield some strategies for retention of the group being studied. Author William Castetter's (1992) statement about trying to find personnel resources was, "where can we find the most competent instructor?" However the question that should accompany that one is "and how long can we keep them working for us?"

Conclusion

The state of North Carolina's future depends on training its students of every race and ethnic background for future success. Over the past decade, the state has been successful in showing improvement for all of its students on many achievement reports. On the other hand, North Carolina has been unsuccessful in notably narrowing the achievement disparity between learners of various ethnicities and races.

In 2011, the Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation in North Carolina published a report titled *Turning Around North Carolina's Lowest Achieving*

Schools (2006-2010). In this report, the group cited several reasons for low performance in North Carolina's low wealth districts. They include:

- Challenging economic and demographic conditions, whether newly developed or chronic
- Serious and widespread discipline problems
- Low academic demands and expectations among teachers and low aspirations among students
- High principal and teacher turnover
- A negative school identity in the minds of teachers, students, and the surrounding community
- Ineffective leadership, ranging from authoritarian top-down leaders to leaders that were too eager to please as well as leaders who failed to enforce discipline and follow through on decisions
- Alienated teachers marking time in survival mode, isolated within their own classrooms (Thompson et al, 2011)

These reasons, or symptoms, are currently still present in low wealth schools throughout the state. In many cases, they are related to leadership. They are all related to having a "good Principal" in your school. This is why it is gravely important to school success to have good leadership. This leadership should have vision, and be able to make key decisions for the school community. These areas, the Leandro counties may not be able to maintain recruitment due to mundane social surroundings. They may be destined to continue to hire new school leaders the

same way, thus relying on a so-called merry-go-round of new personnel every two to three years. This inconsistent, revolving leadership stunts whatever real growth could be made in these regions. Administrative stability is crucial to this revitalization in Leandro/low wealth school systems.

It is also important to keep competent people in these key positions. These areas require dedication, political determination, thoughtful action, and resources. Resources have been at the forefront of Leandro since it was introduced to the courts in 1994. This study has shown that resources alone cannot attract and retain “highly qualified” personnel to these areas. Unfortunately, the country has faced very troubling economic issues that have indirectly hampered school achievement over the last four years. Unless low wealth county achievement becomes a main concern for state and local politicians, more time will pass in which learners depart North Carolina’s public schools without fully developing their talents and realizing their potential by receiving a “sound basic education.” The socio-economic price of lost genius is a cost today’s North Carolina cannot afford to pay.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTENT

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Letter of Intent for Human Subjects Review

Institutional Review Board for the
Use of Human Subjects in Research (IRB)

Principal Investigator: **Voris W. McBurnette**

Faculty Sponsor (if applicable): **Dr. Kevin Brady**

Title of Study: **The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.**

Proposed Source of Funding: **None**

Brief Project Summary: **This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by poor school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts.**

This document serves as notice of the Principal Investigator's acknowledgement that the above referenced proposal involves human subjects, and requires IRB review. Once the proposal receives a fundable score or is funded by the sponsor, an appropriate IRB application will be submitted. The investigator understands that no portion of the research that involves human subjects according to 45 CFR 46 will be conducted until the proposal has received review and approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Principal Investigator's Certification

"As soon as I learn that the proposal may/will be funded, I will submit the appropriate IRB form for review. I am aware that I must receive IRB approval before I approach, recruit or enroll any human subjects into this study, and that my award will be limited until IRB approval has been received."

Principal Investigator's Signature

Date

Faculty Sponsor's Signature (if applicable)

Date

IRB Acknowledgement of Receipt

The IRB office has received and documented this letter.

IRB Chair/Designee

Date

APPENDIX B
IRB APPROVAL

North Carolina State University is a land-grant
university and a constituent institution of the
University of North Carolina

Office of Research and Innovation
Division of Research Administration

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Campus Box 7514
Raleigh, North Carolina 27695-7514

919.515.2444 (phone)
919.515.7721 (fax)

From: Deb Paxton, IRB Administrator
North Carolina State University
Institutional Review Board

Date: June 3, 2011

Title: The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina

IRB#: 2075-11-5

Dear Mr. McBurnette,

The project listed above has been reviewed by the NC State Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research, and is approved for one year. **This protocol will expire on May 31, 2012 and will need continuing review before that date.**

NOTE:

1. You must use the attached consent forms which have the approval and expiration dates of your study.
2. This board complies with requirements found in Title 45 part 46 of The Code of Federal Regulations. For NCSU the Assurance Number is: FWA00003429.
3. Any changes to the protocol and supporting documents must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
4. If any unanticipated problems occur, they must be reported to the IRB office within 5 business days by completing and submitting the unanticipated problem form on the IRB website.
5. Your approval for this study lasts for one year from the review date. If your study extends beyond that time, including data analysis, you must obtain continuing review from the IRB.

Sincerely,


Deb Paxton
NC State IRB

APPENDIX C

REQUEST FOR NC TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS DATA

How to Request Data for Use in Your Research

We ask that you address the following in your request:

1. What is your affiliation? If applicable: who is your advisor?

My name is Voris McBurnette, A North Carolina State University student under the faculty sponsorship of Dr. Kevin Brady in Educational Leadership and Supervision is conducting research as a part of a mixed methods dissertation in regard to Leandro funding.

2. Be clear on the research question you are addressing and why/how the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions data is necessary and how it will be utilized to answer your question.

This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by low wealth school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts. The study may enhance funding from the state for many more school districts based on this and other research conclusions.

3. Be specific about the data you need (whole state set, or select districts and survey year if applicable). Also please address if you need demographic information provided by the respondents as part of the database.

I would like to request the Teacher Working Condition Surveys for each year from 2004 to 2010 for the following counties. This is for a Leandro dissertation concerning Hoke, Wake, Robeson, Cumberland, Vance and Halifax counties. No demographics needed.

4. If demographics are requested you must also address the following question below.
 - a. What assurances will you make to protect the anonymity of individual responses while in possession of the data and in any publication?*

N/A
5. Ensure that you send any final product/publication to the New Teacher Center at least one week prior to publication. Will do.

*You do not need to be overly extensive in your responses to these questions, but we do ask that you ensure the anonymity of the survey responses is protected.

If you have further questions, please contact #####, Associate Director of the Teaching and Learning Conditions Initiative at: #####@#####.org

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM -- INTERVIEW

North Carolina State University
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH
(Interview)

This consent form is valid May 31, 2011 through May 31, 2012

Title of Study: **The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.**

Principal Investigator: Voris W. McBurnette

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kevin Brady

What are some general things participants should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Participants have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form participants will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If participants do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by poor school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

Interviews with key informants

People who agree to participate will be interviewed. These interviews will take place in person or via telephone. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions will be provided to key informants via email for comment and edit. During transmission, no identifying information will be on the transcript nor in the transmittal email.

Interviews will take between 60 and 90 minutes.

Risks

Participants in interviews will be asked to discuss and critique their current district. Interview responses will be protected by confidentiality measures. Because specific persons in the history of the Leandro case will be targeted, a small number of interview participants will be involved. The interview participants are either outside the school system or a high ranking school official, so risks are minimized.

Benefits

Participants may indirectly benefit from the research by shedding light on the distribution of and use of Leandro resources. There is no direct benefit expected to the subject, but knowledge may be gained that could help others.

Confidentiality

With respect to confidential information obtained during this study. **In the case of interviews**, the information in the study records **confidentiality cannot be guaranteed**. Participants are identifiable by their responses. Data will be stored securely in safe at a secure location supervised by the researcher. Answers participants give may be used in future endeavors by the researcher and or his faculty sponsor for further advancement in this area of research. **The researcher will grant access to the faculty sponsor and a third party for transcription only.**

Compensation

For participating in this study participants will receive NO compensation.

What if you have questions about this study?

If participants have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Voris McBurnette, at

What if participants have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If participants feel they have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or their rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, participants may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator

Consent To Participate

"I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled."

Subject's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT – SURVEY

North Carolina State University
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH
(Survey)

This consent form is valid May 31, 2011 through May 31, 2012

Title of Study: **The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and Its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.**

Principal Investigator: Voris W. McBurnette

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kevin Brady

What are some general things participants should know about research studies?

Participants are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. Participants are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form Participants will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to participants. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by poor school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

Online Survey

Survey participants will be asked to go the survey URL and instructed to complete the survey. Survey Monkey is a private American company that enables users to create their own free web-based surveys. The researchers use of the enhanced paid product on Survey Monkey will be configured for anonymous submissions. There will be no record of who participates in the survey.

Surveys should take about 15 – 20 minutes.

Risks

Participants in the survey will be asked to discuss and critique their current district. This may pose employment risk to them. Risks are minimized for survey participants by the researcher not collecting any identifying information on survey responses.

Benefits

Participants may indirectly benefit from the research by shedding light on the distribution of and use of Leandro resources. There is no direct benefit expected to the subject, but knowledge may be gained that could help others.

Confidentiality

With respect to confidential information obtained during this study. The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Participants are not identifiable by their responses. Random alphanumeric identifiers will be used to provide confidentiality of the participant responses and no identifying information (e.g. age, race) will be used in describing individual responses. Data will be stored securely in safe at a secure location supervised by the researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link participants to the study. Participants will NOT be asked to write their name son any study materials so that no one can match their identity to the answers that they provide.

Compensation

For participating in this study participants will receive NO compensation.

What if participants have questions about this study?

If participants have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, they may contact the researcher, Voris McBurnette, at

What if participants have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If participants feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or their rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, participants may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator,

Consent To Participate

"I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled."

Proceed to the Survey

APPENDIX F

LEANDRO STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions for Leandro Study

In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration?

In your opinion, other than salary, what is the most important factor influencing people to work as teachers or administrators at your district?

Based on your experience working in the district, student academic success is largely attributed to the work of teachers or administrators? Why?

Do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified teachers and administrators in the affected school districts?

In your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting teachers and administrators?

How does your district mainly recruit its teachers?

In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts, how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students?

Is there any aspect of the funding of school funding and or student adequacy that you would like to discuss?

APPENDIX G

LEANDRO STUDY SURVEY QUESTIONS

Survey Questions for Leandro Study

1. In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration?

Yes

No

2. In your opinion, other than salary, what is the most important factor influencing people to work as teachers or administrators at your district?

- Professional opportunity
- Spouse's employment
- Near family members
- Affordability (cost of living)
- Other (Please specify)

3. Based on your experience working in the district, student academic success is largely attributed to the work of teachers or administrators?

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Neither (please specify)

4. Do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified teachers in your district?

- Yes
- No, Why

5. Do you think the recent Leandro court decision in 2004 has resulted in more highly qualified administrators in your district?

- Yes
- No (why?)

6. Have you ever heard of the Leandro court decision?

- Yes,
- No, skip to question #_____

7. In your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting administrators?

- Yes
- No

1. In your opinion, is the offering of supplemental pay effective in the recruiting of teachers?

- Yes
- No

2. How does your district mainly recruit its teachers?

- College and university campuses
- Attendance at educator job fairs
- Offer higher salaries than competing or nearby districts
- Other (Please specify)

3. How are Leandro monies primarily implemented in your district?

- Student needs
- Additional personnel
- Supplemental Pay initiatives
- Other (Please specify)

4. Based on your understanding, who/what is primarily responsible for funding in your district?

- Superintendent's discretion
- Assistant Superintendent for Finance's discretion
- Average daily membership (ADM)
- Principal's discretion
- None of the Above

5. How are North Carolina public K-12 schools primarily funded?

- Local monies
- State monies
- Federal monies
- None of the above

6. What is your race?

- African American
- Asian

- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Other

7. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

8. In your district, which of the following most closely resembles your job position/title?

- Administrator
- Lead teacher
- Shared time as an administrator and teacher
- Teacher

9. Which district do you work in?

1. Do you think additional Leandro funds provided to your district have made a notable difference in the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers and administrators?

- Yes
- No

2. Have you ever heard of Judge Howard Manning discussed in relationship to the Leandro court decision?

- Yes
- No

3. In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts, how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students?

- Excellent
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor
- Not applicable

4. In your opinion, what are the major shortcomings of your district's administrators?

5. In your opinion, what are the major shortcomings of your district's teachers?

6. Has your district recently taken any formal action towards increased professional development with administrators?

Yes, by.....

No, they have

not ...

7. Has your district recently taken any formal action towards increased professional development with teachers?

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX H

LEANDRO QUESTIONNAIRE – WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. Leandro Questionnaire

Wake County Public School System is serving as a comparison county in this study.

1. In your opinion, is the offering of supplemental pay effective in the recruiting of teachers? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Yes
 No

2. In your opinion, are supplemental pay options effective in recruiting administrators? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Yes
 No

3. In your opinion, when teachers or administrators are considering employment in your district are supplemental pay incentives a major consideration? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Yes
 No

4. How does your district mainly recruit its teachers? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- College and university campuses
 Attendance at educator job fairs
 Offer higher salaries than competing or nearby districts
 Other
 Don't know

5. Based on your understanding, who/what is primarily responsible for funding in your district? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Superintendent's discretion
 Assistant Superintendent for Finance's discretion
 Average daily membership (ADM)

- Principal's discretion
- None of the Above
- Don't know

6. How are North Carolina public K-12 schools primarily funded? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Local monies
- State monies
- Federal monies
- None of the above

7. What is your race? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- African American
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Other

8. What is your gender? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Male
- Female

9. In your district, which of the following most closely resembles your job position/title? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Administrator
- Lead teacher
- Shared time as an administrator and teacher
- Teacher

10. Which district do you work in? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

11. In your opinion, other than salary, what is the most important factor influencing people to work as teachers or administrators at your district? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Professional opportunity
- Spouse's employment
- Near family members

Affordability (cost of living)

Other (please specify)

12. Based on your experience working in the district, student academic success is largely attributed to the work of teachers or administrators?

Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

Teachers

Administrators

Other (please specify)

13. Have you ever heard of the Leandro court decision? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

Yes

No

14. Have you ever heard of Judge Howard Manning discussed in relationship to the Leandro court decision? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

Yes

No

15. In comparison to other North Carolina public school districts, how would you currently describe your district's capacity to provide a high quality education to students? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

Excellent

Good

Satisfactory

Poor

Not applicable

16. In your opinion, what are the major shortcomings of your district's administrators? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

17. In your opinion, what are the major shortcomings of your district's teachers? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

18. Has your district recently taken any formal action towards increased professional development with administrators? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

19. Has your district recently taken any formal action towards increased professional development with teachers? Wake County Public School System (WCPSS)

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

APPENDIX I
ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Average Daily Membership
DPI or NCDPI	The North Carolina Department of Public instruction
DSSF	Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding
LEA	Local Educational Administration
PSF	Public School Fund of North Carolina
WCPSS	Wake County Public School System

APPENDIX J

IRB SUBMISSION FOR NEW STUDIES

North Carolina State University
 Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research
 SUBMISSION FOR NEW STUDIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date Submitted: <u>May 3, 2011</u>
1a. Revised Date: <u>May 31, 2011</u>
Title of Project: <u>The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.</u>
2. Principal Investigator: <u>Voris W. McBurnette</u>
3. Department: <u>Leadership, Policy and Adult and Higher Education (LPAHE)</u>
4. Campus Box Number: <u>608 Poe Hall, Campus Box 7801</u>
5. Email: <u>vwmcbum@ncsu.edu</u>
6. Phone Number: <u>(919) 515-3127</u>
7. Fax Number: <u>(919) 515-8950</u>
8. Faculty Sponsor Name and Email Address if Student Submission: <u>Dr. Kevin Brady</u>
9. Source of Funding? (required information): <u>none</u>
10. Is this research receiving federal funding?: <u>no</u>
11. If Externally funded, include sponsor name and university account number: _____
12. RANK: <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Student: <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate; <input type="checkbox"/> Masters; or <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): <u>Ed. D</u>

As the principal investigator, my signature testifies that I have read and understood the University Policy and Procedures for the Use of Human Subjects in Research. I assure the Committee that all procedures performed under this project will be conducted exactly as outlined in the Proposal Narrative and that any modification to this protocol will be submitted to the Committee in the form of an amendment for its approval prior to implementation.

Principal Investigator:

Voris W. McBurnette _____ * 3 May 2011
 (typed/printed name) (signature) (date)

As the faculty sponsor, my signature testifies that I have reviewed this application thoroughly and will oversee the research in its entirety. I hereby acknowledge my role as the principal investigator of record.

Faculty Sponsor:

Dr. Kevin Brady _____ * _____
 (typed/printed name) (signature) (date)

***Electronic submissions to the IRB are considered signed via an electronic signature. For student submissions this means that the faculty sponsor has reviewed the proposal prior to it being submitted and is copied on the submission.**

Please complete this application and email as an attachment to: debra_paxton@ncsu.edu or send by mail to: Institutional Review Board, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (Administrative Services III). **Please include consent forms and other study documents with your application and submit as one document.**

For SPARCS office use only

Reviewer Decision (Expedited or Exempt Review)

Exempt Approved Approved pending modifications Table

Expedited Review Category: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8a 8b 8c 9

 Reviewer Name Signature Date

North Carolina State University
 Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research

GUIDELINES FOR A PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

In your narrative, address each of the topics outlined below. Every application for IRB review must contain a proposal narrative, and failure to follow these directions will result in delays in reviewing/processing the protocol.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Briefly describe in lay language the purpose of the proposed research and why it is important.

This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by poor school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts.

Interviews with key informants, archival record review, and online survey

2. If student research, indicate whether for a course, thesis, dissertation, or independent research.

B. SUBJECT POPULATION

1. How many subjects will be involved in the research?

Estimates or ranges are acceptable. Please be aware that if you recruit over 10% more participants than originally requested, you will need to submit a request to modify your recruitment numbers.

Key informants from or representing Leandro counties:

Judge: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Lawyer: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Principal: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Parent: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Community member: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Survey participants:

A total of 300 Administrators and teachers will be invited to participate in an online survey. Because smaller schools may not have designated administrators, any faculty member who has administrative duties will be eligible to participate as an administrator in the survey.

xxxx county is the comparison county, 5 Leandro counties for a total of 6 counties.

2. Describe how subjects will be recruited. Please provide the IRB with any recruitment materials that will be used.

Key informants will be contacted by phone and asked to participate. If they agree, an interview time will be scheduled. The interview may be in person or conducted over the phone.

Administrators and teachers will be sent an email from a central office administrator asking them to complete the survey and providing the survey URL. The central office administrator will not receive any information about who did or did not choose to participate.

Existing school financial information from other schools in other states where similar legislation has occurred will be sought. This information is likely to be published in public legal decisions regarding the legislation. News archives (i.e. newspaper articles since 2004) will be reviewed. Judicial documents such as memorandums, official findings, editorials, etc. that are publicly available will be reviewed. Existing data from NC teacher working condition exit surveys will be accessed and reviewed for reasons that teachers are choosing to leave. This information is available on a public website and is provided in the aggregate by schools. There are no unique identifiers associated with the data. At least 90% of exiting faculty must have completed the survey in order for results to be published on the website.

3. List specific eligibility requirements for subjects (or describe screening procedures), including those criteria that would exclude otherwise acceptable subjects.

Any teacher or administrator in the selected counties are eligible for the survey. Key informants will be selected based on their involvement in and relationship to the Leandro case.

--

4. Explain any sampling procedure that might exclude specific populations.

N/A

5. Disclose any relationship between researcher and subjects - such as, teacher/student; employer/employee.

The researcher was an educator in Johnston and Wake Counties, and may have an acquaintance with study participants. Such a relationship would be incidental, is no longer in effect as the researcher is no longer an educator, and should not impact participation decision or data quality.

6. Check any vulnerable populations included in study:

- minors (under age 18) - if so, have you included a line on the consent form for the parent/guardian signature
- fetuses
- pregnant women
- persons with mental, psychiatric or emotional disabilities
- persons with physical disabilities
- economically or educationally disadvantaged
- prisoners
- elderly
- students from a class taught by principal investigator
- other vulnerable population.

7. If any of the above are used, state the necessity for doing so. Please indicate the approximate age range of the minors to be involved.

The targeted districts are low SES because that is what the Leandro legislation targets.

C. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED

1. In lay language, describe completely all procedures to be followed during the course of the experimentation. Provide sufficient detail so that the Committee is able to assess potential risks to human subjects. In order for the IRB to completely understand the experience of the subjects in your project, please provide a detailed outline of everything subjects will experience as a result of participating in your project. Please be specific and include information on all aspects of the research, through subject recruitment and ending when the subject's role in the project is complete. All descriptions should include the informed consent process, interactions between the subjects and the researcher, and any tasks, tests, etc. that involve subjects. If the project involves more than one group of subjects (e.g. teachers and students, employees and supervisors), please make sure to provide descriptions for each subject group.

Informed consent for the interview will be presented in the email from a central office administrator. Participants will be provided with the survey URL and instructed to complete the survey if they agree to participate. Survey monkey will be configured for anonymous submissions. There will be no record of who participates in the survey. When reporting survey results, the researcher will protect identities by aggregating results from any demographic characteristic groups with fewer than five respondents.

Interviews with key informants will take place in person or via telephone. Interview and survey consents will be distributed separately to the appropriate participant groups. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions will be provided to key informants via email for comment and edit. During transmission, no identifying information will be on the transcript nor in the transmittal email.

2. How much time will be required of each subject?

Surveys should take about 15 – 20 minutes.
Interviews will take between 60 and 90 minutes.

D. POTENTIAL RISKS

1. State the potential risks (psychological, social, physical, financial, legal or other) connected with the proposed procedures and explain the steps taken to minimize these risks.

Participants in both interviews and the survey will be asked to discuss and critique their current district. This may pose employment risk to them. Risks are minimized for survey participants by not collecting any identifying information on survey responses. Interview responses will be protected by confidentiality measures.

Because specific persons in the history of the Leandro case will be targeted, and low interview participants will be involved, there is a risk that individual will be identified from quotes. The interview participants are either outside the school system or a high ranking school official, so risks are minimized. Participants will be alerted in the informed consent form that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

2. Will there be a request for information that subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive (e.g. private behavior, economic status, sexual issues, religious beliefs, or other matters that if made public might impair their self-esteem or reputation or could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability)?

No.

- a. If yes, please describe and explain the steps taken to minimize these risks.

3. Could any of the study procedures produce stress or anxiety, or be considered offensive, threatening, or degrading? If yes, please describe why they are important and what arrangements have been made for handling an emotional reaction from the subject.

No.

4. How will data be recorded and stored?

Surveys will not record identifying information and will be saved on a confidential Survey Monkey server that can only be accessed by the researcher with a unique password. The survey does ask some demographic information that could indirectly identify a participant, but the likelihood of this is reduced through the use of secure servers and collection of demographic information at the district level.

Interview data will be recorded and transcribed. Code numbers will be used on audio recordings and transcripts instead of participant identifiers. The researcher will maintain a master list linking participant identity with code numbers. During transcription, any identifying information mentioned during interviews will be masked.

- a. How will identifiers be used in study notes and other materials?

Code numbers will be used to protect identities.

- b. How will reports will be written, in aggregate terms, or will individual responses be described?

Direct quotes will be used from interviews and aggregated survey data will be reported.

5. If audio or video recordings are collected, will you retain or destroy the recordings? How will recordings be stored during the project and after, as per your destruction/retention plans?

Audio recordings will be transcribed. Audio recordings will be retained in a locked safe for future research.

6. Is there any deception of the human subjects involved in this study? If yes, please describe why it is necessary and describe the debriefing procedures that have been arranged.

No.

E. POTENTIAL BENEFITS

This does not include any form of compensation for participation.

1. What, if any, direct benefit is to be gained by the subject? If no direct benefit is expected, but indirect benefit may be expected (knowledge may be gained that could help others), please explain.

Participants may indirectly benefit from the research by shedding light on the distribution of and use of Leandro resources.

F. COMPENSATION

Please keep in mind that the logistics of providing compensation to your subjects (e.g., if your business office requires names of subjects who received compensation) may compromise anonymity or complicate confidentiality protections. If, while arranging for subject compensation, you must make changes to the anonymity or confidentiality provisions for your research, you must contact the IRB office prior to implementing those changes.

1. Describe compensation

None.

2. Explain compensation provisions if the subject withdraws prior to completion of the study.

3. If class credit will be given, list the amount and alternative ways to earn the same amount of credit.

G. COLLABORATORS

1. If you anticipate that additional investigators (other than those named on **Cover Page**) may be involved in this research, list them here indicating their institution, department and phone number.

No.

2. Will anyone besides the PI or the research team have access to the data (including completed surveys) from the moment they are collected until they are destroyed.

H. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Do you have a significant financial interest or other conflict of interest in the sponsor of this project? No
2. Does your current conflicts of interest management plan include this relationship and is it being properly followed? No

I. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. If a questionnaire, survey or interview instrument is to be used, attach a copy to this proposal.
2. Attach a copy of the informed consent form to this proposal.
3. Please provide any additional materials that may aid the IRB in making its decision.

J. HUMAN SUBJECT ETHICS TRAINING

*Please consider taking the [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative \(CITI\)](#), a free, comprehensive ethics training program for researchers conducting research with human subjects. Just click on the underlined link.

APPENDIX K

COMPARISON COUNTY RESEARCH STUDY APPLICATION

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH STUDY

(COMPARISON COUNTY)**RESEARCH STUDY APPLICATION***"Save As" in your hard drive. Use the Tab Key to move around***Date of Submission:** 25 Oct 2011**Proposal Number:** _____ (E&R use only)**Title of Proposal:** **The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.****Proposed Project Starting Date:** 7 Nov 2011**Ending Date:** 5 Dec 2011**Research Applicant's Name:** Voris McBurnette**Address:****City:** Raleigh **State:** NC **Zip:****Home Telephone Number:** Area Code/No.**Work Telephone Number:** Area Code/No.**Ext:****E-mail Address:****Fax:** Area Code/No. /**Sponsor of Research Project** **Dr. Kevin Brady****Facility, Staff or Agency:** NCSU**Address:****City:** Raleigh**State:** NC**Zip:** 27601**Home Telephone Number:** Area Code/No. /**Work Telephone Number:** Area Code/No.**Ext:****E-mail****Address:** kevin_brady@ncsu.edu **Fax:** Area Code/No. /

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH STUDY

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Participants	Sample Size	Description (Schools, Grades, Demographics)	Time Required	Data Required (From Participants or WCPSS Records)
Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff @WCPSS	School Administrators (100)	See approved IRB from NCSU	15-20 minutes per administrator	Online questionnaire
Parents	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Others	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

COMMENTS: This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by low wealth school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to low wealth school districts.

The questionnaire participants may indirectly benefit from the research by verifying knowledge on the distribution of, and use of Leandro resources. There is no direct benefit expected to the subject, but knowledge may be gained that could help others.

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH STUDY

1. **Ultimate Purpose of Study (Thesis, Publication in Journal):**
Dissertation, potential future publication in a journal.

2. **Describe how this study will contribute to the Wake County Public School System**
Study could further Wake County's interests in receiving Leandro funding

3. **Description of anticipated contribution to theory or field:**

This research is examining multiple perspectives on the recruitment and retention of school personnel base on the Leandro Legislative Mandate. The Leandro Mandate is a North Carolina State legislation stating that all schools should receive access to highly qualified teachers and administrators. The Leandro mandate arises from a lawsuit brought by low wealth school districts who sought additional funding for better qualified personnel. The Leandro mandate is currently providing financial incentives to poor school districts. The study may enhance funding from the state for many more school districts based on this and other research conclusions.

4. **Hypotheses of the study:**

Local property taxes play a significant role in paying for education in our state. This means that some counties are better able to pay for education for their children than others are. Counties with high real estate values and wide spread development raise more in property taxes than counties that don't have a lot of real estate development or high real estate values. While Judge Manning has mandated changes to "remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services of competent, well-trained teachers, good principals and sufficient funding." Well how exactly is that accomplished? How do Local Educational Agencies recruit and maintain these well-trained educators and good principals? Moreover, if it is by using additional monies allocated by the Leandro legislation; is that enough to retain these "quality" personnel in these low wealth areas?

The purpose of this study will attempt to ascertain if any funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality administrative personnel (since the last ruling i.e. Leandro monies) is instrumental in fact in attracting and retaining these employees.

Is supplemental pay in education effective?

What are the outcomes of supplemental pay initiatives?

5. **Brief summary of research design including statistical analysis procedures:**

The rationale to support the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to pursue the study of if any funding allocated toward the recruitment and retention of quality educators /administrative personnel (since the last ruling i.e. Leandro monies) is instrumental in fact in keeping these employees within these school systems. This study employs a qualitative case study research design. Quantitatively, the researcher will employ the use of online questionnaire disseminated from the LEAs Central Office to urge participation of the targeted group. These

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH STUDY

questions will determine if the administrators who are presently working or have worked during the time of the initial Leandro determination (2004) have a through grasp and understanding of the Legislation and where it is heading. It will test the original Leandro counties along with an urban school district (Wake) as a comparison county to determine if the sentiments are the same or greatly different when dealing with Leandro “type” issues. What are the self perceptions of the impact of Leandro monies as they target issues within the district?

6. State whether this is a single study, or one of a series planned or contemplated.
single
7. Describe how the equipment or procedures to be used might constitute a potential emotional or physical hazard to subjects.
N/A
8. List at least three prominent research studies, articles, or books most pertinent to the field of this research:
9. List equipment and names of tests to be used. (Attach descriptions or copies of test instruments.)
The questionnaire will be given online using a program/website called “Survey Monkey.” Survey Monkey is a private American company that enables users to create their own free Web-based questionnaire . An enhanced paid product and services are also available. More than 80% of Fortune 100 companies have used Survey Monkey. This site will be linked to the email sent to the administrators who fit the research window. The survey will be short (20-25 questions).
10. Facilities needed:
N/A
11. Source of research funds:
N/A

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Assurances:

As the applicant of the research project, I understand that I am requesting assistance in a research project and that I am not requesting information pursuant to Open Records legislation. If my request for research assistance is granted, I agree to abide by all policies, rules, and regulations of the district INCLUDING THE SECURING OF WRITTEN PARENT PERMISSION PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION OF MY PROJECT.

As the sponsor for the research project, I have read the procedures for External Research in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) and understand that supervision of this project and responsibility for a report on its outcome rests with me. The privilege of conducting future studies in Wake County Public School System is conditioned upon the fulfillment of such obligations.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Required)

Sponsor Signature: _____ Date: _____
(When applicable)

Submit an electronic copy of this form to xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Department at:

xxxxxxX@xxxxxxxxxx

APPENDIX L
INTERVIEW REQUEST LETTER

From: Voris W. McBurnette, Student Researcher
North Carolina State University

Date: October 23, 2011

Title: The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina

IRB#: 2075-11-5

The Honorable XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX,

First of all I would like to thank you for participating in my study. The project listed above has been reviewed by the NC State Institutional Review Board for the Use of Subjects in Research, and is approved for one year. If the study lasts longer than a year (including data analysis), it must undergo annual continuing review by the IRB. It is my responsibility to resubmit this protocol in one year, if necessary.

Attached is an approval letter. Also attached is Institutional Review Board application, which gives you further insight into the project and the consent form that you must sign. I have also enclosed a copy of the questions that I will ask. I am eager to set up a date to conduct this interview so I am awaiting your contact. My telephone number is 919.XXXXXXX and my email is XXXXXX@ncsu.edu.

Thank you,

Voris W. McBurnette

APPENDIX M
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR TEXT

North Carolina State University
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH
(Additional Central Office Administrator Text)

Title of Study: The Varying Perspectives of the Leandro Mandate (additional public school operating monies) and its Effect on the Recruitment and Retention of School System Personnel within the state of North Carolina.

Principal Investigator: Voris W. McBurnette

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kevin Brady

2) Is the survey consent form what the central office administrator will send out to potential participants or will there be additional text that accompanies the consent form?

A North Carolina State University student under the faculty sponsorship of Dr. Kevin Brady is conducting a survey as a part of a mixed methods dissertation in regard to Leandro funding. While our school system, (is) is not, presently receiving these funds, how Leandro monies are used and your knowledge in this area is of interest to the researcher. The survey is short (15-20 minutes) and will be open for use over a four week period starting today. This research could potentially benefit future generations of teachers and students in North Carolina. The survey participants may indirectly benefit from the research by verifying knowledge on the distribution of, and use of Leandro resources. There is no direct benefit expected to the subject, but knowledge may be gained that could help others.

Below are the "Informed Consent" form and the link to the survey.