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INTERVENTIONS FOR INCREASING
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS IN
CAMDEN CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by
Linnell N. Wright

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the
Master of Arts Degree
Of
The Graduate School
At
Rowan University
May 1999

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved

April 25, 1999

ABSTRACT

Linnell N. Wright
Interventions for Increasing
Substitute Teachers in
Camden City Public Schools
May 1999
Dr. Theodore Johnson
School Administration

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe any methods or strategies, which could be utilized to reduce or eliminate the shortage of substitute teachers in Camden City Public Schools. The design of the study was based on an action research model. Two areas of intervention were selected for the action research: (1) District level intervention and (2) Substitute teacher preparation intervention. Two populations were surveyed for data collection and analysis: substitute teachers who were new to Camden City Public Schools as of September 1998 and school district principals.

The surveys designed for this study were constructed to provide data in three areas: (1) the effectiveness of the Substitute Teacher Handbook and Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions in providing useful information to substitute teachers; (2) the impact of these two variables on substitute teachers; and (3) the effect of these two variables on the return rate of substitute teachers to Camden City Public Schools.

The data indicated positive results for the first two areas. The results were inconclusive for the third area.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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Two variables were implemented to reduce substitute teacher shortages in Camden City Public Schools. The variables had a positive impact on substitute teacher preparation and knowledge of district policies and procedures. Their effect on increasing the return rate of substitute teachers to the district was inconclusive.

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The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Camden City Public Schools' administration, faculty, or staff.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction: Focus of the Study

Purpose of the Study

During the 1997-1998 school year, Camden City Public Schools experienced several days when teacher absences exceeded the number of available substitutes. The district instituted an increase in the daily rate of pay for substitutes in an attempt to attract additional subs and increase the substitute teacher pool. In spite of the increase, the district still faced shortages. The question to be asked here is...Why? Why does it appear that Camden City Public School is unable to attract substitute teachers? Is it all due to a substitute teacher shortage or are there other factors that have influenced substitute teachers not to choose the Camden district as a place of employment? These questions will be of great interest to district principals and central office administrators, as these individuals have struggled to fill teacher vacancies on a daily basis and faced the frustration of having no coverage for teacher absences.

This study will try to determine what variables, within the control of Camden City Public Schools, could be modified to increase the number of substitute teachers willing to work and accept return placements in the district, so that continuity of instruction for district students is provided during the absence of the regular classroom teacher.

As previously stated, Camden City has faced daily shortages of substitute teachers. Substitute teacher placement is a central administrative function of the

Office of Human Resources (HR). On more than one occasion, the intern assisted HR staff in calling substitute teachers, only to discover that, for any number of reasons, many substitutes were not available for Camden City. According to Ms. Donna Young, the clerk responsible for substitute teacher placement for the district, "We have over 300 substitutes who are Board approved for work with our district. And yet we are not able to get enough of them to come into Camden." Although Camden may have more than 300 subs approved for work, according to Ms. Young, approximately 16% or less respond to the districts needs on any given day.

Camden is not the only district facing substitute teacher shortages. The Charlotte-Micklenburg School system of North Carolina had a pool of 1,200 substitute teachers/teaching assistants. "Though the size of that pool might sound plentiful," says Jan Richardson CMS's Director of Human Resources Information Systems, "the bottom line is we still don't have enough substitutes. We lost over 600 substitutes this past (school) year to a variety of reasons." (Holloway, 1997) It is clear that substitutes play a vital role in the educational process. They are expected to serve as a bridge between the regular classroom teacher and the student. They serve to convey knowledge and manage student behavior, when necessary. Their presence is vital to the safe and efficient operation of any classroom during the teacher's absence. Bontempo and Deay (1986) discuss the role of substitutes and point to the increasing role that substitutes play in the education of students. "At a time when research on effective teaching is highlighting the element of time-on-task as a significant variable in student achievement, the increased time students spend with

substitutes takes on even greater importance...” They further point out that, “Substitute teachers have been replacing regular classroom teachers more and more frequently in recent years as regular teachers increasingly take advantage of contract provisions for personal and professional leave time. “ (1986)

The problem of finding adequate substitute coverage is discussed by Abdal-Haqq (1997) as he points out that, “More recently, widespread school restructuring, school-based management, and redefinitions of teacher work that emerged from the school reform movement of the mid-1980s, have involved classroom teachers in a variety of non-traditional, non-instructional activities, such as curriculum designing, mentoring novice and preservice teachers, conducting action research, and working on collaborative teams with peers and college faculty. Employing substitutes is one method of covering the classes of teachers who participate in such activities during the school day.” As this trend increases, Camden may unfortunately find itself struggling to be a desperate buyer in a short supply market.

The purpose of this study is to discover and describe any methods or strategies, which could be utilized to reduce or eliminate the shortage of substitute teachers in Camden City Public Schools. An action research model and quasi-experimental research design will be utilized. The study will result in a recommendation report, which will inform the Camden Board of Education, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and other affected staff, such as school principals, of possible district actions, which, if implemented, could reduce the shortages. One or more variables will be selected for manipulation and/or implementation and the resulting report will provide a qualitative analysis of the

data.

Research shows that students already spend far too much time with substitute teachers. "It is the district's responsibility to ensure that quality education is provided for the students in the absence of the regular teacher." (Augustin, 1987) Providing "quality education" in an urban district is crucial, especially in the state of New Jersey where state mandated testing is used as one measure of a district's ability to deliver a "thorough and efficient" education.

Camden City Public Schools faces a unique situation with regard to testing as the New Jersey Department of Education's statistics for the 1994 High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) revealed that while 73.2 percent of the state's 11th-graders passed the HSPT in reading, math and writing, "... Camden's two high schools averaged a 37.7 percent passing rate." (NJDOE, 1995) Comparison SAT scores for the southern New Jersey counties of Camden, Burlington, and Gloucester, show Camden City dead last with a two high school average mean combined SAT score of 692. The highest mean combined score for this area was 1057. (NJDOE, 1995) The need for high quality classroom instruction is evident. Students in districts like Camden need consistent instruction on a daily basis. Too many days spent without a teacher, regular or substitute, may hinder a student's ability to perform well on district, state, and national tests.

The research shows that districts have developed unique ways to obtain substitutes. The Broken Arrow Public Schools in Oklahoma has developed a web site, which advertises for subs as a part of its Human Resources page. Peck and Rice developed several guidelines for attracting substitute teachers and their research supports the difficulty that districts have had for several years.

(Peck and Rice, 1997) Camden City has developed flyers and posters, which were circulated to area colleges, and yet it still experiences shortages. The substitute problem must be addressed and rectified as soon as possible as the minds and achievement of students are at stake.

Definitions

Substitute teacher will be defined for this study as any individual hired on a per diem basis by Camden City Public Schools to work as a replacement for a regular, contracted teacher. The substitute must possess a State of New Jersey Substitute Teacher Certificate and will possess the minimum 60 college credits as required by the State of New Jersey Department of Education. All substitute teachers will be Board approved. Their names will have been listed on the monthly Superintendent's Report to the Camden Board of Education and approved by a majority vote of the Board.

A substitute teacher shortage will be defined as any given day in Camden City Public Schools when the number of teacher absences not covered by a substitute exceeds ten (10) district-wide.

Limitations of the Study

Data and input for this study will be limited to Camden City Public Schools. All district schools will be involved along with the district's Office of Human Resources, which has direct responsibility for the Substitute Teacher Program. The populations for this study will be selected utilizing purposeful sampling as each respondent is deemed an information rich source.

The study will be limited in that it will only involve substitute teachers employed by Camden City Public Schools. It will not focus on the substitute

teacher certification process or the New Jersey Criminal History Review required of all employees in school districts throughout New Jersey.

Setting for the Study

This study will be conducted in Camden City Public Schools as the concern and focus of the study is only with the substitute teacher program in that district.

The City of Camden was designated as a bi-state federal Empowerment Zone and is considered economically and socially distressed, suffering from high structural unemployment which is the result of commercial out-migration that began in the 1960's. Camden is the fifth poorest city in the United States in the category of cities with populations of over 50,000. According to the 1990 US Census, Camden has a population of 87,492. Of this number, 49,362 (56.4%) are African-American; 27,273 (31.2%) are Hispanic; and 1,662 (9%) are Caucasian. The remaining population is made up of various Asian and Far Eastern nationalities, along with people from many of the Caribbean islands. According to the Philadelphia and Camden Empowerment Zone Strategic Plan, Camden is described "as a city of children... (which) has proportionately 12.3 percent more children than the State of New Jersey and 9.1 percent more (children) than Camden County. Ninety-six percent, or 18,700 children in the City of Camden were identified as "at-risk" or disadvantaged during the 1992-1993 school term.

A Camden County Labor Market Profile, commissioned by the Camden County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) in 1994 revealed that: Camden City's youth population, age 17 and under is 35 percent or 30,600. Of

those, approximately 25,100 or nearly half the youth population, live in households with incomes below the federal poverty level.

Camden City Public Schools is one of the poorest in the nation and has been featured in Jonathan Kozol's book on inner-city school systems titled, Savage Inequalities and featured on CBS's "60 Minutes" program. The school district has been classified by the New Jersey Department of Education as an Abbott district, the result of a landmark decision in school funding, *Abbott v. Burke*.

Given the economic conditions of the city and the obvious relationship and impact of those conditions on students in the school district, substitute teacher coverage is vital. Thus, the population for this study will consist of three groups who are essential to the operation of Camden's substitute program. Population I will consist of Office of Human Resources staff directly responsible for calling and placing substitute teachers. Population II will consist of a random selection of Board approved substitute teachers. Population III will consist of all district principals, who, as building leaders, are directly responsible for substitute teachers in their schools.

Significance of the Study

It is anticipated that development and implementation of this study will result in a re-evaluation and change in how Camden City Public Schools hires and maintains its substitute teachers. The Office of Human Resources and district principals are the anticipated change agents. If new modalities are recommended and the manipulation and/or implementation of selected variables provides evidence for change, principals and perhaps other district

administrators, both as groups and as individuals, may have to re-examine how they view and utilize substitute teachers. Additionally, Camden's organizational culture or habits may need to be revisited with regard to its organizational climate to determine if that climate is really supportive of substitute teachers. The district's culture or habits are important in determining any cause and effect relationships, which may contribute to the substitute teacher shortage in Camden City.

Camden City Public Schools was directed to develop a corrective action plan as a result of having undergone Level III Monitoring by the New Jersey Department of Education. Substitute teachers were not addressed in the plan. And yet no district in this country can function without substitute teachers. Brace notes that "In evaluating their substitute teacher program, administrators should ask: Are substitute teachers forgotten until they are needed? Are there clear expectations for substitutes and do the substitutes have a good chance of achieving these expectations? Are efficient methods used to strengthen their performance? Responses to these questions can give administrators some insight into the effectiveness of the school's substitute teacher program." (Brace, 1990) This study may clearly define what expectations Camden City holds for its substitute teachers.

It is also anticipated that this study will provide needed information about substitute teacher retention and repeat service. These factors are important when evaluating any program and making recommendations for change. In addition, this study may reveal information relevant to substitute teacher recruitment and training.

Saundra J. Tracy discusses the significance of staff development for substitute teachers as an overlooked area, which could increase substitute teacher return visits and enhances substitute teacher performance in the classroom. (Tracy, 1988) "Substitute teachers are often given little advance notice as to the subject and/or level they will be expected to teach. Add to this, placement in a class outside their own area of expertise, little knowledge of the abilities and experiences of students, minimal instruction about the regular teacher's expectations and procedures, and an impotent status in the eyes of the students and the stage is set for failure." (Tracy) If Camden's substitutes are experiencing this, is it any wonder that they don't return.

It is also expected that the information developed from this study will add to the body of knowledge regarding substitute teachers. Research reveals much literature, which provides help to substitute teachers in the classroom but very little relating to their skills and function. Johnson, Holcombe and Vance support this in their article "Apprehensions of Substitute Teachers." They indicate that literature "... that can be found relating to substitute teaching usually prescribes how to leave better plans for a substitute; there is little material available on substitute teachers."

Organization of the Study

Chapter 2 of this study will present a review of the literature, which will focus on three substitute teacher "interventions." Almost all of the literature recommends interventions necessary for the retention of substitute teachers. Those interventions can be divided into three major areas: (1) District level interventions; (2) School or building level interventions; and (3) Substitute

teacher preparation interventions. An analysis of these three areas, along with specific examples of each, will be presented.

Chapter 3 will focus on the design and data gathering methodology of the study. This study will combine qualitative, action research and quantitative, quasi-experimental research designs. Data will be gathered through the use of select response and open ended questionnaire surveys, utilizing a Likert-type scale for selected survey items. Selected response data will be quantitatively analyzed by percentages.

Chapter 4 will focus on the research findings and any tangible projects or changes implemented as a result of the findings, while Chapter 5 will present conclusions, and implications for further study.

It is hoped that this project will answer at least one major question about substitute teachers in Camden City Public Schools. That question is: What is required of Camden City Public Schools to operate an effective substitute teacher program and reduce its substitute teacher shortages?

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

The objective of this literature review is to examine existing research and literature regarding the development of programs for the retention and overall success of substitute teachers by public school districts. In his article, "Making Effective Use of the Substitute Teacher: An Administrative Opportunity," Drake defined the substitute teacher as: "...a certified and qualified professional who replaces the regular classroom teacher for the purpose of continuing the instructional program, maintaining discipline and generally promoting the educational welfare of the students." (Drake, 1981) Clearly, this definition fits the use that most school districts abide by when employing substitute teachers. School districts expect substitute teachers to continue with classroom instruction in the absence of the regular teacher. Learning is expected to continue. Each state sets specific requirements that determine what it means to be "certified" and/or qualified. Some states may require a Bachelor's degree or merely a minimum of 60 college credits.

Almost every school district in the United States employs substitute teachers, and yet a review of the literature reveals little in the way of research designed to assist school districts in recruiting, hiring and maintaining qualified substitute teachers. Bontempo and Deay conducted a study designed to discover some of the problems and needs of substitute teachers, and they discovered that "...out of 90 publications and ERIC documents written since 1966, few are

research based efforts to identify, document, and deal with the problems unique to the substitute's role in the classroom. Most publications dealing with substitute teaching are anecdotal accounts by those who have been there or are a series of 'tips for subs'." (Bontempo and Deay, 1986) Maria Elena Galvez-Martin further supports the findings of Bontempo and Deay. In her paper on "What are the Needs of Substitute Teaching to be Effective?" she stated that "Substitute teaching has not been thoroughly studied as there are not many research studies in this area, and this is a need. Most of the publications that exist about substitute teaching do not have a research base." (Galvez-Martin, 1997)

Existing research and literature supports the need for examining ways to support substitute teachers. Substitute teaching is not an easy job. "When a regular teacher is absent from school, a substitute teacher is usually brought in as a replacement. However, replacing the regular teacher is difficult for substitute teachers, and they generally encounter numerous problems in attempting to proceed with their work." (Clifton and Rambaran, 1987) In their study, Clifton and Rambaran indicated that there were several factors, which added to the difficulty of being a substitute teacher. These included the substitute teacher's lack of authority; the view often held by regular teachers that substitutes are incompetent; and the low pay given to substitutes. "Substitute teachers receive very little support from the education community but they are expected to perform efficiently and effectively a variety of tasks assigned to the teacher they are replacing." (St. Michel, 1995). "The role of the substitute teacher is awkwardly understood by teacher training institutions, regular classroom teachers, school administrators, and by the substitute teacher

themselves." (Galvez-Martin, 1997)

Interventions

A review of the literature reveals several methods and suggestions designed to assist substitute teachers to perform satisfactorily in the classroom, with "satisfactory" performance defined as maintaining classroom control and fostering student learning. Almost all of the literature recommends some type of intervention and those interventions can be divided into three major components: (1) District level interventions; (2) School or building level interventions; and (3) Substitute teacher preparation interventions.

District Level Interventions

Terrie St. Michel conducted a two-year study of substitute teachers entitled "Effective Substitute Teachers, Myth, Mayhem or Magic?" which covered several areas important to substitute teacher effectiveness. The focus of the study was to discover what substitutes need to be effective and how can school districts meet those needs. St. Michel cited the importance of providing substitute teachers with information as a major district level intervention. "Increasing the effectiveness of substitute teachers also requires providing them with information about the district, instructional strategies, evaluating procedures, and tips for success." (St. Michel, 1995) According to St. Michel, a reference manual for substitute teachers would include the following:

- an overview of the general expectations and conduct policies of the district;
- specific information regarding the central office and all the campuses;
- various feedback forms that substitutes are expected to use as well as the evaluation form that will be used in assessing their performance;

- suggestions and strategies for substitutes to use in the classroom as they interact with students; and
- generic lessons, outlines for creating lessons, and helpful hints for how to be prepared at all times for all occasions.

The use of a manual is also supported by Daniel L. Brace, who included the development of "...a district manual and building handbooks..." as one of seven key elements of a comprehensive substitute teacher support system. (Brace, 1990) In his article "Establishing a Support System For Substitute Teachers" William R. Drury listed development of a substitute teacher handbook as the second item in a list of ideas on how to go about revamping a substitute teacher program. (Drury, 1988)

In addition to handbooks, the literature reveals other district level interventions that could contribute to a more effective and productive use of substitute teachers. Clifton and Rambaran site salary as an incentive, "...school boards may also consider adopting a salary plan for substitute teachers that provides credit for their training and expertise as well as providing them with tenure and fringe benefits." (Clifton and Rambaran, 1987) The issue of pay is also addressed by Abdal-Haqq (1997). He suggests two approaches to creating a dependable cadre of experienced replacement teachers, one of which is the development of "a graduated" substitute pay scale. "Graduated pay scale arrangements offer monetary incentives to encourage substitutes to work more and/or take on longer term assignments." The Alhambra School District of Phoenix, Arizona developed a plan to attract and retain qualified substitute teachers which included a "three-tiered salary schedule" based on accumulated

days of service. (Peck and Rice, 1997)

In addition to supporting the development of substitute teacher handbooks and an increase in pay, as district level interventions, Betty Jo Simmons (1991) listed several approaches district administrators could use to improve substitute teacher effectiveness. (1) Insist upon a thoroughly professional application interview process. (2) Select the most qualified applicants. (3) Use discretion about who is called to substitute. (4) Develop a handbook for substitutes. (5) Prepare an information brochure about substitutes. (6) Institute a thorough staff development plan for substitutes. (7) Provide for observation/participation opportunity. (8) Clarify expectations of the regular teacher. (9) Establish a substitute helper system. (10) Maintain an ongoing system of evaluation. (11) Give substitutes the recognition they deserve.

Peck and Rice (1991) also suggested that districts could provide substitutes with free lunch as a district incentive. Lord (1998) discusses the success of a Topeka, Kansas substitute program, which supports the idea of a free meal. "In Topeka's 501 school districts, subs are welcomed with an orientation brunch." The brunch has increased the return of substitutes to the district because the substitute teachers are made to feel welcomed and special.

Additionally, the literature supports improvements in district recruitment and hiring practices for substitute teachers. Abdal-Haqq (1997) advocates a district policy for hiring "permanent, full-time substitutes." Brace (1990) recommended thoroughly screening substitutes and widening the selection pool to include "full-time parents with teaching experience, recent teaching graduates, and other qualified adults whose employment allows them some weekdays off."

Peck and Rice (1997) advocated that individual schools should advertise for substitutes on their "school marquees."

School Level Interventions

School or building level interventions, the second component in developing substitute teacher effectiveness, is also important in a district's efforts to increase substitute teacher efficiency. The literature reveals several school or building level interventions. Various recommendations were made including the development and implementation of some type of evaluation process. St. Michel (1995) stated that, "Evaluations of substitutes should be conducted on a routine basis by either the principal, assistant principal...or other appropriate administrator." The purpose of evaluations is to provide the substitute teacher with constructive feedback and direction. Peck and Rice (1997) also support evaluations by advocating that the principal should "routinely visit every classroom with a guest (substitute) teacher twice a day." Warren (1988) stated that evaluation of substitutes must also be improved. Brace (1990) supports systematic feedback provided by regular classroom teachers as a method of school level evaluative intervention.

Chu and Bergsma (1987) offer a number of school level guidelines for principals to follow that they believed would have a positive impact on substitute teachers' success in the classroom. Included in their guidelines are: "the development of a school handbook or folder; inviting substitutes to workshops for training before the opening of school; developing a uniform substitute information form to be used by all teachers; and developing a systematic process for evaluating substitutes." Bontempo and Deay (1986) cite the responsibility of the

building administrator to include: making information available to substitutes on school policies and procedures, and providing constructive feedback. "The key is to organize, prepare and implement a strategy for utilizing substitute teachers. If indeed the most crucial role of the substitute is to maintain control, then every effort must be made to aid the substitute in doing just that." (Frosh, 1984) Frosh cites the need for seating charts, lists of school rules and administrative support as necessary school interventions. Agustin (1987) discusses several major areas for substitute teacher development. School level interventions include providing substitutes with central office folders, well developed substitute teacher lesson plans, and administrative support in handling discipline problems.

Substitute Teacher Preparation Interventions

The third intervention is that of substitute teacher preparation. The literature supports the view that the most important "tool" a substitute teacher can utilize to be effective in the classroom, is to be well prepared and well trained through an organized, school in-service or district staff development program. St. Michel (1995) suggests that professional development training is a major element in substitute teacher success and she recommends it as the second item in an eleven-item list of recommendations for substitute teacher improvement. "Professional development training could be offered specifically for substitutes in the areas of classroom management, technology, models of teaching, and content enrichment (e.g., interdisciplinary holistic writing, cooperative learning in foreign language classes, etc.). St. Michel advocates staff development for "principals and their secretaries, regular teachers and for substitutes."

All of these groups interact with substitute teachers; thus training is necessary in order to produce positive results. (St. Michel, 1995) These groups must work together for the common interest of student learning and yet they seldom come together to discuss substitute teacher problems or offer and receive evaluative feedback on how they interact with one another. A study of substitute teachers, "Apprehensions of Substitute Teachers" by Johnson, Holcombe, and Vance (1988) found that "...many teachers were anxious about a variety of factors related to their role." As a remedy, Johnson, Holcombe, and Vance concluded that school in- services and workshops, designed to assist substitute teachers with classroom management, developing lessons and school policies, would be helpful.

According to Drury (1988), "Professional development is as important for substitutes as it is for any other group of school system staff members." This view is supported by Simmons who recommends professional development workshops for substitute teachers as a method of preparation in areas such as "maintaining positive attitudes and positive relationships, planning lessons..." (Simmons, 1991) Stanley (1991) maintains that substitute teachers can contribute to making the classroom conducive to learning in the absence of the regular teacher but only after training. "Substitute teachers need training in classroom management skills. They should also be provided with certain basic information and training if they are to carry out their jobs effectively." (Stanley, 1991)

Daniel Ostapczuk conducted a literature review in 1994 entitled "What Makes Effective Secondary Education Substitute Teachers" and found that there

were seven most recommended “areas of opportunity for improving substitute teaching...” Number one on his list was: “Provide substitute teachers in-service training on topics such as discipline, classroom management, etc.” Ostapczuk’s findings are as follows:

- (1) Provide substitute teachers in-service training on topics such as discipline, classroom management, etc.
- (2) Improve the collaboration between the substitute teacher and school district.
- (3) Provide evaluation of, and feedback to, substitute teachers on the services that they render.
- (4) Improve the school’s substitute recruitment procedures, e.g. interview, establish criteria, etc.
- (5) Provide a Substitute Teacher’s Handbook on school rules and policies.
- (6) Provide role clarification and clear expectations of all substitute teachers.
- (7) Improve lesson plans provided by teachers.

These seven findings are supported by the literature review for this study. Each of Ostapczuk’s recommended areas fits into one of the three areas of intervention needed to assist substitute teachers in becoming more effective. Some recommendations fall under more than one intervention because modification in format would allow it to be useful in more than one area. The division would be as follows:

District level intervention: (1), (2), (4), (5), and (6).

School level interventions: (3), (5), (6), and (7).

Substitute teacher preparation: (1), (3), (5), and (6).

The literature clearly reveals the need for assisting substitute teachers to become more effective in the classroom. It further recognizes that finding qualified substitutes and keeping them is often difficult for school districts. Offering rewards and incentives in the form of free lunches and increased pay are seen as possible solutions but not ends unto themselves. The real key to a district's success in attracting substitutes and improving substitute teacher performance appears to be in providing substitute teachers with effective training, which will enable them to enjoy success in the classroom. If a substitute teacher experiences classroom success, by being able to manage and control student behavior or by experiencing the reward of facilitating student learning, or both, that substitute teacher will probably return to the classroom. The literature indicates that districts must combine the three components of substitute teacher interventions, district level interventions, school or building level interventions and substitute teacher preparation, if they wish to achieve substitute teacher success.

CHAPTER III

Design of the Study

The problem facing Camden City Public Schools was the shortage of substitute teachers and the purpose of this study was to examine factors which might be contributing to that shortage and develop strategies to ease or eliminate the shortfall. A review of the literature revealed three factors which could lead to an increased return rate of substitute teachers in any given school district. These three factors are: (1) providing substitute teachers with information about the school district they were working in; (2) providing substitute teachers with training in crucial areas, such as classroom management; and (3) providing feedback on their performance in the classroom. These three areas are components of three types of interventions: District level interventions; (2) School or building level interventions; and (3) Substitute teacher preparation interventions. It was accepted that those areas were also crucial to Camden City Public Schools and given the literature review, a limited study designed to focus solely on Camden City Public Schools Substitute Teacher Program was designed.

Description of the Research Design

The design of the study was based on an action research model that allowed for the manipulation of one or more variables while continuous reflection and observation occurred in an effort to develop a possible solution for the substitute teacher shortage problem.

Action research was selected because, as defined, action research is

most appropriate for participants who recognize the existence of shortcomings in their educational activities and who would like to: adopt some initial stance in regard to the problem; formulate a plan; carryout an intervention; evaluate the outcome and develop further strategies. (Hopkins, 1985)

The action research model was also selected due to the fluid nature of the substitute teaching profession. In other words, substitute teachers are temporary employees hired on a per diem basis. They are always needed by school districts but they do not have to work if they choose not to. They are constantly hired, temporary employees. Their temporary status carries with it a number of variables, most significant of which is their decision as to when and where they choose to work. The substitute teacher's availability is a variable over which a school district has no control. Thus, their situation is an example of a fluid or constantly operating variable that can never be fully addressed in any form of experimental research. Action research allowed for the selection of constant variables for manipulation on a fluid population.

Description of Development and Design of Variables

Two areas of intervention were selected for the action research: (1) District level intervention; and (2) Substitute teacher preparation intervention. The variable selected for manipulation at the district level was a substitute teacher handbook and the variable for substitute teacher preparation was the substitute teacher orientation, which utilized the handbook as an integral component of the presentation. The substitute teacher handbook was a district level intervention, which provided the substitute teacher with information about the district, its schools, and general policy information. The substitute teacher orientation was a

substitute teacher preparation intervention, which provided substitute teachers with initial training in several crucial areas, including professional behavior, dress, and classroom management.

An initial version of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook for Camden City Public Schools designed for this study was prepared in September 1998, for the 1998-1999 school year. This version/first draft, differed from a previous issue in that it contained a greater variety of information, including strategies for teacher preparedness, information about the duties and responsibilities of the substitute teacher and general information on district procedures, including the district's dress code, injuries on the job, and general classroom "Do's" and "Don'ts." It also contained information about how substitute teachers would be paid, and information about the schools, such as maps, telephone numbers and address listings. A section on classroom management was also included. This first draft was distributed during the September and October Substitute Teacher's Orientation Sessions. Oral feedback from these two sessions, along with discussions with Population I of the study sample (HR personnel) led to the revision and development of a second draft which was presented during the November orientation session.

In the second draft, pages were reorganized and grouped together in "user friendly" sections. The sections which emerged were: "Duties and Responsibilities," "Classroom Tips," "Schools," "Evaluation," and the "Appendix". The second draft was significant in that it also contained two new items: a Substitute Teacher Work Record Form, and a Substitute Teacher Evaluation Form. The Work Record Form was created to document classroom

activities conducted by the substitute in the regular classroom teacher's absence and to document the receipt and return of lesson plans and other materials, by the substitute teacher, at the end of the teaching day.

The literature revealed that substitute teachers need to receive feedback on their performance if they are to improve their skills. Thus, the second new item, the Substitute Teacher Evaluation Form was designed for that purpose. Although it was included in the handbook, it was not selected for use as a manipulative variable for this study.

Any item, which directly affects district personnel and their job performance or duties, must be presented for review before the Camden Board of Education's Personnel Committee. The Committee reviews the items before it, and either approves them for a full Board review and vote up or down, or it sends the items back for revision and resubmission. Until board approved, any document is considered a draft, work in progress. The second version of the handbook was stamped "DRAFT" and used through November. The second draft of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook was presented for review during the November Personnel Committee meeting. After a favorable review and discussion, the committee directed that the handbook be revised with the following changes:

- the Board's policy on sexual harassment as covered in the policy manual on "Nondiscrimination/Affirmative Action" must be included;
- the Board's policy guidelines on "Conduct and Dress" were to be added; and
- the policy on "Substitute teachers" had to be inserted.

As a result of the Personnel Committee's directive, a third draft was

prepared. This third version contained guidelines on Sexual Harassment, the Dress and Conduct policy, and the Substitute Teacher policy. These guidelines were outlined within the body of the handbook with references to the complete policies, which were contained in the Appendix. This third draft was used during the December Substitute Teacher Orientation Session and it was presented to the Personnel Committee in December. At that committee meeting, the third draft was approved and incorporated into the Personnel Committee's report, which was forwarded to the full Board for a vote during its December meeting. The Personnel Committee's report was approved in December 1998 and the Substitute Teacher's Handbook became the official Camden City Public School's Substitute Teacher's Handbook. The new handbooks were printed by the district and distributed during the January and February 1999 Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions.

Camden City Public Schools has always held substitute teacher orientation sessions. The Human Resources director always conducted these sessions, as the Office of Human Resources was directly responsible for the hiring and placement of substitute teachers. Previous sessions lasted approximately forty-five minutes and were held in a conference room, with participants sitting around a large conference table or up against the walls. The new orientation developed for this study differed from the previous one in that:

- time was built in for new substitute teachers to receive free TB testing as required by the State of New Jersey;
- the orientation session was expanded to two and one-half hours and held in the auditorium;

- classroom management techniques focused on preparedness and behavioral interventions; and
- the session included information about New Jersey's requirements on how to become a regular, standard certificate teacher.

As the handbook was revised, the orientation session was modified accordingly. All new substitute teachers were given the edition of the handbook available at the time.

Description of the Sample and Sampling Technique

The population for this study consisted of three groups who were essential to the operation of Camden's substitute program. Population I consisted of Office of Human Resources staff directly responsible for calling and placing substitute teachers. This staff included one full-time clerk and one part-time clerk. Both individuals had been directly involved with the substitute teacher program for over ten years.

Population II consisted of a random selection of Board approved substitute teachers who had participated in the 1998-1999 Substitute Teacher Orientation Program between September 1998 and February 1999, and had received at least one version of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook.

Population III consisted of all district principals who, as building leaders, were directly responsible for substitute teachers in their schools.

Population II and III were surveyed. A simple random selection process was utilized for the substitute teachers. Substitute teachers' names were coded by numbers that were placed in a box. One hundred numbers were pulled and decoded for names and addresses. Those individuals were sent survey mailings

via US Postal Service. Included in the mailing was a cover letter, the survey, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Surveys were used to evaluate the usefulness of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook, and information presented during the Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions.

Principals were purposefully selected. All district principals were sent a survey mailing which included a cover letter, the survey, and a self-addressed envelope. The principals' surveys were sent via Camden Board of Education district mailing and respondents returned their surveys utilizing the same mail system.

Data Collection Approach

Only one survey was administered to the substitutes and another to principals. Both surveys were administered during the month of March 1999. During the course of the study, it became evident that administering pre- and post- surveys to the substitute teachers would not produce comparative data.

New substitute teachers are not able to work until they appear on the Superintendent's Report to the Board of Education during an official Board meeting. After substitutes are approved by the Board, they may be placed on payroll and hired on a per diem, as-needed basis. Substitute teachers must appear on the Board minutes if they have never worked for Camden City Public Schools or if they are being rehired for a new school year. Rehiring occurs in August.

Pre-surveys would make the assumption that the individuals participating in the orientation sessions from September to February had substituted prior to applying for work with Camden City Public Schools. Pre-surveys would assume

that there would be a base of knowledge and experience that could be called upon to respond to survey items. However, Camden's records revealed that 90% of the substitute teacher applicants had not worked as substitute teachers prior to applying for a position with Camden. (Young, 1998) Asking this population to "pre-evaluate" would therefore be of little benefit to the action research because these individuals would be unable to make valid comparisons between existing, new, and past practices. Thus, the surveys were designed to measure the effectiveness of the two variables from the time these variables were introduced to the sample population.

Principals were surveyed only once and their survey was designed to measure the impact of the two variables on substitute teachers. Camden City Public Schools' principals were asked to respond to a brief survey, which was designed to begin an analysis of the long-term impact of substitute teacher training and the usefulness of handbook information. An analysis of this data would begin to indicate whether or not improvements in the orientation or handbook were having a positive, increased effect on the return rate of substitute teachers to Camden City Public Schools. It was also designed to provide feedback on the effect of these two variables with regard to the return rate of substitute teachers.

Interviews with Human Resources staff directly responsible for interviewing, hiring, and placing substitute teachers for Camden City Public Schools were also utilized to determine what components of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook and Substitute Teacher Orientation Session needed revision or modification. These interviews were informal, conversational and held

at various times. Each substitute teacher orientation was critiqued by one of the two staff and that critique was used to alter the orientation's format or contents for future sessions.

Data Analysis Plan

The data collection process for this study was interactive as the intern was involved with all three sample populations. The surveys were coded to reduce the data to quantitative percentages about the two interventions selected for manipulation. Sample population comments were listed as narrative comments. Comparisons were made between the results of the two surveys to determine any similarities and any possible cause and effect relationships.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of the Data

Two populations were surveyed for this study: substitute teachers who were new to Camden City Public Schools as of September 1998 and school district principals. The surveys designed for this study were constructed to provide data in three areas: (1) the effectiveness of the Substitute Teacher's Handbook and Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions in providing useful information to substitute teachers; (2) the impact of these two variables on substitute teachers; and (3) the effect of these two variables on the return rate of substitute teachers to Camden City Public Schools. The data indicated positive results for the first two areas. The results were inconclusive for the third area.

Substitute Teacher Program Survey

The Substitute Teacher Program Surveys were distributed to 100 substitute teachers. Thirty-one surveys or 31% were returned.

The first item on the survey asked respondents to indicate the month they attended the Substitute Teacher Orientation. The second item asked them to check the approximate number of days they were employed by the district. An analysis of these two items revealed a positive correlation between the month the respondent attended the orientation and the number of days they were employed as substitutes in the district. The earlier in the school year the substitute attended the orientation, the more frequently he/she worked as a substitute teacher. The results of these items are outlined in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Substitute Distribution – Question 1

“Which Substitute Teacher Orientation Session did you attend during the 1998-1999 school year?”

Month	Number of Responses
September	3
October	2
November	4
December	6
January	5
February	7
Total	27

Four of the thirty-one respondents did not respond to this item.

Table 2

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Substitute Distribution – Question 2

“Approximately how many days have you worked for Camden City Public Schools as a substitute teacher after attending the orientation session?”

September, October, and November

0 Days	1 – 15	16 – 30	31 – 45	45+
1	0	2	8	6
4%		8%	31%	23%

December, January, and February

0 Days	1 – 15	16 – 30	31 – 45	45+
3	0	4	0	2
11%		15%		8%

Five of the thirty-one respondents did not respond to this item. Percentages are

based on 26 responses to this item and rounded to the nearest percentage.

The next section on this survey asked the respondents to rate six items by circling responses that ranged from “Excellent” to “Poor.” Items 1-5 were components of the orientation and handbook, which were presented during the Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions. A combination of “Excellent”, “Very Good,” and “Good”, for a total positive ranking, were indicated by between 87-99% of the respondents. These results are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Substitute Distribution – Items 1-5

	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Poor	Responses per item	Total combined % of ratings 1, 2, 3
1. Information provided during the Substitute Teacher Orientation	34%	24%	34%	3%	3%	29	92%
2. Information provided in the <u>Substitute Teacher's Handbook</u>	39%	25%	36%	0	3%	28	99%
3. Camden District's Substitute Teacher application process	21%	28%	38%	3%	10%	29	87%
4. Free TB testing options.	59%	10%	28%	3%	0	29	97%
5. Knowledge of facilitator in presenting information during the Substitute Orientation	45%	28%	24%	3%	3%	29	93%

Item 6 asked respondents to rate the Substitute Teacher Orientation process overall. Ninety-three percent rated the process as “Excellent”, “Very Good” or “Good.” This item is further outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Substitute Distribution – Item 6

	1 Excellent	2 Very Good	3 Good	4 Fair	5 Poor	Response s per item	Total combined % of ratings 1, 2, 3
6. Overall Substitute Teacher Orientation process	21%	48%	24%	3%	3%	29	93%

Respondents were also asked to indicate the usefulness of the orientation and handbook information. A total of 80% indicated that the information was either “Extremely Helpful” or “Very Helpful.” Thirteen percent indicated “Somewhat helpful” The data indicates that 95% of the respondents were able to utilize some portion of the handbook or orientation information. See Table 5.

Table 5

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Substitute Distribution – Item 7

7. “Please rate how helpful the information presented during the Substitute Teacher Orientation and in the Substitute Teacher’s Handbook has been to you as a substitute teacher in Camden City Public Schools.”

Extremely Helpful	Very Helpful	No Opinion	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful At All	Responses per item
15%	65%	4%	15%	4%	26

Nineteen or 61% of the total number of respondents provided “Additional Comments” for Item 8. Several respondents gave their names. However, to protect anonymity, all names were omitted from this listing. All text is unedited and typed as written by the respondents.

8. "Additional Comments"

"In receiving the orientation, I can say it assisted in answering some questions I had on the procedures process. I think a workshop like this should be held once a month to assist in any problems that might arise later."

"The policies and procedures should be outlined in a handbook at each school in the city, each with the information from the teacher you are substituting for. It's been hard to find their classrooms, desks, and lesson plans or subplans if they have any."

"I believe your substitute program to be one of the best. However, I would suggest a better calling system such as "Herb." Herb gives each sub an Id and calls them for openings or visa versa. It gets troublesome to call in everyday. Herb is a computerized system that is used in Philadelphia and other districts."

"The orientation and the handbook should give hints on: students' general impressions, and attitudes towards substitute teachers; how to handle the disorder, yelling and romping of students during lessons; substituting without lesson plans/briefs; and uncaring behavior."

"All sixth floor personnel extremely helpful and friendly. Subs should be compensated for attending the orientation."

"I found the orientation more helpful for 1-6 teaching than for the high school. I am not sure how to help new teachers with the ideas for classroom control. Perhaps it is not something that can be imparted but must be learned with experience. Otherwise, the whole process was professional, respectful and welcoming."

"Need more work!!! Without prejudice."

"I find the principal of East Camden Middle to be very discourteous and unprofessional!!"

"Working as a teaching aide/substitute teacher at alternative HS in Willingboro, NJ. (After orientation)"

"We need more teachers to provide more lesson plans when they are not there."

"Need payroll number in Orientation handbook."

"I have been baby sitting for my daughter, however, I do plan to work. I've had a sick grandson."

"Substitute Teacher's Handbook" is the most important information we had as regards these schools. If it's possible, I request more things should be included."

"It would be very good for the Board to liaise (sic) with school principals to ensure the cooperation of students and pupils with substitute teachers. They generally don't respect substitute teachers."

"Needs to be more organized."

"As a recently retired teacher, I did attend a Substitute Teacher Orientation."

"It might be a good idea to send this form to me again in about a month, after I've had an opportunity to work as a substitute teacher in Camden."

"Haven't had an opportunity to attend substitute orientation but I plan to."

"Thank you for the opportunity to serve in the Camden City Public Schools."

Principal Surveys

The Substitute Teacher program Principal Survey was distributed to thirty-four district principals. Eighteen surveys or 53% of the sample were returned. Principals were asked to rate statements using a scale that ranged from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The first statement addressed substitute teachers' attire and its appropriateness for the job. This item was specifically covered in both the orientation and the handbook. Attire was considered important and included in the survey because many of Camden's schools were uniform schools and principals had often commented about the unprofessional clothing worn by substitute teachers. A total of 78% of the respondents "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed" that substitutes were appropriately dressed. This item is further outlined in Table 6.

Survey Items 2 and 3 also addressed areas specifically covered in the orientation and the handbook. Principals were asked to compare substitute teachers in their buildings for the 1998-1999 school year with substitutes from previous years. A total of 65% indicated positive responses for Item 2 and

62% for Item 3. These items are completely outlined in Table 7.

Table 6

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Item 1

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses per item
1. Substitute teachers are dressed appropriately for classroom instruction	17%	61%	6%	17%	0	18

Table 7

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Items 2 and 3

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses per item
2. Substitute teachers seemed more knowledgeable of district policies and procedures than in previous years	6%	59%	24%	12%	0	17
3. Substitute teachers seemed more knowledgeable and better prepared to conduct lessons than in previous years.	6%	56%	13%	25%	0	16

Item 4 rated the return rate of substitute teachers to the individual principal's school. Eighty-one percent of the respondents indicated that they "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed" that for the 1998-1999 school year, substitute teachers seemed more willing to return to their building than in previous years. See Table 8.

Survey items 5, 6, and 7 addressed the substitute teacher shortages.

Principals were asked to indicate whether they experienced fewer shortages than in previous years; what was the number of substitutes needed when there were shortages; and were there fewer shortages during the 1998-1999 school year than in previous years. The data was inconclusive in this area. Forty-seven percent of the principals “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed” while 40% “Disagreed” that their schools experienced fewer days of substitute teacher shortages. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents indicated that they were short 1-2 substitute teachers on days when shortages occurred. Sixty-three percent indicated that their shortages were about the same as in previous years. Items 5, 6, and 7 are further outlined in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

Table 8

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Item 4

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses per item
4. Substitute teachers seemed more willing to return to my school to cover teacher absences than in previous years.	25%	56%	13%	6%	0	16

Table 9

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Item 5

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses per item
5. My school has experienced fewer days of substitute teacher shortages than in previous years.	7%	40%	13%	40%	0	15

Table 10

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Item 6

	1-2 Substitutes	3-4 Substitutes	5 or More Substitutes	Responses per item
6. On days when my school has experienced substitute teacher shortages, we have been short approximately:	78%	11%	6%	18

Table 11

Substitute Teacher Program Survey – Principal Distribution – Item 7

	An Improvement Over Previous Years	About the Same as Previous Years	No Improvement Over Previous Years.	Responses per item
7. My response to item #6 indicates:	31%	63%	6%	16

Eight principals provided “Additional comments” for Item 8. All text is unedited and typed as written by the respondents.

Item 8: “Additional Comments:
“Some substitute teachers do quite well but most of them do not.”

“Ms. Young is to be commended on substitute assignments”

“As a newcomer to _____ I have no way to make comparisons for #s 2-5 and #7. I have readily voiced my opinion and placed it in writing, when it was appropriate to do so with Ms. Donna Young.” (The name of the school was removed to protect anonymity.)

“I disagree with #1 because many times students may be dressed better.”

“Substitute teachers need to be more knowledgeable about classroom management techniques and strategies.”

“Continue all possible efforts to acquire and hold the needed quantity of quality substitutes.”

"I may not allow teachers to leave the building for workshops if we do not have subs."

"We have been very pleased with the quantity and quality of our substitutes."

CHAPTER V

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study

Conclusions

The ultimate purpose of this study was to examine strategies, which would assist Camden City Public Schools to reduce or eliminate its substitute teacher shortage problem. The New Jersey Department of Education has instituted Whole School Reform in 28 urban districts, including Camden. This reform is an outgrowth of a 1997 Abbott v Burke Supreme Court decision regarding school funding. The idea behind Whole School Reform is to enhance and improve the education of low-income, at-risk students. To do so, school reform models will be implemented and districts may be "...rebuilt in its entirety school by school." (NJDOE, 1998) Implementation of this program will require several days of in-service training for teachers and administrators. Consequently, the demand for substitute teachers will be even greater in the very near future. Camden's substitute teacher shortage could get worse before it gets better.

The limited data obtained from the Substitute Teacher Program Survey clearly supported the use of district level interventions and substitute teacher preparation interventions. The variables selected for manipulation in this study, the handbook (district level intervention) and the substitute teacher orientation sessions (substitute teacher preparation intervention) received positive ratings. Most significantly was the response to survey Item 7: "Please rate how helpful the information presented during the Substitute Teacher Orientation and in the

Substitute Teacher's Handbook has been to you as a substitute teacher in Camden City Public Schools." Ninety-two percent of 26 responses indicated that these two areas were either "Extremely Helpful," "Very Helpful," or "Somewhat Helpful." This data clearly supports the work of St. Michel (1995) who states, "...substitute teachers should be given the same kinds of information as regular teachers; afterall, they are legally just as accountable for the students with whom they interact as regular teachers." This study can conclude that the Substitute Teacher's Handbook and Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions were indeed effective in providing useful information to substitute teachers.

Impact of Variables on Substitute Teachers

The principal's survey provided data that indicated that the two selected variables appeared to provide the schools with substitute teachers who were better prepared and more knowledgeable than substitutes in previous year. A total of 65% of principals who responded indicated that 1998-1999 substitute teachers were more knowledgeable of district policies and procedures than substitutes in previous years. Additionally, 72% felt that the 1998-1999 substitute teachers were better prepared to conduct lessons than their peers from previous years. Statistically significant is that 81% of the respondents indicated that during 1998-1999 school year substitute teachers seemed more willing to return to schools to cover teacher absences. It can be concluded from this combined data, along with the 78% response to Item 1 which rated appropriate dress, that the two variables had a positive impact on substitute teachers, as rated by principals of schools where positive substitute teacher performance and professionalism are valued.

Effect of Variables on Return Rate

The data in this area was inconclusive and somewhat contradictory. Although 81% of principals responding to Item 4 indicated that substitute teachers were more willing to return to their buildings than in previous years, the percentages were almost evenly split on whether principals experienced fewer days of substitute teacher shortages. This is evident in Table 9. Seventy eight percent of respondents to Item 6 indicated shortages of 1-2 substitute teachers and 63% rated the shortages about the same as in previous years. Thus, although substitute teachers were better prepared, more knowledgeable, and willing to return to the district to work, building principals were still experiencing shortages. The two variables effected "willingness" to return but not the actual return rate.

Implications

As a result of this study, there are four implications for Camden City Public Schools' Substitute Teacher Program.

First, it is clear that interventions do make a difference. Only two of the three interventions were selected: district level interventions, and substitute teacher preparation interventions. Implementing the third or building level intervention would only enhance the effect of the other two.

Implicit in implementation of the third intervention is building level cooperation and organization. Developing a uniform set of building level guidelines, as an example, for use in each school is theoretically sound and supported in the research. (St. Michel). However, in reality this may prove to be a difficult task. Whole School Reform is rapidly changing the internal structure of

the district. Schools and uniform building guides may not be feasible in the short run as schools and harried principals are grappling with adjusting to a new model and reorganizing internal staff and administrative structures.

Second, if the data indicates that these variables were successful with new substitute teachers, the implication here is that perhaps these interventions would be helpful to all substitute teachers employed by the district.

Implicit in implementing all three interventions is cost. Training costs, materials costs, and man-hours for preparation and organization would have to be included in the district's budget. Although the literature and this study support implementation of all three interventions, the district's budget may not. The cost of implementation may be a hurdle the district cannot easily overcome.

The third major implication of this study is derived from the narrative comments of both principals and substitute teachers. It centers on classroom management and control; principals need substitutes who can manage the classroom and substitute teachers need principals who will support them. The reality is often that neither person gets what they need. The substitute, "...a new adult, an unknown quantity, an authority figure with few earned social credentials, faces a new group of young people in a new environment, where even the location of the pencil sharpener must be learned...the principal's only action is to walk substitutes to their rooms and briefly introduce them. In large schools, substitutes often have to find their classrooms and introduce themselves. (Chu and Bergsma, 1987) Thus, in addition to interventions for substitutes, an intervention for principals will have to be developed. Harried principals would probably welcome any suggestions and assistance, which would make the job of

the substitute easier. Substitutes who are successful encourage student learning, which is the sought after end result of all school principals.

Fourth, the Office of Human Resources must re-examine its role in implementing all three interventions through out the district. Human Resources is directly responsible for Camden's substitute teacher program. The implication here is that HR must take a more active stance in the development and improvement of the district's substitute teachers. It will have to take the lead in providing useful information to all schools and seek input and assistance from building principals in locating the most effective and subject appropriate substitutes.

Human Resources may need to re-examine its substitute teacher hiring procedures and consider revising those procedures to ensure that the most qualified candidates are hired. And, H.R. must begin to link with resources outside of the district in an effort to help Camden eliminate substitute teacher shortages.

Further Study

Although the data produced by this study indicates the positive results which district level and substitute teacher preparations interventions can have on a substitute teacher program, there are at least two additional areas, which need further study. They are:

- (1) The effectiveness of substitute teacher evaluations and feedback; and
- (2) Substitute teacher's perceptions of Camden City Public Schools' classrooms and building practices.

The importance of substitute teacher evaluations cannot be over emphasized.

(St. Michel) An evaluation form was developed and included in the Substitute Teacher's Handbook designed for this study, but it has not been utilized or evaluated. Substitute teachers need feedback. "Substitute teachers must try out their classroom management and teaching skills with the knowledge that feedback will be provided by a classroom teacher or administrator." (Tracy, 1988) To-date, evaluation and feed back has not been implemented and/or measured for effectiveness in any significant, uniform manner. This needs to be done.

The perception substitute teachers have of Camden City Public Schools needs to be examined. It has already been established that substitute teacher shortages exist in the district. What has not been established is whether or not Camden is inadvertently contributing to these shortages by continuing practices, which may foster negative perceptions. If negative perceptions exist, they may be discouraging substitute teachers from returning to the district. All substitute teachers need to be polled on several areas including, but not limited to, the availability of lesson plans, the quantity and quality of assistance from building administrators, and the general orderliness and ease of locating materials in the absent teacher's classroom.

The district needs to know if substitutes are being greeted warmly and made to feel welcome or are they perfunctorily dismissed, sent on their way and "...viewed by students, faculty, and administrators as just a warm body to be in the classroom?" (Frosch, 1984) The district needs to know what perceptions exist. Until it discovers how it is viewed by those same substitutes teachers it is trying so desperately to attract, only a part of the solution to the shortages may

be known.

Substitute teacher shortages in Camden City Public Schools may continue as the entire southern New Jersey region faces increased need and fewer human resources. This study has demonstrated that interventions can be effective. However, if Camden does not institute interventions at the district level and it does not examine its own substitute policies and practices, no amount of money, advertising, or revised hiring procedures will entice substitutes to work in the district. In the words of Bontempo and Deay, (1986) "It is clear that all educators need to involve themselves in efforts to ameliorate the substitute dilemma...It is time for other educators to acknowledge their responsibility to these forgotten professionals."

The intern has grown professionally as a consequence of undertaking this project. Most significant has been the intern's growing appreciation for administrators who have struggled to implement new programs only to be met by "doubting Thomases" and "nay-sayers." The true test of leadership is not always in how brilliant one's ideas are, but whether one has the patience and perseverance to struggle forward to share ideas and enable others to work together in the development of a common vision. The intern was able to begin building that common vision for the improvement of Camden's Substitute Teacher Program.

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Appendix A
Research Instruments

CAMDEN BOARD OF EDUCATION SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PROGRAM SURVEY

Which Substitute Teacher Orientation Session did you attend during the 1998 – 1999 school year?
(Please check)

☐ September ☐ October ☐ November
☐ December ☐ January ☐ February

Approximately how many days have you worked for Camden City Public Schools as a substitute teacher after attending the orientation session? (Please check)

☐ 0 days ☐ 1-15 ☐ 16-30 ☐ 31-45 ☐ 45+

Please rate the items listed below by circling the number which best represents your response.

1 = Excellent 2 = Very Good 3 = Good 4 = Fair 5 = Poor

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Information provided during the Substitute Teacher Orientation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Information provided in the Substitute Teacher's Handbook | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Camden district's Substitute Teacher application process | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Free TB testing options | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Knowledge of facilitator in presenting information during the Substitute Orientation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Overall Substitute Teacher Orientation process | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Please rate how helpful the information presented during the Substitute Teacher Orientation and in the Substitute Teacher's Handbook has been to you as a substitute teacher in Camden City Public Schools. (Please Check) | | | | | |

☐ Extremely Helpful ☐ Very helpful ☐ No Opinion ☐ Somewhat Helpful ☐ Not Helpful At All

8. Additional Comments: _____

Name: (Optional) _____

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope via US mail, to the Office of Human Resources (Personnel) by Friday, March 26, 1999.

**CAMDEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PROGRAM
PRINCIPAL SURVEY**

Please indicate your opinion on each of the statements listed below by circling the number which **best** represents your response. These statements apply to substitute teachers who have covered for teacher absences from September 1998 through, to, and including, February 1999.

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = No opinion 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Substitute teachers are dressed appropriately for classroom instruction. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Substitute teachers seemed more knowledgeable of district policies and procedures than in previous years. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Substitute teachers seemed more knowledgeable and better prepared to conduct lessons than in previous years. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Substitute teachers seemed more willing to return to my school to cover teacher absences than in previous years. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. My school has experienced fewer days of substitute teacher shortages than in previous years. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. On days when my school has experienced substitute teacher shortages, we have been short approximately: (Please check) | | | | | |

_____ 1-2 substitutes _____ 3-4 substitutes _____ 5 or more substitutes

7. My response to item #6 indicates: (Please check)

_____ An improvement over previous years _____ About the same as previous years
_____ No improvement over previous years

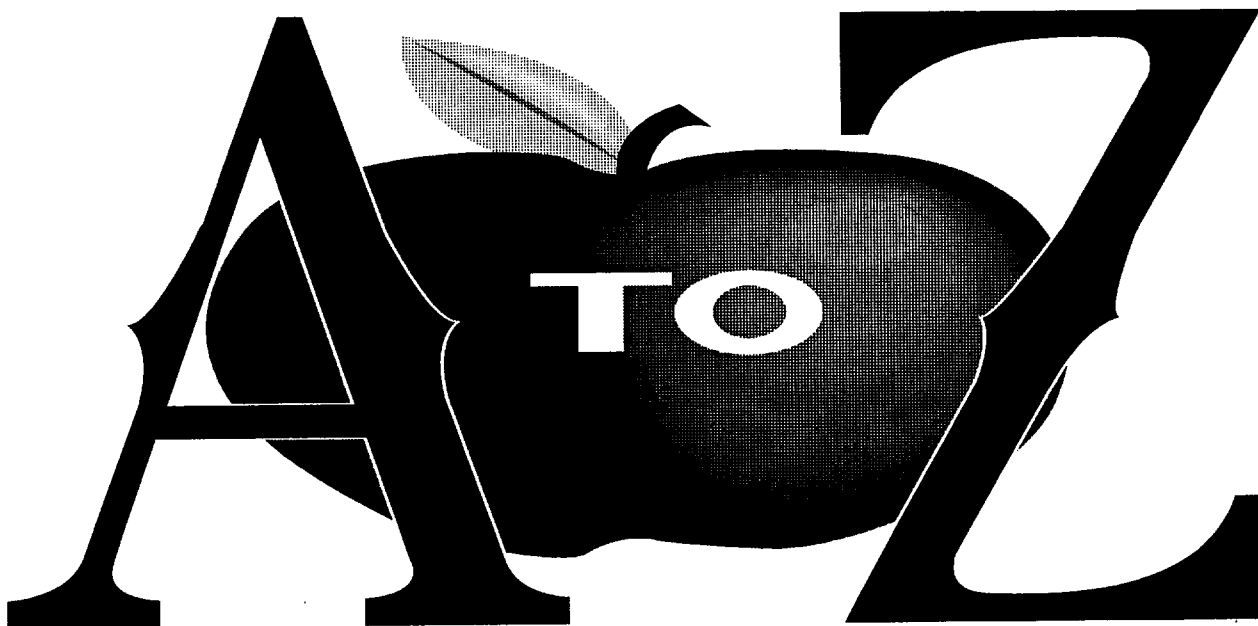
8. Additional comments:

Name: (Optional) _____

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it in the enclosed envelope, via Board mail, to the Office of Human Resources (Personnel) by Tuesday, March 22, 1999.

Appendix B
Substitute Teacher's Handbook

The Title Page, Table of Contents, Board of Education listing, and Acknowledgements pages of the Camden City Public Schools Substitute Teacher's Handbook are contained herein. A full and complete copy of the handbook may be viewed or obtained from Camden City Public Schools, Camden, NJ.



CAMDEN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

Roy J. Dawson, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Marion Proffitt
Assistant Superintendent

Office of Human Resources

Mr. Joshua Alam, Supervisor
Mr. Wendall Foster, Program Analyst
Mrs. Linnell N. Wright, Program Analyst

December 1998

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**CAMDEN CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
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1998-1999**

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Mrs. Jerrothia Riggs, Vice President**

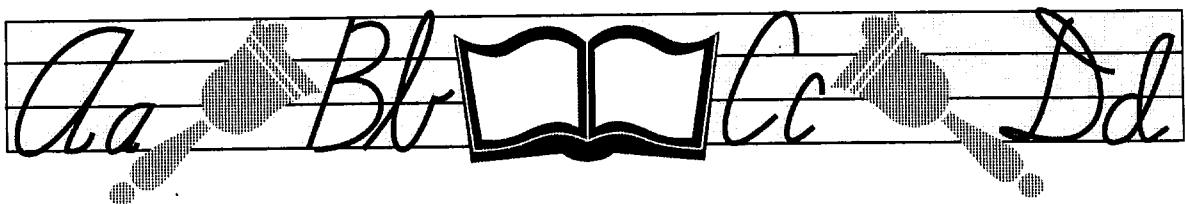
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Karen Tang, Medical Arts High School
Sherwonda Boardley, Woodrow Wilson High School**

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Mrs. Marion E. Proffitt, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Deanna Burney, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Leon Freeman, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary**



**The Office of Human Resources
wishes to acknowledge
the contribution of the following staff in the production
of this handbook:**

**Mrs. Linnell N. Wright, Program Analyst
Ms. Donna Young, Substitute Teacher Clerk
Ms. Beulah Jenkins, Substitute Teacher Clerk**



Appendix C
Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions

**Camden City Public School
Office of Human Resources**

Substitute Teacher Orientation

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

- I. TB Testing – Health Services
- II. Welcome – Mrs. Linnell N. Wright, Director of Human Resources
- III. Review of Handbooks – Mrs. Wright
 - A. General Information
 - B. Job Description
 - C. Dress Code
 - D. Do's and Don'ts
 - E. Injuries on the Job/Worker's Compensation
 - F. Sexual Harassment
 - G. School Calendar
 - H. Pay Schedule
 - I. School Locations/Maps
 - J. Substitute Refusal Form
- IV. Call-In Process – Mrs. Beluah Jenkins
- V. Classroom Management
- VI. Standard Certification
- VII. Questions/Concerns

**Camden City Public Schools
Office of Human Resources**

New Substitute Teacher Orientation Sessions

September 9, 1998

October 7, 1998

November 4, 1998

December 2, 1998

January 5, 1999

February 3, 1999

March 3, 1999

March 31, 1999

May 5, 1999

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name:	Linnell N. Wright
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Graduate	Master of Arts Education Trinity College Hartford, CT MA of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
Present Occupation	Director of Human Resources Camden City Public Schools Camden, NJ