The Decline of K-12 Candidates: A Qualitative Study from Teacher Candidate Perspectives

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Abstract

The growing concern within the K-12 teaching profession is a decline of individuals pursuing a teaching certification or exiting the profession within the first five years of teaching (Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016). The teacher loss affects not only the instructional aspects, students, and educational communities, but also the financial aspects such as initial training, recruitment, hiring and professional development. This research investigates through a qualitative phenomenological research design, themes which contribute to teacher attrition across the United States. The conceptual framework reviews the narratives from the survey, which provides a theme on the rationale why teacher candidates are not staying in the profession. Data sample were 13 anonymous new teachers and graduates of teacher preparation programs in the last 2-5 years who responded to open-ended survey questions in which their responses contributed to the investigation and results. Results revealed three themes including support, administration, and management were used interchangeably.

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