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The University of San Francisco


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to

The Faculty of the School of Education
Learning & Instruction Department

In Partial Fulfillment
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by
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ABSTRACT


This qualitative study examined teachers, schools, and district approaches to new teacher retention with a COVID-19 spin. In the changing world of a global pandemic and shifting teaching modalities, including distance or hybrid learning environments, teachers reflected on their experiences of adaptation. Interviews with teachers in their first three years in the profession were conducted to share the stories of new teachers amid COVID-19. New teachers were recruited through a snowball sampling technique from a large school district in the San Francisco Bay Area in Northern California. To answer the research questions, participants were interviewed about the presence or absence of school and district-level new teacher supports, including improved working conditions, positive school climate, supportive school administrators, induction and mentoring programs, and PD was described alongside teachers’ self-reports of plans for retention or attrition.

Keywords: COVID, new teacher retention, school leadership, emergency remote teaching
SIGNATURE PAGE

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate’s dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctoral of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Educational research literature describes the need for effective instructors. Educational systems rely on the quality of teachers to facilitate student outcomes (Atteberry, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2015; Carver-Thomas, 2018; Haycock, 1998; Stronge, Ward & Grant, 2011). But what if teachers do not remain in schools long enough to be able to hone their skills as professionals? According to 2018 data, 88% of the demand for teachers in California is driven by attrition as 8.5% of teachers leave the profession or state each year and another 8% leave their schools (Darling-Hammond, Sutcher & Carver-Thomas, 2018). Meaning that almost 9 out of 10 hires each year are made to replace someone who has left (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018). Often, this need is filled by new teachers within three years of their first full-time teaching job (Carver-Thomas, Leung & Burns, 2020). Carver-Thomas et al., (2020) detailed the rates of beginning teacher hires as fulfilling 12% of California's teacher workforce. This includes 1 in 4 districts that fill at least 20% of their open teaching positions with new teachers. This greening (larger numbers of new or “green” teachers) of the workforce of teachers means a shift in how districts and schools prepare new hires for many of their first steps into the field of teaching (Ingersoll, Merrill, Stuckey & Collins, 2018).

For schools and school systems to build professional skills among their faculty, school leadership must create conditions for teachers to stay around long enough to develop positive school culture (Balyer, Ozcan & Yildiz, 2017; Eginli, 2021; Shuls & Flores, 2020). This need is partially due to school conditions and the overarching ecosystems of education and the ongoing neglect of public schools. Within the locus of control for districts and schools, school culture development begins with the retention of teachers. Without retaining teachers in schools, high turnover feeds into a lack of quality teachers and instruction (ultimately leading to low student outcomes), loss of continuity and
commitment to the school site, and more time and energy spent by school leadership focused on hiring rather than supporting teachers (Brown & Wynn, 2009; Sutcher, Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas, 2019). Therefore, principals, schools, and districts must find ways to better retain teachers and governments must find better ways to support and change the culture of education.

As there continues to be a “revolving door of teachers” (Carver-Thomas, 2018, p. 3), schools must provide appropriate interventions to support the needs of all new teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2019). The literature describes best practices for new teacher retention by improving working conditions, building a positive school climate, supportive school administration, including formal and informal induction and mentoring programs, and professional development (PD) (Reitman & Karge, 2019).

In March of 2020, however, the experiences of new teachers shifted as the novel coronavirus, titled COVID-19, forced a shutdown of the state of California, with a lockdown put in place by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 19, 2020 (California Department of Education, 2021). This forced schools to shift their instruction to emergency remote teaching including immediate use of online video conferencing, phone calls, work packets, and other materials so that students could learn from home (Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust & Bond, 2020). For teachers, this shift to emergency remote instruction began for many without much prior online teaching skills or strategies (Kurtz, 2020; Joshi, Vinay & Bhaskar, 2020). As the virus’s impact continued, there were changing working conditions, shifts in instructional delivery, physical and emotional spacing of peers, and other means for reducing the spread of COVID-19 to students and teachers. Each of these shifts may have impacted the experiences of new teachers as well as the support provided by schools or school districts during this unique time in history (Kurtz, 2020; Simba, 2021).
Purpose of the Study

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine how the novel COVID-19 virus has affected the experiences of new public-school teachers in California. Prior research indicates the use of interventions by districts and school leaders to improve new teacher retention. The interventions most positively correlated with higher teacher retention include the improvement of working conditions, positive school climate, supportive school administrators, induction and mentoring programs, and PD. The goal of this study was to determine which of these interventions have shifted, improved, or declined during the global pandemic.

This qualitative study examined teachers, schools, and district approaches to new teacher retention with a COVID-19 spin. In the changing world of a global pandemic and shifting teaching modalities, including distance or hybrid learning environments, teachers reflected on their experiences of adaptation. Interviews with teachers in their first three years in the profession were conducted to share the stories of new teachers amid COVID-19. New teachers were recruited through a snowball sampling technique from a large school district in the San Francisco Bay Area in Northern California. To answer the research questions, participants were interviewed about the presence or absence of school and district-level new teacher supports, including improved working conditions, positive school climate, supportive school administrators, induction and mentoring programs, and PD was described alongside teachers’ self-reports of plans for retention or attrition.

Significance of the Study

This study was important for four reasons. First was the opportunity to voice a unique perspective in modern history. Given the nature of a novel global pandemic, the timing of this study was vital to add to the growing body of knowledge surrounding this specific point in educational history. COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus from the coronavirus family that was first discovered in 2019.
The virus is spread via close contact with infected airborne particles. In 2020, the CDC recommended that all individuals maintain at least six feet of distance from others and wear a face mask covering to prevent the transmission of the virus which shifted instruction to outdoors, separated, and cohort models of instruction for the most vulnerable student populations (2021). In 2020, the first vaccinations were made available to United States residents which led to another shift in school practices in California, with many districts leading masked instruction indoors with a full-class load of students (CDC, 2021). At the time of this study, there have been 79,787,583 total cases and 974,569 deaths recorded due to COVID-19 in the United States (CDC, 2022). During this period, working conditions, climate, administrative support, mentoring, and PD have shifted the experiences of new teachers. Educational systems as a whole have been up-ended, however, ongoing systems of oppression have remained, perpetuating inequalities for students and teachers. Therefore, the voices of participants paint a picture of life as a new teacher amid this historic event. This study strove to encapsulate their voices to shine a light on inequities and concerns in public education.

Second, this study was important to provide insight into the changing practices of schools and their use of new teacher supports in a shifting global environment to positively impact future interventions. The way that schools supported teachers at this moment in the time provided a lens into what supports are solidified in our educational system and which have declined or faltered during the pandemic. This study provided insights into how schools may move forward to best support their new teachers following the pandemic. These results may influence school and district policies to positively influence retention. Therefore, this study served as documentation of school and district interventions to better support future educational policy decisions to positively impact outcomes for students and new teachers.
Third, this study resolved a gap in the research literature around shifting school conditions for new teachers. When environments shift, what was the impact on new teacher supports and how well do these supports continue to influence new teacher retention? Although the literature defines the need for the interventions of improving working conditions and school climate, supportive school administrators, induction and mentoring, and PD, there is little reference to what happens when these supports shift, increase, or decrease during a school year. Therefore, this study helped determine the ways that interventions for new teachers shifted or remained stable in an unstable environment, such as changing teaching modalities, shifting job expectations, and other COVID-19 related shifts.

Finally, this study added to the body of literature around the new concept of emergency remote teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). There is limited academic research on the topic given the recency of the COVID-19 virus. Even more recent was the coining of the term emergency remote teaching to describe rapidly shifting online and hybrid instruction (Hodges et al., 2020). Given the emergency shift in instruction, the impact on teachers in general and new teachers more specifically, was important to fully understand this new instructional delivery method. Therefore, this data added to the concept of emergency remote teaching and its impact on the development of new teachers.

**Conceptual Framework**

Stansbury and Zimmerman’s (2000) Continuum of Teacher Support defines the need for various supports when planning for and working with new teachers and served as the conceptual framework for this study. This continuum broadly defines some of the ways that schools and school districts can support new teachers. The supports posited by Stansbury and Zimmerman are vital to new teachers’ development and will be used to identify potential areas of support for new teachers during COVID-19 instruction. The Continuum of Teacher Support framed new teacher participants’ responses as they emerged in this study. Stansbury and Zimmerman place these supports into three categories: (a) personal
and emotional support, (b) task or problem-focused support, and (c) reflections, with each building onto one another as a continuum of supports. Each of these supports stands alone and is vital to the development of new teachers. Schools and districts can provide these three categories of support across working conditions, school climate, school administrators, induction and mentoring, and PD.

**Personal and emotional support**

The first category of the Continuum of Teacher Support is personal and emotional support. This category is often the first form of support necessary for new teachers as they acclimatize to a new profession and environment (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Deep personal relationships acclimatize new members of the community through sharing concerns and providing emotional support, which provides crucial support for new teachers (Rieber & Robinson, 2004; Wenger, 1998).

Within this category, mentors may provide emotional support in the form of a listening ear, sharing their own experiences, and opportunities to reflect and debrief. Mentorship in this category provides the opportunity for new teachers to share their fear, concerns, and successes (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Personal and emotional support may be provided through several different avenues, including district-assigned mentors, principals or other school leadership, fellow teachers (both new and veteran), or district leadership. Teachers may receive this support in a formal setting, through PD or other shared learning experiences, or in less formal moments with their colleagues (Wenger, 1998). A mentor’s and school’s goal within this category is to provide comfort for new teachers (Smith, 1993).

As new teachers receive this emotional and personal support, they become more active members of their school communities, as “identities become anchored in each other and what [they] do together” (Wenger, 1998, p. 89). This process of becoming emotionally anchored to the larger school community also allows additional support in the form of belonging, which is necessary for the development of new
teachers (Mezirow, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Through emotional and personal support, new teachers can have a “support network for bad days” (Inman & Marlow, 2004, p. 7).

**Task or problem-focused support**

The second category of the Continuum of Teacher Support is task or problem-focused support. The emphasis in this category is placed on the issues most prevalent to the new teacher, such as instruction, planning, classroom management, and other immediate concerns for day-to-day teaching. Newcomers first begin to develop their identities as professionals, developing competence through experience, by engaging with others to better understand the role of the career/profession (Wenger, 2000). New teachers learn best when their learning is job-embedded (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989).

Much of this learning for new teachers occurs in a group or a mentor-mentee setting as new teachers grapple with tasks and problems, building knowledge through the experience and discussion with their peers. The context of the professional environment allows for these professional communities and can be found in the school environment through things such as Professional Learning Communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), the teacher lunchroom, or collaborative planning meetings. As described by Brown et al.,

Groups are not just a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of their members. They give rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would not come about without them (1989, p.18).

The school culture, meetings, and peer relationships are crucial in this theory and will be analyzed in this study through an analysis of mentorship and school climate. Within this category, mentors support new teachers as they problem-solve and brainstorm solutions to immediate classroom concerns (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Adults are linked with others within a profession or organization and support the idea that through sharing common knowledge of a profession or
organization, newcomers can be led through understanding their role and becoming better practitioners (Wenger, 1998).

**Critical reflections on teacher practice**

The third category of the Continuum of Teacher Support is the support of critical reflections on teacher practice. This category refers to the process of metacognition of teaching practice, including reflection on lesson planning or classroom observations. Learning done in teacher preparation programs outside of the classroom may differ from the learning done in the context of the classroom and with teacher peers or mentors (Kitchenham, 2008). Therefore, teachers must be allowed to reflect on teaching in the context of the real world.

As teachers build their skills in the theory and practice of teaching, they must be given time to self-reflect on their practice to better understand their successes and challenges (Moir, 1999). Through the process of self-reflection, teachers can build their professional teaching schema to become better practitioners (Mezirow, 1997). New teachers are perpetually trying out new skills and reflecting on their application, “continually evolv[ing] with each new occasion of use, because situations, negotiations, and activities inevitably recast it in a new, more densely textured form” (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989, p.4).

In the context of this study, self-reflections were vital to understanding teachers’ perception of their teaching as well as the support that they have received. Teachers in this study were asked to reflect on their experiences of being new teachers during COVID-19 and in new school settings. In each of these three categories, a formal or informal mentor provides the above support to develop the new teacher further professionally. This continuum provides a basis for adult learning focused specifically on teacher support and served as the conceptual framework for the development of this study as well as framed participant responses.
Background and Need

Teacher retention is an issue plaguing many schools—how to hire, develop, and retain teachers so that they can lead student growth (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018). As schools strive to decrease class sizes, more new teachers are needed to fill the positions within the classrooms. To fill this need, new teachers are frequently being hired directly out of teacher preparation programs (Ingersoll et al., 2018). New teachers are defined throughout this study as teachers who are within three years of their first full-time classroom teaching experience (Inman & Marlow, 2004; Ingersoll et al., 2018).

The largest number of newly hired new graduates are found in urban schools, where high-quality instruction is crucial to supporting vulnerable students’ success (Brown & Wynn, 2009; García & Weiss, 2019b). With this shift in the workforce, urban schools are left to create the conditions for new teacher development and support, specific to their urban school setting (Montero-Sieburth, 1989). This PD is necessary to quickly prepare new teachers for the experiences and teaching situations that they may face in a real-world classroom, which may differ from their experiences in their teacher preparation program (Duncan, 2014). New teachers are often left feeling stung by the pressures of low salaries, high stress, and minimal support, ultimately leaving the profession at alarming rates (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018).

Attrition rates for the teaching profession have stayed around 8% since 2009 (Sutcher et al., 2019). However, these rates differ based on years of experience within the profession. According to one long-term study of teacher retention, 17% of teachers left the profession within 5 years (Gray & Taie, 2015). Another large-scale study describes a comparison among new teachers comparing their first two school years, with 22.8% of new teachers leaving the profession and 33.9% leaving the school but remaining in teaching (García & Weiss, 2019b).
Research indicates that schools and districts can decrease the rates of new teacher attrition through strategic intervention and support. These new teacher supports fall into five categories: (a) improving working conditions, (b) positive school climate, (c) supportive school administrators, (d) induction and mentoring, and (e) PD (Ingersoll, May & Collins, 2019; Reitman & Karge, 2019; See, Morris, Gorard, Kokotsaki & Adbdi, 2020; Singer Early & Shagoury, 2010; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000; Waddell, 2010). Each of these new teacher supports is briefly described below.

The first new teacher support is improved working conditions, in which school administrators and districts provide new teachers with fewer students and less difficult assignments (Stockard & Lehman, 2004; Sutcher et al., 2019). Also used by some schools are roving substitute teachers to allow for release time of new teachers to attend PD, meet with mentors, and observe in peer classrooms (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000)

The second new teacher support is the presence of a positive school climate. For new teachers, schools that support teacher collaboration, ongoing learning, and building collective teacher efficacy are correlated with increased teacher retention in the first three years (Shuls & Flores, 2020; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019; Wynn, Carboni & Patall, 2007).

The third new teacher support is school administrators who may serve the roles of mentor, supervisor, and collaborator during the first few years of a teachers’ career. When the school administrators are more supportive in terms of shared leadership and empowerment of teachers, there have been correlations with new teacher retention (Balyer, Ozcan & Yildiz, 2017; Carver-Thomas, 2018; Shuls & Flores, 2020).

The fourth new teacher support is the presence of induction or mentoring programs. Although both formal and informal mentoring may occur in a school environment, those that have formal relationship structures to provide ongoing support for new teachers are correlated with new teacher
retention (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018; Wiens, Chou, Vallett & Beck, 2019). These formal mentoring programs build non-evaluative relationships between veteran and new teachers to support the new teacher mentees with building content knowledge as well as orienting them to their new workplace (Shuls & Flores, 2020; Smith, 1993).

The fifth and final new teacher support described in the literature is site and district-based PD for new teachers. There is often a disconnect between what teachers learn in their preparation programs and what they are required to do in their careers (Lew & Nelson, 2016). It is in this gap that schools and districts can provide ongoing training for building teaching skills, classroom management, and supporting student needs (Doran, 2020).

Further information about these supports and their ability to influence new teacher retention will be detailed in chapter two. These interventions served as the areas of focus in this study and were analyzed as part of new teachers' interviews about their experiences of teaching and the support that they have received or wish they had received as a part of school and district strategies for new teacher retention.

COVID-19 Shifts

On March 19, 2020, the life of a teacher (both new and veteran) altered in California as a state at home order was issued by Governor Gavin Newsom, requiring all schools and teachers to remain at home for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year (California Department of Education, 2020). Internationally, Kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers made the shift to emergency remote and hybrid instruction (a combination of in-person and online instruction) to decrease the spread of the novel COVID-19 virus (Hodges et al., 2020; Joshi et al., 2020; Song, Wu & Zhi, 2020; Suganya & Sankareshwari, 2020; Yao, Rao, Jiang & Xiong, 2020). In this environment, teachers were forced to shift to emergency online teaching synchronously and asynchronously without much time for planning
or training (Hodges et al., 2020). Synchronous instruction (live student instruction) happened virtually using digital tools including video conferencing, interactive Classroom Management Software (CMS), word processing software (especially those that are collaborative online), and many others. This happened during school days to provide emergency remote teaching for students to replace their in-person learning time to slow the spread of the novel COVID-19 virus (Hodges et al., 2020).

Asynchronous instruction was provided outside of live instructional time, with teachers using CMS, phone calls, and packets, to provide additional practice and instruction time for students. This asynchronous instruction was generally monitored by caregivers or checked by the instructor the following instructional period (Buckle, 2020).

This instructional shift continued into the 2020-2021 school year with 76% of school districts in the United States offering opt-out of in-person schooling options for families. Twenty-two percent of districts continued with the online-only format, 19% offered in-person options, and 52% of schools offered a hybrid format (MCH Strategic Data, 2019; Peele, 2020). In some cases, instruction was delivered in a hybrid format, in which instructors both taught in the emergency remote environment as well as instructed some of their students in the physical classroom. This was completed in a variety of manners. Some schools and school districts elected to teach all students in emergency remote teaching during the mornings and in-person for some students in the afternoon based on parental preference to opt-in or out of in-person instruction. In other schools, instruction happened all day with students sitting in physical classrooms in front of a computer as their peers remained at home, with all completing classwork online. (Buckle, 2020).

The selection of different emergency remote teaching and hybrid formats varied greatly based on the rates of infection of COVID-19, parent comfort levels, and instructional needs of students (California Department of Education, 2021). Regardless of the format selected, online and hybrid
instruction require the use of different instructional skills than those required in a traditional, in-person environment (Albrahim, 2020; Hung, 2016; Joshi et al., 2020; Song et al., 2020; Suganya & Sankareshwari, 2020; Yang, 2020; Yao et al., 2020). Some of these instructional skills include teachers’ use of computers to implement curricula, such as video conferencing applications, online platforms, emails, and Learning Management Software (LMS) (Kurtz, 2020; Joshi et al., 2020). According to a pre-pandemic study, 68% ($n = 3,377,900$) of teachers surveyed reported receiving some form of training on the use of computers for instruction but only 25% reported they felt “very well prepared” following their training (García & Weiss, 2019a). Therefore, the rapid shift in instructional delivery due to the COVID-19 pandemic was thrust onto teachers who were, for the most part, underprepared for the online instructional needs of emergency remote teaching (Hodges et al., 2020).

Continuing into the 2021-2022 school year, California schools adjusted to the flow of the COVID-19 pandemic. In August 2021, MCH Strategic Data reported 88.6% of school districts taught fully in person, 4.4% hybrid or partially in person, and only 0.7% fully remote. This is a dramatic shift from the prior Fall with a nearly 70% increase in school districts offering fully in-person instruction (MCH Strategic Data, 2021). This continuous shift in instructional modalities, teaching location, and working conditions will likely have an impact on the experiences and retention of new teachers.

Given the rapid shift in instructional practices for teachers globally, this study strove to investigate the effect on new teacher retention in the wake of the COVID-19 virus. As there was a shift to emergency remote teaching, including online and hybrid instruction for students and online professional learning for teachers, there was a change in the self-perception of teachers (Dolighan & Owen, 2021; Peroff, 2020). Similarly, teachers’ job satisfaction had decreased significantly in light of the pandemic and during online instruction (Suganya & Sankareshwari, 2020). Given these changing conditions for teachers’ instructional practices and mental health, this study strove to investigate the
ways that schools and school districts are applied best practices for new teacher retention in a changing school environment and how the use of these supports influenced teachers' plans for retention or attrition (Kurtz, 2020).

**Research Questions**

This study strove to better understand the experiences of new teachers amid the novel COVID-19 global pandemic. Ten new teachers from a large Northern California school district were interviewed to answer the following three research questions:

1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?
2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?
3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions will be used throughout this study. Although there are multiple definitions for the words used, the terms are defined for the context of this study.

*Emergency remote teaching* is the term used for online or hybrid instruction used as a substitute for in-person instruction in a temporary manner due to emergency circumstances rather than a planned remote instructional course (Hodges et al., 2020). Emergency remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic was delivered “synchronously” (with the teacher present/live instruction given) using digital video conferencing platforms, including Zoom, Google Hangouts, Facetime, and others. Additional “asynchronous” (done without the teacher present) instruction was delivered using Classroom Management software such as Google Classroom, Seesaw, Canvas, and others.
**Induction** is the process of introduction and preparation of new teachers by a school district or school in a standardized or documented way (Wiens et al., 2019). Induction differs for each school district, preparation program, and state. Within California, teachers must either complete a licensed preparation program, testing, and induction in their school district or participate in a two-year job-based mentoring program (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021b).

**Intent to return** is a formal term used by many school districts, sites, and unions when referring to the plans of a teacher for the following school year (Larkin, Lokey-Vega & Brantley-Dias, 2018). Many school organizations require teachers to formally state their plans at the end of each school year to prepare for hiring. Intent to return was used in this study to describe informally, through self-report, teachers’ plans to return to their same grade level/classroom, school site, district, state, or profession.

**Mentoring** refers to a formal or informal relationship in which a veteran teacher provides support for a new teacher (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Mentoring can take several forms. It can be a formal relationship assigned by a school district or school site to support a new or struggling teacher. This is often a forced relationship required by the school, district, or state. Mentoring can also be a less formal relationship, with principals suggesting partnerships among their staff. Even more organic, mentoring can take the form of new teachers asking for help from their peer teachers in the hallway, over lunch, or via phone or email.

The term **new teacher** refers to teachers who have less than 3 years of teaching experience (Inman & Marlow, 2004; Ingersoll et al., 2018). Although there are different references within the literature for what classifies a new teacher, ranging anywhere from 1 year to 6 years of teaching experience (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Carver-Thomas, Leung & Burns, 2021), for this study and the
timeliness of the 2020 COVID-19 virus, teachers within their first 3 years of teaching were selected to best provide experience and reflections during this period.

*Professional Development (PD)* is a general term for the site or district-based instruction for teachers of all experience levels (Lew & Nelson, 2016). PD is frequently used by districts and school sites to mitigate gaps in understanding in teachers’ practice or to support growth in student performance (Borman & Dowling, 2008). To support this growth, school leadership provides or sends teachers to group instructional opportunities. These are sometimes one-off courses or maybe a part of a larger instructional series.

*Retention* describes the rates at which teachers remain at their school site, district, or within teaching in the following school year (García & Weiss, 2019b). Generally, retention data is used to provide a lens into the professional conditions for the school site, district, or teaching as a profession.

*School climate* may broadly define the relationships and culture of a school, including teachers, parents, community members, and staff. In the case of this research, school climate was used to describe the collegiality of teachers and other school staff, including their relationships with each other and the building or lack of trust, respect, and freedom (Shuls & Flores, 2020). For this study, a positive school climate described the use of interpersonal relationships to drive instructional change among teachers, including but not limited to, the use of planning meetings, the building of teacher-to-teacher relationships, mentorship, and ongoing desire to improve the status of the school in terms of culture, interpersonal relationships, or academics.

*Supportive administration* refers to the ways that principals or other school administrators provide support for teachers through various means such as orienting new teachers, matching new and veteran teachers, adjusting working conditions, and promoting collegial collaboration (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Supportive administration is often defined by the teacher and interpretations of
support may differ based on personal preference, communication styles, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, education level, language, etc. Therefore, this study asked teachers to interpret their relationships with principals as either supportive or unsupportive of their work in the classroom.

**Turnover intention** refers to the rate at which teachers plan to leave a school. Their intention to leave or stay at a school site is stated in future terms by the teacher. Turnover refers to the number of teachers that need to be replaced rather than those who will be returning to the school the following school year (Larkin et al., 2018).

**Urban schools** are public schools that are categorized as generally more densely populated schools with fewer resources (Milner, 2012). Research on new teacher retention within these schools focuses on the development of relationships between colleagues and administrators. Given that urban schools receive fewer resources, yet have more students, they are often difficult places for new teachers to get their footing (Singer-Early & Shagoury, 2010). In this study, all participants worked at urban schools within this large school district, making their experiences unique to this school type.

**Working conditions** are the status of a classroom teachers’ worksite and can include class size, testing, professional culture, and accountability (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017; Sutcher et al., 2019). These conditions may be adjusted to support a new or inexperienced teacher by the school administrator to allow for things such as smaller class size, additional support with testing, and other adaptations of the classroom environment. Accountability may be altered by the school administrator to support working conditions for teachers, such as allowing for multiple deadlines or scaffolded due dates for testing data or lesson plans.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the experiences of new teachers [Research Question One], common themes of new teacher support by districts and schools [Research Question Two], and new teachers’ decisions to remain in their schools, district, or profession [Research Question Three]. This literature review will review the three purposes above in current educational research.

The first section of this literature review will detail the limited, but invaluable, prior research on the shifts in K-12 instruction due to COVID-19. Within this section, research around online teaching instruction from both non-emergency and emergency remote teaching will provide a lens into plausible concerns of new teachers during this time and the impact of online instruction on teacher retention as studied historically. The goals of this section of the review are to better understand the shifts in the experience of new teachers that may be seen among participants in this study and to be able to better identify their reactions and responses as described in the literature.

The second section of this literature review will provide background information on themes of new teacher support. The current research used by school districts and schools to support new teachers’ retention in the profession will be introduced through exploratory studies and five themes of new teacher support will emerge. Subsections will further describe each of these five themes of new teacher support most prevalent in the literature, including working conditions, school climate, administration, induction and mentoring, and PD. The purpose of detailing each theme is to understand the ways that each theme of new teacher support uniquely impacts new teacher retention.

The third section of this literature review will detail the possible impact of COVID-19 on new teacher retention. Due to the limitations of the recency of COVID-19, no data is currently available to
describe how these shifts in instructional practices and new teacher support may impact the retention of new teachers. This section will first draw a parallel with teacher retention among online instructors, which may provide some insight into the impact of shifting teaching modalities on teacher retention. Second, a recent study on technostress and the impact of COVID-19 on teachers’ plans to continue using online instruction will be described as another potential indicator of retention as was measured in this study.

**Impact of COVID-19 on School and Teacher Experience**

The full impact of the novel COVID-19 virus is still not fully known within academic literature. Shifts in day-to-day classroom instruction continue to change as local and state governments fluctuate in their response to outbreaks and new variants of the virus (CDC, 2021). These shifting conditions for teachers and students based on data from 2019, 2020, and 2021 will be detailed in the following sections of this literature review. A global lens will be used first to review the literature, and then the focus will shift to the United States, and more locally to the state of California.

The impact of COVID-19 on education will be examined globally, with many empirical studies reflecting the experiences of teachers in India, China, Canada, and the United States as well as prior examples of emergency remote teaching. Teacher efficacy in this context will be briefly examined to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on teachers’ actual and perceived quality of instruction as it may be referenced during teacher interviews. However, it should be noted that teacher efficacy did not serve a large role in this study. Since there are no current studies to describe the effect of emergency remote teaching and the skills required for this type of instruction, prior research on established online teaching instruction will be provided as well as a description of how online instruction and emergency remote instruction differ to better understand the experiences of new teachers in this context. This section of the literature review will then detail prior research on the retention of teachers first in an
established online instructional environment and then more specifically in the COVID-19, specific emergency remote teaching environment. The studies provided below are mainly peer-reviewed empirical research studies, but due to the timeliness of the virus, a few sources are from public media and will be referenced as such. In doing this review of the literature, it will further identify gaps in the current body of research and supported this study.

During COVID, several researchers globally have reviewed the impact of the novel COVID-19 virus on their respective educational systems. In India, Suganya and Sankareshwari identified the difference between online and traditional in-person instruction and job satisfaction when teaching online (2020). High school teachers in the state of Tamil Nadu in India were surveyed on their reactions to India’s use of emergency remote instruction to diminish the impact of COVID-19. Between June and August of 2020, 260 participants were surveyed using a Google Form. Among those surveyed, 158 identified as female and 102 as male; no alternative response option was provided. The researchers proposed two different two-tailed hypotheses. The first was that there was no difference in the level of job satisfaction and online teaching. The second was that there was no difference between online and traditional teaching. Both hypotheses were rejected using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). There was a statistical significance that online teaching is predictive of job satisfaction \( (p = 0.03) \). The second hypothesis, that there is no difference between online and traditional teaching was also rejected \( (p = 0.01) \). This study serves as the initial indicator that emergency remote teaching does indeed make a difference in the lives of teachers.

Instructional preparation for COVID-19

Yang’s (2020) large-scale study of teachers in China provides an important insight into the overall reflections of teachers during COVID-19. Although limited to Chinese teachers, these responses provide a lens through which to better understand the impact globally of the novel coronavirus and the
potential responses of teachers in the United States. As described by Song, et al., (2020) in China (and beyond), governments were “suspending classes without suspending teaching and learning” (p.746).

In February of 2020, when schools in China began teaching using only emergency remote teaching, this study surveyed 15,438 teachers in 23 regions in China, including Shanghai, Beijing, and others. The survey asked questions about support for online teaching, readiness to deliver online teaching, the difficulty of online teaching, and willingness to use online teaching after the pandemic. No details were provided about the sampling methods or the methodology for how participants were sent the survey, which limits the replicability of this study.

According to survey results, 52.12% of participants strongly supported, 34.75% somewhat supported, 11.02% somewhat opposed, and 2.11% strongly opposed the use of online instructional methods to teach. In general, teachers in China reported high levels of support for online instruction. With regards to the delivery of online teaching, 45.22% of participants reported using online learning platforms frequently and 37.69% of participants occasionally used these platforms. There was a correlation between those who frequently used online platforms and support for online delivery, however, statistical data was not provided to validate these claims. Among those surveyed, there was a lack of training reported by participants. Only 55.31% of teachers had previously received training even though 100% of participants were teaching online. The survey also asked teachers about their willingness to continue using this instructional delivery method of online teaching following the pandemic. According to responses, only 38.84% had “high willingness”, 40.36% had “some willingness”, 17.06% were “unwilling”, and 3.74% were “extremely unwilling”. Willingness to incorporate and normalize online teaching after the pandemic was mixed in response.

This study has several limitations, including the gaping lack of transparency in statistical data and the fact that the study occurred outside of the location of study for the current research. That said, it
serves as one of the largest surveys of teachers amid the pandemic and its results are influential to the
current study. This study has implications for the current research to incorporate questioning around the
use of online tools both during the pandemic and its application following COVID-19. This line of
questioning provided further depth to understanding the impact of how COVID-19 impacted the
experiences of teachers in general and new teachers specifically.

Song, Wu & Zhi’s (2020) research supports Yang’s results. Song et al. examined the results from
two governmental studies of 92 principals and 8,632 teachers in China. They reported that 35.7% of
schools had held 3-to-5-day training sessions for teachers on how to use online teaching in the last three
years and 37.1% of schools had attended one to two training sessions. Song et al.’s, study also adds to
the findings of Yang by further ranking the needs of teachers in the adoption of online teaching
strategies. The highest needs reported by teachers were access to successful cases of online teaching
(96.5%), access to online curriculum resources (96.1%), techniques in online classroom management
(94.4%), design of online teaching activities (94.1%), and guidance for parents (93.9%). In essence, the
majority of all teachers (both veteran and new) needed support as though they were new teachers due to
the shift to online instruction, a novel instructional modality for many teachers. This study supports the
idea that most teachers are currently in need of PD around emergency remote teaching and hybrid
instruction and that principals are key “pinch points” (Harris & Jones, 2020, p. 244) for their staff, being
mediators of instructional support, education, and policies decisions for their sites, which plays an
important role in the experience of teachers and school culture.

**Impact of COVID-19 on California schools**

Carver-Thomas, Leung, and Burns’ (2021) qualitative research into the impact of COVID-19 on
public schools in the state of California serves as an invaluable resource in understanding the issues
facing schools in the state of this study. The purpose of Carver-Thomas et al.’s, study was to analyze
how schools responded to ongoing teacher shortages in the face of COVID-19 in the 2020-2021 school year. Within this study, they interviewed district administrators (superintendents and human resource directors) to better understand whether teachers are more likely to resign or retire, or be retained within the district considering the pandemic.

In Fall 2020, Carver et al. interviewed participants from eight of the largest districts in California and nine small rural districts. Through purposive sampling, the researchers received a 71% response rate to their requests for interviews. Each of the interviews was done over 30-60 minutes with either a superintendent or human resource administrator from the school district. Of the districts interviewed, 16 out of 17 reported the use of distance or hybrid models of instruction. These models continued to shift based on local COVID conditions and restrictions in their local government. Many district leaders described the use of small in-person groups for their vulnerable populations (English Language Learners, Special Education, and others). For districts providing hybrid instruction, some schools were teaching online and in-person simultaneously while others described teachers preparing work for students to do online while the teacher delivered in-person instruction. District leaders described conflicting concerns by families, students, teachers, and state restrictions as some of the rationale for their selection of different instructional models.

There were four resulting themes of the interviews. The first indicates that teacher shortages in California continue to be an ongoing concern for many school districts. According to interviews, nine out of 17 district leaders reported shortages in math and science teachers. Seven out of the seventeen districts also reported shortages in Special Education teachers. In response to these shortages, district leaders described that schools increased other class sizes to allow for the class to continue to happen. Other schools eliminated courses, meaning fewer course offerings for students. According to participants, substitute teachers also continue to be in shortage. As several districts historically used
retired teachers to provide substitute coverage, interviews indicated that these retirees struggled with online instruction, as well as age or health concerns that act as barriers to in-person instruction.

The second finding was that many school districts continue to hire teachers with emergency or substandard credentials (intern, provisional, limited assignment, or waivers) (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2021a). Out of the seventeen districts, eight hired the same number of teachers on substandard credentials as they would in any other year. Four districts reported hiring more teachers in this manner. According to the interviews six districts reported reassigning teachers to new subjects that they had not been formally prepared for to offer new courses. According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, in the 2018-2019 school year, 13,912 teachers were hired on a substandard teaching credential (2021a). Carver-Thomas et al., posit that hiring teachers with substandard teaching credentials has become less of an emergency solution and more of a necessary measure for hiring new teachers. Many administrators also noted their concerns about supporting new teachers through the credentialing process, with the standardized testing required being difficult or causing fear for some of their newer teachers.

The third finding of Carver-Thomas et al.’s, study was that district leaders indicated concerns that their teachers’ workload has increased by at least double, and that burnout is a major concern. The first concern described by participants was that teachers are dealing with their own emotional and physical concerns during a global pandemic, such as worrying for their families and selves. Due to the nature of emergency remote instruction, teachers also reported having a difficult time understanding online instruction and often had additional requirements to prepare multiple lessons for students online and in-person in a hybrid environment. District leaders also reported concerns over teachers’ mental health. Because of the pandemic, some students have experienced death due to COVID-19 and one district leader reported that they have seen double the number of serious student mental health issues.
The results of the interviews indicated that teachers are feeling stressed over the need to provide support for students’ social and emotional needs during the pandemic as well as concerns over their students’ health. Many district leaders reported an increase in teachers on a leave of absence in the Fall of 2020 due to the above and other concerns. With this increase as well as the lack of available substitutes, many teachers must cover additional classrooms instead of their normal preparatory periods or other release times. These ongoing concerns of burnout and teacher stress further supported the need for this study.

In line with this finding from Carver-Thomas et al.’s study, non-academic research and public media sources support this supposition of concerns in teacher mental health during COVID-19. Gewertz (2020) describes additional concerns of teachers, such as the need to reinvent lesson plans to fit the needs of online instruction. Since there seem to be ongoing changes to instructional delivery, many administrators lack the answers to teachers’ questions. Gewertz reports how teachers are having trouble turning off their work at the end of the day, with online instruction or working from home blending into personal lives. Kurtz (2020) also describes a decline in teacher morale among 1,720 surveyed teachers. In March 2019, 56% of teachers surveyed reported low morale which increased to 66% when surveyed again in April of 2020.

The fourth finding from the interviews conducted by Carver-Thomas et al. was the indication that there are growing numbers of teachers retiring and resigning from their teaching position. Five of the seventeen districts indicated that teachers seem to be struggling with maintaining online instruction. Another plausible reason for retirement was the lack of face-to-face time with students. Similarly, with continuing uncertainty of district budgets and state funding, some teachers are growing weary of the continuity of their teaching positions. Finally, interviews indicated that teachers’ main concern was the fear of COVID-19 in their classrooms during in-person instruction or the alternative, the continued use of hybrid or emergency remote instruction.
Carver-Thomas et al. provided several policy recommendations for districts and the state of California for increasing high-retention pathways for teachers. The first is the provision of financial support for teachers or increased salaries to retain teachers financially within the profession. Prior research supports the suggestion that higher salaries lead to a decline in teacher turnover (Ingersoll et al., 2019). Second, the process for licensure should be streamlined for new teachers to provide easy access to standardized teacher preparation and credentialing. Third, the researchers recommend a decreased workload for teachers during COVID-19, such as smaller class sizes and an increase in the number of teacher preparation periods. Fourth, districts and teachers should recruit and maintain substitute teachers, using them to cover in classrooms rather than using fellow teachers to cover this need. This will allow for an improved workload for teachers and potentially decrease some of the stress for teachers. Finally, districts and schools should be providing ongoing PD to meet the needs of teachers in providing hybrid and emergency remote instruction. By teaching teachers best practices in this new instructional format, teachers can become better prepared for the demands of changing instructional formats.

Carver-Thomas et al.’s study has a few limitations, some of which are clearly outlined by the researchers. Although there are clear selection criteria for the school districts, there was no study of medium-sized school districts within the study. With shifting conditions during COVID-19, there is a limitation of the moment in time when this study was conducted. As stated by the researchers, there was a surge in COVID-19 cases following the Thanksgiving break, which may have influenced the responses of district leaders. Interviews were conducted with only superintendents and human resource directors, which did not include teachers, families, or students. This is a large limitation that the current study hoped to resolve by interviewing new teachers rather than using secondary reports. Overall, this study provided ample evidence for the need for the current study.
Impact of COVID-19 on Instruction

In an opinion piece in Education Review, Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust, and Bond review the differences between emergency remote teaching and online learning (2020). In their review of the literature and responses by schools during COVID, they describe the differences between the planning involved in online instruction, which may take up to nine months, and hours of staff development, and that which has taken place during COVID-19. Due to the rapid reaction of schools necessitated by COVID-19, teachers lacked time for planning, necessary resources, and even internet connection to be able to provide quality online instruction (Roy & Boboc, 2020). Therefore, the authors introduce the term “emergency remote teaching” to encapsulate the difficult conditions for teachers and the limitations of this teaching modality. Hodges et al., describe this modality of teaching as being challenging for teachers in its flexibility, which requires constant re-evaluation due to changing needs of the community and students. Hodges et al., described the novelty of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, stating that instruction during “COVID-19 has presented some unique challenges for institutions… Students, faculty, and staff- are being asked to do things regarding course delivery and learning that have not been seen on this scale in the lifetimes of anyone currently involved” (Hodges et al., 2020, p. 12).

Therefore, additional research into the technical skills and strategies used by teachers during emergency remote teaching must still be evaluated. Hodges et al. set the recommendation of supporting teachers in this transition of different teaching modalities by evaluating teacher efficacy in the application of online teaching skills to better understand gaps for further learning and support. Emergency remote teaching should be “more focused on the context, input, and process elements than product (learning)” (p. 11). To this end, what follows is a review of prior research on skills necessary in
Online instruction during the COVID pandemic to better understand the stressors, frustrations, and instructional skills shifts for new teachers.

**Online instructional skills**

Albrahim’s (2020) review of past literature provides a synthesis of the skills necessary for online instruction. Since there is limited consistency across different research studies with regards to which skills are valued among online teachers, Albrahim has refined the list into six categories of skills.

The first is *pedagogy*. Teachers who teach online should be familiar with the methodology for instructing students. This may include the structure of lessons, classroom management, groupings, and learning theories. Albrahim also includes assessments (both student self-assessments and those done by the instructor) within this domain. The second category of skill for online instruction is *technology*. This is a crucial element of online instruction as teachers must be able to use the Learning Management Software (LMS), video conferencing tools, and other online resources to instruct students. Joshi et al.’s (2020) study of Indian teachers described additional online platforms being used during COVID-19 including WhatsApp, YouTube, and email. Albrahim describes the need for instructors to be able to create online content, use online assessment tools, and assess online resources for their quality. Teachers must be aware of the limitations of technology and be able to adapt or problem solve any concerns with technology.

The third category described in the literature is the *understanding of content*. For teachers to be able to facilitate instruction either online or in a traditional format, they must understand the content that they teach. This requires instructors to be able to teach new skills, impart knowledge, and facilitate the learning of content. The fourth category, *design*, is linked to content. Design is the process by which instructors use instructional principles to organize students’ learning through modules, activities, etc.
Instructors must use student feedback and learning to design lessons and activities that best meet the needs of their learners.

The fifth category is *management and institutional skills*, which includes professional knowledge of the larger organization. Teachers must be able to provide leadership in navigating the school, policies, and expectations of students. Instructors may show this skill through the development and implementation of classroom management and expectations of students. Albrahim includes grading and formal feedback within this domain. The final skill for online teaching is social and communication. Within this domain are skills such as feedback to students through email, LMS, and other systems. Instructors should be able to communicate with their students and facilitate learning through different communication methods that meet the needs of the learners, such as email, phone, etc. Albrahim also describes the need for teachers to mediate disagreements between learners or between the teacher and students.

To develop these skills, Albrahim describes the process as iterative. It traditionally begins with the preparation and design of a learning experience or lesson by the teacher, then instruction occurs. From that instruction, teachers should request or observe feedback from students to better understand what worked and what needs improvement. From this feedback, an instructor should reflect on the lesson and overall instructional practices to refine and improve. This whole process then starts again. It is through this cycle that instructors may learn skills and strategies for instruction. It is success in this process that creates self-efficacious teachers who feel prepared to teach online (Hung, 2016). Unfortunately, this iterative process may not be successfully undertaken during emergency remote teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). Therefore, further research was necessary to better understand the shifting skills necessary for effective teaching in this context.
Teacher efficacy is a widely studied field. Below is a brief snapshot of its application to COVID-19 as it may be referred to as a stressor for teachers as they think about their successes and challenges in teaching during the pandemic. Dolighan and Owen’s (2021) study reviewed the feelings of self-efficacy among secondary teachers in Ontario, Canada in Spring 2020, amid lockdowns in the area due to COVID-19. The purpose of this study was to determine how confident teachers felt before, during, and after teaching online. This study also asked teachers to identify support from their community (experts, instructional designers), and prior years of teaching online.

Dolighan and Owen hypothesized that teachers with more years of experience teaching online would be correlated with higher reports of online teaching efficacy. They also posited that teachers who reported relationships with experts and/or instructional designers would correlate with higher online teaching efficacy. Their third hypothesis was that teachers with online PD courses through their district or a university would positively correlate with high levels of online teaching efficacy.

The survey of online teaching efficacy was sent via email to 432 secondary teachers. The researchers received 132 responses from secondary teachers within the Ontario Catholic school district. Sixty-one percent of participants identified as a female with an average age of 48. Seventy-three percent of those surveyed had a bachelor’s degree. Seventy percent of the teachers surveyed had been teaching for over 16 years in public education. In terms of knowledge of online instruction, 81% of the teachers had been teaching online for fewer than 5 years and among those 88% had 1 year or less of online instructional experience.

The survey consisted of 32 items on a 9-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal). Means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the survey’s four subscales: (a) student engagement ($M = 4.7$, $SD = 1.1$), (b) instructional strategies ($M = 5.8$, $SD = 0.8$), (c) classroom
management \((M = 5.3, SD = 0.8)\), and (d) computer skills \((M = 6.2, SD = 1.6)\). Results of the survey indicated that teachers, overall, needed additional support around each domain. The results also indicated that there was no significant relationship between demographics of age, degree, years teaching online or face-to-face, and overall efficacy scores. There were significant findings in the correlation between taking an online college course \((r = .18, p = .039)\) and doing PD sessions for online teaching \((r = .26, p = .002)\). The subscales were also correlated to determine the relationship between each of the different elements of online teaching efficacy.

Dolighan and Owen’s study is well detailed and provides ample information about methodology and replicability. However, this study has a few limitations, the first of which is the absence of discussion of anxiety and stress among participants due to the pandemic. Since COVID-19 has been constantly shifting modalities for instruction, additional research should be done to compare this initial measure of online teaching efficacy with ongoing adaptations of hybrid and online instruction given changing requirements by schools and districts. Finally, one major limitation is the admission that one researcher has a personal relationship with participants as they are a fellow teacher within the school district which may have swayed responses by participants. This study is helpful in the current research as it informed some of the categories that may impact teachers’ reports of self-efficacy during their tenure teaching during the pandemic, including student engagement, instructional strategies, classroom management, and online teaching skills. This study also serves as a helpful reminder that even though 70% of teachers within the study had been teaching for over 16 years, a very small number had taught online for more than one year. Therefore, it’s likely that this is true in other school districts globally, with even veteran teachers learning new skills with their new teacher colleagues.
**Student learning as a measure of teacher efficacy during COVID-19**

During emergency remote instruction, some researchers posit that learning outcomes cannot be used to understand the success of teachers’ instruction during a global pandemic (Hodges et al., 2020). However, student learning is one of the clearest indicators of successful instruction and therefore cannot be dismissed (Atteberry et al., 2015; Carver-Thomas, 2018; Haycock, 1998; Stronge et al., 2011). In their study projecting student outcomes during COVID-19, Kuhfeld, Soland, Tarasawa, Johnson, Ruzek, and Liu (2020) reviewed prior literature around summer learning loss to posit possible outcomes for student learning due to the pandemic. Given their model of instructional shifts, civil unrest, economic hardships, health concerns, and other elements of the global pandemic, they propose that learners would begin the school year following emergency remote instruction (online only) with 60-87% of their previous year learning gains. Kuhfeld et al., also conclude that these findings are variable based on teachers’ efficacy in instruction and technological access.

Yao, Rao, Sichuan, Jiang, and Xiong’s (2020) quasi-experimental study explored the different methodologies for instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic to understand the value-added to student learning through different instructional modalities. The two methodologies used for emergency remote instruction were “Recorded Video” or “asynchronous instruction” and “Live Broadcasting” or “synchronous instruction”. For this study, there were two samples of students from different middle schools in Guiyang City, China between February and March 2020. One group of students was given the experimental condition of live broadcasting instruction while the control group in a comparable middle school used recorded video instruction. The class subject (literacy and science) was also used as a grouping for students. There were 209 participants in the experimental literacy group, 221 in the control literacy group, 294 in the experimental science group, and 300 in the control science group. All groups of students maintained a unified class schedule which was uniform across all conditions per the Chinese
curriculum (Yao et al., 2020). All groups participated in pre and post-tests of their class content to determine the efficacy of instruction across conditions.

Results of the pretest across experimental (Literacy $M = 200.81$, $SD = 114.84$; Science $M = 244.74$, $SD = 59.87$) and control groups (Literacy $M = 214.47$, $SD = 109.48$; Science $M = 244.80$, $SD = 81.81$) were not statistically significant (Literacy $t = 1.26$, $p > .05$; Science $t = 0.01$, $p > .05$). However, the difference across posttest scores between experimental (Literacy $M = 271.64$, $SD = 57.18$; Science $M = 271.89$, $SD = 44.64$) and control groups (Literacy $M = 239.35$, $SD = 91.72$; Science $M = 249.55$, $SD = 82.65$) was statistically significant (Literacy $t = 4.35$, $p < .00$; Science $t = 4.086$, $p < .00$). The results of this study indicate that teacher-student interactions online, which occurred in the synchronous, live-broadcasting condition, are incredibly valuable in increasing the impact of emergency remote instruction. This study is valuable in thinking about the methods used by teachers during remote online instruction and their impact on student outcomes both during hybrid, remote online teaching, and in-person instruction. In essence, teachers matter when it comes to student learning.

**New Teacher Retention and Support**

Moir (1999) developed the most widely used model for new teacher experience. According to Moir’s model, in teachers’ first years of teaching, they go through five stages. The first is *anticipation* where teachers are excited about the prospect of their classroom and armed with an understanding of teaching methodologies and theories from their preparation programs. The second stage of the new teacher experience is *survival*, where teachers are alone, with training school now suddenly gone (Smith, 1993). This stage often includes teachers feeling overwhelmed or unsure of the next steps, with just a feeling of “getting through”. The third stage is *disillusionment* in which new teachers often experience stress. This stage is where new teachers must be supported as they navigate frustration. The fourth stage often occurs around the winter break (December or January), which is *rejuvenation*. New teachers use
this time to regenerate their excitement for teaching and recharge their energy levels. The fifth stage is reflection, a critical practice that will be further detailed below. New teachers within this stage process their frustrations, missteps, successes, and enthusiasms for the school year. New teachers that are retained then begin this process all over again in the coming school year. For new teachers to continue this cycle and grow as professionals, schools and school districts must support new teachers as they evolve during this process.

Many districts have worked to support individuals through the new teacher experience. Prior research has indicated that the only external influence on new teacher retention is salary (Inman & Marlow, 2004). Some districts provide financial incentives to teachers to stay within a school (See et al., 2020). Others increase teacher salaries to lower teacher turnover (Ingersoll et al., 2019; Podolsky & Sutcher, 2016). Some districts have grow-your-own teacher programs with apprenticeships, volunteers, paraprofessionals, and high school students as pathways to full-time teacher employment (Carver-Thomas, 2008; Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016). Many schools and school districts, however, increase teacher retention through increased on-site support for new teachers.

To better understand the conditions necessary for supporting new teachers in a COVID-19 environment, as was investigated in this study, traditional approaches to new teacher retention must be fully detailed. A review of recent research published in this area found several key studies specifically focused on identifying these interventions and strategies. In this section, I will describe in detail several key studies and then highlight the key themes of new teacher support that emerged across these studies, which include: (a) Reitman and Karge (2019); (b) Podolsky, Kini, Bishop & Darling-Hammond (2016); (c) Shuls and Flores (2020); (d) Ronfeldt and McQueen, (2017); and (e) García & Weiss, (2019).
Research Conducted by Reitman and Karge on New Teacher Induction

Reitman and Karge (2019) surveyed ($n = 60$) and interviewed ($n = 10$) teachers in California to determine which supports provided by their districts’ induction program most impacted their first-year teaching experience in high poverty schools. Results of the surveys and interviews indicated six themes of new teacher support. First, individual relationships between themselves and other teachers and school administrators were vital to their experience as new teachers. This provided opportunities to share, reflect, and grow. The second theme was pedagogical knowledge. New teachers described needing support and knowledge around how to teach from other teachers, their teacher training program, and PD. The third theme was teachers’ perception of their competence and whether their teaching matters to a larger goal, either to teaching broadly or to their students. The larger term school climate encapsulates this idea of “making a difference” among new and veteran teachers. Borman & Dowling (2008) describe the school climate as being one of the most influential elements of supporting new teacher retention, with the building of community and supportive colleagues as being vital to developing teaching skills. The fourth theme was mentoring, which was identified by new teachers as the support given by their assigned mentor within the studied formal induction program. The fifth theme identified was professional learning. The induction program that was studied provided PD and other professional learning opportunities which were identified by participants as being influential to their process of learning to become teachers. The final theme identified by participants was reflection. New teachers identified the need to reflect on their learning and teaching to become better teachers and to stay in the profession. This is mirrored in Moir’s (1999) new teacher experience model and is a vital element of a positive school climate. Working conditions were not evaluated in this study, with the focus mostly being on the elements present within the district-level induction program.
Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, and Darling-Hammond’s (2016) Learning Policy Institute report identified multiple themes of new teacher support in their review of the literature. According to their review, districts and schools can support new teachers beginning with hiring and through their veteran years. School leadership, especially opportunities for shared decision-making, was one of the top reasons for teachers leaving or staying within the profession. Similarly, mentoring and induction programs were cited by multiple studies as vital to novice teachers in improving retention, including feedback, mentoring, coaching, and observations (Podolsky et al., 2016). Podolsky et al., also suggested collaborative planning with other teachers at the school site to gain experience from peers. Schools can support teachers with a reduced workload of students and extra classroom assistance. Within this same category of working conditions, sufficient instructional materials and safe facilities also increased teacher retention. Schools and districts are responsible for providing ongoing training, retreats, seminars, and orientations. According to Podolsky et al.’s., review, teachers who were provided these supports were twice as likely to be retained in teaching. These findings are further supported in a second report on new teacher retention by Darling-Hammond et al. (2018) in which they describe the need for support such as improved working conditions, positive school climate, supportive administration, induction and mentoring programs, and PD.

Research Conducted by Shuls and Flores on High Retention Schools

In a qualitative study, Shuls and Flores (2020) interviewed district human resources personnel at three high-performing, high retention districts in St. Louis, Missouri. The districts were selected due to their high average teacher years of work experience (15.2, 14.9, and 14.9 average years of experience). During their 30-minute interviews with high-level administrators, Shuls and Flores found that all three districts did not have a formal plan for new teacher retention, however, their building of various supports
throughout their district seemed to provide the conditions for teachers to remain within their schools. In the first district, the administrator described the building of an atmosphere of trust and respect that allowed teachers and principals to be a part of the decision-making. Teachers were active members of the school community, and there was a positive school and district climate. District two noted a two-tiered mentor system of mentors and buddy teachers to support new teachers. This program was supported and monitored closely by the district to ensure its effectiveness. The administrator also noted a grow-your-own administrator program in which they employed prior teachers and trained them to become supportive administrators in schools. In the third district, the administrator referred to schools and teachers as being a part of the larger mission and vision and like a family. Teachers in the district led committees and helped to make decisions. Like district two, they provided support for teachers to become administrators, with a grow-your-own program. Finally, all three districts referred to the purposeful use of PD, tailored to the needs of the teachers and school sites, with most schools having teachers teach other teachers.

**Research Conducted by Ronfeldt and McQueen on National Staffing Surveys**

In another large-scale study that focused directly on the experiences of new teachers by surveying the teachers themselves, Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) reviewed the results of two national school surveys, the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the follow-up Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS). Two thousand, three hundred and forty teachers in their first year were included in the survey results, with the majority of teachers represented identified as white (74%), female (72%), and at the Elementary level (45%). The limitations of this are its application to a district or teacher population with higher diversity. Ronfeldt and McQueen reviewed the results of the two surveys across outcome measures of stayers (teachers who stayed at their schools), movers (teachers who changed schools within their district), and leavers (teachers who left the district, state, or profession). Ronfeldt and
McQueen compared the outcomes to various measures of induction support, including assignment of a mentor, participation in a seminar or PD, common planning time with other teachers, supportive communication with principals or another administrator, reduction in teacher schedules or additional preparation periods, and extra help in the form of an aide. The researchers then added together the presence of each support to give each participant a total measure of induction support extensiveness. Those who identified four to six supports were categorized as having “extensive supports”. Of those studied, 54% were identified as receiving this level of support and were included in the treatment effect model. According to their results, receiving supportive communication from administrators reduced migration by 55% to 67% ($r = 0.33, p < .001, SE = 0.33$); having an assigned mentor reduced migration odds by 41% to 55% ($r = 0.45, p < .001, SE = 0.07$); and participation in professional learning reduced odds by 36% to 45% ($r = 0.55, p < .001, SE = 0.08$). Common collaboration time decreased the odds by 16% to 27% but was not significant as compared to the control group ($r = 0.84, ns, SE = 0.10$); reduced teaching or increased preparation time decreased to 33%, though control data was not provided nor was the measure significant ($r = 0.76, ns, SE = 0.136$); and having a teaching aide reduced the odds to 10%, though this was also not significant, nor was control data provided ($r = 0.90, ns, SE = 0.91$). The researchers then combined all the supports, noting that the addition of each support decreases the odds of migration by an average of 20% to 24% ($p < .001, SE = 0.039$). According to these results, increased support increases the retention of new teachers.

**Research Conducted by García and Weiss on National Teacher and Principal Surveys**

Garcia and Weiss’s (2019) study evaluated the results of the 2015-16 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) which is sent out to teachers and principals through random selection. Of the 3,348,800 teacher responses, 15.1% were teachers with 4 years or less of teaching experience ($n = 505,669$) (Taie, Goldring & Spiegelman, 2020).
The survey was analyzed to better understand how schools support their new teachers in practice. According to the results of the survey, 74.5% of new teachers received regular supportive emails or other communication from their principal. Sixty-nine percent of new teachers were observed and received feedback about their teaching either from a mentor or administrator. Sixty-six percent of new teachers had been able to attend seminars or PD for new teachers. Sixty-one percent of new teachers described having collaborative planning time with other teachers at their school, as a vital element of a positive school climate (Ingersoll et al., 2019). Thirty-seven percent of new teachers had been given paid release time for new teacher support. With regards to working conditions, 26.9% of new teachers had extra classroom assistance such as an aide, parent helper, or paraeducator. Only 10.7% of new teachers reported having a reduced teaching class load, such as more preparation periods or fewer students.

**Themes of new teacher support**

Through analysis of these five key studies: a) Reitman and Karge (2019); (b) Podolsky, Kini, Bishop & Darling-Hammond (2016); (c) Shuls and Flores (2020); (d) Ronfeldt and McQueen, (2017); and (e) García & Weiss, (2019) five themes of support emerged. These five themes of support include: (a) working conditions, (b) school climate, (c) supportive administration, (d) induction/mentoring, and (e) PD.

For this study, the term *working conditions* refers to the physical environment and safety of the school, such as class size, professional culture, and accountability (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017; Sutcher et al., 2019). *School climate* refers to the interpersonal relationships within a school, including collaboration, collegiality, and shared decisions making (Shuls & Flores, 2020). *Supportive administration* refers to the principal or other administrator’s positive relationships with staff (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). *Mentoring* is the formal or informal relationship between a veteran and a new teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2018; Hobson et al., 2008; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). *Induction* is a
more formal onboarding and mentorship program used by school districts (Wiens et al., 2019). PD refers to district and school-site-based professional learning (Lew & Nelson, 2016). Each study was analyzed based on its methodology, the definition of terms, research questions, and results to determine the most relevant new teacher support. Through this analysis, the five themes of new teacher support emerged. A summary of the results of the analysis of each of these themes is included in Table 1 below. Table 1 provides validation of the themes of new teacher support as they are referenced in the research. The table also serves to define each of the themes of new teacher support as they are referenced in the five studies above.
Table 1

*Themes of New Teacher Support as Referenced in the Literature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Conditions</th>
<th>School Climate</th>
<th>Supportive Administration</th>
<th>Induction/Mentoring</th>
<th>PD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reitman &amp; Karge (2019)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Teacher perception of perceived competence</td>
<td>Individual relationships</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podolsky et al. (2016)</td>
<td>Reduced workload, Access to resources for teaching and learning</td>
<td>Shared decision making, Teacher collaboration, Collegial relationships</td>
<td>Supportive principals</td>
<td>Induction, Mentoring programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuls &amp; Flores (2020)</td>
<td>An atmosphere of trust and respect</td>
<td>Shared mission and vision</td>
<td>Grow-your-own administrator programs</td>
<td>Two-tiered mentoring program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rofeldt &amp; McQueen (2017)</td>
<td>Reduction in work schedule or additional prep periods, Extra help-aide</td>
<td>Common planning time with other teachers</td>
<td>Supportive communication with principals</td>
<td>Assignment of a mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>García &amp; Weiss (2019)</td>
<td>Reduced class load, Extra support</td>
<td>Collaborative planning, Paid release time</td>
<td>Supportive administrator communication</td>
<td>Observation, Feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The application of each of these themes of new teacher support varies greatly by school and school district. To better understand each of these themes as they pertained to the current study and the variation in their application to different school sites and districts, additional literature is reviewed in the following sections.

**Working conditions**

One important theme of new teacher support is the conditions in which they teach. Wynn, Carboni, and Patell (2007) define schools’ working conditions as a school’s perceived safety, overall cleanliness, presence of reliable communication in classrooms, professional space to work, an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, following of rules for student conduct, and the presence of classroom supplies. Within the theme of working conditions, the literature points to class structure and physical resources as being key elements to new teacher retention. According to Stockard and Lehman’s (2004) study, new teachers with more difficult assignments, such as more students who are English Language Learners (ELLs), have Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), or classes with more students, are more likely to have lower levels of job satisfaction. Teachers who believed their schools were clean and safe were more likely to identify supportive colleagues ($r = 0.44$). They were also found to believe they influenced their school or classroom ($r = 0.20$). Teachers with improved working conditions also reported higher effectiveness scores for their administrators ($r = 0.33$). There was also a significant effect of sufficient supplies ($r = 0.19$) and class size ($r = -0.18$) on teacher job satisfaction. Sutcher et al. (2019) support these findings, as new teachers report decreased class sizes and support things such as testing and accountability as being important to their ability to grow as professionals with fewer stressors. See et al., (2020) posit that workload in the early years of teaching may contribute to the attrition of teachers. Schools can support this by building in release time and roving substitute teachers to support new teachers (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000).
In Geiger and Pivovarova’s (2018) study of 37 Arizona schools, they reviewed the relationships between working conditions, school type (such as low income, low enrollment, and linguistic demographics), and retention of new teachers. To analyze this relationship, they analyzed the results of two working condition surveys through the “Teacher Advancement Program” and “Teacher Incentive Fund” across 1,479 teachers. Across the schools studied, there were 81.1% high poverty schools (n = 30) and a 68.1% teacher retention rate. The survey items studied serve as valuable tools in better understanding what items teachers view as most important to their working condition needs. The survey describes three domains of positive working conditions: (a) use of time, (b) school facilities, and (c) resources, and school leadership. The first was a need for improved use of time, including small class size, time for teacher collaboration, and streamlining of paperwork that is required of teachers. The second survey domain was school facilities and resources, including materials available for student use, technology for teaching and learning, and that the physical environment is overall safe and conducive to learning. Also within this domain was the presence of professional support personnel at the school site. The final domain included school leadership, with their influence being vital to promoting overall school improvement and positive working conditions.

Although this study helps to identify items for positive working conditions, other studies report that teachers lack basic supplies like textbooks and other student materials which harm teachers’ ability to instruct (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). In another study, only 10% of new teachers report reduced schedules or an increased number of preparation periods in which to prepare for their next class sessions (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017). New teachers must be provided with ample support to ensure their success.
School climate

School climate refers to the positive atmosphere and collegiality among teachers and the development of collective teacher efficacy. According to Eginli’s (2021) study, the building of collective agency among teachers within a positive school climate significantly increases teacher efficacy and job satisfaction. The building of collective self-efficacy among a teaching staff has been associated with high job satisfaction and less emotional exhaustion among teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2019) also found that the building of positive relationships with supportive colleagues is correlated with collective efficacy ($r = .44$), belonging ($r = .40$), and teacher self-efficacy ($r = .23$).

This is corroborated by Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) who found that having a common planning time in which teachers can build relationships and share their teaching decreases new teacher attrition by 16%. The opportunity to share ideas with colleagues in a collaborative planning environment positively supports new teachers by allowing “new teacher’s opinion [to be] just as important as the person that’s been there 25 years” (Learning Policy Institute, 2017, p. 2). It is also in these meetings that veteran teachers model teaching practices as well as set the stage for new teachers to observe veteran teachers, allowing them to improve their practice through replication (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000).

Ansley, Houchins, and Varjas’s (2019) study further identifies elements of a positive school climate among colleagues. According to their study of 20 teachers and 25 paraeducators in the Southeastern United States, teacher efficacy is closely related to job satisfaction. The researchers asked participants to complete a 43-question Likert-scale survey about school leadership, workplace relationships, and job design. According to their results, teachers' job satisfaction was highly related to their relationships with colleagues as well as their intention to remain in the school. Job satisfaction was highly correlated to colleague support ($r = .538$, $p < .001$), relationships with the principal ($r = .526$, $p <$
and relationships with teachers and other teaching staff \((r = .457 \ p < .001)\). Teachers’ job satisfaction was highly correlated to their intention to stay at their school \((r = .589, \ p < .001)\). The literature identifies teacher support through the building of peer relationships, shared vision, collaborative planning time, and the building and maintenance of collective efficacy as being influential strategies to positively support new teacher retention.

**Supportive administration**

Principal support is one of the main indicators of new teacher retention and satisfaction (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). According to Wynn, Carboni, and Patall’s (2007) study of 217 first- and second-year teachers in the Southeast United States, satisfaction with principal leadership was positively correlated with new teacher retention \((r = .23, \ p < .05)\). Of those surveyed, 43% listed administrative support (or lack of support) as the main reason that they consider leaving the profession. Supportive communication from an administrator is crucial to getting new teachers oriented and retained in a school (Stanbury & Zimmerman, 2000). One study noted supportive communication from an administrator reduced the migration of new teachers by 55% \((N = 2,340)\) (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017).

In another qualitative study of new teacher support, Brown & Wynn (2009) interviewed 12 principals in small urban schools in the Southeastern United States. In these hour-long interviews, the researchers hoped to better understand how these principals were able to successfully support beginning teachers (as measured by their low attrition rates) in a district in which 42% of teachers in their first 3 years of teaching left each year. Through the interviews, the researchers identified three themes: (a) finding, (b) supporting, and (c) keeping. The first, “finding”, described how these principals hired teachers that shared values or philosophies at their school. They purposefully hired people that demonstrated that they cared about kids and looked for the right fit. The second theme, “supporting”, described how principals worked to nurture teacher bonds with one another. They described how they
figuratively wrap their arms around new teachers and support them through building their community and providing tangible things that they might need. The final theme, “keeping”, described how principals need to bend and build their teachers to support new teacher development and retention. Multiple principals described the development of a community at their school sites among all teachers, and the process of instilling confidence in their leadership. These principals built and valued “...collective inquiry and the importance of nurturing a positive, energetic, cohesive network of learners that shares ideas and makes decisions for the whole (not individual agendas)” (Brown & Wynn, 2009, p. 56).

The Learning Policy Institute (2017) further describes principals as facilitators, collaborators, team leaders, and leaders of leaders. These roles require principals to empower teachers through shared decision making, and cultivation of teacher relationships. According to Ansley et al.’s (2019) study of new teacher support, teachers’ perception of their school administrator in building relationships and supporting their development had a high effect on their job satisfaction. Therefore, principals who built distributive leadership practices in which there was shared decision-making and buy-in by teachers were more likely to retain their teachers.

Sulit’s (2020) qualitative study provides additional insight into the impact of distributive leadership on teachers. According to 13 interviews with Arizona teachers, seven Elementary and six Middle-school teachers, administrators were responsible for providing open communication with teachers. Teachers described additional responsibilities when working in a school with distributive leadership but that it supported a positive school culture and empowered teachers to feel part of the larger school community.

Balyer, Ozcan, and Yildiz’s (2017) study shared similar results in their qualitative interviews with twenty Turkish teachers. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of shared
leadership on teachers’ empowerment. Through shared decision-making and distributive leadership, teachers described an improvement in their expertise around instructional practices. Shared decision-making as a school policy allowed for professional growth among both new and veteran teachers and improved trustworthiness with teachers and communication generally. With administrators as the main face of a school, teachers perceived principals’ impact as being the leading factor in a positive or negative school experience (Singer Early & Shagoury, 2010). Principals’ support of new teachers through building community, encouraging inquiry, and providing support, principals are invaluable tools in positively supporting new teacher retention.

**Induction and mentoring**

Induction and mentoring is another support that is found within new teacher retention literature. According to one study, about one-third of school districts offer formal mentoring programs and a larger number have state-mandated induction programs (Podolsky et al., 2016). The goal of these induction programs is to provide emotional and pedagogical support for new teachers to reduce teacher transiency (Hobson et al., 2009; Wiens et al., 2019). Formal induction programs traditionally include a mentor program in which new teachers are matched with a trained veteran teacher (Inman & Marlow, 2004). According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2018) teachers who receive formal mentoring leave at about half of the rate as those that do not receive this same structured support. Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) concluded that having a mentor reduced new teacher migration by 41%. Smith (1993) describes mentors as “comfort creators” who provide information about how schools work, where to find various supplies, and share the culture of the school.

In 2007, a longitudinal study was conducted among elementary and secondary public-school teachers, referred to as the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) (Gray & Taie, 2015). One hundred fifty-six thousand, one hundred new teachers were studied over five school years (2007 to
to determine the correlation between various school conditions and interventions and teachers’
retention. One of the conditions that were studied was the assignment of a mentor. Among those studied,
there was a significant difference in the rates of teacher retention among those who had a mentor and
those who did not. In the first year of the study, there was an 8% difference in rates of retention with
92% of those with a mentor staying in their position and 84% retention among those without a mentor.
In the second year, there was a 14% difference (91% retention of those with a mentor, 77% retention of
those without a mentor), a 15% difference in the third year (88% retention of those with a mentor, 73%
retention of those without a mentor), and a 15% difference in the fourth year (86% retention of those
with a mentor, 71% retention of those without a mentor).

In Hobson et al.’s (2009) review of the literature, they discovered that mentorship of new
teachers provided psychological support such as reduction of isolation and increased confidence and
self-esteem. Historically, mentors provide three main types of support, emotional, psychological, and
classroom management skills. However, the literature also varied in the application and quality of
mentors practiced with some mentors providing too much support (not enough autonomy for new
teachers) or not enough support (too tough on them). Hobson et al. concluded that more consistency
within induction and mentoring programs is vital to new teacher success and retention.

Formal mentoring programs are not universal across districts or schools. According to one study
by Wynn et al. (2007), 85% of new teachers (n = 217) had observed their mentor 0-3 hours a year, and
69% had been observed by their mentors 0-3 hours a year. Therefore, not all mentoring programs, even
when present in a school district, are equal in their value for new teacher retention and support.

Waterman and He (2011) further reviewed the literature to better define best practices to be used
in districts and school induction and mentoring programs. According to their findings, four elements are
crucial to induction programs’ success: (a) mentor characteristics, (b) facilitative administrative
structures, (c) frequency of support, and (d) PD. Mentors must be matched well to provide appropriate support for their mentees. This is supported by Freedman and Appleman (2008) and Inman and Marlow's (2004) prior research into mentor-mentee matching. According to these two studies, mentors and mentees should be matched according to their ideologies about teaching, content, and ability to work cooperatively. Both people must be able to commit to ongoing communication and support and mentors should be trained in how to mentor. Waterman and He also found that administrators’ support of induction programs is crucial to their success. Administrators were found to be supportive of induction programs by allowing release time, increasing stipends for mentors and mentees, and allowing new teachers to participate in decision-making. The literature, they concluded, was not clear about how frequent these meetings should occur but deemed mandatory meetings as inhospitable for new teacher support. Finally, new and veteran mentors and mentees should receive training to be able to support and grow from their interactions. Districts should make their expectations clear for all involved members so that they can create consistent ongoing support for new teachers.

Wiens, Chou, Vallett, and Beck (2019) reviewed one such mentorship program, called the “Peer Assistance and Review Program” (PAR) which touts a consistent, multi-step teacher induction program for the new teacher. In their study within an urban school district in the Southwestern United States, they studied schools with the highest levels of teacher turnover (about one-third of teachers each year) and low student academic outcomes. In the 2016-2017 school year they studied 25 schools, 15 Elementary schools, two Middle schools, and eight High schools. They included 289 participants in that same year, 312 in the 2015-2016 school year, and 240 in the 2016-2017 school year. In their study, they described PAR’s process for evaluating and mentoring teachers, which includes two parts, a PAR panel, and a mentor teacher. The PAR panel was composed of principals, teachers, and high-level administrators in the district. Their role was to determine teachers’ progress in the program and outcomes for the new
teacher (continuing in PAR or no longer receiving support). There was no clarity in the study about whether continuing in PAR or no longer receiving support was a disciplinary or negative result for new teachers in the program. According to their study, 69% of teachers were retained before the implementation of PAR. In the following three years, there was a 10% increase to 79% retention in the 2016-2017 school year. Therefore, they concluded the implementation of multi-tiered supports with high fidelity positively supported new teacher outcomes.

**Professional development (PD)**

The final theme of new teacher support is PD targeted to the needs of new teachers. According to Shuls and Flores (2020), the best PD for new teachers is that which targets teachers’ career goals. García and Weiss (2019) further state that there is often a disconnect between what schools and districts provide as PD and that which teachers find useful. Unfortunately, only 11% of new teachers that they studied felt that they had a “great deal of influence” in determining what was taught during PD. Even more concerning, only 79% of teachers stated that they had required PD time in their contracts, only 51% had release time for professional learning, and an even smaller number, 28%, received reimbursement and 27% received a stipend for PD learning outside of school hours. For those that do receive PD support at their schools and districts, what are the topics that are most salient to their needs?

In Doran’s (2020) qualitative interviews of new teachers, mentors, and principals in two elementary schools, they discovered six topics that were frequently mentioned in their group interviews ($n = 15$). Participants described needing additional PD around lesson planning. Within this topic, they described needing to spend more time focusing on engaging students in their lessons as well as being able to differentiate their instruction to the needs of their students. Similarly, participants discussed needing more information about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the complexity that
their shifts might cause in planning high-quality instruction. Finally, participants described needing real-time support with how to plan day-to-day instruction based on their curriculum.

The second category identified in the interviews was the need for more concrete classroom management strategies. Specifically, teachers needed strategies for how to support students with academic or behavioral needs in their classrooms. The third theme was Special Education in general, with these teachers feeling unprepared to support their students with IEPs. The fourth theme identified from the interviews was teachers need more PD around data analysis. Teachers understood the need to use student data when planning instruction but felt unsure of how to plan and collect formative data. The fifth theme, which is very relevant to the COVID-19 instructional shift, was technology. Participants described not knowing how to use technology in their classrooms and being unsure of what technology they had access to at their schools. The final theme was building relationships. Within this theme, new teachers needed additional PD into strategies for how to talk to their students in a way that built lasting relationships with them and how to communicate with families about challenges and successes in the classroom. For each of the themes above, participants described their prior learning on the topic as being self-taught, with little external instruction or support, but also as areas of concern and needing instructional support. Doran’s study clearly defines the areas necessary for new teacher development and support through PD.

Lew and Nelson (2016) discovered similar results in their qualitative study of recent teacher graduates. In their interview with 12 new teachers (eight Elementary school teachers, two Middle school teachers, and two High school teachers), they sought to understand new teachers’ knowledge and readiness to use teaching practices that are most relevant in the literature, including Critical Race Theory (CRT), Classroom Management, and assessment. According to their interviews, the majority of provided PDs were generic and did not specifically support the needs of new teachers. Teachers described
concerns around classroom management and the need for this instruction to be specific to their classrooms, where they have the most concerns. According to the teachers interviewed, the most challenging element of classroom management PDs was melding together various techniques and applying the concepts in their classes. The new teachers described PD as being most effective when they were allowed to create a plan for their teaching rather than just understanding the theory.

Within all the literature around new teacher support through PD, there is a clear message of the content that new teachers need including classroom management, instructional planning, and assessment. Schools must be strategic in their teaching of each of these topics, thinking about the needs of new teachers specifically. Similarly, new teachers identified needing application and planning based on their classroom rather than theoretical knowledge on a topic. Overall, new teachers can be supported through high-quality and targeted PD.

**Impact of COVID-19 on Teacher Retention**

Not only do teachers matter to student outcomes and instructional efficacy, but their retention within organizations means the ongoing progression of instruction and school culture (Wynn et al., 2007). At present, no studies describe the impact of instruction on teacher retention. Historically, there is evidence of support for online teaching retention that will serve as a starting point for the current study.

**Online teacher retention**

Larkin, Brantley-Dias, Lokey-Vega’s (2016 and 2018) studies describe the ways that organizations can positively impact the retention of teachers who teach online. Organizations in which their teachers report a high level of organizational commitment have been positively correlated with increases in retention as well as support networks present in the organization (Larkin et al., 2016). Mentoring for teachers who are newer to the methodologies and skills involved in online instruction has also been positively correlated with increased retention (Larkin et al., 2018).
According to Larkin et al.’s (2016) study, teachers self-reported that they enjoy online instruction due to the flexibility that it provides both in instruction and scheduling. They also reported that they feel less stress in their work, which differs from the experiences of teachers in emergency remote instruction as described by Kurtz (2020) and Gewertz (2020). Online teachers referenced their desire to build relationships with their students, which is mirrored in reports from teachers during COVID-19 (Carver-Thomas et al., 2020). Teachers reported leaving online instruction due to the physical demands of constant online work as well as the low compensation for online instruction and lack of uniformity in evaluation. They also reported concerns around student performance and support, such as lack of technology available to their students, inactivity online, or lack of motivation by students. Teachers also reported concerns around parental support and the need for parents to be actively involved and engaged with their students’ learning; getting students online each day, checking that they have submitted assignments, and generally monitoring student work.

Larkin et al.’s (2018) study again confirmed their initial results that affective commitment to the organization increases retention within the profession and in online instruction. Teachers reported the need to build relationships through communication in email and video conferencing with their students. This is also true of relationships with parents, one of the major concerns presented in Farmer & West’s (2019) study of online teacher concerns. Given the need to use parents as a resource to support their students, teachers in an online environment must be creative in building relationships with families, which may be a deterrent or support for teachers in the profession (Schwartz, 2020; Schwartz, 2021).

Impact of COVID-19 on new teachers

Before the current study, there was no prior research detailing the impact of COVID-19 on new or veteran teacher retention. The current study strove to provide a recount of new teachers’ experiences of COVID. One Romanian study came close to describing retention concerns in the study of how the
virus has impacted teachers’ feelings of burnout and technostress due to changing conditions in instruction. In April 2020, Panisoara, Lazar, Panisoara, Chrica, and Ursu studied the ongoing impact of COVID-19 among in-service teachers. Nine hundred and eighty teachers were recruited using a purposive sampling method in the posting of the survey in targeted Facebook groups. A Google Form was used to record the responses of teachers.

The purpose of Panisorara et al.’s study was to review the relationship between technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) self-efficacy, extrinsic motivations, intrinsic motivations, occupational stress, and the relationship between each factor’s explanation in teachers’ decisions to continue online instruction. TPK refers to teachers’ self-perception of their ability to use various online tools effectively. Extrinsc motivation describes external factors that might impact teachers’ intention to continue to use online instruction, which is linked to the obligation to teach online for higher authorities in the current study. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal factors that might impact their decision to continue using this teaching methodology due to their interest in the topic and technologies. Finally, occupational stress is described as the acute stress reactions of teachers in Romania due to COVID-19, with their jobs, teaching assignments, and students constantly changing, with the educational workplace no longer a predictable job.

The researchers posited an increase in burnout with emergency remote teaching due to a decrease in teachers’ confidence in relationships with administrators, colleagues, parents, and students. The second purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between emotional and motivational factors including burnout and stress and the choice of continued use of online instruction. The researchers developed twelve hypotheses as detailed in Table 2.
**Table 2**

*Relationships Between Measured Factors Theorized by Panisoara et al. (2020)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measured Factors</th>
<th>Intention to continue using online instruction</th>
<th>Burnout and technostress</th>
<th>TPK self-efficacy</th>
<th>Intrinsic motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TPK self-efficacy</td>
<td>Positively related *</td>
<td>Negatively related</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsc</td>
<td>Positively related *</td>
<td>Negatively related</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
<td>Positively related *</td>
<td>Positively related</td>
<td>Positively related</td>
<td>Negatively related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnout and technostress</td>
<td>Positively related</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Relationship mediated by burnout and technostress

To evaluate the above hypotheses, a questionnaire was sent to participants via Google Forms. Six initial constructs were included in the survey based on prior research in the field—TPK self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, burnout, technostress, and continuous intention. These were later merged into five categories, with burnout and technostress combined. For each question, a 7-point Likert scale rating was used ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Researchers used a structural equation modelling (SEM) to assess the relationships between factors. They found a significant effect on continuance intention with TPK ($\beta = 0.44$, $p < .001$), intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.46$, $p < .001$), extrinsic motivation ($\beta = .04$, $p < .05$), and burnout and technostress ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < .05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that knowledge in the use of technology and self-efficacy (measured here by TPK) has an effect on teachers’ feelings of burnout and stress. There was also a significant effect on burnout and technostress by intrinsic motivation ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < .001$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = .48$, $p < .001$).

This is valuable information for school districts and leaders who can improve conditions for intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to impact teacher burnout and technostress. This study’s results
provide excellent support for the need for continuing research into the ways that schools and districts can support the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of teachers and improve their understanding of online instruction to better improve conditions for teacher retention. As Simba (2021) further describes in an opinion piece about how being a new teacher during COVID has shifted the new teacher experience, the author describes the professional loneliness and stress of learning a new profession, new instructional strategies, all without peers down the hallway to lend support.

**Summary**

COVID-19 helped to identify inequities and gaps in our educational system. Inequities within the larger public education system were perpetuated during this time and have continued to facilitate negative outcomes for new teachers and students. Rhone’s (2020) public media article in NAACP’s *The Crisis* proposes that identifying these inequities and changing our educational system to meet the needs of each child may support our educational system long-term. It is through the identification of these shifts in learning and instruction that we can grow to better support students’ learning and new teacher growth. Therefore, to proceed with positive changes in education, this study strove to better understand the shifts caused by COVID-19.

The literature describes identifiable differences between emergency remote teaching and traditional instruction (Hodges et al., 2020). These differences have shifted instructional modalities and the overall job satisfaction of teachers (Dolighan & Owen, 2020; Suganya & Sankareshwari, 2020). These shifts have come at a time in which teachers were ill-prepared for their implementation and lacked answers from their administrators (Gewertz, 2020; Song et al., 2020; Yang, 2020).

Large-scale studies of new teacher retention provide insight into the ways that districts and schools have supported new teacher retention historically and can provide guidance into supports that were identified by new teachers in the current study. The literature describes five themes of new teacher
support: (a) working conditions, (b) school climate, (c) supportive administration, (d) induction and mentoring, and (e) PD (García & Weiss, 2020; Podolsky et al., 2016; Reitman & Karge, 2019; Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017; Shuls & Flores, 2020). The previous review provided additional detail into each of these domains and their value to a new teacher’s experience. However, the implementation of these interventions by school districts and schools during COVID-19 was still unknown before the current study.

Similarly, there was an impact on the experiences and burnout of teachers globally, especially those new to the profession of teaching, which may have increased or decreased rates of new teacher retention (Panisoara et al., 2020). The current study further identified the experiences of new teachers during this unique time in history, the support that shifted, increased, and declined during the global pandemic, and the impact of this shift on new teacher retention.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

New teacher retention is a critical area of need for U.S. schools. In California, rates of all teachers leaving their positions have remained at about 8% since 2009 (Sutcher et al., 2019). New teachers have been reported to leave at a much higher rate between 17% and 22% (García & Weiss, 2019; Gray & Taie, 2015). These alarming rates are compounded by the impact of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), which has altered the teaching modalities and interactions of teachers due to the need for students and teachers to isolate and distance themselves from each other to pause the spread of COVID-19 (CDC, 2021). Therefore, the experiences of new teachers in this changing environment and shifts within traditional supports for new teachers were investigated through this study to better support the retention of new teachers following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of COVID-19 on the experiences of new public-school teachers in a large urban school district. Within the study, there was a focus on the interpersonal and structural support that allowed teachers to shift to varying forms of remote and in-person emergency teaching as measured by one-on-one teacher interviews. This section will detail the methodology of this study. The first section of this chapter includes the design of this qualitative research study. Second, the sample, including the population and sampling process is described. Third, issues around the protection of human subjects are evaluated to ensure all protections are in place for participants within the study. Fourth, procedures around the implementation of the study are explained, including a pilot interview. Fifth, the process for data analysis based on qualitative research practices is described.

Research Design

This study strove to answer three research questions:
1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?

2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?

3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

This study employed an interview design to better understand the experiences of new teachers during this unique time in history. Qualitative interview design was selected to “humanize [the] problems and data… make [the] people, problems, and situations ‘come alive’… portray phenomena in context,… [and] ‘get inside’ others to view the world as they perceive it” (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 229). To truly answer the research questions, open-ended interview questions were employed to allow participants to share their perspectives and experiences of these irreplicable events (Merriam, 2009). One-on-one interviews were completed with each new teacher participant via Zoom video conferencing software due to the Omicron variant, present in January 2022 (CDC, 2022). Before each interview, participants were asked to complete a google forms demographic survey to ensure that participants were selected to mirror a diverse range of perspectives. The demographics survey is included in Appendix A.

At the start of each interview, participants were reminded of the purpose of the study and confidentiality. The initial questions focused on the overall experiences of teaching during COVID-19 [Research Question One]. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the experience, additional unlisted probing questions about the positive and negative elements of this experience, teachers’ feelings, as well as comparisons with their expectations of this experience in comparison to the reality of teaching were asked. Following this line of questioning, participants were asked to describe their schools and supports that allowed them to shift to different teaching modalities during the pandemic [Research Question Two]. Follow-up questions dove deeper into the interpersonal and tangible support that
participants have received and the impact of each on their ability to shift instructional practices during COVID-19 instruction. Finally, data were collected from each participant about their plans for employment in the 2022/23 school year as well as a follow-up question about how the pandemic has impacted this decision [Research Question Three]. The collection of interview data took approximately three months to compile between January and March of 2022.

**Sample**

This study occurred within a large school district in Northern California. This district includes approximately 50,000 students (EdData, 2020). In the most recent district report (2018-2019) through EdData, the district had approximately 360 first-year teachers and 140 second-year teachers (EdData, 2020). This district was selected due to the high number of new teachers hired each year. During COVID-19 this school district shifted from in-person to fully online, to hybrid (in-person and online instruction), and back to fully in-person instruction between March 2019 and August 2021. Given this rapid shift in instructional modalities and many new teachers, it served as an ideal population for the current study.

From the population of teachers within the school district, purposive sampling was used to identify 10 new teachers within their first 3 years of teaching. To represent the diverse population and experiences of new teachers during this time, purposive sampling was used to find new participants first based on school level (Elementary, Middle, and High school). Four teachers were included at the Elementary level, three teachers from Middle schools, and three teachers from High schools. For consistency across the sample and based on the prior research base, only General Education teachers were used for this study. Finally, the goal of sampling was to find individuals that represented diversity in race and gender (see Figure 1).
To initially recruit participants, personal contacts of school principals and district leadership were used to make primary connections with new teachers via email. Principals were also asked to recommend any other principals with new teachers on their staff. Teacher participants completed an online demographic survey (Appendix A) and participated in an interview. From these initial contacts and interviews, participating teachers were asked to provide contact information for known new teachers within the district. This snowball sampling method was used to find and recruit additional participants for the study (see Figure 2).
Protection of Human Subjects

An application to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) at the University of San Francisco was submitted to obtain permission to conduct the study. Once approved, principals and school leaders were contacted and given information about its purpose. These research contacts then suggested teacher participants. Participants were sent an initial Google Form, including a consent form (Appendix C) and a demographic survey (Appendix A). If their demographic information met the criteria for inclusion, an interview was scheduled via Zoom. Interviews occurred outside of classroom instructional time to ensure no adverse effects of interviews on students, schools, or teachers.

During the interviews, participants were recorded via video through Zoom. These interview recordings were stored on the researcher’s computer in a secured file. Interview notes on individual interview guide forms (Appendix B) were saved in a secure file on the researcher’s computer. Following the final dissertation, these recordings will be permanently deleted. All transcriptions, data, coding, and

Figure 2. Recruitment of subjects through snowball sampling of teachers and principals.
other study materials used pseudonyms and participant numbers to ensure the anonymity of participants and will be deleted after 3 years. Similarly, school site names and any other identifying information were redacted to further protect participant identity. No costs or adverse effects were anticipated because of this study.

**Participants**

Twenty-six participants were recruited for this study and completed the initial demographic survey. Of those 26, seven respondents did not respond to follow-up requests for interviews. Two respondents were excluded from the study based on inclusion criteria (Special Education and substitute teacher). Of the remaining 17 respondents, two participants were interviewed for the pilot study, and 15 additional participants were interviewed via Zoom.

Following the interview process, five participants’ interview responses were not included in this study. Two of these five participants’ audio quality was very poor which made transcription very difficult. One participant had previously taught overseas for many years which excluded her from the study. One elementary level participant that was interviewed was not included in the results because her responses did not add to the diversity of perspectives and mirrored those responses of others. Another elementary level participant that was interviewed was not included in the results due to her level of experience (she was in her first year of teaching), and a desire to include additional participants in their third years of teaching.

Ten participants were included in the final results of this study based on criteria for demographic diversity (gender, race, and ethnicity). Most participants identified as female ($n = 6$), white ($n = 5$), and non-Hispanic ($n = 7$) (Table 3).
Table 3

Participant Demographic Information by Grade Level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>K-5</th>
<th>6-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>Full sample</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-binary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>K-5</th>
<th>6-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>Full sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>K-5</th>
<th>6-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>Full sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were also included based on years taught and grade level (Table 4). Four participants were included at the elementary level (K-5), three participants at the middle school level (6-8), and three participants at the high school level (9-12). Most participants were in their second year of teaching ($n = 6$). In the demographic survey, participants further described their career experiences. Eight participants listed teaching as their first career. The remaining two participants had previously been an animal behavior researcher and an architect before teaching. Most participants had completed student teaching ($n = 8$), and most had completed it fully in person ($n = 5$). On average, participants felt confident about using technology when asked to rate their confidence on a scale of one to four ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.52$).
Table 4

Participant Career Demographics by Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K-5</th>
<th>6-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>Full sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years of experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching the first career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully in-person</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully online</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No student teaching</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants at the elementary level were taught in a self-contained classroom where they taught all subjects. There was diversity in class types at the middle and high school levels. In middle school, two teachers taught Humanities and one taught English. At the high school level, two teachers taught Science and one taught Ethnic Studies. Additional information about each participant is included below.

Participant Profiles

Jacob (he/him)

Jacob is a Black male in his first year of teaching. This is Jacob’s first career after working as a substitute teacher and getting his degree in theater. He did not intend to go into teaching but ended up
enjoying it during college. He teaches second grade at a school with about 50% African American and 50% Latinx students. Jacob feels passionate about teaching students that look like him and transforming their perception of what it means to learn. He values his relationships with veteran colleagues and asks them many questions about teaching.

**Chris (they/she)**

Chris is a White nonbinary person in their second year of teaching. This is Chris’s first career after attending college in another state but grew up in Northern California. Chris teaches third grade at a predominantly Latinx school which recently merged with another school campus. They always intended to be a teacher and ended up finding a job close to family due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Samantha (she/her)**

Samantha is a Hispanic, two or more race female teacher in her third year of teaching. Samantha is a first-generation immigrant who grew up in a low-income household and found education provided social mobility. Teaching is Samantha’s first career. She teaches first grade at a predominantly Latinx and bilingual school that recently merged with another school campus. Samantha has taught three different grade levels over her three years of teaching.

**Kayla (she/her)**

Kayla is a White female teacher in her second year of teaching. Before teaching 9th grade Science, Kayla was an animal behavior researcher before becoming a teacher and completed her student teaching at her current school. Kayla’s high school is very diverse and focuses on STEAM education. Kayla has been taking care of her mother who has advanced-stage cancer throughout her teaching career.
Alyssa (she/her)

Alyssa is an Asian female teacher in her second year of teaching. Teaching is Alyssa’s first career after getting her degree in English. She teaches middle school English at a diverse school (25% White, 25% Black, 20% Asian). Alyssa has worked at two different schools in her two years of teaching.

Riley (they/them)

Riley is a two or more race non-binary teacher in their second year of teaching. Teaching is Riley’s first career, and they teach 9th grade Science. Riley’s school is highly diverse and focuses on STEAM education. Riley went into science instruction due to their desire to teach students about climate change and their devotion to social justice. Riley did not complete student teaching due to the need to have an income and instead started on an intern teaching credential.

Sophia (she/her)

Sophia is a White female in her second year of teaching. Teaching is Sophia’s first career, and she teaches at a predominantly Latinx school. Sophia teaches second grade. Sophia is interested in the theoretical foundations of education and the process of changing education, including unschooling.

Grace (she/her)

Grace is a Black, Hispanic female in her first year of teaching. Teaching is Grace’s first career, and she did not receive any teacher training before teaching ninth-grade Ethnic Studies. She was recruited to teach out of her undergraduate degree and commutes an hour each way for work. Grace has strong relationships with her students.

Richard (he/him)

Richard is a Hispanic male in his second year of teaching. Before teaching, Richard worked as an architect. He teaches at a predominantly Latinx school and teaches middle school Humanities. Richard
feels passionate about making sure that all his students feel successful to change the experiences that he received.

**Madeline (she/her)**

Madeline is a White, female teacher in her first year of teaching. Madeline teaches middle school Humanities at a mostly Latinx (70%) and African American (30%) school. Teaching is her first career after college. Madeline went on a volunteer trip to Costa Rica in which she volunteered with middle school students, which led her to teach.

**Instrumentation**

Data was collected using open-ended semi-structured interviews with each new teacher. Semi-structured interviews are described by Merriam (2009) as a mixture of structured and unstructured interview questions, which require some consistency across interviews but the flexibility to dive more deeply into questioning as the interview unfolds. Semi-structured interviews were selected for this study to allow flexibility in the line of questioning to fully understand the experiences of each teacher (Krathwohl, 1998).

**Demographic Survey**

A demographic survey (Appendix A) was conducted before participant interviews through a Google Form. Participants were asked to provide demographic information about themselves, including their gender, pronouns, race, and ethnicity. Information was also collected about participants’ work experience including year teaching, student teaching experience, and student teaching format (online, hybrid, or in-person instruction). Participants were asked if teaching is their first career or what prior career they had before teaching. Additionally, participants shared their grades taught, subject, and type of teaching (Special Education or General Education) to ensure that there was diversity in the participant population. Finally, participants were asked about their experience with using technology on a scale of 1
(not comfortable) to 4 (very comfortable) as well as prior training in educational technology. Participants whose responses met the criteria for inclusion in the study as well as contributed to participant diversity were invited to participate in an interview.

**Interviews**

An interview guide (Appendix B) was used to standardize the elements of each interview. Due to the flexible nature of partially structured interviews, not all questions that were asked during the interviews have been included in the interview guide (Merriam, 2009). The goal of this guide was to provide standardization of some of the interview questions across diverse participants and experiences. The guide also supported the goal of internal validity within the interviewing process despite the flexibility of the semi-structured interview structure.

Before interviewing participants, a pilot interview with two new teachers was completed to adjust the wording, format, and questions of the interview guide (Appendix B). This pilot interview was completed following IRB approval and each of the interview guide questions was asked. During this process, questions’ efficacy and clarity were evaluated and the participant was asked to evaluate the questions after the interview. Following this pilot interview, the interview guide was revised. During the pilot interview, participants did not have concerns about the questions asked and felt that they adequately allowed for first-hand accounts of teaching during the pandemic. However, the interviewing process was stunted by the original order of the questions and therefore this was revised to its current version. During the pilot interviews, it was noted that question ten needed to be revised from “What are your plans for next year?” to “Do you plan to remain in your position next school year?” because pilot participants responded with plans for classroom management and lessons rather than career plans.

Some of the interview questions were adapted from prior research on new teacher retention (see Table 5). Questions two through nine were adapted from Johnson and Birkeland’s (2003) long-term
study of new teacher migration or retention. These questions specifically targeted the experiences of new teachers and the support that they have received from their schools and districts. Questions two, four, and five provided additional details about changing perceptions within the new teacher experience [Research Question One]. Questions three, six, seven, eight, and nine were included to provide information around the supports that have been provided by schools and districts to support new teachers and their effectiveness in the participants’ perspective, and question seven pushes further into these supports, focusing on how they have impacted shifting instructional practices during COVID-19 [Research Question Two]. Question ten served to identify participants’ plans for the following year, including staying at the school, district, and within teaching, and how COVID-19 has impacted these plans [Research Question Three].

Table 5

Adaption and Development of Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Questions from the Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?</td>
<td>2. How would you describe: • Your school to someone who doesn’t know it? • The people you work with? • The programs?</td>
<td>“Has teaching been what you expected? What did you expect when you started?” (Johnson &amp; Birkeland, 2003, p. 610)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Has teaching been what you expected? • What did you expect when you started?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What has it been like teaching during COVID-19?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What supports do new teachers identify as having</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If you completed student teaching prior to having</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “Can you describe the types of support you’ve
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Questions from the Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?</td>
<td>your own classroom, how did that prepare you to teach?</td>
<td>received as a new teacher, within either the school or the district? Have you had a mentor? Is the support that you have received what you needed?” (Johnson &amp; Birkeland, 2003, p. 610)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What support have you received as a new teacher through your district?</td>
<td>- Is the support that you received what you needed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What support have you received as a new teacher through your school?</td>
<td>- Is the support that you received what you needed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Have you had a mentor? If yes…</td>
<td>- How did this person become your mentor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Which of these supports has been the most beneficial in shifting your instruction to online or hybrid instruction during COVID-19?</td>
<td>- Is the support from this person what you needed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus</td>
<td>8. What are your plans for next school year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Interview Questions</td>
<td>Questions from the Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?</td>
<td>• How has COVID-19 impacted these plans?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The progression of the interview questions began open-ended and became more specific to allow “insights from early questions [to be] validated by later ones” (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 290). To collect robust data around each research question, probing follow-up questions were employed in response to participant answers focusing on better understanding their responses, sharing their feelings, and experiences (Krathwohl, 1998; Merriam, 2009).

During the interviewing process, a copy of the interview guide was used to note responses, additional questions asked, and general themes for each participant. The purpose of this notetaking was twofold. First, it served as a record of nonverbal interview elements as well as initial interviewer reactions that were used for data analysis. Second, it allowed for transparency regarding questioning and the interview process, providing an audit trail, as suggested by Merriam (2009) to further ensure the reliability of the study.

**Procedure**

Participants were recruited using personal contacts and snowball purposive sampling of teachers and principals. Once communication began and the participant agreed to participate in the study, the demographics survey was sent to participants, and interviews were scheduled via email based on the availability of the new teacher. Interviews occurred via Zoom video conferencing software due to the presence of the COVID-19 Omicron variant (CDC, 2022). Interviews occurred once over the school year with each teacher, and no additional follow-up interviews were needed. Each interview took approximately 30 to 45 minutes to conduct. Following the interview, teachers were sent a digital $10 gift card (Starbucks coffee or TeachersPayTeachers.com). These meetings were recorded as video through
Zoom to allow for transcription. Immediately following acceptance of the dissertation, audio, and video recordings will be permanently deleted to ensure participants’ anonymity. Raw data and transcripts were housed in a secure location on the researcher’s computer and will be deleted after 3 years.

At the start of each interview, participants were told the purpose of the study, “to understand the experiences of new teachers during COVID-19”. Teachers were told that they would be interviewed and recorded, but that their data was protected using pseudonyms. Following this introduction, participants were led through the interview using the interview guide and additional probing questions. Figure three further details the study’s procedures.

Figure 3. Organization of study procedures.

To collect, collate, and code the interview transcriptions, the qualitative data analysis software, ATLAS.ti, was used. Transcription occurred immediately following the interview recordings and was housed in a secure file on the researcher’s computer. As suggested by Krathwohl (1998) and Bogdan and Biklen (2007), ATLAS.ti memos were created to house a running title (Title File), subjectivity notes based on researcher reactions to interviews (Subjectivity File), and a file of quotations from the literature and interviews (Quotations Files). Each of these files was updated throughout the study as data analysis and coding progressed. To code and collate the raw data, interview transcripts were transferred to the
ATLAS.ti software, where codes were developed and adjusted as the data continued to be collected and analyzed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Raw data was tagged with codes and themes were developed from the collation of these codes. Reports of codes and larger themes across data were easily accessible through the ATLAS.ti software and used to answer the research questions.

Data Analysis

A constant comparative method was used to analyze the results of the new teacher interviews. Initially, an “open coding process” occurred in which transcript data were evaluated and interpreted to develop initial codes from participant responses (Merriam, 2009). The final Code Book is included in Appendix D. As data were collected and transcribed, these themes were further evaluated and adjusted to “capture some recurring pattern that cuts across [the] data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 181). Krathwohl (1998) describes this iterative process as observation, coding, and interpretation. Using the constant comparative method of data analysis, data were evaluated first through open coding, then through axial coding, in the comparison of themes with one another to ensure differentiation and to refine the definition of each theme. Finally, selective coding was done, with the development of core themes as supported by the data. To support the development of a generalization, counterexamples were included in the evaluation of participant responses to ensure generalizations were able to be made or revised based on the data (Krathwohl, 1998). Generalizations were produced using results from each of the responses to the three research questions. As data was collected, additional purposive sampling was done to observe new “properties and dimensions of the general category” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p.74).

Research question one

To evaluate research question one, “what has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?”, results of interview questions two, four, and five were analyzed across
participants. These questions specifically targeted the experiences of new teachers during COVID-19 and took up much of the interview time. These questions were intentionally open-ended and initial codes for these items were not used. Coding and themes developed as participants were interviewed, during transcription, and through data analysis and constant comparative coding. In response to interviews, additional participants of different races, genders, and grade levels were included to ensure a full understanding of the experiences of new teachers was included in the study. During interviews, this research question and the associated interview questions required the greatest number of follow-up probing questions to ensure adequate detail was provided by the respondents.

Upon analysis of the first two interviews, ten codes were developed in response to research question one (Table 6). Although the development of additional codes occurred following the analysis of each interview, this table groups together three sets of code development to allow for streamlining of this process. Following additional interviews, sub-codes were added to the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and technology use as can be seen in the second column. Learning loss was made into a code with absences and classroom management as subcodes during this second grouping of code development. Additional codes were also added at this point, including “Responsibility to students” and affiliated subcodes. In the final grouping of open coding, “Vaccination status” was added to COVID-19’s impact.
Table 6

Open Coding Process for Research Question One in Three Groupings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial codes developed</th>
<th>Additional codes developed during open-coding (group two)</th>
<th>Additional codes developed during open-coding (group three)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student learning loss</td>
<td>Student learning loss (codes merged)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Absences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classroom management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 impact</td>
<td>COVID-19 impact (cont.)</td>
<td>COVID-19 impact (cont.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safety management</td>
<td>• Ventilation</td>
<td>• Vaccination status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Looming virus</td>
<td>• Cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safety preferences</td>
<td>• Masking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive cases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>Mental health (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology use</td>
<td>Technology use (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility to students (new code)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student/family relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students as data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research question two**

Research question two, “what supports and/or interventions do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?”, was evaluated through
responses to interview questions three, six, seven, eight, and nine. These questions asked teachers to identify supports at their schools and district, both interpersonally and physically, and their impact on their ability to teach during the pandemic. At the start of the coding process for these items, a “start list” of codes was included and revised as more data was collected (Krathwohl, 1998). These codes stemmed from the literature on new teacher support, including working conditions, school climate, supportive administrator, induction/mentoring, and professional development. During the process of open-coding, codes for research question two required the most adjustment and re-coding. Table 7 defines the code list during three moments of the open-coding process, initial, middle, and final. The initial five codes within the literature were further defined using sub-codes. Four of the five original codes remained throughout the open-coding process, with sub-codes adjusted, re-worded, and further expanded based on participant responses. One code, induction/mentoring was separated into district, coach, similar-level colleague, and veteran colleague supports based on the division of these supports within participant responses.
Table 7

Research Question Two Code List Refinement in Three Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial code list from the literature and open-coding</th>
<th>Secondary code list following open-coding</th>
<th>Final code list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions</td>
<td>Working conditions</td>
<td>Working conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People</td>
<td>• People</td>
<td>• People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School building</td>
<td>• School building</td>
<td>• School building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time</td>
<td>• Time</td>
<td>• Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classroom make-up</td>
<td>• Classroom make-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Materials</td>
<td>• Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Money/pay</td>
<td>• Money/pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School climate</td>
<td>School climate</td>
<td>School climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helpful</td>
<td>• Helpful</td>
<td>• In it for the kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family</td>
<td>• Family</td>
<td>• Inviting/not inviting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disrespect (kids)</td>
<td>• Disrespect (kids)</td>
<td>• Online no feeling of school climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Online no feeling of school climate</td>
<td>• Online no feeling of school climate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open door for other classrooms</td>
<td>• Open door for other classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive administrator</td>
<td>Supportive administrator</td>
<td>Supportive administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disconnect between needed and given support</td>
<td>• Disconnect between needed and given support</td>
<td>• Facilitator or “just boss”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding/asking what teacher needs</td>
<td>• Understanding/asking what teacher needs</td>
<td>• Feeling heard/not heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Political</td>
<td>• Political</td>
<td>• Follow-through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tension</td>
<td>• Tension</td>
<td>• Lack of emotional safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Too much advice</td>
<td>• Too much advice</td>
<td>• Perceived experience level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction/mentoring (separated to district, coach, similar-level colleague, veteran colleague)</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linked teacher to outside resources</td>
<td>• Linked teacher to outside resources</td>
<td>• Advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need for linking between schools</td>
<td>• Need for linking between schools</td>
<td>• Mismanagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not listened to</td>
<td>• Not listened to</td>
<td>• Not seen/heard as a new teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uncaring</td>
<td>• Uncaring</td>
<td>• School closures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unsupportive</td>
<td>• Unsupportive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not valuable support</td>
<td>• Not valuable support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supportive/unsupportive</td>
<td>• Supportive/unsupportive</td>
<td>• Overloaded during COVID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial code list from the literature and open-coding</td>
<td>Secondary code list following open-coding</td>
<td>Final code list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planning support</td>
<td>• Advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demoing</td>
<td>• Another set of eyes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classroom management coaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coaching cycle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curriculum/content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Listener/emotional support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New teacher support work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar-level colleague</td>
<td>Similar-level colleague</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Same students</td>
<td>• Asking questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Figuring it out together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Going through the same things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran colleague</td>
<td>Veteran colleague</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Passion</td>
<td>• Asking questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Emotional support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpreting advice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Intimidating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Observing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Logistical</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wisdom</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher preparation</td>
<td>• Teacher preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Colleague-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School-based</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overwhelmed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Doesn’t match my needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Colleague-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School-based</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overwhelmed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Doesn’t match my needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research question three

Research question three, “to what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teacher plans for retention or attrition?” was evaluated through responses to interview question ten. In response to question ten, which is a closed question, there were three codes used: (a) stayer, or those that planned to remain in their current position/school, (b) mover, those that planned to move from the district or school, either voluntarily or involuntarily, and (c) leaver, those that planned to leave teaching altogether. These codes were developed from Johnson and Birkeland’s (2003) study to define the outcomes of new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition and served as categories in response to this question. During the open-coding process, these three initial codes remained, with two additional codes added, indecision and disillusionment of teaching. Under the code of stayer, the subcode, re-experience was developed during the open-coding process mid-study. Under the code of leaver, the subcode, new experience, was developed during the open-coding process at mid-study. Given that teachers in this school district were asked to record their intentions to stay or leave the district in December, before the interviews, their decisions were likely fairly finalized. However, since these interviews occurred before the conclusion of the school year, responses to this question were still tentative.

Position of the Researcher

The orientation of the researcher is important to better understand any interpretations and validity of the study (Krathwohl, 1998). I have been teaching for the last 10 years in a variety of different schools and levels, including Special Education, General Education, Elementary schools, Middle schools, private schools, and public schools. I found my niche first as a fourth-grade teacher and then in a position as an instructional coach. Over the last four years, I have coached new and veteran teachers in the implementation of curriculum, classroom management, and instructional strategies. It is in this role that I came to rethink my own and others’ experiences as new teachers.
As a new teacher, I received limited support from my first school’s leadership. As a wealthy private school, they touted high-caliber teachers and instructional innovation. As a new teacher, I had only my teacher preparation and student teaching experience to guide me, despite the promises of high-quality instructional consistency across the school. Although there was an open-door policy, the leadership did not have formalized plans for how to support or engage new teachers beyond getting them hired and onboarded with school policies and procedures. Much of the new teacher experience at this site was dependent on other, more experienced teachers who willingly provided support about how to facilitate instruction in the real world. It was a sink or swim situation, as I tried to navigate curriculum, parent communication, grading, and elusive classroom management strategies. The support that I received from colleagues was invaluable to my development as a teacher. Through their guidance, I swam gracefully through my first three years of teaching.

I have found that this is not the case for many new teachers. In my role as an instructional coach, I’ve supported new teachers in battling the challenges of underfunded and overpopulated classrooms. In my current role, I’ve been able to provide the designated support that was given to me by my colleagues in my first teaching role. As a doctoral student, I’ve become increasingly interested in the ways that districts and schools can support or ignore the needs of new teachers. These interventions are crucial to the success of districts, schools, and students, and have become my area of research interest. During COVID-19 I have seen a marked shift in communication and support for new teachers, which has inspired this study. This lens may cloud my interpretation of the results of the study, but this background may also allow for a deeper understanding of the topic as well as an ability to ask questions that will get at the heart of this issue.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

The following section describes the results of the data analysis of participant interviews. Ten one-on-one interviews were conducted to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on new teachers in a Northern California school district. During the interview portion of this study, in January and February of 2022, high rates of the COVID-19 variant, Omicron were present throughout the United States (CDC, 2022). Participants revealed multiple instances of the Omicron variant placing COVID-19 at the top of mind. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?
2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?
3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

Despite the diversity in the selection of participants, participant responses were generally consistent across all three research questions and interviews. One difference amongst responses was across grade levels. Middle and High school teachers described a school culture that included opportunities to work with colleagues to discuss their shared students. This is unique to Middle and High schools which have structures that enable this cross-discipline collaboration due to students having multiple periods and structures that enable teachers to have common planning time (shared “prep” periods). These shared student discussions were not present among the Elementary teachers interviewed, as will be further described in the theme for research question two, school climate.

The following chapter will identify the results of the data analysis of participant responses. To better understand the nuances and overall findings, this chapter will be separated into three sections
based on the above research questions. Within each section, emerging themes and subthemes will be identified and participant quotations will provide additional support for each theme. After the three sections, a summary will describe the overall findings of this study.

**Research Question One**

Research question one, “What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?” was analyzed using responses to interview questions four and five. Interview question four, “Has teaching been what you expected? What did you expect when you started?” facilitated initial descriptions of teachers’ experiences of teaching including successes and frustrations. Interview question five, “What has it been like teaching during COVID-19?” provided in-depth stories that brought to life how new teachers during this unique time in history have felt about their teaching, students, and schools. Five themes emerged from the analysis of research question one as well as additional subthemes (Table 8). Emergent themes and sub-themes of participant responses to interview questions four and five are further analyzed and described in the following sections.
### Emergent Themes and Subthemes from Research Question One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
<th>Emergent Subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Teacher obligation to support students</strong></td>
<td>• Student and family relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students as data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2: Student learning loss</strong></td>
<td>• Absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3: COVID-19 safety management</strong></td>
<td>• Differences in safety preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Masking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ventilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vaccinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 4: Technology use</strong></td>
<td>• Continued using technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stopped using technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feeling like I can contribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 5: Mental health</strong></td>
<td>• Student mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Home-work separation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emergent Theme One: Teacher Obligation to Support Students**

Nine out of ten participants described feelings of obligation concerning their students. These feelings went beyond a generic professional obligation to students’ learning and trended towards supporting a holistic view of their students’ development during the pandemic. Some of the support teachers have provided during COVID-19 were detailed by Kayla, a second-year High school science teacher:

Some of them need support with like this is how you organize your work or let's look at your grades in your other classes, and let's write emails to your teachers to ask them for help and things like that. And then, like last year it was like here's a resource your mom can use to get free therapy. Or you know you are kicked out of your house because
someone shot it up so let's find a resource, so you can get rent to pay to live somewhere else.

For some participants, this feeling of obligation to provide for their students made them feel inadequate in their capacity to provide quality instruction to their students as new teachers. Sophia, a second-year Elementary school teacher stated, “I don't want to feel like I’m harming my students by staying in my job and I logically don't think that that's true, but sometimes I feel that way.” Grace, a first-year high school Ethnic Studies teacher, echoed these sentiments when she stated “on all levels, I'm doing my students a disservice. And I know that, and I’ve said that but there is no change.”

However, this obligation to students had an overall positive effect on participants’ experiences of teaching during the pandemic. Samantha, a third-year Elementary teacher, felt the need to provide for her students as being vital to her survival while teaching during the pandemic, “I’m glad I’m here because I could be there for the families last year… getting food and stuff when they lost their jobs last year so that’s been the one good thing.” Despite other frustrations at her school site, Grace attributed the need to provide for her students as the reason for her return to teaching each day:

I'm just interested in continuing to try every day to serve my students’ interests, even if that means I’m not invited back next year or if people don't like me. And that's how I like go home fulfilled every day.

Participants consistently shared the obligation to students’ holistic development as an important element of their role as a teacher. This obligation was described positively in most interviews with some participants feeling negative about their capacity or skill level as instructors.
Student and family relationships

A key element of participants’ success in teaching during the pandemic was attributed to relationships with students and their families. Participants described the need to use family relationships to support both online and in-person instruction.

Kayla felt like a better teacher online because she had more time in the afternoons each day to develop strong student and family relationships:

We only taught for half the day and the other half of the day, I could call home and talk to families and figure out what support students needed and set up one-on-one tutoring and like really follow up with every student on what they know what they don't know. And how they think and how they can challenge themselves and it's a lot harder to do that when you're working all day... Like this year I wouldn't even know necessarily which kids need help getting food at home, last year I did.

Riley, a second-year High school Science teacher, spent more time on the phone with families during online instruction, “I called home for every kid at least once a week I tried to call every like at least six homes, a day.” Samantha ensured students logged in during online instruction, “I just called their parents like I need you to go wake him up and like get him on zoom you know, is it was easy like that.”

During in-person instruction, Richard, a second-year Middle school Humanities teacher, noted how “parents that … hold them accountable… it's a huge help for me” to allow him to keep students accountable for their in-classroom behavior. Grace also used parents to support classroom behavior but had struggled with building relationships with parents due to COVID-19, because “we don't have in-person Back to School night because of COVID. That also means I haven't met any of the parents, they don't know me.”
Students as data

Multiple participants shared frustrations that despite their building of student and family relationships and the overwhelming feeling of obligation for supporting students, district leaders and administrators viewed students as data. As described by Jacob, a first-year Elementary school teacher who felt students should be the focus of the conversation, “We have these kids, how can we do the best for these kids? I think that that should be the center of all of our conversation and it's not.” Alyssa further felt frustration and disillusionment with the educational system with regards to the idea of students as data:

They only care about the grade, the score, the number versus the mental and emotional health, even though there's a lot of hard-working teachers out there that do care about that part those students still end up you know. Looking a certain way, on paper, and you know being failed because they weren't caught early enough in time it's just so hard to translate the life of a student in all aspects of their life onto a piece of paper.

Alyssa, a second-year Middle school English teacher, noted the pressure of test scores by both the district and school as providing additional stress but not additional support or change in instructional practices. She stated, “I think that that narrows our instructional focus sometimes and that like it doesn't always lead to better teaching or better learning by the students.”

Jacob described this focus on “data as God” as a stunting force in trying to help his students progress and change his teaching practices:

When we look at data and data is like God, then what then happens is… there's a lot of conversation that gets cut out … Yes, that is important, but you cannot judge me purely on that, and then maybe there are other things that can be done to meet those gaps if
there's if there are gaps there let's talk about that because things are so much more nuanced than well these scores happen this way but OK where did they start?

**Emergent Theme Two: Student Learning Loss**

Student learning loss was referred to by participants as the idea that students had lost content knowledge due to the pandemic. Learning and teaching were described as less effective during online instruction per participant interviews. As described by Chris, a second-year Elementary school teacher, “I definitely felt last year teaching on Zoom that I wasn’t able to like help improve their reading nearly as much as like working in person.” Alyssa mirrored these reflections by describing how students were less likely to engage in content using LMS during emergency remote and hybrid instruction:

At this point where we're trying to figure out what else can we do because they were gone for so long, they didn't do the work and now they're lost into what we're doing right now. They're not sure where we're going next, and it's halfway through the year. So, we're kind of trying to help the students we can and also support the students that are finally back in person as much as we can in person, versus realizing that if we leave them to their own devices they're not going to participate.

At the time of the study, all participants and their students had returned to in-person instruction, however, the impact of the loss of learning during emergency remote and hybrid instruction remained at the forefront of their teaching, especially for those teaching younger students. As Sophia shared:

I could speculate, I think I mean I teach second grade, so my students now were not like, even at the end of kindergarten when they left school for online teaching um and I feel like that's been part of the challenge this year has been that they really not only academically many of them, missed a year, not all of them, but a lot of them and they're struggling academically.
This pressure to provide not only quality in-person instruction but also “make up for lost time” (Sophia) was pervasive across participant interviews who felt the need to ensure that students were “catching up” (Chris). Samantha described how “a lot of [my students] are … still learning letter names or sounds when they should be reading now… it’s discouraging.”

Absences

Despite the return to in-person instruction, participants noted excessive absences among students and teachers due to positive COVID-19 cases as negatively impacting student learning. Richard detailed how the stress of tracking down students who have been absent and grading their work has negatively impacted his ability to support students academically:

I was kind of stressing out as far as like who’s missing this, who’s missing that academically… it's been really difficult and really stressful. Grading is really hard. Trying to track kids down for late work it's like whew it's tough… They're on these like modified quarantines and stuff okay so a lot of them don't have access to computers or you know hotspots or Internet so it's just one of those deals where like okay I’ve traded these like packets, and then… if, like a kid’s missed a lot, I mean I can't just give them a zero on a paper, even though I really want them to do it so I’ve had to come up with like extra work these condensed like this is the meat and potatoes of what you need to know to move on.

Chris noted how not only students’ absences have impacted their instruction, but when teachers or other staff were out sick with COVID-19, it’s decreased the number of times students received differentiated and small group instruction as those who provide this instruction are either out sick themselves or substituting for classes missing a teacher:
There have been so many COVID cases at my school that we haven't been doing mixed class groups. Which has been really tough, because then, all of my students who can't read are not getting any reading intervention. I’m trying to throw in some things with them when I can. But usually, that happens at the same time that I’m teaching the kids … And even when it was happening more regularly… it would be interrupted day by day because they [intervention teachers] needed to go sub classes. Grace felt frustration around this focus to make up for academic learning loss as she described how recovering from the virus impacted her students:

Half my classes were gone at one point I only had five people in one class. People were sick their parents were sick, and teachers were just cutthroat. One staff meeting they were like “How are we supposed to hold students accountable for the work they've missed?” And it was just like “Are you fucking kidding me?” Like at this point, most people have had COVID and so, you know that it sucks even if you didn't get it. I got it I got it pretty bad. But like it sucks, you can't do anything in that moment you know what I mean? Like and we're worried about students being held accountable for their work. It's just never been that serious and then it was like after they came back a whole nother wave of students got sick.

Classroom management

Participants described how COVID-19 absences and loss of student learning are not solely tied specifically to academic instruction but also their classroom behaviors. Many students within this district had been in emergency remote instruction for at least a year and a half with a smattering that had received some form of hybrid instruction in the Spring of the 2020/21 school year. Many participants shared how the pandemic had negatively impacted students’ behavior in the classroom and had made
establishing classroom culture more challenging. As Chris described, “kids haven't been in school for a year and a half, so I don't know much about establishing a classroom culture, but they also haven't been in school, since they were first graders… for a long time in and out.” Among younger students, this was like starting from a Kindergarten level of classroom management instruction, with students who had perhaps never had an in-person classroom experience despite being first or second-grade students. As Jacob described, students:

maturity level is about a level or so lower than it typically might be if you were in school, and communicating with other people, having disagreements… they didn't get that, it was all brand new… They hadn't worked through those things before and just knowing how to be in school.

This was also true among Middle and High school teachers. Grace noted how her high school students, “like ninth-graders they act like sixth-graders right because they haven't been in school since sixth grade and seventh grade.” Alyssa noticed the impact of COVID-19 on her students socially, “And then there's also like I didn't expect that you know the behavioral issues coming in there's like a lot of kids that didn't have that social interaction last year.” Madeline, a first-year Middle school English teacher, described how COVID-19 had impacted her Middle school students’ ability to work together:

We're trying to do group work for some of the first time and it is absolutely disastrous.

The kids who've got it absolutely got it and the kids that are just like the worst partners… collaborating is a skill that they need some work on.

With the increased numbers of student behaviors due to the impact of COVID-19 emergency remote instruction and lack of student interactions, all participants listed classroom management as a major concern in their instruction as new teachers. As described by Richard, “behaviorally like they just it's like they forgot… how to code switch …like dude like you're at school, like, do you not remember
like you can't do that.” Participants who taught online the year before noted the shift in their instructional practices due to returning to in person. As Chris described:

I think that's been challenging because it's not my first year teaching anymore, but it kind of feels like it is in the classroom management aspect. Because Zoom teaching just like didn't have that element to it. Like Zoom teaching had a lot of hard things but didn't really have any classroom management like trying to keep kids engaged and participating was hard. At the start of this school year, I just had like so much like I mean still like kids hitting each other kids running in the classroom kids leaving the classroom and running through the hallways and somewhere and like kids screaming and throwing things across the classroom and like lotsa that kind of thing happening that just like I know wouldn't be the case if I was like more experienced in classroom management, like a lot of it is like how you set up the classroom at the beginning of the year, that I just like didn't have the skills for.

**Emergent Theme Three: COVID-19 Safety Management**

In response to research question one and the interview question, “what has it been like teaching during COVID-19?” all ten participants described the management of COVID-19 safety protocols. Participants differed in their reactions to the COVID-19 virus from being very cautious or scared to a feeling of acceptance that they would or already had, become sick with the virus. Of those interviewed, four out of ten participants discussed their personal experiences of getting COVID-19. Additional participants may have previously been infected with the virus but did not share this information during their interviews. However, all participants shared the need to manage COVID-19 safety protocols in their classrooms. As described by Madeline:
It's a lot of like nagging students with this like shared understanding like you need to have your mask on the whole time and... it's a lot of it's like explaining to students, the consequences of their actions, because many students don't think past literally five seconds. It's really hard to manage that.

Seven sub-themes emerged from data analysis: (a) differences in safety preferences, (b) masking, (c) ventilation, (d) vaccinations, (e) cleaning, and (f) positive cases.

**Differences in safety preferences**

Participants stated the need to manage the preferences of multiple stakeholders concerning COVID-19 safety preferences and protocols. Jacob reflected on this challenge and summarized the opinions of other participants:

I'm also realizing everybody is approaching it in a different way... some people are serious about really serious about being vaccinated. Some people are not. Some people are really serious about being really clean and not you know spreading. Some people are not. Some people are really fearful about catching it. Some people are not. Then you can there are different families in the same classroom that have different ideals on COVID. You see it, you see some kids who just miss a whole week gone. Two weeks, sometimes... It's just like it's a totally different experience, I think you know, having this sort of looming context of a virus.

Kayla described frustrations around conflicting preferences in COVID-19 safety protocols both in her classroom and with colleagues:

I've asked other teachers, to put [a mask] on and they'll be like “it's fine you know like we're outside” or like it's “you know not nothing's gonna happen really in this room for like five minutes.” Like at meetings, people will bring food and I just sit there
because…they know that I'm especially careful because my mom has cancer and I'm taking care of her, but they still are trying to tell me that it's not important. They're like “well the kids have to wear masks but we're adults, we can make decisions” and I'm like “well I’m asking you to wear your mask because I'm here and I don't feel comfortable.”

Grace also shared how different people’s COVID-19 safety protocols have caused “a lot of conflict about like being scared of COVID” in the classroom setting. Participants described this fear of COVID-19 as being an ever-present reality in their daily instruction. As Sophia described, “I feel stressed about my students getting COVID or… getting it and then like possibly passing it on and but yeah mostly about student students getting COVID.”

Shifting protocols by the district and schools negatively impacted participants’ ability to know best practices for COVID-19 safety protocols. Grace described the “miscommunications … between parents and students and schools. Is school open? Is it closed? With this that you're doing it’s just so exhausting.” Alyssa detailed the shifts in COVID-19 safety protocols as changing second to second:

Just like having things change so quickly, there's always new rules new protocols like new things that administration has to relay to us from the district and it's just you know hard to be so flexible all the time. Because rules can change from second to second in a day and then kids miss more and more and more. And then it's up to us, teachers to figure out, “oh crap, you know yesterday was this, and now the rules change and now I can't do this, what am I supposed to do next?”

**Masking**

One of the main safety protocols described by participants was the use of masking in the classroom. All participants mentioned the need to hold students and staff accountable for mask-wearing as a major responsibility of teaching during COVID-19. Kayla shared her frustration with the school
administration for not supporting the culture of mask-wearing, “like when you have an assembly, and you take your mask off in front of all of the kids at school you're making it, so we don't have a culture of mask-wearing.” Within the classroom, mask mandating was described as a constant reality to ensure the safety of all students and staff. This was an unexpected element of Madeline’s job as a teacher, “now you have to make sure that they're wearing a uniform and also wearing their masks over their nose the whole time… I didn't expect I would have to facilitate and manage [that].”

Grace found managing different student reactions to masking and the impact of students’ less strict masking adherence and discomfort with masking as a unique challenge during COVID-19:

There was a lot of like conflicts between students about like mask use because some students were like just not used to being out every day and wearing the mask… But other students felt it personal like “you don't care about people getting sick” “you're bad, you're not wearing your mask” and then that student was like “well, I really can't breathe like I’m not used to” “it’s uncomfortable.”

Similarly, participants recounted the difficulty of teaching with a mask on. Grace described being “out of breath I literally like lost my voice… just from like screaming over the mask.” Chris used a microphone because it was “hard to hear what the kids are saying, or for the kids to hear me… I felt like, for the first couple of months, I was needing to shout.”

However, throughout teaching during COVID-19, participants stated how students have become adept at masking. Samantha described that her students, “are pretty good with their masks now… But it's not like they complain or anything… we've been doing this for so long.” Kayla echoed this shift to how masking had become easier with practice and setting expectations:
First, there was pushback from students at the beginning of the year, because not everyone was as strict as I was about it, but they pretty much like are just good at it now… they're used to it, they know I expect that.

Ventilation

As part of COVID-19 safety protocols, participants noted the use of air filters to help to provide additional ventilation. However, participants described these purifiers as making it difficult to hear and teach. Chris stated that “it makes a difference of like the noise of like the air filters constantly.” Other participants described concerns over social distancing as had been recommended by the CDC to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus (CDC, 2021). Grace detailed this issue as conflicting with best practices, “there's no space in our classes for social distancing. You can't keep six even three feet apart because almost every desk is filled.”

Vaccinations

Vaccinations for students aged 5 years and older were available at the time of this study but not all students had been vaccinated, causing conflict in the classroom. Samantha shared her frustration with a parent not getting their child a free vaccination:

We had a clinic for vaccines for the kids here on campus so easy peasy, free. Just pick up your kid go to the vaccine clinic. And I remember passing them (fliers) out and one parent was like “Is this mandatory?” I was like “No but it's free vaccines at school.” She was like “Oh yeah no like we don't like her to get the vaccine” … I was like “you sound like you're stupid” like I didn’t say that, but I was like “oh my God.”

Grace had a different perspective about her high school students who had not been vaccinated:

My students aren't vaccinated for many reasons. Mainly reasons of distrust of the medical field and also like parents’ immigration status, you know, like not wanting to
share information, all these things…other students who are vaccinated are like “Oh, you know if they need to get them out of there.” So, it's become this like divide of like vaxxed, non-vaxxed. And that there's some level of like discrimination there for me where it's like we're not considering, like all the reasons and we're simply being like “Okay, if you get vaccinated, you care about society, and you are a good person, and if you don't it's because you don't care and your parents hate you and, like you're just careless” … I think it means a lot more than simply like vax/anti-vax.

**Cleaning**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, participants described how cleaning had become a larger part of their role to ensure the safety of their students. This included hand sanitizing, disinfecting surfaces, and ensuring the students have adequate supplies for cleaning. Grace described her process for cleaning between periods:

I'm in charge of cleaning the tables or having students do it … And at one point, like the school didn't even have enough like cleaning supplies so like we were having to buy our own hand sanitizer and our own like Clorox wipes… It was just like you know wanting to make things as sanitary as possible, but like not having enough supplies…I got to make sure like clean the desk in between classes …You know clean the computers off right that we use all the time it's like basic things …it's like really being like in charge of like sanitizing things but it's like it's not as clean as it should be.

Samantha explained how students have become invested in the efforts to maintain a clean classroom, “when [we] come in and come out they fight like ‘Can I be the hand sanitizer?’ You know is just like routine. I mean it's weird, but it also kind of feels normal now, at this point.”
Positive cases

Despite participants’ best efforts, positive cases of COVID-19 had been a reality for all the participants studied. In the district studied, participants described protocols in place for regular testing of students and teachers. However, Kayla described a need to campaign for additional and consistent testing, “I always having to like organize with other teachers to…try to get testing done… it's very overwhelming.” Samantha described how despite the availability of free testing, one parent doesn’t, “let her [student] get COVID tested… they just keep her home for two weeks, like okay cool you’d [rather] have your kid miss two weeks of school.”

Participants described many positive COVID-19 cases in their classes leading to increased absences as stated above (see “Absences”). However, when those cases occurred, teachers did not have a full understanding of how they were meant to respond as part of their COVID-19 safety protocols. Samantha described one of these cases in her classroom:

In case of exposure, we eat outside um but… I forgot that was what we're supposed to do because I just thought everyone had a COVID case in their class and then also…the principal forgot to tell me… so we didn't eat outside that day, and then I had a parent come to like, she was like… “I saw there was a COVID case and then …you weren't even outside. And I’m pissed.”

The management of COVID-19 safety protocols was top of mind for all participants as they detailed their experience of teaching during the pandemic in response to the interview question “what has it been like teaching during COVID?”.

Emergent Theme Four: Technology Use

Technology use both during and following emergency remote instruction was first measured in participants’ responses to the survey question, “On a scale of 1-4, how comfortable are you with using
technology for education (video conferencing, learning management systems, etc.)?" In response to this survey question, participants rated themselves as very comfortable with using technology for education ($M = 3.30, SD = 0.48$). Technology use was also evaluated through the interview question “How comfortable do you feel using technology in your classrooms now that instruction is back in person? Is this different to how you felt previously?” Analysis of participants’ responses indicated three sub-themes: (a) continued using technology, (b) stopped using technology, and (c) feeling like I can contribute.

**Continued using technology**

Among participants that have continued using technology, the majority reported this use as being helpful for students in a remote setting as they recovered from the COVID-19 virus or in quarantines. Richard stated how Google classroom “has been perfect like you know kids are going to be absent, they still have the work up there.” Riley noticed that her students have become more technology literate following emergency remote teaching, “they gained a lot of academic computer skills.”

Participants also discovered helpful tools during online instruction that they had continued to use in-person to support student learning. Chris stated that they don’t use as much technology as they did during emergency remote teaching but that they did try to incorporate it into their instruction:

I'll put things on Google classroom where it's like a recording of a book that we're reading together, so you can listen to it or I’ll like voice record assessments like put pictures of the question on the assessment and like put my voice recording of it, so they can listen to it and that kind of thing. I've got a couple like Peardecks, you know things that I learned last year that I’m like okay that like can be a fun thing, sometimes in the classroom and they can like see their answers up on the board and stuff um yeah so I felt
pretty comfortable I don't use like as much of a variety of technology things as last year, but I do think it's helpful, to use it.

Kayla reiterated this response in the positives and negatives of continuing to use technology:

Today they did a simulation and I had them like really quickly enter all their data in on the computer, so we could get a whole class data set. And then, sometimes I have them work online. Like when I have substitutes I’ll use my lessons from online to give them to work on independently. And there was like one lesson I did last year, where they moved a lot of things around on the screen and had to connect their ideas. And so, I had them do that online, but I also find that when they all have their computers out I spend most of my time asking students to stop playing games and to work, so, if I can do it without the technology I usually do.

**Stopped using technology**

Some participants found that the classroom management element of using technology in person was too difficult compared to technology-free instruction. Richard described how the class is “too reliant on the computer. So now I’m like okay gotta put the computers away when they are too distracted and sometimes just start playing games on them.” Kayla found that technology was also a challenge concerning classroom management, “when they all have their computers out I spend most of my time asking students to stop playing games and to work, so, if I can do it without the technology I usually do.”

Jacob explained how his students have struggled because of technology use since returning from emergency remote instruction. “Kids you know have used to play video games all day long” which has led to his class “not really using a whole lot of technology.”


*Feeling like I can contribute*

During the shift to emergency remote instruction, multiple participants felt a sense of being able to contribute to the use of online digital platforms due to their age, coursework, or experience with technology. Despite being a new teacher, Chris felt they could help by “contributing a little bit more with my coworkers just because I am young and I know how to use computers well like…I could figure out zoom stuff a little bit more quickly and, like different new platforms.” Kayla similarly felt, “more prepared than some teachers were. I was just like yeah I can do this on Zoom I can like… do breakout rooms.” Madeline described this building of confidence among new teachers through a shared lack of knowledge of online teaching and the struggle of teaching during a pandemic:

> Even though I am a new teacher and I'm kind of going through it also there's other people who are more experienced, who are also going through it, which makes me feel like I’m not as bad of a teacher, as I originally thought.

*Emergent Theme Five: Mental Health*

The final, but plausibly most notable, emergent theme within research question one was mental health concerns among students and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. This theme was shared by all ten participants as they have navigated the world of COVID-19 instruction. Within this theme, there are three sub-themes present within the analysis of participant responses: (a) student, (b) teacher, and (c) home-work separation. The sub-themes of teacher mental health and home-work separation were linked in the analysis of teachers’ mental health in this study.

*Student mental health*

Teachers detailed their concerns surrounding students’ mental health throughout the pandemic but specifically during emergency remote teaching and at the start of in-person instruction. Despite these concerns, there was a clear lack of support by districts and schools to facilitate this transition concerning
students’ emotional needs. Upon return to in-person instruction, students were “deregulated from being home for a year and a half and going through COVID… They were like expected to just be in a classroom again… the school could have done better” (Chris).

Participants noted the effects of COVID-19 on students’ well-being and how “some of them were exposed to things, maybe they shouldn’t have been exposed to… And I think that was really, really bad. Hurt them a lot and it’s set them back a lot.” (Jacob). Samantha described the trauma of students’ experiences of COVID:

You know they’re fucking traumatized…. You know the parents have COVID, lost their jobs, families need assistance like you know they’re little kids that have been living through a pandemic. Students’ stress levels were increased due to “a lot of disruptions in their life” (Sophia). Due to these mental health concerns and the lack of in-person socialization during emergency remote instruction, participants shared concerns about students’ “social anxiety. They had not seen each other or other students in two years.” (Grace). Therefore, teachers felt the need to check in on students more frequently as they are “processing a lot and so there’s a lot of extra time that needs to be spent checking in on students and making sure they’re ok” (Kayla). This has also impacted students' classroom behavior “I think [for] students that shows up differently now like if they’re experiencing something at home as either a withdrawal or attention-seeking behavior” (Riley).

**Teacher mental health**

Teachers also noted increased mental health concerns of their own as they attempted to handle both the impact of the pandemic personally and the impact of being a new teacher. Jacob elaborated that “It puts a strain on me that starts to… mess with my mental health.” This sentiment was shared by many other participants. Riley was “a mess” during online instruction, “I was like crying constantly. I felt like
I was failing. I wasn’t taking care of myself.” Sophia began going to therapy during online instruction “it was a very low point emotionally.” Grace further described the frustration of teaching during COVID-19 and the stress involved, “I feel like crying every day. I cry every day. I feel frustrated… Like give me a break from like the misery I’m feeling now because I’m not happy.” Overall, participants felt lonely as teachers both online and in-person and many described strong emotions as new teachers. Madeline described how this has exhausted her capacity at the end of the day:

> I’m actually at like 40% capacity… I'm more cognizant of the amount of brain space that's being taken up and… [I want to] go to the store and …clean up my house and stuff but like, in reality, I just sit down and I'm tired.

During online instruction specifically, teachers felt teaching was “demoralizing at times” (Richard) as they did not have student participation or relationships with others.

Mental health was not only a concern personally among participants but also among their colleagues. Jacob explained how COVID impacted interactions that he’d seen among colleagues, “we’re all kind of on edge, whether we want to admit it or not, it’s a different time.”

**Home and work separation**

Another element of teachers’ mental health was the lack of separation between home and work during emergency remote instruction. Participants felt “exhausted by this work… work[ing] all the time” (Chris). Riley described how teaching during COVID-19 has been:

> really fucking hard and I don’t feel like teachers are compensated enough for the work that we’re doing… a lot of teachers [will] probably end up leaving… because of the additional labor that we’ve been asked to do.
This separation between home and work was a major concern to participants’ mental health and something that teachers wanted to shift. Sophia “worked on not only working, like doing other stuff.”

Richard was reflective of his lack of home-school separation, that it:

isn’t necessarily a healthy thing… I had teachers [pull] me aside like, “dude you need to
like kind of pump the brakes a little it’s gonna be fine… You need to take some time, not
come to work so early.”

Despite the perceived need for this separation to support teachers’ mental health, participants described this lack of separation as a necessity for their success in teaching. Samantha worked outside of work hours despite her desire to get everything done during the workday:

I usually do my planning a little bit after school like I would do it like right now-ish or in
the morning when I come in. If I need to do like printing and stuff …it'll be like my long
day. After school I try not to work on the weekend, or I’ll go crazy I did that my first year
and I did go crazy. So, you know I just do what I can without losing my mind and still
being able to teach… it's not that you don't care it's about knowing your limit and
knowing how to still be present without burning yourself out, you know… If I tried to do
everything I would have been gone before winter break… So, I just do what I can…

Yeah, it's not fun being a teacher.

**Research Question Two**

Research question two, “What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?” was analyzed using responses to interview questions two, three, six, seven, eight, and nine. The resulting themes are identified in Table 9.
### Table 9

*Emergent themes resulting from responses to interview questions 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Question</th>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
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<td><strong>Question 2:</strong> “How would you describe your school to someone who doesn’t know it? The people you work with? The programs?”</td>
<td>• Working conditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• School climate</td>
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<td><strong>Question 3:</strong> “If you completed student teaching prior to having your own classroom, how did that prepare you to teach?”</td>
<td>• Teacher preparation</td>
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<td><strong>Question 6:</strong> “What support have you received as a new teacher through your district? Is the support you received what you needed?”</td>
<td>• District support</td>
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<td>• Support from coach</td>
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<td>• Professional development (PD)</td>
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<td><strong>Question 7:</strong> “What support have you received as a new teacher through your school? Is the support you received what you needed?”</td>
<td>• Working conditions</td>
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<td><strong>Question 8:</strong> “Have you had a mentor? If yes… how did this person become your mentor? Is the support from this person what you needed?”</td>
<td>• School climate</td>
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<td>• Support from a veteran colleague</td>
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<td><strong>Question 9:</strong> “Which of these supports has been the most beneficial in shifting your instruction to online or hybrid instruction during COVID-19?”</td>
<td>• Support from a veteran colleague</td>
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<td>• PP</td>
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<td>• Teacher preparation</td>
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A start list of codes, working conditions (WC), school climate (SC), supportive administrator (SA), induction/mentoring (IM), and professional development (PD), were used for research question two to identify the various supports used by new teachers in prior literature. However, during coding,
the code “Induction and Mentoring” was not specific enough to describe the ways that teachers received support and was therefore split into four codes: (a) district support, (b) support from a coach, (c) support from a similar-level colleague, and (d) support from a veteran colleague. As participants noted various supports from their teacher preparation program, Teacher Preparation was also added as a code. School Climate was also defined differently across the grade levels, with Middle and High school teachers noting more opportunities to collaborate based on their period schedules. Frequencies of positive mentions of support are included in Figure 4.

![Figure 4. Total positive mentions of support by support type.](image)

**Emergent Theme One: Working Conditions**

Participants identified several factors as both positively and negatively impacting their experience during COVID-19 instruction. The shifting conditions of teaching to emergency remote,
hybrid and in-person instruction were notably impacted by the sub-themes of classroom make-up, materials, people, and time.

**Classroom make-up**

In the district in which this study occurred, participants noted that COVID-19 had required many students to make-up coursework once the transition to in-person instruction occurred. This led to increased class sizes and mixed grade-level classes. Grace described this experience:

> It's supposed to only be a ninth-grade class but due to COVID…a lot of people are taking it from past years for graduation requirements …all the classes are sprinkled. My eighth period, for example, has about like maybe like 30 kids maybe like 25 no 28 of them are ninth graders. I have one 10th grader, one junior, one senior….I have a different class that has like more like almost all 10th graders and then a couple juniors and seniors and like one ninth-grader…And then, I have a class that has international or newcomer students who are new to this country from various places Guatemala and Mexico, Honduras…and they're sometimes considered ninth graders but they've done school before but they don't have their transcripts. So, they're older like my oldest student is 19 years old.

She continued to describe her frustration with the classroom make-up:

> Ninth graders are very different than juniors and seniors… there's different expectations… In my classes, I have students who speak a language I don't speak… How am I successful as a new teacher making up my own content teaching students who not only do, we not speak the same language but some of the content material, like the documentaries I show it can't be translated into Spanish?
Materials

Materials were a consistent theme across all participants. Those that received materials, such as support with how to use curriculum or access to supplemental materials described feeling supported. Sophia described how her coach was able to help her navigate what:

I really need to do and what do I just kind of need to look like I'm doing… I think clarifying that is important for new teachers because I'm someone who feels like I need to do it all and I need to do it all well and like it's just not possible because there's just not enough time.

Other participants felt frustrated by the lack of materials that they had received for their classrooms. Jacob stated, “it’s just resources for me, a lot of times these resources like I asked for… three months ago…she was like okay we'll get to it okay. But I don’t have enough time to be chasing nobody down.” Samantha described how she was unable to teach what she wanted due to a lack of personal funds at the end of the month:

If it's like the end of the month, I have no money to go buy stuff and then that (hands-on science lesson) just got scrapped, you know. And that’s sad but I'll do like mystery science, you know which is like lessons are like standards-aligned, but not the same thing versus having like science instruction like at least three times a week, which is like my goal. So that's hard.

Beyond supplemental materials, Grace lacked a basic curriculum for teaching her course on Ethnic Studies, “the curriculum’s incomplete…. I have to make everything from scratch, I stay up till 4 am making the PowerPoint.”
People

For many participants, it felt “like there's never enough like resources and staffing at the school” (Chris). Participants repeatedly dreamed of having additional aides or paraeducators in their classes as well as translators. Chris would “really benefit from having another person in the classroom, at least like some of the time.” Sophia compared her current school to her prior working environment, “I had one student in the class of I think 20 in fifth grade who had big behaviors and he had an individual aide… for half of the day… I like wasn't prepared.” Grace requested additional support with translation to be able to communicate with her students, “I would need a co-teacher or translator that is always in the classroom.”

Other participants described how their school, or the district provided additional support in the form of people. Sophia’s class received “behavioral support… pull out for a group of my students.” Samantha’s class received “an early literacy tutor in here from the grant that we got and so she's here every day from morning until our first recess time she’s here for like two hours she does small groups and that’s been really nice.” Riley described how they received support from:

People who do after school care into the classes and so she helped me translate which was super helpful because I couldn't have a conversation with like half of my students in their home language, so she was great, and she gave a lot of support with students she did like one-on-one tutoring hours with me. She's great.

Time

Three participants noted how additional time would make a huge difference in their ability to teach. During emergency remote teaching, Samantha described how online instruction allowed her to support students in a more controlled way, with a group “Zoom lesson and get ready during lunch and come here and the afternoons, and that was really nice and like you know small group.” Sophia echoed
the positives of the emergency remote teaching schedule and “how the schedule gave me that capacity. I finished teaching on Zoom at one … so I had the afternoon [to plan].” Since returning to in-person instruction, Richard hoped for:

    More prep time. I'm like damn I didn't expect that. I thought we'd have a little bit more time instead of meetings and all kinds of what I call “NTS” nonteaching stuff. I think that was the more one that kind of gets me, like wish for a little more time.

_Emergent Theme Two: School Climate_

All ten participants noted school climate as making a major impact on their transition to a COVID-19 teaching environment. Among the most important elements mentioned were the sub-themes of collaboration and an inviting atmosphere. While not all participants had completely positive experiences with their school climate, these elements were the most impactful on their teaching during the pandemic. Richard defined the draw of a positive school climate, “the community was a big part of leading me to that school and then just the people, the culture, the camaraderie.”

_Collaboration_

    Collaboration was defined by participants as a culture of sharing ideas with colleagues and the presence of formal collaborative time. Alyssa defined her school as:

    Extremely collaborative and friendly and giving…They like always want to have conversations about what can we do better, improvement. You work every single day together, at least with someone else in order to improve on our teaching every single day and it's kind of tiring but you know, in the end, I'd rather have collaboration than no collaboration at all.

Madeline also described how she and her colleagues collaborate around classroom management and supporting students:
We’ll send each other emails all the time, like hey I saw the student outside of class when she was supposed to be in the bathroom, or the student wouldn’t give his phone away… so we're all just very communicative of everybody's needs because it's a pretty small school.

Kayla noted that the collaborative school environment is “part of the reason that teachers are able to work closely together and … to help students feel connected to the school and get to know each other really well.” Madeline shared how her school has formal structures in place to “automatically match you with somebody who's been there for a while” which has allowed the school to build a positive and collaborative school climate.

Participants who did not have a collaborative school environment described their desire to have more formal opportunities to learn from colleagues through peer observation. As Riley described:

There are so many veteran teachers here that I think I can learn from, and I also think learning should continue, no matter how long you've been teaching. And I don't think that is a value that we have as a school site.

Grace shared a painful story of how her site does not collaborate, even when it might be beneficial for students’ well-being:

Recently, one of our students was killed. He died in a car accident. Last week, and today they decided to take the altar that students made him down because it was distracting them from going to class… Another student wanted to come to my class and the chemistry teacher told him that he couldn't come to my class to talk to me because I'm not a counselor. And so, there's just this idea that like when you're in your role as a teacher like you're just supposed to close the door, teach your content. And like do what you're supposed to do and make sure that you know kids aren't in there, that are not supposed to
be in there and they're not talking about different things and there's just a lack of care because like life goes on.

**Inviting atmosphere**

Linked to collaboration is the idea of an inviting atmosphere for teachers and staff. During emergency remote instruction, participants defined school culture as being limited. Chris described:

I didn't meet anybody in person for months into my first year of teaching and so I think that support wasn't there so much at the beginning… but it feels different this year to like actually you know my co-workers and see them.

With the transition to in-person instruction, teachers described the ways that colleagues and staff make them feel invited to the school. Jacob’s colleagues “are willing to help and it’s a community… they’re just like my aunties at work and I love them.” Other participants described how other teachers build them up. Richard shared:

I get [staff meeting] shout-outs for stuff that I didn't even realize like oh yeah, I helped it wasn’t a big deal, but to them, it was a big deal which is nice. There's definitely a culture of communication like you know gratitude.

Other participants described how the lack of invitation at their schools negatively impacted their feelings about the school culture and teaching. Madeline’s school has “a very high teacher turnover rate…so it is a little weird to establish yourself as a teacher, especially, I guess, in the first year.” This lack of bonding with other colleagues because of teacher turnover was also shared by Grace:

I got hired three days before school started. So, I was just kind of thrown into it. Didn't really get to know anybody. People had known each other for years before or people like you know, had like summertime to connect. I got thrown in three days before when the other teacher who was super loved was transitioning to a higher role in the district. I think
that's number one. I think number two I got a lot of complaints and a lot of like hyper surveillance right off the bat for the way I did things, how I dressed like being young like you know not just not being traditional and I think that just kind of set the tone.

*Emergent Theme Three: Supportive Administrator*

Among the ten participants, nine noted their school administrator as making an impact on their teaching. Participants discussed administrators 46 times during their interviews with 20 of those instances supportive and 26 unsupportive. Based on these observations, four sub-themes were used to classify their experiences: (a) observation and feedback, (b) follow-through, (c) not feeling heard, and (d) lack of emotional safety.

*Observation and feedback*

Participants had mixed reactions to being observed and receiving feedback. While some received the feedback without concerns, “sometimes I’ll get an email after (the observation) ... this was good, this is something to work on” (Chris), others felt frustrated by the style of feedback they’ve received. Jacob described:

I don’t need no motivational speech. Just tell me. Model it for me. Show me so I can see it and then I’ll do it. You know I’m intelligent enough to figure it out… I don't need all of that. That's gonna waste your time and my time… I'm building off what I'm doing here so there's some knowledge that I'm kind of using. I'm not just completely raw.

Sophia felt overwhelmed by the number of observations and feedback, “it felt like a lot… I had too many cooks in the kitchen. I’m getting advice from too many places.” However, Sophia also found observation helpful because her principal shared the common interest that they “both want me to improve and my students to improve… so I don't think of every observation as an evaluation, I think of
it as like a coaching observation.” Samantha felt positive about the outcome of the observations despite the anxiety they caused:

Observations make me anxious… But the principal and vice-principal do come in to observe together occasionally, and then they give me feedback…. So that's nice but they're like “oh you're missing this, good job with this” versus like I'm like fully anxiety at that time you know I'm like ahhh what do they want? But it's actually pretty nice because they're like “good job” ... like “oh my god, most of your kids were engaged” when over here I'm like focusing on the one kid as rolling around.

Follow-through

Participants stated that they were most positively impacted by their principal’s support when the administrator followed through on what they said they would do. Sophia’s principal had:

Subbed instead of my coach and when I came back [from COVID leave] she was like I’m going to be in your room a lot and I’m going to make a second office next to your room… [she's] next door often one of two of my highflyers are in there with her… I feel supported, and I feel grateful, and I feel that things feel like I’m finally giving students what they need instructionally instead of barely making it through the day.

Madeline also discussed subbing as a way that her administrator showed follow-through “they’ll come in and they’ll even sub sometimes… they’re pretty good.”

Other participants described how their principal followed through on non-teaching-related things, like making sure that they took time off work, Sophia described how the principal told them, “You are not allowed to come before 7:30 or stay after 4:30… you’re not allowed to have students with you at lunch, so I do those things and that’s actually helped.”
Alternatively, Grace shared how a lack of accountability and follow-through can have a detrimental effect on a school, “I feel sad, I feel frustrated, I feel that it's not fair, because no one is held accountable, and it gets to look nice but it's not really nice.”

*Not feeling heard*

Jacob described how a lack of feeling or being heard can make all the difference when it comes to next teacher support:

There's a disconnect when it comes to what support is actually needed, I think that to other people in the organization they have their priorities and they have their own version of what their goals are and their agenda which I'm not upset about that's fine, but then when they're bringing this agenda to you um there's a couple of things issues I have. Number one… if you want to reach your goal, you're gonna have to work with me…And they're going to tell you how you are going to be supported and why you need to be supported this way and why this is the best way. And I'm like can I get a word in?

Sophia mirrored this reaction to not receiving the support she needed. She described how she felt frustrated by the classroom management strategy that her principal instituted in her classroom:

It was really like a disaster, the first few weeks partly because I didn't buy into it [classroom management strategy]. And didn't know how it should work really. I'm still not a huge fan but... I'm okay trying them if they're going to make it better and hopefully, someday, I get to a place in my teaching where I don’t need to use that.

Kayla described not feeling heard with regards to asking her colleagues and administrator to use masks, “you're making it harder for me to do my job, and like constantly and that's awkward to tell your boss like hey you're doing something that's not okay.”
Lack of emotional safety

Participants' main complaints about their school administrators was a lack of emotional safety that they felt. Some of these responses stemmed from the perception of teaching as a “very political job” (Jacob). Grace described her frustrations with the politics of teaching and the lack of emotional safety she felt with the school administrator:

I thought that everybody was united around the students and the students' needs… but it's not like that, I mean maybe it's not every school… But I never thought it would be so much about impressing or… sending an email for a paper trail. It's all about these conversations, checking off your list of what you did.

During another interview, Samantha turned down the volume on her computer to ensure that she was not heard by the school administrator:

Yeah, let me turn down the volume… I haven't had any personal problems with her, but I know some coworkers have felt that she has made them uncomfortable and has been a little bit racist or sexist to them… still feels like… a problem wasn’t resolved… But then it’s like, I don’t know, she’s, my boss.

Emergent Theme Four: District Support

Most participants described their Northern California school district as negatively impacting their professional development and teaching when asked what support they received through their school district as a new teacher. During interview analysis of question 6, six comments were coded as ways that the district had positively supported participants while 23 comments were tagged as non-supportive actions by the school district. Reflection from Riley summarized many participants’ reactions to question 6, “I have a coach to help me with my induction… Through the district, nothing else…. No [that’s not what I need].”
Advocate

Participants who noted positive experiences with the school district stated that these supports stemmed from advocacy by the district for various supports for them as new teachers. Kayla shared how her participation in an external membership program was facilitated by the district:

The district has set up for me to work with [organization] so that's really helpful, but if I was doing my credentialing just through the normal district channels, I think that wouldn't be as supportive and so [organization] works only with science and math teachers and it's five years of mentoring support as a new teacher.

Multiple participants shared the value of the district’s induction program as they navigated their first years of classroom teaching. As Alyssa shared, “that’s the main thing I’m getting support from because I actually meet physically in person with a mentor. And that’s been the most helpful, to be honest.” Madeline described how the district’s matching of her with a district induction coach has made a difference, “emotionally it's been nice to feel like I have another person in my corner who recognizes that this is very hard and advocates for me.”

Not valuable

Some participants had a very different experience of district induction and new teacher support. For these participants, they felt that new teacher support was lacking and not valuable for their development, though they appreciated the existence of this opportunity. Alyssa shared:

You know they invite you to go to a new teacher meeting, but you know that's at the end of the day at 4 pm after I've taught school for many hours. Am I really going to go to that? Realistically, no. Do they still offer it because they want you to connect with other new teachers and give me support? Yeah. So, the offer is there. It's just technically more like optional, come to this meeting or optional … modules you can do to get earn extra
credit. It's just all very optional. Nothing's required, which is great, but I don't find that I …particularly felt supported from my district.

Riley also felt that the district new teacher support was lacking as they described, “there have been new teacher mixers on Zoom that I like haven't been able to go to because… I have a meeting or something at that time. But that's not what I need.”

**Emergent Theme Five: Support from a Coach**

All participants described receiving support from either a district or school site coach. Only coaches designated as this title were analyzed within this theme, including induction (or BTSA) coaches, site-level coaches, district-level coaches, and Teachers on Special Assignment. Informal coaches were included in the themes “support from a veteran colleague” and “support from a similar-level colleague”.

Despite the presence of site-based coaches and Teachers on Special Assignment at participants’ schools, they have not been accessible during COVID-19. These support personnel were “too overworked” (Kayla). Coaches are unable to provide support due to increased responsibility during the pandemic, “trying to do the reading intervention pieces, trying to cover classes, all the time. They're also in charge of PD stuff… There’s not a lot of coaching support” (Chris). Riley described how their lack of struggle has made them receive less support as a new teacher:

At the school, there's new teacher support but she's supporting way too many new teachers. And there are new teachers who are struggling more than I am struggling… I feel like one of those students who are quietly struggling in the classroom, whereas if you're not causing chaos, then you're fine… She comes in, maybe once a month, and we have a debrief and she's supporting 9th-grade academy applications and also subbing when someone's out and her job description is too long. She has just too many things that are being piled onto her to adequately support new teachers.
For those that received support from a coach during COVID-19, they identified three sub-themes: (a) advocate, (b) emotional support, and (c) professional guidance.

**Advocate**

Participants noted their coaches as advocates, amplifying their voice as new teachers. Sophia’s coach advocated for her with the school administration:

[She] helped advocate for me in that respect and basically asked, or told, or talked with the leadership and was like, “Sophia cannot do math and science and reading and, like all the new curriculums and SIPPS like all in the time that she has. So, what are the priorities?”

Grace had gone through three different coaches over her first year of teaching. During the interview, she described how she had received the most support from her third coach. This coach provided follow-through and advocacy with the school administration and ensured that Grace was able to observe another teacher:

She follows through, she's very consistent with helping me… the biggest thing she made happen, was that she took me to another ethnic studies class, another school, to observe how they did it. I asked for that, but she made it happen because at first, they told me, no and I'd have to take a day off and do it on my own time. And then you know she's been working there for 14 years… and she's also white so she kind of like said, “yeah we're going to do this”, and they just listened to her when she said that…And even recently she facilitated a restorative conversation between me and the principals and even though the conversation didn't really go completely well, it was a point that she was willing to do that.
Coaches’ willingness to use their seniority and privilege to support their mentees was a way that new teachers felt supported in their coaching relationships.

**Emotional support**

Emotional support during confidential coaching sessions was noted in five of the ten interviews. Participants shared that regardless of the quality of coaching they had received, the opportunity to vent with their coach was invaluable. Alyssa appreciated her coach’s willingness to meet:

*Way more than the required time and overall, my mentor is a very giving person. The work we do together is probably, you know, not extremely helpful, but it provides a lot of insight into what I wouldn't have if I had a regular conversation with a coworker. So, it feels like a very protected authentic conversation.*

Sophia mirrored this experience with her coach as emotional support but not supportive in growing her professional knowledge:

*She’s very helpful in that she is so kind … I just don't feel like the advice that she gave me was necessarily new, but I think emotionally it's been nice to feel like I have another person in my corner who recognizes that this is very hard.*

Riley described how they “frequently cried to her [coach] and so like she helps me hold this [secondary trauma].” This shoulder to cry on was invaluable to Riley as they attempted to navigate the difficulty of teaching in a challenging school.

Other participants noted the availability of their coach to help when things got tough. Richard shared that when he was struggling his coach “dropped everything and just came to my room.” This willingness to drop anything when needed was invaluable for Madeline:

*The middle of my lesson fourth period I was like “I have to walk outside; I need a breath because this kid is driving me insane.” She's [coach] like “Oh I'll be there in two”. She's*
always [a] really nice resource and I know not everybody gets… I call her “my lady” ...

She's everything.

**Professional guidance**

District and site-based coaches provided support in the form of coaching cycles, focusing on classroom management, curriculum/content, and new teacher support work. These cycles were described by Kayla, “she observes me every other week and I observe her the weeks that she's not observing me, and then we debrief and make a plan and a goal.” Participants at multiple schools noted this professional guidance as helping develop their professional knowledge. Riley described how this cycle of support through “consistent observations and an hour-long debrief was really, really helpful” (Riley) though they did not receive this support as a second-year teacher. Sophia found it invaluable to “really figure out what was going on, what needed to go better, like what were the next steps in the plan.” Alyssa appreciated how her coach acted as another set of eyes during observations:

She's even just like another body in the room, when I do teach and so when things go wrong, and I don't know what to do it, or how to deal with it, she, you know, picks up that flag or she, you know, catches it or nips it in the bud before it can even turn into something else, and so it's just extremely supportive to have someone seeing and recognizing that I'm doing the best in my classroom but also like helping whatever chaos is happening in my classroom because I don't know how to deal with it.

Other participants described coaches as facilitating these conversations to “check up on us, make sure it’s like we’re on track” (Samantha). Samantha hoped for additional time to plan rather than coaching cycles:
If you need help like if I wanted her to observe, she would. If I wanted to go observe someone else, she would come to my class. So, there are those options. I just need more planning.

Chris shared how they received less support with full coaching cycles in their second year of teaching:

This year we haven't been meeting very much. We've just kind of met like when I have one of the things due [induction tasks], and she helps me write it up… If there was a specific thing that I felt like I needed help with I could probably go find somebody and get help with that thing. I don't think there's a lot of support just offered.

**Emergent Theme Six: Support from a Similar-Level Colleague**

All ten participants described their colleagues as providing guidance and support. These colleagues were noted in two categories based on the level of experience described during the interviews. Similar-level colleagues were defined as those with one to three years more experience than the participant. Those with more experience were categorized as veteran colleagues. With both colleague groups, participants asked lots of questions of their colleagues. Jacob described himself as that “extra student, ‘I gotta question, I gotta question.’” Alyssa shared how she was able to ask colleagues from all levels questions about her role and responsibilities as a teacher:

Hearing what they’re doing in their classroom and what’s working well… I feel like I can always go to them, ask questions about, “How does this thing work?” or “This kid is doing this thing, what do I do?”

Outside of asking a lot of questions of their colleagues, participants described different ways that each colleague group (similar-level and veteran) provided support. All participants noted the presence of colleague support, but the frequencies of these codes differed by individual experiences. Alyssa and
Madeline noted support from similar-level but not veteran colleagues. Richard noted support from a veteran but not from similar-level colleagues. Figure 5 notes the frequencies of instances mentioned.

Figure 5. Instances of support mentioned by colleague level group.

Participants noted that similar-level colleagues were supportive as friends or comrades rather than coaches or mentors. Analysis of participant interviews indicated two sub-themes within the theme of support from a similar level colleague: (a) figuring it out together, and (b) going through the same things.

Figuring it out together

New teachers described their experience of working with similar-level colleagues as providing them an opportunity to problem solve, plan, and figure things out with their colleagues. This structure of “figuring it out together” was unique to their similar-level colleagues whose similar level of inexperience but slightly more advanced experience enabled the participants and their colleagues to plan and collaborate reciprocally. Alyssa described how:
At first, I felt like she (a similar-level colleague) was like very all-knowing, but then she realized that “oh crap like I shouldn't be telling her what to do, I should be working with her, so we can both figure out what to do.”

Madeline shared how she uses her similar-level colleague when she comes across things “that I'm too scared to ask my induction coach or … to get two opinions on some things and so she's also she's always a really good like second resource.”

Similar-level colleagues were also described as more supportive due to their experience of teaching during COVID-19. As described by Madeline:

I go talk to my other friend (similar-level colleague) cuz she's been teaching for longer during the pandemic, then can she kind of like knows more I would say, sometimes, then my lady (coach) knows. Or I'll sometimes run things past my other friend if I’m like “hey, (coach) told me to do is, do you think I should actually do that, or is there a way, I should like modify it or, should I even do that at all?”

Chris described how they have collaborated with their similar-level colleague in a different way than veteran colleagues as they felt more confident with both being at a similar skill level:

Last year we would meet during our PLC time on zoom and that would be mostly when we were kind of collaborating. But I started working a lot more with one of the teachers because she is a third-year teacher… so she was still fairly new but more experienced than me… She's been just so helpful for me because she's just gone through all the same things that I'm going through. “Oh yeah I had that same issue, and like this is how I responded” ... But she's also still figuring out a lot, so it feels like, again, a place that I have like a little bit more to contribute.
Alternatively, Alyssa sometimes felt frustrated with her similar-level colleague’s disorganization as a fellow new teacher, but they were able to translate her help into collaborative planning:

Even though she [third-year colleague] has more experience than me, [it] is actually kind of like troublesome on my part in terms of like she knows what the school is about, but she still doesn't have, like you know, organized curriculum planned out…She doesn't really have a clear idea of where she is going…. We actually have longer meetings now where we actually sit down, have a unit plan for like six weeks at least, map it out on to what days we're doing it and then adjust from there.

**Going through the same things**

Emotionally, participants described leaning on similar-level colleagues as they were both going through the same things as newer teachers during COVID-19. Kayla described this relationship:

My teacher next door [is my greatest support] because they are also a biology teacher…We go visit each other all the time and it's really cute because they know all my students and I know all their students… And also, just like we complain sometimes and help support each other like I've been gone a lot because I'm taking care of my mom and they'll come give a lesson plan to my substitute or something and it's really nice.

Sophia had built a comradeship with her similar-level colleague. Despite teaching different grades, “we're kind of friends, and you know also can commiserate and I think came to teaching, for similar reasons, and have similar doubts… that’s been helpful.” Samantha built a relationship with another PE teacher at her school, “because she's new this year. She's cool, we're the same age group, she’s 24. She's worked at a charter school, I worked at a charter school. We’re both in the same situation, so we get along.”
Grace’s comrades at work were described as all having gone through similar experiences as young professionals:

We've bonded over certain frustrations about “Oh, the first-year teaching” … We’re both black, we’re both young, and people don't really take us seriously… I have another teacher who's white, who is in her credentialing program… she gets critiqued for being young as well.

Participants described friendships and comradeship with colleagues who are going through similar experiences as new teachers during COVID-19 as being crucial support.

**Emergent Theme Seven: Support from a Veteran Colleague**

Support from a veteran colleague was also detailed extensively by participants but this support has ebbed and flowed during COVID-19. As described by Chris:

This year I still feel like I don’t know what I’m doing, but the people around me do so I can ask them questions. But last year I didn’t know what I was doing and the people around me also didn’t know what they were doing, which was tricky in terms of support.

The veteran teachers or “OGs” (Jacob) shared their years of experience with the new teachers studied. As Jacob described, this experience was valid due to the perception that, “they say what a child sees standing an old man sees sitting down”. Other times, this advice was deemed as “unsolicited, but like very caring advice” (Sophia). Participants provided many instances of both asking and receiving veteran colleague advice but there were times when it felt “a little intimidating” (Samantha). Analysis of participant interviews indicated four sub-themes of ways that veteran teachers provided support: (a) observation, (b) sharing wisdom, (c) logistical support, and (d) emotional support.
**Observation**

Participants noted the opportunity to observe their veteran-level peers as being a great way to build their teaching practice. Jacob described how he used every opportunity to “watch folks in action…the whole thing. Okay, let me see how the teacher deals with this.” Chris was able to observe classroom teachers, “at the beginning of the year, when I was really, really struggling with classroom management, I was able to observe a couple really good teachers and their classrooms.” Kayla’s school provided the structure that enabled both her as a new teacher and her grade-level colleagues to “visit each other's classrooms, observe… and then we give each other feedback” to improve their teaching practices. She and others found peer observation to “really [help] me grow as a teacher.” Richard felt that he learned something new every time he observed a veteran teacher, “whether it’s classroom management, whether it’s you know reading strategies… all kinds of stuff… anything I need.”

**Sharing wisdom**

Beyond the opportunity to see what was happening in other teachers’ classrooms, veteran teachers were described as frequently sharing wisdom with participants. Jacob found that the “veteran teachers… love sharing… a good story and some advice”. Samantha described how her co-teacher colleague has been “my life raft”:

She’s the best… she’s been teaching for 25 years. She’s amazing and she’ll send me stuff, like print stuff like “Hey you want a copy of this? One copy of this?” like “This is the way I do this; I do like the chants.” I would never have thought of doing. Yeah, she’s super helpful.

Veteran mentor wisdom was defined by Richard:
He's [veteran teacher mentor] got kind of like that big brother vibe…He's just like a walking book of knowledge, for me. You know, situations that I have questions on, he's always there to help me guide me through it.

Participants noted the need to interpret some advice from their veteran colleagues. As Sophia described:

There's a lot of institutional knowledge, a lot of dedication to the community that doesn't always look the way I want it to look or like sometimes I, you know, have issues with how other teachers… I don't always agree with everything that all the other teachers say, or how they do things.

Grace described how her veteran colleague’s advice, though different than her way of doing things, was valuable because of the respect that she had for her as a teacher:

I think that for her subject and for her passion and I respect her, even though our ways are different. I respect her because I think she’s showed she does care, and she shows that care through the things that she does she does …I learned so much from her.

**Logistical support**

Participants noted that support from colleagues tended to fall into two categories: logistical and emotional support. Logistical support was described as knowledge of school systems and access to materials. Grace was helped by a veteran colleague, “she supports me a lot and showing me any logistical things like I didn't know about Go Guardian right I didn't know about Jupiter and Aeries and the grading systems.” Participants also described colleagues giving them access to materials or “all her stuff” (Samantha). Richard described similar curricular support from a veteran colleague, “I needed some anchor charts for my class, and she gave me some ideas. She even sent me a PDF or like you know if I wanted to change stuff so I could make it my own.”
Emotional support

Participants also shared experiences of receiving emotional support from their veteran colleagues, “they’re super supportive of my meltdowns…They’re like how can we help you?” (Samantha). Samantha described how work time with her colleagues provided:

Good ideas from them because sometimes I go in there, I'm like tearing up. I'm like “I'm done teaching” and they’re like “It's okay. We’re feeling the same thing” and I'm like “Oh you guys too, I thought it was just me.”

Madeline shared how technology has allowed her to receive mentorship and emotional support from veteran teachers online:

I'm on Teacher Tik Tok a lot and… I love this idea of solidarity that “Yeah, this year’s really weird. And last year was also really weird.” Like even for … old teachers, so I think it makes me feel a lot better that even though I am a new teacher and I'm kind of going through it…there's other people who are more experienced, who are also going through it, which makes me feel like I'm not as bad of a teacher, as I originally thought.

Emergent Theme Eight: Professional Development

During COVID-19 new teachers described different ways that they received professional development (PD) both in-person and online. According to the analysis of participant responses, five sub-themes emerged: (a) colleague-led, (b) district-led, (c) school-led, (d) self-taught, and (e) under-developed.
**Colleague-led**

Participants described an increased use of colleague-led professional development during COVID-19. Some participants mentioned formal professional learning meetings, such as weekly school staff meetings or PD. Chris described how teaching online:

> Was just new for everybody… sometimes in PDs it would be like, “Oh this person is doing this cool thing. Can you show us what it is you're doing?” ... I don't feel like there was a lot of support of how to do it, everyone was just trying to figure it out together.

Other participants described how PD led by colleagues was less formal and done outside of regular staff or PD meetings. Alyssa noted that these trainings were:

> I guess informal trainings where my co-workers would be like, “Hey I'm going over this with you know, whoever else like let me know if you want to sit in so we can talk about this online educational tool” ... A lot of that like informally trying to teach you how to use certain things.

**District-led**

Participants appreciated opportunities to participate in district-led PDs that met their instructional needs. These trainings ranged from “Restorative Justice training” (Madeline) to a “California math conference” (Riley). Kayla shared a positive experience in a district-led new teacher training in which it “was also just helpful we just talked to the other new teachers online a little bit to just like talk to other new people was nice.” The opportunity to meet other new teachers outside of a school site was not mentioned by other participants. Across participants, there was no consistency in the amount, quality, or content that new teachers received in the Northern California school district.
School-led

Participants identified weekly school-based PD and Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings as being “very helpful to my practice” (Kayla). Riley described monthly PDs where “we’re looking at student data and trying new things and what’s not working and learning from each other” as being useful. Madeline appreciated that the structure of the Wednesday meeting time allows for teacher development: “Wednesdays are set up where it’s a half-day, so we have professional development, in the end, so we do get together at least once a week as a staff.” Samantha described how having supported PLC time is vital for her teaching:

At PLCs, that’s all we talk about, we talk about it all the time. In [curriculum] like this is what’s coming up, let’s look through the slides and see what lessons we want to focus on. And this assessment is coming up so that’s super helpful because otherwise when would I do all of this? So that's nice.

Self-taught

Self-teaching of content was the most frequently mentioned professional learning by participants (12 instances) as compared to colleague-led (6 instances), district-led (4 instances), and school-led (7 instances). Madeline put this discrepancy into perspective:

[District] always has district meetings and stuff or district professional development that I can do if I want to. Oftentimes I say no because I feel like I’m already learning so much that I don’t need to develop professionally because I’m doing it every day.

Most participants described this self-learning as being by “trial and error” (Madeline). As new teachers, multiple participants shared that there are “so many pieces of teaching… you kind of have to figure out as you go…” (Chris). Samantha noted the need to “figure out how to be a teacher on your own.”
During emergency remote instruction, participants described how they used technology, such as video tutorials to learn new content and digital tools. Alyssa shared how she felt ill-prepared for teaching online:

No one teaches you about what online tool you could use and what's, you know, engaging for an online learner and you know I had to learn all these tools on the fly, or I would have to take extra time that same year to learn more about educational technology.

Richard shared a similar experience:

Oh man, Google Classroom, I kind of had to figure that out, on my own… I mean I'm sure if I would have asked questions, I could have gotten that support. And maybe I just wasn't even aware, and it was buried in some email manual PDF I didn't read.

Chris felt that due to emergency remote teaching they received less support because no one knew what they were doing, and everyone was needing to teach themselves:

It was different kinds of not knowing what they were doing like you know for more established teachers, it was more about the like technology and the teaching through Zoom and engaging the kids and stuff and they were like more pieces of it for me of just being a new teacher.

As a result of self-teaching, Alyssa described how emergency remote teaching has made her “more flexible with figuring out how to troubleshoot things… And this time it's not going to feel like a huge problem because I've done it before.”

Under-developed

Some participants felt overwhelmed by PDs and developing professionally. As Madeline noted, “I know there's tons of resources and sometimes they’re overwhelming because I feel like I need them, but I don't know when, but I know they're available if I need them.” For some, they felt that the
professional learning options did not meet their needs as new teachers during COVID-19. Chris felt that their professional development did not meet the social-emotional needs of their classroom, “I think that didn’t help necessarily that, like all of the emphasis is on like just academics when the kids are like experiencing life.” Riley and Grace shared frustrations around the ineffectiveness of their schools’ professional learning options. Grace stated, “I don’t even know what we’re talking about. Bullshit every Wednesday. Nothing important.” Riley felt the “presentation that they could have given to us via email… and that’s not professional development at all.”

**Emergent Theme Nine: Teacher Preparation**

Theme nine, “teacher preparation” emerged in response to interview question three, “If you completed student teaching prior to having your own classroom, how did that prepare you to teach?” Of the ten participants, four reported completing student teaching fully in-person, two reported completing student teaching online, two reported completing student teaching in a hybrid format (online and in-person), and two participants did not complete student teaching. During the analysis of participant responses, many participants who taught online or in a hybrid format during their student teaching year “didn’t feel prepared at all” (Alyssa). Participants described concerns around the “huge jump” (Chris) from student teaching to leading their classroom. The biggest concern for participants was the need to establish their own classroom culture. As Chris described:

My mentor teacher was the one who established the classroom culture and established the classroom management, and so I hadn't had to do that myself like I'd come into an already established dynamic that I was already a part of, and so, being the one who built that for the first time was and continues to be very hard, especially at the beginning of the year it's like gotten a little bit better, but it was really, really tough.
Jacob mirrored this response when he described the need for the “mental fitness you gotta have. I don't think student teaching prepares you for that because you're missing multiple dynamics that you're not going to get unless you're actually the teacher.” Sophia shared that “student teaching gave me an opportunity to see what a really well-run classroom is like and to feel like what it feels like to teach in that, but that's very different from creating that.”

**Research Question Three**

Research question three, “To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?” was analyzed through participant responses to question 10, “What are your plans for next school year? Do you plan to remain at your school?” and follow-up question 10a, “How has COVID-19 impacted these plans?”. Question 10 was analyzed using codes based on prior teacher retention literature: (a) stayer, those who decided to remain at their school site and district, (b) mover, those that planned to move schools or districts, and (c) leaver, those that planned to leave the profession. However, among these coded responses additional nuances developed to describe the impact of COVID-19 in this decision as well as the rationale for participants’ decisions which developed into sub-themes that are further detailed below.

Of those studied, 7 out of 10 participants described some form of indecision about whether they plan to stay or leave their school site, therefore a fourth theme emerged from the data. Given that most participants provided alternative viewpoints in getting to their final decision to say, move, or leave coding was done based on themes in participant responses rather than their final plans. However, for each category, participants’ final decisions for the 2022/23 school year are provided for reference in Table 10. Four themes emerged based on the coding of participant responses: (a) indecision, (b) stayer, (c) mover, and (d) leaver.
Table 10

Participant Plans for 2022/23 School Year

<table>
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<th>Participant Number</th>
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**Emergent Theme One: Indecision**

Only one participant, Samantha, remained decidedly undecided in her plans for the 2022/23 school year. However, most participants (7 out of 10) described feelings of indecision throughout the school year. Many of the participants’ final decisions stemmed from their need to provide an “intent to return” (Samantha) to the district by the end of March. Samantha’s indecision stemmed from changing classroom dynamics and frustrations, stating that she was “still deciding every day. I’m like do I come back? And some days I’m like, I can’t do this. Some days I’m like ehhh what else are you gonna do?”

This roller coaster in decision-making was mirrored in Jacob’s response:

> It took me a while. It was a maybe and it wasn’t until like two weeks ago [that I made a decision] ... then I went to this like roller coaster, this mess. I’m like man my classroom’s better, I’m getting the hang of it. I love these kids… it’s gotten better… I don’t think it’s fair for me to put myself through that again.

For the participants that described feelings of indecision, the majority returned to the idea of classroom management as being the main trigger for wanting to leave. This was especially present at the start of the year. As illustrated by Chris, “the first couple months of this year I was really like I’m not sure I can even make it through this school year. Like it was really destroying me… this is so hard.”
Emergent Theme Two: Stayer

Seven out of the 10 participants studied have decided to remain in their current school. Riley, Richard, and Madeline did not mention any forms of indecision around whether they would return the following year and were steadfast in their decision. The main justification for participants’ wanting to stay was their desire to re-experience teaching at their school, grade, or content area. Participants within this category described COVID-19 as a non-issue in their decision-making process. Most participants who had decided to stay attributed COVID’s impact on their decision to location. As Alyssa described:

I graduated in February of 2020 and then the pandemic started, and I was like okay, I kind of want to be close to my family, because everything is really scary right now, and so I moved back home… That's how I ended up doing this and then kind of for the same reasons… And it also made me less inclined to move somewhere where I don't know anybody because of COVID.

Madeline mirrored this response that COVID-19 “impacted the place where I got a job at first, and so, therefore, I'm staying in the location that COVID kind of brought me to.”

Re-experience

Many participants referred to the desire to re-experience teaching after teaching for one or more school years. Having prior knowledge, they believed, would allow them an easier year following. Samantha, who had taught three different grades in her first three years of teaching, noted “I’m thinking I’m going to stay cuz it should be easier next year because I did the hard part this year.” This idea that teachers have done the “hard part” in the first year of teaching was communicated in teachers’ desire to keep the same content or grade levels in the upcoming school year. Madeline described her decision made based on a desire to re-experience teaching the same content:
Yeah, I'm gonna stick it out, I think we'll see how next year goes especially with admin stuff and my friend leaving, but I think it would still be good, especially because… I’ll know what I'm teaching next year since I’ll have something under my belt and I have more plans for behavior management at the beginning of the year, so I think I'm excited for next year.

Richard described a different element of re-experiencing his first two years of teaching, intending to learn from the community and the challenges of teaching in his school environment:

I feel like I can get better, and I can learn a lot from where I'm at. The school that I work at, all the community… It's not the easiest kids to work with and I just know it's going to make me that much better as a teacher.

Chris described how COVID-19 has been a less-ideal opportunity to learn how to teach. They describe wanting to re-do this year:

I kind of want a year to like do this over not like there's nothing to be gained from this year, but that, like okay, I think if I have another year, where I’m doing the same curriculum and working with the same co-workers and in the same grade level and the same classroom I think I could do it better like I could start off a little bit stronger than I did this year and build on what I have learned this year.

**Emergent Theme Three: Mover**

Jacob was the only participant to definitively want to move from his position to another school or school district. His decision was not an easy one and he described the impact of the school environment on his decision.
I'm gone… I would have stayed if there was a better relationship with the teacher, faculty, and the administration… Also, I live in [a neighboring city] … I may want to teach a little bit closer to this area.

Other participants shared a desire to move to new positions within the district or teach in other districts to gain new experiences in teaching.

Movers and thoughts of moving were impacted by COVID-19’s impact on school climate. Jacob stated:

I just feel like the strain and the pressure and the district, and all these things are just draining and it's ruining the relationships and…we have to consider the fact that COVID is also playing a role in all of our mental health when the way we're dealing with each other and I think that we're all kind of on edge, whether we want to admit it or not, it's a different time you know we could be you I mean I'm sure you have good days and bad days you know it's like that, whatever and I think that you're seeing a lot of that with people at work.

**New experience**

Like stayers, movers indicated a desire for an additional experience beyond their first one to three years of teaching to gain additional skills for their teaching tool belts. Jacob described this desire:

I think it's important for my growth as a teacher to get into different spaces that have different things, that have different personalities, and a different demographic that will challenge me in new ways. I think that's important for me and I don't want to get too comfortable, never been that person anyway, so… it doesn't mean I wouldn't stay if I felt like it was right to stay and I was where I needed to grow, and it was good for the kids
and everything and it made sense, but I think what's best for me is moving to go on to another space experimenting and seeing what is out there.

Samantha and Grace noted the pull of nearby districts because of higher salaries. Their hesitance, however, was in the need to have a new experience with new content. As Samantha described, “I can try going to [another district] where they pay more, but then I need to start all over again, which is the main problem right now with the new curriculum.” Grace had other concerns about leaving the student relationships that she’s built this year:

I'm thinking about maybe if there's an opportunity, taking an advantageous position in (another district) where I'm from which is like also be like a pay raise but it's going to be hard to fucking start over with new students cuz I fucking love these kids.

**Emergent Theme Four: Leaver**

Grace was the only participant to indicate a clear decision to leave the profession of teaching, but as was the case for many participants, she was still conflicted in her decision. For the next steps, Grace describes a desire to either continue in a credential program or quit the profession:

I'd rather get that [teaching credential] and then move on, but then part of me is just kind of saying fuck it to the whole thing. And not wasting my time or money on that, but then… I give up … that's where I'm conflicted.

She and other participants described how the low pay in teaching also had a negative impact on their ability to remain in the profession. Grace described that she wished teaching “paid more because honestly like what I make now I barely survive, especially with my commute so that's also miserable… I'm still living broke college life”. Samantha mirrored these reflections as a young professional trying to survive financially:
Teaching in your 20s in (location) and 2022 is not a viable career option, so I think I'll probably have to leave the profession, at some point. Which is sad because we [Samantha and similar-level colleague friend] both planned on being like long-term teachers like being principals, coaches… I was Teach for America. It’s not like I was two years, bye. Let me go do something else like you know. I was like ready and then actually being in it like this is just too much.

**Disillusionment of teaching**

For participants across the different themes, there were numerous mentions of disillusionment with teaching and the educational system due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For Alyssa, the pandemic made her rethink:

The educational system kind of fails students even but also teachers. And students in a sense that they only care about the grade, the score, the number versus the mental and emotional health, even though there's a lot of hard-working teachers out there that do care… I've just been seeing so many teachers that had a love of teaching just totally fall out of it because of the lack of support from admin or, I would even go so far as to say, like the government because of how little care that they've been providing in terms of salary or COVID leave, or you know mental-emotional services for teachers… It feels like teachers are now giving instead of 100%, 200%, and none of that is being recognized in a way of like value boost, you know health better health benefits or just something to really help.

Jacob mirrored these reactions as he saw that the pandemic, “exacerbated things that are already there like things that were like you know dysfunction that was already around, and I feel like it just made it worse.” During COVID-19 many teachers envisioned a change in the educational system, with:
COVID [being] good for education in the sense we’d have to step back and critically look at things you’ve been doing wrong in the classroom. But it’s kind of like COVID was a break and then now we resumed. Everything as normal (Grace).

In all, many participants communicated the same emotions as Samantha when she said, “who in their right mind is a teacher in 2022” and stipulated that their careers in teaching would likely be short-lived.

**Summary**

Ten participants were interviewed to determine new teachers’ perceptions of teaching during COVID-19. Interviews were conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?
2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?
3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

In response to research question one, participants described feeling an obligation to support their students holistically. This included providing for their instruction and mental health. Student learning loss was a concern across participants as to how to best progress students’ learning as well as the ways that COVID-19 had negatively impacted students’ behavior and social development. Participants noted frustrations around COVID-19 safety management and the additional burden of managing COVID-19 safety protocols. Participants also noted the use of different educational technology to support their instruction both during emergency remote instruction and during the return to in-person teaching. Finally, participants detailed the ways that being a new teacher during COVID-19 had impacted their and their students’ mental health.
In response to research question two, participants noted several supports that impacted their ability to transition to various teaching modalities as well as develop professionally as new teachers. Participants shared frustrations around working conditions and the ways that their schools’ make-up, such as class size and materials impacted their teaching. Teachers also evaluated their school climates as a crucial element to feeling supported at their school sites. Administrators and support from coaches were noted as a highly influential force in new teachers’ success. Participants categorized colleague support by the level of experience of their colleagues. Veterans supported participants in the form of a mentor while similar-level colleagues were friends and comrades as they shared the experience of learning to teach during COVID-19. Professional development during COVID-19 was mostly provided by the participants themselves as they were self-taught how to use various educational technologies. Finally, participants described how teacher preparation programs failed to fully support new teachers as they learned to take on the responsibility of building a classroom culture.

In response to research question three, participants were evaluated based on their plans for the following school year. Seven participants shared their plans to remain at their school site and school district. The pandemic had impacted participants’ location but not their decision to remain at their school site. One participant remained undecided in her decision for the following school year. One participant had decided to leave teaching altogether or complete a credential program. COVID-19 had impacted this participants’ experiences in college and her decision to initially enter the job market rather than continue with her education. One participant had decided to move to another school site. COVID-19 was named as a reason he chose to move due to the negative mental health and relationships among administrators and school staff.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Section five will detail the implications of this study. First, the study will be summarized, referring to the statement of the problem. Within this summary, additional attention will be given to the theoretical framework, methodology used, and research questions studied. Secondly, a summary of the study’s findings will be presented. Third, the limitations of the study will be reviewed. Fourth, study findings will be discussed in more depth based on current literature and the conclusions reached. Finally, the implications of this study for research and practice will be described based on the findings.

Summary of Study

New teachers, defined throughout this study as teachers in the first three years of entering the profession (Inman & Marlow, 2004; Ingersoll et al., 2018), leave the profession of teaching at alarmingly high rates. According to one long-term study of teacher retention, 17% of teachers left the profession within their first 5 years (Gray & Taie, 2015). In another study on new teacher retention, 22.8% of teachers left teaching and 33.9% left their school within the first two years of teaching (García & Weiss, 2019b). As teachers enter and leave quickly from the profession, schools and students suffer (Brown & Wynn, 2009; Sutcher, Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas, 2019). The literature identifies the ways that schools can positively support new teacher retention through improving working conditions, building a positive school climate, supportive school administration, the inclusion of formal and informal induction and mentoring programs, and professional development (PD) (Reitman & Karge, 2019).

In 2020, the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) spread to the United States, up-ending prior methods of teaching (CDC, 2020). COVID-19 impacted the instructional modalities for teachers as schools attempted to slow the spread of the virus by shifting to online, emergency remote instruction
(Hodges et al., 2020), hybrid instruction (in-person and online), and during the 2021/22 school year, in-person, and masked instruction (MCH Strategic Data, 2021). This study strove to understand the impact of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the experiences of new teachers in a Northern California school district. Therefore, teachers with three years or less experience were selected based on the recency of COVID-19’s impact on instructional shifts.

The problem of new teacher retention during a global pandemic is important due to the unique period in our global history. Never have we seen an impact on global education of this magnitude. Prior natural disaster events including Hurricane Katrina and the devastating 2010 earthquakes in Haiti and Chile forced emergency school closures and the use of distance learning (Vallas, 2014). COVID-19 had a widespread impact on instruction globally (CDC, 2020). In March of 2020, students in California needed to remain in their homes, participating in emergency remote instruction (California Department of Education, 2020). Then, the CDC (2021) recommended the use of face masks, ventilation, and vaccinations to reduce transmissions. These recommendations directly impacted teachers as they navigated how to speak over masked faces and air purifiers while also supporting students’ fears over vaccinations and their family’s health.

Given that schools faced the tasks of adjusting instructional modalities (Hodges et al., 2020), supporting students and their families during a global pandemic, and adapting to various CDC and district requirements, their ability or inability to adjust support for teachers led to differing outcomes for new teacher retention. The problem of new teacher retention, especially during a pandemic, was that teachers’ decisions to stay at or leave their schools are a direct result of their school experiences.

To better understand the “new teacher experience” and the needs of new teachers outside of a global pandemic, Stansbury and Zimmerman’s (2000) Continuum of Teacher Support was used as a conceptual framework. This framework identifies three categories of support for new teachers: (a)
personal and emotional support, (b) task or problem-focused support, and (c) reflections. Each of these supports provides a scaffold for new teachers as they implement new curricula and learn the ropes of teaching. The three categories were used as a conceptual framework to formulate the interview questions and response coding.

COVID-19 may have impacted each of these categories of support due to the nature of changed teaching conditions (online, hybrid, or masked instruction). Similarly, COVID-19 had an impact on the accessibility of administrators and support staff. During the pandemic, support staff members were either not available in person due to stay-at-home orders or overstretched in person due to numerous other responsibilities. Therefore, the unique perspectives of new teachers during COVID-19 were studied guided by the following research questions:

1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?
2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?
3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

To understand the impact of COVID-19 on new teachers’ experiences of teaching, a qualitative research methodology was used. Initially, participants completed a demographic survey. In this survey, participants first acknowledged and signed a participation consent form. Participants then provided personal demographic information, including their gender, pronouns, race, and ethnicity. Participants also described their prior experience in teaching, including years of teaching, grade level, class type, and comfort level with using technology. Following completion of the demographic survey, participants were invited to a Zoom interview. Zoom interviews took place during January and February of 2022. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and asked participants open-ended interview
questions about their experience before teaching, their school environment, student teaching experience, and their experience of teaching during COVID. Following that, participants were asked about the support that they had received through their schools and districts as well as any mentors. Participants were asked to identify which supports had been most beneficial to shifting instructional modalities. Finally, participants were asked to share their plans for the following (2022/23) school year.

Summary of Findings

Participants’ interviews were reviewed individually using a constant comparative method. Initially, an “open coding process” was used to develop initial themes from participant responses (Merriam, 2009). During data analysis, codes were adjusted and redefined. These codes were then combined and evaluated to formulate final themes in response to each research question. Analysis of the three research questions led to six key findings (Table 11).
Table 11

Relationship Between Research Questions and Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?</td>
<td>1. Teachers have added responsibilities during COVID-19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teachers felt increased stress during COVID-19.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?</td>
<td>3. New teachers depended on social relationships at their schools during COVID-19.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Emergency remote teaching strategies and tools were self-taught.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?</td>
<td>5. COVID-19 had little impact on teachers’ decisions for retention in the 2022/23 school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. COVID-19 created disillusionment with the teaching profession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limitations

Qualitative research findings are notably “local and context-bound” (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 237) and may not be transferable across multiple settings. This study observed one school district and 10 participants. This small sample limits the transfer of these results to other settings or teachers. Ten participants were included as a sample size. In qualitative interviews, enough participants are required to “answer the question posed” (Merriam, 2009, p.80).

Given that interviews occurred once per participant, any changes in their perceptions were not recorded following the interview. Similarly, their responses to plans for the following year may have changed following the interviews. However, every attempt was made to increase the validity and reliability of this study to ensure that it reflected the experiences of these teachers at this moment in
time, with the goal that these results may serve as a basis for larger research into the concerns of new teachers during this unparalleled moment in educational history.

To support the validity of this study and ensure that these findings support the reality of the new teacher experience, triangulation of the data was used. Interviews were conducted with teachers from various genders, races, and school levels to ensure that multiple perspectives were included within the data.

Alternatively, data that did not support initial conclusions were included and used to redefine the results of the data and to ensure transparency and full inclusion of all perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In the results of the study, thick and rich descriptions were provided of participant responses to enable the reader to interpret results as well as allow for generalization across similar situations and studies (Merriam, 2009). To support the reliability of the data, audit trails of participant notes, interview reflections, and all other correspondences are included in the results of this study. This provides transparency in the collection of data and the methods used in the study.

Due to the nature of online conferencing, not all participants had equal access to high-speed internet, limiting their ability to hear or see me during the interview. Similarly, Zoom interviews limit the ability to view facial expressions or develop relationships as is important in in-person interviews (Kvale, 1996). The use of Zoom may have limited participants’ access or engagement and therefore this acts as a limitation of this study and its validity.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis was conducted based on participant responses to interview questions related to each of the three research questions. Findings for each research question were both consistent and inconsistent with previous research on the new teacher experience. Based on the analysis, there were six major findings. In the sections that follow, findings for each of the three research questions will be detailed.
Research Question One

Analysis of research question one indicates that participants noted similar experiences to most new teachers. As detailed by Moir (1999), the model for new teacher experience includes anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, and reflection. All participants in the study described the moments of each of these experiences. Anticipation was felt by Madeline as she prepared for the following year, “I'm excited for next year, I already want it to happen.” Survival was noted by all participants, and Samantha said she felt glad to “have survived three years.” Disillusionment was shared by Jacob, Samantha, Kayla, Alyssa, Riley, and Grace and will be further detailed in an analysis of Research Question Three. Rejuvenation was briefly mentioned by Samantha as she described the need for self-care, needing to be “present without burning yourself out”, however, this experience was not described by other participants and may be an important topic for further research into teaching during COVID-19 and the rejuvenation phase. Finally, reflection was a crucial piece of each interview. Multiple participants described how even the process of being interviewed for the study served as a moment for reflection on their experiences of teaching during COVID-19. Participants’ movements across each stage of the new teacher experience were crucial to understanding the experiences of teachers during COVID-19 instruction. Based on the analysis of interview responses related to research question one, two findings emerged. Finding one indicates that new teachers during COVID-19 had increased responsibilities and finding two indicates that during COVID-19 new teachers felt increased stress.

Finding One: Teachers Have Added Responsibilities During COVID-19

During COVID-19, new teachers took on additional responsibilities beyond what is traditionally expected of them in teaching (instructional delivery, assessment, and building a learning environment) (Stronge et al., 2011). As described by Hodges et al. (2020), teachers have been “asked to do
extraordinary things” during COVID-19. Upon returning to in-person instruction, participants shared the need to make up for the lost time. This learning loss accounted for many participants’ feelings of additional responsibilities. With the need to teach additional content, revise student behavior to meet the needs of in-person instruction, and the weight of emotional or psychological damage that COVID-19 has caused for students. The loss of learning is indicated in the literature surrounding COVID-19. Rhone (2020) predicted at least half a year of math and a third of a year of reading loss for students during emergency remote teaching. However, the literature does not note the potential impact of COVID-19 on students’ emotional development and the loss of behavioral learning due to being out of the classroom for a year. Results of this study indicate that this out-of-classroom time has made classroom management an even larger concern for new teachers during COVID-19.

Another responsibility that went beyond traditional teaching was the need for new teachers to manage COVID-19 safety protocols. Masking, ventilation, and cleaning were all mentioned by teachers as important elements of their jobs. As one participant, Jacob, stated, the “looming virus” was consistently noted by participants as they tried to navigate instruction. Similarly, the need to do all these things while also learning how to teach was described as “really stressful” by participant Riley. Although the literature described prior needs for additional custodial staffing, cleaning protocols, and space (Gao & Lafortune, 2020), these needs have been met by the teaching staff in the district studied. The need to manage various students’ and families’ preferences for masking, vaccination, and testing were also noted by participants. With in-person instruction, participants were constantly navigating these protocols and preferences as part of their classroom management routines and procedures.

Carver-Thomas (2020) posited that COVID-19 would stimulate a teacher shortage. This has occurred, with participants noting constant absences among other teaching staff with positive cases occurring frequently without substitute teachers available. Participants noted this as another added
responsibility, with other teachers covering their classes when they were out sick or the inability of the school to provide differentiated pull-out or push-in groups due to the inaccessibility of support staff.

**Finding Two: Teachers felt increased stress during COVID-19**

During COVID-19, participants described that as new teachers they felt increased stress levels. This is similar to findings among new teachers in non-pandemic school years where the first years of a new teacher are described as challenging emotionally (García & Weiss, 2019a). Participants described COVID-19 as negatively impacting their mental health both when lonely during emergency remote instruction (Kurtz, 2020; Simba, 2021) and in the return to in-person instruction. The stress of managing COVID-19 safety protocols as well as their safety was top of mind for participants as they described their experiences of teaching. For participant Kayla, concerns over her family’s physical well-being and fear of COVID-19 also played a large role in her experiences with colleagues and professionalism at her school. Hodges et al. (2020) anticipated this reaction for teachers as they felt the disruption both to their personal and professional lives amid the pandemic.

Teachers also noted an increase in feelings of obligation for students and families as they dealt with losses in their families during the pandemic, including loss of jobs, loss of life, and loss of safety. Students were described as struggling emotionally during the pandemic, with secondary trauma also impacting the experiences of new teachers. Harris and Jones (2020) note a decrease in teacher mental health due to the loss of relationships with colleagues and school leadership. This was also described by participants during their emergency remote teaching and a lack of camaraderie now that they had returned to in-person instruction for fear of getting sick. Kurtz (2020) also notes a decline in teacher morale among teachers throughout the pandemic. This was mirrored in participant responses both in their own experiences and those of their colleagues.
During COVID-19, participants experienced decreased separation between home and work. This lack of balance also contributed to negative mental health. Gewertz (2020) describes this as not being able to “shut it off.” This was noted as a concern by seven of the ten participants and should be a consideration in further research around both COVID-19 and the experiences of new teachers more generally as they navigate not “working when I shouldn’t be working,” as was described by participant Alyssa.

**Research Question Two**

Findings related to research question two suggest that participants frequently noted many of the traditional supports that are indicated in the literature, including working conditions, school climate, supportive administrator, professional development, and induction and mentoring (Reitman & Karge, 2019). Prior literature describes that more support for new teachers leads to higher levels of new teacher retention (Reitman & Karge, 2019). During data analysis, induction and mentoring were separated to distinguish these supports further into: (a) support from a coach, (b) support from a veteran colleague, (c) support from a similar level colleague, and (d) district support.

Analysis of research question two indicates that during COVID-19 participants had two unique experiences that differed from supports traditionally used by teachers. Finding three indicates that during COVID-19, teachers depended much more heavily on social relationships at their school sites, including school climate, supportive administrators, support from a coach, support from a veteran colleague, and support from a similar-level colleague. Finding four indicates that to shift to online, hybrid, and in-person teaching modalities, participants described using self-teaching methods, which differs from professional development historically deemed useful within the literature (Doran, 2020).
Finding Three: New teachers depended on social relationships at their schools during COVID-19

During COVID-19 participants were more apt to identify social relationships as being the most beneficial to navigating the transition to online and hybrid instruction (Figure 4). Prior research indicates that social support in the form of a positive school climate and supportive administrators also serve as an important support for new teachers as they navigate a new career in teaching (Shuls & Flores, 2020). This was mirrored in the results of this study, with participants noting school climate, supportive administrator, support from a coach, support from a veteran colleague, and support from a similar-level colleague as being the most influential supports in their teaching during COVID-19.

School climate. School climate was valuable support for new teachers during COVID-19. Analysis indicates that participants either felt supported or unsupported by their school communities. Some factors that supported this feeling were opportunities to collaborate, structured meeting times, assigned mentors, and a collegial environment. This is mirrored in the literature surrounding school climate. According to Ansley (2019), workplace relationships with colleagues are a crucial way to increase job satisfaction among new teachers. Shuls (2020) describes how a community built of trust, respect, and freedom is crucial to new teacher development.

Supportive administrator. Supportive administrators also play a key role in building this positive school climate. Results from this study indicate that participants who had administrators who were willing to follow through and provide additional support were more likely to remain in their classroom. Similarly, this allowed teachers to feel that they were supported at all levels and that the principal “had their back”. Eginli (2021) supports these findings, indicating that increased principal support facilitated increased teacher commitment. Principals’ management was a crucial reason why participants Jacob, Samantha, and Grace chose to leave, move, or were undecided about their 2022/23 school year retention plans. Alternatively, other participants described the ways that principals provided support and
empowered them and other teachers (Balyer, 2017) as being monumental in their decision to remain at their school site.

*Support from a coach.* Prior research does not mention the influence of coaching on new teachers. During the analysis of data, coaches were seen as important members of new teachers’ teams of support. Coaches provided support with advocacy, professional guidance, and emotional support. Coaches were described as a go-between with school administration and the teachers and therefore were sometimes described in conjunction with school administration, as was the case with participants Jacob and Richard. Unfortunately, during COVID-19 many participants described coaches as being incredibly helpful but relatively inaccessible due to teacher shortages and absences. Coaches were necessary for substitute teaching in other classrooms but also served as small group instructors and coaches for new teachers. Therefore, during COVID-19, this valuable tool was made much less valuable.

Coaching support was not seen as equal by all participants. For Jacob, he wished to receive direct instructions and modeling from his coach. For participant Richard, he needed someone to help with tasks. Coaching roles and coaching strategies within the studied school district were not consistent. Similarly, new teachers described different preferences in their coaching relationships. Given that there is limited data on the impact of coaching for new teachers alongside the positive descriptions of these supports within this study, COVID-19 may have shifted the ways that coaches have been able to support new teachers during this time and made their support inconsistent across the district. Instructional coaches in non-COVID-19 environments with more consistency may serve as a valuable tool in supporting new teachers given the positive descriptions of many participants.

*Support from a veteran colleague.* Participants made 27 mentions of veteran colleague support. These more experienced peers provided wisdom from their experience in teaching. Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000) describe this as the transmission of the culture of teaching. Among this wisdom was
emotional support. Hobson et al. (2008) describe this emotional support as vital to the new teacher, but mentors must be prepared to provide this vital support. Participants also described the logistical support, such as materials and content knowledge as being beneficial to improving their practice. Similarly, participants described the opportunity to observe veteran teachers in their classrooms as being a way to better conceptualize best practices in teaching. Veteran colleagues provided essential support for the new teacher during COVID-19 but were also seen as more intimidating by their new teacher colleagues, with fewer opportunities for true collaboration. Prior research indicates that the responsibility for building these relationships often falls on the mentor (Smith, 1993).

**Support from a similar-level colleague.** The separation of colleague type was not present within the literature with regards to the impact of colleagues on new teachers. However, it may be posited that due to the high teacher turnover within this Northern California school district, many traditional veteran colleagues are only one or two years more advanced than their new teacher peers. Similar-level colleagues were specifically supportive of sharing experiences with the new teachers, allowing a voice to these individuals who may have felt voiceless with more experienced peers. During this unique event in human history, COVID-19 may have created a unique experience for new and similar-level colleagues that allowed them to commiserate around what teaching means in a pandemic that differs from past experiences of more veteran colleagues. Participants noted going through the same things as their similar-level peers and finding time to figure things out together. Among similar-level peers, they were more likely to describe the building of personal relationships.

Within prior literature, French (2018) describes how relationships between veteran colleagues and new teachers have the greatest influence on new teachers’ beliefs, but the vastness of the experience difference is not communicated within past research. A feeling of belonging and increased collective teacher efficacy, however, is noted by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (year?), which may be related to this
opportunity that similar-level teacher peers have with one another. Benner’s (2009) nursing theory indicates that professionals who are at the “competent” level of practice are more able to communicate and teach their less-skilled peers because they can explain their thinking process and have emotional reactions like new peers. Alternatively, veterans are more likely rigid in their thinking without the ability to communicate their meta-cognition.

**Finding Four: Emergency remote teaching strategies and tools were self-taught**

Traditionally, professional development is provided by districts, schools, and teacher preparation programs (García & Weiss, 2019a; Shuls, 2020). Given the flustering of school communities and teaching modalities during COVID-19, many of these traditional professional learning routes were ill-prepared to guide remote teaching strategies (Hodges et al., 2020). Without external support, new teachers described the need to self-teach different emergency remote teaching strategies. Given that many of the teachers studied were young or new professionals, many described high levels of technical literacy. Some teachers also described being learners online themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants described how they found access to tools through other teachers who shared their expertise in informal ways. This is also present within the literature as Shuls (2020) notes that teachers teaching teachers is an important strategy for building teacher skills. Participants noted that during COVID-19 they needed less support with traditional new teacher skills gaps, such as classroom management, data analysis, and day-to-day planning (Doran, 2020). Since the switch back to in-person instruction, classroom management, strategies for student success, relationship building, and day-to-day planning have re-emerged as important skills for new teachers (Doran, 2020; Lew & Nelson, 2016)

**Research Question Three**

Analysis of research question three indicates that there was little impact of COVID-19 on new teacher retention and attrition for the upcoming school year. Among those studied, seven participants
were identified as stayers, one participant as a mover, one participant as a leaver, and one participant as undecided. COVID-19 had a limited impact on these decisions, instead, the major reasons for participant attrition were administration and school climate. Analysis of research question three indicates two findings. Finding five is that COVID-19 had little impact on teachers’ decisions for retention in the 2022/23 school year. Finding six is that COVID-19, although not impacting immediate retention of new teachers, has impacted long-term perceptions of the teaching profession among those studied.

**Finding Five: COVID-19 had little impact on teachers’ decisions for retention in the 2022/23 school year**

Analysis of participant responses indicates that COVID-19 did not have a large impact on their rationale for retention or attrition from their schools. For participant Richard, he was “always gonna stay.” Some of the ways that COVID-19 had impacted teachers’ decisions were location, mental health, and experience. Participants noted that the location where they found a job during COVID-19 was something that they found to be valuable as they considered staying at their school site. For participant Madeline, she described how she was “staying in the location that COVID… brought me to.” For others, they had struggled with finding a job during the pandemic and felt situated in their current role due to the necessity of having a job.

Jacob and Grace described how COVID-19 had impacted their own and others’ mental health. The impact of the pandemic personally and the strain of stress on relationships had driven them to want to leave their school sites. Given the limited prior research on the psychological impact of COVID-19 on new teachers and school staff, this is an area for further research.

Five participants noted that the opportunity to re-experience teaching at their site with increased knowledge of teaching was a big reason for them to remain in their positions. For participant Jacob, he desired to have a new experience of teaching by moving to a different school. Self-reflection and the
opportunity for new or re-experiences are mentioned within the literature surrounding new teacher retention (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000) and should be used as a motivator for new teacher retention.

**Finding Six: COVID-19 created disillusionment with the teaching profession**

Although COVID-19 had minimal impact on the decisions of new teacher retention or attrition immediately following the 2022/23 school year, analysis indicates that COVID-19 has impacted new teachers’ perceptions of the profession of teaching. For participants, the pandemic served as an opportunity to step back and critically look at education and make changes to instruction and student support. However, participants described that it exacerbated issues in education. Teachers also noted that the educational system feels like it fails students and teachers, with schools, the district, and the government more worried about data and not the health or well-being of students. For many, this left them feeling stung with disillusionment for their chosen profession. On top of this frustration, participants also noted the impact of low salaries on their experiences of teaching. Prior research corroborates these findings of the need for increased compensation for teachers (Grey & Taie, 2015; Ingersoll, 2019; See et al., 2020). Due to the disillusionment with the profession, many teachers noted that they felt that regardless of their 2022/23 plans for retention, teaching was not a long-term career option for them. Additional research should be conducted around the disillusionment with the teaching profession during COVID-19 to better understand the full impact of the pandemic on the experiences of new teachers and their perceptions of teaching.

**Conclusions**

Prior research corroborates many of the participants’ responses. Analysis of the three research questions indicates six findings:

1. Teachers had added responsibilities during COVID-19.
2. Teachers felt increased stress during COVID-19.
3. New teachers depended on social relationships at their schools during COVID-19

4. Emergency remote teaching strategies and tools were self-taught

5. COVID-19 had little impact on teachers’ decisions for retention in the 2022/23 school year.

6. COVID-19 created disillusionment with the teaching profession.

Learning to teach is a time-consuming and challenging process for any new teacher (Geiger & Pivavarova, 2018). However, during COVID-19, new teachers faced additional responsibilities for the safety of their students and school, placed on them by the CDC, school and district leaders, classroom parents, district mandates, and personal safety needs. These additional responsibilities were not noted by participants to have been recognized nor were they provided additional financial incentives, personnel, or support. Participants largely felt responsible for their students’ safety, however, teachers described not fully understanding their roles or responsibilities with regards to COVID-19 safety management. Responsibilities for new teachers should be carefully managed by school leaders both during and following the COVID-19 pandemic to allow new teachers to focus on improving their craft.

COVID-19 largely impacted the experiences of new teachers’ mental health and stress in learning how to teach. The relationships at their school sites, including coaches, principals, school climate, and colleagues were vital in supporting new teachers as they navigated the unfamiliar terrain of teaching during a global pandemic. Participants described feeling most supported by on-site mentors and colleagues, therefore, districts and schools should create the structures for mentorship programs and ongoing new teacher development beyond what is learned in a teacher preparation program. For teachers who did not receive prior teacher preparation, participants noted the need for ongoing support to learn the process of teaching. In hiring teachers without prior teaching or academic experience, districts should be prepared to internally support these individuals through professional learning, mentoring, and district check ins. No teacher should be “thrown off the deep end” in the world of teaching when
colleagues and mentor support can be provided through the many veteran and more experienced colleagues that already exist at school sites (Hobson et al., 2008). Each support that new teachers receive, as is indicated in prior literature, makes an impact on the new teacher experience and the ability of schools to retain teachers.

Participants described being self-reliant when learning new teaching modalities during online instruction. In the large public school district studied, in which school and district leaders regularly provide professional learning and release time for staff, this should not have occurred. It is the responsibility of the schools and districts to provide support for teachers’ needs in the form of professional learning. Following emergency remote teaching modalities, districts and schools can learn to provide better quality instruction for teachers that meets their needs. Similarly, teachers should be provided ongoing support on how to best continue their learning of online, flipped, and alternative teaching modalities, rather than returning to the status quo of educational practices which did not positively support students or new teachers, as described through participant responses.

Given the lack of support that participants in this study received through their schools and districts, it is not surprising that COVID-19 was shown to impact long-term plans for the new teacher rather than the immediate school year due to disillusionment of the teaching profession. This disillusionment should come as highly concerning to professional educators, district leaders, researchers, and the general public. In recent years, we have seen a shift in the teaching workforce, with fewer schools and districts able to fill their open teaching positions and lower enrollment in teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2018). Districts should take note of these findings to better support and retain their current staff members.
Implications for Research

Following this study on the impact of COVID-19 on the experiences of new teachers and their plans for attrition, additional research should be conducted around this experience and the experiences of other teaching professionals during this important event in human history. Given the impact of the pandemic on teachers’ and students’ mental health, follow-up research should be conducted to determine the long-term emotional toll of COVID-19 on members of the educational community. The separation of work and home was a big factor for new teachers as they navigated emergency remote teaching and therefore should also be further evaluated both during online instruction and in an in-person school year to determine how much time new teachers spend working when at home. Given the popularity of work-life balance in understanding job satisfaction (Hansen & Gray, 2018; Poulose & Sudarsan, 2014), future research should be conducted on the ways that both new and veteran teachers are able to positively impact their separation of work and home balance and the role of school environment in finding this balance.

This study indicates that social relationships are an invaluable tool for new teachers. During COVID-19, coaches and principals have been stretched thin. Additional research should be conducted to determine the impact of this stretch on coaching and administrator burn-out and retention as well as the ways that districts and schools can mitigate these abundant obligations on support staff. School leadership should not be held solely responsible for the outcomes of new teacher retention (Sulit, 2020). District leaders and school policy-makers should be held to higher levels of responsibility in the crisis of new teacher retention both in practice and within the literature.

Results from this study were unique in the ways that similar-level colleagues provided more appropriate support for new teachers. In prior research, much of the literature surrounds more senior members of the staff being used as mentors for new teachers. However, during the COVID-19
pandemic, with everything being unique for all, those with similar levels of experience leveraged peer relationships to share expertise and ideas with one another. The differences between similar-level colleagues and veteran colleagues should be further evaluated and the outcomes of these different supports should be used to determine their different values. Given the powerful relationships described in this study, districts and school should leverage these partnerships, creating formal roles in which slightly more experienced teachers may receive compensation and release time for this invaluable service. Similarly, the opportunity to observe and collaborate should not be unique to specific schools, but must be a constant across school districts, with this expectation upheld for all members of the teaching staff. If educators hope to improve the status of teachers in a public perspective, teachers must be afforded professional learning and collaboration as is seen across other professions. Additional research should be conducted on these interventions to ensure positive outcomes are seen across schools.

Finally, disillusionment with the teaching profession was a major finding of this study. During non-COVID-19 teaching, is this still relevant to teachers? What is the cause of this disillusionment and how can it be mitigated to better support the profession of teaching? Given the nature of a study on a specific moment in human history, the timeliness of this research is vital, but its impact is substantial. COVID-19 will likely have a long-term impact on the profession of teaching and therefore additional research must be conducted to truly understand how the pandemic has changed the course of teaching and learning. Without additional research into this incredibly troubling finding, the status quo will remain, with new teachers leaving the profession at high rates, with a lack of respect both internally and externally for the profession as a whole.

Implications for Practice

New teacher retention continues to be a consistent concern in public schools (Carver-Thomas et al., 2020). This study supports prior research and best practices for new teacher retention concerning
types of support. During COVID-19 and other shifts in teaching environments, schools and districts must spend ample time supporting new teachers in multiple ways (Eginli, 2015). Despite ongoing pressures by the district and schools for school leadership to also navigate changing conditions, time must be set aside for designated support of new teachers.

In this high attrition school district, school climate and leadership, including administrators and instructional coaches, must be properly trained in how to support new teachers to have increased levels of retention (Sulit, 2020). It is imperative that school districts consider the training of administrators and support staff in the methodology of new teacher support as a basic right of new teacher support. Given that the majority of school districts, and certainly the district studied here, have a new teacher support department, the training of district personnel should be a basic component of their work to ensure higher rates of teacher retention and the use of staff who have the most contact with new teachers.

Given the teacher shortage and the lack of new teacher retention, educational policy makers should be reviewing best practices, such as improving teaching conditions (smaller class sizes, positive relationships among staff, professional learning, etc.) and ensuring their enforcement through analysis of staff data. Additional money will not change outcomes for new teachers without appropriate interventions. Districts cannot improve teacher retention without first understanding how to best support new teachers. Therefore, rigorous scrutiny should be done on school districts with the lowest levels of teacher retention. Support personnel with training on best practices for new teacher support should be used to create positive change in these districts, along with the requirement of liaisons to build a positive school climate, implementation of mentor systems, hiring of on-site personnel including coaches, training of administrator and support personnel in how to best support new teachers, and the use of professional learning that meets the needs of all teachers. Data, analysis, and adjustments should be made to ensure positive improvements across schools and each district. By holding schools and districts
to high expectations, we are ensuring that schools are held to a higher degree of respect and more positive outcomes for our students.

**Improving School Culture: Climate and Mentors**

School climate is a vital support for new teachers. School administrators, districts, and leaders should think carefully about school climate, observing and asking questions of their teachers to ensure a positive climate is in place for all staff members. Districts have the responsibility, however, to uphold high levels of positive climate through training of administrators and leaders rather than assuming a common understanding of expectations of best practices across districts, especially large urban districts, such as the one studied. Districts should monitor these school climates and provide support for administrators and coaches to ensure consistency across the district. Positive mentions of climate were related to opportunities for collaboration and a collegial environment. Positive school climate should be a basic right of all school staff.

Given the positive reactions of middle and high school teachers to the family model of a student cohort across different teachers, elementary schools should consider also applying this model. The family model allows teachers to have shared planning time and the same students, so they have a similar footing in discussing best practices and ensuring student outcomes. Teachers who had shared planning time in this model described shared responsibility for students and more opportunities for collaboration and planning which is supported by prior research (Learning Policy Institute, 2017). The emphasis on student data was a concern for many participants. Schools and districts should think about how this conversation takes place and enable multiple data points in these conversations to humanize data analysis. Although discussion of student data is vital for the development of best practices and best student outcomes, new teachers may not be able to make shifts in practices quickly, and therefore should
receive one-on-one support from school leadership to make changes in practice and to ensure consistency in their use based on what the teachers’ needs and preferences may be.

Participants also noted the value of a collegial school environment. By developing positive relationships among teachers, administrators can build collective agency to retain new teachers (Eginli, 2021). Administrators can also support collegial relationships at their school sites by providing opportunities outside of school hours for teachers to interact and build positive relationships with team building and shared work and non-work experiences (Ansley, 2019). Relationships with mentors should be developed and supported. Mentorships should be thoughtfully created (Inman & Marlow, 2004). Given the results of this study, formal mentors should be veteran colleagues who can provide emotional and tangible support. Mentors must be trained formally by districts and schools to ensure that they have strategies to adequately support new teachers. Schools should also ensure observation time is provided for the new teacher to observe their mentors. Additionally, similar-level colleagues should be allowed to plan and interact in formal ways, beyond just circumstantial meetings. During district and school PDs, these relationships should be forged and supported. Given the positive outcomes of these relationships noted by participants, these relationships should be enforced beyond schools, with districts providing paid out-of-classroom time for new teachers and their mentors. Districts hold the responsibility for ensuring positive outcomes of mentor-mentee relationships and should provide ample funding, training, and respect for the work being done by both coaches and new teachers.

**Developing Supportive School Leadership: Administrators and Coaches**

Administrators play a crucial role in new teachers’ experiences. Clear communication and follow-up will allow administrators to develop trust and respect in their schools and reduce the migration of new teachers (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017). Administrators should ensure that they are creating opportunities for new teachers to try new things, fail, learn, and be reflective of their teaching
practice. Participants in this study noted that more support from their school administrators, both emotionally and tangibly, increased their commitment to their schools, as is also suggested in Eginli (2021). School administrators also need to provide emotional safety for risk-taking. For new teachers to develop their skills, they must try out new skills. Emotional safety is a crucial component of a positive school climate and positive outcomes for new teachers. School districts are a vital support for building and improving school administrator practice and should provide training and follow-up to ensure positive school climates are in place for all new teachers.

Instructional coaches were noted as a way for teachers to feel supported by their school leadership. Within the district studied, there was inconsistency in the availability and approaches of instructional coaches. Consistency across the district is a vital way that districts and schools can positively support new teachers. Coaches should be trained in best practices for supporting new teachers with clear objectives and outcomes in their work. Similarly, the availability of these coaches to provide instructional coaching and small group instruction is vital to their success. During COVID-19 these coaches have pulled away from supporting new teachers and student success, used instead as substitute teachers. New teachers must receive support from these mentors in a consistent way to increase performance. Similarly, coaches should be able to adapt to the needs of the teachers that they coach based on where everyone is at and how they best receive coaching support, such as emotional support, coaching cycles, modeling, and other methods.

**Improving Teaching Practice: Professional Development**

Participants in this study described self-teaching online instructional skills due to the lack of formal PDs. Districts and schools should provide support for teachers as they navigate new teaching conditions (online, hybrid) by providing tangible resources and training at the district and site levels. Given that only 11% of teachers feel that they influence the content of site-based PD, additional thought
should be given to the ways that schools and districts prepare PD to match what teachers need (García & Weiss, 2019a). Participants described the positive relationships that they built and the learning that occurred through peer teaching during COVID-19. Schools and districts should apply this thinking when conceiving plans for PD. Given the lack of quality professional development described in prior literature and within this study, districts and educational policymakers should consider developing criteria for school leadership in the development of their PD plans. Best practices with regard to professional learning should be used across districts and schools to ensure that all teachers receive what they need. This can only be accomplished through increased funding for schools, accountability measures for schools and districts, and the recommendations of the on-the-ground school staff.

**Summary**

This study reviews the impact of COVID-19 on the experiences of new teachers. Participants were interviewed based on three research questions:

1. What has been the experience of new teachers during COVID-19 instruction?
2. What supports do new teachers identify as having made an impact on their shift to remote emergency or hybrid instruction?
3. To what extent has the novel COVID-19 virus affected new teachers’ plans for retention or attrition?

Ten participants were interviewed via Zoom to describe their experiences teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from these interviews indicate six findings:

1. Teachers have added responsibilities during COVID-19.
2. Teachers felt increased stress during COVID-19.
3. New teachers depended on social relationships at their schools during COVID-19.
4. Emergency remote teaching strategies and tools were self-taught.
5. COVID-19 had little impact on teachers’ decisions for retention in the 2022/23 school year.

6. COVID-19 created disillusionment with the teaching profession.

These six findings have many applications for future research, including additional research about the emotional impact of COVID-19 on students and new teachers, and the long-term use of technology and online teaching skills. Additional research should also be conducted to better understand the process of disillusionment with teaching among new teachers both during COVID-19 and in other school years.

These findings also have numerous applications for school leadership practices. New teachers should be supported using an improved school climate that allows for collaboration and relationships with peers. Mentors should be recruited, trained, and supported both among veteran and similar-level teachers to positively support outcomes for new teachers. School administrators are a critical component to new teachers feeling supported and should ensure that they use clear communication and shared leadership opportunities. Coaches are potential support for new teachers and should be given ample training in how to best support the teachers that they coach. Consistency of school climate and leadership is also critical to developing positive outcomes for new teachers across school sites and districts. Finally, schools and districts should take a proactive approach to provide PD that meets the needs of teachers rather than following only the needs of the site. Schools should consider using family models to support collaboration and peer teaching to build knowledge among their staff.

As described by Sulit (2020), school leadership cannot stand alone in the fight for positive conditions for new teacher retention. Districts serve an invaluable role in the hiring and support of new teachers. Districts have a responsibility to either hire qualified teachers through teacher preparation programs or to provide teacher preparation as part of their hiring plans. Teachers hired out of a Bachelor’s or Master’s program outside of teaching have not received ample support in the ways of
pedagogy and student need and therefore districts must have clearly developed plans for how they will support these individuals with learning the methodology of teaching. For all new hires, facilitating the process of gaining a credential is not enough. This study supports the notion that mentorship of new teachers is critical to providing a throughline to teacher retention and ongoing mobility within the teaching profession.

Educational policy is a vital element to new teacher retention. Low pay, lack of materials, large class sizes, and increasing responsibilities alongside a public lack of respect for the profession of teaching created disillusionment within the profession for the teachers studied. This study described the ways that public education creates a breeding ground for unhappy employees who are underpaid and overstressed. Within this study, the majority of participants described the ways that the threat of school closures negatively impacted their mental health and their experience in the profession. With the movement of public education towards the establishment of charter schools (Aud et al., 2012), closing will mean a larger loss to the profession. Alongside school closures, teacher disillusionment will likely not foresee these new teachers looking for employment within new schools and therefore will lead to a stunting of the workforce. We are at a critical moment for school reform, to continue with the status quo: closing schools, a revolving door of new teachers, and loss of student learning; or to change: building schools from where they are and supporting the individual needs of students and teachers through funding for schools, increased wages for public school teachers, and hands-on overseeing of this funding to positively support the conditions for teaching and learning.
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Appendix A
Demographic Survey

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Below is a description of the research procedures and an explanation of your rights as a research participant. You should read this information carefully. If you agree to participate, you will sign in the space provided to indicate that you have read and understand the information on this consent form. You are entitled to and will receive a copy of this form.

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Rebecka (Beck) Maxkenzie, a graduate student in the School of Education- Learning and Instruction at University of San Francisco. The faculty supervisor for this study is Dr. Xornam Apedoe, a professor in the Department of Education- Learning and Instruction at the University of San Francisco.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT:
The purpose of this research study is to examine the experiences of new teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic, school and district-based supports, and the impact of the pandemic on teachers’ plans for the following school year.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO DO:
During this study, you will participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher in person or via Zoom video conferencing. The interview will be recorded to allow the researcher to use the responses for data analysis and transcription. The interviewer will ask general questions about your experiences as a new teacher during COVID-19. Questions will be open-ended, and you may be asked follow-up questions about your responses.

DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE STUDY:
Your participation in this study will involve one 30-to-45-minute interview. The study will take place via Zoom or in person at your school site or another mutually agreed upon location.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:
We do not anticipate any risks or discomforts to you from participating in this research. If you wish, you may choose to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during the study without penalty.

BENEFITS:
You will receive a $10 Starbucks or TeachersPayTeachers.com gift card for your participation in this study. Additionally, there are possible benefits to others including changes in the ways that schools and districts support new teachers through changing school conditions, supporting other new teachers through this process.

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:
Any data you provide in this study will be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law. In any report we publish, we will not include information that will make it possible to identify you or any individual participant. Specifically, we will separate any identifying information (such as email contact, personal contact information, etc.) will be kept in a separate file to any collected data. All recordings of interviews and observational notes will be stored in a secured computer file. Following transcription, all recordings (video and audio) will be permanently deleted. No raw data will be identifiable.

VIDEO AND AUDIO/RECORDINGS:
Audio and video recordings are vital to this study to ensure full and accurate representation of participants’ unique experiences. Recordings will be stored first through the Zoom platform and/or using an audio recorder. Data will then be transferred to the researcher’s computer in a secure file for transcription immediately following the interview and transcibed. Once the final dissertation has been approved, recordings will be permanently destroyed from both the original device (Zoom or audio recorder) as well as the researcher’s computer.

COMPENSATION/PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION:
You will receive a $10 Starbucks or TeachersPayTeachers.com gift card for your participation in this study.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:
Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits. Furthermore, you may skip any questions or tasks that make you uncomfortable and may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. In addition, the researcher has the right to withdraw you from participation in the study at any time.

OFFER TO ANSWER QUESTIONS:
If you have questions, you should contact the principal investigator: Becka Maxkenzie at rclaugum@dons.usfca.edu
If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM DURING THE INTERVIEW.

1. Signature (Type first & last name) *

2. Date *

   Example: January 7, 2019

Demographics Survey

3. Please record your name (first & last). *

4. Best phone number to reach you

5. How do you identify your gender? *

   Mark only one oval.

   - Female
   - Male
   - Nonbinary
   - Other: ____________________________
6. What are your pronouns? (Select all that apply) *

*Check all that apply.*

- [ ] She/her
- [ ] He/him
- [ ] They/them
- [ ] Other:  

7. What is your race? *

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] White
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- [ ] Native American or Alaska Native
- [ ] Two or more races

8. What is your ethnicity? *

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Hispanic
- [ ] Non-Hispanic
8. What is your ethnicity? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Hispanic
☐ Non-Hispanic

9. How many years have you been teaching? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ 0-1 year
☐ 1-2 years
☐ 2-3 years
☐ More than 3 years

10. Did you complete student teaching prior to teaching your own classroom? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other: ________________________________

11. If you completed student teaching, what method of instruction was used?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Fully online
☐ Hybrid (online and in person)
☐ Fully in-person
☐ Other: ________________________________

12. Is teaching your first career? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes
☐ No

13. If teaching is not your first career, what was your prior field(s) of work?

_______________________________________
14. What grade level do you teach? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ K-5 (Elementary School)
☐ 6-8 (Middle School)
☐ 9-12 (High School)

15. Do you teach General Education or Special Education? *

Mark only one oval.

☐ General Education
☐ Special Education

16. What type of class do you teach? (Select all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

☐ Art
☐ Foreign Language
☐ Language Arts (Reading/Writing)
☐ Math
☐ Music
☐ Science
☐ Self-contained classroom
☐ Social Sciences/History

Other: ☐

17. On a scale of 1-4, how comfortable are you with using technology for education (video conferencing, learning management systems, etc.)? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4

Very uncomfortable with using technology for education ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very comfortable with using technology for education

18. What training have you received in how to use technology for education? *
Appendix B
Interview Guide
Participant # __

1. What led you to teaching?
   a. If this is not your first career, what did you do before teaching?

2. How would you describe:
   a. Your school to someone who doesn’t know it?
   b. The people you work with?
   c. The programs?

3. If you completed student teaching prior to having your own classroom, how did that prepare you to teach?

4. Has teaching been what you expected? What did you expect when you started?

5. What has it been like teaching during COVID-19?

6. What support have you received as a new teacher through your district?
   a. Is the support that you received what you needed?

7. What support have you received as a new teacher through your school?
   a. Is the support that you received what you needed?

8. Have you had a mentor? If yes…
   a. How did this person become your mentor?
   b. Is the support from this person what you needed?

9. Which of these supports has been the most beneficial in shifting your instruction to online or hybrid instruction during COVID-19?
   a. How comfortable do you feel using technology in your classrooms now that instruction is back in person? Is this different to how you felt previously?

10. What are your plans for next school year? Do you plan to remain in your position next year?
    a. How has COVID-19 impacted these plans?
Appendix C
Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Below is a description of the research procedures and an explanation of your rights as a research participant. You should read this information carefully. If you agree to participate, you will sign in the space provided to indicate that you have read and understand the information on this consent form. You are entitled to and will receive a copy of this form.

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Rebecka (Becka) Maxkenzie, a graduate student in the Department of Education- Learning and Instruction at University of San Francisco. This faculty supervisor for this study is Dr. Xornam Apedoe, a professor in the Department of Education- Learning and Instruction at the University of San Francisco.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT:
The purpose of this research study is to examine the experiences of new teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic, school and district-based supports, and the impact of the pandemic on teachers' plans for the following school year.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO DO:
During this study, you will participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher in person or via Zoom video conferencing. The interview will be recorded to allow the researcher to use the responses for data analysis and transcription. The interviewer will ask general questions about your experiences as a new teacher during COVID-19. Questions will be open-ended, and you may be asked follow-up questions about your responses.

DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE STUDY:
Your participation in this study will involve one 30-to-45-minute interview. The study will take place via Zoom or in person at your school site or another mutually agreed upon location.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:
We do not anticipate any risks or discomforts to you from participating in this research. If you wish, you may choose to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during the study without penalty.

BENEFITS:
You will receive no direct benefit from your participation in this study; however, the possible benefits to others include changes in the ways that schools and districts support new teachers through changing school
conditions, supporting other new teachers through this process.

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:
Any data you provide in this study will be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law. In any report we publish, we will not include information that will make it possible to identify you or any individual participant. Specifically, we will separate any identifying information (such as email contact, personal contact information, etc.) will be kept in a separate file to any collected data. All recordings of interviews and observational notes will be stored in a secured computer file. Following transcription, all recordings (video and audio) will be permanently deleted. No raw data will be identifiable.

VIDEO AND AUDIORECORDINGS:
Audio and video recordings are vital to this study to ensure full and accurate representation of participants’ unique experiences. Recordings will be stored first through the Zoom platform and/or using an audio recorder. Data will then be transferred to the researcher’s computer in a secure file for transcription immediately following the interview and transcribed. Once the transcription process is complete, recordings will be permanently destroyed from both the original device (Zoom or audio recorder) as well as the researcher’s computer.

COMPENSATION/PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION:
There is no payment or other form of compensation for your participation in this study.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:
Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits. Furthermore, you may skip any questions or tasks that make you uncomfortable and may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. In addition, the researcher has the right to withdraw you from participation in the study at any time.

OFFER TO ANSWER QUESTIONS:
Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you should contact the principal investigator: Dr. Xornam Apedoe at xapedoe@usfca.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM.

________________________________________
PARTICIPANT’S SIGNATURE

________________________________________
DATE
Appendix D
Code Book

○ Absences
  ○ Student
  ○ Teacher

○ Administrator
  ○ Facilitator or "just boss"
  ○ Follow-through
  ○ Lack of emotional safety
  ○ Perceived experience level
  ○ Observation and feedback
  ○ Supportive
  ○ Unsupportive

○ Changing conditions

○ Classroom management

○ COVID impact
  ○ COVID Safety
  ○ Cleaning
  ○ looming virus
  ○ Managing/requiring
  ○ masking
  ○ Personal/family safety & preferences
  ○ Positive cases
○ Testing
  ○ Vaccination status
  ○ Ventilation & Distancing

○ Disillusionment of teaching

○ District
  ○ Advocate
  ○ Mismanagement
  ○ Not seen/heard as new teacher
  ○ Not valuable
  ○ School closure
  ○ Supportive
  ○ Unsupportive

○ Experience
  ○ New experience
  ○ Re-experience

○ Indecision

○ Induction/Mentoring: Coach
  ○ "Too overloaded" or don't ask for support
  ○ Advocating
  ○ Another set of eyes
  ○ classroom management coaching
  ○ Coaching cycle- plan, implement, reflect
  ○ Coaching Main
○ Curriculum/content
○ Listener/understanding/supporting emotionally
○ New teacher support work
○ Not helpful
○ Overloaded during COVID
○ Induction/Mentoring: Colleague
  ○ Asking questions
○ Similar-level Colleague
  ○ Figuring it out together
  ○ Going through the same things
  ○ Personal relationship
○ Veteran Colleague
  ○ Emotionally
  ○ Interpreting advice
  ○ Intimidated
  ○ Logistical
  ○ Not supported
  ○ Observing
  ○ Wisdom
○ Leaver
○ Mental Health
  ○ Student
  ○ Teacher
- Work/home separation
- Mover
- Professional Development
  - Colleague-taught
  - District
  - Doesn't match my needs
  - Overwhelmed
  - School based
  - Self-taught
- Responsibility to students
  - Generally
    - Student & Family relationships
    - Students as data
- School Climate 1
  - Collaborative/not collaborative
  - In it for the kids
  - Inviting/not inviting
  - School Climate Main
- Social Justice and/or Inequities
- Stayer
- Student learning loss
- Teacher Confidence
- Teacher Preparation
○ Technology use

○ Working Conditions
  ○ Classroom make-up (large classes, multigrade)
  ○ Materials
  ○ Money/pay
  ○ People
  ○ School Building
  ○ Time