High School Students' Perceptions of Teaching and Their Intention to
Choose Teaching as a Profession

by

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to (a) explore high achieving high school students' perceptions of the teaching profession, (b) examine the influence of these perceptions on intentions to teach, and (c) test a recruitment suite of tools to determine the effectiveness of recruitment messaging and strategies. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) served as the theoretical framework for this study. Using the TPB allowed examination of students’ behavioral, normative, and control beliefs as well as their attitudes, subjective norms, and efficacy and how those components affected intentions to teach. Participants included high school seniors in the top 20% of their class. A mixed methods approach was employed to identify how the characteristics that students value when considering a profession were aligned with those they believed to be true about the teaching profession. Additionally mixing methods allowed for a more thorough exploration of the matter and an in-depth depiction of perceptions and intentions to teach. Results from a confirmatory path analysis showed students’ perceived behavioral control, a measure of efficacy, and attitudes toward teaching were predictive of intention to teach and accounted for 25% of the variation in intention to teach scores. A series of exploratory structural equation models was developed to examine additional paths that might be useful in understanding students’ intention to teach. Three additional, important paths were found among TPB variables that accounted for an additional 14% of the variation in intention scores. Additionally, these paths had implications for recruitment practice. Five themes emerged from the qualitative data—status, societal importance, influences of important others, teaching as a backup option, and barriers. The discussion focused on implications for recruitment practice and research, limitations, and conclusions. The following
conclusions were drawn: (a) students must be provided with knowledge about the teaching profession to overcome stereotypical beliefs, (b) recruitment must begin much earlier, (c) parents must be better informed about teaching, (d) use of a longer recruitment process with multiple touch points must be used to inform and inspire students, and (e) students must be provided with practice teaching opportunities and systematic observational opportunities, which can foster increased efficacy for teaching.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

High achieving students generally do not become teachers. Most of these students aspire to attain careers in other professions that provide higher compensation or more prestige (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006; Heasley & Partners, 2010). As a result, recruitment efforts to attract prospective teacher candidates have become extensive and varied in colleges, universities, and other alternative programs leading to teacher certification. Some of these efforts have included: (a) recruitment in secondary schools, (b) recruitment in universities, (c) recruitment of paraprofessionals, and (d) recruitment of mid-career, and post-baccalaureate professionals working in other fields (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006). Increasingly, research results provide evidence that many who are deciding to pursue teaching careers have not participated in typical education programs at teachers colleges (Associated Press [AP], 2009).

An increasing number of those currently pursuing the teaching profession are adults who transition to the education field after years of working in another occupation. Approximately one-third of new teachers are comprised of those who switch careers and this number continues to rise (Associated Press [AP], 2009). Moreover, these individuals are more likely to enter the field through alternative pathways and certification programs (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006). In 2010, the National Center for Education Information (NCEI) reported that 48 states and the District of Columbia indicated they have alternative routes to certification for educators (NCEI, 2010). These alternative route programs are products of approximately 600 different organizations (NCEI, 2010). The
NCEI reported an estimated 59,000 individuals received teaching certificates through alternative routes in 2008-09 and this number continues to increase (NCEI, 2010).

Diane Ravitch (2010) contends that regardless of these statistics, the overwhelming majority of new teachers will come from state universities through more traditional, albeit modified, teacher preparation programs. Consequently, recruitment efforts among teachers colleges and universities must be carefully monitored and continuously improved to ensure that high quality teacher candidates are entering the profession. This recruitment dilemma is exacerbated by the fact that most high school and college students who are in the beginning of their college experience see teaching as an unattractive profession (McKinsey & Company, 2010). Ninety-one percent of college students who graduated in the top-third of their high school classes say that they will not go into teaching (McKinsey & Company, 2010).

The highest achieving students have the potential to be excellent educators. Moreover, such high achieving individuals have the potential to advance the way the public views teachers and thus elevate the status of the profession. It is this conviction that has brought me to work in my current position as a recruiter of high achieving high school students for service as future teachers. As we pursue the recruitment of high achieving students as teachers two essential questions warrant careful and thoughtful consideration. The two questions are: ‘What discourages our highest achieving students from entering the education profession?’ and ‘What motivates other high achieving students to take this path?’

When I was growing up, I was discouraged from becoming an educator by my family and my own teachers. These influential individuals suggested the salary provided
to educators, my talents for other professions, my parents’ dreams for me, and my teachers’ poor attitudes towards their own professional careers served as primary reasons for their dissuading me from choosing education as a profession. I decided early on that I would embark on a career in law. I attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs, CO and majored in international political economics. My plan was to attend law school after graduation. During my senior year, I was recruited by Teach For America (TFA) with the premise that the organization had excellent partnerships with some of the top law schools in the country, which would enhance the likelihood of being accepted and make me eligible for scholarships after two years of service. I applied to the program hesitantly, but I was hopeful for a full ride to law school upon completion of my two-year commitment. I was accepted and sent to teach second grade in the Isaac School District in Phoenix, AZ.

I entered the classroom counting down the days until my two-year commitment would be over. I was predisposed toward my goal to attend law school. However, during my first two years as a teacher, I realized that the education field presented many opportunities I had not previously imagined. The perceptions that caused others to discourage me from pursuing education as a profession, over the long term revealed themselves as being false. Early on, I began attaining leadership positions in my school and developed a passion for the profession. Experiences as a teacher led me to seek a Master’s Degree in Educational Administration and Supervision at Arizona State University (ASU).

After four years in the classroom, I became an instructional coach. When I worked as an instructional coach, the need for excellent and high achieving teachers
became increasingly apparent to me. Consequently, I decided that I needed to affect change in education elsewhere. I wanted to change the perceptions of the teaching profession to increase the pool of high achieving high school students who apply to and matriculate in teacher preparation programs. With this goal in mind, I joined the Sanford Inspire Program (SIP) at ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC).

**Situated Context**

An $18 million grant provided by philanthropist T. Denny Sanford to MLFTC made the development of the SIP possible. The SIP consists of five primary pillars including recruitment, selection, preparation, support, and research. An integral part of this five-year project is a full-time recruitment team in the MLFTC at ASU. The first pillar of the SIP is to attract and recruit teachers from an expanded pool of students who are high achieving individuals devoted to the idea that all children can learn. High achieving individuals are defined as high school seniors in the top 20% of their graduating class, who excel in all subjects, participate in extracurricular activities, and who have a high Colorado Index (CI) Score. The CI score is calculated using a combination of a student's high school grade point average or class rank percentage and ACT or SAT scores. Students with CI scores of 111 and above are considered to be the highest achieving and are eligible for merit based scholarships at the university. Students with these qualities are those recruited through this intervention; however it should be understood that this was a desired level of performance for the intervention and not a required level for college admissions. ASU is committed to access and the vision of SIP is not to become a program to recruit only elite students. For purposes of this study
however, the focus was on high achieving students, other students however were invited to participate should they wish to do so.

Initially I was assigned to recruit in six high school districts across the West Valley. In this role, I personally conducted over 300 recruitment events during the first two years. These recruitment events included group orientation meetings with groups of 15 to 25 students; individual one-on-one meetings with students; class presentations; and campus-based events. In addition to my individual efforts, I worked collaboratively with the SIP recruitment team, which works jointly with the Office of Student Services (OSS) and Undergraduate Admissions to identify, recruit, and enroll these students in MLFTC.

In February of 2010, my role switched from that of a recruiter to the Associate Director of Recruitment for SIP. The goal of the study however remained the same and one of the focus areas of the full recruitment team became this intervention to work with a smaller number of schools in order to identify perceptions of the teaching profession to create targeted recruitment messaging based on data collected.

Implementation of the SIP alleviated some of the responsibilities of the OSS staff and made recruitment into MLFTC a top priority. Although the work of the OSS has been promising, a full time recruitment team is essential so that recruiters are able to develop and maintain embedded relationships within high schools that are critical to the recruitment process. The OSS has engaged in concerted efforts to recruit high school students into MLFTC. Nevertheless, it is difficult for OSS staff members to dedicate a large amount of time solely to recruitment because of their other responsibilities, which include advising and retention of currently enrolled students as well as outreach to out of state students and community college transfer students.
Using a data tracking system called Recruitment Plus, 2,446 student contacts based on 65 ‘recruitment’ events were reported between September, 2009 and June, 2010. The fall 2010 freshmen admission numbers reported on July 26, 2010 indicated that 224 students from 72 schools in which SIP began recruiting in were admitted to MLFTC. Of the 224 students 99 had CI scores of 111 and above. Final data for fall 2011 were reported on September 26, 2011. These data indicated that 251 students were admitted to MLFTC from the same schools identified in fall 2010. Of the 251 students, 118 had CI scores of 111 and above. Given that it is desirable to recruit high achieving students to the profession it became important to me to identify what motivates high achieving high school students to consider applying to MLFTC. Further, because the intent of the SIP is to recruit more high achieving students to the teaching profession and to elevate the profession, the focus will be on identifying and motivating students in the top 20% to consider teaching and to enroll in a teachers college, preferably in MLFTC.

Given these substantial recruitment goals, it was clear that a better understanding was warranted of why high achieving students either choose to pursue a degree in education or do not choose to do so. Consistent with that objective, four research questions related to students’ perceptions and choices about teaching as a profession were developed to guide this action research study.

The research questions were:

1. What perceptions of the teaching profession are held by high school students who are in the top 20% of their class?
2. How and to what extent do perceptions of the teaching profession for students in the students in the top 20% of their class affect their decision to apply to any teachers college?

3. How and to what extent do targeted recruitment messages and individual cultivation of high achieving high school students in the top 20% of their class influence their perceptions of the teaching profession?

4. What motives and other influencing factors encourage high achieving high school students in the top 20% to apply to a teachers college?
Chapter 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE PROJET

A number of researchers have examined the reasons students select or do not select teaching as a profession (Breglio, 2006; McKinsey & Company, 2010, Richardson & Watt, 2006). In the following section, perceptions identified that motivate students towards or sway them away from teaching are reviewed. Although efforts to identify who chooses teaching and why have been extensive, theoretical perspectives to further understand these notions have not always been considered. Initially, the literature reviewed in this chapter will highlight the perceptions students have of the teaching profession. Then three theories that will guide the action research project will be examined and illustrated with respect to their relevance to career choice and the study.

Studies on the Perceptions of the Teaching Profession

With the consensus that high-potential teachers can directly and immediately influence student outcomes, numerous efforts are underway to improve the pipeline of teachers entering the profession (Hassel & Hassel, 2009). Efforts to increase the number and distribution of excellent teachers have primarily focused on recruiting more of our talented college seniors and high achievers into teaching (Hassel & Hassel, 2009). Raising the percentage of great recruits from twenty-five to forty percent annually would be a breathtaking achievement, requiring the attraction of at least an additional 50,000 very talented new entrants every year (Hassel & Hassel, 2009).

The United States and numerous other countries have been experiencing difficulties in attracting and retaining effective teachers (Richardson & Watt, 2006). For over a decade, the appeal to select teaching as a profession has been declining and as a
result teaching must compete with other professions (Ramsay, 2000; Richardson & Watt, 2006). Better, bolder recruiting efforts are crucial, because each new great teacher either replaces one of the departing great teachers or grows the ranks of great teachers (Hassel & Hassel, 2009). A key finding from a McKinsey and Company (2010) report suggests that it would take a major overhaul of efforts for the United States to attract more top-third talent to teaching because talented individuals perceive the profession as less desirable than other professions.

In 2006, the National Center on Education and the Economy for the New Commission on the Skills of the American workforce authorized a study on the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of teachers and top students with regard to a teaching career. The study began with a discussion in which top students were asked to describe characteristics of their ideal job (Breglio, 2006). These students from the University of Southern California and the University of California-Los Angeles listed four key attributes of their ideal job. The most important characteristic, which 53% of students reported, was good money/great pay (Breglio, 2006). Other attributes presumed by these top students were: (a) challenging/fulfilling work, (b) time for family/self, and (c) the ability to make a difference in the lives of people (Breglio, 2006). Additionally, when students were asked for their opinion regarding positive aspects of a teaching career, 65% agreed the greatest aspect was the ability to make a difference or influence others (Breglio, 2006). Similarly, Richardson and Watt (2006) found the highest motivations for teaching also included the intrinsic value of teaching and the desire to make a social contribution. The focus on teachers’ potential to contribute to society and make a difference has been used overwhelmingly as a recruitment practice, but has tended to
limit the scope of recruitment efforts to focus primarily on this motivation (Santiago, 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2006).

To attract more individuals to the profession, recruitment efforts must target a wider range of motivations that attract people to various careers including teaching (Richardson & Watt, 2006). Other motivations unveiled in multiple students were related to salary, challenging work, perceived teaching abilities, vicarious experiences, and time for family and self (Richardson & Watt, 2006).

In the Breglio (2006) study positive characteristics of the teaching profession disclosed by students included (a) a personally rewarding and enjoyable career, (b) vacation time, (c) the ability to share knowledge and experiences, and (d) the ability to get students off on the right track (Breglio, 2006). By comparison, when students were asked about the obstacles or negative aspects of a teaching career 62% brought up low pay (Breglio, 2006). In general, students perceive teaching as low in social status and as a low salary profession (Richardson & Watt, 2006). Other drawbacks related to teaching were: (a) dealing with difficult students, (b) difficulty in finding a job, (c) high stress and work burn out, (d) amount of education required and certification, and (e) the lack of respect in the community (Breglio, 2006).

Hall and Langton (2006) conducted a study for the Ministry of Education in New Zealand on perceptions of teacher status. Results from this study may lend some additional insight to perceptions about a teaching career and closely mirror the results of the Breglio (2006) study. Ninety-five participants including pre-teens, parents, and business professionals were surveyed on their opinions and attitudes with respect to teaching as a career (Hall & Langton, 2006). Among these individuals, status of the
teaching profession was viewed through primary and secondary influences. The primary influences were money, power, and fame (Hall & Langton, 2006). The secondary influences included training, skill, and expertise required and the extent to which the career had an effect on others’ lives (Hall & Langton, 2006). Although teaching was highly regarded as incorporating the secondary influences it lacked the primary influences that participants regarded as necessary to have status (Hall & Langton, 2006).

In addition to the lack of status perceived for the teaching profession compared to other career choices, participants indicated their perception of teaching came from their direct experiences with teachers themselves (Hall & Langton, 2006). The negative perceptions of the career appeared to outweigh the positive ones. Participants in the study viewed schools as a negative place to work (Hall & Langton, 2006). In addition, they had concerns about working with misbehaving children or dealing with unsupportive parents (Hall & Langton, 2006). Further, it was also noted a large number of teachers themselves saw the career as being negative due to the intense workloads in a system that doesn’t reward good performance by using merit pay. (Podgursky & Spinger, 2007; Winters, 2009)

Block (2008) also examined the question, “Why should I teach?” Consistent with the previous findings, the lack of primary influences, such as money, power, and fame were the most frequently mentioned drawbacks to considering the teaching profession (Block, 2008). If one considers the money, they likely will not choose to teach (Block, 2008). Additionally, the status of the profession is not one to look forward to especially when reports on the incompetence of teachers surface frequently (Block, 2008). Although secondary influences such as the enjoyment of work and influence on others are
somewhat more applicable to teaching, the profession still falls substantially behind the
top students’ chosen professions (McKinsey & Company, 2010). McKinsey and
Company (2010) reported that of the 91% percent of top third college students who say
they are not going into teaching, the most important reasons they chose alternative
professions were prestige and peer group appeal. Moreover, compensation reflected the
biggest gap between teaching and their chosen professions (McKinsey & Company,
2010). Given these outcomes, we must broaden our scope of recruitment messages.

None of the studies focused on how to best communicate the benefits of the
teaching profession and how to use them as a recruitment tool for the teaching profession,
they simply mention that recruitment efforts must change. As a result the innovation
proposed for this study will target existing perceptions and focus on the benefits of the
teaching profession. Despite these research efforts to identify who chooses teaching and
why, the studies have been conducted without theoretical perspectives to guide them.
Other studies have been conducted to examine factors related to career choice, but none
of these studies have been specifically related to examining career choices about
teaching.

Theoretical Perspectives

Three theories guided this study: Bandura’s (1986) Theory of Self Efficacy, the
Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) articulated by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994),
and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) based on the work of Azjen (1985, 1991). In
the following sections, each of those theories is individually described. Following the
description of each theoretical framework is a review of various studies derived from
these theories, which are relevant to this action research study. These studies provided
knowledge about instruments and methods that were used to gather and analyze data for the study.

**Self-Efficacy Theory**

Albert Bandura (1986) defines self-efficacy an individual’s own judgment of their abilities to organize and achieve courses of action required to attain designated performances. Self-efficacy plays a major role in how personal goals and intentions are approached. Bandura (1997) identifies traits of those with increased or weakened self-efficacy. Individuals with an increased sense of self-efficacy see challenges as opportunities for success, develop greater interest in activities in which they engage, and recover more quickly from setbacks. On the other hand, those with a weakened sense of self-efficacy tend to avoid challenging tasks, doubt their abilities in achieving these tasks, and focus on barriers or perceived failures. In self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1986, 1997) postulates there are four main sources of information that influence self-efficacy. Bandura refers to these sources of self-efficacy as mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physical and emotional states.

**Mastery experiences.** The most powerful way to enhance an individual’s sense of self-efficacy is through mastery experiences (Bandura, 1986, 1997). As an individual gains ability or develops expertise in a certain area and is successful, their self-efficacy is reinforced. With increased self-efficacy in a given area, one is more likely to pursue that area as a career. Thus, mastery experiences play a crucial role in career choice for students. Moreover, if a student perceives few barriers because of a wealth of mastery experiences, he or she is likely to pursue the profession. On the other hand, if the student
lacks mastery experiences and perceives substantial barriers, then interest in that career decreases.

**Vicarious experiences.** In addition to mastery experiences, individuals cultivate expectations about various career paths through indirect, vicarious learning experiences. These perceptions arise from the outcomes the individual has personally acquired from relevant past observational experiences and from second-hand information acquired for various career fields (Brown & Lent, 2005). When individuals see others similar to themselves succeed by sustained efforts, the observer begins to believe he or she also has the ability to perform similar endeavors (Bandura, 1986). Thus, vicarious exposure, which is based on observing others, leads to differentiated perceptions of an individual’s abilities across a wide variety of domains. These vicarious learning experiences provide an expanded sense of the working conditions and reinforcers afforded by varied career options (Brown & Lent, 2005). “Although vicarious experiences are generally weaker than direct ones, vicarious forms can produce significant, enduring changes through their effects on performance” (Bandura, 1986, p. 400).

**Social persuasion.** Through social persuasion individuals are led to believe they can accomplish certain tasks successfully. Social persuasion usually comes in the form of feedback from adults such as teachers and parents, family members, and peers. The influence that social persuasion has on an individual depends on the credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise of the persuader (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Those individuals with higher credibility have more persuasive influence. Social support and persuasion can be used to encourage students to attempt new tasks, persist despite setbacks, and to interpret performances in a positive manner (Lent & Brown, 2005). Although social
persuasion in isolation can be limited in creating lasting increases in self-efficacy, persuasion can contribute to successful performances. Social pressures in combination with successful performances and accomplishments boost self-efficacy and can thus lead to action or intentions about choosing a particular career field (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

**Physiological states and reactions.** Individuals rely on somatic information conveyed by physiological and emotional reactions when judging their abilities to engage in a particular action or activity (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Physiological states and reactions affect self-efficacy when individuals make connections between poor performance or perceived failure with aversive physiological arousal. Similarly connections between success and physical arousal can lead to positive reactions and feelings. Positive physiological reactions are therefore more likely to lead individuals to feel more confident in their abilities for a given endeavor (Brown & Lent, 2005).

**Primacy of social persuasion and implications for the project.** For the purpose of this study, verbal/social persuasion as defined in SCCT and Self-Efficacy theory took precedence over the other three sources of influence. In an effort to influence or change human behavior, verbal persuasion is widely used because of its ease and ready availability (Bandura, 1977). For this reason, this study aimed to strengthen student’s beliefs and attitudes towards the teaching profession using a suite of recruitment presentations, based on perceptions, attitudes, expectations, and levels of efficacy. Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) posits that individuals who are persuaded they possess the abilities to master particular endeavors are more likely to engage and persist in these endeavors. The suite of recruitment presentations and tools consisted of a variety of methods including: (a) a series of inspirational and informative class presentations, (b)
distribution of inspirational and informative articles and video clips via social media and
during in person visits, and (c) large-scale events focused on the opportunities in teaching
with the option for parents and key influencers to attend.

Studies Based on Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy theory has been applied to a variety of behavioral topics. None of
the studies researched were directly parallel to how self-efficacy plays a role in choosing
teaching as a profession. Other studies such as those described in this section informed
this action research. One such topic identified is related to entrepreneurship and the
intention to start a new venture. Entrepreneurship theorists have proposed that self-
efficacy plays a critical role in forming entrepreneurial intentions (Sequiera, Mueller, &
McGee, 2007). Boyd and Vozikis (1994) posit that the intention to start an
entrepreneurial venture is formed by perceptions and outcome expectations. All four
sources of self-efficacy, i.e., mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, etc., play an
important role in the intention to start a new venture. The remainder of this section will
focus on the role of social persuasion in relation to entrepreneurial intentions.

An individual’s social network greatly influences intentions towards business
ventures (Sequiera et al., 2007). Social networks can directly influence interests,
intentions, and the decision making process for those wishing to pursue entrepreneurial
ventures (Sequiera et al., 2007). A social network is made up of people whom individuals
relate to on a social level and can include family, friends, and other acquaintances. These
social networks often provide critical emotional and practical support, information and
knowledge, and awareness of opportunities, and access to employment (Sequiera et al.,
2007). Because of the resources provided and the role that social networks play in an
individual’s decisions, social persuasion can foster or hinder individuals from developing intentions that lead to certain behaviors.

Social networks are sets of ties that connect individuals. These ties can be weak or strong and formal or informal (Sequiera et al., 2007). Strong ties, specifically those with family members and close friends, serve to influence and persuade, and are relied upon when embarking on major change (Sequiera et al., 2007). Values, attitudes, information and skills gained from these relationships with strong social networks lead to increased entrepreneurial intentions. Social networks that encourage positive feelings towards embarking on entrepreneurial ventures lead to increased intentions toward startup of a business (Sequiera et al., 2007).

Results from the study by Sequiera et al. (2007) indicated social networks and persuasion increased the likelihood of intentions and behavior when those with strong ties looked favorably upon starting a business. In addition, individuals were more likely to engage in starting a business when strong ties lent moral support. By comparison, when those with strong ties provided practical support in the form of knowledge, information, skill and experience, the likelihood of entrepreneurial intentions and behavior was weakened.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) as established by Lent et al. (1994) was derived from Bandura’s social cognitive theory (1986) and is similar to self-efficacy. The focus here is on how self-efficacy influences career choice and performance. SCCT differs because it also addresses issues of culture, gender, social context, and life events as they relate to the formation of vocational interest, career aspirations and career choice.
behaviors, and career performance attainments. Lent and his colleagues posit three career development models as a part of SSCT: task performance, interest, and choice. To explain the task performance components of SCCT, Lent et al. also examined self-efficacy and outcome expectations and their relation to career choice. As stated, the definition for self-efficacy comes from Bandura (1986) and is based on an individual’s self-questioning of “Can I do this?” More specifically, it is based on individuals’ judgments of their abilities to organize and achieve courses of action required to attain designated performances. Outcome expectations are beliefs about the outcomes individuals will achieve if they perform particular behaviors. Personal goals, also defined by Bandura (1986), are individuals’ intentions to engage in a specific action or to produce a certain outcome. “To what extent and how well do I want to do this?” is a question individuals would ask pertaining to personal goals (Brown & Lent, 2005).

Similar to the self-efficacy model (Bandura, 1986), the proponents of SCCT suggest there are four sources of self-efficacy that affect career choice (Lent et al., 1994). These four sources are the same by definition but vary in their names. These four factors are known in SCCT as (a) personal performance accomplishments, (b) vicarious learning, (c) social persuasion, and (d) physiological states and reactions.

**Studies Based on Social Cognitive Career Theory**

Several studies have used SCCT as a theoretical framework to determine predictors of career exploration intentions, including the intent to pursue teaching as a profession. Ochs & Roessler (2004) studied special and general education high school students to identify their career exploration intentions. The overarching purpose of this study was to explore students’ intentions to engage in career exploratory behavior.
Findings indicated that in both of the groups, career decision self-efficacy and career outcome expectations were key predictors of career exploration intentions (Ochs & Roessler, 2004). Because of the similar pattern of relationships across populations, it can be inferred that self-efficacy and outcome expectations are relevant to understanding and facilitating the career development process.

Ku and Watt (2009) used SCCT as a theoretical framework to conduct a study addressing the under-representation of males in the teaching profession. This study focused specifically on students who were high school seniors, given that they would likely be making decisions about attending universities and career options and would have already formed some estimation of their own abilities and interests. Keeping in mind the importance of gender and gender role orientation and their effects on individuals’ self-efficacy and vicarious learning experiences, Ku and Watt (2009) examined how high school students’ gender and gender role orientation affected their views of a good teacher, the possibility that they would consider a teaching profession, and their perceptions of self-efficacy, interests, and personality as they related to teaching. Findings suggested gender and gender role orientations, mediated by an individual’s self-efficacy, affected students’ choices to enter the teaching profession (Ku & Watt, 2009).

Several of the questions examined in the previous research study are similar to the topic explored in this action research study. One question from the Ku and Watt (2009) study asked whether participants who view themselves as possessing similar qualities of good primary and secondary teachers were more likely to consider teaching as a career. Further, the researchers examined whether teaching self-efficacy was positively related to
teaching interests and occupational intentions as predicted by SCCT. The researchers concluded that SCCT and career relevant self-efficacy beliefs were positively related to occupational interests (Ku & Watt, 2009).

Relations were also found between self-efficacy and interests to teach based on the interest for teaching at a particular educational level. This correlation was largely evident in those interested in teaching at the secondary level. Teaching abilities, pedagogical knowledge, and familiarity with content were more important for those interested in becoming secondary teachers. Therefore, Ku and Watt (2009) speculated these students’ self-perceived abilities contributed more to teaching self-efficacy in secondary teaching, rather than in early childhood or elementary teaching. This result was attributed to factors posited by the SCCT in which outcome expectations affected goals and intentions (Ku & Watt, 2009).

**Theory of Planned Behavior**

Icek Azjen’s (1985, 1991, n.d.; see also Fishbein & Azjen, 2010) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) serves as the fundamental framework for the innovation component of this study as it brings self-efficacy into a more comprehensive theory that includes beliefs, norms, and intentions. According to the TPB, human behavior is guided by three constructs: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs. In their respective groups, behavioral beliefs produce the attitudes toward a particular behavior; normative beliefs lead to perceived subjective norms that are influenced by what important others say; and control beliefs influence perceived behavioral control, which is closely related to self-efficacy. Together, the attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control lead to formation of a particular behavioral
intention. In general, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely the individual will act on it.

Interventions designed to change a specific behavior can be directed at one or more of these constructs: attitudes, subjective norms, or perceived behavioral control. Changes in one or more of these areas should produce changes in behavioral intentions. Figure 1 below is a graphic representation of TPB that will guide further explanation of each construct.

In the following section each construct of the TPB will be described. First, the construct will be defined; examples relative to TPB and career choice will follow, when applicable additional information will be provided to describe how that specific construct of the TPB model has the potential to affect this action research project.

**Behavioral beliefs.** Behavioral beliefs link the behavior of interest to the expected outcomes (Azjen, n.d.). These beliefs, along with the values of the expected
outcomes, determine individuals’ attitudes towards a particular behavior. As a result, it is often assumed that motivation and ability interact in their effects on behaviors.

Individuals have many behavioral beliefs with respect to given behaviors. However, only a fairly small number of those beliefs are readily accessible at a given moment (Azjen, n.d.). Under the TPB, it is assumed that these accessible beliefs, along with the subjective values of the expected outcomes, determine the individuals’ attitudes towards the behavior (Azjen, n.d.). Because these beliefs are foundational, attempts to change them were not the target in this study.

**Attitude towards the behavior.** Attitude towards a particular behavior refers to the degree to which performance of the behavior is positive or negatively valued. Attitude towards a behavior, as mentioned above, is determined by the extent of accessible behavioral beliefs. The attitude towards each expected outcome contributes to the attitude in direct proportion to individuals’ subjective possibility the behavior produces the outcome being anticipated (Ajzen, n.d.; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

Attitude towards the behavior can be further understood if we examine the expectancy value theory. Atkinson (1957) originally defined this theory by clarifying that individuals anticipate that their performance will be followed by success or failure. Thus, the value of pursuing something such as a profession was defined as the relative attractiveness of succeeding or failing at a given task. More recent researchers who have explored this theory, such as Wigfield and Eccles (1992) have expanded Atkinson’s definitions to further identify how individual’s expectancies for success, task values, and other achievement beliefs facilitate their motivation to pursue a given task or profession (Wigfield, 1994).
In this action research study, the intervention focused on changing the behaviors of high achieving students towards the teaching profession by attempting to change their attitudes towards teaching. Prior to the intervention, the aim was to identify the degree to which each student had a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards teaching. Students were assessed with respect to their intentions to pursue teaching. This assessment was in the form of a scale from zero to ten. The scale begins with a zero indicating that the student does not intend to pursue teaching at all and ends with a ten indicating that the student will definitely become a teacher. In other studies using TPB, those with more positive attitudes towards performing the behavior, who also had substantial levels of social pressure to do so and perceived control over their actions, were more likely to carry out the behavior (Siragusa & Dixon, 2009). Given this information it is important to examine normative beliefs, which is taken up next.

**Normative beliefs.** Azjen (1991, n.d.) described normative beliefs as those that refer to the perceived behavioral expectations of important individuals or groups who influence individuals’ lives. Jie-Tsuen (2011) elaborated on this notion when he stated the complexity of career choice behavior stems from students’ lack of work experience. As a result, students rely on parents, teachers, peers, and others to obtain specific career information prior to or as they form their own beliefs about careers. These beliefs about how others expect an individual to behave, along with the person’s motivation to comply with these perceived expectations, determine the subjective norm.

**Subjective norms.** Subjective norms are the perceived social pressures to engage or not to engage in a behavior. Jie-Tsuen (2011) presumed the opinions and social pressures from influential individuals have a large influence on students’ career choice
attitudes. Similar to the expectancy-value model of attitude toward the behavior, it is assumed that subjective norms are determined by the number of accessible normative beliefs about the expectations of influential individuals. The strength of each normative belief is weighted by the motivation to comply with the influential individual in question and can therefore vary in its effect on subjective norms. To illustrate the concept of a subjective norm, consider the following example, a student does not even consider teaching as a viable option because her parents feel she has talents that far exceed the teaching professions and do not want her to become a teacher.

Through a series of questions, the sources of students’ normative beliefs can be identified. There was little interaction with the influential individuals in the students’ lives unless it is with their teachers, counselors, parents did not respond to surveys sent to them and did not attend recruitment related events. This study did not attempt to change the subjective norms, but rather engaged in forming meaningful relationships with students in an effort to become an additional influential individual to influence their normative beliefs.

**Control beliefs.** Control beliefs are those having to do with the perceived presence of factors that either facilitate or impede the performance of a behavior. For example, in the context of this study, control beliefs are the beliefs a student has about his or her abilities to teach content, manage a classroom, and adhere to other responsibilities related to teaching. These beliefs, along with the perceived power associated with each control factor define the perceived behavioral control.

**Perceived behavioral control.** Azjen (1991, n.d.) states that perceived behavioral control refers to individuals’ perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior.
Perceived behavioral control is similar to self-efficacy. Both constructs refer to an individual’s belief that the behavior in question is under their control. However, these two concepts are assessed somewhat differently. Perceived behavioral control is primarily assessed by the ease or difficulty of the behavior (Wallston, Wallston, & DeVellis, 1978). For example, an individual might say they find it easy to teach young students. Self-efficacy on the other hand, is assessed by the individual’s confidence in their ability to carry out the behavior in question (Wallston et al., 1978). For example, an individual might say they are confident that they can teach young students or may believe that they can manage large groups in a classroom setting. To make this concept more concrete with respect to the action research project, consider the following example. Say that a high school student perceives that she is (a) capable of working effectively with school-aged students, (b) believes she can manage the classroom, (c) judges she knows the content required to be taught, and (d) considers she will be able to teach that content so that students can learn it, she is exhibiting a strong degree of behavioral control. In Bandura’s framework, this sense of behavioral control would be a strong sense of efficacy with respect to teaching.

If this is an accurate reflection of the actual behavioral control, which refers to the extent that the individual believes she has the skills, resources, and other prerequisites needed to perform the behavior, then perceived behavioral control in combination with intention can be used to predict behavior. In an effort to change intention and behaviors as they relate to perceptions about teaching, the intervention employed for this study provided knowledge about the skills, resources, and other prerequisites needed to teach.
In addition, the intervention provided information about how these skills, resources, and prerequisites are developed in the MLFTC and at other teachers colleges.

**Intention.** Intention is an indication of an individual’s readiness to perform a specific behavior. The intention is based on the three constructs previously described: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. To measure intention, each construct is weighted for its importance as it relates to the behavior. The importance of intention in the TPB model is directly related to the fact that intention has been shown to be directly and positively related to the behavior in question. For example, Azjen (1975, 1991, n.d.; see also Azjen & Fishbein, 2010) has shown intention to perform a behavior is directly related to performing the behavior.

In summary, intention to become a teacher is based on a person's attitude toward teaching as a career choice, perceived social pressure from important others to enter/avoid the field of teaching (social norms), and perceived behavioral control to select teaching as a career. Therefore, the suite of recruitment presentations in this intervention was designed to positively influence individuals’ intentions towards teaching as influenced by all three constructs (Azjen, 1985, 1991, n.d.).

**Studies based on the Theory of Planned Behavior**

The information an individual has about an occupation is an important element of the career choice process (Millar & Shevlin, 2003). In a study conducted by Millar (1994), the results showed there was wide variability in information-seeking behaviors related to career exploration. To examine this matter further, Millar and Shevlin approached the problem using the TPB to explain career exploration in high school students by demonstrating the value of predicting intentions and behaviors. Millar &
Shevlin found that if students were not engaging in seeking out information related to professions, then nothing significant in regard to intention or behavior would occur with respect to that profession. As a result, this research suggested that it is important to facilitate and cultivate career exploration among students.

In a 2006 study using the TPB to understand and then promote nursing as a career choice, Hoke discovered that students believed that nurses (a) could not be executives, (b) could not attain financial success, (c) were not on the cutting edge of research, and (d) were not members of an important profession. Students had little knowledge about career opportunities in nursing and therefore were not likely to pursue the profession (Hoke, 2006). For this reason, researchers worked at facilitating and cultivating information and exploration of the nursing profession. The specific focus of this study was to promote a positive image of nursing to increase recruitment among youth. In doing so, the researchers placed a focus on (a) the intellectual challenge and high level of knowledge involved in nursing, (b) the variety of work and wide range of opportunities available to nurses at all levels, (c) the opportunities for career progression, and (d) the opportunity for nurses to work as autonomous practitioners (Hoke, 2006).

Although this study was implemented with middle school aged students, the methodology used would likely be relevant to high school aged students, as well. Using pre- and post-test survey instruments, researchers assessed attitude and knowledge these students had about nursing careers prior to and following a presentation about nursing careers. Following the pre-test assessment, students received a 50-minute presentation about nursing careers, which was produced by the National Student Nurses Association. Then they took the post-test assessment. Overall, the results indicated an increase in
attitudes and knowledge. Nevertheless, there was greater change in knowledge as compared to attitudes.

Based on the results of this study, it is clear that by the time students are in middle and high school they have rejected many jobs due to perceptions that may be based on limited or inaccurate information (Hoke, 2006). Further, it was noted that most students typically did not reject nursing as an option in an explicit, reasoned way; but rather they gave it little if any consideration. Over 33% of students who chose to become nurses did so before they entered middle school. Many of these individuals made these decisions based on idealized images and positive stereotypes rather than on knowledge specific to opportunities within the profession (Hoke, 2006).

Ajzen’s TPB and the aforementioned studies can help to explain why recruitment campaigns aimed solely at providing information often do not yield high numbers of recruits. To change behaviors, campaigns may need to be targeted more carefully on attitudes, perceived norms, and perceived behavioral control. This outcome was also evident in a recent study on the application of TPB to account for college students’ occupational intentions in contingent employment (Jie-Tsuen, 2011). Contingent employment refers to employment that does not offer an explicit contract and is typically part-time or temporary work. Although this study is related to pursuing contingent employment and not related to the teaching profession or high school students’ intentions, the results offer suggestions for recruitment and interventions for this action research study. The findings in Jie-Tsuen’s (2011) study indicated social pressures and persuasion from noteworthy others were critical factors in influencing students’ occupational intentions. More emphasis should be placed on involving family members
because of the crucial force they exert in influencing career choices and decisions (Jie-Tsuen, 2011). Information regarding careers should be disseminated to all parties including, students, parents, and teachers through curriculum, workshops about trends and characteristics of the career, and by having others pursuing that career share their work-related issues and experiences to provide accurate viewpoints about the profession (Jie-Tsuen, 2011). Given the importance on intentions, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, which is evident in these studies, this action research study mirrored the work of the aforementioned studies in effort to change intentions and behaviors by influencing attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral control.

**Persuasive Communication**

The tools in the recruitment suite for this intervention required extensive persuasive communication. Therefore, closer examination of literature with respect to persuasive communication was warranted. In persuasive communication the goals are to be understood and to be believed (Taillard, n.d.). In this study, I wanted participants to understand the opportunities, responsibilities, and influences of the teaching profession so they will in turn believe this profession is suited to them. Sperber & Wilson (1986, 1995) indicate that getting an audience to believe something may be accomplished in two different ways. The first is through ostensive communication. In ostensive communication, the individual communicating the message may overtly attempt to secure the attention of the audience to make them aware the intention is to convey a particular piece of information (Taillard, n.d.).

Ostensive communication was used in this action research study during presentations and discussions with students. As a researcher, my role was to
communicate the message by letting high achieving students know that my intention was to convey information about the teaching profession. By comparison, the other method of communication is considered to be covert rather than overt. In this type of communication, the communicator leaves it up to the audience to identify the intention of the information being presented (Taillard, n.d.).

Taillard (n.d.) indicates that using ostensive communication allows the individual who is persuading the audience to efficiently achieve effects because the intentions of the speaker are readily recognized. Thus, if students have limited knowledge of the teaching profession, it is better for the persuader to state the intentions for communication as opposed to allowing students try to uncover this information on their own.

**Methodological Considerations**

Azjen’s (1985, 1991, n.d.; see also Fishbein & Azjen, 2010) approach was closely followed to assess the components of the TPB model as they pertained to this study. The focus on the measurement of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control constructs, and so on, was to obtain scores that represent a student’s positions on a bipolar evaluative dimension with respect to the constructs in question (Fishbein & Azjen, 2010). To accomplish this task the semantic differential approach was utilized. Use of semantic differential scales required participants to rate their perceptions of a construct on a bipolar evaluation scale with seven alternatives (Fishbein & Azjen, 2010). Usually, responses are scored with three alternatives on the negative side of the scale, a neutral response in the middle, and three alternatives on the positive side. Therefore, to be consistent with instruments that have been used in research studies of the TPB,
instruments in this study were primarily designed around the semantic differential scale as opposed to the traditional Likert approach.

Assessment of attitudes, subjective norms, and so on from the TPB have been conducted for a variety of areas including organizational behaviors, job performance, withdrawal behaviors, smoking cessation, voter participation and more (Fishbein & Azjen, 2010). The use of the semantic differential scale to measure attitudes, subject norms, and so on has not been used to measure perceptions with respect to the teaching profession. However, in a study closely related to the current one, Hoke (2006) used the procedures to measure attitudes, subjective norms, and so on about nursing and students’ intent to pursue that profession. A number of ideas for this study were drawn from the Hoke study. Further, questions from a TPB study conducted by Siragusa and Dixon (2009) on higher education students’ attitudes towards information technology communication provided insights about the construction of questions for this study, as well.
Chapter 3

METHOD

The method used for this action research study is described in the following section. In this section, information about the setting and participants, role of the researcher, a description of the instruments and intervention, the action plan for the study, and procedures for data collection and analysis are presented.

Setting and Participants

This study took place during the fall 2012 semester. The project was implemented in four high schools in the metropolitan Phoenix area. Schools in which the study took place were Agua Fria High School, Camelback High School, Carl Hayden High School and Mountain View High School. These four high schools were chosen to provide a range of demographic variables, access, and varied geographical representations. Agua Fria High School serves students in the West Valley and is part of the Agua Fria Union District. Camelback and Carl Hayden High Schools serve students in the Central Phoenix area and are both part of the Phoenix Union High School District. Mountain View High School serves students in Mesa and is part of the Mesa School District.

Participants targeted for this study consisted of high-achieving high school students in the top 20% of their senior class, many who had a Colorado Index (CI) score of 111 and above. Other students falling below this desired level of performance were invited to participate as well, but few did. Typically, high-achieving students with this CI score have a grade point average ranging from 3.0 to 4.0 and an SAT score from 1,010 and up or an ACT score ranging from 21 and up. Based on previous experience, this group of students has a balance between males and females. It was also noted that males
tend to pursue secondary education degrees whereas females have been more likely to pursue early childhood or elementary education degrees. These students were given an interest scale on which they rated their intentions to enter the teaching profession. On this interest scale, students rated their intentions between 0 and 10. The focus of the study was to focus predominantly on students who rated themselves within the five through eight score range on the Teacher Interest Scale by consistently reaching out to them between presentations. See the Instruments sections and Appendix A for details on the Teacher Interest Scale. These students were believed to be most likely to be persuaded to choose teaching over other professions they are also considering. Students who ranged between nine and ten, meaning that they were more likely to pursue or definitely planned to pursue teaching still received focused recruitment messages, but not as much emphasis was placed on these students.

Peripheral participants who assisted in this study were counselors, career center specialists, teachers and administrators who assisted me and my recruitment team in securing meetings with students. Between July and August of 2012, the recruitment team sought out the peripheral participants to secure semester long interactions with students.

**Role of the Researcher and High School Recruiter**

The researcher’s role in this action research study was that of an observer. In this role I trained, supervised and observed three high school recruiters to act as observer participants. The high school recruiter’s role as an observer as participant, means that the participants were aware of the researcher’s role (Creswell, 2008). The observer as participant role enabled the researcher to participate as desired while maintaining focus on collecting data (Kawulich, 2005). That said, this process enabled me to learn about the
perceptions of the students in their natural setting through observing and participating in the intervention. Consequently, having the role of an observer as participant provided context for the development of instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness of the tools and presentations used in the recruitment suite.

**Instruments**

This study was designed using a mixed methods approach. Mixing methods provides the researcher with the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the phenomena being studied (Greene, 2007). Thus, the study was informed with a balance of quantitative and qualitative data. In the following sections, the five instruments used to collect data for this study will be described.

**Theory of Planned Behavior survey.** To initiate the study in August, before any of the high school students were exposed to the intervention, survey data was collected. The initial instrument given to students consisted of a survey to measure high school students’ perceptions of the teaching profession. To measure student perceptions, the survey was divided into the seven constructs of the TPB model which are: (a) behavioral beliefs, (b) attitude towards the behavior, (c) normative beliefs, (d) subjective norm, (e) behavioral beliefs, (f) perceived behavioral control, and (g) intention. The survey assessed student perceptions using a seven-point, semantic differential scale. The semantic differential method allowed the researcher to obtain a score that represents an individual’s position on a bipolar evaluative dimension with respect to the attitude being measured (Fishbein & Azjen, 2010). This survey included five to seven questions for each of the aforementioned constructs. The scale measured extremes from 1=definitely not to 7=definitely. Two examples of semantic differential TPB response items are:
“Teachers have a fulfilling job,” and “My parents think that I should become a teacher.” The first example measures attitudes, whereas the second measures social norms. Within each construct of the survey the semantic differential items are followed by one open-ended question. An example of an open-ended item in this survey is “List any concerns or motivations you may have about teaching.” The TPB survey is provided in Appendix B. Student responses for the semantic differential items were analyzed using quantitative procedures whereas open-ended responses were coded qualitatively to identify themes.

**Teacher Interest scale.** Before the end of September, after students completed the TPB survey, a second mixed-methods instrument to collect data was given to students. This instrument was a zero to ten point interest scale used to measure students’ intentions to enter the teaching profession. The scale asks: “To what extent have you considered the teaching profession?” and students respond from 0 = *not at all* to 10 = *I will definitely become a teacher.* Each of the numerical response values from 0 and 10 has a behavioral anchored verbal statement that is paired with the numerical value. For example, 5 = *I have considered teaching along with 1 other profession (same interest level for both).* Responses between zero and ten allow students to state whether or not teaching is a consideration along with other professions and to what extent. Students were also asked to list any other professions they have considered in open-ended item question. The complete interest scale can be found in Appendix A. Students included their name on these scales and responses were tracked in an Excel document in order to identify students who received additional communication throughout the intervention. The scaled responses provided quantitative data regarding the number of students at each level and
were used at the end of the study to identify which students ultimately chose teaching and how that was related to their initial ratings.

**Effectiveness exit tickets.** To measure the effectiveness of each presentation and its messaging in the recruitment suite, a four-point Likert scale from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree was distributed to students after each presentation. The questions were based on the constructs of the TPB model in order to identify which messages had the most effect in changing each construct. All exit tickets were composed of general statements and the same exit ticket was used for each tool to provide quantitative data. An example of a Likert response item is “Material was effective in increasing my interest in teaching.” On the exit ticket students also had the opportunity to respond to an open-ended question which asked them to list anything else that was noteworthy to them. Responses to the open-ended questions were coded and emerging themes were identified. The complete effectiveness exit ticket is provided in Appendix C.

**Intervention**

The intervention for this action research study consisted of a suite of recruitment presentations and specific messages based on the constructs of the TPB and informed by several studies on student’s perceptions of the teaching profession (Breglio, 2006; Hall & Langton, 2006; McKinsey & Co., 2010). The suite of recruitment tools and messages included (a) a presentation with inspirational components, (b) a presentation addressing barriers, (c) parent information brochures, and (d) a presentation about MLFTC. Moreover, the suite incorporated one-on-one interactions throughout the course of the intervention, which were conducted with students via phone, Facebook, in-person, or e-
mail as needed. Other components of the suite included articles and videos pertaining to teaching, barriers, and MLFTC and were posted on Facebook periodically for students.

The high school recruiters worked with peripheral participants in school districts during July and early August to present the plan for using this suite of recruitment tools and to secure an agreement to have access to students in the top twenty percent of their senior classes who received the intervention. At the beginning of the school year, the TPB survey was sent to schools and given to all seniors in the top twenty percent of their class during the first few weeks of school. The high school recruiter worked closely with the school team to identify how to best disseminate this survey. The TPB survey was given before any of the presentations or messages from the recruitment suite were shared with students.

Once TPB surveys were completed and collected the presentations and messages from the recruitment suite were used to recruit students. The first tool in the recruitment suite is a presentation entitled Lead.Inspire.Educate. This was a forty-five minute presentation which aimed to inspire students to pursue teaching. It included personal anecdotes from the high school recruiter’s experiences in teaching. Moreover, it included data and statistics on the achievement gap and the need for excellent teachers locally and globally. The presentation was interactive and included questioning, videos, and discussion. This portion of the suite was presented to students during late August and early September.

Throughout the course of October and November, the high school recruiter visited schools again to give a presentation which targeted perceived barriers that inhibit students from pursuing the teaching profession. This presentation was informed by data collected
from pre- and post-survey response data collected and by the Breglio (2006) and McKinsey and Co. (2010) studies. Topics in this presentation included information on salary, opportunities within education, parental concerns, and skills and abilities related to teaching.

Parent handouts with frequently asked questions to address concerns parents may have about their children pursuing teaching as a career were given out during the month of October for students to take home to their parents. These handouts included information about salary, loan forgiveness, and opportunities within education, impact and MLFTC. A survey link for parents to complete in order to identify their perceptions was also included on this handout.

During December the high school recruiter focused on delivering a presentation about MLFTC, iTeach AZ, scholarships, and financial aid specific to teachers. Students also completed a post TPB survey to identify changes in attitudes, normative beliefs, and behavioral control beliefs. The complete intervention timeline is provided in Table 1, which includes the dates, intervention events, and contents of the event and its rationale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention Timeline</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Intervention Event</th>
<th>Content and Rationale</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July-August</td>
<td>School Meetings with Peripheral Participants</td>
<td>The researcher and recruiter met with peripheral participants at schools to propose the content and timeline of the intervention. Dates for events were scheduled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August-September</td>
<td>Lead.Inspire.Educate Presentation</td>
<td>The recruiter presented the <em>Lead.Inspire.Educate Presentation</em></td>
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to students. This presentation was used to present information on the teaching profession that aims to target attitudes.

October Parent Handouts Parent handouts were disseminated to parents via students. These handouts were intended to affect the normative beliefs and social norms.

October-November Targeting Barriers Presentation The recruiter presented the Targeting Barriers Presentation to students. This presentation was used to target barriers represented in data up to this point. This presentation was intended to improve student attitudes and perceived behavioral control.

December MLFTC Presentation Recruiter presented the MLFTC presentation to students with information on MLFTC programs, scholarships, and financial aid.

**Data Collection**

Several instruments were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data for this study. Data was collected at various points throughout the intervention. The TPB survey was given as a pre- and post-intervention assessment. In August and September the TPB pre-intervention survey was disseminated to schools for students to complete. Details about this data collection timeframe as well as the other data collection times are provided in Table 2. The TPB survey, used again as a post-intervention assessment was given to students who received the intervention in December. On both of these surveys, the students read the items and circled the rating that best reflected their opinion. The interest scale was attached to this pre- and post- TPB survey. Exit surveys, as previously
described were given at the conclusion of each presentation to measure the effectiveness of the messaging and to gain more information on the students' perceptions. These surveys were given after the Lead.Inspire.Educate presentations in August and September, after the Targeting Barriers Presentation in October and November, and after the MLFTC presentation in December.

Table 2

Data Collection Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Date Collected</th>
<th>Instrument Used in Data Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>TPB Survey (pre-intervention assessment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Interest Scales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August-September</td>
<td>Lead.Inspire.Educate Presentation Exit Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Parent Brochure Exit Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October-November</td>
<td>Targeting Barriers Presentation Exit Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>MLFTC Presentation Exit Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>TPB Survey (post-intervention assessment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure

Implementation of the intervention was initiated in August 2012. The procedure began with the data collected using the pre-intervention TPB survey. Students did not have a time limit while taking the survey but it took approximately 15 minutes to complete. The four tools from the suite were presented to students in this sequence: (a) Lead.Inspire.Educate Presentation, (b) Targeting Barriers Presentation, (c) Parent Handouts, and (d) MLFTC presentation. Each component was presented to students at the
various sites within a three- to four-week timeframe. Throughout this time, students also received one-on-one contact as needed and as described in the intervention process. This contact took place in the form of face-to-face meetings, phone conversations, e-mail communication, or Facebook communication. Through Facebook students were also exposed to video clips and journal or news articles about the teaching profession and the MLFTC.

**Data Analysis**

**Qualitative data.** Qualitative data included information from the responses to open-ended items on the interest scale and responses to open-ended items on the exit surveys. These qualitative data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this procedure, qualitative data was coded using initial codes that included key words or short phrases. Subsequently, these initial codes were grouped into larger categories. The categories were collected into theme-related components, which were then brought together into themes. The themes lead to the development of assertions.

**Quantitative data.** Quantitative data included numerical data from the TPB pre- and post-test survey assessments, responses to quantitative items on the interest scale, and from responses to Likert items on the exit surveys. These quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures and, as appropriate correlational procedures. In addition, multivariate analysis of variance procedures were employed to determine whether there were differences in attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control. A path analysis model was also used to identify correlations between the constructs of the TPB model.
Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Results from the study are presented in the following two sections. The first section will include results from the quantitative data gathered in the study. In the second section, results for qualitative data are presented. To depict the results of the qualitative data, assertions are presented and reinforced with theme-related components and quotes from participants. In addition to the presentation of results, this chapter includes a section which outlines the data sources and data collection procedures used.

The quantitative data consists of two sets of data. The first set is composed of responses made by 192 students on an 11-point teacher interest scale, which measured students’ initial intention to pursue teaching as a profession. In addition, these same students provided responses to a pre-survey instrument that assessed students’ beliefs about six constructs from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) that have been shown to influence intentions toward engaging in a behavior (pursuing teaching as a profession). These constructs were: beliefs about the behavior (becoming a teacher), attitudes toward the behavior, normative beliefs, subjective norms, control beliefs, and perceived behavioral control about the behavior.

The second set of quantitative data consisted of pre- and post-survey responses for 32 students who attended all three intervention sessions and who completed both surveys. Again, the surveys measured the intention to teach on the 11-point scale as well as the six constructs from the TPB.

The pre-survey was given to students once during August or September, prior to their participation in the intervention cycles. The post-survey was given to students once
in November or December, after students had participated in the intervention cycles. As noted above, 192 students completed the pre-survey as compared to 32 who completed both the pre- and post- intervention survey. The decline in students who completed both surveys was attributed to the fact that they had to attend all three intervention cycles to complete a pre- and a post-survey. Obtaining data from students who went to all three presentations and completed both surveys allowed for the analysis of change on these variables over the course of the study. High absence rates, conflicting events, and lack of interest from students on the days presentations were conducted, led to a decline in the amount of both pre- and post-survey data collected. Prior to implementation of appropriate statistical analyses, quantitative data from the pre-survey administration of the instrument were examined for reliability. Two types of statistical analyses were conducted. Pre-test data were analyzed using a path analysis model to identify the magnitude and significance of hypothesized connections among variables from the TPB and intention to teach. Pre- and post-survey data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures to examine the changes in the variables from the TPB and intention to teach over time after attending the intervention sessions.

Qualitative data used in the study included exit surveys that were completed after each of the presentations in the intervention. Data from exit surveys were entered into a spreadsheet and then imported to Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis program. These qualitative data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this procedure, qualitative data were coded using initial open codes which included key words or short phrases. Subsequently, these initial codes were grouped into larger categories. The categories were then collected into theme-related components,
which were then brought together into themes. The themes lead to the development of assertions, which were supported with quotes from the original data.

The first intervention presentation session took place between September and October. During this presentation students learned about the importance of and the need for teachers and other educators. In November, students attended a second intervention presentation session where previously identified barriers towards choosing the teaching profession were discussed in depth. These previously identified barriers were collected from the pilot study conducted at Basis High School in August 2012, pre-test data and from the responses on the first exit ticket. In December, students attended a final intervention presentation session, which depicted information about the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College specifically. Data were collected at the end of every intervention presentation session.

These quantitative and qualitative data provided results that answered the following research questions, “What perceptions of the teaching profession are held by high school students who are in the top 20% of their senior class?”; “How and to what extent do perceptions of the teaching profession for students in the students in the top 20% of their senior class affect their decision to apply to the any teachers college?”; “How and to what extent do targeted recruitment messages and individual cultivation of high achieving high school students in the top 20% of their senior class influence their perceptions of the teaching profession?”; and “What motives and other influencing factors encouraged high achieving high school students in the top 20% to apply to any teachers college?”.
Results

Results from Quantitative Data

Results from the quantitative data are presented in three sections. First, preliminary data analyses leading up to the examination of the confirmatory path analysis of the TPB are presented. Second, information regarding the reliability of the TPB pre-intervention survey is presented. Third, results for the confirmatory path analysis pertaining to the Theory of Planned Behavior and intention to teach are presented in detail. Fourth, a set of exploratory structural equation models were fit to the student data to explore more closely how TPB variables influenced intention to teach. Fifth, the repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the seven variables of the pre- and post-intervention survey is presented for a smaller group of students who attended all three recruitment sessions.

Preliminary data analyses leading up to the confirmatory path analysis of the TPB model for intention to teach. To better understand the confirmatory path model of the TPB, a number of descriptive, correlational, and predictive statistics are presented in the following three tables. SPSS was used to analyze data including the descriptive, correlational, and regression statistics. The confirmatory path model and the exploratory structural equation model were conducted using AMOS.

In table 3, descriptive statistics for intention to teach and the various TPB variables are presented. These statistics are from the group of 191 students who took the pre-intervention assessment, which is the same group used for the confirmatory path model. As noted in the table, scores for intention to teach were quite low at 2.35 on an 11-point scale. For the intention to teach variable, stem and leaf plots showed high scores
offset low scores with a wide distribution from 1 to 10, which accounts for the very high standard deviation relative to the mean score for this variable. Further, note that respondents’ behavioral beliefs are about at the agree level (5.81 is near 6, which is equal to agree), but the score on attitudes toward the behavior is about 1 point lower (4.96 is near 5, which is equivalent to slightly agree). The score for attitudes towards the behavior is lower because students do not believe they can attain the desired outcomes (good salary, high status, etc.) through teaching. The mean score for subjective norms is quite neutral; very close to 4.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Teach and TPB Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pre-survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators of …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to Pursue Teaching</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Beliefs</td>
<td>5.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward the Behavior</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Beliefs</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Norm</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Beliefs</td>
<td>5.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Behavioral Control</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 depicts the correlation coefficients for intention to teach and the various TPB variables. The correlation coefficients were significant for $r > .143, p < .049$. These correlation coefficients were also used in development of the confirmatory path model.
Table 4

Correlations for Theory of Planned Behavior Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Behavioral Beliefs</th>
<th>Attitude Towards Behavior</th>
<th>Normative Beliefs</th>
<th>Subjective Norm</th>
<th>Control Beliefs</th>
<th>Perceived Behavioral Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention to Teach</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Beliefs</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude Towards Behavior</td>
<td>.493</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Beliefs</td>
<td>.493</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Norm</td>
<td></td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $r > .143, p < .049$

Table 5 depicts the regression of intention to teach on TPB variables. All of the TPB variables were significant in terms of their ability to predict intention to teach. The second column in the table below presents the $b$ weights, the unstandardized regression coefficients for each of the TPB variables. In columns 3-5, other information about the standard error, $t$ test statistics for the $b$ weights, and the significance levels of the regression coefficients of the TPB variables are presented. Finally, in the last column, standardized regression coefficients are presented. These standardized regression coefficients depict that for every unit of increase in the standard deviation there is an increase in scores equal to the standardized regression coefficient. For example, with
respect to perceived behavioral control there is a .308 increase in the intention to teach score for every unit increase in standardized score. In this regression output, perceived behavioral control and normative beliefs are the two most important predictors.

Table 5

Regression Output for TPB Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficient, b</th>
<th>Standard error of b</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p level</th>
<th>Standardized coefficient, β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.0969</td>
<td>1.099</td>
<td>-.0882</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Behavioral Control</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Beliefs</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Norms</td>
<td>-0.261</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>-2.54</td>
<td>&lt;.012</td>
<td>-.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Beliefs</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>&lt;.009</td>
<td>.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Beliefs</td>
<td>-0.460</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>-2.49</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>-.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Behavior</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>&lt;.049</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability of Theory of Planned Behavior survey scales. The pre-intervention survey used to identify students perceptions about the teaching profession consisted of the six variables from the TPB. These variables were: (a) behavioral beliefs, (b) attitudes towards the behavior, (c) normative beliefs, (d) subjective norm, (e) control beliefs, and (f) perceived behavioral control. Items for each of these variables are presented in
Appendix A for the pre- and post-survey. For each variable, Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) was computed using SPSS to determine the reliability the TPB variables. In examining the pre-survey responses, the reliabilities for the variables were: .74, .81, .85, .77, .83, and .79, respectively. The reliability coefficients were all above .70, which is a minimally acceptable level of reliability, and confirm the reliability of the subsets of items for each of the variables assessed by the survey.

**Results from the confirmatory path analysis of the Theory of Planned Behavior and intention to teach.** Figure 2 provides information about the confirmatory path analysis model that was evaluated including the path coefficients. As noted in the figure, all path coefficients were significant at the \( p < .001 \) level with the exception of the path from subjective norms to intention to pursue teaching, which was not significant. For example, the path coefficient from behavioral beliefs to attitudes toward the behavior was .32 and accounted for 11% of the variance in the attitudes toward the behavior variable scores. Similarly, the path coefficient from normative beliefs to subjective norms was .40 and accounted for 16% of the variance in the subjective norms variable scores. Further, the path coefficient from control beliefs to perceived behavioral control was .28 and accounted for 8% of the variance in the perceived behavioral control variable scores. Moreover, the path coefficient from attitudes toward the behavior to intention to pursue teaching was .19. Additionally, the path coefficient from perceived behavioral control to intention to pursue teaching was .45. Together, the two variables, attitudes toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control accounted for 25% of the variation in the intention to teach scores. Finally, as noted above, the path coefficient from subjective norms to intention to pursue teaching was -.10, which was not significant.
Descriptive statistical information about the variables used in this analysis are presented in Table 3, following Figure 2.

Results from the exploratory structural equation model of the Theory of Planned Behavior and intention to teach. Figure 3, represents the results from the exploratory structural equation model of the various TPB variables. Although 25% of the variance was accounted for in the confirmatory path analysis model in Figure 2, some exploratory structural equation modeling was conducted to examine whether there were
other paths that might help to better understand this group of students’ intention to teach.

In Figure 3, the individual questionnaire items for the various TPB variables and the factor loadings of those items, which would typically be present were excluded from the figure because it would make the model too messy and difficult to understand.

To develop this structural equation model an iterative process was used. Newly formulated paths were added one at a time to the existing, the previous, structural equation model. Results from these iterative models were examined and then modification indices were reviewed to determine the next potential path that would best help account for variance in intention to teach. The first path suggested was the path from attitude towards the behavior to perceived behavioral control, that path was .67 and was a substantial path coefficient. The second path that was suggested was the path from normative beliefs to attitude towards the behavior, that path coefficient was .59 and again very substantial. This foreshadows the qualitative results that indicated parents and teachers had substantial influence on students’ interests in pursuing teaching. This will be further explained during presentation of the themes from the qualitative data. A third path suggested was the path from control beliefs directly to intention to teach with a value of .24, which is smaller but important in the present context. This path suggests that students’ experiences related to teaching directly influence their intention to teach. This will be elaborated on further in the discussion. After these three paths, no further improvements were obtained based on chi-square tests, no more were significant, and modification indices. The behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs are all exogenous variables in this model. They are not influenced by other variables in the model, but they do influence the variables which include attitudes towards the behavior,
subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These three, latter variables are endogenous. Intention to teach is also considered endogenous because that intention to act on a behavior is influenced by the aforementioned endogenous variables.

To understand this model, it is important to know that normative beliefs influence attitude towards the behavior, which in turn influences perceived behavioral control. These paths are not typically present in the TPB, but to better understand these student data, these paths need to be explored. Additionally, the path from control to intention to teach was also helpful in understanding students’ scores. By adding these three paths 39% of the variance in intention to teach was accounted for, which is a 14% gain from the original, confirmatory path model.

Repeated measures analysis of pre- and post-intervention scores. A multivariate repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were changes in scores from pre- to post-intervention survey
results for the group of 31 students who attended all three presentations. The seven scores that were assessed were: (a) behavioral beliefs, (b) attitude towards the behavior, (c) normative beliefs, (d) subjective norm, (e) control belief, (f) perceived behavioral control, and (g) intention to pursue teaching. The multivariate $F(7, 24) = 2.05, p < .10$, which was not significant.

Pre- and post-intervention assessment means and standard deviations for the seven variables are presented in Table 6. It is important to note that the standard deviations for intention to teach are quite high at 2.71 for the pre-intervention assessment and at 2.92 for the post-intervention assessment. These relatively large standard deviations were examined more closely using descriptive statistical procedures in stem and leaf plots. At the pre-intervention assessment with a mean score at 3.19, there were five scores at the extreme above 8. Additionally there were nine scores at 0 and 1. These scores contribute a substantial amount of variation and as a result the standard deviations are quite large relative to the means. The same was true for the post-intervention assessment. With a mean score of 4.16, there were six scores at the extreme above 8. Further, there were five scores at 0 and 1. Again, these scores contributed a substantial amount of variation thus producing higher standard deviations for intention to teach.

Table 6

*Pre- and Post-survey Scores on the Six Variables of the Theory of Planned Behavior Survey and the Intention to Pursue Teaching Question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pre-survey</th>
<th>Post-survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators of …</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Beliefs</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attitudes Toward the Behavior 4.99 1.16 5.28 0.80
Normative Beliefs 3.70 1.16 3.70 1.42
Subjective Norm 3.98 1.30 3.67 1.52
Control Beliefs 5.45 1.22 5.35 1.15
Perceived Behavioral Control 4.66 1.45 4.88 1.24
Intention to Pursue Teaching 3.19 2.71 4.16 2.92

Quantitative results from exit ticket data. To fully understand the effectiveness of the TPB model as it pertained to presentations conducted in the intervention, exit ticket data were analyzed and are presented in Table 7. Four questions from the exit ticket were analyzed based on their applicability to the TPB model. As noted, there is a decline in scores overall. Upon reflection on this there was a decline because the last presentation during the intervention dealt less with inspiring students and was missing the affective component that was present in the first two presentations. The alpha for the second presentation was very low at .37. This low coefficient resulted because information for the second presentation on barriers contradicted information students were receiving previously. Therefore students were more variable in their responses.

It should also be noted that the group of students (n = 31) for which these data were analyzed varied in their intention to teach across all three presentations. By the third presentation one would assume that all 31 students in attendance would likely intend to teach. This was not the case, not all of these students intended to teach, some of them were new students and others were still exploring the possibility of teaching.
Table 7  

Exit Ticket Analysis Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lead.Inspire.Educate Presentation Exit Ticket</th>
<th>Barriers Presentation Exit Ticket</th>
<th>MLFTC Presentation Exit Ticket</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>n2=192</td>
<td>n2=47</td>
<td>n2=30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>α=.67</td>
<td>α=.37</td>
<td>α=.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3: positive effect on attitude towards teaching</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4: messages consistent with those received from others</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5: belief in acquiring skills necessary to teach</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9: more likely to choose the teaching profession</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Likert scale (4= strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

Results from Qualitative Data

A qualitative approach was used in the study to enhance understanding of the quantitative findings. The qualitative data were used to gain a greater insight into students’ perceptions and opinions about the topic and each of the variables examined. These data were based on exit tickets given at the end of each intervention presentation session.
The exit tickets consisted of the same 10 questions each round. This survey tool used a mixed methods approach. Students indicated their overall thoughts for each question by responding to a Likert scale item. After each Likert scale response, students were asked open-ended questions to elaborate on their thoughts about the presentation. A total of 272 exit tickets were collected for all presentations across four high schools.

In the analysis of the qualitative data, 26 codes were identified. Codes were grouped into five themes. The themes were: (a) status, (b) societal importance, (c) influences of important others, (d) teaching as a backup option, and (e) barriers. Table 8 provides a breakdown of the themes, theme-related components, and assertions connected to each theme.

Table 8

*Themes, Theme-related Components and Assertions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes* and Theme-related Components</th>
<th>Assertions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students agreed some jobs in education provided good compensation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Most students were not aware of the opportunities in education beyond classroom teaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students agreed teachers received good benefits, such as loan forgiveness and time off.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students believed teaching was a self-fulfilling and rewarding career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Societal Importance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students believed excellent teachers and access to an exceptional education for all children was essential for the good of society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students considered teaching based on the influence and difference they could make.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Influences of Important Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents and teachers had the most penetration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Parents greatly influenced students’ decisions relating to career choice; most parents discouraged students from teaching because of salary considerations; those who encouraged students to choose teaching did so because of the profession’s influence on society.

2. Teachers prominently influenced students’ decisions to teach or not to teach; most teachers discouraged students from choosing the teaching profession; few teachers encouraged students based on their experiences.

3. Peers had little influence on student’s decisions relating to career choice.

4. Media outlets had little influence on student’s decisions relating to career choice.

_{Teaching as a backup option_}

1. After a series of presentations students agreed teaching was a good option, but they already had a different profession in mind.

2. Students indicated they would chose teaching as a backup option in the event they did not succeed in their original profession.

_{Barriers_}

1. Students cited the low salary of teachers as one of the greatest barriers to choosing the teaching profession.

2. Students believed they lacked the skills and confidence to teach and manage a classroom.

3. Students indicated they would not be able to deal with students and parents if they were to choose teaching as a profession.

---

*--Note: Themes are in italic print.

_{Status._} Assertion 1—*Teaching was viewed as a rewarding profession that led to other careers in education which offered greater salary potential and benefits.* The following theme-related components validate the theme leading to this assertion: (a)
students agreed some jobs in education provide good compensation; (b) most students were not aware of the opportunities in education beyond classroom teaching; (c) students agreed teachers received good benefits, such as insurance and time off; and (d) students believed teaching was a self-fulfilling and rewarding career.

Status, in relation to high regard by society, salary, and material as well as non-material benefits was very important to students who were surveyed. Initially, in the pre-survey and in the exit surveys, a majority of students indicated that they did not believe teachers had the opportunity to earn a good salary. Among numerous comments regarding negative perceptions about salary, one student shared this perspective, “Some people say that teachers don't make much money, but this presentation helped me see the difference in salary across education professions.” Another affirmed these statements typically come from others by stating, “I have been told by my teachers that teaching is not a good career and that it does not pay well.” The exit survey after the first presentation shed light on results that were indicative that students believed some jobs in education provided good compensation. Nevertheless, students shared that teaching was the lower paying job that only led to other education professions with higher pay. In the exit survey, one student claimed, “Education is not only limited to classroom teaching. Some fields have a good pay in education.”

Most students were not aware of the opportunities in education beyond classroom teaching. Qualitative data from the pre-survey indicated that students valued a profession in which they could obtain leadership positions. Prior to the first intervention presentation and even at the second, many students still believed that if they went to a teachers college they would only earn a degree that allowed them to be a classroom teacher for their entire
career. “I did not know about all of the jobs in education,” was the sentiment expressed by one student. Many others shared similar thoughts about their previous lack of knowledge regarding careers in education. This perception was further substantiated by several claims similar to the following response, which was provided by a student after the first presentation who wrote, “Teaching isn’t the only job in education. This helped show the range of education jobs I thought didn’t exist.”

In addition to salary and opportunities beyond the classroom, students agreed teachers received good benefits, such as loan forgiveness and time off. One student indicated she learned about this benefit when she wrote, “the breakdown of a teacher’s weekly salary and loans compared to other careers.” Many students were not aware that loan forgiveness was available to some teachers depending on certain circumstances. The following quote illustrated students’ lack of knowledge regarding the benefits of loan forgiveness, “I didn’t know teachers have less debt if they work in certain schools or subjects.”

Not everything related to status dealt with monetary elements. Students also deemed status such as having a career that is self-fulfilling and rewarding was a benefit of the teaching profession. This concept was best illustrated by one student’s response to an exit survey question, “teachers do make good money, and it’s not even about the money, but about making others happy and making [sic] them learn!” Many other students concurred with a student who wrote, “Being a teacher can be fun and rewarding.”

**Societal importance.** Assertion 2—Students believed teachers made a positive *difference in students’ lives, society, and our nation’s future.* Students uniformly agreed
with this assertion. The following theme-related components validated the theme leading to this assertion: (a) students believed that excellent teachers and access to an exceptional education for all children was essential for the good of society; (b) students considered teaching based on the influence and difference they could make in students’ lives.

All students were in agreement that excellent teachers and access to an exceptional education for all children was beneficial for the good of society. This theme-related component had the greatest number of codes and open-ended responses linked to it. For example, one response to an exit survey question asking what new knowledge was obtained reflected this orientation when the student claimed, “Education in America is a major problem and it needs to change. The education profession can be beneficial in many ways for you and the future of America.” Another student’s response connected teaching to society by stating, “Being a teacher isn't just about teaching, it's about being a leader and impacting [sic] society.” Students also expressed the need for all children to reap the benefits of an excellent education and became more inspired to do so after attending the first intervention presentation session. One student shared this perspective when she/he wrote, “I am more interested in becoming a teacher to help all young kids have a better future.”

Many students had a positive attitude change after the intervention presentation session and stated that they would consider teaching because of the influence on others and the differences they could make. “I can make a difference in someone’s life” was a response from one particular student, but one that was echoed many times in various forms. Some students indicated that they knew teachers made a difference, but they had
not fully realized the extent of teachers’ influence. Consistent with perception, one student wrote, “I never thought education impacted [sic] so many aspects of our lives.”

**Influences of important others.** Assertion 3—*Parents and teachers had the most influence on the decisions students make regarding their choice of profession.* The following theme-related components validated the theme leading to this assertion: (a) parents greatly influenced students’ decisions relating to career choice; most parents discouraged students from teaching because of salary considerations; those who encouraged students to choose teaching did so because of the profession’s influence on society; (b) teachers prominently influenced students’ decisions to teach or not to teach; most teachers discouraged students from choosing the teaching profession; few teachers encouraged students based on their experiences; (c) peers had little influence on students’ decisions relating to career choice; and (d) media outlets had little influence on student’s decisions relating to career choice.

Students appeared to be greatly influenced by important people in their lives. Parents had the greatest influence on student’s decisions relating to career choice. Most parents discouraged students from teaching because of salary considerations. Those who encouraged students to choose teaching did so because of the profession’s influence on society.

Parents who discouraged their students from choosing teaching as a profession typically had an idea about which profession they wanted their child to pursue. One student commented, “They [my parents] want me to be something other than a teacher,” was very representative of many other student comments. Students indicated their parents wanted them to choose “something better.” One student disclosed, “A lot of people tell
me it’s not worth the work to be a teacher and that I need to do something better.”

Professions such as engineering and medical professions were highly encouraged by parents. Salary appeared to be the biggest reason that parents encouraged students to choose something other than teaching. Statements such as, “my mother always tells me not to be a teacher or go into education because it won’t pay well,” substantiated this claim.

Not all parents discouraged their students from choosing teaching. Some parents believed that teaching was an important profession that contributed to society. One student was clearly influenced in this way when she/he stated, “my parents encouraged me to become a teacher and make an impact in the lives of young students.” Many other students shared similar thoughts. Some parents did not tend to put as much emphasis on salary. One student indicated her parents told her “to pursue a career not only for money, but in something that I like to do and to make a difference as well.” A similar piece of advice from one mother to her child, “education not only benefits you but the children as well” further substantiated this theme-related component.

In addition to parents, teachers also prominently influenced students’ decisions to teach or not to teach. Most teachers discouraged students from choosing the teaching profession and few teachers encouraged students based on their experiences. Teachers appeared to discourage students because of salary considerations, student attitudes, and lack of rigor. In numerous instances, students indicated, “Teachers always say they don’t make enough money.” Other students shared that their teachers did not encourage teaching because students were hard to deal with. One student wrote, “Teachers talk about how kids are getting worse.” Finally, students also shared their teachers encourage
them to pursue a more rigorous career. One student wrote, “My teachers say that I am too talented and that I should choose a harder profession.”

Just like parents, not all teachers provided a negative perspective of the profession. Some teachers encouraged students to choose teaching. Although no teachers shared with students that they should choose teaching because of salary, many encouraged students to choose teaching because of their skill set and personality and because of the influence they can have on society. One student shared that her teacher told her that she was “a great leader and really helpful to all kinds of people, those are great skills of a teacher.” Another student, like many others, had a parent who was a teacher and she/he wrote, “My mom encourages me to consider teaching because of the impact [sic] I can make. She is a teacher and tells me how great teaching is.” Another student asserted, “My teachers encourage me to change the future because I can affect people’s lives, one kid at a time.”

In comparison to parents and teachers, peers had little influence on students’ decisions relating to career choice. Influence from peers was positive, but very modest. Peers did not discourage each other from pursuing teaching because of salary, but rather they supported their contemporaries because of influence on society. One student averred, “I've been receiving messages from peers about me going on to become a teacher because I can make a difference.” Another student indicated that her peers told her, “teaching is a good career and it makes a difference.”

Media outlets had the least amount of influence on students. There were no direct statements on any of the open-ended responses from students indicating that media
affected their decision to teach or not to teach. All of the influences students provided were attributed to things they had heard from people rather than media sources.

**Teaching as a backup option.** Assertion 4—*Many students considered teaching as a backup option rather than an initial career choice.* After a series of presentations, more students agreed teaching was a good option, but few decided to choose this as their initial choice because they already had a different profession in mind for a much longer period of time.

The following theme-related components validated the theme leading to this assertion: (a) after a series of presentations students agreed that teaching is a good option, but they already had a different profession in mind; and (b) students indicated they would choose teaching as a backup option in the event they did not succeed in their original profession.

After a series of presentations students agreed that teaching was a good option. Given that these were seniors however, many of them already had a different profession in mind. Many students stated after the first two presentations they now believed teaching was an option or that this reinforced their thoughts about it being a good option. One student’s comment affirmed this perspective when she/he said, “it truly just made me think about teaching as a real option.” Another student maintained, “I already had the education possibility in my mind, but it's more definite now.” A third student, who had initially considered teaching as a back-up plan, left the presentations considering teaching as the only option. The student contended, “Before, I thought about teaching as a back-up plan in case my intended major didn't work out, but now I want to major in post-secondary education primarily.”
Like the previous students, many other students considered education as a good back-up plan in case other majors and professions did not work out as they had hoped. Some of these students came to these conclusions as a result of the presentations. Nevertheless, most would not switch over completely to education because they said they had been considering their other choices for too long. One student said, “I am strongly interested in a different field, but would consider it [education] if the profession I want to follow does not work for me.” Another commented, “It might become a second option, but it’ll not be my first.” The presentation sessions helped students think a little more about the possibilities. Many students who were either considering teaching as their only option or as a backup plan said that the intervention presentation sessions made them think about it more. One student who had been considering teaching all along wrote, “I had always thought about teaching but this made me want to pursue it even more.” Another student who had considered teaching as a backup option stated, “Teaching was always a second choice for me. This gave me more insight towards education.”

**Barriers.** Assertion 5—*Students hesitated in choosing teaching or other education professions because of seeming barriers or negative perceptions regarding the education field.* The following theme-related components supported the theme leading to this assertion: (a) students cited the low salary of teachers as one of the greatest barriers to choosing the teaching profession; (b) students believed they lacked the skills and confidence to teach and manage a classroom; and (c) students indicated they would not be able to deal with students and parents if they were to choose teaching as a profession.

Among many barriers that keep students from pursuing the teaching profession, students cited the low salary of teachers as one of the greatest barriers. The overall
perception regarding salary was as one student suggested, “people in education do not make a lot of money.” Another student indicated, “I didn’t think teachers got paid enough.” In response to the messages received from others one student shared that he was told, “Teachers make low income and should have a higher education.” Additional support for the concern about salary was evident when the other professions students say they would choose were considered. Most students were inclined to choose careers such as doctor, lawyer, architect, and engineer. Individuals in these professions typically have earned high salaries.

Many students also refrained from going into the teaching profession because they believed they lacked the skills and confidence to teach and to manage a classroom. Student responses such as, “I don’t think I can teach people” and “I’m not interested in teaching because I don’t think I could do it” exemplified these concerns and portrayed a lack of confidence in their perceived ability to teach. Other comments such as, “I'm not that good at bossing people around; telling them what to do” reveal that the students did not feel they had the appropriate skill set to become teachers. Many students mentioned lack of patience as a barrier, which prevented them from going into teaching. One student maintained, “I have really not thought about teaching because of my patience.” Another indicated, “I don’t have patience for slow learners.” For some students who liked the idea of teaching, their perceived lack of patience was the only barrier. This was evident in the following statement, “I really like what teachers do however I don't have the patience that is needed to become a teacher.”

A number of students indicated they would not be able to deal with students and parents if they were to choose teaching as a profession. Many students’ viewed teaching
only as they saw it through their current experiences in classrooms. One student noted, “I just couldn’t deal with students like us.” Another student shared, “My teacher tells me that kids are just getting worse every year.” Students were very weary of the attitudes they saw students act out within class. One student wrote, “I do not want to be a teacher because I do not like dealing with immaturity.” Dealing with parents also seemed to be a concern; however, this was not as apparent across all schools and participants. A few students’ comments such as, “I don’t think I could deal with the parents” confirmed some of the concerns shared about dealing with parents.

**Summary of Results**

Quantitative results showed intentions to teach were related to attitudes toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control from the Theory of Planned Behavior. Results from the repeated measures ANOVA indicated there were no differences in TPB measures or intention to teach for the group of students who attended all the intervention presentation sessions.

Qualitative data demonstrated five themes emerged from students’ responses to the open-ended questions at the end of each of the intervention presentation sessions. The five themes were: (a) status, (b) societal importance, (c) influences of important others, (d) teaching as a backup option, and (e) barriers. These themes reflected students’ understandings and perceptions about entering the teaching profession. In the next chapter, interpretations of these results will be provided.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this action research study was to examine high school students’ perceptions of the teaching profession and their influence on students’ intentions to pursue teaching. Azjen’s (1985, 1991, n.d.; see also Fishbein & Azjen, 2010) TPB model served as the overall theoretical framework guiding this study. In the next section, the quantitative and qualitative data will be examined to explore the complementarity of these data (Greene, 2007). Greene defines complementarity as the connections that exist between the quantitative and qualitative data. Further, when data are complementary, the data cross validate each other and the outcomes become more meaningful. In the second section, the TPB will also be used to explain outcomes and make connections to previous research presented in the literature review. Other information presented in the discussion will include personal lessons learned, limitations and future work in terms of implementing findings, and implications for practice, implications for future research, and conclusions.

Complementarity and Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Results from the quantitative and qualitative data sets demonstrate complementarity, thus providing a broader and more enhanced interpretation allowing for greater confidence in the inferences made from this study (Greene, 2007). The exit ticket surveys following each intervention presentation session included open ended questions to gather supporting qualitative data to elaborate on TPB survey responses. Having this data on student’s perceptions as well as how they were affected by the intervention provided a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence
students’ decisions to pursue or not pursue teaching as a professional career (Greene, 2007). The quantitative and qualitative data are complementary in a number of areas. First, scores on the attitudes toward the behavior, pursuing teaching as a profession, reflect the concerns about teaching exemplified in the status theme from the qualitative data. Issues with respect to salary and job status that were present in the qualitative data were also evident in the quantitative data.

Quantitative data related to the influence of others on students’ decisions to pursue a career in teaching is less clear. Specifically, the path coefficient for the subjective norm variable of the quantitative data is not significant. In the present study, this result may occur because students are less willing to say they are influenced by parents/teachers/close friends/media on the TPB questionnaire items. This hypothesis stems from the way the items were written. Students may not be willing to say they are influenced by parents/teachers/close friend/media because students may not “care what others think”. Given that the items are written using that kind of language, students may this hypothesis was formed. Thus, for example, the representative item, “Generally speaking, I care which profession my parents encourage me to pursue” may not elicit the typical response found in other TPB research relating to influence from important others and the idea of social norms. Nevertheless, the qualitative data indicate parents’ influence is important in choosing teaching as a profession. As observed in the qualitative data, many parents discourage their high achieving daughter/son from pursuing teaching, whereas, a much smaller group of parents encourage the pursuit of teaching as a career.
Finally, quantitative scores on the perceived behavioral control variable from the TPB show that students had some concerns about their ability to manage students, deal with parents, etc. These results are consistent with the qualitative results, which show lacking skills and confidence to teach and manage a classroom and demonstrating inability to successfully interact with students and parents are barriers standing in the way of selecting teaching as a profession.

Taken together, the qualitative data are quite complementary to the quantitative data. The qualitative data provide greater depth to the quantitative data and allow for a better understanding of the numerical data.

**Explanation of TPB Results**

Consistent with the TPB, path coefficients from (a) behavioral beliefs to attitudes, (b) normative beliefs to subjective norms, and (c) control beliefs to perceived behavioral control are positive and statistically significant. Nevertheless, the proportion of variance accounted for is fairly small, ranging from 7% to 16%. Further, path coefficients from (a) attitudes toward the behavior and (b) perceived behavioral control were positive and statistically significant and accounted for .5% of the variation in intention to teach. Taken together, these data provide support that the TPB variables were useful in understanding students’ intentions to teach.

**Outcomes Related to Previous Research and Theory**

When considering the previous research and the TPB model, there are many connections between the results of this study and those from the literature although the study explored a select student population. Recall, the focus is on examining perceptions of teaching held by high performing high school students. The research questions of the
Many of the perceptions the participants hold are consistent with those observed in previous research. Consistent with the findings from the Breglio (2006) study, characteristics students value when describing the qualities of their ideal job include (a) good money/great pay, (b) challenging and fulfilling work, (c) time for family/self, and (d) the ability to make a difference in the lives of others (Breglio, 2006). The results from this study also indicate students value pay, fulfilling work, and making a difference in lives of others. On the other hand, students in the present study do not appear to be concerned about time for family/self. This could be because these topics were rarely touched upon in the intervention presentation sessions or as items on the surveys.

In the Breglio (2006) study, the most prominent characteristic students consider with respect to choosing a profession is salary. Breglio found that 53% of students desire good money/great pay when considering their ideal job. Results in this study in regard to desire or importance of having a great salary were much greater. In the present study, 96% of the participants indicate having a job with a good salary is somewhat important to extremely important. The importance of good pay also is similar to the outcomes from a
study by Hall and Langton (2006) in which students indicate teaching lacks primary influences such as money, power, and fame. Further, students in that study indicate higher status in a profession is associated with these primary influences, which they suggest teaching lacks (Hall & Langton). Block (2008) also examines the question, “Why should I teach?” Consistent with the previous findings, the lack of primary influences, such as money, power, and fame are the most frequently mentioned as drawbacks to considering the teaching profession.

Having a job that is challenging and fulfilling is an important characteristic that students desire in a profession. In the present study, 89% of the participants indicate that having a profession that is intellectually demanding is somewhat to extremely important. The qualitative results vary with regard to students’ thoughts about whether or not teaching is intellectually demanding. Most students agree that they could teach the content or easily acquire the skills they need to teach certain content. However, aside from content, students indicate the challenging aspect of teaching would be dealing with students and parents as well as the amount of paperwork teachers are asked to do. Concerns about working with misbehaving children and dealing with unsupportive parents are also predominant responses in the Hall and Langton (2006) study and were also true for this research study. Consistent with the literature, students in this study strongly value a fulfilling profession. One of the primary qualitative codes in this study indicates students describe teaching as self-fulfilling and rewarding.

In the present study, 93% of the students shared that having a profession where they can positively influence the lives of others is somewhat to extremely important. This outcome is similar to other research studies that show influencing others is an important
characteristic for considering a profession. Additionally, it is one of the primary reasons students indicate they would choose teaching as a profession. For example, Breglio (2006) indicates 65% of participants in the study he conducted, agree that the greatest aspect of teaching was the ability to make a difference or influence others. Richardson and Watt (2006) maintain the highest motivations for teaching include the intrinsic value of teaching and the desire to make a social contribution. In a more recent report, students indicate secondary factors such as influence on others are important in career choice and appear to be more applicable to teaching, but that the teaching profession still falls behind top students’ chosen professions (McKinsey & Company, 2010).

Several components of the TPB model have a close relation to the aforementioned perceptions held by students. Student’s behavioral beliefs and attitudes towards the teaching profession greatly affect their intention to choose teaching as a profession. Behavioral beliefs link the behavior of interest, in this case choosing teaching as a profession, to the expected outcomes (Azjen, 1985; 1991; n.d.; see also Fishbein & Azjen, 2010). Students expected outcomes, specifically relating to the primary influences mentioned above, tend to dominate the secondary influences, which leaves students with a negatively valued attitude about the teaching profession and little intention to pursue it.

Self-efficacy as initially proposed by Bandura (1986) and elaborated by Lent et al. (1994) in Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) are the control beliefs and perceived behavioral control variables in the TPB model (Azjen, 1985; 1991; n.d.; see also Fishbein & Azjen, 2010), which are related to students’ pursuit of teaching as a profession. Control beliefs have to do with the perceived presence of factors that facilitate or impede performance of a behavior (Azjen, n.d.). These control beliefs lead to perceived
behavioral control, which refers to people’s perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior. In this study there were mixed perceptions about control beliefs. Students perceived that they could easily acquire or already had the skills necessary to teach content but their concern regarding being able to deal with parents and students impeded their intention to choose teaching.

Additionally, normative beliefs and social norms as part of the TPB model play a small role in student career choice. Normative beliefs refer to the perceived behavioral expectations of important individuals. It is assumed that these normative beliefs determine the subjective norms, the perceived social pressure to engage or not to engage in a behavior (Azjen, n.d.). Many students indicate their parents, teachers, and sometimes peers play an important role in their career choice. Parents especially have certain expectations about which careers students should choose. Many students indicate they are choosing other careers because that is what their parents want them to do. Parents and teachers support both sides of the choice of teaching as a career, i.e., to the subjective norms. Some encourage students to pursue teaching because of the opportunity to make a difference. By comparison, others discourage them from engaging in the profession because of the perceived barriers discussed earlier.

Due to these perceptions and pre-conceived attitudes students have of the teaching profession, many are not applying to teachers colleges. In fact, only 17 students who participated in at least two of the intervention presentation sessions have decided to apply to the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. Importantly, 5 of these 17 students indicate in their pre-survey assessment they had not really considered the teaching profession as a career pathway and one had never considered it prior to the intervention presentation.
sessions. Clearly, there was some effect on attitudes and perceptions for some students as a result of participating in the sessions. Nevertheless, most students indicate the barriers they foresee in the profession outweigh the benefits and they conclude choosing a different pathway is more appealing. As mentioned in the previous chapter many students indicate they would choose teaching as a backup option if things do not work out in their initial preferred profession.

**Personal Lessons Learned**

As a result of this study, I can carry several personal lessons I have learned into practice and research in the future. The most important lessons pertain to: (a) the advantages of conducting a mixed methods study and (b) the importance of grounding a study in a theoretical framework.

**Advantages of conducting a mixed methods study.** Conducting a mixed methods study allows me to better understand the phenomenon of this study (Greene, 2007). By gathering and integrating quantitative and qualitative data I am able to more deeply examine participant’s perceptions and views. I can also identify which portions of the intervention most directly affect students’ overall intention to teach. Using a mixed methods approach allows me to integrate the quantitative and qualitative findings and make stronger, more valid claims with respect to the data.

Prior to this study, I had a greater understanding of quantitative data. This is attributable to my past experiences in public school settings and recruitment. The focus in those two settings is more often on the numbers rather than the qualitative understandings. Incorporating a mixed methods way of thinking, as Greene (2007) points out, provides me with multiple ways of making sense of the world. It also provides me
with data that encourage me to examine multiple standpoints on what is important to students. Further, using this mixed methods model, I was able to employ multiple perspectives to advance the discourse around the perceptions of the teaching profession. All of these efforts give more validity and credibility to the findings. Beyond my dissertation, but within the scope of my work, I am able to integrate a mixed methods way of thinking that has provided me with deeper understandings of my surroundings and potential solutions to problems.

**Grounding the study in a theoretical framework.** Initially, in my own thinking about this research area, I did not look at the matter with a theoretical framework in mind. I had long thought about the main issues of the study. Having previously been one of those students with negative perceptions of the teaching profession, I have often sensed that others have the same perceptions and barriers that keep them from choosing this field of which I have grown so fond. Through conducting the literature review for this study however, I found very little on this topic. What I did find typically lacked grounding in theoretical frameworks. To illustrate, much of the work on career choice has been conducted without benefit of theoretical frameworks, especially when researchers conduct studies to examine the factors that influence students’ selection of teaching as a professional career. For example, Breglio’s (2006) and Block’s (2008) studies, which examine factors that facilitate or impede students’ pursuit of teaching as a profession were conducted without use of a theoretical framework.

At the onset of this doctoral program, I began to explore various theoretical frameworks. It took going through about seven frameworks and applying them to the study before I came to the TPB model. Once I was able to fully apply the TPB model and
use it to guide my development of data collection tools and the intervention, the study became much clearer. I learned about the power of a theoretical framework to inform a research-based study. More importantly, I learned that getting to this theory takes time and patience. Finally, and importantly, I learned that theory can and should provide a framework for planning and conducting the study.

Limitations

The present study has several limitations. One of the main limitations is the group of participants targeted in this study. In reaching out to the highest achieving seniors in each school district, it is apparent that the group of participants lacks variability with respect to grade level. Thus, this particular group of students has largely already decided much earlier which profession they will enter. Based on some of the open-ended responses, it is clear that students wish they would have known about their options in education earlier. Further, this outcome leads to several conclusions. First, it will be helpful to increase the sample size and include high achieving students from sophomore and junior classes, as well. This would require a modification of the research questions to ask participants whether they intend to apply to a teachers college as a result of the information shared versus tracking whether or not students applied.

A second, notable limitation of this study pertains to the duration of the study. Ideally, it would be beneficial to determine whether or not participants actually enroll in teachers colleges. Nevertheless, due to the duration of the study, it is impossible to identify whether or not students enroll because that data is not available until the twenty-first day of classes during their freshmen year of college. This suggests that further
practice and research would most appropriately be conducted using a longitudinal study
design.

Another limitation of this study is the lack of response by parents. Students were
given a frequently asked questions sheet to share with their parents. The sheet also has a
link to a survey encouraging parents to take five minutes to share their perceptions of the
teaching profession. The goal of this tool is to provide additional data related to
normative beliefs and social norms. No responses from parents were received. A different
method for soliciting parent feedback and differentiated forms in which parents can
respond to the survey will be beneficial for future research.

Lastly, experimental mortality of participants was a great limitation and posed a
threat to validity. As mentioned previously, a relatively large number of students dropped
out of the study between the pre-and post-survey. Aside from absences during
presentations due to students being out of school, those who were testing, and/or
attending other school functions, some students may have stopped coming to the
presentations due to a lack of interest in the teaching profession. Reflecting on mortality
of participants, if due to lack of interest further elaborates on the challenges related to
recruitment into the teaching profession. Furthermore, when focusing efforts on the top
20% of the senior class, these challenges are exacerbated because the majority of the
students have already made up their mind in regard to the career path they chose.
Reaching out to high achieving students earlier on in their high school careers is one
implication for practice that will be discussed further later in this chapter.
Implications for Practice

As a result of the three additional, suggested pathways from the exploratory structural equation model, a recommended recruitment model as seen in Figure 4 below was developed. The three additional paths provide implications for practice and recommended recruitment strategies.

![Figure 4: Recommended Recruitment Model](image)

The first path suggested in the exploratory model was from attitude towards the behavior to perceived behavioral control. Because this path was so large, .67, and significant and because the intervention focused to a great extent on changing attitudes
several implications for practice are suggested. Considering one of the limitations of this study dealt with the participant group having already decided on a profession before they were in their senior year, starting recruitment outreach earlier is recommended. This notion is further supported by the literature. In the Hoke (2006) study, it was noted that by the time students reached middle school they had made career choice decisions based on idealized images and stereotypes. Further, Millar & Shevlin (2003) also presented evidence that the information an individual has about an occupation is an important element of the career choice process. They also found that if students were not consistently engaging in seeking out information related to a profession, then there were no significant actions taken in regard to intention or behavior for choosing that profession. Given these conclusions from the literature along with the findings from the current study, recruitment outreach must begin earlier and must include multiple touch points with students. If high achieving students are already considering careers in middle school grades, the recommendation is to begin recruitment outreach with students in middle school and continue to provide information to these students into their high school years.

In addition to starting the outreach process much earlier, recruitment messaging should be re-examined. Bandura (1986) posits that self-efficacy can be affected by verbal persuasion and emotional states. From quantitative and qualitative data gathered in this study, it is apparent that self-efficacy does affect the students’ attitudes toward teaching. Given this finding, messaging needs to begin early and should be presented to students in various forms. Typically recruiters provide messaging about the programs offered within the Teachers College. A recruitment campaign focused on providing inspiration as well
as information is recommended. Until a student is interested in the teaching profession, they will not be interested in programming offered at a teachers college. Quantitative and qualitative findings in this study suggest that the first presentation was the most effective in changing attitudes. Students stated that much of the inspirational type information, related to the need for excellent teachers, statistics about the achievement gap, opportunities in education and such, was effective and that if they would have known about this material earlier they may have considered teaching as a profession. Messaging should therefore contain inspirational, affective components as well as information about programs to obtain a teaching degree. Given the digital age and generation of these students, recruiters must meet students at their “level” to provide this information. Aside from presentations, it is recommended that technology tools are utilized in providing information. Emails are no longer enough, students rarely check email and when they do it is typically on a mobile device. Institutions aiming to recruit should consider using social media web applications such as Facebook and Twitter, micro-sites, smart phone application tools, video, and other web tools.

The second suggested path from the exploratory model was that from normative beliefs to attitude towards the behavior. This path, which was also significant, is consistent with the qualitative results that indicated that parents and teachers had substantial influence on students’ interest in pursuing teaching. Given these findings and this suggested path, parents and teachers must be included in recruitment outreach practices as a means to increase students’ attitudes towards teaching. Parents exhibited the greatest influence on students’ decisions relating to career choice. This study attempted to provide information to parents and gather brief feedback on their
perceptions of the profession, however no parents responded, which led to one of the limitations in this study. To engage parents further, a recommended implication for practice is to provide incentives to parents of high school students to engage in and participate in focus groups. These focus groups should target parents across demographic levels and should attempt to gather data on the parents’ perceptions and knowledge about teaching and other education professions. Information gathered from these focus groups can then be utilized to create messaging for parents. Because sending fliers to parents via students was not successful, the focus groups should also lend themselves to gathering data about how to best provide this information to parents.

The third path suggested was that from control beliefs directly to intention to teach. This path had the smallest coefficient, but it was significant. Notably, this path is highly important in the present context and suggests implications for practice. This path indicates that students’ experiences related to teaching directly influence their intention to teach. With control beliefs being so similar to self-efficacy, this recommended recruitment model suggests incorporating recruitment practices that will provide students with vicarious and mastery experiences.

Vicarious experiences are generally considered to be observations of people that then influence the behaviors of others (Bandura, 1997). These experiences directly influence an individuals’ self-efficacy. Considering that high school students immediate experiences with teaching consist of their own experiences as students in a classroom setting, recruitment strategies should aim to provide them with vicarious experiences outside of this typical setting. Qualitative data in this study indicated that students often see teaching as a barrier because they do not see themselves being able to manage a
classroom or teach others new things. One student commented that, “I could not be a teacher because I don’t think I could deal with students like the ones in my classes.” By providing prospective students with opportunities to systematically observe master teachers across various grade levels, students might be more inclined to consider teaching based on these more positive idealized images. Given that these observations would have to take place during the school day, showing video footage of these master teachers could offer another way to provide vicarious experiences.

Aside from vicarious experiences, Bandura (1997) also emphasizes mastery experiences as a way to foster self-efficacy. Mastery experiences are personal experiences with success or failure (Bandura, 1997). For example, if a prospective student is provided with an opportunity to teach school-aged children and within that experience successfully conducts classroom management and teaches a concept or lesson effectively, this positive experience will influence the perception of that student’s ability to teach. Given the importance of such mastery experiences, another implication for practice is to provide students with these opportunities as a part of the recruitment process.

These experiences could take place in various forms. Currently, a large number of schools have education professions or early childhood classes that students can take as electives. Some schools also have student clubs related to education. These courses and clubs however do not always provide students with experiences to teach school-aged children, specifically children in younger grades. One suggestion might be for recruitment teams and other college faculty to engage in an overhaul or re-design of curriculum for these courses. Since not every student would be inclined to take these
courses or join these clubs, or because these options are not available readily at all sites, teachers colleges would benefit from using technology to provide students with mastery experiences. Interactive gaming could provide students with opportunities to engage in mastery experiences through simulation. These simulated mastery experiences should allow students to engage in opportunities to explore classroom management, lesson planning, and content delivery.

In addition to the suggested paths from the exploratory structural equation model, the paths from attitude towards behavior and perceived behavioral control to intention will still remain a focus. However, these paths will largely be affected by the recommended strategies for the three suggested paths.

This recommended recruitment model and the implications for practices that emerge from the proposed components would likely increase the pipeline of prospective teachers. These recommended practices would allow recruitment teams to identify perceptions and barriers students have earlier on, provide them with effective and varied messaging, engage important others by providing information, and would provide students with exposure to the profession and foster increasing intention to teach. These strategies have the potential to elevate the status of the teaching profession and engage students in considering teaching and other education professions earlier on in their pursuit of potential career choices.

**Implications for Future Research**

Considering the implications for practice presented in the previous section and based upon the recommended recruitment model, several implications for research are also recommended. Further research is warranted to determine whether providing
students with information about teaching and education professions much earlier would increase their intention to choose the teaching profession. Future research pertaining to this topic might aim to identify when high achieving students decide on their choice of professions and how providing information at an earlier stage to families, students, and school stakeholders affect normative beliefs and a student’s intention to pursue teaching? The parent focus groups mentioned in the previous section would require quantitative and quantitative data collection that could also be centered on the TPB model using similar questions from the pre- and post- intervention assessment. In relation to providing vicarious and mastery experiences, research to identify the effectiveness of each and the various forms those experiences might take place would be essential. These experiences could be provided to students at various grade levels and stages to research and identify at which stage or grade level they have the most effect on students attitudes and intentions.

**Conclusion**

A data-driven recruitment model based on student’s perceptions and aimed at addressing their barriers and concerns is powerful. In teachers colleges across the country there is a decline in enrollment, which reflects the decrease in interest in the teaching profession. The teaching profession is not as appealing to students as other professions that are seen to hold higher status in our society. Further, given that 96% of student responses indicated that obtaining a job with a good salary was important, along with their perceptions that individuals in the teaching profession are not well paid, one conclusion is that the teaching profession lacks status because low pay is a prominent barrier. Thus, information about salary in regard to the number of years required to obtain
a degree in the field, loan forgiveness, and the range of opportunities needs to be shared with students. Further, this data, along with declining teachers college enrollment across the country should be considered in an effort to inform policy in regard to teacher pay.

This study demonstrates that students need to be inspired to pursue teaching and should also be informed on various opportunities a teaching profession can offer beyond classroom teaching. This information needs to be shared before students can thoughtfully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and consider applying to and enrolling in teachers colleges. Additionally, results from this study suggest that parents have a large influence on students’ career choices. This suggests that recruitment must reach beyond the student to inspire and inform parents as well. According to students, their parents hold similar perceptions and are concerned about barriers identified by both students and parents in this study.

This new model for recruitment based on identifying attitudes, norms, and perceived control as they relate to intention to pursue a certain behavior, in this case the pursuit of the teaching profession, is a fundamental change in the way we recruit. These outcomes suggest that there is room for modifying recruitment practices in teachers colleges to foster greater understanding of the teaching profession and recruitment for the profession. The insights and experiences gained in this study lead to the following conclusion: we must identify and then work with students’ perceptions as a foundation for providing inspirational and informational messaging about the teaching profession and opportunities in education.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

TEACHER INTEREST SCALE
To what extent have you considered teaching as a profession?
Please circle the number for your response:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Not a real possibility</td>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>I have considered teaching along with a few other professions (same interest level for all)</td>
<td>I have considered teaching a little more than the other professions</td>
<td>I have considered teaching along with I other profession (same interest level for both)</td>
<td>I have considered teaching a little more than the other profession</td>
<td>I have considered teaching along with I other profession, but am mostly leaning towards teaching</td>
<td>Teaching is a great possibility for me.</td>
<td>I am most likely going to become a teacher</td>
<td>I will definitely become a teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please list the other professions you have considered below:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

92
APPENDIX B

PRE- POST- SURVEY
Cover Letter to Participant

Dear Student,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out your perceptions and opinions of the teaching profession. This information will allow us to identify possible motivations and barriers towards choosing teaching as a profession. Even if you do not intend to teach, please answer all of the questions as best as you can.

This questionnaire is designed to measure: 1) your intentions to pursue teaching, 2) your attitude towards teaching, 3) social pressures to pursue or not to pursue teaching, and 4) your beliefs in your abilities to become an effective teacher.

This questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please provide your name and email address in the boxes provided. This information will remain confidential and is solely used for me to identify students whom I will follow up with and provide assistance to throughout the year.

Your participation is voluntary and you can choose to withdraw at any time. Thank you for your time and participation. If you have further questions feel free to contact Crystal Cruz (crystal.cruz@asu.edu).

Thank you!
1. What is your name?

2. What is your email address?

3. To what extent have you considered teaching as a profession?

- Not at all
- Not a real possibility
- Hardly ever
- Somewhat
- Occasionally
- More often
- Almost always
- Hardly ever
- Somewhat
- Occasionally
- More often
- Almost always

Please list the other professions you have considered:

4. Please list the colleges you are interested in applying to next year.
Please answer each of the following questions by choosing the description that best matches your opinion. Some of the questions may appear to be similar, but they do address somewhat different issues.

**5. For me to earn a good salary in the profession I chose is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>very unimportant</th>
<th>extremely unimportant</th>
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**6. For me to have the opportunity to obtain a leadership position in my profession is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>very unimportant</th>
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**7. For me to have an opportunity to obtain an advanced degree is:**

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<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>neither</th>
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**8. For me to have a profession where I positively impact the lives of others is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>neither</th>
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**9. For me to have a profession that is highly respected by society is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>neither</th>
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**10. For me to have a profession that is intellectually demanding is:**

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<th>extremely important</th>
<th>very important</th>
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<th>neither</th>
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</table>

**11. The teaching profession would provide me with the opportunity to earn a good salary.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely likely</th>
<th>very likely</th>
<th>somewhat likely</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>somewhat unlikely</th>
<th>very unlikely</th>
<th>extremely unlikely</th>
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**12. The teaching profession would provide me with opportunities to pursue leadership positions within the field.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>extremely likely</th>
<th>very likely</th>
<th>somewhat likely</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>somewhat unlikely</th>
<th>very unlikely</th>
<th>extremely unlikely</th>
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**13. As a teacher I would have opportunities to obtain advanced degrees.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>extremely likely</th>
<th>very likely</th>
<th>somewhat likely</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>somewhat unlikely</th>
<th>very unlikely</th>
<th>extremely unlikely</th>
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<tr>
<td>14. As a teacher I would have opportunities to positively impact the lives of others.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. As a teacher I would be involved in a profession that is highly respected by society.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. My teachers encourage me to pursue the teaching profession.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. My parents encourage me to pursue the teaching profession.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. My close friends encourage me to pursue the teaching profession.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<td>19. The media encourages me to pursue the teaching profession.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Generally speaking, I care which profession my teachers encourage me to pursue.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Generally speaking, I care which profession my parents encourage me to pursue.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Generally speaking, I care which profession my close friends think I should pursue.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Generally speaking, I care what the media has to say about the profession I intend to pursue.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. I have experienced what it is like to manage a classroom or group of students.</td>
<td>![Likert Scale]</td>
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</table>
25. I have experienced what it is like to teach others new things.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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26. I know about what it is like to teach school aged children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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27. I know enough of the content required to teach school aged children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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28. If I had prior experiences with school aged children, managing a classroom would be easy for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</table>

29. If I had more experiences teaching others new things, teaching school aged children would be easy for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</table>

30. If I knew more about what it is like to teach school aged children, choosing the teaching profession would be a greater possibility for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

31. If I knew more of the content knowledge required to teach students, choosing the teaching profession would be a greater possibility for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>slightly agree</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>slightly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
1. **Student Information (will remain confidential)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **The presentation provided me with new information about the teaching profession.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did you learn that you did not know before?

3. **The presentation was effective in positively affecting my attitude toward the teaching profession.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please explain how and why.

4. **The messages in the presentation were consistent with messages I have been receiving from people who are important to me (parents, teachers, peers, etc.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</table>

What messages are you receiving from these people and who are they?

5. **The presentation was effective in making me believe that I could acquire the skills needed to teach?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</table>

What specific messages increased your belief that you would acquire the skills needed to teach?
6. The presentation was effective in increasing my interest in attending the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What specific messages were effective in increasing your interest in attending the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College? How or why were they effective?

7. The presentation was easy for me to understand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If anything was unclear, please describe what you do not understand so that we can make it clearer.

8. I would suggest this presentation to my peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Why or why not?

9. I am more likely to choose teaching as a profession because of this presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</table>

Why or why not?

10. What did you like best about the presentation?

11. What did you like least about this presentation?
APPENDIX D

PRINCIPAL LETTER OF PERMISSION
Dear Principal:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Ray Buss in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. Additionally, I work for the Sanford Inspire Program, formerly known as the Sanford Education Project. I am conducting a research study as part of my doctoral studies and the Sanford Inspire Program in order to identify high school students’ perceptions of the teaching profession. As a former teacher and an aspiring school leader, I see the importance of securing excellent teachers for our schools. This study will allow me to identify what motivates students to choose teaching as a profession and what discourages them.

Based on the work our program has engaged in at (NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL) in the past and on recent discussions regarding plans for working with students between your (COUNSELORS, CAREER CENTER ADVISORS, ETC) and me, I am inviting participation from students at your school. Students that we would like to engage in these discussions and study are seniors in the top twenty percent of their class, students enrolled in education related courses, students who self-select based on interests and students who are recommended by staff.

Counselors have helped our team identify or have made plans to identify the participants. The duration of this approach would take place over the course of the school year based on dates that have been set up with your (COUNSELING DEPT, CAREER CENTER). Presentations would take place in September, October or November, and December.

Student participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to have your students participate or wish to withdraw your school from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Likewise, if your students choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study may be published, but your school name or students’ names will not be used.

Although there may be no direct benefit to your school or students, the possible benefit of their participation is assistance in career and college choices. Through a series of presentations students may discover what motivates them about potential careers and what does not. Regardless of their desire to choose teaching or not, presentations will inform students about career options, degree and major options, and about University admissions, financial aid, and scholarships. Our team works closely with the Undergraduate Admissions representatives from Arizona State University and through partnership and collaboration, this allows your students to have access to an additional representative to answer their questions or direct them to the answers. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your school’s participation.

Responses to any evaluation tools completed by your students will be confidential. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your school name and student’s names will not be used.
If you have any questions concerning the research study or your schools participation in this study, please call me or Dr. Ray Buss at (602) 543-6343.

Sincerely,

Crystal Cruz

By signing below, you are giving consent for your high school and your students to participate in the above study.

_____________________         _____________________
Signature                                    Printed Name

____
Date

If you have any questions about your school or your student’s rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel your school or your students have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.
APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL BOARD APPROVAL
To: Ray Buss  
FAB

From: Mark Roosa, Chair  
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 08/17/2012

Committee Action: Expedited Approval

Approval Date: 08/17/2012  
Review Type: Expedited F7

IRB Protocol #: 1207008080

Study Title: HIGH ACHIEVING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND THEIR EFFECT ON ENROLLMENT INTO THE MARY LOU FULTON TEACHERS COLLEGE

Expiration Date: 08/16/2013

The above-referenced protocol was approved following expedited review by the Institutional Review Board.

It is the Principal Investigator’s responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Adverse Reactions: If any untoward incidents or adverse reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to notify the Soc Beh IRB immediately. If necessary a member of the IRB will be assigned to look into the matter. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending IRB review.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, or the investigators, please communicate your requested changes to the Soc Beh IRB. The new procedure is not to be initiated until the IRB approval has been given.

Please retain a copy of this letter with your approved protocol.