The Differences between Novice and Experienced Public Middle School Principals in the Decision to Remediate a Tenured Teacher

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS........................................................................................................... iii

LIST OF TABLES....................................................................................................................... vii

LIST OF FIGURES..................................................................................................................... x

ABSTRACT............................................................................................................................. xii

CHAPTER....................................................................................................................................

I. INTRODUCTION.................................................................................................................. 1
   Purpose of Research ...................................................................................................... 12
   Conceptual Framework ................................................................................................. 13
   Preliminary Research Design ..................................................................................... 16
   Limitations ..................................................................................................................... 17

II. LITERATURE REVIEW...................................................................................................... 19
   The History of Tenure and its Evolution in Illinois Schools ........................................ 20
   Evaluation of Tenured Teachers .................................................................................. 28
   Tensions Associated with the Remediation Process .................................................... 30
   Understanding the Legal Process for Dismissing a Tenured Teacher ......................... 35
   Research on Novice and Experienced Principals ......................................................... 37
   Conceptual Frameworks: Ethical Paradigms and Expectancy Theory ......................... 41
      Ethic of Justice ........................................................................................................... 43
      Ethic of Critique ........................................................................................................ 44
      Ethic of Caring ......................................................................................................... 45
      Ethic of Profession ................................................................................................. 46
      Expectancy Theory ............................................................................................... 49
   Other Considerations in Teacher Evaluations ............................................................. 52
   Summary ....................................................................................................................... 55

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.......................................................................................... 57
   Research Strategy ......................................................................................................... 57
   Site Selection ................................................................................................................ 60
   Sampling Plan ............................................................................................................. 61
   Questionnaire Design ................................................................................................. 62
   Questionnaire Informal Focus Group ....................................................................... 64
   Data Collection ........................................................................................................... 65
   Data Analysis ............................................................................................................. 66
   Ethical Considerations ............................................................................................... 68
   Limitations .................................................................................................................. 68
   Bias Minimization ..................................................................................................... 69
   Summary ..................................................................................................................... 70

iv
IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA

Review of the Procedure ................................................................. 71
Design of the Questionnaire ............................................................. 72
Demographic Data ............................................................................. 73
Age ..................................................................................................... 73
Gender ............................................................................................... 74
School Years of Experience as Principal ........................................ 75
School Years Serving as the Principal in Their Current Schools .... 75
Enrollment ......................................................................................... 76
Number of Teachers .......................................................................... 77
Location of School ........................................................................... 77
Grades Currently Served ................................................................. 79
Union/Non-union .............................................................................. 80
Bivariate Demographic Data ............................................................ 80
Gender and Location ........................................................................ 80
Age and Location ............................................................................ 82
Years of Experience and Location ................................................ 83
Age and Years of Experience as Principal ....................................... 83
Experience and Size of Faculty ......................................................... 84
Further Analysis of Principals’ Years of Experience ....................... 85
Evaluation and Remediation of Tenured Teachers .......................... 86
Remediation Plans ........................................................................... 87
Unsatisfactory Ratings .................................................................... 98
Principals’ Definitions of Tenure ..................................................... 103
Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence .......................................... 113
Principal Perceptions of Norming Evaluations ............................... 117
Teacher Dismissal Proceedings ..................................................... 121
Current Under-performing Teachers ............................................. 125
Summary ......................................................................................... 132

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS ........................................... 133
Themes ............................................................................................ 138
Theme #1: Compared to the occurrence of underperforming teachers,
the rate of principals placing tenured teachers on remediation
plans is low .................................................................................... 138
Theme #2: Novice principals are more likely to remediate tenured
teachers compared to experienced principals ............................... 140
Theme #3: Principals perceive remediation plans as ineffective and
that their effects on teachers’ instruction and behavior are only
temporary ......................................................................................... 142
Theme #4: A common understanding of tenure by principals is that
tenure serves to protect poor performing teachers ....................... 144
Theme #5: Among principals, there is a wide range of understandings
and perceptions of tenure and incompetence .............................. 146
Research Questions .......................................................................... 149
What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan? ................................................................. 149

What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher? ............ 156

Limitations of the Study ................................................................. 159
Further Research ........................................................................... 160
Implications on School Leaders and Principal Preparation Programs ........................................................................ 162
Conclusion ...................................................................................... 164

APPENDIX

A. ETHICAL PARADIGM CODING ...................................................... 168
B. EXPECTANCY THEORY CODING .................................................. 170
C. COVER LETTER 1 TO PRINCIPALS .......................................... 172
D. COVER LETTER 2 TO PRINCIPALS .......................................... 174
E. REMINDER POSTCARD ............................................................. 176
F. CONSENT FORM ......................................................................... 178
G. PRINCIPAL SURVEY ON TENURE AND EVALUATION .......... 181
H. SELECTIONS FROM THE ILLINOIS SCHOOL CODE ................. 186

REFERENCES ......................................................................................... 197

VITA ........................................................................................................ 206
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A Comparison of Expert and Novice Principals</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Differences in Tacit Knowledge between Expert and Novice Principals</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Five Principles of Ethics Applied to the Principalship</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ethic of Care and Ethic of Justice</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Key Words and Phrases Associated with Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fraenkel and Wallen’s Steps for Conducting Qualitative Research</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. All Grades Served by Each School (n=186)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gender and Location (n=186)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Summary of Average Ages by Location (n=181)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Summary of Years of Experience by Location (n=181)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Summary of Outcomes of the Remediation Plans (n=52)</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Outcomes of the Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Remediation Plans (n=51)</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Summary of Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Directed to Not Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating (n=182)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Summary of Novice Principals and Experienced Principals’ Perception of the Freedom to Rate Tenured Teachers (n=182)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Summary of Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=186)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=183)</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59) ................................................................. 111

18. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59) ..... 112

19. Novice Principals (Who Have Remediated a Tenured Teacher) and Experienced Principals (Who Have Remediated a Tenured Teacher) Perceptions of Tenure (n=17) ..................................................................................................... 112

20. Summary of Incompetence Definitions (n=186) ...................................................... 114

21. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence (n=183) .................................................................................................................... 117

22. Summary of Offers by Principals to Tenured Teachers to Resign (n=94) .......... 123

23. Summary of Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Offers to Tenured Teachers to Resign (n=83) .................................................................................. 124

24. Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Currently Have One or More Teachers with Unsatisfactory Performances (n=65) ........................................... 127

25. Principals Who Currently Have One or More Teachers With Unsatisfactory Performances and their Experience with Remediation Plans (n=65) .................. 127

26. Principals’ Current Plans for Addressing Unsatisfactory Performance (n=65) .... 128

27. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Current Plans for Addressing Unsatisfactory Performance (n=65) ................................................................. 131

28. Summary of Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=186) ...................................... 146

29. Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59) ................................................................. 147

30. Summary of Incompetence Definitions (n=186) ...................................................... 148

31. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=183) ..... 150

32. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59) ..... 151

33. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence (n=183) .................................................................................................................... 151

34. Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Current Plans for Addressing Unsatisfactory Performance (n=65) ................................................................. 153
35. Outcomes of the Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Remediation Plans (n=51) ......................................................................................................................... 158

36. Senate Bill 7 .............................................................................................................. 162
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Starratt’s Multidimensional Ethical Paradigm</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Age of Principals (Respondents)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Age Groups of Principals (Respondents)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gender of Principals (Respondents)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. School Years of Experience as Principal (Respondents)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Number of Years Serving as the Principal in their current school</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. School Enrollments</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Number of Teachers</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Location of School</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Grades Served</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Union/Non-union</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Gender Summary of the Rural Principals</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Gender Summary of the Suburban Principals</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Gender Summary of Urban Principals</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Age Versus Years of Experience</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Summary of Novice and Experienced Principals</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Number of Schools Served in the Role as Principal</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. Principals Who Have Placed a Tenured Teacher on Remediation ..................... 88
20. Principals’ Years of Experience as a Principal When Remediating a Tenured Teacher ................................................................. 89
21. Concerns Indicated by Principals Placing Teachers Under Remediation ........ 90
22. Novice Principals’ Concerns before Remediating a Tenured Teacher ............ 93
23. Experienced Principals’ Concerns before Remediating a Tenured Teacher .... 93
24. Summary of Results from Remediation Plans ............................................. 97
25. Principals Who Have Been Told by a District Administrator Not to Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating ...................................................... 98
26. Principals Who Have Felt They Could Not Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating ............................................................... 100
27. First Year Principals Who Felt Pressure to Give Ratings Similar to their Predecessors .............................................................................. 118
28. Written Responses about Principals Feeling Pressure to Norm their Evaluations from the Previous Principal ................................................. 119
29. Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process ................................................................. 121
30. Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process ................. 122
31. Summary of Teachers Holding Teaching Positions after Being Pressured to Resign ................................................................. 125
32. Principals Who Currently have Tenured Teachers Whose Performances are Unsatisfactory ................................................................. 126
33. Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm .................................................. 136
34. Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process ................. 155
ABSTRACT

School principals in Illinois face an ethical dilemma when evaluating tenured teachers. Giving an unsatisfactory rating and placing a tenured teacher under a remediation plan opens the door to a time-consuming process filled with legal and financial issues that will strain relationships in the school. However, giving a less than honest rating results in leaving the teacher in the classroom and not making decisions in the best interest of students.

Presented here is a review of current research on evaluating tenured teachers and a framework of ethical lenses that can be applied to a principal’s decision-making. This study looks at the differences, if any, that exist between novice and experienced principals when contemplating remediating a tenured teacher.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

School principals in Illinois face an ethical dilemma when evaluating tenured teachers. “Teachers need to run a classroom on a day-to-day basis, make a subject come alive, and find ways to inspire unmotivated and struggling students” (Johnson, 2004, p. 27). If they feel a teacher’s performance is unsatisfactory, giving an unsatisfactory rating and placing a teacher under a remediation plan opens the door to a time-consuming process filled with legal, financial, and ethical issues. However, giving a less than honest rating results in leaving the under-performing teacher in the classroom and not making decisions that are in the best interest of students.

Ideally, all principals, when earning their administrative certifications, are trained to be instructional leaders who make decisions that are in the best interests of their students. “Most state certification systems rest on a foundation of explicit leadership standards to create licensure requirements” (Roberts, 2009, p. 6). However, in addition to inconsistencies that exist between certification programs, there is growing concern that additional training for new principals is needed. “There are too many complex demands placed on school principals to assume that, once certified, they are set for life. Induction for beginners and ongoing in-service education for all administrators must be (and in many cases is) required and seen as part of effective professional life” (Daresh, 1997, p. 4).
“Administrators deal with fairness, equality, justice and democracy as much as they deal with test scores, teachers’ salaries, parents, and budgets” (Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 2005, p. 15). This study examined the principal’s accountability to the financial health of the school and district, the principal’s legal obligations as a supervisor of district employees, and the principal’s ethical responsibility to the profession of education. These additional roles of principals can create ethical dilemmas and cause tension in a school, district, and community. This study looked at the differences, if any, that exist between novice and experienced Illinois middle school principals when contemplating remediating a tenured teacher. Principals, when making decisions such as deciding to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher, have to weigh all the issues as well as be concerned about the financial and legal ramifications.

In 2010, the following headlines appeared in Illinois newspapers. “Public school funding sees $241 million cut” (Chicago Tribune, July 1, 2010). “Education cuts causing teachers to leave state” (Peoria Star, June 1, 2010). “Illinois school budgets at the breaking point” (Chicago Tribune, March 24, 2010). “Class size increases, firing hundreds of teachers, cutting employee pay and increasing benefit contributions are all very real possibilities” (Daily Herald, February 12, 2010). As the headlines reflect, the poor economy is significantly impacting Illinois school funding. In turn, the number of unemployed teachers vying for an open teaching position in Illinois increases every day. Therefore, when a school district dismisses a teacher, a real possibility exist he or she may not get hired for another teaching job in Illinois the following school year, despite the experience earned the previous school year. That teacher will be competing against
other teachers displaced or dismissed due to budget cuts and all the new teachers looking for their first teaching job.

Due to these economic conditions, district administrators also know there will not be a shortage of qualified applicants to replace that teacher. It is a case of supply and demand with the increase in supply favoring the school district wishing to hire the best teaching candidates. Many of those applicants will have the training, experience, and pedagogy that a district is seeking in an ideal candidate. The poor economic conditions in Illinois and the decrease in Illinois school funding have created an opportunity for the school district to be more selective in their hiring.

At the same time, the district has invested many hours of professional development in the teachers they currently employ. Ideally, each teacher in the district participates in an induction process and spends part of each school year working on the school and district initiatives to improve student achievement. This teacher has collaborated with other teachers in the district and knows the curriculum. The district and specifically the principal have to decide if the concerns they have for any teacher warrant further consideration and if they should begin the process of remediating the employee with the possibility of eventually deciding to dismiss the employee.

Add to this scenario that the teacher being dismissed has tenure and is being dismissed with cause. Illinois School Code limits the reasons a teacher with tenure may be dismissed from a district. To dismiss a Illinois teacher “for incompetency, cruelty, negligence, immorality or other sufficient cause, first the teacher must fail to complete a one-year remediation plan with a "satisfactory" or better rating” (ILSC 10-22.4). For the
principal considering releasing the teacher, he or she will have to document the reasons very carefully. If the final recommendation to the school board is to dismiss this teacher from the district, the teacher will be seeking new employment with two strikes against him or her: he or she will have been dismissed with cause and his or her salary will be higher than other candidates with less experience.

Tenure is a property right. “The holding of a teaching position qualifies as a property right if the employee has an unexpired contract or has acquired tenure” (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004, p. 199). “Its [Tenure’s] primary purpose is to protect competent teachers from arbitrary nonrenewal of contract for reasons unrelated to the educational process—personal beliefs, personality conflicts with administrators or school board members, and the like” (Scott, 1986, p. 3). In a study by Thomas Kersten (2006) surveying Illinois’ school board presidents, 65% agreed or strongly agreed that tenure protects good teachers from arbitrary dismissal. However, 14% commented that tenure protects below average teachers. Why has tenure of teachers become such a contentious issue for school administrators?

If one reads the public statements made by proponents of tenure, they argue that tenure-track positions attract more qualified candidates and teachers are more effective knowing they have the job security and protection tenure affords. “Schools benefit from a stable and satisfactory workforce. Teachers have rights to certain due process guarantees that protect them from nepotism, discrimination, and ineptitude” (Nettles & Petscher, 2007, p. 328). The opponents of tenure argue that the numbers indicate tenure is preventing school districts from removing ineffective teachers (Kvenvold, 1989;
Reader, 2005a). “Data gathered from each of the 876 [Illinois] school districts show that of the state’s 95,500 tenured teachers, an average of only 51 received “unsatisfactory” ratings in each year over the past decade” (Reeder, 2005a). While this study will focus on Illinois middle schools, the problem is not unique to Illinois. In a study in North Carolina between 1989 and 1992, thirty school districts removed a total of forty tenured teachers while employing an average of 12,297 teachers annually (Ward, 1995). In California, which employees an average of 179,780 teachers, only 227 dismissal hearings were held between 1990 and 1999 (Dawson, 2000).

All published statistics on teacher dismissals only include dismissals that went through a formal process designed by a state legislature to dismiss a teacher. Not included is what is referred to as “closet leavings.” Despite having tenure, teachers are either counseled out or pressured by principals to resign. A teacher chooses to leave rather than going through the remediation process that may result in dismissal. “Rather than relying on the district’s formal dismissal procedure, the principals used alternative methods to pressure teachers they perceived to be low quality” (Stoelinga, 2010, p. 57). There are no statistics how many teachers each year are performing unsatisfactorily but never received unsatisfactory evaluations and decided to leave their districts.

District administrators are left to consider the time they would need to devote to remediating an unsatisfactory teacher and the time and cost for a possible dismissal of a tenured teacher. “Bills indicate school districts have spent an average of $219,504.21[per case] in legal fees for dismissal cases and related litigation from the beginning of 2001 until the end of 2005. As staggering as that number is, it actually understates the ultimate
cost of these lawsuits because 44 percent of these cases are still on appeal and the lawyer bills continue to grow” (Reeder, 2010b). As school districts strive to recruit qualified teachers and remove ineffective teachers, the lists of people supporting and opposing tenure continue to grow.

As the person responsible for evaluating all the teachers in the school, the principal, through his or her summative rating, will be the determining voice for putting a teacher under a remediation plan which may subsequently result in the removal of a tenured teacher. However, as the numbers show, principals are choosing not to give teachers unsatisfactory ratings that would trigger remediation plans. “School administrators will give these positive evaluations just hoping that the teacher will improve” (Reeder, 2005a). Also, the process of remediating and possibly releasing the teacher is lengthy and this decision should not be taken lightly.

It is not impossible to terminate the employment of a tenured teacher, but the process is a difficult and cumbersome one. Consequently, many parents arrive at the conclusion that administrators would rather retain incompetent teachers than go through the time and effort involved in a dismissal hearing. (Scott, 1986, p. 3)

Teacher evaluations are no longer limited to knowing how to evaluate a teacher on his or her content knowledge and classroom management skills. “Teacher evaluation necessarily embodies the values and expectations of the school community regarding teaching and learning and requires the integration of keen technical and political skills by those in leadership roles” (Stronge & Tucker, 1999, p. 399). Each evaluation is an
opportunity for the principal to note areas of improvement for his or her teachers, but it has become a time when a principal weighs the options and consequences of his or her ratings (Bridges & Groves, 1999; Kvenvold, 1989; Oliva, Mathers, & Laine, 2009).

“Some principals simply cannot handle that stressful situation. They replace high professional standards with maintaining good relationships with their teachers” (Yariv, 2009, p. 447).

The statistics not only reflect some administrators’ unwillingness or apprehension to give low ratings to tenured teachers but also a lack of power to properly evaluate and remediate teachers. “The reality is that, throughout the United States, they [school administrators and boards of education] often face substantial obstacles to implement effective teacher evaluation and dismissal, particularly with faculty members who are perceived as mediocre or below average performers” (Kersten, 2006, p. 235). While being ultimately responsible for every aspect of the school, the principal is limited when it comes to evaluating tenured teachers. “They [principals] have positional power to evaluate teachers but only recommending power in matters of reemployment and dismissal” (Bridges & Groves, 1999, p. 321). The Center for Reinventing Public Education refers to this situation as “a double bind of being responsible for everything while lacking the authority to decide anything” (Portin, 2003, p. 34).

A new principal may face additional challenges when attempting to effectively evaluate his or her teachers. “Some new principals may hear a subtle yet distinct message: you don’t make waves” (Rooney, 2000, p. 78). In this case, what is being said is that the evaluations of the tenured teachers should not be dramatically different from
previous years and previous administrations. “In fact, one of the biggest obstacles to removing poor performing teachers is years of evaluations that do not reflect the depth of the instructor’s shortcomings” (Reeder, 2005b). What may be obvious to the new principal about a teacher’s deficiencies may not be recorded anywhere in previous evaluations.

Rooney’s (2000) comment also speaks to the politics of school administration and teacher evaluation. “In an ideal world, these systems of personnel evaluation would be based solely on merit, encourage improved performance, and remove those whose performance is marginal or unsatisfactory” (Bridges & Groves, 1999, p. 321). While principals are not elected to their position, their role is not free of politics and their schools do not operate in an “ideal” world. Principals lead schools that have incompetent teachers still in the classrooms and principals are weighing the legal, financial and political ramifications of each personnel evaluation (Painter, 2000; Peterson, 2004). At the same time, principals must be aware that evaluations send messages to their teachers. If a teacher receives an unsatisfactory rating, the faculty sees that the principal wants to see some changes. If a teacher receives a satisfactory rating, the faculty takes that as a message that the principal is content with the quality of the teaching her or she observed.

The issue of school culture must be addressed when considering the remediation and possible dismissal of a tenured teacher. “Schools tend to be collegial environments where conflict between faculty members and principals is avoided” (Reeder, 2005c). “Viewing personnel evaluation simply in rational, technical terms conceals more than it
illuminates” (Bridges & Groves, 1999, p. 336). The decision to remediate a tenured teacher can trigger a response from every employee as well as other stakeholders (Peterson, 2004). One principal characterized the process as having an “emotional toll” on total organization: Students who support teacher, parents who support teacher, teachers who support teacher. “It puts the full organization through a lot of stress and strains relationships” (Painter, 2000, p. 261). However, there will be teachers and staff members who will welcome and support some removals of teachers. An incompetent teacher puts a strain on a school and is stressful on the faculty.

Both the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium and the Illinois Content-Area Standards for Principals address the need for principals to effectively evaluate their teachers. “The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that human resource functions support the attainment of school goals” (CCSSO, 2008). “The competent principal applies effective job-analysis procedures, supervisory techniques and performance appraisal for instructional and non-instructional staff” (ISBE, 2002). There is little research suggesting a lack of ability to evaluate and remediate on the part of the principal. “They [Principals] assert confidence in their skills and abilities with respect to teacher evaluation” (Painter, 2000, p. 256). Most of the research suggests that the principal may have internal and external reasons for not honestly evaluating and remediating the problems seen in tenured teachers’ classrooms.

The factors causing principals to hold back on rating tenured teachers unsatisfactory and remediating them result in an ethical dilemma for school and district administrators. “The educational leader fulfills all professional duties with honesty and
integrity and always acts in a trustworthy and responsible manner” (AASA, 2007).

Where is the integrity in filing a satisfactory evaluation for a tenured teacher and “hoping he or she improves”? However, is it responsible to pursue a remediation plan and possible dismissal if that process is going to, in the end, divert funds from essential instructional programs? “Ethical situations often require that hard choices be made under complex and ambiguous circumstances” (Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 2005, p. 3).

No matter how many years of experience in administration, all principals have some hesitation when deciding to remediate a tenured teacher. Novice principals (those with five or fewer years of experience) may not be able to commit the time and energy necessary to properly remediate and document their work with an unsatisfactory teacher. “Cited as obstacles to dismissal were: the difficult legal process involving lengthy documentation, strict tenure laws, powerful teacher unions, and the inordinate amount of time needed to pursue even one suspected incompetent teacher” (Kvenvold, 2010, p. 99).

For a novice principal, these obstacles are in direct conflict with the research on what a novice principal should be focused. “New principals must develop a collegial attitude within their school community and make collaboration, shared decision-making, and school improvement teams an integral part of the school climate” (Beckerman, 2005, p. 44). “Principals need to concentrate on the most substantive qualities on leadership, those that focus on relationships” (Rooney, 2008, p. 85). On the other hand, knowing how great the time commitment is, experienced principals may also be reluctant to place a tenured teacher on remediation. “An average of nearly 12 months per teacher was
required before the issue of incompetence was resolved while fulfilling due process requirements” (Kvenvold, 2010, p. 101).

Research shows that the decision to remediate a teacher is blurred by the cost, time, policies and politics. “The extent to which principals can effectively act to remove incompetent teachers may be compromised by multiple environmental factors including legal protections related to job security of teachers (state statutes, collective bargaining agreements), political considerations and social influences” (Painter, 2000, p. 257).

While studying the dismissal of tenured teachers in Illinois, Paul Thurston examined, the legal framework, and called the dismissal “a evolving, viable system” (Thurston, 1990). He focused on four major categories of dismissal: incompetence, physical abuse, personal misconduct, and insubordination. “Those who believe that the dismissal of tenured teachers is unpredictable and irrational, only understandable by the uncertain whims of the hearing officers selected to decide the cases, will be surprised to find well-developed patterns in each of the four categories” (p. 6). The focus of this study will be on how the principal’s years of administrative experience may or may not impact his or her decision to remediate a tenured teacher. In the research on principals and teacher evaluation and remediation, this topic warrants further research.

This study focused on Illinois public middle schools. According to the 2008-2009 data, the average enrollment for a public elementary school, grades K-8, in Illinois was 424 students and the average enrollment for a public high school, grades 9-12, was 995 students (ISBE, 2010). “Teacher evaluation at the middle and high school level is particularly challenging, relative to elementary school, in that the evaluator’s subject
matter expertise is essential” (Peterson, 2004, p. 72). Excluding the City of Chicago, this study focused on 646 Illinois public middle school principals.

**Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this research was to understand the impact that administrative experience may or may not have, on a middle school principal’s decision to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan.

Specifically the fundamental research questions were:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

Before evaluating a tenured teacher and placing him or her on a remediation plan, there are many issues to consider. These issues range from legal and financial to political and ethical. “Undoubtedly, the legal requirements associated with tenure influence how dismissal procedures unfold” (Coleman, Schroth, Molinaro, & Green, 2006, p. 226). This study sought to identify differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals when considering the issues before making the decision to remediate a tenured teacher or evaluate his or her work as satisfactory. This study also sought to identify perceptual differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals in relation to
the resources and support they need to remediate, and possibly dismiss, a tenured teacher for poor performance.

**Conceptual Framework**

In analyzing the responses by middle school principals to the survey designed for this study, the researcher code the qualititative data received. The coding was based Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2009) research on ethical leadership and decision making as well as Victor Vroom’s (1964) Expectancy Theory.

In sum, we have described a paradigm for the profession that expects its leaders to formulate and examine their own professional codes of ethics in light of individual personal codes of ethics, as well as standards set forth by the profession, and then calls on them to place students at the center of the ethical decision-making process. (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 26)

The researcher examined the responses from the principals to see which ethical lenses they are applying in their responses as well as how their responses reflected their personal motivation which is addressed by Expectancy Theory.

“The principle of justice is expressed as equal treatment of and respect for the integrity of individuals” (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 105). Many of the legal issues and dilemmas that arise in this study will crossover to the ethic of justice. “Viewing ethical dilemmas from this vantage point, one may ask questions related to the rule of law and the more abstract concepts of fairness, equity, and justice” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 13). Researchers have examined how principals have a choice to apply the ethic of
justice or the ethic of care to certain school situations (Enomoto, 1997). “A caring ethic assumes that personal concerns, private concerns, and the public good are linked and that solutions to problems must seek to promote both” (Beck, 1992, p. 480). Beyond focusing on justice, principals must look to an ethic of caring for the total development of others (Beck, 1992).

“The ethic of critique illuminates unethical practices in governing and managing organizations and implies in its critique some ethical values such as equality, the common good, human and civil rights, democratic participation, and the like” (Starratt, 1991, p. 191). What policies or practices are causing an ethical dilemma for principals and who created these policies? “Rather than accepting the ethic of those in power, these scholars challenge the status quo by seeking an ethic that will deal with inconsistencies, formulate the hard questions, and debate and challenge the issues” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 14). The ethic of critique would be applied to issues facing groups that make laws and policies and concerns for who is being left out by these laws and policies.

The ethic of profession requires administrators to develop their own personal and professional codes of ethics (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009). “As professional leaders develop their professional (and personal) codes, they consider various ethical models, either focusing on specific paradigms or, optimally, integrating the ethics of justice, care, and critique” (p. 24). What is in the best interest of the students and what are the principal’s professional beliefs?

Victor Vroom presented what he called Expectancy Value Theory (1964) and other researchers have since referred to it as Expectancy Motivation Theory. His theory
proposes that individuals are motivated to engage in a particular behavior when they value the outcome of the task and they believe that performing the task will produce the desired result.

We speculated that the effects of success and failure might be dependent on the level of effort exerted by the subject prior to succeeding or failing, the persistence of the success or failure, and previously established beliefs concerning the probability of success under different levels of effort. (Vroom, 1964, p. 284)

If there is an established belief among some principals that no amount of effort will successfully remove a tenured teacher, this might affect a principal’s decision to move forward with the remediation process. “Applying this theory to the motivation of principals to engage in successful completion of the tasks of evaluation will actually result in the removal of the incompetent teacher, and their belief that this removal is a worthy goal” (Painter, 2000, p. 250). Vroom’s (1964) theory was also applied to some of the principals’ responses in this study.

The decision to remediate a tenured teacher involves many issues, including ethical decisions and the principal’s motivation for deciding to commit to this lengthy process. In this study, the participants (public middle school principals in Illinois) were asked to answer a set of free-response questions and the researcher looked for key words, phrases, and concepts from the ethical paradigms and Expectancy Theory when analyzing the principals’ responses. “It [A conceptual framework] identifies the concepts included in a complex phenomenon and shows their relationships” (Leshem & Trafford, 2007, p.
By using Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2009) “Multiple Ethical Paradigm” and Vroom’s (1964) Expectancy Theory as conceptual frameworks, the researcher analyzed the data and identified the key concepts and relationships within the data. “A framework is a configuration of an interrelated set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that comprise a way of viewing reality” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 121). In this study, using research on ethical decision making and motivation, the conceptual framework was used to view Illinois middle school principals’ assumptions, views, practices, and decisions in the area of evaluation, remediating, and possibly releasing tenured teachers for poor performance. Through this analysis, the researcher drew conclusions that address the fundamental research questions.

**Preliminary Research Design**

The researcher employed a qualitative research design and used a qualitative questionnaire to gather data. The researcher analyzed the data using qualitative methodologies to understand the experiences of middle school principals and the evaluation of tenured teachers. The goal was to address the fundamental research questions on novice and experienced Illinois public middle school principals’ perceptions concerning the remediation of tenured teachers.

The researcher was interested in the experiences of a broad range of middle school principals in Illinois. The researcher sent out a qualitative questionnaire to all building administrators of public middle schools in Illinois, excluding the City of Chicago.
Limitations

While this study aimed to gain an understanding of and to add to the research on novice and experienced Illinois middle school principals’ perceptions concerning the remediation of tenured teachers, there were limitations.

In total, 646 questionnaires were sent out. Some principals who chose not to take part in this study and lacking their responses possibly limited the findings of this study.

The participants in this study were limited to middle school principals in Illinois. A larger sampling to include elementary principals, high school principals, and other administrators responsible for formally evaluating teachers could add to the results and implications of this study.

Public schools in Chicago were excluded from this study because of the district's policy on conducting research. Chicago Public Schools has its own Institutional Research Board that must review any proposals involving any of their schools. Due to the difficulties gaining access to the Chicago public schools and their administrators, this study focused on only public middle schools not overseen by the Chicago Board of Education.

Tenure laws vary from state to state. Also, tenure laws were enacted and refined at different times in each state’s history. Therefore, this study cannot be generalized to other states that each has their own tenure laws and the history of tenure in each state differs from Illinois.

The researcher is a member of a secondary school leadership team in a charter high school and conducts a portion of the formal evaluations of the faculty. This creates a
bias and the researcher is aware of this bias and will attempt to limit its effects. The researcher will keep a research journal to write about these biases during the study in an attempt to separate them from the research.

The qualitative data collected from the surveys are subject to coding and interpretation of the researcher. However, the coding and interpretation was tied back to the literature review and the aforementioned conceptual framework. The researcher looked for key words and phrases as guided by the literature.

Despite these limitations, this study addressed an important issue for all stakeholders in public education. What this researcher learns through this study will inform principals and districts struggling with issues of evaluation of tenured teachers. Also, what this researcher learns will inform superintendents working with novice and experienced principals, especially in the area of summative evaluations. There is a possibility differences exist between novice and experienced Illinois middle school principals’ perceptions concerning the remediation of tenured teachers that superintendents have never considered and there may also be some similarities superintendents never realized. Principal preparation programs and professional development providers for middle school principals will benefit from this study and it may change how they work with middle school principals in the areas of human resources and supervision of teachers.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is a review of current research relevant to the research questions proposed in Chapter I:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

This chapter investigates existing research in several areas this study covered. This chapter also presents current research on ethical decision-making and Expectancy Theory, both of which were applied as conceptual frameworks for understanding the principals’ responses to the qualitative questionnaire.

The research available looks at several related fields and it is clear that properly evaluating public middle school tenured teachers in Illinois has become problematic. In this age of accountability and poor school funding, more attention will be given to school districts and their tenured teachers if the districts are not making the necessary academic progress with their students (Kersten, 2006; Painter, 2000). “Marginal teachers are a drag
on school improvement initiatives because their students do not achieve at the levels if which they are capable” (McEwan, 2005, p. 142). In recent years, the standards and accountability movement has drawn attention to the performance of public schools and teacher tenure (Bridges, 1990; Coleman et al., 2006; Painter, 2000).

The research presented in this chapter has been organized into the following themes:

1. The History of Tenure and its Evolution in Illinois Schools
2. Evaluation of Tenured Teachers
3. Tensions Associated with The Remediation Process
4. Understanding the Legal Process for Dismissing a Tenured Teacher
5. Research on Novice and Experienced Principals
6. Conceptual Frameworks: Ethical Paradigms & Expectancy Theory
7. Other Considerations in Teacher Evaluations

The History of Tenure and its Evolution in Illinois Schools

“Teaching has indisputably become a more desirable occupation during the twentieth century” (Sedlak & Schlossman, 1987, p. 94). Teachers were scrutinized by communities, and teachers were left to lead very restricted lives. “The lives of female teachers were regulated even more closely than those of their male colleagues… Teachers today are far less constrained by contract or custom regarding personal behavior, political activity, and moral beliefs” (Sedlak & Schlossman, 1987, p. 94). Teaching lacked stability and conditions in schools were likened to those in factories in the early 1900s (Coleman et al., 2006). Tenure has provided job security to teachers and stability to
school communities; competent teachers are protected from unfair dismissals, and the promise of academic freedom and a long-term position in a community attracts new teachers each year.

“In order to fully understand the impact tenure had on today’s educational system it is important to recognize what it is, and how it came to be and then ask whether today’s current realities in education paint a picture similar to that picture which was painted over a century ago when tenure was introduced” (Coleman et al., 2006, p. 222). To be clear, tenure is not equivalent to granting an employee a job or job security for life. Tenure is a set of due process rights granted to a teacher following his or her years of continuous employment. “Its primary purpose is to protect competent teachers from arbitrary non-renewal of contract for reasons unrelated to the educational process—personal beliefs, personality conflicts with administrators or school board members, and the like” (p. 223). Some opponents would challenge this statement and ask if this is still the primary purpose or simply the original intent.

“The first tenure law [for teachers] was enacted [in 1909] in New Jersey. At that time, job protection was seen as necessary because of prevalent nepotism, political favoritism and arbitrary dismissal” (ECS, 2007). In the late 1800s and early 1900s, teachers were considered civil servants, and teachers were dismissed with the same frequency as political appointments (Marshall, Baucom, & Webb, 1998). “Furthermore, teachers were badly paid, lacked pension benefits or job security, and saw many teaching positions dispensed through political patronage” (Coleman et al., 2006, p. 220).
Since the early 1900s, tenure laws have continued to appear in some form in most states, including Illinois. In 1917, the Otis Bill was passed in Illinois, and it included a clause granting tenure to a teacher after three years. The bill only covered Chicago and other cities with populations exceeding 100,000. “They [female elementary teachers in Chicago] were disgruntled with the working conditions and low wages, as well as the decisions made by the Board of Education” (Huvaere, 1997, p. 37). During the Great Depression of the 1930s, instability grew in districts without tenure. “It was not unusual for school boards to terminate teachers and replace them with relatives, friends, and supporters during these harsh economic times” (Kersten, 2006, p. 237). “The Illinois Education Association worked in conjunction with the NEA to secure the passage of a tenure law for Illinois public school teachers in 1941” (Huvaere, 1997, p. 73).

In 1997, Dorene Huvaere conducted an analysis of the adoption of the 1941 Tenure Law in Illinois and came to the conclusion:

Tenure has continued to be advocated as a means of protecting teachers from the inappropriate and sometimes illegal actions of school administrators and boards regarding teacher employment. Frequently, however, it has also been a protection for the incompetent and ineffective teacher. It has often been too burdensome, time consuming, and costly for a district to remove a tenured faculty member who has not overtly violated standards of morality or severely jeopardized the well being of students. (p. 129)
Her research, in line with other research, draws a picture of tenure marred in political, legal, and financial complications for school administrators.

One part of tenure laws that has changed throughout the years is the number of years of service before a teacher is granted tenure. “To gain tenure, teachers must generally complete a specified period of probationary employment, usually three years” (ESC, 2007). The Otis Bill of 1917 required three years, but the statewide law passed in 1941 only required two years. It was not until 1997 that the Illinois General Assembly changed the law from two years to four years. Supporters of longer probationary periods are not necessarily opponents of tenure. “The traditional reasons that justify the public policy of awarding tenure are still powerful; thus the answer is not to eliminate tenure but to extend the probationary period to five or six years” (Bernstein, 2006, p. 51).

Tenure establishes due process rights for teachers and this study focuses on remediating tenured teachers. However, there are situations where immediate action is required and progressive discipline is not applicable. “As the principal, you must ensure that children learn in a safe, caring, and nurturing atmosphere” (Lawrence & Vachon, 2003, p. 35). When a school principal determines the actions of a teacher are endangering students, the principal will place a teacher on immediate suspension, pending an investigation. Illinois School Code (Sec. 21-23: Suspension or revocation of certificate) details the suspension and revocation of a teaching certificate for actions including abuse or neglect of a child, immorality, incompetency, unprofessional conduct, or the neglect of any professional duty (105 ILCS 5/21-23).
“Principals are held accountable for instruction, student safety, staff safety, facilities and resources. They should have the authority to organize the staff and program to meet those obligations unrestricted by union contracts” (Ingram, 2004, p. 30). The involvement of unions is a commonly cited deterrent for principals considering remediation and possible dismissal of a tenured teacher (Kvenvold, 1989; Menuey, 2005). “Evaluation procedures are embedded in union contracts, and the resulting and rather tenacious myth is that unions protect bad teachers” (Bernstein, 2004, p. 81). But in reality, a trained administrator should be able to spot poor instruction; fixing the instruction in a timely manner with all the union requirements and legal protections afforded to a tenured teacher is the challenge.

“Over the past few decades, both the role and impact of unions have grown significantly in response to the increased sophistication of public education and the ever-expanding political nature of school governance, particularly related to faculty employment and retention” (Kersten & Israel, 2005, p. 58). The list of people involved in the evaluation of a teacher continues to grow, and a principal’s observations and evaluations are challenged to the point the principal becomes unmotivated to give honest and sometimes unfavorable evaluations (Bridges, 1990; Kersten & Israel, 2005; Painter, 2000). “Long gone are the days of autonomous schools and apolitical school leaders” (Davis & Hensley, 1999, p. 385). However, the principal is still the instructional leader whose main focus must be on the best interest of the students.

Ironically, in all the discussion on tenured teachers and school administrators, it should be noted that school and district administrators do not acquire tenure in
administrative positions and do not receive the same due process rights as the teachers they are evaluating.

Since they [principals] have virtually no rights to continued employment as principals, they may be demoted or dismissed for cause, or even for no cause at all. Few principals anywhere risk losing their jobs if they are less than forthright with a poor-performing teacher. However, if they evaluate a teacher negatively, the teacher may sow seeds of discontent and lower morale in the school. (Bridges & Groves, 1999, p. 331)

Therefore, another issue in the evaluation of tenured teachers is the short and long-term consequences on the culture of the school and the continued employment of the school leader.

In Illinois, in January 2010, the governor signed into law the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010, a “bill to implement new, rigorous evaluations for teachers and school principals across the state” (IGNN, 2010). By 2012, student performance will be a factor in principals’ evaluations in Illinois. The evaluation tools used for Illinois principals must provide for the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating the principal’s performance. Performance evaluation systems must assess professional competencies as well as student growth (105 ILCS 5/34-8; 105 ILCS 5/24). Therefore, if principals are not properly evaluating and remediating underperforming teachers, the subsequent effects those teachers will have on
Proponents see tenure as a way for teachers to feel secure in their jobs and to be more efficient (Huvaere, 1997; Kersten, 2006). However, opponents raise concerns that tenure would cause teachers to become lax in their professional development. “From its inception, some people expressed concern that tenure laws would not result in professionalism. Rather, it would lead to apathy and a decline in the overall quality of education” (Huvaere, 1997, p. 20). Current research points to some declines in teacher quality and considers tenure one of the causes. “Unfortunately, the potential of the protection clause to stimulate that reasoned commitment to education is rarely actualized…We believe that tenure as it is presently conceptualized may serve more to stymie than to stimulate such a commitment” (Marshall et al., 1998, p. 303). The potential benefits of tenure to the profession of teaching are not being realized at the present time.

Prior to receiving tenure, teachers go through a probationary period, which in Illinois is four years. School boards, knowing the complexities of dismissing a tenured teacher, will dismiss any unproven teachers during their probationary periods. “An up-or-out policy has thus evolved which tends to mitigate against the young teacher in a tight job market” (Brown, 2001, p. 13).

A greater proportion of probationary teachers are removed for classroom incompetence than the proportion of tenured teachers removed for the same reason. The primary explanation for this difference appears
to be the greater burden of proof necessary to establish a case of classroom
incompetence on the part of a tenured teacher. (Ward, 1995, p. 17)

Concerned by the protection tenure provides, some administrators may not take a chance
with probationary teachers about whom they have concerns. Therefore, administrators
choose not to renew some teachers’ contracts before those teachers complete four years
and gain tenure. One advantage to the Illinois tenure laws is that administrators have four
probationary years before having to grant tenure to a teacher.

Tenure does offer protection to tenured teachers, but there is a perception that it
offers too much protection. “Most tenure laws set up barriers that make firing, at best,
difficult; at worst, a messy trial through the courts of law and public opinion” (Brown,
2001, p. 14). When principals perceive they have virtually no recourse for marginal
teaching, tenure is in direct opposition to school improvement. Some school leaders
believe the enactment of tenure laws to help teachers feel secure in their jobs has reduced
their control over staffing the school and properly addressing teacher incompetency

Whatever its alleged drawbacks, tenure has been integral to the public school
system for many years and is likely to remain so for many more” (Scott, 1986, p. 4).
Therefore, the researcher hopes this study will have long-term implications on school
leaders and principal preparation programs. This study is focused on teacher tenure and
remediation to understand how novice and experienced principals make decisions related
to evaluating and remediating tenured teachers.
Evaluation of Tenured Teachers

“It is a rational assumption that if the legal environment is well-structured, the evaluation system technically above reproach and the evaluating principals highly trained, the evaluation and dismissal of incompetent teachers would be relatively unproblematic” (Painter, 2000, p. 257). Unfortunately, most of the current research and data on the evaluation of public school teachers does not draw a picture of a problem-free system (Bridges & Groves, 1999; Kvenvold, 1989). “Many school and district leaders want to implement best practices in teacher assessment and evaluation but are challenged by real and perceived constraints” (Oliva et al., 2009, p. 17). What this study wants to examine are the real and perceived constraints for Illinois middle school principals and if the principal’s experience makes a difference when evaluating a tenured teacher.

“The tenure decision represents the last occasion for a district to impose a reasonable standard of performance on its teachers. Once a teacher has acquired tenure, the courts and the hearing officers presume that a teacher is competent” (Bridges, 1990, p. 150). Once the teacher has acquired tenure, the principal (and any future principals overseeing this teacher) can only dismiss the teacher with cause. Incompetence is a reason for cause but the principal has to have the time, resources, and desire to address it. These constraints have been referred to as “administrative inertia in the removal of unsatisfactory teachers,” specifically unsatisfactory tenured teachers (Ward, 1995).

“The evaluation of teachers’ performances is as old as the education profession” (Rebore, 2011, p. 202). What, unfortunately, also seems to be a time-honored practice is avoiding dealing directly with the problem of teacher incompetence. “In such cases some
administrators face, sooner or later, the necessity of removing the teacher from the classroom” (Phillips & Young, 1997, p. 106). Administrators referred to this practice as “the dance of the lemons” and even “passing the trash” (Bridges, 1990; Menuey, 2005). If a tenured teacher’s performance is mediocre and there are complaints from parents, principals consider moving the teacher to other classes, other schools, or other roles before considering measures to correct the problems with the teacher directly. “If an escape hatch were available, the teacher’s poor performance was tolerated; if the escape hatches were closed, the teacher was confronted about his or her deficiencies in the classroom” (Bridges, 1990, p. 148).

Research on teacher evaluations examined how subjective “incompetence” is when evaluating teachers (Menuey, 2005; Painter, 2000). “What makes one person incompetent at one school might not be the same at another school” (Menuey, 2005, p. 320). Unlike other research citing lack of training and problems with the evaluation tool, this research proposed another reason principals’ evaluations are not normalized.

Individual principals may implement the same official evaluation processes quite differently, depending on personal factors (their perception of the problem, their personal skills, their beliefs about the context in which they operate, their estimation of the chances of successfully resolving the problem) and contextual factors in their schools and communities. (Painter, 2000, p. 255)

Painter’s (2000) research is addressing inconsistencies in evaluations due to subjective factors within the principal. Combine this research with the research on the
political, legal, financial, and ethical reasons evaluations are inconsistent with performance and a series of issues arise that principals have to address in their roles as evaluators (Oliva et al., 2009; Peterson, 2004). This study will add to the research on the political, legal, financial, and ethical issues as well as the principal’s personal motivation and more closely examine the role the principal’s experience has in these issues.

**Tensions Associated with the Remediation Process**

“Experienced teachers have better planning skills, use a variety of teaching strategies, are better organized, and deal with discipline issues more effectively” (Stronge, Gareis, & Little, 2006, p. 19). In many ways, an unsatisfactory rating of a tenured teacher says that beliefs about experienced teachers, such as this research from Stronge, Gareis, and Little, do not apply to this teacher. Remediating a tenured teacher is a contentious process because it says despite their teaching experience his or her teaching performance is not satisfactory in certain areas.

A tenured teacher has received years of satisfactory or exemplary evaluations in his or her probationary period to earn the tenure that he or she now holds. Some teachers may see acquiring tenure as a “stamp of approval” on their teaching by the principal, school board, and school community. “The teacher may genuinely see a lack of need on his/her part to improve. Many times this is the case with teachers who have been on staff for long years and are resistant to change” (Maulding & Joachim, 2000, p. 16). There is an inherent tension in remediating a tenured teacher because often the teacher will deny there is a problem and cite previous evaluations as evidence (Maulding & Joachim, 2000; Waintroob, 1995). “It is not surprising that some supervisors found it difficult to
confront teachers about poor performance when the level of performance had been accepted for a long period of time by other supervisors” (Phillips & Young, 1997, p. 107). A remediation plan is frequently associated with hesitation and resistance.

“Everyone connected with school knows who the incompetent teachers are. The only one who doesn’t know is the incompetent teacher” (Waintroob, 1995, p. 36).

To place a teacher under a remediation plan, the principal will observe the teacher and the overall rating of the teacher’s performance will be “unsatisfactory.” Once the teacher has been made aware of the rating, the principal will write a remediation plan, also known as an improvement plan, detailing what behaviors must be corrected, what resources will be provided to the teacher, and when the principal will observe again.

“Behavioral directives constitute the core of most rescue operations and serve at least two major purposes. First, these specifications clarify where improvement is needed. Second, they ward off future contentions that never knew how his/her conduct should be improved” (Bridges, 1992, p. 54).

Bridges (1992), who refers to remediation as behavioral specifications, makes it clear that plans must be clear for both instructional and legal purposes. Principals can never start the remediation process with assumption that the remediation will be successful and the teacher will not be dismissed. “Dismissal rarely stems from a single egregious error; rather, termination is most often based on a persistent pattern of mistakes and failures (Ellis, 1984). The remediation plan, the events leading up to the remediation plan, and all events once the plan is in place, may all be used for legal purposes if there is a recommendation to dismiss the teacher.
A teacher who is successfully remediated can earn a satisfactory rating and be removed from remediation and return to the classroom and the standard evaluation process. Other times, at the conclusion of the remediation plan and the principal’s follow-up observations, the principal, in consultation with the district and in adherence to the union contract, will extend the remediation or recommend the teacher be dismissed from the school. “In cases of marginal teaching that show no indication of sustainable change after implementation of assistive strategies and due process, implementation of legal steps toward dismissal of these teachers will be required as an act of moral responsibility” (Kaye, 2004, p. 256).

As the research shows, the steps to dismissal will not be quick. “If teachers prove incompetent, statutory protections prevent districts from dismissing the failing instructors in a timely manner that also benefits students” (Dawson & Billingsley, 2000, p. 9). As stated in Bridges’ (1992) research, all the paperwork on evaluating and improving the teacher’s instruction now becomes legal documentation to remove the teacher.

The most important factor in proving incompetency is to show that the individual was specifically notified of the deficient areas, provided a remediation plan by his or her supervisor, and given the assistance and time needed to correct these inadequacies in job performance. (McGrath, 1993, p. 31)

A remediation plan brought about by a teacher’s evaluation is a long-term commitment of the school administration with both instructional and legal purposes.
When a principal observes an unsatisfactory teacher, the principal may see a variety of issues, large and small, that are of concern. In creating a remediation plan for a teacher, a principal will normally choose large issues to focus on and the plan will include observations, professional development, coaching, and other resources to help the teacher improve in those areas.

Models built on concepts like supportive supervision, collaborative conversations, and reflective inquiry will only work with mature, effective, reflective, and professional individuals who have a desire and ability to change. Marginal [and incompetent] teachers need close supervision and direct instruction about what constitutes effective teaching. (McEwan, 2005, p. 142)

McEwan’s (2005) research on remediation plans is antithetical to how principals approach most staff development. Most principals design professional development opportunities that allow teachers to self-assess and decide for themselves what will work in their classrooms (Danielson, 2007; Rebore, 2011). One issue when remediating a teacher is that the principal will not be able to approach the situation as they could all other staff development initiatives with competent and effective teachers.

“The administrator’s goal is to make the teacher’s entire performance satisfactory, not just the one or two aspects of performance the teacher may agree to be important” (Waintroob, 1995, p. 37). When presenting a teacher with a remediation plan, the plan will detail specific areas of improvement found during the observation but, as Waintroob’s research shows, the overall goal of the administrator is to see improvement
across the board. Future observations can reveal other areas outside the scope of the remediation plan that concern the observer. Therefore, the remediation plan can cause tension for the principal or administrative designee who has to write a specific plan based on one observation.

“Supervision and evaluation that is formative in nature provides a basis for teachers to improve instruction” (Eady & Zepeda, 2007, p. 6). Is a remediation plan formative or high-stakes? The goal is to inform and improve instruction but, if the teacher does not improve, there is a possibility of dismissal. “The process focuses on a formative rather than summative approach to evaluation. However, the final element of the process for a struggling teacher is probation” (Youngblood, 1994, p. 52). The principal walks the line between instructional supervisor and evaluator. “Therefore, classroom observations are more akin to worker-manager rather than professional-collegial relationships” (Cooper, Ehrensal, & Bromme, 2005, p. 116). The profession of teaching has placed the tasks of assisting a struggling tenured teacher and recommending dismiss of a struggling tenured teacher on the same person- the principal. It has also made the opportunity to give constructive feedback and the time to give an evaluation of the work at the same event - a formal observation.

However, the decision not to remediate a tenured teacher can cause just as much tension within a school as moving forward with a remediation plan. “Teachers [in this study] felt tension towards the principals for not taking their complaints seriously about incompetent employees and for increasing their workloads in order to allow an incompetent teacher to continue his or her job with ease” (Menuey, 2005, p. 319).
Fielding complaints from teachers and parents is a common result of not moving forward with remediating a teacher. “Poor performing teachers present a formidable challenge to school principals. Not only do they not provide the expected results, but they also may distract others from doing their work” (Yariv, 2009, p. 446).

“Leaders will inevitably make difficult decisions that are, at least with some stakeholders, unpopular” (Reeves, 2009, p. 29). The research presented here shows that the principal’s decision, either way, will be unpopular with some stakeholders. “Although a principal must be supportive of teachers, it is important not to cover for them if they are in error or make excuses for their behavior” (Welch, Lindsay, & Halarce, 2001, p. 59). The principal must remain focused on the long-term effect of incompetent teachers on students and to the school.

**Understanding the Legal Process for Dismissing a Tenured Teacher**

The legal process for dismissing a tenured teacher in the State of Illinois is detailed in the Illinois School Code, 105 ILSC 5/ article 24. Before the Illinois Board of Education or any hearing officers get involved in the dismissal of a tenured teacher, the matter is first handled by the district’s legal entity, the school board (105 ILCS 5/10-22.4a). The recommendation to the school board to dismiss a tenured teacher is made by the principal after rating the teacher unsatisfactory and going through a process to attempt to remediate the issues. Prior to the recommendation reaching the school board, the teacher must have received warning specifying what problems need to be remediated or may result in charges to dismiss and must have the opportunity to remediate them.
“To dismiss a teacher for incompetency, cruelty, negligence, immorality or other sufficient cause, to dismiss any teacher who fails to complete a 1 year remediation plan with a "satisfactory" or better rating” (105 ILCS 5/10-22.4). If the school district (principal, superintendent and school board) fail to properly notify the teacher of the problems and fail to allow the teacher an opportunity to remediate them, it could be determined that the actions of the school board fail the Gilliland test. Named after a 1977 Illinois supreme court case, despite numerous complaints and evidence against teacher Karen Gilliland, the teacher was allowed to continue teaching and retain her teaching certificate. Gilliland argued that “the board lacked jurisdiction to proceed with the dismissal because the charges were all remedi able and she had not been given the written warning and opportunity for correction” (Gilliland v. Board of Education, 1977).

Once the motion to dismiss a teacher reaches the board, the vote to dismiss a tenured teacher is taken in closed session by the school board and the decision is sent to the teacher within five days. At this point, the decision will become final unless the teacher, within ten days, requests a hearing. When a hearing is requested, the first step is to choose a hearing officer. The Illinois Board of Education maintains lists of hearing officers qualified to hear teacher dismissal cases. A list of five potential hearing officers is provided to both sides and, through a process of elimination, one is chosen to hear the dismissal case. Following the selection of a hearing officer, both sides begin gathering witnesses, requesting documents, and requesting other relevant information for the hearing. The hearing officer is empowered to subpoena witnesses, if necessary, and both sides are allowed legal representation (105 ILCS 5/10-22.4).
While the process unfolds, the school district may suspend the teacher with or without pay. However, if the hearing officer sides with the teacher, the teacher is entitled any pay lost during the suspension. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing officer has thirty days to render a decision. If the decision favors the teacher, the school board must assign the teacher to a “substantially similar position” as the one they held before being dismissed (105 ILCS 5/10-22.4). If the decision upholds the decision of the school board, notice is given to the teacher, the school board, and the State Teacher Certification Board. The State Teacher Certification Board may choose to either suspend or revoke the license of the dismissed teacher.

This set of policies, first adopted in 1976, are detailed and must be strictly adhered to by all sides for dismissals to be legal and for appeals to be considered. “‘Teacher' means any or all school district employees regularly required to be certified under laws relating to the certification of teachers” (105 ILCS 5/24-11). All decisions by hearing officers are based on the policies detailed in the Illinois School code.

**Research on Novice and Experienced Principals**

The demands on a school principal do not lessen each year; the instructional and non-instructional responsibilities of a middle school principal do not decrease from one school year to the next. “Being able to balance such conflicting demands makes it difficult for even the most seasoned school leaders to be innovative, much less for their raw colleagues” (Walker & Qian, 2006, p. 304). Much of the research on principals has focused on the growing demands on principals – more accountability, more social-emotional programs for students, more concern for student safety, etc.
For most principals in decades past, concerns about student violence at schools were minimal, standardized testing happened once every few years with minimal fanfare, school site decision making was concentrated in the principal’s office rather than shared with a site council, and technology implementation training meant little more than switching from duplicator machines to plain paper copiers. (Painter, 2000, p. 263)

The role and challenges of the school principal continue to grow each year for all principals, experienced and novice. Therefore, it becomes nearly impossible to devote more time to teacher evaluations.

Kerrins and Cushing’s (2000) study of expert and novice principals found differences in how teachers were being observed based on the experience of the principal. In their findings, they reported:

Table 1

A Comparison of Expert and Novice Principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert Principals</th>
<th>Novice Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View the big picture and provide interpretive comments regarding teacher behavior.</td>
<td>Tend to be descriptive about what they see during observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about the coherence of the lesson.</td>
<td>Provide a series of statements about what they see happening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about the teacher’s ability to self-evaluate and be reflective about the lesson.</td>
<td>They do not question the sequence or coherence of the lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They make recommendations and qualify their comments.</td>
<td>Make fewer evaluative comments, and qualify their comments less often.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Taking a Second Look: Expert and Novice Differences when Observing the Same Classroom Teaching Segment a Second Time* (Kerrins & Cushing, 2000).
All the principals had similar knowledge of the curriculum, best practices, and pedagogy. “However, the ability of expert and novice principals to use that knowledge in meaningful, integrative, and contextually appropriate ways is different” (Kerrins & Cushing, 2000, p. 20). This study would be especially applicable for a district that hires a new principal whose experience varies greatly from the previous administrator.

St. Germain and Quinn’s (2005) study focused on differences in tacit knowledge between novice and expert principals. Some of the areas of noted difference were:

Table 2

*Differences in Tacit Knowledge Between Expert and Novice Principals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert Principals</th>
<th>Novice Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed, Calm</td>
<td>Anxious; sometimes emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial Approach</td>
<td>Often done in isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood issues of social class</td>
<td>Incomplete understanding of polarizing class issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used context effectively</td>
<td>Decontextualized solutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Investigation of Tacit Knowledge in Principal Leadership* (St. Germain & Quinn, 2005).

The differences shown here have implications for principals facing a difficult decision, such as teacher remediation. “Expert principals often had acquired greater analytical skills for initial problem analysis than novice principals” (St. Germain & Quinn, 2005, p. 84).

Kelly and Taylor’s (1990) research looked at the way novice and experienced principals dealt with conflicts between supervising and evaluating their teachers.

Principals have to supervise instruction and also judge and evaluate teacher’s instruction. “The task of writing direct and unambiguously negative evaluations is particularly
difficult for school administrators, who are usually nice, often gentle, people whose personal predisposition and training cause them to approach the teacher as a problem pupil” (Waintroob, 1995, p. 38). Are novice principals less prepared to handle adult supervision and evaluations? “The administrators with more supervisory experience were more inclined to agree that there was a role conflict” (Kelly & Taylor, 1990, 106). Novice principals may not be able to identify and address the challenges they face when it comes to giving poor evaluations as well as experienced principals can.

In addition to the studies that found differences between novice and experienced principals, other studies have noted differences among novice principals and among all principals. In Maria Shelton’s (1992) study on novice principals, “Not only did differences exist between female and male respondents who had mentors, but also between races” (p. 114). In Ellen Eckman’s (2004) research on gender differences, she found, “Areas where there were differences between the males and females [principals] occurred in terms of their ages at their first principalship, experiences, career paths, mentoring opportunities, ways of handling role conflict, and perceived leadership styles” (p. 203). However, her research also found areas of concern for all principals. “The bureaucracy and the politics of their school districts caused dissatisfaction for some of the high school principals in terms of the amount of paperwork, their lack of autonomy, and their frustration with school board governance systems” (p. 201). This study will gather data on the respondents’ gender and community.
Conceptual Frameworks: Ethical Paradigms and Expectancy Theory

“Due process is, of course, an important legal concept. But it is also an ethical concept” (Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 2005, p. 78). Current research also examines the political aspect of due process for teachers. Teachers with tenure are not legally entitled to lifetime employment; they are entitled to due process and the rights detailed in their state’s statute on tenure. From an ethical perspective, the principal faces a dilemma when balancing the rights of employees with the best interest of the students. “A school is an ethical organization whose leaders confront daily challenges fraught with a variety of ethical dilemmas and moral decisions” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 43). The research presented here examines the dilemmas faced by principals and provides a framework for the ethical dilemmas embedded in this study. In addition to understanding what ethical lenses principals are applying, this study will also look at the principal’s motivation for his or her actions and decisions.

“Standard Five: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner” (CCSSO, 2008). A school leader not only works each day to educate his or her students but also invests in his or her teachers through supervision and professional development. “The ethic of care emphasizes concern for both the faculty and the students” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 44). Therefore, placing teachers on remediation plans and releasing teachers create a dilemma for a principal who has spent a school year working to make the teacher more effective. “How these dilemmas are resolved is contingent on the administrator’s training, values system, and approaches to moral decisions” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 48).
Five principles of ethics are respecting autonomy, doing no harm, benefiting others, being just, and being faithful (Komives, Lucas, & McMahan, 1998). In his research, Jeffrey Glanz applied these to a school principal.

Table 3

*Five Principles of Ethics Applied to the Principalship*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respecting Autonomy</td>
<td>Ethical principals provide stakeholders with the freedom of choice, allowing individuals to freely deepen their values and respect the right of others to act independently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing on harm: (nonmaleficence)</td>
<td>Ethical principals create environments that are free from harm to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefiting others (beneficence)</td>
<td>Ethical principals promote the interests of the school over personal interests and self-gain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Just</td>
<td>Ethical principals treat people fairly and equally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being faithful</td>
<td>Ethical principals keep promises, are faithful, and are loyal to their teachers and school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Decisions You Can Live With* (Glanz, 2009).

Robert Starratt presented a Multidimensional paradigm to be applied to schools.

Adapted from *Building an Ethical School: A Theory for Practice in Educational Leadership* (Starratt, 1991).

*Figure 1. Starratt’s Multidimensional Ethical Paradigm*

Applying Starratt’s paradigm to schools and tenured teacher evaluations, schools have relationships with students, parents, and teachers. Controlling decisions within a
school are the principals, district, policies, union policies, and other factors outside the school district. “How shall we govern ourselves?” would be how do we, as a school, resolve conflicts, address concerns, and how do we serve everyone’s rights.

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2008) present a “Multiple Ethical Paradigm” encompassing the ethics of justice, critique, and care as well as the ethic of profession. The ethic of profession adds the questions: What is unique to our profession? What professional codes should we follow? (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009). “The ethical school principal proceeds more deliberately and reflectively, gathering relevant facts and consulting teachers, and perhaps parents or others” (Greenfield, 1990, p. 35). That process leads to the ethical principal applying one or more ethical lenses in resolving the dilemma.

**Ethic of Justice**

Viewing ethical dilemmas from this vantage point [ethic of justice], one may raise queries regarding the interpretation of the rule of law as well as deal with the more abstract concepts of fairness, liberty, and responsibility” (Shapiro & Gross, 2008, p. 22). Principals are charged with interpreting laws and policies and applying them in an ethical manner in their schools (Greenfield, 1990; Stefkovich & Begley, 2007). “The decision-maker in the justice approach seeks to determine which universal principles apply to the particular situation” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 44).
Ethic of Critique

The ethic of critique is based on critical theory, which has at its center an analysis of social class and its inequities, identifying who has power, and who is harmed by their use of power. (Shapiro & Gross, 2008; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2008) Those working towards social justice in schools and in school leadership often pose questions driven by the ethic of critique. “Who benefits by these arrangements? Which group dominates this social arrangement? Who defines what is valued and disvalued in this situation?” (Starratt, 2009, p. 23).

“The ethic of critique seeks to challenge the status quo and give voice to the marginalized sectors of society” (Stefkovich & O’Brien, 2004, p. 200). In addition to challenging the policies in place in a school, as Starratt’s questions show, the ethic of critique also challenges the persons benefiting from these policies and fighting to keep the policies in place.

Hence, ethic of critique, based as it is on assumptions about the social nature of human beings and on the human purposes to be served by social organization, calls the educational administrator to a social responsibility, not simply to the individuals in the school or school system, not simply to the education profession, but to society of whom, and for whom, he or she is an agent. (Starratt, 1991, p. 191)

Applying the ethic of critique expands the role of the principal far beyond the boundaries of school leadership. “Critical theorists would ask who is making these rules
and who is enforcing them” (Stefkovich & O’Brien, 2004, p. 205). By applying an ethic of critique, the principal looks far beyond the students and staff in his or her school.

**Ethic of Caring**

“Three elements characterize an ethic of caring: a willingness to receive the perspective of the other, to respond appropriately to the awareness that comes from receiving this perspective, and remaining committed to the relationship that develops from this shared perspective” (Beck, 1992, p. 462). Applying the standards for ethics of care moves administrators away from contracts and legal matters and moves them towards relationships. “An ethic of care rejects absolute moral principles and rule-governed behavior” (Dempster, Carter, Freakley, & Parry, 2004, p. 459).

Much of the research sees the focus on ethics and leadership as a long-term challenge for school leaders with the goal of producing schools that promote the ethic of caring.

A caring ethic - with its enduring commitment to person, its concern with the continued ecological health of schools and their related communities, and its view that human needs must not be ignored- has the potential to ground and focus administrative thought and to protect educators from being swayed by quick-fix, short-term solutions to complex problems. (Beck, 1992, p. 481)

The ethic of care challenges individuals to consider the consequences, personally and professionally, of their decisions and actions (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2008).
Ernestine Enomoto’s research (1997) explored the differences in applying ethics of justice and ethics of care to school administration.

Table 4

*Ethic of Care and Ethic of Justice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethic of Care</th>
<th>Ethic of Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care and compassion</td>
<td>Impartial rationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of others</td>
<td>Agreement on applicable principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to context</td>
<td>Abstract from particular situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurture relationships</td>
<td>Respect for individual rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility to others</td>
<td>Accountability to moral law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Ethics of Care and Justice* (Enomoto, 1997).

These noted differences between ethic of care and ethic of justice leave school leaders in the position to determine which ethic to apply in each situation or ethical dilemma they encounter in their schools.

**Ethic of Profession**

“Every state guarantees children equal protection under the law, and most promise them a sound education. In the face of these obligations, students have a right to competent, caring teachers who work in schools organized for success” (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 194). The ethics of profession focuses on instructional leaders being prepared and considered “ethical professionals” (Shapiro & Gross, 2008). “This paradigm considers the other frameworks as well as issues such as what the profession expects, what happens when personal and professional ethics clash, and how community influences educators’ ethical decision making” (Stefkovich & Begley, 2007, p. 215). The principal will have to consider the stakeholders and, at times, separate himself or herself from his or her personal views when resolving an ethical dilemma in his or her school.
“The professional paradigm is based on the integration of personal and professional codes. However, frequently an individual’s personal and professional codes collide” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 60).

Principals face daily challenges and the research on ethics suggests that frequently principals have options on which ethical lens to apply.

On the basis of our work, we believe that principals require an understanding of and the ability to use the following processes related to ethical decision making: identifying morally salient features pertaining to a given situation, researching issues particular to a case, seeking peer support and advice, developing defensible justifications for decisions, challenging personal moral frameworks and pursuing consistency. (Dempster et al., 2004, 459)

Through coding the participants’ responses, this study will examine what knowledge and ability to apply Illinois middle school principals have in terms of ethics.

To apply Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2009) “Multiple Ethical Paradigm” to code the data, the researcher plans to apply the following diagram to the survey responses:
Adapted from *Ethical Educational Leadership in Turbulent Times* (Shapiro & Gross, 2008) and *Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education* (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009).

**Figure 2.** Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm

As shown in this diagram, there are ethical decisions exclusive to the ethic of care, the ethic of the profession, the ethic of justice, and the ethic of critique. There are also ethical considerations that overlap more than one category, including ones that are in all four ethical paradigms. “Coding is two simultaneous activities: mechanical data reduction and analytic categorization of data. The researcher imposes order on the data” (Neuman, 1997, p. 422). The coding process for this study will reduce all the responses to the survey to the qualitative data that can be placed into one or more ethical paradigms or Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964).

To code for the ethical paradigms, the researcher plans to label the responses that match key words or phrases from one or more of the ethical paradigms. The research presented here details key words and phrases associated with each ethical paradigm. “When a researcher finds a meaningful segment or text in a transcript, he or she assigns a code or category name to signify or identify that particular segment” (Johnson &
Christensen, 2008, p. 535). The researcher will code the free responses from the principals’ surveys by assigning one or more of the ethical paradigms to each response.

Table 5

*Key Words and Phrases Associated with Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses that include</th>
<th>Coded with:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurturing students, making moral decisions, concern for others, loyalty and trust</td>
<td>Ethic of Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging the status quo, debating the issues and laws, critical theory, social class</td>
<td>Ethic of Critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best professional judgment, consistency, challenging personal beliefs, equity and equality</td>
<td>Ethic of the Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights, democratic process, rules, laws, and policies</td>
<td>Ethic of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Responses that include more than one of these areas</em></td>
<td><em>Coded for Multiple Ethical Paradigms</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Ethical Educational Leadership in Turbulent Times* (Shapiro & Gross, 2008) and *Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education* (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009).

**Expectancy Theory**

Principals can also be in a situation where they do not feel the process will be productive and the principals lack the personal motivation to move forward with unsatisfactory evaluations and remediation plans. “In choosing between behaviors A, B, or C, people will choose the behavior or selection that will result in their getting the more valuable output or reward, provided they see the reward as attainable” (Quick, 1988, p. 30). Expectancy Theory bases human behavior and motivation on this principle. “Expectancy Theory proposes a causal relationship between expectancy attitudes and motivation” (Lawler & Suttle, 1973, p. 486). Individuals perceive what rewards certain
behaviors yield and individuals place a level of expectation that the behaviors will actually yield that reward (Quick, 1988; Vroom, 1964).

To apply this theory to schools, one can start with the universal goal of student learning and student achievement as the reward. The research then links good classroom teaching to student learning and student achievement (Danielson, 2007; Oliva et al., 2009). All the stakeholders in that school, therefore, want to see effective teaching taking place in every classroom. They are motivated by growth in student achievement and professional development of teachers.

In his research on productive employees, Walter Newsom explains Expectancy Theory as, “The theory states that an individual has the highest motivation to put forth the greatest effort if he or she believes the effort will lead to good performance, and the good performance will lead to preferred outcomes” (Newsom, 1990, p. 51). An employee (for this study, the principal) that has any doubt their efforts will not lead to the outcomes they desire will experience a reduction in motivation (Newson, 1990; Oliver, 1995). A principal deciding to remediate a tenured teacher sees two long-term outcomes: the teacher is remediated and his or her teaching improves and is rated satisfactory or the remediation is not successful and the teacher is dismissed. The current research on teacher evaluation casts doubt on both outcomes. A principal’s motivation to remediate ineffective teaching may be reduced by the belief that the tenured teacher will not improve but will not be dismissed due to legal barriers and time constraints on the principal.
For this study, the researcher will also be coding responses using Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964). Unlike the ethical paradigm coding, the researcher will not be looking for words or phrases. To code data for the Expectancy Theory, the researcher will look for responses to the questionnaire that address principals’ motivations for their decisions. Specifically in the survey questions addressing the principals’ concerns about moving forward with remediation, the researcher will look at what principals felt the outcome or “reward” of the remediation would be. The researcher will be analyzing the free-response data and identifying responses that fit Vroom’s Expectancy Theory.

Using Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964), the coding will be centered on these five questions:

1. Did the principal perceive that there was an expectation that he or she could give tenured teachers unsatisfactory ratings when warranted?
2. Did the principal perceive that he or she had the necessary resources to remediate the teacher?
3. Are there one or more tenured teachers in the school the principal feels are unsatisfactory?
4. Did the principal feel the remediation would be successful?
5. Did the principal feel, if the remediation was not successful, that the teacher would be dismissed?

These five questions will allow the researcher to compare the principals’ responses against the components of the Expectancy Theory.
Other Considerations in Teacher Evaluations

Political, legal, and financial issues can further complicate the ethical dilemmas public middle school principals face when evaluating tenured teachers. “Questions can arise in the administrator’s mind when he or she is confronted with complex situations or dilemmas, restrictions on behavior, matters involving the giving or withholding of consent or when the values being supported are questionable” (Langlois, 2004, p. 78). Issues of politics, finances, and the law can cause principals to question their values and feel restricted when addressing issues that arise around evaluating tenured teachers.

From a political aspect, a principal observes and evaluates a teacher and determines if the teaching meets the standards to continue teaching in the same manner. However, teachers, students, and parents may view the teacher’s performance differently and may want the teacher to stay in his or her current position. “They [Principals] need to also address the social interactions at the building level that can form barriers to effective evaluations” (Painter, 2000, p. 261). A principal who hopes to rely on collaboration, peer assistance, and mentoring to help a struggling teacher may encounter resistance.

“As such, personnel evaluation as a purely rational and objective process rarely exists. However, the extent to which performance evaluations may be contaminated by political favors varies greatly within schools and between schools and school districts” (Davis & Hensley, 1999, p. 385). The political dilemmas faced by the principal require a clear understanding of school politics and the leadership necessary to be effective in this climate. “The result is that teachers may fear that evaluation is less about personal
improvement involving professional growth and more of a political hurdle” (Conley & Glasman, 2008, p. 68). No matter the observation tool being used by the principal, teachers will perceive subjectivity in the evaluations and believe politics were behind some of the principal’s ratings.

“Undoubtedly, the legal requirements associated with tenure influence how dismissal procedures unfold. However, equally influential are the political machinations of teachers union and associations” (Coleman et al., 2006, p. 226). Research and case studies on teacher dismissals paint pictures of legal battles that can continue for years after the recommendations to dismiss have been made. “Real or perceived threats and challenges have the potential to influence behaviors, specifically the decisions that school leaders make” (Militello, Schimmel, & Eberwein, 2009, p. 38). The principal has to ask him or herself if the teaching they are not pleased with is worth the legal battle to follow.

Accompanying a legal battle to dismiss a tenured teacher are the legal costs to the school district. A district facing financial hardship may pressure a principal to consider the financial ramifications before dismissing a tenured teacher. However, a tenured teacher’s salary is higher than teachers in the district with less experience. “The financial health and the size of the district determine whether administrators will confront the teacher or sidestep the issue when complaints arise and/or enrollments begin to fall” (Bridges, 1992, p. 42). While the process to dismiss a tenured teacher is costly, a tenured teacher’s salary is a long-term financial liability for the district.

“As educators in rapidly transitioning schools, we need to reexamine everything we’re doing. Continuing with business as usual will mean failure or mediocrity for too
many of our students” (Howard, 2007, p. 17). As mentioned earlier, teachers with tenure received, at minimum, satisfactory evaluations prior to receiving tenure in that school district. The demographics of the school and district may have changed significantly since the teacher began teaching there. What worked effectively in previous school years may not work as well due to the new population of students in the classrooms.

“Educators of all racial and cultural groups need to develop new competencies and pedagogies to successfully engage our changing populations” (Howard, 2007, p. 18). One issue with tenured teachers is that they are not able to serve the current student population as well as they served previous student populations.

The current research shows that teacher professional development is necessary when the demographics of a school change. “Changing demographics demand that we engage in a vigorous, ongoing, and systemic process of professional development to prepare all educators in the school to function effectively in a highly diverse environment” (Howard, 2007, p. 17). The research also shows that this professional development is often lacking (Zehr, 2005). “Teacher education programs are typically understaffed and have little room for additional courses in bilingual education, school law, the cultural practices of different populations, and other topics” (Portes & Smagorinsky, 2010, p. 244). In deciding to remediate and possibly dismiss a tenured teacher who is not serving the needs of the current school population, the principal may have to address whether the teacher was properly trained and given the opportunity to adjust to the changes in demographics during his or her tenure at the school.
Summary

When a principal observes a teacher not teaching effectively, the goal should be to correct the problem or remove the teacher from the classroom. However, the research is showing that principals do not see dismissal as an attainable goal (Bridges, 1990). “When this is not the case, the quality of individuals’ goal-related performance may diminish, the goals may be ignored altogether, and steps may even be taken to actively avoid pursuing the goals” (Liccione, 2007, p. 18). This study will be analyzing perceptions of school administrators as they relate to evaluating and remediating tenured teachers.

The literature presented in this chapter sheds light on some of the problems facing school and district administrators when working with tenured teachers. Tenured teachers represent a group of teachers that school districts have invested time and money into and, in turn, those teachers are now entitled to certain legal protections. Tenure, up against the best interest of the students, creates legal, ethical, and financial dilemmas for principals (Menuey, 2007; Peterson, 2004; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009).

The research shows the need for principals to have knowledge and be able to apply ethical lenses to these dilemmas. “Ethics cannot be an afterthought or an appendage in the resolution of this dilemma. You must be proactive in developing and defending principles of honesty and fair-testing practices for all” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 47). Additionally, the research shows principals may lack the motivation to confront the instructional and professional problems they observe with tenured teachers (Newson, 1990; Oliver, 1995; Vroom, 1964).
The issues presented here with the relevant literature will be used as part of the researcher’s display and analysis of the data and conclusions concerning these two questions:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature review clearly shows that there are issues with the evaluations of tenured teachers which directly impact decision on the ratings tenured teachers receive from their principals. The decision to evaluate and place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan is not one that is taken lightly. However, the research and data are showing that principals are choosing not to take that path for reasons other than the best interests of the students. “Decision-makers make choices to save face in some way, although the resulting decisions might not be in the best interest of the organization” (DiBattista, 1988, p. 212). The researcher plans to investigate this further and see if the principal's experience plays a significant role in the decision.

Research Strategy

A qualitative methodology was selected for this study to gather data on principals’ perceptions, experiences, and decision-making to answer the following research questions:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?
2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the
necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

This qualitative study looks at the perceptions and experiences of novice and experienced principals and the issues they face when evaluating, remediating, and potentially dismissing tenured teachers.

To sufficiently address the research questions for this study, a qualitative questionnaire design was chosen to collect data. “A questionnaire is a self-report data-collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 203). The questionnaires included a section of demographic data followed by a series of free-response questions on remediation and tenure.

From the literature review, one sees a variety of factors that are considered in evaluations and this study questioned a large sample of principals on their evaluation process and decision-making. “The qualitative research approach demands that the world be approached with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 31). The researcher chose this approach to gain an understanding of the differences that exist, if any, between novice and experienced principals.
Table 6

_Fraenkel and Wallen’s Steps for Conducting Qualitative Research_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraenkel and Wallen identified six steps in conducting qualitative research studies. (1996) The design of this qualitative research study aligns with these six steps. Identification of the phenomenon to be studied</th>
<th>Evaluation of Tenured Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of the participants in the study.</td>
<td>Illinois middle school principals, excluding schools in the City of Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation of Hypothesis</td>
<td>Differences exist between novice and experienced principals in deciding to remediate tenured teachers. <em>Additional research questions will be considered during the study.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Qualitative questionnaires sent out and received from principals, anonymously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Using the literature review to code responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing conclusions</td>
<td>Draw conclusions on what differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals when deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan. Connect the researcher’s conclusions to the literature review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from _How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education_ (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996)

The researcher chose not to conduct qualitative interviews because of the desired sample size for this study. “One major advantage of questionnaires and surveys is that they can be easily administered to a large group of individuals” (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2006, p. 210). There was also a concern that, due to the subject of the research, some principals would not be honest and comfortable answering some of the questions in a one-on-one interview. “Questionnaires are an excellent way to assess perceptions because they can be completed anonymously and readministered to assess the changes in
perceptions over time” (Bernhardt, 2004, p. 57). The researcher wanted the responses to be anonymous and wanted to assess principals’ perceptions; at the present time, there are no plans to re-administer this survey.

The researcher chose not to conduct a quantitative study because of the nature of the research question. “A quantitative research question is an interrogative sentence that asks a question about the relationship that exists between two or more variables” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 78). This study is focused on decision-making and applies an ethical framework to the data. There are no variables in this study that can be quantitatively measured or correlated.

The researcher chose not to design this study as a case study. “We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). The research question is not focused on the actions or decisions of one principal, school, or district. Therefore, the researcher concluded that a case study would not properly or would not fully address the research question.

**Site Selection**

The original sample group was selected using the following criteria:

1. The school must not contain any students grade 9-12 or any students below grade four. Therefore, schools included in the study have one of the following: grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8.

2. The school must be located in Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago.

3. The school must be a public school run by the district and school board.
The rationale for choosing a building with grades nine through twelve was to exclude schools that also housed grades six through eight. The researcher is only focusing on public middle school principals in Illinois and therefore wants to exclude any principals supervising middle school teachers.

The State of Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago, was selected because of the socio-economic diversity of the schools in Illinois. Also, the public middle schools in Illinois have a wide range in enrollments. The City of Chicago was not included because of the lack of accessibility to these schools by educational researchers.

This study focused on public school districts because the research questions focus on tenure. Tenure is included in the Illinois School Code and only applies to public schools. The researcher has worked at religious and independent high schools. The researcher is currently employed as an administrator at a Chicago charter high school.

**Sampling Plan**

The questionnaire was sent to every public middle school principal in the state of Illinois, exclusive of the city of Chicago and any charter schools. For this study, middle schools were defined as schools housing grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8. The “n-value” for those receiving questionnaires was 646.

Since every principal supervises and evaluates members of the faculty, this survey was not sent to any assistant principals or district-level administrators. The data collected need to be from the administrator who evaluates tenured teachers and whose overall ratings would result in a remediation plan.
**Questionnaire Design**

The researcher designed the Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation to gather responses from middle school principals in Illinois that address the research questions on issues surrounding the decision to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan (see Appendix G).

The first part of the questionnaire gathered data on the respondent (principal) and his or her school. Going back to the research question, the researcher examined the data received from novice principals (less than five years as a principal) compared with the data received from experienced principals (more than five years as a principal). The researcher furthered analyzed the data by sorting the responses using another factor (type of location, gender, union/non-union, etc.) and looked for similarities and differences between responses.

Questions 1-5 gathered information from principals who made the decision to give a tenured teacher, or teachers, an unsatisfactory rating and place the teacher on a remediation plan. The researcher was interested in how much experience the principal had at the time of the evaluation, what went into his or her decision-making, how effective was the plan, and what the outcome was.

Questions 6 and 7 are based on the research presented by Bridges and Groves (1999) and Oliva, Mathers, and Laine (2009). The principal may be in a situation where his or her power is limited even though he or she is ultimately responsible for student learning and teacher evaluations. Some of the responses to questions 6 and 7 may address Oliva, Mathers, and Laine’s research on “real and perceived” power.
Coleman, Schroth, Molinaro, and Green (2006) stressed that tenure was a means of receiving due process protection, not lifetime employment. Question 8 sought to determine if current practicing administrators would agree with the definition and intent of tenure or if they would say tenure is de facto lifetime employment. If they perceive tenure as comparable to lifetime employment, where is the motivation to proceed with remediation plans? From Vroom’s (1964) Expectancy Theory, Johnson (2009) states the final outcomes as “efforts will be rewarded” (p. 274). Question eight connects to Expectancy Theory and the principal’s motivation for moving forward with a remediation plan.

Question 9 asked the principals to define incompetency. Menuey (2005) and Painter (2000) both presented research on the subjective nature of incompetence and how it differs from principal to principal and school to school. These responses will address that research as well as give the researcher an understanding of how the respondents define incompetency. The data from questions eight and nine was analyzed together to see if there was a relationship between principals’ understanding of incompetency and tenure.

Question 10 relates to Rooney’s research on novice principals (2000; 2008). Did any of the respondents “make waves”? Why or why not?

Questions 11, 12 and 13 asked the respondents about practices discussed in Menuey’s (2005) research and Bridge’s (1990) research. Did the principals in this study participate in “the dance of the lemons”? These questions can also be applied to Reeder’s (2005a, 2005b) research on the alternatives to the costly dismissal process. From an
ethical point of view, this could be seen as “navigating through an array of morally gray options before making a choice that, for the principal, was no morally optimal but could be lived with under a given circumstance” (Frick, 2008, p. 65).

Questions 14 and 15 asked the respondent about any current teachers whose performance is considered unsatisfactory. The responses will allow the researcher to follow up on Reeder’s (2005) research on Illinois public schools. The responses to these two questions will also be coded as one piece of the Expectancy Theory framework. There must be an opportunity for the employee (principal) to make a decision on remediating a tenured teacher.

The questionnaires were not marked in any way that could identify the respondent. This survey asked principals to write about human resource decisions. Their responses reflect their ethical beliefs about human resource issues. Collecting the data anonymously and ensuring the returned surveys kept confidential were important to the researcher. The researcher wanted the respondents to speak openly and did not want this research to do harm to anyone.

**Questionnaire Informal Focus Group**

A draft of the questionnaire was presented to an informal focus group consisting of graduate students in Education at Loyola University Chicago on October 6, 2010. The students were all enrolled in Seminar in Current Issues in Administration. The choice of this group was made because these students are familiar with issues in teacher evaluation and the framework for this study. In their current positions, no one in the focus group will be included in the study. This group was able to provide feedback to the researcher
on the structure of the questionnaire and the wording of individual questions. Based on their feedback, the researcher revised the materials in the following manner:

- Slightly altered the structure of questions two through five. Some of the questions required a yes/no answer and it was causing confusion with question one.
- Question three was reworded to stress that the focus was on non-instructional concerns effecting the principal’s decision.
- Added space for more lengthy answers to question 10.

**Data Collection**

The questionnaires were sent in September 2011 with a cover letter (found in Appendix C) that introduced the researcher, provide a brief overview of the study, and provide details on completing and returning the survey. Included with the cover letters were consent forms with statements of confidentiality and consent. The mailings contained a cover letter, consent form, questionnaire, and self-addressed stamped return envelope. The mailing envelopes were addressed to each public middle school principal in Illinois, exclusive of Chicago. The items were not numbered or contain any markings to ensure the anonymity of the principal responding to the survey. Since this study addresses legal, ethical, and financial issues for a school leader, ensuring their anonymity on the surveys protects the privacy of the participants.

Four weeks after mailing the initial questionnaire, a second mailing was sent to the same list of participants. The second cover letter reminded the principals to complete the questionnaire and return it to the researcher in the self-addressed stamped return
envelope (found in Appendix D). The letter also thanked them for their participation in this study.

Two weeks after the second mailing (six weeks from the initial mailing), a reminder postcard was sent to the same list of participants. The postcard (found in Appendix E) served as a reminder to principals to complete the questionnaire and return it so their responses could be included in the study.

All questionnaires were sent to a rented Post Office box. Only the researcher had access to the Post Office box. All questionnaires were retrieved and stored in a locked cabinet. The researcher was the only person with access to the locked cabinet and the completed questionnaires. After this research study is completed, the researcher will personally shred all the completed surveys.

**Data Analysis**

The questionnaire was constructed around the research presented on tenure and the remediation of a tenured teacher. The responses provided the researcher with a further understanding of existing research and provided an insight on practices and perceptions of Illinois middle school principals. All the data gathered was analyzed and used to address the research questions: *What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan? What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?*
Data were sorted using the information provided on the surveys. The initial sort was based on years of experience. The researcher also sorted according to gender, size of school, and the other five pieces of data gathered on the principal and his or her school. “Researchers need to continually return to the raw data to ensure accuracy of the placement of core ideas into categories and examine the categories to see whether they can be revised” (Hill et al., 2005, p. 201). The research on novice and experienced principals was used in the analysis of the data each time it is sorted.

The conceptual frameworks provided by Shapiro and Stefkovich’s “Multiple Ethical Paradigm” (2009) and Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964) allowed the researcher to code the free-response questions.

Most authors use the term [conceptual framework] to describe a specific function and set of relationships within the research process. This approach offers the potential for conceptual frameworks to shape how research conclusions are presented by emphasizing the conceptualization of those conclusions within their respective theoretical context. (Leshem & Trafford, 2007, p. 99)

For this study, the conceptual frameworks looked at the relationships between all the issues principals are dealing with when evaluating tenured teachers. These frameworks allowed the researcher to draw conclusions based on specific ethical paradigms or Expectancy Theory.

As described in Chapter II and found in Appendix A, the researcher has detailed the key words and phrases associated with each ethical paradigm and how this conceptual
framework will serve as a coding guide for respondents’ answers. Appendix B details how the Expectancy Theory will be applied as a conceptual framework for this study.

**Ethical Considerations**

This study looked at tenured teachers, the effectiveness and limitations of the principal, and examines the principal’s experience as a factor in their work. “Treatment of research participants is the most important and fundamental issue that researchers must confront” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 105). For principals (respondents) to respond and provide honest and complete responses, they needed to know their responses would be kept confidential anonymous. There was assurance from the researcher that anyone reading the final product could not identify a specific principal.

The cover letter to the questionnaire and consent form outlined that the study was voluntary and they could choose to submit a response or simply not respond. The surveys that were completed and returned were indications of content to use their responses in the study. The surveys sent out were not numbered, did not have any identifiable marks, and a return envelope was provided with the survey. These are some examples of how the researcher ensured anonymity. The respondents chose to leave questions blank and submit responses on only some parts of the survey.

**Limitations**

1. The surveys were distributed anonymously to all principals in Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago. In preserving the anonymity of the study, the researcher does not know who chose to respond and who chose not to.
The respondents may not be a representative sample of Illinois middle school principals.

2. The sampling criteria limited responses to Illinois public middle school principals. Generalizing these results to elementary schools, secondary schools, private schools, and schools outside of Illinois may not be possible. These schools may be governed by a different set of policies and laws and the evaluation practices may have differences that would make this study not applicable.

3. Survey questions are subject to interpretation. Unlike a structured interview, the researcher was not able to clarify any questions or follow-up on any responses. Therefore, some of the responses in this study may not properly address the questions posed by the researcher.

4. Changes may be made to the Illinois School Code that may affect teacher evaluations and tenure laws. Those changes may alter principal’s practices and their responses to the Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation.

**Bias Minimization**

“As much as possible, we want to faithfully represent how participants describe their experiences rather than communicate how we as researchers experience the world” (Hill et al., 2005, p. 197). The researcher for this study is currently a secondary school administrator who evaluates teachers as part of his job. However, the researcher does not write any summative evaluations or ratings. The teachers at the researcher’s school are
not entitled to tenure but are members of a union. The researcher does not work at one of the schools being surveyed.

Since the researcher is a current administrator and does teacher evaluations, the researcher created a research journal to minimize bias. “Experts say the problem arises when that bias begins to elbow out objectivity in researchers’ work” (Viadero, 2002, p. 26). The research journal was a way to reflect on personal reactions to the data and to refocus and remain objective.

**Summary**

Qualitative questionnaires were mailed during the 2011-2012 school year to all public middle school principals (grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8) in Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago. The principals were asked to complete the surveys and mail them back to the researcher. The researcher analyzed the responses, limiting any biases that might have been present. The surveys were designed to address the research questions:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF DATA

This study analyzed perceptions of school administrators as they relate to evaluating and remediating tenured teachers.

The purpose of this study was to investigate these two research questions:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

This chapter presents and displays data collected from the Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation questionnaires sent during the 2011-2012 school year to all public middle school principals in Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago. Illinois schools were identified using the Illinois State Board of Education’s list of all Illinois state public schools. Only schools serving grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8 were surveyed and all schools in the city of Chicago were excluded. The sample totaled 646 schools.
Review of the Procedure

The researcher sent 646 questionnaires in September 2011 in mailings that each contained a cover letter, a consent form, a questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped return envelope. The mailing envelopes were addressed to each public middle school principal in Illinois, exclusive of Chicago. Four weeks after mailing the initial questionnaire, a second mailing was sent to the same list of participants. Two weeks after the second mailing (six weeks from the initial mailing), a reminder postcard was sent to the same list of participants. All returned questionnaires were sent to a rented Post Office box. Only the researcher had access to the Post Office box.

At the conclusion of this six-week process, the researcher received 186 completed or partially completed surveys for a return rate of 28.8%. What follows are the researcher’s data displays from these 186 responses. All figures and percentages come from the total (n-value=186) respondents except when otherwise noted.

Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire sent to the principals asked them to provide demographic information about themselves (age, years of experience, etc.) and their schools (location, enrollment, etc.). The researcher will summarize the demographics of the respondents for this study. The researcher will be using the demographics to provide additional summaries and breakdowns for the responses. To address the research questions, the researcher must know the respondents’ experience as an administrator.

The survey includes seven dichotomous questions requiring principals to select “yes” or “no.” Ten questions are free-response questions asking the respondent to define,
describe, or write additional information and details. For five of the ten free-response questions, respondents are instructed to only answer them if they answered “yes” to the preceding questions. The researcher asked every respondent to write five responses and respondents could have written ten additional responses throughout the survey depending on how they responded to five dichotomous questions each linked to a free-response question. Additionally, one question asked the principal to fill in the number of years experience if they had answered “yes” to one of the dichotomous questions.

Demographic Data

The first section of the survey collected demographic data on each respondent and the principals’ Illinois middle schools. The first items displayed and summarized are gender and age.

Age

As seen in Figure 3, the ages of the principals who responded ranged from 28 to 65. Two participants (n=2) did not answer this question.

![Ages of the Principals](n=186)

*Figure 3. Age of Principals (Respondents)*
As seen as Figure 4, 23% of the participants (n=43) were between the ages 28 to 39 and 45% of the participants (n=84) were between the ages 40 to 49. Thirty-one percent of the participants (n=57) of the principals responding were 50 years old or older. The average age of the principals responding was 45.7 years old.

![Age Groups of Principals](image)

*Figure 4. Age Groups of Principals (Respondents)*

**Gender**

Sixty-one percent of the participants (n=114) were male and 38% of the participants (n=70) were female. Two participants (n=2) did not answer this question. Figure 5 displays these data.

Participants were asked for the number of school years they have been working as principals. The average was 7.9 years. The responses ranged from one to 34 years and Figure 6 displays these data. Fifteen of the principals (n=15) responded “one” which indicated they were in their first year serving as a principal.
In two questions on the survey, participants were asked for the number of school years they have been working as principals and number of school years they have been serving in their current position. Surveys with match responses indicated the principals only have experience as principals in their current positions; responses that differed
indicated the principals had previously served as the principal at other schools. Figure 7 displays the number of school years the principals have been serving in their current position.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 7. Number of Years Serving as the Principal in their Current School**

**Enrollment**

As part of the survey, the participants were asked how many students are in their buildings. As seen in Figure 8, the enrollments ranged from 40 to 2321. However, only five (n=5) schools had enrollments less than 100 and only six schools (n=6) had enrollments of 1200 or more. Thirty-two percent of the schools (n=60) had enrollments between 200 and 399. For this survey, the principals who responded oversaw middle schools with an average enrollment of 529.6.
As part of the survey, the participants were asked how many teachers, full-time and part-time, are in their buildings. As seen in Figure 9, the number of teachers ranged from 6 to 148. Twenty-seven percent of the principals (n=51) had between 20 to 30 teachers. For this survey, the principals responding oversaw middle schools with an average faculty of 43.3.

**Location of School**

Participants were each asked to select whether his/her school was located in an urban area, suburban area, or rural area. The surveys were sent to all public middle school principals in Illinois, exclusive of the city of Chicago.

Six percent of the principals (n=12) responding this survey selected urban. For the remaining 174 responses, 44% of the schools (n=82) are located in a suburban area.
and 46% (n=87) of the schools (n=87) are located in a rural area. Three percent of the respondents (n=5) left this question blank. Figure 10 displays these data.

**Figure 9. Number of Teachers**

**Figure 10. Location of School**
Grades Currently Served

Principals responding were asked to indicate which grades their schools served and the choices were only grades 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and/or 8th. Figure 11 displays the individual grades selected by the principals. Prior to sending the surveys, the researcher defined middle schools as schools serving grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8. Table 7 displays how many responses represent the combinations of grades served by the principals’ middle schools,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Grades Levels served by the Principals’ Schools</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th through 8th Grades</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th &amp; 6th Grades</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th through 8th Grades</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th, 7th &amp; 8th Grades</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th &amp; 8th Grades</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Grades Served

Table 7

All Grades Served by Each School (n=186)
Fifty-nine percent of the schools (n=109) served only grades sixth, seventh and eighth. Ninety-seven percent of the schools (n=180) had grades seventh and eighth.

**Union/Non-union**

For the final piece of demographic data, the principals were asked whether their teachers belonged to a union. Ninety-seven percent of the principals (n=181) responded “yes” to this question and no one responded non-union. Three percent of the principals (n=5) did not indicate if their teachers belonged to a union. Figure 12 displays these data.

![Union Status of the Principals' Schools](image)

*(n=186)*

*Figure 12. Union/Non-union*

**Bivariate Demographic Data**

After summarizing and displaying each demographic data point, the researcher constructed additional figures and tables to display pairings of variables.

**Gender and Location**

The researcher constructed a two-way table to display gender of the principals compared to the location of their middle schools. Table 8 displays this conditional data.
Table 8

*Gender and Location (n=186)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>rural</th>
<th>suburban</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>n/a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the principals who indicated their middle schools were located in rural areas (n=87), 55% were male (n=48) and 45% were female (n=39). Figure 13 displays these data. Of the principals who indicated their middle schools were located in suburban areas (n=82), 70% were male (n=57), 29% were female (n=24), and 1% no response (n=1). Figure 14 displays these data.

*Figure 13. Gender Summary of the Rural Principals*
Figure 14. Gender Summary of the Suburban Principals

Only 12 principals indicated their middle schools were located in urban areas. The breakdown for these 12 principals (n=12) was five males, six females, and one no response. Figure 15 displays these data.

Figure 15. Gender Summary of the Urban Principals

Age and Location

The average age of the principals responding was 45.7 years old. From the principals who selected schools in urban areas (n=12), their average age was 48 years old. From the principals who selected schools in suburban areas (n=82), their average age was
45 years old. From the principals who selected schools in rural areas (n=87), their average age was 46 years old.

Table 9

Summary of Average Ages by Location (n=181)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of the school</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average age of the principal</td>
<td>46 years old</td>
<td>45 years old</td>
<td>48 years old</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years of Experience and Location

The average years of experience serving as the principal of the principals responding was less than eight years. From the principals who selected schools in urban areas (n=12), the average years of experience serving as the principal was a little over seven years. From the principals who selected schools in suburban areas (n=82), the average years of experience serving as the principal was a little over eight years. From the principals who selected schools in rural areas (n=87), the average years of experience serving as the principal was eight and a half years.

Table 10

Summary of Years of Experience by Location (n=181)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of the school</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years of experience as a principal</td>
<td>7.8 years</td>
<td>8.2 years</td>
<td>8.5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age and Years of Experience as Principal

For this study, the average age of the principals was 45.7 years old and the average of years of experience serving as a principal was 7.9 years. In reviewing a scatterplot of age versus the years of experience as a principal, there is a pattern showing
older principals having more years of experience serving as principal. Figure 16 is a scatterplot showing each principal’s age and years of experience.

![Age Versus Years of Experience](image)

*Figure 16. Age Versus Years of Experience*

Two novice principals (n=2) did not fit this pattern formed by these data from the other respondents. One first-year principal was 28 years old (n=1); this principal was the only principal less than 30 years old. A second-year principal was 63 (n=1); this principal was the only novice in their sixties.

**Experience and Size of Faculty**

From the principals responding, the average size of the faculties, number of full-time and part-time, was 45.6 teachers. For novice principals (five or less years of experience), the average size of their faculties was 35.5 teachers. Experienced principals had an average faculty size of 47.7 teachers.
Further Analysis of Principals’ Years of Experience

On the surveys, the principals were asked how many years they have served as principal and they were also asked how many years they have served as the principal in their current school. From these data, the researcher could determine:

1. Is the principal a novice principal or an experienced principal?
2. Has a principal served as a principal at another school(s) besides his/her current school?

Thirty-eight percent of the principals (n=70) responding to this survey had five or fewer years of experience. Sixty-one percent of the principals (n=113) responding this survey had six or more years of experience. Figure 17 displays these data.

![Summary of Novice and Experienced Principals](n=186)

*Figure 17. Summary of Novice and Experienced Principals*

Each principal was asked to indicate how many years, including this school year, he or she has been working as a principal and as a principal in his or her current school. The responses ranged from one to 34 years. For sixty percent of the principals (n=112), their responses to these two questions matched which indicates that all the experience
they have as a principal is only from their current position. Thirty-eight percent of the principals (n=71) had worked in the capacity of principal in another school prior to their current positions.

![Number of Schools served in the role as principal](image)

*Figure 18. Number of Schools Served in the Role as Principal*

These data and the responses to question two on the survey allowed the researcher to separate the survey responses by the principals’ years of experience.

**Evaluation and Remediation of Tenured Teachers**

The researcher has summarized and displayed the principals’ responses to the questions about evaluating and remediating tenured teachers. The survey included questions requiring principals to select “yes” or “no,” give their definitions, describe their experiences, and/or provide additional information. If a question was restricted only to participants who had answered “yes” to a preceding question, the research has noted this in the question’s summary.

While summarizing data from the 186 surveys, the researcher was guided by the research questions:
1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

The researcher has provided summaries and displays for each survey question and then additional summaries based on the principals’ year of experience, where appropriate.

**Remediation Plans**

The first questions on the survey, after the demographic section, were all focused on teacher remediation. The participants were asked to answer:

1. Have you ever placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. How long had you been a principal when this took place?

3. Please describe in a few sentences any concerns you had in relation to any outside factors (such as legal, financial, union, etc.) before placing the teacher on a remediation plan.

4. Please describe in a few sentences if you felt the plan was effective in remediating the teacher?

5. Was the teacher dismissed at the end of the remediation plan?

Participants were instructed to answer questions two though five only if they answered “yes” for question one.
For question one, the researcher has included quantitative summary and display. For question three, the researcher has provided a sample of the open-ended responses. The researcher summarized the responses for questions four and five together and has provided a sample of the open-ended responses. Identical responses or very similar to one or more responses have been noted. The researcher has also noted the amount of respondents that left any blanks for questions one to five.

**Question 1: Have you ever placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?**

Twenty-eight percent (n=52) of the principals responded “yes” and seventy percent (n=131) of the principals responded “no.” Two percent (n=5) left this question blank. Figure 19 displays these data.

![Principals who have placed a tenured teacher on remediation](n=186)

*Figure 19. Principals Who Have Placed a Tenured Teacher on Remediation*

**Question 2: How long had you been a principal when this took place?**

Twenty-eight percent of the principals (n=52) responding to this survey had placed tenured teacher on remediation plans. Of these 52 surveys, the researcher received 51 responses for question two. The responses ranged from first-year principals...
to a 24th year principal and the average was 5.3 years of experience. Seventy percent (n=36) of the principals who had placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan had been serving as principal for five or less years. Ten percent (n=5) of the 52 principals who had placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan were in their first year as principal. Figure 20 displays these data.

![Bar chart showing the number of principals with a given number of years of experience as a principal when remediating a tenured teacher.](chart.png)

**Figure 20.** Principals’ Years of Experience as a Principal When Remediating a Tenured Teacher

**Question 3:** Please describe in a few sentences any concerns you had in relation to any outside factors (such as legal, financial, union, etc.) before placing the teacher on a remediation plan.

Based on the responses to question one, only 52 participants (n=52) were instructed to answer this open-ended question. Fifty principals (n=50) wrote in responses to question three. The researcher grouped identical or similar responses. Many of the
principals wrote several concerns so principals were counted more than once while analyzing question three. Figure 21 displays the responses for question three.

**Figure 21. Concerns Indicated by Principals Placing Teachers Under Remediation**

The most common response to question three was union concerns. Seventeen principals (n=17) indicated that they were concerned with the teachers’ union. The seventeen responses (n=17) specifically mentioned the union and/or the union representatives for their building. These principals felt rating any or one or more specific teachers unsatisfactory and triggering remediation would result in union action.

Principals’ responses included:

- “Union for sure was a concern. Their interests are for the member no matter how bad a teacher.”

- “Always concerned with the union. They have to “fight the good fight” for their member no matter how they feel.”
• “It was difficult as we were trying to build a relationship with the union. It was tense from my point of view.” (n=1)

• “The strength of the union- it would draw out the process.” (n=1)

Six of the responses (n=6) were principals expressing a concern for the time commitment, elaborating how lengthy the remediation process was. One principal wrote, “The time it takes to go through the remediation process is significant.” Another principal wrote, “The time commitment to conduct the plan with fidelity.”

Sixteen of the responses (n=16) indicated they did not have any concerns. For some these 16 responses, principals only wrote “none” or “I had no concerns.”

Additional responses expressing no concerns included:

• “I followed procedures that were outlined in the teacher contract.” (n=2)

• Three principals indicated the teachers’ reputations were the reasons they had no concerns. “The teacher was well known for being below average.” (n=3)

• Two principals wrote about their frequent communication with the union. (n=2)

Six of the responses (n=6) indicated the principals were concerned about the financial impact to the district due to the cost of the remediation process for a teacher. One principal wrote, “I had financial concerns but knew it was best for our students for the person to improve or move on.” Another principal wrote, “Obviously, the cost was a concern, but I knew it had to be done.”

Five of the responses (n=5) indicated the principals did not have a supportive superintendents and/or board of education. One principal wrote, “The initial support
from the district was great. After a year long process, they would not follow through and allowed the teacher to stay in another building.”

Five of the responses (n=5) indicated the principals were concerned about the school culture and relationships. These responses mentioned the relationship with the unsatisfactory teacher or with all teachers or mentioned the morale in the school. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “I was very concerned with how this would effect the climate in the building, and if staff would lose confidence in my leadership.”

- “I was hoping the process would improve her performance but not ruin our relationship. I wanted to see her succeed.”

Thirteen of the responses (n=13) indicated legal concerns. These principals wrote about the steps and legal procedures to follow remediating a teacher. One principal stated, “Attorneys were involved from the beginning (as soon as I thought we were going down this path my first year).”

The researcher had one response (n=1) that did not fall under of the common themes relative to the other 50 responses. This principal indicated, “The teacher had some mental health issues.”

Using data from question two, the researcher separated data from question three into novice principals (1-5 years of experience when remediating a teacher) and experienced principals (6 or more years of experience when remediating a teacher). Figure 22 displays the novice principals (at the time of the remediation) and Figure 23 displays the experienced principals (at the time of the remediation).
Thirty-three percent of the novice principals (n=12) and 31% of the experienced principals (n=5) had concerns about the teachers’ union.
• Seventeen percent of the novice principals (n=6) had concerns about the time necessary to develop and execute a remediation plan. None of the experienced principals expressed concern about time.

• Eight percent of the novice principals (n=3) and 19% of the experienced principals (n=3) had concerns about the cost to the district.

• Twenty-five percent of the novice principals (n=9) and 25% of the experienced principals (n=4) had legal concerns.

• Eight percent of the novice principals (n=3) and 13% of the experienced principals (n=2) had concerns about the effect on the school culture.

• Eleven percent of the novice principals (n=4) and 6% of the experienced principals (n=1) had concerns about having the support of the superintendent and board of education.

• Twenty-eight percent of the novice principals (n=10) and 38% of the experienced principals (n=6) had no concerns when placing a tenured teacher on a remediation plan.

**Question 4:** Please describe in a few sentences if you felt the plan was effective in remediating the teacher? **Question 5:** Was the teacher dismissed at the end of the remediation plan?

Based on the responses to question one, only 52 participants (n=52) were instructed to answer questions four and five. The researcher received 52 responses (n=52) to question four and 49 responses (n=49) to question five. The responses to
question four included details about the teachers’ retirement, resignation, or dismissal. Some of the responses were:

- “The teacher resigned, so yes!”
- “The plan was a good one but the teacher did not follow it and resigned.”

The researcher analyzed questions four and five together to account for the 52 remediation plans. Table 11 combines the responses and data to questions four and five, accounting for overlap.

Table 11

*Summary of Outcomes of the Remediation Plans (n=52)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes of the Remediation Plans</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resigned or retired</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans in progress</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediation was effective.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediations were only temporarily effective.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten principals (n=10) responded “yes” to question five indicating the teachers had been officially dismissed. In total, 40% of the principals (n= 21) who placed teachers on remediation indicated that the teacher left the district at some point of the remediation. Comments under question four included:

- “In all honesty, the plan was created for her to fail, not to grow. She was not a good teacher who wouldn’t grow.”
- “The plan resulted in the employee’s voluntary separation.”
- “Before the plan ended, I got the teacher to resign.”
Twenty-five percent of the responses (n=12) indicated the plan was effective in remediating the teacher. One principal wrote, “Yes, I believe it helped the teacher become more of a reflective practitioner and helped the teacher better understand job-related responsibilities.” Another principal’s response was, “Most definitely. Occasionally the teacher slides but gentle, positive comments can get them back on track.”

Twenty-nine percent of principals (n=15) who placed teachers on remediation indicated there were noticeable changes in the teacher’s performances but the noticeable change was temporary. Many of the same issues remediated have begun arising. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “She was given a mentor, improved for the year and then went back to her bad habits.”
- “It was a short term solution. I expect it will become a problem again.”
- “The plan was effective in the short term (long enough for the teacher to regain a satisfactory rating), but was not sustained over time.”
- “She went back to her ‘old ways.’”

Using data from question two, the researcher has separated data for questions four and five from novice principals (1-5 years of experience when remediating a teacher) from the data from experienced principals (6 or more years of experience when remediating a teacher). Table 12 displays data from the novice principals (at the time of the remediation) from and the experienced principals (at the time of the remediation).
Table 12

Outcomes of the Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Remediation Plans (n=51)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes of the Remediation Plans</th>
<th>Novice (n=36)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resigned or retired</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans in progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediation was effective.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediation plans were only temporarily effective. (Teachers are still on faculty.)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six percent of the responses (n=4) indicated the remediation plans were still in progress. Figure 24 summarizes the results of the remediation plans.

![Results from Remediation Plans](n=52)

*Figure 24. Summary of Results from Remediation Plans*
Unsatisfactory Ratings

Questions six and seven asked the principals questions about giving tenured teachers unsatisfactory ratings. While summarizing the responses, the researcher has provided a sample of the responses. The researcher has noted when participants’ responses including were identical or very similar to one or more responses.

Question 6: Have you ever been told by a district administrator not to give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating?

For this question, principals were asked to first select “yes” or “no.” Then there was space and a prompt on the survey if a principal wanted to provide details or describe any situations that might apply to this question. Four percent of the principals (n=8) answered “yes” indicating they had been told to not give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating and 94% of the principals (n=174) answered “no.” Two percent of the participants (n=4) did not select “yes” or “no.” Figure 25 displays the breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses.

![Pie chart showing the breakdown of responses to the question about being told not to give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating.

Figure 25. Principals Who Have Been Told by a District Administrator Not to Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating

(n=186)
Principals had the option to include open-ended responses whether they had selected “yes” or “no.” The researcher received five (n=5) written responses. One of the written responses was from one of the principals who had selected “no.” The other four (n=4) written responses were from principals who had selected “yes.”

One principal who had selected “no” for question six wrote, “In a small district it is very easy to discuss and work with all teachers.” (n=1)

Two of the principals who had selected “yes” indicated the teachers’ impending retirements were the issue. One principal wrote, “It was my first year at my current building and I evaluated a very poor tenured teacher. Due to his retirement within two years, the superintendent said not to “push it.” This was an elective class (Industrial Arts). It might have been different if it was a core subject.” The other principal indicated, “The teacher was three years from retirement and they didn’t want to invest the time and money.”

One of the principals who had selected “yes” indicated, “The reason was- this teacher isn’t bad enough to go through the work and financial cost.” (n=1)

One of the principals who had selected “yes” indicated he/she had been told by a district administrator not to give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating because, “For political reasons it wouldn’t be a good move.”

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the data from question six from novice principals and from experienced principals. Table 13 summarizes this data analysis.
Table 13

*Summary of Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Directed to Not Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating (n=182)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 7: Have you ever felt you could not give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating?

For this question, principals were asked to first select “yes” or “no.” Then there was space and a prompt on the survey to provide details or describe any situations that might apply to this question.

For this question, 16% of principals (n=29) answered “yes” indicating they had felt they could not give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating and 82% of principals (n=153) answered “no.” Two percent of the participants (n=4) did not select “yes” or “no.” Figure 26 displays the breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses.

*Figure 26. Principals Who Have Felt They Could Not Give a Tenured Teacher an Unsatisfactory Rating*
Principals had the option to include open-ended responses whether they had selected “yes” or “no.” The researcher received 18 open-end responses. Three of the written responses (n=3) were from principals who had selected “no” and 15 of the written responses (n=15) were from principals who had selected “yes.”

The three principals (n=3) who had selected “no” and included written responses indicated:

- “If they are not doing what is required of a teacher in the State of Illinois, then unsatisfactory is the only option.” (n=1)
- “I feel that I am not doing my job or what is best for kids if I am not honest when evaluating.” (n=1)
- “Our district has made a concerted effort to fairly and accurately evaluate tenured teachers. If they are deserving of an unsatisfactory rating, that is what they will receive.” (n=1)

Three of the principals (n=3) who had selected “yes” and wrote responses indicated the teachers had received satisfactory or higher marks on previous evaluations. One principal wrote, “I have felt this way several times (in previous administrative positions) when the [teacher’s previous] evaluations done by others were excellent and I had no one major bad behavior.” These previous evaluations caused the principals to feel they could not give those teachers unsatisfactory ratings.

Four of the principals (n=4) indicated that there was a problem with the evaluation system or the evaluation tool that their district is or was using. These
principals felt the evaluation system or current evaluation tool prevented them from giving tenured teachers an unsatisfactory rating. Principals’ responses included:

- “Our evaluation tool is outdated.”
- “The tool makes it difficult to rate an okay teacher unsatisfactory.”
- “The evaluation process was inadequate to support the rating.”

Three of the principals (n=3) indicated the time commitment involved with the remediation process led them to feel that they could not give tenured teachers an unsatisfactory rating. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Not enough resources—time, manpower, money to go through the remediation process.”
- “When giving a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory, you have to have documented carefully. Also, you have to have notified HR and allow attorneys to go through files/documentation.”
- “Not worth the time or effort to carry out the remediation process. Too time consuming without any guarantee of success.”

Two of the principals (n=2) indicated the strength of the teachers’ union led them to feel could they not give tenured teachers an unsatisfactory rating. One principal wrote, “We are always careful because in this district the union does seem to try and protect even the bad teachers.” The other principal wrote, “Giving an unsatisfactory rating will never turn into a dismissal with the union.”
Two of the principals (n=2) indicated the school board would not support the ratings and that led them to feel could they not give tenured teachers an unsatisfactory rating.

Three of the 15 principals (n=3) who selected “yes” to question seven wrote specific responses that did not fall under the groups of comments. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “There is a lot of pressure - unspoken pressure.” (n=1)
- “This was a very difficult time in the community as well as the district. The strike was nasty and contentious. If the principals gave anything other than excellent or satisfactory, the union was going to grieve it and accuse us of retribution.” (n=1)
- “To go through the process isn’t worth it because they will keep their job anyhow.”

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher separated the data from question seven from novice principals from the data provided by experienced principals. Table 14 summarizes this data analysis.

**Principals’ Definitions of Tenure**

The cover letter that was mailed with the *Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation* surveys stated that the purpose of the study was to examine the issues that arise when evaluating tenured teachers and to identify the differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals. For question number eight, the principals were asked to define tenure.
Table 14

**Summary of Novice Principals and Experienced Principals’ Perception of the Freedom to Rate Tenured Teachers (n=182)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of Tenure</th>
<th>Novice Principals</th>
<th>Experienced Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannot give unsatisfactory rating</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can give unsatisfactory rating</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 8: Please define tenure.**

The survey asked all respondents to define tenure. One hundred and seventy-one of the principals (n=171) wrote in a response to question eight; 15 of the surveys (n=15) received had this question blank. Many of the definitions, or parts of the definitions had similar wording and understanding. Table 15 displays the common definitions and numbers of principals who wrote in these definitions. Some of the principals’ definitions of tenure could be categorized by more than one of the researcher’s definitions.

Eighty-eight of the principals (n=88) wrote definitions for tenure that were based on or included four years of service.

Fifty-one of the responses (n=51) emphasized or included “protection” against arbitrary dismissal. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Unfortunately, tenure usually protects poor teachers because good and great teachers don’t need it.” (n=1)
- “A term that some teachers believe protects them from being released due to poor performance.” (n=1)
Table 15

Summary of Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=186)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Definitions of Tenure</th>
<th>Number of Principals use these terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years of service</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued contractual service</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Statute</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime/Permanent employment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s performance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of tenure</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- “Protects bad teachers, does nothing for good teachers.” (n=1)
- “Tenure should not protect incompetent teachers.” (n=1)
- “Tenure is a safety net for experienced teachers. However, in reality, often times it protects poor teachers from dismissal.” (n=2)
- “Unfortunately, it provides too much protection for mediocrity.” (n=1)

Six of the responses (n=6) indicated that tenure meant lifetime or permanent employment.

- “Tenure to me is a permanent contract for a teacher. Everyone knows a reduction in workforce is the only realistic way to dismiss a tenured teacher. In my opinion, a remediation plan should not fail so it is not a viable option for dismissal.” (n=1)
- “4 years and you’re in for life.”
• “A practice, utilized in education that gives teachers nearly permanent position after a four year trial period.”

Nineteen principals (n=19) defined tenure as job security. Some of the principals’ responses included:

• “Job security as reasonable way of protecting teachers from “whim” of administrators.”

• “When a teacher has received multiple satisfactory or better ratings and fulfilled the requirements of the district, the teacher is granted tenure which enables job security and benefits.”

• “Tenure is added security that helps a teacher to keep their job regardless of performance.”

Six definitions (n=6) stated that tenure is obtained based on a teacher’s performance. The principals’ responses included:

• “Something granted having demonstrated the ability to contribute to a district’s mission.” (n=1)

• “A teacher reaches a basic level of competency of a curriculum, best practice, and tools needed to become a successful teacher.” (n=1)

• “A professional educator who demonstrates capacity for satisfactory to excellent performance.” (n=1)

• “A teacher who has demonstrated the skill and knowledge of their content.” (n=1)
“The point in the teacher’s career when you find out how good they really are.” (n=1)

“Reward for a teacher maintaining high quality student learning experiences for his/her students.” (n=1)

Eighteen definitions of tenure (n=18) included continued contractual service. Some of the principals’ responses included:

“Property rights under the law.” (n=1)

“Termination is more difficult and requires a good deal of documentation and/or remediation.” (n=2)

Three principals (n=3) defined tenured referring to the Illinois School code or stating it is an Illinois statue. Some of the principals’ responses included:

“A statement/commitment by a school district to a teacher that reflects the fact that we think you’re a good fit and are willing to make a long term commitment to you.” (n=1)

Two of the definitions (n=2) could not be grouped with the other responses. The two principals (n=2) wrote:

“Just more rights.”(n=1)

“Many chances and PD given to reform.” (n=1)

Six of the definitions (n=6) received were subjective comments or opinions of the principals about tenure. These included:

“Tenure is an antiquated system in which an educator gains lifetime benefits.” (n=1)
“Overall tenure has a negative connotation for me as an administrator so I am choosing not to define this.” (n=1)

“Protects poor quality teachers.” (n=1)

“Tenure, I believe can lead to complacency in some teachers.” (n=1)

“Tenure means teacher performance has to be tolerated no matter how ineffective it is.” (n=1)

“I am in favor of tenure and many teachers continue to grow after receiving tenure. There is a small group who refuses to grow/change once tenure is achieved.” (n=1)

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated data from novice principals from the data provided by the experienced principals when asked to define tenure. The researcher received 65 responses (n=65) from 70 novice principals (n=70) and 105 responses (n=105) from 113 experienced principals (n=113) to this question. For two responses (n=2) and one non-response (n=1) for this question, the researcher did not have the principals’ years of experience. Table 16 summarizes this data analysis for the definitions of tenure.

- Forty-seven percent of the novice principals (n=33) and forty-eight percent (n=54) of the experienced principals wrote definitions for tenure that were based on or included four years of service.

- Twenty-nine percent of the novice principals (n=20) and twenty-seven percent of the experienced principals (n=31) emphasized or included “protection” against arbitrary dismissal.
Table 16

*Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=183)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Definitions of Tenure</th>
<th>Novice (n=70)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=113)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years of service</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued contractual service</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Statute</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime/Permanent employment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s performance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of tenure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Four percent of the novice principals (n=3) and three percent of the experienced principals (n=3) indicated that tenure meant lifetime or permanent employment.
- Thirteen percent of the novice principals (n=9) and ten percent of the experienced principals (n=11) defined tenure as job security.
- Four percent of the novice principals (n=3) and two percent of the experienced principals (n=2) stated that tenure is obtained based on a teacher’s performance.
- Nine percent of the novice principals (n=6) and eleven percent of the experienced principals (n=12) included continued contractual service.
- None of the novice principals and three percent of the experienced principals (n=3) defined tenured referring to the Illinois School code or stating it is an Illinois statue.
• One percent of the novice principals (n=1) and one percent of the experienced principals (n=1) wrote definitions that could not be grouped with the other responses.

• Six percent of the novice principals (n=4) and three percent of the experienced principals (n=3) gave definitions that were subjective comments or opinions about tenure.

In addition to the focus on principals’ understanding of tenure, the researcher also analyzed what were the principals’ perceptions of tenure. Some responses just outlined the requirements to obtain tenure but other included comments such as, “Tenure is a milestone achievement.” Table 17 is a table displaying the terms used to structure the definitions of tenure. The other responses did not include or use terms other than tenure in their definitions.

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the terms used to structure the definitions of tenure from the novice principals from the responses from experienced principals. Table 18 summarizes these data.

Using the demographic data and the responses to question one, the researcher has separated the terms used to structure the definitions of tenure. Table 19 displays the responses from novice principals who have previously remediated a tenured teacher (n=4) and the responses from experienced principals who have previously remediated a tenured teacher (n=13).
Table 17

*Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure is a (an)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal term/Law</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification/Designation/Category</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarantee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiquated policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaic policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False sense of security</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Academic Freedom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18

*Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novice (n=25)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=34)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification/Designation (n=2)</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarantee (n=2)</td>
<td>Antiquated policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of service</td>
<td>Archaic policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Classification/Designation (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process (n=2)</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition (n=4)</td>
<td>False sense of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>Guarantee (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right (n=4)</td>
<td>Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard (n=2)</td>
<td>Legal term/Law (n=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Academic Freedom</td>
<td>Milestone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status (n=5)</td>
<td>Process (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right (n=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status (n=7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19

*Novice Principals’ (Who Have Remediated a Tenured Teacher) and Experienced Principals’ (Who Have Remediated a Tenured Teacher) Perceptions of Tenure (n=17)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novice Principals who have remediated a tenured teacher</th>
<th>Experienced Principals who have remediated a tenured teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right (n=2)</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status (n=2)</td>
<td>Antiquated policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>False sense of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guarantee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Law (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence

Question 9: Please define incompetence.

The researcher received 172 responses (n=172) to this question. Fourteen of the surveys (n= 14) received had this question blank. Table 20 displays a summary of the written responses for question nine.

Eighty-three principals (n=83) defined incompetence as the teacher’s inability to perform his/her duties or ones included in his/her job description. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Total lack of judgment and professionalism. Does not have student interest in mind.” (n=4)
- “Not being able to do or complete tasks and duties assigned to a person.” (n=10)
- “The inability to perform one’s job even with a reasonable level of support.” (n=3)
- “Incompetence describes someone who consistently fails to perform essential functions of a particular task or work unit.” (n=3)

Forty-seven principals (n=47) defined incompetence based on teacher’s instructional practices in his/her classroom. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Students are bored and not learning. Teachers do not immerse themselves in the process and rarely engage students in active learning.” (n=5)
- “The inability to conduct class in a manner that allows student learning to effectively take place.” (n=6)
Table 20

*Summary of Incompetence Definitions* (n=186)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of the definition</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to complete duties/responsibilities</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective practices in the classroom</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not meeting standards and/or expectations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacking skills</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing not complete tasks</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing harm to students</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- “Students are bored and not learning. Teachers have a “who cares” attitude. Collecting another paycheck until retirement.”
- “An incompetent teacher is one who is not able to educate his/her students due to poor techniques and/or lack of control or respect.”

Thirty-two principals (n=32) defined incompetence based on meeting the standards. The researcher included responses about the district standards or the district evaluation system under this theme. Some of the principals wrote:

- “Not meeting satisfactory standards repeatedly.” (n=3)
- “Inability to show satisfactory improvement in domains of concern, when unsatisfactory.” (n=2)
- “Not being able to meet the pre-established expectations for performance.” (n=8)
- “Does not meet, as per evaluating tools – using Danielson’s framework for evaluation.” (n=2)
Twenty-seven principals (n=27) defined incompetence based on skills. The principals indicated that incompetent teachers lack or do not possess the necessary skills.

- “Inability to train or understand how a task is completed. Belligerent at times to make a change or follow basic directions.” (n=1)
- “Not having the skills, common sense to successfully complete the duties assigned.” (n=6)

Twelve principals (n=12) indicated that incompetence is a choice. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Unwillingness to perform one’s job to certain expectations.”
- “The act of choosing not to do your job- not to be confused with inability.”
- “Incompetence is the intentional act of not following conduct set by the federal, state, and local guidelines.” (n=1)
- “A teacher who chooses not to learn the content; does not take suggestions on ways to improve their teaching.”
- “Teachers that lack the will to help students grow academically.”

Six principals (n=6) defined incompetence as doing harm to students. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Teachers are incompetent if what they are doing in the classroom is harming students or has a negative impact on kids.” (n=1)
- “Incompetence is defined as “doing harm to the process of student learning and/or wellbeing of the child.” (n=1)
- “Doing harm to students through poor teaching.” (n=3)
“Educational malpractice, i.e. …When a teacher exhibits a pattern of behavior which is unethical, not focused on student growth and learning, and unprofessional in nature with colleagues, students, or the community at large.” (n=1)

Three principals’ responses (n=3) could not be group relative to the other responses. Their written responses to this question were:

- “Inability to act on constructive criticism.” (n=1)
- “Basically, shows up and collects a paycheck. Last one in the building and the first one out.” (n=1)
- “Some people were never meant to be teachers.” (n=1)

Fourteen principals (n=14) did not respond to this question.

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the data from novice principals from the data provided by experienced principals. Table 21 displays this analysis for question nine. The researcher received 65 responses from 70 novice principals (n=70) and 105 responses from 113 experienced principals (n=113) to this question. For two responses (n=2) and one of the non-responses (n=1) for this question, the researcher did not have the principals’ years of experience.

- 54% of the novice principals (n=38) and 39% of the experienced principals (n=44) defined incompetent as the inability to complete duties and/or responsibilities.
- 20% of the novice principals (n=14) and 29% of the experienced principals (n=33) defined incompetent as ineffective practices in the classroom.
Table 21

Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence (n=183)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of Incompetence</th>
<th>Novice (n=65)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to complete duties/responsibilities</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective practices in the classroom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not meeting standards and/or expectations</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacking skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing not complete tasks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing harm to students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 13% of the novice principals (n=9) and 20% of the experienced principals (n=23) defined incompetent as not meeting standards and/or expectations.
- 14% of the novice principals (n=10) and 15% of the experienced principals (n=17) defined incompetent as the teacher lacking skills.
- 6% of the novice principals (n=4) and 7% of the experienced principals (n=8) defined incompetent as a choice and the teacher is choosing not to complete assigned tasks.
- Additionally, one of the 70 novice principals (n=1) and three of the 113 experienced principals (n=3) defined incompetent as doing harm to students.

Principal Perceptions of Norming Evaluations

The cover letter that was mailed with the surveys stated that this survey would help the researcher understand the challenges principals face in their role as evaluator. The survey included a question asking principals about when they took over as the principal and had to evaluate the faculty for the first time.
Question 10: In your first year as principal, did you feel pressure to rate teachers with ratings in sync with their previous evaluations?

For this question, principals were asked to first select “yes” or “no.” Then there was space and a prompt on the survey if they wanted to provide details or describe any situations that might apply to this question.

For this question, 33% of the principals (n=62) answered “yes” and 65% of the principals (n=124) answered “no.” Two percent (n=4) participants did not select “yes” or “no.” Figure 27 displays the breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses.

![First Year Principals who felt pressure to give ratings similar to their predecessors](chart)

*(n=186)*

*Figure 27. First Year Principals Who Felt Pressure to Give Ratings Similar to their Predecessors*

Principals had the option include open-ended responses whether they had selected “yes” or “no.” The researcher received 67 open-end responses. Figure 28 displays a summary of the written responses that went with question ten.
Figure 28. Written Responses about Principals Feeling Pressure to Norm their Evaluations from the Previous Principal

Five percent of the principals (n=3) who had answered “yes” indicated that, while they felt pressure, they did not alter or base any ratings on the previous evaluations. The three principals wrote:

- “But I didn’t because I felt it was one chance to rate fairly before having to show growth.” (n=1)
- “Teachers felt they should have previous year’s evaluation even though the evaluations were worthless.” (n=1)
- “Although I looked at previous evaluations, I resisted falling in the trap of making sure I rated the same.” (n=1)

Twenty-seven percent of the principals (n=18) either chose not look at the evaluations or did not have access to the previous evaluations.
Forty-three percent of the principals (n=29) indicated that they felt pressure from the faculty to give ratings in sync with their previous evaluations. Written responses for question ten included:

- “The history and culture of the school have a norming effect. Teachers come to understand what “satisfactory” or “excellent” mean with this historical context and not in terms of standards-based definition of performance.” (n=2)
- “I didn’t until my rating did not sync with his previous evaluation. I heard about it through another teacher who heard about it from a complaint.” (n=1)
- “The teachers are used to a certain score and expect to receive it regardless of the evaluator.” (n=5)

Twenty-five percent of the principals (n=17) indicated that they felt pressure but it was pressure they were putting on themselves. “Not wanting to rock the boat” was used by several principals while describing the pressure they felt to rate teachers similar to their predecessors. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Year one I needed to learn the lay of the land. Earn respect and trust of the staff and change comes a little easier.” (n=1)
- “It is a natural thing to want to not “rock the boat” especially in a smaller district where relationships are formed.” (n=3)
- “The pressure was self-induced due to my lack of experience completing teacher evaluations.” (n=1)
- “As a first-year principal- you don’t want to make too many waves unless detrimental to kids!” (n=1)
Teacher Dismissal Proceedings

The next section of the surveys included three questions asking about the dismissal process.

Question 11: Have you ever participated in getting a teacher to leave rather than face dismissal proceedings?

For this question, principals were asked to first select “yes” or “no.” Then there was space and a prompt on the survey if they wanted to provide details or describe any situations that might apply to this question. Fifty percent of the principals (n=94) answered “yes” to this question and 48% of the principals (n=89) answered ”no.” Two percent of the participants (n=3) did not select “yes” or “no.” Figure 29 displays the breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses to question eleven.

![Figure 29. Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process](image)

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the data for question eleven by novice principals and experienced principals. Of the 94 principals who responded “yes” to question eleven, 36% of the principals (n=34) were novice
principals. Of the 94 principals who responded “yes” to question eleven, 63% of the principals (n=59) were experienced principals. Figure 30 displays these data.

Questions twelve and thirteen were follow-up questions to question eleven and participants were asked to provide open-ended responses to these two questions if they had answered “yes” to question eleven. Based on the responses to question eleven, only ninety-four participants (n=94) were instructed to answer questions twelve and thirteen.

![Figure 30. Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process](image)

Question 12: If yes, can you describe what was offered to the teacher in exchange for resigning?

Out of 94 surveys (n=94) with affirmative responses to question eleven, the researcher received 83 responses (n=83) to question twelve. Table 22 displays these responses received for question twelve.
Table 22

Summary of Offers by Principals to Tenured Teachers to Resign (n=94)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offer/Non-offer</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference/Recommendation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Resigning is the best option&quot; Conversation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Package</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer within the district</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-nine percent of the principals (n=27) indicated they offered the teachers recommendation letters or they would be a reference, dependent on their resignations. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “I wrote a letter of general information listing practices that I felt were accomplished.” (n=6)
- “I gave them the right to use their experience on an application and a letter of reference that only confirmed their employment.” (n=5)

Fifty-five percent of the principals (n=42) indicated they spoke with teachers and told them that resigning was the best option for them.

- “It was explained that a resignation looks better than a dismissal.” (n=5)
- “We agreed that we would not hinder the teacher in finding a new job.” (n=2)
- “Teachers usually recognize they need to make a bad situation better by understanding the ‘end’ is near. Make the least of it and don’t burn bridges.” (n=1)
Twelve percent of the principals (n=11) indicated the district offered the teachers financial packages. These eleven responses included:

- “Extended benefit packages” (n=4)
- “A financial package from the BOE that I was not privy to.” (n=1)

Three percent of the principals (n=3) indicated they honored requests to transfer teachers to other middle schools or other buildings serving different grades.

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the data for question twelve from novice principals from the data provided by experienced principals. Table 23 displays this additional analysis of the data for question twelve.

Table 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offer/Non-offer</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference/Recommendation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Resigning is the best option&quot; Conversation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Package</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer within the district</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 13: If yes, do you know if the teacher took another teaching job after that?

Out of 94 surveys with affirmative responses to question eleven, the researcher received 91(n=91) responses to question thirteen. Three principals who had answered “yes” to question eleven (n=3), left question thirteen blank. Figure 31 displays the responses received for question thirteen.
Fifty-one percent of the principals (n=48) responded “yes” indicating that they knew those teachers had been hired to new teaching positions.

Thirty-three percent of the principals (n=31) responded “no” indicating that they knew those teachers had not been hired for new teaching positions.

Thirteen percent of the principals (n=12) responded that they were unsure if those teachers had been hired to new teaching positions.

Figure 31. Summary of Teachers Holding Teaching Positions after Being Pressured to Resign

Current Under-performing Teachers

The next section of the survey included two questions asking the principals about their current tenured teachers.

**Question 14:** Do you have any tenured teachers whose current performance you would consider unsatisfactory?
For this question, principals were asked to first select “yes” or “no.” Thirty-five percent of the principals (n=65) answered “yes” to this question and 62% of the principals (n=115) answered “no.” Two percent of the principals (n=3) left this question blank. Two percent of the principals (n=3) wrote in notes that they were planning to formally evaluate some teachers who they suspect will receive unsatisfactory ratings. Figure 32 displays the breakdown of the “yes” and “no” responses.

![Figure 32](image)

*Figure 32. Principals Who Currently Have Tenured Teachers Whose Performances are Unsatisfactory*

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher determined 37% of the 65 principals with tenured teachers whose performance are unsatisfactory were novice principals (n=24). The other 63% of the principals with tenured teachers whose performance are unsatisfactory were experienced principals (n=41). Table 24 displays these data.
Table 24

Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Currently Have One or More Teachers with Unsatisfactory Performances (n=65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals who currently have one or more teachers with unsatisfactory performances. (n=65)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novice Principals 37% (n=24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced Principals 63% (n=41)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question one asked principals if they had placed tenured teachers on remediation plans. Using the data from question one, the researcher separated the 65 responses for question fourteen by experience placing a tenured teacher on remediation. Thirty-one percent of the principals (n=20) currently supervising tenured teachers whose current performance that they would consider unsatisfactory have experience placing a tenured teacher on remediation. Sixty-nine percent of the principals (n=45) currently supervising tenured teachers whose current performance that they would consider unsatisfactory do not have experience placing a tenured teacher on a remediation plan. Table 25 displays these data.

Table 25

Principals Who Currently Have One or More Teachers with Unsatisfactory Performances and their Experience with Remediation Plans (n=65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals who currently have one or more teachers with unsatisfactory performances. (n=65)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have experience remediating tenured teachers 31% (n=20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have experience remediating tenured teachers 69% (n=45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question fifteen was an open-ended question that principals who answered “yes” to question fourteen were instructed to answer.
Question 15: If yes, what are your plans for that teacher(s) that is/are not performing?

Please describe.

Of the 65 participants (n=65) who answered “yes” to question fourteen, the researcher received 60 open-ended responses (n=60) to question fifteen. Table 26 summarizes these responses.

Table 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ current plans</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering a growth and/or remediation plan</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has started or will start additional professional development and/or coaching</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to pressure the teacher to resign or change performance</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal is waiting for the teacher retirement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal has or is planning to change the teacher’s schedule and/or additional duties</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forty-five percent of the principals (n=29) indicated that they were planning to develop either a growth or remediation plan for the teacher. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Currently working with the superintendent to develop a plan.” (n=2)
- “Working through extensive remediation plans.” (n=2)
- “Develop an improvement plan.” (n=4)
- “Place on Assistance Track – a district step before remediation.” (n=1)
Twenty-eight percent of the principals (n=18) indicated that they plan to start or have already started some additional professional development opportunities and/or additional coaching for these teachers. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “At this time I am providing professional development opportunities and in-house training to improve their teaching skills.” (n=5)
- “Support the teacher through regular but ‘informal’ coaching.” (n=2)
- “Address it by coaching the teacher on areas of weakness with regular feedback.” (n=4)
- “I have reflected on her deficiencies in her evaluation and provided assistance to help.” (n=1)
- “Send to a workshop”
- “She has received professional development, observed in other districts, and coaching from colleagues and administrators.” (n=1)

Eleven percent of the principals (n=7) indicated that they would place pressure on the teachers if a change in performance did not occur. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Pressure - I am willing to support “skill.” If there is no will- you cannot move or change that.” (n=1)
- “Make one uncomfortable enough that they will retire soon.” (n=2)
- “Administrative support even when unwelcomed with frequent monitoring.” (n=2)
“Continue to make them uncomfortable by setting high, unrealistic expectations and expecting them to meet these expectations.” (n=1)

Nine percent of the principals (n=6) indicated the teachers are close to retirement and principals are waiting for the teachers to retire. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “She has 2 years – and retirement will come before the remediation process. (Much less expense to the district).”
- “Wait 1 more year until they retire.”

Six percent (n=4) principals of the 65 principals (n=65) indicated they had plans to change the teacher’s schedule and/or additional duties. Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Move within class levels to more appropriate levels for them.” (n=2)
- “Move to a different grade level.” (n=2)

The five responses (n=5) the researcher did not group and summarize were:

- “Nothing because there is no way to dismiss them unless they commit a crime against a student. Tenure is one thing wrong with the education system unless you are the teacher on tenure.” (n=1)
- “Give them an evaluation based on observed performance in class rather than on their seniority and “reputation.” (n=1)
- “They do not have the skills to do the job.” (n=1)
- “Work with our HR office to document performance.” (n=1)
**We added equipment in supervising students and provided new and scripted curriculum.** (n=1)

Five principals (n=5) of the 65 principals (n=65) who answered “yes” to question fourteen did not respond to question fifteen.

Using the demographic data on the survey, the researcher has separated the responses for question fifteen from novice principals from responses provided by experienced principals. Table 27 displays this analysis of the data.

**Table 27**

*Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Current Plans for Addressing Unsatisfactory Performance (n=65)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ current plans</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering a growth and/or remediation plan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has started or will start additional professional development and/or coaching</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to pressure the teacher to resign or change performance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal is waiting for the teacher retirement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal has or is planning to change the teacher’s schedule and/or additional duties</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 38% of the novice principals (n=9) and 22% of the experienced principals (n=9) are considering a growth and/or remediation plan for these teachers.
- 46% of the novice principals (n=11) and 44% of the experienced principals (n=18) have started or will start additional professional development and/or coaching for these teachers.
8% of the novice principals (n=2) and 12% of the experienced principals (n=5) plan to pressure the teacher to resign or change performance for these teachers.

4% of the novice principals (n=1) and 12% of the experienced principals (n=5) have underperforming teachers that the principals are waiting for these teachers to retire.

2% of the novice principals (n=2) and 5% of the experienced principals (n=2) have plans to change the teacher’s schedule and/or additional duties for these teachers.

Summary

The purpose of Chapter IV is to present and display the data collected from the 186 completed the Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation questionnaires sent during the 2011-2012 school year to all public middle school principals in Illinois, exclusive of the City of Chicago.

This chapter displays and summarizes demographic data and the responses to the survey questions. The researcher paired demographic data to identify possible factors (gender, location of the school, enrollment, age) that would cause differences in the data. The researcher has provided summaries and displays for each survey question and then additional summaries based on the principals’ year of experience, where appropriate.

In Chapter V, the researcher utilizes these summaries and displays to address the research questions posed for this study.
CHAPTER V
DATA ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

This research study was designed to examine the issues that arise when evaluating tenured teachers. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify differences, if they existed, between novice and experienced principals when handling underperforming tenured teachers. The researcher collected data from every public middle school principal in the state of Illinois, exclusive of the city of Chicago, after investigating existing relevant research.

The researcher designed this study to answer these two research questions:

1. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

2. What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?

To address the research questions for this study, a qualitative questionnaire design was chosen to collect data. The Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation questionnaire was sent to 646 middle schools during the 2011-2012 school year. Chapter IV presented and displayed the data collected from 186 completed or partially
completed and returned *Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation* questionnaires. Chapter V is intended to present the researcher’s data analysis and conclusions.

The questionnaire was sent to 646 public middle school principals in the state of Illinois, exclusive of the city of Chicago and any charter schools. For this study, middle schools were defined as schools housing grades 4-6, 4-8, 5-6, 5-7, 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8. Since every principal supervises and evaluates members of the faculty, this survey was not sent to any assistant principals or district-level administrators.

The researcher sent the questionnaires in September 2011 in mailings that each contained a cover letter, a consent form, a questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped return envelope once the 2011-2012 school year started. The mailing envelopes were addressed to each public middle school principal in Illinois, exclusive of Chicago. At the end of four weeks after mailing the initial questionnaire, a second mailing was sent to the same principals. Two weeks after the second mailing (six weeks from the initial mailing), a reminder postcard was sent to the same schools.

At the conclusion of this six-week process, the researcher received 186 completed or partially completed surveys for a return rate of 28.8%. All returned questionnaires were sent to a rented post office box. Only the researcher had access to the Post Office box. All figures, tables, and statistics in Chapter IV and Chapter V account for 186 responses, except when otherwise noted.

Knowing bias can be reduced but never eliminated, the researcher made every effort to remain objective so his personal biases did not affect the results of this study. The researcher has kept a researcher journal throughout the duration of the study which
allowed him to reflect on his personal biases while analyzing responses. The journal will be shredded at the conclusion of this study.

For the summaries and displays selected in Chapter IV and the data analysis in Chapter V, the researcher was guided by the purpose of this study and the two research questions. The researcher’s intent was to have findings that addressed and answered the two research questions. Therefore, the researcher created additional data summaries and displays based on the principals’ years of experience, where appropriate. While anonymous, respondents did provide their ages, genders, and other demographic information. Data analysis guided by these demographics did not produce any patterns or conclusions that did not necessitate further study or affect the data analysis based on the principals’ year of experience.

Data for this study have been analyzed using the Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2009) research on ethical leadership and decision making as well as Victor Vroom’s (1964) Expectancy Theory. These frameworks are detailed in the literature review in Chapter II and displayed in the appendices. The conclusions derived from these data and implications on school leaders and principal preparation programs will be connected to issues raised in Chapter I (Introduction) and in Chapter II (Literature Review). Limitations to this study and suggestions for additional research are presented.

Ethics of justice, care, and critique are common paradigms used in several models for ethical decision making and ethic of profession is seen as a subset or part of these paradigms (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009; Strarratt, 1991). “The ethics of justice, critique, and care do not provide an adequate picture of the factors that must be taken into
consideration as leaders strive to make ethical decisions within the context of educational settings” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 19).

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2009) developed a framework for ethical reasoning in educational leadership to guide the decision-making of principals as they confront unfamiliar and complex dilemmas in their schools. In this framework, four approaches to ethical analysis are presented that influence the practice of school leaders, including the perspectives of justice, critique, care, and the ethics of one’s profession. These perspectives pose different questions for administrators to consider as they make decisions that hold them accountable to stakeholders and responsible for the children they serve (Lashley, 2007, p. 182).

Applying Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2009) framework, the researcher coded the principals’ responses using key terms and guiding questions for the ethics of justice, care, critique, and profession.

Adapted from Ethical Educational Leadership in Turbulent Times (Shapiro & Gross, 2008) and Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009).

Figure 33. Shapiro and Stefkovich’s Ethical Paradigm
“Ethics may be consciously or unconsciously employed in situations. A typical application for ethics is as a personal guide to action, particularly as supports to resolving ethical dilemmas” (Stefkovich & Begley, 2007).

Expectancy Theory states that an employee’s motivation is an outcome of how much an individual wants a reward (Valence). The employee’s assessment that the likelihood that the effort will lead to expected performance (Expectancy) and the belief the performance will lead to reward (Instrumentality) (Hamington, 2010; Vroom 1964). For this research, the “employee” is a principal as the researcher attempts to understand the principal’s motivations to remediate a tenured teacher. A remediation plan details steps to improve performance and identifies the expectations the principal has for the underperforming teacher. The researcher applied the Expectancy Theory by defining the “reward” as the desired outcome for the principal deciding to remediate a tenured teacher.

In Chapter IV, demographic data and then the qualitative and quantitative responses were summarized. After the researcher summarized and displayed data from each survey question, additional summaries based on the principals’ years of experience were constructed.

The researcher identified five themes that emerged. These themes are supported by qualitative and quantitative data from the 186 responses for this study. The five themes are:

1. Compared to the occurrence of underperforming teachers, the rate of principals placing tenured teachers on remediation plans is low.
2. Novice principals are more likely to remediate tenured teachers compared to experienced principals.

3. Principals perceive remediation plans as ineffective and that their effects on teachers’ instruction and behavior are only temporary.

4. The most common understanding of tenure by principals is that tenure serves to protect poor performing teachers.

5. Among principals, there is a wide range of understandings and perceptions of tenure and incompetence.

**Themes**

**Theme #1: Compared to the occurrence of underperforming teachers, the rate of principals placing tenured teachers on remediation plans is low**

Only 28% of the principals (n=52) responding to this survey had placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan. At the time of this survey in the Fall 2011, 37% of the principals (n=68) indicated they had or possibly had an underperforming teacher. For this group of Illinois public middle school principals, there is a gap between the potential number of underperforming teachers and the number of teachers being placed on remediation plans.

Twenty percent of the principals (n=37) responding to this study stated that at one point they were told or felt they could not give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating. These data suggest that principals are unable to place all underperforming tenured teachers on remediation plans. This interpretation supports the theme that the rate of teachers being placed under remediation is relatively low.
Seventy percent of the 52 principals (n=36) who responded to this study and placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan expressed that they had one or more concerns when they did place their teachers on remediation plans. The most common concern (n=17) was issues with the union representatives. One principal wrote, “Union for sure was a concern. Their interests are for the member no matter how bad a teacher.” Thirteen of the principals (n=13) indicated legal concerns. Principals were also concerned about time commitment to develop and execute a remediation plan (n=5), the financial impact to the district (n=5), a lack of support from their superintendents and/or board of education (n=5), and the strain on the school culture and relationships (n=5). Principals dealing with incompetent teachers in their classrooms are weighing the legal, financial and political ramifications of each personnel evaluation. (Painter, 2000; Peterson, 2004) Responses for this study suggest the legal, financial, and political concerns are leading principals to consider options other than remediating underperforming teachers.

“Expectancy motivation theory posits that employees will perform tasks if they are expected to do so, have the ability to do so, the opportunity to do so and believe that their efforts will be rewarded” (Johnson, 2009, p. 274). These data suggest an unspoken rule that principals should not automatically place an underperforming tenured teacher on a remediation plan. This “rule” is being enforced by unions, superintendents, and school boards.

The ethic of critique is based on critical theory, which has at its center an analysis of social class and its inequities, identifying who has power and who is harmed by the use of power (Shapiro & Gross, 2008; Shapiro & Stefkvich, 2009) These responses and data
suggest to the researcher that the power to remediate underperforming teachers may not rest with the principal.

Framed by the ethic of critique and Expectancy Theory, there is a discouraging reason underperforming tenured teacher are not being remediated. The power to place teachers on remediation plans has in effect shifted from the principal to the school districts and unions. Principals are receiving the message that they are not encouraged to remediate underperforming teachers unless their concerns over the teacher’s performance outweigh other factors.

“The ethic of care emphasizes concern for both the faculty and the students” (Denig & Quinn, 2001, p. 44). The responses the researcher received did reflect concern for the teacher that would be placed on a remediation plan. Principals had concerns for the district and the school culture but not explicitly say they had concerns for the teacher being remediated.

**Theme #2: Novice principals are more likely to remediate tenured teachers compared to experienced principals**

St. Germain and Quinn’s (2005) study on principals’ tacit knowledge stated that novice principals have incomplete understanding of polarizing class issues and are anxious and sometimes emotional. For this study, the median years of experience was four years when the 52 principals (n=52) had placed tenured teachers on remediation plans. Seventy percent of the principals (n=36) who had placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan had been serving as principal for five or fewer years. Ten percent of
The principals (n=5) were in their first year as principal. Data from this study suggest novice principals are more likely to remediate underperforming principals.

The Council of Chief State School Officers in collaboration with the National Policy Board on Educational Administration (NPBEA) developed The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. Standard six states: “A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.” The ethic of profession requires administrators to develop their own personal and professional codes of ethics (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009).

In sum, we have described a paradigm for the profession that expects its leaders to formulate and examine their own professional codes of ethics in light of individual personal codes of ethics, as well as standards set forth by the profession, and then calls on them to place students at the center of the ethical decision-making process. (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 26)

Placing a teacher on a remediation plan is a student-centered decision by the principal. These data suggest that novice principals are guided by the ethics of profession more often than experienced principals. The novice principals are “making ethical decisions in light of their best professional judgment, a judgment that places the best interests of the student at the center of all ethical decision making” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 23).

Applying Expectancy Theory to these data suggests that these novice principals were more motivated to remediate tenured teachers. “The theory states that motivated...
individuals put forth the greatest effort, believe that effort will lead to good performances, and that good performance will lead to preferred outcomes” (Oliver, 1995, p. 45). Novice principals, more than experienced principals, believe the remediation plans are worth the effort and will result in performance they want to see from the teacher.

**Theme #3: Principals perceive remediation plans as ineffective and that their effects on teachers’ instruction and behavior are only temporary**

Twenty-nine percent of principals (n=15) who placed teachers on remediation indicated there were positive changes in the teacher’s performances, but the noticeable changes were temporary. One principal wrote, “The plan was effective in the short term (long enough for the teacher to regain a satisfactory rating), but was not sustained over time.” These data pose a challenge to principals who view remediation plans as an ethical dilemma. These data also strike at the motivation for principals expecting the desired performance to be long-lasting, if not permanent.

While the ethic of care values relationships and considers effects on individuals, the principals also recognize their responsibility to students. A principal deciding to remediate a teacher is acting on the ethics of profession. The ‘best interests of the student’ is at the heart of the ethic of the educational profession (Stefkovich & Begley, 2007). Acting in accordance with the ethic of profession, the principals remediating teachers are focused on the community and the students’ educations.

Current research and responses to this study show that principals face a dilemma when trying to maintain and building positive relationships and deciding to place a
A tenured teacher on remediation is given a plan that identifies steps to correct behaviors and to meet expectations. The desired result is the teacher reaching and maintaining satisfactory performance. Victor Vroom’s Expectancy Value Theory (1964) proposes that individuals are motivated to engage in a particular behavior when they value the outcome of the task and they believe that performing the task will produce the desired result.

We speculated that the effects of success and failure might be dependent on the level of effort exerted by the subject prior to succeeding or failing, the persistence of the success or failure, and previously established beliefs concerning the probability of success under different levels of effort. (Vroom, 1964, p. 284)

The ramifications of these data are that principals are not motivated to place teachers on remediation plans because the desired results are only temporary.
Theme #4: A common understanding of tenure by principals is that tenure serves to protect poor performing teachers

Fifty-one of the principals (n=51) defining tenure emphasized or included “protection.” Some of the principals’ responses included:

- “Unfortunately, tenure usually protects poor teachers because good and great teachers don’t need it.” (n=1)
- “A term that some teachers believe protects them from being released due to poor performance.” (n=1)
- “Protects bad teachers, does nothing for good teachers.” (n=1)
- “Tenure should not protect incompetent teachers.” (n=1)
- “Tenure is a safety net for experienced teachers. However, in reality, often times it protects poor teachers from dismissal.” (n=2)
- “Unfortunately, it provides too much protection for mediocrity.” (n=1)

These responses were summarized by the researcher as definitions from principals who have negative views of tenure and consider tenured as protection for poor or “bad” teachers.

The perception that tenure protects poor teachers leads principals to believe that tenure only benefits those who may not deserve its safeguards. Those working towards social justice in schools and in school leadership often pose questions driven by the ethic of critique. “Who benefits by these arrangements? Which group dominates this social arrangement? Who defines what is valued and disvalued in this situation?” (Starratt, 2009, p. 23). Applying the ethic of critique to this theme, these perceptions would
suggest that tenured teachers have the power, and principals valuing quality instruction over experience do not have a voice.

The perception of tenure as protection for poor teachers works against the ethic of care. The ethic of care asks that individuals consider the consequences of their decisions and what the long-term effects of a decision are. Principals considering removing tenured teachers might be less likely to consider the impact on the teacher, personally and/or professionally, if the principals perceive them as poor teachers who have been protected by tenure.

A principal deciding to remediate a tenured teacher is motivated to change what they are seeing in the school they are running. Either the teacher is going to change his/her work or the remediation will result in the removal of the teacher from the district. Principals understanding tenure as “protection” do not expect their efforts will lead to change; the teacher is a poor teacher and tenure is preventing the teacher’s removal. Applying the Expectancy Theory to this theme, a principal would not be motivated to remediate a tenured teacher.

Since the early 1900s, tenure laws have continued to appear in some form in most states, including Illinois (Coleman et al., 2006; Marshall, Baucom, & Webb, 1998). Most teachers say that without the protection tenure provides, they would be vulnerable to “administrators who abuse their power” (Johnson, 2009). The ethic of critique identifies inequities in laws and the status quo. Current research on teachers’ perception of tenure is incongruent with the principals’ responses to this study.
Theme #5: Among principals, there is a wide range of understandings and perceptions of tenure and incompetence

The researcher has highlighted that many principals in this study defined tenure as protection for poor teachers. Tenure, also known as “contractual continued service,” is a status conferred by law upon certified employees who have satisfactorily completed a term of probationary employment (Braun, 2010). The researcher received 171 responses that could be categorized into eight different definitions. Eighty-eight of the principals (n=88) wrote definitions for tenure that were based on or included four years of service. Fifty-one of the responses (n=51) emphasized or included “protection” against arbitrary dismissal. Other responses indicated that tenure meant lifetime or permanent employment, tenure as job security, or continued contractual service. Some of the principals’ definitions of tenure could be categorized by more than one of the researcher’s definitions. Table 28 summarizes these data.

Table 28

*Summary of Principals’ Definitions of Tenure* (n=186)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Definitions of Tenure</th>
<th>Number of Principals use these terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years of service</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued contractual service</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Statute</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime/Permanent employment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s performance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of tenure</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the focus on principals’ understanding of tenure, the researcher also identified and analyzed the principals’ perceptions of tenure. The principals’ perceptions and opinions were conveyed through their word choices. One principal chose not to define tenure due to his or her feelings. “Overall, tenure has a negative connotation for me as an administrator so I am choosing not to define this.” Table 29 summarizes these data.

Table 29

*Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure is a (an) ___________________</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal term/Law</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification/Designation/Category</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarantee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiquated policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaic policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False sense of security</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Academic Freedom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals were also asked to define “incompetence” and the researcher received 172 responses (n=172) to this question. These responses were summarized by six
different definitions. Eighty-three principals (n=83) defined incompetence as the teacher’s inability to perform his/her duties. Forty-seven principals (n=47) defined incompetence based on teacher’s instructional practices in his/her classroom. Additionally, some principals defined incompetence based on meeting the standards, lacking of skills, doing harm to students. Some principals also indicated that incompetence is a choice. Table 30 displays these responses.

Table 30

Summary of Incompetence Definitions (n=186)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of the definition</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to complete duties/responsibilities</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective practices in the classroom</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not meeting standards and/or expectations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacking skills</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing not complete tasks</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing harm to students</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals are applying different ethical lenses when dealing with underperforming tenured teachers. Principals who define incompetency as “doing harm to students” are applying the ethic of care. These principals are acting out of compassion and empathy and placing the needs of students at the center of decisions. Principals treating tenure as a “milestone” or “reward” are applying the ethic of justice. In this respect, tenure is an abstract concept and tenured teachers must be treated with dignity. The different definitions and perceptions of incompetency and tenure proffered by the principals responding to this study show different applications of ethical paradigms.
Research on teacher evaluations examined how subjective the definition of incompetence is when evaluating teachers (Menuey, 2005; Painter, 2000). “What makes one person incompetent at one school might not be the same at another school” (Menuey, 2005, p. 320).

Individual principals may implement the same official evaluation processes quite differently, depending on personal factors (their perception of the problem, their personal skills, their beliefs about the context in which they operate, their estimation of the chances of successfully resolving the problem) and contextual factors in their schools and communities (Painter, 2000, p. 255).

Painter’s research is addressing inconsistencies in evaluations due to subjective factors within the principal. The researcher for this study found that differences of the treatment of tenure and the decision to remediate a tenured teacher extend beyond the evaluation tool.

**Research Questions**

What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan?

The researcher designed the Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation to gather responses from middle school principals in Illinois that address the research questions on issues surrounding the decision to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan (see Appendix F). Thirty-eight percent of the principals (n=70) responding to this survey had
five or fewer years of experience. Sixty-one percent of the principals (n=113) responding to this survey had six or more years of experience.

Further analyzing data from this study the responses separated by years of experience showed differences between novice and experienced public middle school principals in Illinois when identifying issues that need to be addressed before deciding to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan. Tables 31 and 32 separate the definitions and perceptions of tenure the researcher received by the principals’ years of experience.

Before deciding to place a teacher on a remediation plan, a principal must first identify the issues and determine whether the behaviors are remediable. Separated by the principals’ years of experience, the definitions of incompetence provided on the surveys show differences between novice and experienced principals. Table 33 displays these definitions.

Table 31

Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Tenure (n=183)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ Definitions of Tenure</th>
<th>Novice (n=70)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=113)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 years of service</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued contractual service</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Statute</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime/Permanent employment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s performance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of tenure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 32

**Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Perceptions of Tenure (n=59)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Novice (n=25)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=34)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification/Designation (n=2)</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarantee (n=2)</td>
<td>Antiquated policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of service</td>
<td>Archaic policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Classification/Designation (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process (n=2)</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition (n=4)</td>
<td>False sense of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>Guarantee (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right (n=4)</td>
<td>Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard (n=2)</td>
<td>Legal term/Law (n=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Academic Freedom</td>
<td>Milestone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status (n=5)</td>
<td>Process (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right (n=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety net/ Safeguard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status (n=7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33

**Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Definitions of Incompetence (n=183)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of Incompetence</th>
<th>Novice (n=65)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to complete duties/responsibilities</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective practices in the classroom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not meeting standards and/or expectations</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacking skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing not complete tasks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing harm to students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the experienced principals in this study perceived tenure as an antiquated policy, an archaic policy, or a false sense of security. These perceptions of tenure raise
questions about who makes the laws and policies. These principals are also asking, “Who are benefiting from tenure?” These perceptions of tenure can be explained by the ethic of critique which challenges the status quo and analyzes inequities.

These data show that an experienced principal is more likely to define incompetency by a teacher’s ineffective practices in the classroom and a teacher not meeting the standards and/or expectations. Experienced principals are focused on the expectations or standards and more novice principals are defining incompetency as the inability to complete duties and responsibilities. These differences in the understandings of incompetency can be explained by the ethic of profession; these principals are making different professional judgments of their teachers’ work.

A principal deciding to remediate a tenured teacher may not want to challenge the “recognition” the teacher received and the sense of academic freedom the teacher has. A principal may feel it is time to challenge an antiquated or archaic policy and a false sense of security. These differences in the proffered definitions may impact experienced principals’ decisions to remediate a tenured teacher because these principals will want to challenge an antiquated or archaic policy that is part of the status quo or they might want to avoid being entrenched with these policies.

The principals responding to this survey were asked if they currently have underperforming teachers and what actions do they have planned for these teachers. The actions under consideration reflected differences between novice and experienced principals that suggest differences between novice experienced principals working with a
tenured teacher before deciding to place him or her on a remediation plan. Table 34 displays these data.

Table 34

**Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Current Plans for Addressing Unsatisfactory Performance (n=65)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals’ current plans</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering a growth and/or remediation plan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has started or will start additional professional development and/or coaching</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to pressure the teacher to resign or change performance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal is waiting for the teacher retirement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal has or is planning to change the teacher’s schedule and/or additional duties</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The biggest differences were shown by the number of experienced principals pressuring teachers to leave their current schools and the number of experienced principals waiting for underperforming teachers to retire.

The choice to “pressure teachers” has been referred to as harassing supervision. “Most principals perceived harassing supervision as the only viable way to remove low-performing teachers in a system where it was difficult to formally dismiss a tenured teacher” (Stoelinga, 2010, p. 59). This perception is in line with the Expectancy Theory as principals do not see their efforts in remediating low performing teachers achieving the desired outcomes. Therefore, they are motivated to find alternative options to address underperforming teachers.
These data suggest that experienced principals are more likely to choose the “push-out” option. “It is still harassment. While perceived by principals as justified to protect students, improve schools, or save schools from accountability sanctions, such practices invoked feelings of sadness, frustration, and shame in most principals” (Stoelinga, 2010, p. 61). Principals are using the ethic of care for students to justify ignoring the ethic of care for teachers. These responses, primarily from experienced principals, can be viewed as unethical when applying to ethic of profession. Experienced principals who pressure and “push-out” teachers are not confronting “those moral aspects unique to the profession and the questions that arise as educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009, p. 19).

Principals who choose to wait for teachers to retirement feel their remediation efforts will not be rewarded and have chosen not to attempt remediation plans or try to work with these teachers. Looking at these principals’ choices through the ethic of profession, the ethic of profession asks, “What does the community expect me to do?” These experienced principals have decided that the expectation is to not bother with these teachers for this school year.

Principals in this study were asked if they had ever participated in getting a teacher to leave rather than face dismissal proceedings. Looking at these data and the follow-up questions, the data show that more experienced principals, compared to the novice principals, had more teachers “voluntarily separate” from their schools. Novice principals were more likely to follow the formal procedures and dismiss teachers who were not successfully remediated.
Fifty percent of the principals (n=94) responding to this survey had participated in getting a teacher to leave rather than face dismissal proceedings. Of the 94 principals, 36% of the principals (n=34) were novice principals and 63% of the principals (n=59) were experienced principals. Figure 34 displays these data.

Figure 34. Novice Principals and Experienced Principals Who Participated in a Teacher Leaving Rather than Face the Dismissal Process

Data showed that more novice principals were remediating tenured teachers. The principals, novice and experienced, who had decided to remediate tenured teachers expressed concerns including concerns about unions and financial costs. These additional data show that novice principals are more likely to follow the formal procedures when they identify an underperforming teacher to be dismissed.

The ethic of justice has administrators asking, “Is there a law, right, or policy that should be enforced?” Principals are choosing not to enforce or follow the procedures for an underperforming tenured teacher. One reason may be that these principals believe they are not expected to follow these procedures. Among experienced principals, exploring options other than remediation plans may be the norm. A teacher who is
dismissed will have difficulties finding a new teaching position. Are principals applying the ethic of care considering the careers of the underperforming teachers when removing teachers by other means that remediation and dismissal?

The Expectancy Theory applied to this data suggests that experienced principals are more motivated to use other options to remove teachers. They are not motivated to remediate the behavior and they are not motivated to formally dismiss teachers. Experienced principals feel options, other than remediation plans, are worth their effort and will produce the results they want.

**What differences, if any, exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher?**

Six principals (three novice, three experienced) responding to this study stated that they had no concerns when they each decided to place a tenured teacher on a remediation plan. There was a clear difference in their explanations why they were not concerned.

One of the novice principals stated that, “No concerns. Just a poor teacher.” The novice principals were following the ethic of justice in that their low-performing teachers met the criteria for remediation and, therefore, the principals followed the policy. These principals were also following the ethic of care and decided that, for the benefit of the students, these teachers needed to be remediated.

An experienced principal who decided to remediate tenured teacher wrote, “We used union representation and legal representation when developing and starting the
remediation process.” Another experienced principal stated, “We communicated frequently with our union reps.” The ethic of critique asks, “Who has the power?” These experienced principals are saying that the union representatives and lawyers hold the power in the remediation process. These differences in responses show a difference between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher. Novice principals may need additional legal resources and support working with union when remediating a tenured teacher.

Existing research acknowledges the demands on principals’ time. “On average, the activities on which principals spent the most time were overseeing student services, managing budgets, and dealing with student discipline issues” (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2009, p. 24). Only the novice principals responding to this study expressed time as a concern when starting the process remediating a tenured teacher. Six novice principals (n=6) cited time as a concern when they were placing a tenured teacher on remediation. “My concern was the time commitment to conducting the plan with fidelity.” This difference on the surveys suggests that novice principals in Illinois public schools will need resources and support that will free up their time to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher.

Looking at the outcomes of the remediation plans created and overseen by the principals who responded to this study, these data suggest differences exist between novice and experienced principals in Illinois public schools as to whether or not they believe they have the necessary resources and support to remediate and potentially
dismiss a tenured teacher. Table 35 displays the outcomes of the novice principals’ and experienced principals’ remediation plans.

Table 35

*Outcomes of the Novice Principals’ and Experienced Principals’ Remediation Plans (n=51)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes of the Remediation Plans</th>
<th>Novice (n=36)</th>
<th>Experienced (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resigned or retired</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans in progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediation was effective.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal felt the remediation plans were only temporarily effective. (Teachers are still on faculty.)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirty-three percent of the experienced principals stated that the remediation plans were effective and 19% of the novice principals stated that the remediation plans were effective. This difference suggests that all principals in Illinois public schools need resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher. Principals placing teachers on remediation plans are realizing the effects of the plan were temporary and overall ineffective.

Twenty-two percent of the teachers remediated by a novice principal were dismissed and only 7% of the teachers remediated by an experienced principal were dismissed. More teachers on remediation plans with experienced principals are either being remediated and allowed to return to the classroom without additional supervision and support or experienced principals are getting underperforming teachers to leave
without going through the dismissal process. This difference suggests that novice principals in Illinois public schools need resources and support to remediate and potentially dismiss a tenured teacher.

**Limitations of the Study**

While this study aims to gain an understanding of and to add to the research on novice and experienced Illinois middle school principals’ perceptions concerning the remediation of tenured teachers, there may be limitations. In total, 646 questionnaires were sent out and 186 principals chose to take part in this study. Only 28.6% from the population responded so there is a chance these responses do not represent the population which would limit the findings of this study.

The participants in this study are limited to middle school principals in Illinois. Public schools in Chicago were excluded from this study because of the district's policy on conducting research. Chicago Public Schools has its own Institutional Research Board that must review any proposals involving any of their schools. Due to the difficulties gaining access to the Chicago public schools and their administrators, this study focused on Illinois public middle schools not overseen by the Chicago Board of Education.

This study may not be generalized to other states since each state has their own tenure laws and the history of tenure in each state differs from Illinois.

The researcher is a member of a secondary school leadership team in a charter high school and conducts a portion of the formal evaluations of the faculty. This creates a bias and the researcher is aware of this bias and has attempted to limit its effects. The
researcher kept a research journal to write about these biases during the study in an attempt to separate them from the research.

The qualitative data collected from the surveys were coded and interpreted by the researcher. Additionally, the coding and interpretation were tied back to the literature review and the aforementioned conceptual framework. The researcher looked for key words and phrases for coding as guided by the literature.

Despite these limitations, this study addresses an important issue for all stakeholders in public education. The researcher drew conclusions and addresses his primary research questions based on the data collected from the surveys.

**Further Research**

A larger sampling to include elementary principals, high school principals, and other administrators responsible for formally evaluating teachers could add to the results and implications of this study. With the exclusion of the Chicago Public Schools, the researcher did not receive a significant amount of responses where the principals described their schools’ location as urban. While the researcher did not see significant differences between the responses from urban, suburban, and rural schools, a larger representation of urban schools might impact these findings.

The researcher did not collect any information on the principals’ education and training. Further research could be performed on a principal’s understanding of tenure and incompetency compared to his or her education or preparation. Developing surveys specific for superintendents and for teachers would also generate additional sets of data that could inform these data from this study. The researcher only surveyed principals but
teachers and superintendents have perceptions and understandings of tenure and how remediation plans are handled.

At the time of this study, a legislative package of education reform laws effecting school district policies on hiring, tenure, and other labor issues had just been passed by the Illinois’ General Assembly. None of these laws, collectively known as “Senate Bill 7” or “SB 7,” including Public Act 96-0861, the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), were in effect at the time of this study. With implementation dates staggered over the next five school years, further research should be performed to understand the immediate and long-term effects of these laws, especially the laws and new policies that apply to tenure, remediation, and possible teacher employment termination.

The laws packaged by “Senate Bill 7” will impact Illinois school districts’ policies and collective bargaining agreements between school districts and teacher unions. Table 36 details the areas the laws effect.

Once school districts implement the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), earning tenure will be contingent on a teacher’s evaluations during his or her four-year probationary period. The reforms mandated by “Senate Bill 7” change many of the policies principals voiced concerns about when responding to this study. Tenure will no longer be a status a teacher automatically earns after four years and these laws create an effective process for remediating a tenured teacher. Future research could be performed to evaluate how principals’ perceptions of tenure and teacher dismissal may have shifted since this study. Future research could be performed to understand how districts have implemented the “Senate Bill 7” laws.
Table 36

**Senate Bill 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Climate Survey</th>
<th>Districts must perform surveys at least every year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Board Member Training</td>
<td>Required ISBE training for school board members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filling New and Vacant Positions</td>
<td>Removes policies that primarily rely on seniority as opposed to certification, qualifications, merit, and ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure Acquisition</td>
<td>Performance Evaluation Reform Act details ratings teachers must receive to attain tenure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Action for Incompetency</td>
<td>Statute defines incompetence as two unsatisfactory summative evaluations in two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenured Teacher Dismissal</td>
<td>New conduct-based and performance-based dismissals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Education Labor Relations Act Impasse Procedures</td>
<td>New policies on mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Force and Recall</td>
<td>Performance evaluations will be considered when reducing and recalling employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications on School Leaders and Principal Preparation Programs**

For this study, the researcher defined experienced by the principal’s years of experience as a principal. However, there were novice principals who had remediated a tenured teacher and some experienced principals who had never gone through the process of remediating a tenured teacher. These data should give superintendents pause if they are making assumptions about their principals based on their years of experience.

The American Association of School Administrators’ (AASA) Statement of Ethics for Educational Leaders is:
An educational leader’s professional conduct must conform to an ethical code of behavior, and the code must set high standards for all educational leaders. The educational leader provides professional leadership across the district and also across the community. This responsibility requires the leader to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct while recognizing that his or her actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates and students. The educational leader acknowledges that he or she serves the schools and community by providing equal educational opportunities to each and every child. The work of the leader must emphasize accountability and results, increased student achievement, and high expectations for each and every student. (AASA, 2007)

This study highlights the differences that exist between novice and experienced principals when contemplating remediating a tenured teacher. The researcher has shown that novice and experienced principals are applying different ethical paradigms in situations.

School districts and the Illinois Board of Education have begun planning and training administrators for the new laws under “Senate Bill 7.” Superintendents and school boards will, in the future, have principals who worked under the current Illinois School Code and some principals who only served as administrators only under the “Senate Bill 7” laws. This study analyzed some of the principals’ issues with tenure and the evaluation process that were present under the current Illinois School Code. While
training for “Senate Bill 7” has to focus on all of the aspects the new laws, superintendents and those training school districts cannot ignore the principals’ current perceptions of tenure expressed in this study. The laws packaged in “Senate Bill 7” create an opportunity to change administrators’ perceptions of remediation plans. Principals will have the expectation that remediation plans will be effective means to remediate or remove under-performing teachers.

**Conclusion**

It is the principal’s decision to remediate a tenured teacher. However, principals responding to this study conveyed many of the restrictions they face when wanting to remediate a tenured teacher. In Kocabas and Karakose’s (2009) research, they concluded, “In a school a context, the principal is the main decision maker in the school” (p. 129). Principals sometimes lack the support from their superintendents and boards of education. Principals have to work with, and sometimes appease, union representatives and attorneys through every step of a teacher’s remediation plan. With limited resources and the political, legal, and ethical issues expressed by the principals responding to this study, principals are the main but not the sole decision makers in schools.

One principal responding to this study referred to remediation as an “investment.” This study identified some of the issues the principals are struggling with, including the financial problems in their districts and remediated teachers “going back to their old ways.” Principals are deciding whether or not to invest the districts’ funds and resources in a teacher who has attained the right to correct deficiencies cited in his/her evaluation. The “return on investment” can be measured by the teacher’s instruction and work.
While parts of the cost-benefit model are applicable, school-based decisions on student needs and how to maintain the school culture are not based only on business or financial factors. Principals deciding to remediate tenured teachers are facing ethical dilemmas. “The principal faces some ethical issues mostly about staff, students, financial matters and relations with public” (Kocabas & Karakose, 2009, p. 128). Central to the ethic of profession and the principals’ decision making must be the best interests of the students.

Novice principals in this study talked about “not rocking the boat” but several novice principals had underperforming tenured teachers. In this study, novice principals were more likely to remediate teachers but were less likely than experienced principals to effectively remediate teacher. Experienced principals in this study participated more in “closet leavings.” This research suggests that novice principals need assistance to effectively remediate underperforming tenured teachers and novice principals need to know they are will be supported when they decide to remediate a tenured teacher. Conversely, experienced principals need to return to using the districts’ formal evaluation processes for remediating or removing tenured teachers.

This study concluded before any of the laws passed under Illinois’ “Senate Bill 7” were implemented. When the bill was passed and now as plans to implement the laws are being made, supporters of “Senate Bill 7” stressed the body of research behind the laws and the necessary reforms to Illinois school districts that this legislation will hopefully bring. “A teacher who is granted tenure in a district will have demonstrated a level of proficiency that will give administrators, teachers, and parents confidence that
the district is making the right personnel decisions” (Advance Illinois, 2012). Responses to this study showed that principals lacked confidence in the current tenure laws and tenured teachers in some Illinois districts were not performing proficiently. The hope is that these new laws bring about changes that give principals a new confidence in Illinois’ tenure laws.

Mike Schmoker (2006) has claimed, “We have an opportunity to create schools better than anything we’ve ever seen or imagined” (p. 2). This opportunity he describes can only be taken advantage of when principals have high-performing teachers who deliver high quality instruction. An experienced principal in this study wrote, “I wrote a decent letter of recommendation for resigning.” When asked for the plan for an under-performing teacher, another experienced principal wrote, “Wait for them to retire and try to work with them.” Principals are missing opportunities to improve instruction in their schools and are not acting in accordance to the ethic of profession.

Thomas Sergiovanni (1992) wrote, “Stewardship represents primarily an act of trust, whereby people and institutions entrust a leader with certain obligations and duties to fulfill and perform on their behalf” (p. 139). Some of the responses in this study showed principals who were aware of under-performing, if not incompetent, teachers in their schools and these principals were choosing not to fulfill the obligations and duties entrusted to them. The moral dimension of leadership described by Sergiovanni requires principals to accept the responsibilities inherent in the role of principal. Principals must make ethical and moral decisions when a tenured teacher requires remediation but these
data in this study show principals, especially experienced principals, choosing other options than remediation, including taking no action.

While some principals expressed issues with their districts’ evaluation tools, the challenges principals faced when attempting to remediate tenured teachers effectively went beyond the districts’ evaluation tools. Principals in this study who had remediated tenured teachers did not find remediation plans to be effective, long-term solutions to improve these teachers’ performances. The hope is that “Senate Bill 7” will give principals the means to effectively remediate or terminate tenured teachers not meeting the principals’ expectations.
APPENDIX A

ETHICAL PARADIGM CODING
Shapiro and Stefkovich’s “Multiple Ethical Paradigm” applied as a conceptual framework for this study

Coding the Ethic of Care:
Nurturing students; Making moral decisions; Concern for others; Looking at others’ needs; Loyalty and trust
Who will benefit from what I decide? Who will be hurt by my actions?

Coding the Ethic of Critique:
Challenge the status quo; Debate the issues and laws; Critical Theory; Social class
Who makes the laws? Who benefits from the law, rule, or policy?

Coding the Ethic of the Profession:
Best professional judgment; Consistency; Challenging their personal beliefs
What would the profession expect me to do?

Coding the Ethic of Justice:
Rights; Democratic process; Rules, laws, policies; Equity and equality
Is there a law, right, or policy that relates to a particular case?

Adapted from *Ethical Educational Leadership in Turbulent Times* (Shapiro & Gross, 2008) and *Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education* (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2009)
APPENDIX B

EXPECTANCY THEORY CODING
Vroom’s Expectancy Theory applied as a conceptual framework for this study

“Expectancy motivation theory posits that employees will perform tasks if they are expected to do so, have the ability to do so, the opportunity to do so and believe that their efforts will be rewarded” (Johnson, 2009, p. 274).

Using this as a framework, expectancy motivation theory posits that principals will give incompetent tenured teachers unsatisfactory ratings if they are expected to do so by the district, have the ability to do so (resources), the opportunity to do so (see unsatisfactory teaching during annual evaluations) and believe that their efforts will result in the teacher being remediated or dismissed.

1. Did the principal perceive that there was an expectation that he or she could give tenured teachers unsatisfactory ratings when warranted?
2. Did the principal perceive that he or she had the necessary resources to remediate the teacher?
3. Are there one or more tenured teachers in the school the principal feels are unsatisfactory?
4. Did the principal feel the remediation would be successful?
5. Did the principal feel, if the remediation was not successful, that the teacher would be dismissed?
APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER 1 TO PRINCIPALS
Dear Principal,

I am currently a doctoral student at Loyola University Chicago and my research is focused on Illinois middle school principals. My dissertation is entitled, *The Differences Between Novice and Experienced Public Middle School Principals in the Decision to Remediate a Tenured Teacher*. The purpose of the study is to examine the issues that arise when evaluating tenured teachers and to identify the differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals.

Your voluntary participation is a chance for your insights into the evaluation process and your experiences when evaluating tenured teachers to be included in the study. The data you provide through the enclosed survey, *Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation*, will help me understand the challenges principals face in their role as evaluator. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

This research could inform principals struggling with decisions that have to be made during summative evaluations. This research could inform superintendents working with novice and experienced principals. This research could also inform how principals preparation programs cover teacher supervision and evaluation.

I would ask that you please return it by September 25th, 2011. I have a self-addressed stamped envelope for you to return the questionnaire. Included in this mailing is a consent form. Please review this form and there is contact information if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Andrew Reuland  
Doctoral Candidate, Loyola University Chicago
APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER 2 TO PRINCIPALS
Dear Principal,

I am currently a doctoral student at Loyola University Chicago and my research is focused on Illinois middle school principals. My dissertation is entitled, *The Differences Between Novice and Experienced Public Middle School Principals in the Decision to Remediate a Tenured Teacher*. The purpose of the study is to examine the issues that arise when evaluating tenured teachers and to identify the differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals.

Your voluntary participation is a chance for your insights into the evaluation process and your experiences when evaluating tenured teachers to be included in the study. The data you provide through the enclosed survey, *Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation*, will help me understand the challenges principals face in their role as evaluator. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

This research could inform principals struggling with decisions that have to be made during summative evaluations. This research could inform superintendents working with novice and experienced principals. This research could also inform how principals preparation programs cover teacher supervision and evaluation.

I would ask that you please return it by October 15th, 2011. **If you have already completed this questionnaire and mailed it in, thank you and please disregard this mailing.** If not, I have enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope for you to return the questionnaire. Included in this mailing is a consent form. Please review this form and there is contact information if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Andrew Reuland
Doctoral Candidate, Loyola University Chicago
APPENDIX E

REMINDER POSTCARD
Dear Principal,

You should have received a questionnaire, *Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation*, from me in the last month. I am conducting research at Loyola University Chicago for my dissertation entitled, *The Differences Between Novice and Experienced Public Middle School Principals in the Decision to Remediate a Tenured Teacher*.

If you have already completed this questionnaire and mailed it in, thank you and please disregard this mailing. If not, please complete the questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided included with the questionnaire.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Andrew Reuland
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NOVICE AND EXPERIENCED PUBLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE DECISION TO REMEDIATE A TENURED TEACHER
Researcher(s): Andrew J Reuland
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Marla Israel

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in a research study being conducted by Andrew J Reuland for a dissertation in Administration and Supervision under the supervision of Dr. Marla Israel in the Department of Education at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because this research study is surveying public middle school principals in Illinois.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in the study.

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine the issues that arise when evaluating tenured teachers and to identify the differences, if any, between novice and experienced principals.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to:

- Complete the included survey. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.
- Included with the survey is a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please use that envelope to return the completed survey to researcher.

Risks/Benefits:
There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but this research could inform principals struggling with decisions that have to be made during summative evaluations. This research could inform superintendents working with novice and experienced principals. This research could also inform how principals preparation programs cover teacher supervision and evaluation.
Confidentiality:
- The included survey is not numbered and not to be marked in any way that could identify the respondent. There is no place to include your name, school or district. Do not put your name on the survey. Do not put either your school name or district name on the survey.
- The survey is being mailed to Post Office box that only the research has access to. The Post Office box is being rented specifically for this study.
- The researcher will collect the surveys and will keep the surveys locked in a desk when he is not reviewing the surveys. The researcher will ensure he is the only person with access to these surveys. No surveys will be copied or scanned.
- The researcher will be compiling the data from these surveys and then sorting the data by different criteria as part of analyzing and summarizing the responses.
- Within six months of the completion of this study, the researcher will shred all completed surveys.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. If you do not want to participate, you may simply throw this survey away. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Andrew Reuland at 773-307-2373 or the faculty sponsor Dr. Marla Israel at Loyola University Chicago, at 312-915-6336. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Statement of Consent:
Returning the survey to the researcher indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You may keep this form and the cover letter for your records.
APPENDIX G

PRINCIPAL SURVEY ON TENURE AND EVALUATION
### Principal Survey on Tenure and Evaluation

**Demographic Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age: __________</th>
<th>Gender: __________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many school years, including this year, have you worked as a principal?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many school years, including this year, have you worked as a principal in the building you are in now?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many students are in your building?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many teachers are in your building? (full and part time)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your school is located in: ________ Urban ________ Suburban ________ Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades served: _____4th _____5th _____6th _____7th _____8th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Are your teachers belong to a union? _____Yes_______No |

1. Have you ever placed a tenured teacher on a remediation plan? _____Yes_______No

**If yes, please answer questions 2 through 5.**

2. How long had you been a principal when this took place? __________

3. Please describe in a few sentences any concerns you had in relation to any outside factors (such as legal, financial, union, etc.) before placing the teacher on a remediation plan.

4. Please describe in a few sentences if you felt the plan was effective in remediating the teacher?
5. Was the teacher dismissed at the end of the remediation plan? _____ Yes _____ No

6. Have you ever been told by a district administrator not to give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating? _____ Yes _____ No
   Please describe:

7. Have you ever felt you could not give a tenured teacher an unsatisfactory rating? _____ Yes _____ No
   Please describe:

8. Please define tenure.
9. Please define incompetence.

10. In your first year as principal, did you feel pressure to rate teachers with ratings in sync with their previous evaluations? _______Yes_______No
    Please describe:

11. Have you ever participated in getting a teacher to leave rather than face dismissal proceedings? _______Yes_______No

12. If yes, can you describe what was offered to the teacher in exchange for resigning?

13. If yes, do you know if the teacher took another teaching job after that?
14. Do you have any tenured teachers whose current performance you would consider unsatisfactory? _______ Yes _______ No

15. If yes, what are your plans for that teacher(s) that is/are not performing? Please describe.

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.

Please return this survey in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.
APPENDIX H

SELECTIONS FROM THE ILLINOIS SCHOOL CODE
ARTICLE 24A. EVALUATION OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES

Sec. 24A-1. Purpose. The purpose of this Article is to improve the educational services of the elementary and secondary public schools of Illinois by requiring that all certified school district employees be evaluated on a periodic basis and that the evaluations result in remedial action being taken when deemed necessary.
(Source: P.A. 84-972.)

Sec. 24A-2. Application. The provisions of this Article shall apply to all public school districts organized and operating pursuant to the provisions of this Code, including special charter districts and those school districts operating in accordance with Article 34, except that this Section does not apply to teachers assigned to schools identified in an agreement entered into between the board of a school district operating under Article 34 and the exclusive representative of the district's teachers in accordance with Section 34-85c of this Code.
(Source: P.A. 95-510, eff. 8-28-07.)

Sec. 24A-2.5. Definitions. In this Article:
"Evaluator" means:
(1) an administrator qualified under Section 24A-3;
or
(2) other individuals qualified under Section 24A-3, provided that, if such other individuals are in the bargaining unit of a district's teachers, the district and the exclusive bargaining representative of that unit must agree to those individuals evaluating other bargaining unit members.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in item (2) of this definition, a school district operating under Article 34 of this Code may require department chairs qualified under Section 24A-3 to evaluate teachers in their department or departments, provided that the school district shall bargain with the bargaining representative of its teachers over the impact and effects on department chairs of such a requirement.

"Implementation date" means, unless otherwise specified and provided that the requirements set forth in subsection (d) of Section 24A-20 have been met:

(1) For school districts having 500,000 or more inhabitants, in at least 300 schools by September 1, 2012 and in the remaining schools by September 1, 2013.

(2) For school districts having less than 500,000 inhabitants and receiving a Race to the Top Grant or School Improvement Grant after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 96th General Assembly, the date specified in those grants for implementing an evaluation system for teachers and principals incorporating student growth as a significant factor.

(3) For the lowest performing 20% percent of remaining school districts having less than 500,000 inhabitants (with the measure of and school year or years used for school district performance to be determined by the State Superintendent of Education at a time determined by the State Superintendent), September 1, 2015.
(4) For all other school districts having less than 500,000 inhabitants, September 1, 2016.

"Race to the Top Grant" means a grant made by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education pursuant to paragraph (2) of Section 14006(a) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

"School Improvement Grant" means a grant made by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education pursuant to Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

(Source: P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-3) (from Ch. 122, par. 24A-3)
Sec. 24A-3. Evaluation training and pre-qualification.
(a) School boards shall require evaluators to participate in an inservice training on the evaluation of certified personnel provided or approved by the State Board of Education prior to undertaking any evaluation and at least once during each certificate renewal cycle. Training provided or approved by the State Board of Education shall include the evaluator training program developed pursuant to Section 24A-20 of this Code.
(b) Any evaluator undertaking an evaluation after September 1, 2012 must first successfully complete a pre-qualification program provided or approved by the State Board of Education. The program must involve rigorous training and an independent observer's determination that the evaluator's ratings properly align to the requirements established by the State Board pursuant to this Article.

(Source: P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-4) (from Ch. 122, par. 24A-4)
(a) As used in this and the succeeding Sections, "teacher" means any and all school district employees regularly required to be certified under laws relating to the certification of teachers. Each school district shall develop, in cooperation with its teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive bargaining representatives of its teachers, an evaluation plan for all teachers.
(b) By no later than the applicable implementation date, each school district shall, in good faith cooperation with its teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive bargaining representatives of its teachers, incorporate the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating teaching performance, into its evaluation plan for all teachers, both those teachers in contractual continued service and those teachers not in contractual continued service. The plan shall at least meet the standards and requirements for student growth and teacher evaluation established under Section 24A-7, and specifically describe how student growth data and indicators will be used as part of the evaluation process, how this information will relate to evaluation standards, the assessments or other indicators of student performance that will be used in measuring student growth and the weight that each will have, the methodology that will be used to measure student growth, and the criteria other than student growth that will be used in evaluating the teacher and the weight that each will have.

To incorporate the use of data and indicators of student growth as a significant factor in rating teacher performance into the evaluation plan, the district shall use a joint committee composed of equal representation selected by the district and its teachers or, where applicable, the exclusive bargaining representative of its teachers. If, within 180 calendar days of the committee's first meeting, the committee does not reach agreement on the plan, then the district shall implement the model evaluation plan established under Section 24A-7 with respect to the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating teacher performance.

Nothing in this subsection (b) shall make decisions on the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating teaching performance mandatory subjects of bargaining under the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act that are not currently mandatory subjects of bargaining under the Act.
(c) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in subsection (b) of this Section, if the joint committee referred to in that subsection does not reach agreement on the plan within 90 calendar days after the committee's first meeting, a school district having 500,000 or more inhabitants shall not be required to implement any aspect of the model evaluation plan and may implement its last best proposal. (Source: P.A. 95-510, eff. 8-28-07; 96-861, eff. 1-15-10; 96-1423, eff. 8-3-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-5) (from Ch. 122, par. 24A-5)
Sec. 24A-5. Content of evaluation plans. This Section does not apply to teachers assigned to schools identified in an agreement entered into between the board of a school district operating under Article 34 of this Code and the exclusive representative of the district's teachers in accordance with Section 34-85c of this Code.

Each school district to which this Article applies shall establish a teacher evaluation plan which ensures that each teacher in contractual continued service is evaluated at least once in the course of every 2 school years.

By no later than September 1, 2012, each school district shall establish a teacher evaluation plan that ensures that:
(1) each teacher not in contractual continued service is evaluated at least once every school year; and
(2) each teacher in contractual continued service is evaluated at least once in the course of every 2 school years. However, any teacher in contractual continued service whose performance is rated as either "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" must be evaluated at least once in the school year following the receipt of such rating.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Section or any other Section of the School Code, a principal shall not be prohibited from evaluating any teachers within a school during his or her first year as principal of such school.

The evaluation plan shall comply with the requirements of this Section and of any rules adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to this Section. The plan shall include a description of each teacher's duties and responsibilities and of the standards to which that teacher is expected to conform, and shall include at least the following components:
(a) personal observation of the teacher in the classroom by the evaluator, unless the teacher has no classroom duties.

(b) consideration of the teacher's attendance, planning, instructional methods, classroom management, where relevant, and competency in the subject matter taught.

(c) by no later than the applicable implementation date, consideration of student growth as a significant factor in the rating of the teacher's performance.

(d) prior to September 1, 2012, rating of the performance of teachers in contractual continued service as either:
   (i) "excellent", "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory"; or
   (ii) "excellent", "proficient", "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory".

(e) on and after September 1, 2012, rating of the performance of teachers in contractual continued service as "excellent", "proficient", "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory".
(f) specification as to the teacher's strengths and weaknesses, with supporting reasons for the comments made.

(g) inclusion of a copy of the evaluation in the teacher's personnel file and provision of a copy to the teacher.

(h) within 30 school days after the completion of an evaluation rating a teacher in contractual continued service as "needs improvement", development by the evaluator, in consultation with the teacher, and taking into account the teacher's ongoing professional responsibilities including his or her regular teaching assignments, of a professional development plan directed to the areas that need improvement and any supports that the district will provide to address the areas identified as needing improvement.

(i) within 30 school days after completion of an evaluation rating a teacher in contractual continued service as "unsatisfactory", development and commencement by the district of a remediation plan designed to correct deficiencies cited, provided the deficiencies are deemed remediable. In all school districts the remediation plan for unsatisfactory, tenured teachers shall provide for 90 school days of remediation within the classroom, unless an applicable collective bargaining agreement provides for a shorter duration. In all school districts evaluations issued pursuant to this Section shall be issued within 10 days after the conclusion of the respective remediation plan. However, the school board or other governing authority of the district shall not lose jurisdiction to discharge a teacher in the event the evaluation is not issued within 10 days after the conclusion of the respective remediation plan.

(j) participation in the remediation plan by the teacher in contractual continued service rated "unsatisfactory", an evaluator and a consulting teacher selected by the evaluator of the teacher who was rated "unsatisfactory", which consulting teacher is an educational employee as defined in the Educational Labor Relations Act, has at least 5 years' teaching experience, and a reasonable familiarity with the assignment of the teacher being evaluated, and who received an "excellent" rating on his or her most recent evaluation. Where no teachers who meet these criteria are available within the district, the district shall request and the applicable regional office of education shall supply, to participate in the remediation process, an individual who meets these criteria.

In a district having a population of less than 500,000 with an exclusive bargaining agent, the bargaining agent may, if it so chooses, supply a roster of qualified teachers from whom the consulting teacher is to be selected. That roster shall, however, contain the names of at least 5 teachers, each of whom meets the criteria for consulting teacher with regard to the teacher being evaluated, or the names of all teachers so qualified if that number is less than 5. In the event of a dispute as to qualification, the State Board shall determine qualification.

(k) a mid-point and final evaluation by an evaluator during and at the end of the remediation period, immediately following receipt of a remediation plan provided for under subsections (i) and (j) of this Section. Each evaluation shall assess the teacher's performance during the time period since the prior evaluation; provided that the last evaluation shall also include an overall evaluation of the teacher's performance during the remediation period. A written copy of the evaluations and ratings, in which any deficiencies in performance and recommendations for correction are identified, shall be provided to and discussed with the teacher within 10 school days after the date of the evaluation, unless an applicable collective bargaining agreement provides to the contrary. These subsequent evaluations shall be conducted by an evaluator. The consulting teacher shall provide advice to the teacher rated "unsatisfactory" on how to improve teaching skills and to successfully complete the remediation plan. The consulting teacher shall participate in developing the remediation plan, but the final decision as to the evaluation shall be done solely by the evaluator, unless an applicable collective bargaining agreement provides to the contrary. Evaluations at the conclusion of the remediation process shall be separate and distinct from the required annual evaluations of teachers and shall not be subject to the guidelines and procedures relating to those
annual evaluations. The evaluator may but is not required to use the forms provided for the annual evaluation of teachers in the district's evaluation plan.

(l) reinstatement to the evaluation schedule set forth in the district's evaluation plan for any teacher in contractual continued service who achieves a rating equal to or better than "satisfactory" or "proficient" in the school year following a rating of "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory".

(m) dismissal in accordance with Section 24-12 or 34-85 of the School Code of any teacher who fails to complete any applicable remediation plan with a rating equal to or better than a "satisfactory" or "proficient" rating. Districts and teachers subject to dismissal hearings are precluded from compelling the testimony of consulting teachers at such hearings under Section 24-12 or 34-85, either as to the rating process or for opinions of performances by teachers under remediation.

Nothing in this Section or Section 24A-4 shall be construed as preventing immediate dismissal of a teacher for deficiencies which are deemed irremediable or for actions which are injurious to or endanger the health or person of students in the classroom or school, or preventing the dismissal or non-renewal of teachers not in contractual continued service for any reason not prohibited by applicable employment, labor, and civil rights laws. Failure to strictly comply with the time requirements contained in Section 24A-5 shall not invalidate the results of the remediation plan.

(Source: P.A. 95-510, eff. 8-28-07; 96-861, eff. 1-15-10; 96-1423, eff. 8-3-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-6)
Sec. 24A-6. (Repealed).
(Source: P.A. 86-201. Repealed by P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-7) (from Ch. 122, par. 24A-7)
Sec. 24A-7. Rules. The State Board of Education is authorized to adopt such rules as are deemed necessary to implement and accomplish the purposes and provisions of this Article, including, but not limited to, rules (i) relating to the methods for measuring student growth (including, but not limited to, limitations on the age of useable data; the amount of data needed to reliably and validly measure growth for the purpose of teacher and principal evaluations; and whether and at what time annual State assessments may be used as one of multiple measures of student growth), (ii) defining the term "significant factor" for purposes of including consideration of student growth in performance ratings, (iii) controlling for such factors as student characteristics (including, but not limited to, students receiving special education and English Language Learner services), student attendance, and student mobility so as to best measure the impact that a teacher, principal, school and school district has on students' academic achievement, (iv) establishing minimum requirements for district teacher and principal evaluation instruments and procedures, and (v) establishing a model evaluation plan for use by school districts in which student growth shall comprise 50% of the performance rating. Notwithstanding any provision in this Section, such rules shall not preclude a school district having 500,000 or more inhabitants from using an annual State assessment as the sole measure of student growth for purposes of teacher or principal evaluations.

The rules shall be developed through a process involving collaboration with a Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, which shall be convened and staffed by the State Board of Education. Members of the Council shall be selected by the State Superintendent and include, without limitation, representatives of teacher unions and school district management, persons with expertise in performance evaluation processes and systems, as well as other stakeholders. The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council shall meet at least quarterly following the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 96th General Assembly until June 30, 2017.
Prior to the applicable implementation date, these rules shall not apply to teachers assigned to schools identified in an agreement entered into between the board of a school district operating under Article 34 of this Code and the exclusive representative of the district's teachers in accordance with Section 34-85c of this Code.
(Source: P.A. 95-510, eff. 8-28-07; 96-861, eff. 1-15-10; 96-1423, eff. 8-3-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-7.1)
Sec. 24A-7.1. Teacher, principal, and superintendent performance evaluations. Except as otherwise provided under this Act, disclosure of public school teacher, principal, and superintendent performance evaluations is prohibited.
(Source: P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-8) (from Ch. 122, par. 24A-8)
Sec. 24A-8. Evaluation of teachers not in contractual continued service. Each teacher not in contractual continued service shall be evaluated at least once each school year.
(Source: P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-15)
(a) Each school district, except for a school district organized under Article 34 of this Code, shall establish a principal evaluation plan in accordance with this Section. The plan must ensure that each principal is evaluated as follows:

(1) For a principal on a single-year contract, the evaluation must take place by March 1 of each year.

(2) For a principal on a multi-year contract under Section 10-23.8a of this Code, the evaluation must take place by March 1 of the final year of the contract.

On and after September 1, 2012, the plan must:

(i) rate the principal's performance as "excellent", "proficient", "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory"; and

(ii) ensure that each principal is evaluated at least once every school year.

Nothing in this Section prohibits a school district from conducting additional evaluations of principals.

(b) The evaluation shall include a description of the principal's duties and responsibilities and the standards to which the principal is expected to conform.

(c) The evaluation must be performed by the district superintendent, the superintendent's designee, or, in the absence of the superintendent or his or her designee, an individual appointed by the school board who holds a registered Type 75 State administrative certificate.

Prior to September 1, 2012, the evaluation must be in writing and must at least do all of the following:

(1) Consider the principal's specific duties, responsibilities, management, and competence as a principal.

(2) Specify the principal's strengths and weaknesses, with supporting reasons.

(3) Align with research-based standards established by administrative rule.
On and after September 1, 2012, the evaluation must, in addition to the requirements in items (1), (2), and (3) of this subsection (c), provide for the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating performance.

(d) One copy of the evaluation must be included in the principal's personnel file and one copy of the evaluation must be provided to the principal.

(e) Failure by a district to evaluate a principal and to provide the principal with a copy of the evaluation at least once during the term of the principal's contract, in accordance with this Section, is evidence that the principal is performing duties and responsibilities in at least a satisfactory manner and shall serve to automatically extend the principal's contract for a period of one year after the contract would otherwise expire, under the same terms and conditions as the prior year's contract. The requirements in this Section are in addition to the right of a school board to reclassify a principal pursuant to Section 10-23.8b of this Code.

(f) Nothing in this Section prohibits a school board from ordering lateral transfers of principals to positions of similar rank and salary.

(Source: P.A. 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

(105 ILCS 5/24A-20)
Sec. 24A-20. State Board of Education data collection and evaluation assessment and support systems. (a) On or before the date established in subsection (b) of this Section, the State Board of Education shall, through a process involving collaboration with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, develop or contract for the development of and implement all of the following data collection and evaluation assessment and support systems:

(1) A system to annually collect and publish data by district and school on teacher and administrator performance evaluation outcomes. The system must ensure that no teacher or administrator can be personally identified by publicly reported data.

(2) Both a teacher and principal model evaluation template. The model templates must incorporate the requirements of this Article and any other requirements established by the State Board by administrative rule, but allow customization by districts in a manner that does not conflict with such requirements.

(3) An evaluator pre-qualification program based on the model teacher evaluation template.

(4) An evaluator training program based on the model teacher evaluation template. The training program shall provide multiple training options that account for the prior training and experience of the evaluator.

(5) A superintendent training program based on the model principal evaluation template.

(6) One or more instruments to provide feedback to principals on the instructional environment within a school.

(7) A State Board-provided or approved technical assistance system that supports districts with the development and implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems.

(8) Web-based systems and tools supporting implementation of the model templates and the evaluator pre-qualification and training programs.

(9) A process for measuring and reporting correlations between local principal and teacher evaluations and (A) student growth in tested grades and subjects and (B) retention rates of teachers.
A process for assessing whether school district evaluation systems developed pursuant to this Act and that consider student growth as a significant factor in the rating of a teacher's and principal's performance are valid and reliable, contribute to the development of staff, and improve student achievement outcomes. By no later than September 1, 2014, a research-based study shall be issued assessing such systems for validity and reliability, contribution to the development of staff, and improvement of student performance and recommending, based on the results of this study, changes, if any, that need to be incorporated into teacher and principal evaluation systems that consider student growth as a significant factor in the rating performance for remaining school districts to be required to implement such systems.

(b) If the State of Illinois receives a Race to the Top Grant, the data collection and support systems described in subsection (a) must be developed on or before September 30, 2011. If the State of Illinois does not receive a Race to the Top Grant, the data collection and support systems set forth in items (3) and (4) of subsection (a) of this Section must be developed by September 30, 2011 regardless of whether the State of Illinois receives a Race to the Top Grant. By no later than September 1, 2011, if the State of Illinois receives a Race to the Top Grant, or September 1, 2012, if the State of Illinois does not receive a Race to the Top Grant, the State Board of Education must execute or contract for the execution of the assessment referenced in item (10) of subsection (a) of this Section to determine whether the school district evaluation systems developed pursuant to this Act have been valid and reliable, contributed to the development of staff, and improved student performance.

(c) Districts shall submit data and information to the State Board on teacher and principal performance evaluations and evaluation plans in accordance with procedures and requirements for submissions established by the State Board. Such data shall include, without limitation, (i) data on the performance rating given to all teachers in contractual continued service, (ii) data on district recommendations to renew or not renew teachers not in contractual continued service, and (iii) data on the performance rating given to all principals.

(d) If the State Board of Education does not timely fulfill any of the requirements set forth in Sections 24A-7 and 24A-20, and adequate and sustainable federal, State, or other funds are not provided to the State Board of Education and school districts to meet their responsibilities under this Article, the applicable implementation date shall be postponed by the number of calendar days equal to those needed by the State Board of Education to fulfill such requirements and for the adequate and sustainable funds to be provided to the State Board of Education and school districts. The determination as to whether the State Board of Education has fulfilled any or all requirements set forth in Sections 24A-7 and 24A-20 and whether adequate and sustainable funds have been provided to the State Board of Education and school districts shall be made by the State Board of Education in consultation with the P20 Council.

(105 ILCS 5/34-85c)
Sec. 34-85c. Alternative procedures for teacher evaluation, remediation, and removal for cause after remediation.

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the board and the exclusive representative of the district's teachers are hereby authorized to enter into an agreement to establish alternative procedures for teacher evaluation, remediation, and removal for cause after remediation, including an alternative system for peer evaluation and recommendations; provided, however, that no later than September 1, 2012: (i) any alternative procedures must include provisions whereby student performance data is a significant factor in teacher evaluation and (ii) teachers are rated as "excellent", "proficient", "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory". Pursuant exclusively to that agreement, teachers assigned to schools identified in that agreement shall be subject to an alternative performance evaluation plan and remediation procedures in lieu of the plan and procedures set forth in Article 24A of this Code and alternative removal for cause standards and procedures in lieu of the removal standards and procedures set forth in Sections 34-85 and 34-85b of
this Code. To the extent that the agreement provides a teacher with an opportunity for a hearing on removal for cause before an independent hearing officer in accordance with Sections 34-85 and 34-85b or otherwise, the hearing officer shall be governed by the alternative performance evaluation plan, remediation procedures, and removal standards and procedures set forth in the agreement in making findings of fact and a recommendation.

(b) The board and the exclusive representative of the district's teachers shall submit a certified copy of an agreement as provided under subsection (a) of this Section to the State Board of Education.

(Source: P.A. 95-510, eff. 8-28-07; 96-861, eff. 1-15-10.)

Sec. 21-23. Suspension or revocation of certificate.

(a) The State Superintendent of Education has the exclusive authority, in accordance with this Section and any rules adopted by the State Board of Education, to initiate the suspension of up to 5 calendar years or revocation of any certificate issued pursuant to this Article, including but not limited to any administrative certificate or endorsement, for abuse or neglect of a child, immorality, a condition of health detrimental to the welfare of pupils, incompetency, unprofessional conduct (which includes the failure to disclose on an employment application any previous conviction for a sex offense, as defined in Section 21-23a of this Code, or any other offense committed in any other state or against the laws of the United States that, if committed in this State, would be punishable as a sex offense, as defined in Section 21-23a of this Code), the neglect of any professional duty, willful failure to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, failure to establish satisfactory repayment on an educational loan guaranteed by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, or other just cause. Unprofessional conduct shall include refusal to attend or participate in, institutes, teachers' meetings, professional readings, or to meet other reasonable requirements of the regional superintendent or State Superintendent of Education. Unprofessional conduct also includes conduct that violates the standards, ethics, or rules applicable to the security, administration, monitoring, or scoring of, or the reporting of scores from, any assessment test or the Prairie State Achievement Examination administered under Section 2-3.64 or that is known or intended to produce or report manipulated or artificial, rather than actual, assessment or achievement results or gains from the administration of those tests or examinations. It shall also include neglect or unnecessary delay in making of statistical and other reports required by school officers.

(a-5) The State Superintendent of Education shall, upon receipt of evidence of abuse or neglect of a child, immorality, a condition of health detrimental to the welfare of pupils, incompetency, unprofessional conduct, the neglect of any professional duty or other just cause, further investigate and, if and as appropriate, serve written notice to the individual and afford the individual opportunity for a hearing prior to suspension or revocation; provided that the State Superintendent is under no obligation to initiate such an investigation if the Department of Children and Family Services is investigating the same or substantially similar allegations and its child protective service unit has not made its determination as required under Section 7.12 of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. If the State Superintendent of Education does not receive from an individual a request for a hearing within 10 days after the individual receives notice, the suspension or revocation shall immediately take effect in accordance with the notice. If a hearing is requested within 10 days of notice of opportunity for hearing, it shall act as a stay of proceedings until the State Teacher Certification Board issues a decision. Any hearing shall take place in the educational service region wherein the educator is or was last employed and in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, which rules shall include without limitation provisions for discovery and the sharing of information between parties prior to the hearing. The standard of proof for any administrative hearing held pursuant to this Section shall be by the preponderance of the evidence. The decision of the State Teacher Certification Board is a final administrative decision and is subject to judicial review by appeal of either party.

The State Board may refuse to issue or may suspend the certificate of any person who fails to file a return, or to pay the tax, penalty or interest shown in a filed return, or to pay any final assessment of tax, penalty or interest, as required by any tax Act administered by the Illinois Department of Revenue, until such time as
the requirements of any such tax Act are satisfied. The exclusive authority of the State Superintendent of Education to initiate suspension or revocation of a certificate pursuant to this Section does not preclude a regional superintendent of schools from cooperating with the State Superintendent or a State's Attorney with respect to an investigation of alleged misconduct. (b) (Blank).

(b-5) The State Superintendent of Education or his or her designee may initiate and conduct such investigations as may be reasonably necessary to establish the existence of any alleged misconduct. At any stage of the investigation, the State Superintendent may issue a subpoena requiring the attendance and testimony of a witness, including the certificate holder, and the production of any evidence, including files, records, correspondence, or documents, relating to any matter in question in the investigation. The subpoena shall require a witness to appear at the State Board of Education at a specified date and time and shall specify any evidence to be produced. The certificate holder is not entitled to be present, but the State Superintendent shall provide the certificate holder with a copy of any recorded testimony prior to a hearing under this Section. Such recorded testimony must not be used as evidence at a hearing, unless the certificate holder has adequate notice of the testimony and the opportunity to cross-examine the witness. Failure of a certificate holder to comply with a duly-issued, investigatory subpoena may be grounds for revocation, suspension, or denial of a certificate.

(b-10) All correspondence, documentation, and other information so received by the regional superintendent of schools, the State Superintendent of Education, the State Board of Education, or the State Teacher Certification Board under this Section is confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties, except (i) as necessary for the State Superintendent of Education or his or her designee to investigate and prosecute pursuant to this Article, (ii) pursuant to a court order, (iii) for disclosure to the certificate holder or his or her representative, or (iv) as otherwise required in this Article and provided that any such information admitted into evidence in a hearing shall be exempt from this confidentiality and non-disclosure requirement.

(c) The State Superintendent of Education or a person designated by him shall have the power to administer oaths to witnesses at any hearing conducted before the State Teacher Certification Board pursuant to this Section. The State Superintendent of Education or a person designated by him is authorized to subpoena and bring before the State Teacher Certification Board any person in this State and to take testimony either orally or by deposition or by exhibit, with the same fees and mileage and in the same manner as prescribed by law in judicial proceedings in the civil cases in circuit courts of this State.

(c-5) Any circuit court, upon the application of the State Superintendent of Education or the certificate holder, may, by order duly entered, require the attendance of witnesses and the production of relevant books and papers as part of any investigation or at any hearing the State Teacher Certification Board is authorized to conduct pursuant to this Section, and the court may compel obedience to its orders by proceedings for contempt.

(e-10) The State Board of Education shall receive an annual line item appropriation to cover fees associated with the investigation and prosecution of alleged educator misconduct and hearings related thereto.

(d) As used in this Section, "teacher" means any school district employee regularly required to be certified, as provided in this Article, in order to teach or supervise in the public schools.

(Source: P.A. 96-431, eff. 8-13-09.)
REFERENCES


VITA

Andrew Reuland was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and is the youngest of six children. He currently resides in Chicago, Illinois, and is an uncle of five nieces – Madison, Ava, Natalie, Ruby, and Ella.

Andrew Reuland has been working in education since 1999. Previous to starting this career, he worked a stage manager and production manager in Chicago theatres. Andrew has taught mathematics at St. Rita High School, The Chicago Academy of the Arts, Fenwick High School, and Triton College.

Andrew graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1998 with a Bachelors of Science in mathematics. He had the honor to study stage management and light design under Kevin Dreyer. In 2000, Andrew earned a Masters of Science in Education from Northwestern University. In 2007, Andrew earned a Masters of Education in Instructional Leadership from Loyola University Chicago.

Currently, Andrew is the principal of CICS Northtown Academy where he has served as part of the leadership team since 2008.
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