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WHERE TO TEACH? DEVELOPING A MORE
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WHERE TO TEACH? DEVELOPING A MORE COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK
TO UNDERSTAND TEACHERS' CAREER DECISIONS

By

Marisa Cannata

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ABSTRACT

WHERE TO TEACH? DEVELOPING A MORE COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND TEACHERS' CAREER DECISIONS

By

Marisa Cannata

The distribution of teachers is highly uneven, with schools in urban areas—those likely to have high concentrations of poor and minority students—being the least likely to have qualified teachers. Most of this inequitable distribution of qualified teachers is due to the initial choices teachers make about where to work. This dissertation is a study of the processes by which teachers come to work in particular schools and how these career decisions relate to their social and cultural background. It uses Bourdieu's cultural reproduction model and the ideas of field, capital, and habitus to understand the practical sense teachers bring to the job search and how this influences how they perceive and respond to available positions in schools. This dissertation uses a mixed-methods design; interviews with 27 prospective elementary teachers during their job search are combined with surveys of 289 prospective elementary teachers about their perceptions of the teacher labor market, preferences for schools, and how they approach the job search.

Overall, this study shows a tendency for teachers to self-sort into schools that serve students from similar social and cultural backgrounds as themselves. Some of these forces are deliberate while others are more tacit—such as what teachers think it takes to get a job, how they identify open positions, and how they perceive schools during interviews. The ways that teachers approach the job search sometimes are inconsistent with their espoused preferences for particular school characteristics. In particular, the

processes that teachers use when making decisions indicate that teachers seek out schools where they feel comfortable and think they fit. A sense of fit is important in where teachers think they can get a job and what they look for in a potential workplace.

This dissertation also presents evidence that teachers become sorted across schools based upon both teacher candidate behavior and school and district hiring practices. Teacher candidates' race and socioeconomic background are related to the student characteristics of the districts to which they apply. Schools and districts also have varying preferences for the candidates they hire. Together, these forces lead to different labor market outcomes for African American and White teacher candidates, teacher candidates from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and mid-career changers and new college graduates. In contrast to existing work on teachers' career decisions, a cultural reproduction framework illuminates this adjustment process as teachers end up in schools where they fit. A cultural reproduction framework thus expands our understanding of teacher labor markets to include teachers as active participants in the process.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Teachers are a school's most important resource. Yet the distribution of teachers is highly uneven with schools in urban areas—those likely to have high concentrations of poor and minority students—being the least likely to have qualified teachers (Betts, Rueben, & Danenberg, 2000; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). The inequitable distribution of qualified teachers is due, in part, to the initial matching of new teachers to their first teaching jobs, with many candidates choosing more affluent, less diverse schools located close to where they grew up (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002, 2005a). Teachers' subsequent decisions to transfer from their initial schools further exacerbates this inequitable teacher sorting, as teachers tend to move from schools serving low-income, minority students to schools serving more affluent areas with fewer racial minority students (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004).

This inequity in access to high quality teachers has implications for student learning. High quality teachers can have significant and substantial effects on student achievement (Ferguson & Ladd, 1996; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). While there are few systematic relationships between specific teacher qualifications and student achievement, teacher quality does matter (Rivkin et al., 2005). Schools with persistent staffing difficulties are often forced to hire lower quality teachers and thus reduce the learning opportunities for students—often the students most in need of good teachers.

Researchers and policymakers have not ignored this important policy area. People care about the inequities in access to high quality teachers and there is a proliferation of

policies to support the recruitment and retention of new teachers in high-need schools. No Child Left Behind requires states to make sure poor and minority students are not more likely to have inexperienced or unqualified teachers. Seventeen states offer salary bonuses, scholarships, loan forgiveness, or housing assistance for teachers who agree to work in hard-to-staff schools (Education Commission of the States, 2005). Arizona State University partnered with a state senator and local districts to offer scholarships to student teachers in high-need schools, with the hope they will stay to teach in those schools. Alternative certification programs help districts “grow their own” teachers to meet staffing needs.

Researchers have also focused attention on the sorting of teachers among schools. The bulk of this research has examined teacher career patterns and the characteristics of schools that are associated with these patterns to further our understanding of teachers’ preferences for schools. What characteristics of schools and teaching positions matter most to teachers? What school features are important in teachers’ career decisions? Often, this research was designed to answer questions like these so that policies could be designed to meet teachers’ preferences. For example, how much do we need to increase salaries to entice teachers to hard-to-staff schools (Hanushek et al., 2004)? What impact do mentoring or induction policies have on attrition decisions of new teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004)? Overall, this body of research has focused on identifying and describing teachers’ preferences, hoping that knowledge of these preferences could inform policy and practice.

This dissertation also began as an investigation into teachers’ preferences for schools. By situating teachers in their social and cultural contexts, the goal was to

understand how preferences varied among teachers and how these preferences developed. Yet it is about more than preferences. I now view this dissertation as a study of the *processes* by which teachers come to work in particular schools. This difference between preferences and processes is not semantic. It reflects a different set of assumptions about how teachers approach the task of finding a teaching job.

Focusing on preferences posits teachers as rational actors that seek to maximize their career satisfaction by getting the job that best meets their criteria. Preferences are about what teachers want in a school and what gives them satisfaction in their work-life. Yet how teachers gather information or make assessments about which school would provide the most satisfaction is left unspecified. Focusing on processes, however, emphasizes prospective teachers' experiences on the job market and how they approach the task of finding a job. This dissertation tries to understand how teachers make use of their preferences during the job search. It focuses on the contexts in which schools become options for teachers and how they decide if a school is a desirable place to work. It highlights ways in which teachers' behavior, while reasonable, reduces the options available to them without assuming this behavior is the result of rational calculation. I explore these ideas through a longitudinal mixed-methods study of the career decisions of prospective elementary teachers from six colleges in one metropolitan area.

This dissertation introduces a new framework through which to view teachers' career decisions. Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory has been used to examine teachers' perceptions of students and parents as well as individuals' decisions in school and the labor market (Lareau, 1987; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; MacLeod, 1995), but has not yet been applied to a study of teachers' decisions in the teacher labor market. I use

Bourdieu's ideas of habitus, field, and capital to explore how prospective teachers perceive and navigate the teacher job search. Prospective teachers may take many actions throughout the job search; they may research various schools, look for available jobs, contact individuals in their social network, send out applications, go on interviews, gather information, and, ultimately, accept (or, in some cases, reject) a position. These behaviors are influenced by their perceptions of what makes a good school, their sense of what it takes to get a teaching job, the criteria they use to evaluate potential teaching jobs, their experiences on interviews, and how they conceive their job alternatives. These perceptions and experiences are, in turn, shaped by the socio-cultural contexts of teacher and schools. By focusing on the processes rather than preferences, I attempt to open up the black box of a teacher's job search.

What We Know About Teachers' Career Decisions

Three main strands of research add to our knowledge of how teachers make career decisions. These research strands come from different disciplinary backgrounds: labor economics, organizational sociology, and psychology. Due to these various disciplinary backgrounds, each strand relies on different methodologies and assumptions to explain teachers' career decisions. Yet, all three seek to understand teachers' preferences for schools as workplaces. As a whole, these research traditions identify three important features of jobs that guide teachers' decision-making: economic incentives, organizational characteristics, and position-specific features. As each research tradition provides some insight into teachers' preferences for each of these features, this section will first describe the methods and assumptions behind each research strand and then

describe what they tell us—as a whole—about teachers’ preferences and decisions on the job market.

Economic studies of the teacher labor market posit teachers as rational actors that make decisions based upon objective and observable features of schools. Through this perspective, teachers have preferences for particular work environments and weigh potential jobs against these criteria. It is assumed that teachers have full information about the satisfaction they will receive from different jobs, resulting from both salary and working conditions, and choose the position that will give them the most satisfaction. Schools with some undesirable characteristics may compensate by having other, more amenable, features, or by offering a higher salary (Rosen, 1986). Other economic studies examine the impact of various school characteristics on teachers’ exit decisions, length of time spent teaching, or mobility between jobs. These studies assume that teachers’ preferences are guiding their turnover decisions; therefore, identifying school characteristics associated with lower turnover rates provides information on teacher preferences. Economic studies of the teacher labor market have identified a number of features of schools that appear to influence teachers’ satisfaction with working in a school, such as salary, class size, the racial ethnic, income, and achievement background of the school’s students, and the geographic location (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Baugh & Stone, 1982; Boyd et al., 2005a; Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005b; Brewer, 1996; Dolton & van der Klaauw, 1999; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1999; Kirby, Berends, & Naftel, 1999; Murnane & Olsen, 1990; Scafidi, Sjoquist, & Stinebrickner, 2007; Stinebrickner, 2001; Theobald, 1990).

A different line of research about teachers' career decisions draws on ideas from organizational sociology. This literature focuses on organizational features of schools that affect teachers' careers. Like the economic studies, these studies may explore the effect that different school features have on teacher turnover, although they may also focus more broadly on factors that influence teacher satisfaction. They also draw on occupational and organizational norms, as well as experiences of new teachers. This framework highlights how individuals are brought into general occupations and specific organizations, and how organization-wide features shape an individual's sense of job satisfaction and organization-wide turnover. Research in this tradition has emphasized teachers' need to feel successful on the job and the administrative or organizational characteristics of schools that contribute to this sense of success, such as the level of conflict and strife in an organization, support from administrators or more experienced colleagues, new teacher mentoring and induction, and influence over schoolwide policies (Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson & Birkland, 2003; Johnson, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu, & Donaldson, 2004; Johnson & Landman, 2000; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Finally, a third research tradition uses experimental psychology methods to test hypotheses about factors that influence teachers' evaluations of teaching positions. This literature draws heavily from more general human resource functions in organizations. It focuses on factors that influence teacher recruitment and how attractive particular jobs appear to teachers. As experiments, these studies are often conducted in laboratory settings and vary one or two components in a recruitment situation to isolate effects. The studies might choose to vary characteristics of the teacher candidates, characteristics of

the position available, or characteristics of the job announcement or organizational representative. For example, some studies have varied the race and gender of organizational representatives talking about an available position and found that teachers find jobs more attractive if they are presented by someone of the same race and gender as themselves (Young, Place, Rinehart, Jury, & Baits, 1997). Other studies have varied the recruitment message, or the description of the available position, and found that job announcements that emphasize extrinsic factors—such as salary—are considered less attractive to teachers than job announcements that emphasize the work tasks or work environment (Young, Rinehart, & Heneman, 1993).

Economic Incentives

Together, all three strands of research on teachers' career decisions have identified several school characteristics that appear to influence teacher preferences for schools. One feature of teaching jobs that is of central importance to policymakers is the extent to which teachers are sensitive to salary differences between schools. Studies in this tradition have found that teachers respond to both wage and non-wage characteristics of schools. Salaries affect both whether an individual chooses to teach at all, and, if they do, where that individual takes a teaching job (Brewer, 1996; Dolton & Makepeace, 1993; Stinebrickner, 2001). Teachers also are less likely to quit when teaching wages are relatively high (Dolton & van der Klaauw, 1999; Grissmer & Kirby, 1997; Kirby & Grissmer, 1993; Murnane & Olsen, 1990; Theobald, 1990). Indeed, economic studies have found teachers react to wages at least as much as do workers in other occupations. Baugh and Stone (1982), for example, found that teachers respond both to wage

differentials between teaching and non-teaching jobs, as well as to pay differences between teaching jobs.

Yet salary is still a limited tool by which to attract and retain teachers in particular teaching positions. Murnane and Olsen (1989, 1990) noted that fixed effects methods reduce the relative impact of salary on teachers' decisions to quit, suggesting that some school attributes also affect teachers' decisions. Evidence from experimental psychology studies suggest that teachers consider jobs more attractive if they emphasize the work environment and work tasks rather than economic incentives (Young et al., 1997; Young et al., 1993), although male teachers give more attention to salary than women when evaluating jobs (Winter, 1996). Sociologists focus on the importance of the student-teacher relationship as the psychic rewards of teaching (Lortie, 1975). If teachers cannot attain these intrinsic rewards and feel successful with their students, financial incentives may have limited effectiveness in retaining teachers (Liu, Johnson, & Peske, 2004). For example, the Massachusetts Signing Bonus Program promised new teachers \$20,000 if they taught in a public school for four years. Yet many participants left teaching before earning all of the bonus because they did not feel they were achieving success with their students (Liu et al., 2004). In an experimental design study, teachers did not rate jobs more attractive if they had a 10% signing bonus (Winter & Melloy, 2005). Likewise, Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (1999) found that differences in school characteristics are better predictors of teachers' movement between schools than salary.

Organizational Characteristics

As school characteristics and working conditions influence teachers' career decisions independently of salary, it is important to know which features of schools or

districts appear to matter in these choices. All three research traditions have identified several features of schools that appear to influence teachers' career decisions. Teachers care about class size and workload (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Eberts & Stone, 1985; Hanushek et al., 1999; Horng, 2005; Kirby et al., 1999; Levinson, 1988; Mont & Rees, 1996; Stockard & Lehman, 2004). For example, teachers in North Carolina are paid a premium to teach in larger schools, suggesting that teachers prefer smaller schools and districts (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Levinson, 1988; Walden & Sogutlu, 2001). A teacher's probability of leaving a particular school increased by 3 percent for each additional student in her classroom (Kirby et al., 1999). Other measures of teacher workload have been used to examine teachers' preferences for job attributes. For example, teachers prefer to work in schools with more professional support staff and teacher aides (Kirby et al., 1999; Walden & Sogutlu, 2001). Qualitative studies of new teachers' experiences indicated that the teaching assignment or workload contributed to teachers' dissatisfaction and likelihood of leaving (Johnson & Birkland, 2003). Teachers are wary of schools in which the scope and definition of their responsibilities are not clearly delineated as they may foster unrealistic work expectations and burnout (Johnson & Landman, 2000).

Researchers have also investigated the extent to which teachers care about the resources and facilities in their schools. Loeb, Darling-Hammond, and Luczak (2005) found no direct relationship between the adequacy of textbooks, availability of computers, or professional development opportunities on teacher turnover or difficulty in filling teaching vacancies. Yet, schools that used non-classroom space for instruction or had dirty bathrooms had more serious problems with turnover and difficulty filling

vacancies. Likewise, Horng (2005) found that having clean and safe facilities was the most important attribute of schools for teachers. Stockard and Lehman (2004) found that teachers were more satisfied in schools with sufficient supplies. Falch and Strom (2005) found that teachers are less likely to leave a school if there is a library.

Student discipline also appears to influence teachers' career choices. Studies of teacher turnover and retention have found that teachers are more likely to stay in schools with lower levels of student discipline problems; teachers moving to a new school or leaving teaching altogether often cite student discipline as a cause of their dissatisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001; Knapp, Elfers, Plecki, Loeb, & Zahir, 2005). A study of new teachers' experiences on the job found that discipline problems and student disrespect led to higher levels of teacher dissatisfaction (Johnson & Birkland, 2003). Indeed, teachers' perceptions of student discipline problems contributed to teachers' decisions to leave teaching, despite a \$4000 salary bonus for staying an additional year (Liu et al., 2004).

Studies from economics, organizational sociology, and experimental psychology have all identified the importance of administrative and support structures in teachers' career decisions. For example, one experiment found that teachers care more about features of their work environment—such as shared decision-making and interactions with colleagues—than factors related to economic incentives or the work itself (Young, Rinehart, & Place, 1989). Although administrative support can mean many things to teachers, teachers' perceptions of how effective the school and principal are in supporting new teachers lead to a reduced likelihood of exit (Ingersoll, 2001) and higher teacher satisfaction (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Interaction with more experienced colleagues and opportunities for instructional growth also led to higher levels of teacher satisfaction

(Johnson & Birkland, 2003; Kardos et al., 2001). Indeed, for these teachers, achieving success in the classroom depended on the contributions of other colleagues and the principal. Similar to student discipline, the amount of curriculum support available to new teachers contributed to their decision to leave public school teaching despite an increased salary (Liu et al., 2004).

Teachers also prefer schools where they can influence decision-making (Ingersoll, 2001). Teachers are more satisfied when they have a role in designing the school plan and in school governance (Johnson & Landman, 2000). Similarly, the principal leadership style matters to teachers. Teachers are more likely to transfer schools if they have a principal with an authoritarian leadership style than one who is more democratic (Bempah, Kaylen, Osburn, & Birkenholz, 1994).

Another important attribute of schools is the extent to which they have structures in place to support new teachers. Teachers are most likely to move schools or exit the profession within their first few years of teaching (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991). Further, teachers who think they get support from colleagues and a mentor report higher levels of satisfaction (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Thus, school characteristics that help new teachers may be particularly beneficial in reducing turnover. New teachers are less likely to quit teaching if they are assigned a mentor teacher in the same teaching field, have collaboration or planning time with other teachers, or have extra classroom assistance (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Yet, teachers in low-income schools are less likely to have a mentor in the same field or sufficient curriculum guidance and flexibility in the classroom (Johnson et al., 2004).

Position-Specific Characteristics

In addition to school organizational characteristics and the economic incentives associated with various teaching positions, teachers also care about some aspects of the job itself. While districts and schools may control organizational structures and the salary offered to teachers, some features of teaching positions are less amenable to policy intervention. Nevertheless, these features do affect teachers' career decisions and may have an important impact on the nature of the work involved in various teaching positions. While the nature of the work might appear to be uniform across elementary schools, differences in grade level, subject matter specialties, and student population may influence the specific work tasks involved in teaching.

The findings with respect to location are particularly noteworthy as teachers care about the geographical location of teaching positions (Boyd et al., 2005a; De Tray & Greenberg, 1977; Rynes & Lawlor, 1983; Toder, 1972). Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2005a) found that teachers prefer to teach close to where they grew up. Sixty-one percent of new teachers had their first teaching job within 15 miles of where they went to high school. This hometown preference also existed for teachers who went to college at least 100 miles from their high school location. Teachers have a preference not only for proximity to their hometown, but also for communities similar in type to where they grew up. Teachers who grew up in urban areas were more likely to take a teaching job in an urban area. Similarly, Rynes and Lawlor (1983) found that most teachers find inner city schools less attractive than other types of schools. This preference for location also affects teacher turnover. For example, teachers who lived outside of New York City prior to accepting a teaching job within the city were five times more likely to transfer to

a school outside of the city than city residents (Boyd et al., 2005b). The finding in many studies that teachers prefer to teach in suburban areas over urban areas (De Tray & Greenberg, 1977; Kirby et al., 1999; Toder, 1972) may reflect the fact that most teachers grew up in the suburbs.

Teachers also have preferences for teaching a particular grade level or subject area, even among elementary grades. Teaching a self-contained first grade class can be quite different from teaching a self-contained fifth grade class. Also, it is relatively common for an upper elementary grade teacher to focus on math and science or language arts and social studies, trading students with one another for part of the day. As a specific example of this, Stockard and Lehman (2004) found that elementary level teachers were more satisfied with their jobs if they taught in their preferred grade and did not teach in a middle school. Teaching in one's area of certification also leads to greater satisfaction (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Teachers in Washington reported that their specific teaching assignment was the most important reason to stay in their school (Knapp et al., 2005).

These studies also suggested that teachers care about the demographic characteristics of their students. In particular, teachers appear to make career decisions based on the academic performance, socioeconomic status, and racial background of student populations served by various schools. Teachers tend to leave schools with low performing students and move to schools serving higher achieving students (Boyd et al., 2005b; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2004; Hanushek et al., 1999; Scafidi et al., 2007). Teachers appear to be offered a positive compensating pay differential for teaching in schools with lower student verbal scores (Antos & Rosen, 1975) and report lower levels of satisfaction if they teach low achievers (Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Both experienced

and inexperienced teachers find jobs less attractive if they are located in schools labeled in need of attention by state accountability programs and more attractive if they are labeled as meeting these goals (Winter & Melloy, 2005). Teachers also care about other student outcomes, including graduation rates and college attendance (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Eberts & Stone, 1985).

Teachers are also sorted across schools by the percent of students who come from low-income families, with more qualified teachers in schools in low poverty areas (Betts et al., 2000; Lankford et al., 2002). While this sorting is evident in the first job teachers take (Boyd et al., 2002), it is exacerbated as teachers move from less affluent to more affluent schools (Boyd et al., 2005b; Clotfelter et al., 2004; Hanushek et al., 1999; Levinson, 1988; Scafidi et al., 2007). Among public schools, schools in high poverty areas have higher rates of teacher turnover and lower levels of job satisfaction than those in more advantaged areas (Boyd et al., 2005b; Ingersoll, 2001; Levinson, 1988; Scafidi et al., 2007; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Stockard & Lehman, 2004). Teachers also appear to care about other features of a school community's socioeconomic status. Both White and non-White teachers prefer to teach in communities where there is a higher percentage of professional and technical workers (Levinson, 1988; Murnane & Olsen, 1990), although the proportion of the population that is poor did not significantly affect teachers' decisions (Levinson, 1988). Teachers appear to be paid a compensating pay differential when there is a relatively high percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a common indicator of school poverty (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Levinson, 1988). Teachers are less likely to leave when there is a high median household income in the area around the school (Mont & Rees, 1996).

Finally, the racial and ethnic composition of the student body also appears to influence teachers' career decisions. A number of studies have found that, overall, teachers prefer to teach in schools with fewer racial and ethnic minority students (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Boyd et al., 2002, 2005b; Clotfelter et al., 2004; Falch & Strom, 2005; Hanushek et al., 1999; Scafidi et al., 2007; Strunk & Robinson, 2006). Teachers in these studies are paid compensating differentials for teaching in schools with greater numbers of minority students (Antos & Rosen, 1975; Eberts & Stone, 1985; Levinson, 1988; Toder, 1972). They are also more likely to quit teaching or transfer schools if they teach in a school with a high proportion of non-White students (Boyd et al., 2005b; Murnane & Olsen, 1989; Scafidi et al., 2007; Theobald, 1990). Schools which have a majority of African Americans or Latino students are more likely to have a serious problem with teacher turnover (Loeb et al., 2005).

How Teacher Characteristics Influence Teacher Preferences

One important question when looking at teachers' preferences for schools is whether preferences are uniform or varied. A uniform set of preferences would indicate that all teachers prefer to teach in similar types of schools and that it would be relatively easy to rank schools in order of attractiveness to teachers. More likely, preferences vary across teachers, with different teachers preferring to teach in different types of schools. This variation may be due to teachers having preferences for particular characteristics but weighting the various characteristics differently. For example, two teachers may both want to teach in a school with a small class size and a well-stocked library, but one teacher thinks class size is more important while another gives more weight to the school library. Or, it may be due to teachers preferring different features. For example, some

teachers may avoid schools with many English as a Second Language students, while other teachers seek out schools with linguistic diversity.

Understanding the nature of the variation in teachers' preferences for schools is also important. This variation may be random or systematic. Systematic variation in teachers' preferences suggests that we can identify teacher characteristics that are associated with particular types of preferences for schools. Perhaps, for instance, male teachers make decisions between schools differently than female teachers. Or maybe individuals who switch into teaching as a second career have different preferences than those just starting out. Random variation in teacher preferences implies that while different teachers may prefer different schools, we cannot predict which teachers will prefer which schools. As shown below, there is evidence that preferences are systematic. By better understanding why teachers make the choices that they do, we could then more effectively address policies to recruit particular types of teachers.

The three research strands on teachers' career decisions explore variation in teacher preferences, although they do so in different ways and to different extents. Of the three, research on human resource decisions in schools using experimental psychology methods is most likely to explore possible systematic variation in teachers' preferences. Studies in this tradition often use a teacher background characteristic as an experimental control variable in designing studies. For example, one study found that extrinsic features of available jobs are relatively more important to male teachers than they are to female teachers (Winter, 1996) while others found that inexperienced teachers rate all jobs as more attractive than do experienced teachers (Winter & Melloy, 2005; Young et al., 1993). Further, Young, Place, Rinehart, Jury, and Baits (1997) found that teachers are

more likely to accept a job if it is presented to them by someone of the same race, suggesting that teachers' evaluations of a particular school varies by their racial and ethnic background. As noted above, these studies are designed to test specific hypotheses, so they do provide some explanation for why teacher preferences vary in these ways. For example, the study by Young et al (1997) tests the attraction-similarity hypothesis—that teachers are attracted to jobs in which they match the demographic characteristics of the organizational representative presenting the job. Their finding that teachers prefer jobs in which there is a match on racial and ethnic background but not necessarily on gender provides some support for the attraction-similarity hypothesis.

Economic studies also pay some attention to how teachers' preferences for schools vary by looking at the interaction of teacher and student race. These studies have explored whether White and non-White teachers have the same preferences for student racial and ethnic characteristics. For example, as noted above, Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2005b) found that White and Hispanic teachers were more likely to leave a school if it served a high number of African American students. African American teachers' decisions to leave a school, however, appeared relatively insensitive to the racial composition of the student body. Similarly, Scafidi, Sjoquist, and Stinebrickner (2002) found that, African American teachers' likelihood of exiting a school was similar for schools serving mostly White or mostly African American students.

Other studies, however, have found that African American teachers do care about student racial ethnic composition. For example, while White teachers were more likely to leave a school if it had large numbers of minority students, the opposite was true for African American and Hispanic teachers, who were more likely to leave a school if it had

large numbers of White students (Hanushek et al., 1999). One study noted the marked degree of teacher sorting by racial and ethnic group in California schools (Betts et al., 2000). This segregation of teachers and students by race and ethnicity was present despite policies to ensure that the racial and ethnic distribution of teachers in a particular school matched the overall racial and ethnic distribution of teachers in the district (Betts et al., 2000). Antos and Rosen (1975) found that teachers tended to segregate themselves by race. Likewise, Strunk and Robinson (2006) found that teachers prefer to teach in schools with more students of their same race and, for some teachers, more teachers from similar racial backgrounds. Further, there is heterogeneity among teachers in terms of their preferences for student achievement attributes. While some teachers seem insensitive to levels of student achievement when making decisions to quit teaching or transfer to another school, other teachers are much more likely to leave when achievement is low (Boyd et al., 2005b).

Studies coming from organizational sociology, in contrast, often overlook issues of race and class in analyzing teachers' sense of satisfaction or reasons behind choosing particular schools. Johnson and colleagues (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of new teachers' experiences. This group, called The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, published several research articles on teachers' career decisions. However, very few of these studies mention how teachers' race or class may have influenced these decisions. The researchers did try to obtain a sample that was racially diverse, but did not take advantage of this sample variation in their analyses. For example, Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, and Liu (2001) did provide some demographic information on the teachers, including their racial and ethnic background, but did not explore how teachers'

perceptions of their school's professional culture may have differed by race. Likewise, Liu, Johnson, and Peske (2004) provided descriptive information on their sample, including demographic characteristics of the teachers and their schools, but failed to explore how these sample characteristics may have affected decisions to continue teaching or how teachers from different racial or class backgrounds may have reacted to a \$20,000 signing bonus differently. A smaller study (Horng, 2005) did note that Latino teachers appear to have higher utility levels when they teach in schools with more minority students.

Recent Trends in Research on Teachers' Career Decisions

More recent work on teachers' career decisions tends to take two forms. One strand attempts to identify elements of induction and mentoring that influence turnover decisions of new teachers (for example, see Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Another focuses on distinguishing between various school and student characteristics in these decisions. Teachers prefer particular types of working environments, yet they are also distributed in ways that disadvantage poor and minority students. Schools serving low-income, racial minority students, however, are also those that tend to have larger classes, greater discipline problems, and few supports for teachers. Thus, distinguishing between these different features of schools and their students is important for establishing effective education policy. Do we see the unequal patterns of the distribution of qualified teachers because teachers seek out schools with high salaries and supportive environments, which tend to be those serving more affluent students, or do these patterns emerge as teachers exercise their preferences for teaching students with particular characteristics? For example, Horng (2005) and Loeb, Darling-Hammond, and Luczak (2005) use surveys of

current teachers' perceptions to conclude that it is measures of the work environment, rather than student characteristics, that influence teachers' career decisions. Yet, Scafidi, Sjoquist and Stinebrickner (2007) use administrative databases of teachers to track them over time and found that teachers do care about student characteristics, and, in particular, their behavior can be explained by preferences for students from a particular racial and ethnic background, rather than the ability or socioeconomic status of students.

As this dissertation explores the importance of student race and class composition on teachers' career decisions, it is in line with current trends in teacher labor market research. Moreover, it explores the extent to which teachers' preferences and their subsequent decisions can be explained by objective features of the school work environment or on socio-cultural understandings of students and teachers' places within the teaching field. This dissertation's focus on teachers' job search processes extends the current work on teachers' career decisions and addresses some of the limitations in the current literature, as outlined below.

Limitations of Existing Research on Teachers' Career Decisions

Despite the valuable knowledge about teachers' preferences for schools that has already been produced, studies based on economics, organizational sociology, and experimental psychology each have methodological faults. Economic studies often use administrative datasets that may not contain important features of either schools or teachers that affect how these career decisions are made. Some economic studies use survey data, although in these cases the data may not have been collected for the purpose of exploring teachers' job search processes. While the size of these datasets allow for complex models, they cannot overcome the lack of important intervening variables.

Further, the quantitative nature of these studies results in limited attention to why teachers prefer the schools that they do and their experiences with the job search.

Organizational sociology studies are more likely to delve into the reasons behind teachers' decisions with rich qualitative data, but they sometimes fail to take advantage of the diversity in their samples to explore how preferences or perceptions might be related to teacher characteristics. In addition, organizational sociology research is often retrospective, asking teachers to reflect back on why they moved schools or stayed in their school after the decision has been made. Relying on retrospective accounts may overlook some factors that guide teachers' actions. Further, the factors behind teachers' decisions to quit or transfer schools may not explain their initial choice of a school, yet both the initial job and exit decisions contribute to the inequitable distribution of teachers (Boyd et al., 2002).

Finally, human resource psychology research relies on experimental designs. Studies in this tradition ask teachers to rate the attractiveness of various jobs that are similar in most respects, but the researchers vary one or two features of the job for each participant in the study. While this method is able to isolate the effect of particular features, it creates a contrived situation in which to understand how teachers make decisions about where to apply and where to work. Real career decisions are not made in this isolated manner. Indeed, some decision-making research suggests candidates evaluate jobs on an holistic basis, rather than attending to variations in particular features (Rynes & Lawlor, 1983; Soelberg, 1967).

In addition to methodological limits in each of the three existing research strands on teachers' preferences, each field relies on particular assumptions that limit their

usefulness. While these three frameworks have identified some of the features and characteristics of schools that attract or repel teachers, they share an assumption that teachers can and do objectively interpret these features of schools. Though some teachers, through their location in particular social networks or experiences as a student teacher or substitute, may have a sense of a school's culture and specific policies, it is quite likely that most beginning teachers will have a limited knowledge of such features. Indeed, the hiring process often does not provide teachers with the amount and type of information necessary to form an accurate picture of work-life at the school (Liu & Johnson, 2003). Thus, teachers may be making decisions about where to teach—and sorting themselves across schools in ways that disadvantage poor and minority students—based upon assumptions about what it would be like to teach in certain schools or communities.

These beliefs about students and school communities may likely exist before teachers enter schools. Guin (2004) used data from a study of schools with chronic teacher turnover and found that low-income schools are not only more likely to experience chronic turnover, but also receive substantially fewer applications for every open teaching position. For example, she described how a school in one of the poorest areas of a district received just 3-5 applications for each available position, while an affluent school in the same district had 150 applications for each opening. Potential teachers around this district appeared to form opinions about which schools are desirable before even applying. The hiring process may provide only limited information for potential teachers (Liu and Johnson, 2003), but many teachers appear to select themselves out of particular schools without even the benefit of this limited information. This

underscores the necessity of examining how teachers interpret characteristics of schools and how they form perceptions of schools as workplaces.

Even decisions to leave a school may be influenced by culturally-based perceptions of whether difficulties experienced are endemic to the school. While teachers appear to have full information about a school when they make the decision to quit or transfer, that information is not necessarily accurate as it includes the biased, partial understandings that teachers choose to acknowledge (Weiss, 1995). This knowledge is especially open to being shaped and/or filtered through teacher's cultural models and social prejudices. Teachers' perceptions of students are filtered through social and cultural understandings and teachers define both school success and failure as linked to students' home environment or social background (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Lipman, 1998; McDermott, 1974). The extent to which teachers prefer particular work environments or feel successful with students thus depends, in part, on the meaning to which teachers ascribe to school and student characteristics.

Teachers are social and cultural beings, and their perceptions of student behavior as "disrespectful" depends on their culturally informed ideas about what motivates student actions and what counts as "respect" in particular contexts, especially the classroom. Schools can and do have effects on student behavior and many schools serving low-income or African American students would not be perceived by most teachers as having discipline problems. Yet, using a cultural reproduction framework, "respectful" students may be little more than students whose communication styles match those of the teachers, who are often White and come from middle class backgrounds. Understanding how teachers make sense of these different characteristics of schools and

their students through their social and cultural position is important for understanding teachers' choices among schools. The organizational context of the school and instructional support provided by the principal may help teachers deal more effectively with student disruptions and increase their sense of efficacy in the classroom. Yet, no matter what the organization provides, teachers also come to schools with cultural ideas about appropriate behavior and assumptions about how successful particular types of students can be.

Likewise, teachers' perceptions of whether they can be successful with students may be filtered through a socio-cultural lens. Johnson and Birkland (2003) emphasized the importance of teachers' ability to achieve a sense of success with students in their decisions to leave teaching or transfer schools. They argue that teachers who moved schools were searching for schools that had "stable faculties and the capacity to initiate and sustain improvement efforts" (pp. 599). Yet, these teachers also all moved to schools serving more affluent students. While it is likely that inequalities in school funding result in schools with greater concentrations of poor students having fewer resources for school improvement efforts, it is also likely that teachers' perceptions of students and reasons for school failure result in the inability to engage in meaningful educational reform and the lack of a sense of success with students.

Indeed, Lipman (1998) described how teachers have ideologies about student failure that guide their interactions with students. Most teachers in her study explained educational failure as due to some deficit in the student's family or home life, or because students lacked social support for education. She used evidence from schools undergoing significant restructuring activities which created many of the organizational conditions

and collegial interactions that some studies have linked with improved teacher working conditions, such as creating substantial time for teachers to collaborate and talk about instruction and encouraging teachers to develop new curriculum materials together. Yet, these opportunities for collaboration often reinforced teachers' ideas that students fail due to a deficit in students or their family life, as teachers realized they were not alone in experiencing difficulties with students in the school. The restructuring efforts in these schools led to lower expectations for African American students and teachers' expressions of frustration that they could not use the same instructional strategies or materials that they could with students in the honors track (who were predominantly White students).

While Lipman (1998) did not explore teachers' preferences for schools as workplaces or their decisions about where to teach, her research is important because it highlights how teachers' perceptions of students are filtered through social and cultural understandings. Teachers make sense of their interactions with students through a socio-cultural lens that includes ideas about why students fail and norms for student-teacher interactions. This lens is, in turn, shaped by teachers' own position within the social structure. Johnson and colleagues (2004) argued that the student-teacher relationship is a key component of whether teachers will feel successful and that teachers feel particularly uncertain about this relationship when they come from a different cultural background than their students. While schools may be more or less successful in helping teachers overcome these cultural differences, Lipman's research suggested that efforts to increase teacher collaboration or facilitate teacher teaming are limited approaches if they do not

also address teachers' ideological beliefs about students, their families, and the causes of their educational success and failure.

Further, some attributes of schools may not be universally defined. Teachers may have different ideas about what it means for a school to be safe or have good student discipline. Understanding what it means to teachers for principals to be supportive is crucial, as teachers may evaluate their principal through a social and cultural lens about the types of behavior and communication styles that are expected. For example, the same principal who gives a great deal of discretion to teachers may be regarded as either "flexible" or "lacking clear standards" to teachers, depending on what they expect from a principal. How teachers make sense of their principal and the amount of support they perceive coming from the school leadership depends, in part, on their cultural expectations for interaction with individuals in authority positions.

Finally, economic models often focus on the effects of marginal changes in school characteristics, implying that teachers are willing to make tradeoffs between different features of schools and their students at the margin. It is assumed that teachers may sacrifice some desirable features of their work environment for a higher salary or a shorter commute. Yet teachers may not evaluate positions in this way. Although teachers may prefer to teach students of their own race, is it something they are willing to trade for a higher salary or smaller class size? Indeed, research on decision-making behavior suggests career decisions are made more holistically, using very few criteria and giving little consideration before rejecting some jobs (Rynes & Lawlor, 1983; Soelberg, 1967; Stevens, 1998).

Cultural Reproduction Framework

This study uses a cultural reproduction framework and Bourdieu's notions of field, capital and habitus to identify the socio-cultural contexts of teachers' job search experiences. Bourdieu's (1984; 1991) work illuminates both the socio-cultural¹ processes through which people perceive and construct distinctions between themselves and others, and their relationship to the distribution of resources and opportunities—including occupational positions—across various social groups. The structure of the field influences people's habitus and thus guides individuals in every day cultural practices. This framework highlights how teachers' career decisions are grounded in particular social and cultural contexts that structure how they approach the task of finding a teaching job and how they perceive various schools.

Field and Capital

According to Bourdieu, fields are spheres of activities that have, over time, come to be autonomous from other activity spheres. That is, they have a particular logic that both structures how people and groups are positioned in relation to each other and to the work of the field, and how actors who occupy these positions interact with one another. A central part of this logic, or the “rules of the game” as Bourdieu refers to it, requires the identification of the types and combinations of capital as valued resources that provide a person with status in a field. For example, Bourdieu has argued that within the educational field in France, cultural capital, derived from the prestige associated with where a person attended school, one's knowledge of “high” culture, and one's communication styles and repertoires, is more important to one's position within that

¹ The term socio-cultural has more nuanced meanings in some research literatures. I am using the term to capture the relationship between both social and cultural influences on the teacher job search processes.

field than is economic capital, or the possession of material wealth (Bourdieu, 1977a, 1984). Conversely, within the industrial field, economic and social capital, or the information and resources available through the people one knows or comes into contact with, are more valued than cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977a, 1984).

Recognizing that teachers occupy different positions within the teaching field is important for understanding teachers' decisions. People typically obtain a position on this field depending, first, on their possession of a requisite state-sanctioned credential. While individuals who do not possess these credentials can obtain teaching jobs, their options tend to be limited either to the private sector (which tends to offer lower salaries) or to urban areas (which often face severe teacher shortages and inadequate resources). A teaching credential represents a type of cultural capital. Within the field, other types of capital, including other types of cultural capital, may be salient. For example, the status of the institution an individual graduated from, the knowledge of particular types of pedagogical philosophies, and where an individual grew up may all serve, to varying degrees, as forms of cultural capital. In addition, social capital in the form of the information that teachers gather about job openings through formal and informal contacts may be highly valued and, thus, highly relevant to where teachers end up teaching.

As players on the teaching field, teachers interact with each other and with schools. Through this interaction, teachers get a sense of their position on the field. Teachers occupy positions on this field based upon the amount and distribution of capital they hold. The positions are related to each other according to how the field values the different types of capital. For example, economic capital may not be highly valued in the teaching field and more weight may be given to social and cultural capital. Thus, teachers

from wealthy backgrounds may not be successful in converting their economic capital to a high status position on the teaching field, but those with a large social network (signaling high social capital) or a degree from a highly ranked teacher preparation program (signaling high cultural capital) may be able to convert those forms of capital into a position in a highly ranked and/or desirable school. Although the teaching field is relatively autonomous, it is also influenced by what Bourdieu has called the broader field of power, or structural effects across fields that seek to conserve or transform relations between types of capital (Bourdieu, 1998). Thus, teachers' places in the field are partly shaped by their gender, social class, and racial and ethnic background.

Habitus and Practical Logic

According to Bourdieu, the habitus is the central mediating mechanism between the structure of a field and people's preferences and everyday practices. Bourdieu defined the habitus as the enduring systems of dispositions, perceptions, and appreciations that shape how individuals make sense of and act within a particular field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Habitus structures the way individuals perceive objects, events and actions, and it organizes the social world for them. It also represents the social structure embodied within the individual agent (Bourdieu, 1984). As individuals interact on a field and experience a social life structured by the relations defined by the field, these relations layer onto them and become embodied within their tastes, behaviors and perceptions. This creates a correspondence between the objective social structure and individuals' mental schemas for perceiving the social world (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In this sense, agents internalize the external social structures (the logics of the fields)-which they inhabit and act within. As we interact within the social world, we both

have and make sense of specific experiences that are particular to the position we occupy. Through a sedimentary process (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), the experiences of our position deposit themselves in our mental map of the world, leading us to view the world through those perceptions.

A central component of habitus is that individual behavior is guided by a practical logic, or an understanding of what is appropriate in a given situation (Bourdieu, 1980, 1998). According to Bourdieu, our actions are not based on rational calculus, but on our sense of “the game” and what action should come next. Agents on a field act in ways that are consistent with their embodied understanding of the field, even though they are not deliberately following rules (Bourdieu, 1998; Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu called these actions strategies, although by strategy he did not mean a conscious choice or strategic intention made through rational calculation (Bourdieu, 1998). He distinguished strategies from “acting strategically” because individuals do not usually act with future outcomes in mind (Bourdieu, 1980). Practical logic is neither unconscious—agents could explain why they chose particular actions if asked—nor conscious—agents are not necessarily thinking through possible actions and their ramifications before acting (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986). In this way, Bourdieu distinguished practical logic from both rational decision-making and socially deterministic behavior (Bourdieu, 1980). In describing choices of marriage partners, for instance, Bourdieu describes matrimonial strategies as “the product not of compliance with rules but of a sense of the game that leads one to ‘choose’ the best possible match, in view of the hand that one has been dealt” (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 113). Actions are thus spontaneous results of individuals responding to a social specific situation according to their practical logic.

Yet to call actions spontaneous does not mean that they are random. An individual's practical sense has coherence because the habitus serves as a generating principle that brings a unity to actions (Bourdieu, 1980). Our cultural schemas guide how we view the world around us and how we act within it. The notion of habitus is useful for understanding teachers' career decisions because it focuses attention on how teachers perceive available jobs and the cognitive schemas that generate their behavior. The actions of teachers during the job search are generated their habitus. In this way, the spontaneous actions appear coherent because they are the result of applying the same generating principle to diverse situations (Bourdieu, 1980). As habitus is structured by one's social position, teachers from different cultural and social backgrounds behave differently because their habitus have contrasting generating principles.

If the habitus influences one's perceptions of the social world, it will influence how teachers perceive different schools, communities and the teaching positions available in different contexts, as well as provide a unifying principle that generates how specific teachers respond to specific job offers. Determining the generating principle of the habitus that creates one's tastes and preferences is key to understanding how he or she makes decisions. Teachers have preferences for certain types of schools because their habitus leads them to interpret school characteristics and conditions in particular ways and also has an underlying generating principle which produces a taste for particular features and, by extension, schools. Therefore, teachers occupying different positions within the teaching field may perceive the same school in contrasting ways. Each may ascribe quite different meanings to these features to create distinctions between schools. One's habitus may make a teacher notice differences between the number of poor

students in schools and that perception may lead teachers to make a judgment about the value of that school. Yet one teacher's generating principle could lead her to avoid schools with high numbers of low-income students while another teacher may prefer that school.

Bourdieu's work suggests that, in making decisions about where to work, teachers may rely on their perceptions of their position in the social structure and the opportunities they perceive as open to them in the teacher labor pool. A teacher's system of perception and apperception may unconsciously shape their choices in ways that are aligned with their position in the social structure. According to Bourdieu, our social and cultural background influences how we perceive and react to the world, thus teachers may make employment decisions not on a deliberate accounting of the working conditions and economic benefits of different schools, but on a subjective sense of their "proper" place within the occupational field, as well as a sense of their limits. Seen in this light, the sorting of teachers across schools can be seen as a function of teachers' understanding of their place in the occupational structure and their self-selection into schools they think match their position.

A cultural reproduction framework emphasizes how individuals adjust their preferences to fit one's position on a field. Economic sociology has moved closer to such a conceptualization of how individual preferences operate. Akerlof and Kranton (2005) argued that one's identity describes their social category and norms about how people should behave in particular situations. Individuals lose utility if their actions, or the actions of those around them, do not match ideals for expected behavior. Teachers, then,

are dissatisfied if their students, or fellow teachers, do not match the teacher's ideal for student or teacher behavior.

Cultural reproduction theories likewise emphasize how teachers feel most at ease when their habitus, or set of cultural dispositions, match those with whom they interact. Yet, the framework goes beyond this by highlighting how individuals' social and cultural position in the field influences their perceptions of the world around them. Individuals get a sense of their position in the field and their preferences are adjusted to fit what they think they can expect from their position. Our habitus then not only shapes our preferences, but it also shapes our system of perceptions and ways we approach the task of finding a job. Teachers not only have different preferences for schools, but have different strategies for getting a job and make different types of distinctions between potential teaching jobs. A cultural reproduction framework is important to understanding teachers' career decisions as labor market studies traditionally look at a limited set of school and student characteristics, and often do not explain why members of different social groups behave differently (Akerlof & Kranton, 2005). Bourdieu's framework allows us to explore how teachers' cultural and social background influences their perceptions and preferences for schools and to understand how teachers approach the task of finding a teaching job.

Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory may be particularly useful to deepen our understanding of teachers' self-selection into schools. Research on teachers' school selection has consistently found that the overwhelming majority of teachers choose to teach in schools that are both similar to the ones they attended in terms of student demographics and working conditions, and that are located in or very close to the

communities in which they grew up (Boyd et al., 2005a). Further, experimental evidence suggested that teachers give higher ratings to job recruiters, such as principals, when they are of the same racial and ethnic background (Young et al., 1997). Although they found that teachers were receptive to recruitment messages that focused on the work environment, they also found that teachers reacted more positively to vacant job positions when they were presented by individuals of the same racial background. In short, the research suggests that teachers' school preferences are highly related to their own social class and racial backgrounds. Teachers sort themselves into schools in ways that reproduce existing social divisions.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is an initial attempt to use ideas from cultural reproduction theory to understand teachers' career decisions and experiences on the job search. In doing so, it explores the nature of the teaching field, teacher candidates' habitus and practical logic in the job search, and the implications of these processes for the overall distribution of teachers across schools. The chapters are organized accordingly.

Chapter 2 describes the research design and data collection. The data come from my longitudinal, mixed-methods study of 289 prospective elementary teachers who responded to a survey, as well as interviews with 27 of these teacher candidates. Chapter 2 describes the sampling strategy and response rates for the survey component and the sampling strategy and coding methods of the interview component. It also describes the labor market context for teachers in this study and the metropolitan area in which it was located.

Chapter 3 examines the nature of the teaching field and its relationship to the field of schools. It explores teacher candidates' perceptions of what it takes to get a teaching job and how principals make hiring decisions. By comparing teacher candidate perceptions to the literature on principal hiring decisions, the chapter examines which teacher candidates have the most accurate perceptions of the teaching field.

Chapter 4 focuses on teacher candidates' habitus and the practical logic they have about the job search. This practical logic informs how they approach the job search, including what types of distinctions they make between schools and how they think about districts and schools in the process. It explores the characteristics of schools that teachers prefer and how they gather and use information about schools when making decisions about where to apply and where to work.

Chapter 5 links the individual experiences and decisions of teacher candidates in Chapters 3 and 4 to a broader sample of prospective elementary teachers. It traces the progression of teacher candidates' job search as they submit applications, receive offers, and accept jobs, and examines the distribution of teachers across schools at each of these stages.

Chapter 6 considers the role of school and district hiring practices in the teacher labor market and examines the types of teachers that schools and districts hired. It also explores the future plans of teacher candidates who did not end up with a teaching job.

Chapter 7 summarizes the main findings from the dissertation and discusses the importance of this study in the larger research base on teachers' career decisions. It outlines the implications this study has for policies aimed at improving the distribution of high quality teachers as well as practices of teacher educators and school administrators.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

Teacher hiring is a seasonal phenomenon. Schools and districts usually begin posting available positions and accepting applications around April. This continues through September, with many teacher candidates not receiving a job offer until late August. Districts try to predict the number of teachers they will need before students arrive for the school year, but their predictions may be inexact. Thus, some teachers may be hired in the early months of the school year. While some teacher candidates are hired mid-year as positions become available, most teacher hiring takes place within this April to September window. This study occurred during the hiring season to follow teacher candidates throughout this process.

This dissertation uses a longitudinal mixed-methods design and consists of two components. The longitudinal design is necessary to capture the processes through which teacher candidates make career decisions. A mixed-methods approach is used to make connections between teacher candidates' individual experiences on the job market and broader labor market outcomes. First, there is a longitudinal survey of 289 prospective elementary teachers. I surveyed prospective teachers who were currently applying for teaching positions in elementary schools before the hiring season began. I then sent a follow-up survey to these teacher candidates after the start of the school year. Second, I interviewed a sample of 27 prospective elementary teachers at two points in the hiring season. The first interview took place near the beginning of the hiring season and the second interview took place near the end. All data collection occurred within the

Smithton² metropolitan area, a large Midwestern city and its surrounding communities. Sampling from one metropolitan area provided a geographical boundary to the teaching field, thus, making it possible to identify the relevant capitals and the logic that structured teacher candidates' choices.

Survey Component

A longitudinal survey of 289 prospective elementary teachers was conducted to identify patterns among teacher candidates. The initial survey took place in January, February and March of 2006 through the teacher candidates' education courses. Items were designed to measure criteria used for evaluating available jobs, perceptions of particular schools, type and source of information about schools, job search strategies, perception of self as a candidate, range of schools to which they will apply, demographic characteristics, and teaching qualifications. It included measures relevant to economists, organizational sociologists, and cultural reproduction theorists. Information on prospective teacher candidates' educational and social background was gathered to explore possible relationships between their background and preferences for schools. The initial survey was distributed as a paper and pencil survey—mostly during the respondents' university teacher education classes. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A. Some items on the survey were based on the Schools and Staffing Survey³ (SASS) and the Teacher Pathways Project,⁴ in order to make connections with existing research.

² All names included in this dissertation are pseudonyms, including the name of the large city and metropolitan area, the colleges and universities involved, and individual teachers interviewed.

³ Copies of the SASS Public School Teacher survey can be found at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

⁴ Copies of the Teacher Preparation Program Graduates survey can be found at <http://www.teacherpolicyresearch.org/teacherpathwaysproject/surveys>.

The follow-up survey took place from mid-September to October of 2006 and asked where the teacher candidates applied, how many job interviews they had, where they had job offers, and where they ended up teaching. It also asked about the characteristics of the school they chose compared to other job offers they received. All respondents from the initial survey were asked to complete the follow-up survey. A copy of the follow-up survey can be found in Appendix B. Some items on the survey were based on the SASS, the Teacher Follow-up Survey⁵ (TFS) and the Baccalaureate and Beyond study,⁶ in order to make connections with existing research.

Sampling

The population sampled consists of individuals looking for teaching jobs in elementary schools in a single metropolitan area. The sample needed to be limited to either elementary or secondary teachers as state certification laws distinguish between elementary and secondary teacher candidates, creating distinct labor pools of potential teachers. Further, state certification requirements are subject matter-dependent at the secondary level, with the result being that secondary science teachers have different qualifications than secondary mathematics teachers and thus would be not applying for the same jobs. I chose to focus on prospective elementary teachers because one might expect these individuals to be qualified for similar jobs and thus able to apply for the same jobs. Still, prospective elementary teachers may seek specific grade level endorsements (i.e., early childhood) or subject matter endorsements (i.e., mathematics, reading, social studies) on their teaching certificates, creating variation in their

⁵ Copies of the SASS Public School Teacher survey and the Teacher Follow-up Survey can be found at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

⁶ Copies of the Baccalaureate and Beyond surveys can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/b&b/>.

qualifications. Further, prospective teachers with an elementary certificate may be qualified to teach in middle schools if they seek a subject matter endorsement. Despite these complexities in the qualifications of prospective elementary teachers and in the types of jobs they may pursue, candidates for elementary teaching positions have broader qualifications and face a more uniform set of available positions than candidates in secondary schools. For this reason, this study was limited to the labor market for elementary school teachers.

The sampling strategy consisted of identifying teacher preparation programs that tended to supply elementary teachers to this particular metropolitan area. Individuals completing elementary teacher preparation programs from these institutions were contacted to complete the initial survey. Specifically, the sampling strategy targeted individuals who were completing their student teaching requirement (typically the last requirement of teacher education programs) in elementary schools. Universities were chosen to get a diverse range of programs and students. Six colleges participated in this study by providing opportunities for me to distribute the initial survey to their student teachers. Table 1 provides descriptive information on the colleges and universities included. The sample of colleges included both public and private schools, as well as schools of various sizes.

Table 1 - Descriptive Information on the Colleges Used for Data Collection

<i>University</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Total enrollment¹</i>	<i>Percent non-White²</i>	<i>Elementary education graduates³</i>	<i>Selectivity⁴</i>
River State University	Public	35,000-40,000	20	300-400	More selective
Valley University	Public	20,000-25,000	35	100-150	Most selective
Fairtown University	Public	5,000-10,000	30	100-150	More selective
Oak State University	Public	15,000-20,000	30	500-600	Selective
Holy Immaculate College	Private, Catholic	Less than 1,000	90	50-100	Less selective
Capital State University	Public	20,000-25,000	50	400-500	Selective

¹ Undergraduate enrollment information obtained from <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>.

² Race/ethnicity information was obtained from <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/> and is an approximation to mask the identity of participating colleges. This represents the composition of the entire college, not necessarily that of the teacher preparation program.

³ Number of students who passed the certification test for elementary education. Obtained from www.title2.org.

⁴ Obtained from <http://www.usnews.com>.

Data collection proceeded in one of three ways, depending on the level of participation the college allowed. In the first method, the respondents completed the survey in my presence, during a workshop or seminar in which student teachers were gathered and time was allotted for the survey administration. In the second, I distributed surveys to student teachers during an established seminar or workshop, along with stamped envelopes. The prospective teachers completed the survey on their own time and put it in the mailbox. Finally, a third method occurred when the college provided me with a list of names and addresses of elementary student teachers and I mailed the survey to respondents. In this case, I also sent a reminder postcard and a second copy of the survey to respondents that did not respond in a timely fashion. In each case, I followed the

principles of survey design and administration set forth in Dillman (2000) to make administration across these three settings as similar as possible. Also, all individuals asked to complete the survey were given \$2 as an incentive for participation. This token incentive was designed to create goodwill between the respondents and I (Dillman, 2000). Respondents kept the money whether or not they completed the survey.

Response Rates

Table 2 shows the response rates for the initial survey. The overall response rate was 60.7%. The total number of responses was 327, although 36 responses were considered unusable as respondents indicated in the screening question that they would not apply for any elementary teaching positions that year. Most respondents removed from the sample in this way indicated that they would not be completing their undergraduate degree this year, decided to take a job outside of teaching, or would be leaving the country (i.e., doing missionary work). Two responses were considered unusable because the respondent answered too few questions. Therefore the final sample size was 289 prospective elementary teachers.

Table 2 - Number of Responses and Response Rates by College

<i>College</i>	<i>Number disbursed</i>	<i>Number returned</i>	<i>Response rate</i>	<i>Number not usable</i>	<i>Final sample size</i>
River State University	120	90	75.0%	2	88
Valley University	55	54	98.2	1	53
Fairtown University	52	36	69.2	0	36
Oak State University	252	96	38.1	29	67
Holy Immaculate College	23	20	87.0	3	17
Capital State University	37	31	83.8	3	28
Total	539	327	60.7	38	289

Response rates varied by institution, most likely due to the differential access to prospective elementary teachers provided to me by each institution. The response rates ranged from 38.1% in Oak State University to 98.2% in Valley University. Oak State University would only allow me to approach elementary student teachers through the mail, resulting in a low response rate. Oak State University also had a large number of respondents indicating that they would not complete their student teaching in Fall 2007 or would otherwise not graduate by the start of the next school year. The large number of unusable responses from Oak State suggests that the mailing list provided was not up to date. As such, it may be that the low response rate is the result of survey recipients assuming that a survey about prospective elementary teachers did not apply to them. Still, the low response rate is cause for concern. To avoid possible non-response bias due to the low response rate from Oak State, I ran two sets of analyses—one including Oak State respondents and one excluding Oak State respondents. Unless otherwise stated, I report the results of all the institutions including Oak State; for those instances in which including Oak State significantly and substantively changes the findings, I include results of all institutions including Oak State and then all institutions excluding Oak State.

Demographic characteristics of the final sample were compared to characteristics of the state's elementary teachers from the 2004-05 Registry of Education Personnel (REP). The REP is an administrative database that tracks all public school and district employees in the state. Table 3 compares the demographic characteristics of teacher candidates in this study to all of the state's elementary teachers in their first three years of teaching from the REP. Demographic characteristics for only those new elementary teachers who earned their certification from one of the six colleges included in this study

were also analyzed. The sample of teacher candidates included in this study has a similar percentage of African American teacher candidates as all new elementary teachers in the state, although there are fewer White, non-Hispanic teachers and more Asian teachers.

There are a similar number of male teacher candidates compared to the general population of new teachers in the state. The teacher candidates in this study are less likely to have a master's degree. This difference is likely due to the inclusion of teachers with up to three years of experience in the REP.

Table 3 - Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents and All Elementary Teachers in the State

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>This study</i>		<i>State database</i>		<i>Sampled colleges only¹</i>	
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>SD</i>
Male	13.1	0.32	12.9	0.33	12.3	0.33
Master's degree	6.8	0.25	11.8***	0.32	14.2***	0.35
American Indian	0.7	0.08	0.3	0.05	0.3	0.06
Asian	4.3	0.23	0.6***	0.07	0.9**	0.10
African American, non-Hispanic	10.0	0.30	8.0	0.27	11.6	0.32
White, non-Hispanic	80.4	0.40	90.1***	0.30	85.9*	0.35
Hispanic	2.5	0.16	1.0	0.10	1.3	0.11
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.7	0.08	n/a		n/a	
White and Asian	1.1	0.10	n/a		n/a	
White and African American	0.4	0.06	n/a		n/a	
N	289		4863		1647	

Note: Data on the state's teachers come from the 2004-05 REP. The data reported here only include elementary teachers in their first three years teaching.

¹ Only includes new elementary teachers in the state database who earned their certification from one of the six colleges sampled in this study.

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. These p-values come from two-tailed t-tests on the difference between the REP data and this study.

The demographic variables in this study allowed teacher candidates to report more than one racial or ethnic identity, although few did so. Due to the small numbers of respondents who reported more than one racial/ethnic identity or who identified themselves as Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, some racial groups were combined in the analyses. For analytic purposes, the individuals who identified themselves as both White and African American are included in the African American subsample. Individuals who identified themselves as Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander were combined into one category, noted as “Other racial minority.”

Table 4 presents the item nonresponse rates, focusing on the items with a nonresponse rate over 10 percent. Of the 180 items on the survey, 45 had a nonresponse rate above 10 percent. The average rate of item-level nonresponse is 6.7%, although this varied from 0.35% to 52.9%. The two items with the highest nonresponse rates are the items in which respondents named their top choice and least desirable schools. It is likely that this nonresponse rate is an indication that teachers had difficulty naming specific schools, as most of these teachers did name a district. Some respondents who did not answer this item wrote on the margins that they could not think of a school within the district, supporting this explanation of nonresponse on these items. Likewise, the item in which teacher candidates were asked to name a district in which they do not want to work also had a high nonresponse rate. Some of this nonresponse is probably due to respondents being unwilling to eliminate any district from their job search. Many teacher candidates who did not answer this item wrote that they would work anywhere. For these

reasons, the item-level response rates to these three items are considered pieces of data, rather than indications of missing data.

Table 4 - Items With Highest Nonresponse Rate

<i>Item</i>	<i>Item description</i>	<i>Missing</i>	<i>Range of % missing</i>
11a	Write the name of a specific school in which you would NOT want to teach. School name	52.94%	n/a
5a	Write the name of a specific school in which you would most like to teach. School name	39.79	n/a
21c	Features you feel will most HURT your own chances of obtaining a teaching job, Third feature	31.83	n/a
21b	Features you feel will most HURT your own chances of obtaining a teaching job, Second feature	26.30	n/a
15c	What features make this school LEAST desirable to you, Third feature	24.22	n/a
38b	ACT score	23.53	n/a
15b	What features make this school LEAST desirable to you, Second feature	21.11	n/a
15a	What features make this school LEAST desirable to you, First feature	20.07	n/a
21a	Features you feel will most HURT your own chances of obtaining a teaching job, First feature	19.03	n/a
11b	Write the name of a specific school in which you would NOT want to teach. District name	16.61	n/a
16a-i	Average for sources of information on least desirable school	15.38	15.22 to 15.92
12	Academic performance of least desirable school	15.22	n/a
13	Community type of least desirable school	14.53	n/a
14a-w	Average for characteristics of least desirable school	12.97	12.46 to 13.49
36	Name of high school you graduated from	12.46	n/a

There are four overall trends in the item-level nonresponse rates. First, the items about respondents' individual characteristics that would most hurt their ability to find a job had high levels of nonresponse. It may be that these items confused respondents. Some individuals who did respond wrote in how they interpreted the question, indicating that respondents did have trouble understanding the question. For this reason, these data

are not used. Second, the items in which respondents were asked questions about their least desirable school had high levels of nonresponse. As noted above, some respondents could not identify any school in which they did not want to teach, and thus they left this section of the survey blank. Third, the items with the largest nonresponse were the items at the end of the survey, suggesting that some individuals did not finish the survey. Finally, the ACT score had a high level of nonresponse, probably because individuals who took the ACT for college entrance did not remember their score.

Follow-Up Survey Response Rates

The follow-up survey was sent to all respondents of the initial survey who provided contact information, either a mailing address or email address. The follow-up survey was initially distributed through an online survey website, Survey Monkey.⁷ Respondents that provided both an email address and mailing address in the initial survey were sent a letter in mid-September through the mail alerting them to an email message they would receive about the follow-up survey. This pre-notice letter was sent to increase respondents' awareness of the survey and thus improve response rates (Dillman, 2000). Teacher candidates received an email a week later with a link to complete the follow-up survey online. Teacher candidates were sent two email reminders to complete the survey online. In mid-October, teacher candidates who had not yet completed the follow-up survey were sent a paper copy of the survey through the mail. Nineteen teacher candidates only provided mailing addresses or had email addresses that were not deliverable. These respondents were sent a similar number of contacts, but all occurred through the mail.

⁷ www.surveymonkey.com

The follow-up survey was administered primarily through the Internet for two main reasons. First, it included questions that were only applicable to a segment of the respondents depending upon their progress through the job search. For example, all teacher candidates were asked a similar set of questions about where they applied, but only those respondents who received at least one job offer were asked additional questions about their job offers. Teacher candidates who did not receive any job offers thus completed a shorter follow-up survey. Also, teacher candidates who received more than one job offer answered an additional set of questions comparing their various offers. Using an Internet-based survey program facilitated the navigation of teacher candidates through these skip patterns so that respondents were only presented with questions that pertained to their situation. Second, the majority of respondents were college students about to graduate and would likely change their mailing address. As the colleges in this study allowed their students to use university email accounts for several months (sometimes years) after they graduated, it was more likely that the respondents could be reached by email rather than postal mail.

Table 5 provides the sample sizes and response rates to the follow-up survey by college. The overall response rate for the follow-up survey was 59.2%, although this varied from a low of 38.9% at Fairtown University to a high of 75.0% at River State University. The follow-up survey had a final sample size of 171 teacher candidates.

Table 5 - Number of Responses to Follow-Up Survey and Response Rates by College

<i>College</i>	<i>Initial sample size</i>	<i>Follow-up surveys disbursed</i>	<i>Returned through Internet</i>	<i>Returned through mail</i>	<i>Final sample size</i>	<i>Response rate¹</i>
River State University	88	87	54	12	66	75.0%
Valley University	53	53	19	6	25	47.2
Fairtown University	36	35	13	1	14	38.9
Oak State University	67	67	37	6	43	64.2
Holy Immaculate College	17	15	7	2	9	52.9
Capital State University	28	28	11	3	14	50.0
Total	289	285	141	30	171	59.2

¹ The response rate was calculated by dividing the final follow-up sample size by the initial survey sample size.

Table 6 presents response rates to the follow-up survey by teacher candidate demographic characteristics. To test whether the response rates differed by teacher characteristic, chi-square statistics were computed. Male teacher candidates and African American teacher candidates were less likely to respond to the follow-up survey than their female, White, or other racial minority peers. Teacher candidates with and without a master's degree were equally likely to respond to the follow-up survey, as were new college graduates who are entering teaching as their first career and individuals who are switching into teaching from another career. The low response rate for male and African American teacher candidates indicates caution should be used in making inferences about these groups using the follow-up survey data.

Table 6 - Number of Responses to Follow-Up Survey and Response Rates by
Demographic Characteristics

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Initial survey</i>	<i>Follow-up survey</i>	<i>Response rate</i>	<i>Chi- square</i>	<i>Prob.</i>
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	37	14	37.8%	8.47	.004
Female	246	155	63.0		
<i>Highest degree</i>					
Bachelor's degree	261	155	59.4	.10	.746
Master's degree or above	19	12	63.2		
<i>Career status</i>					
New college graduate	183	110	60.1	.01	.933
Mid-career changer	99	59	59.6		
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>					
African American, non Hispanic	29	11	37.9	7.95	.019
White, non-Hispanic	226	139	61.5		
Other racial minority	26	19	73.1		

Table 7 presents item-level nonresponse rates for items on the follow-up survey, focusing on the items with a nonresponse rate over 10 percent. Of the 81 items on the survey, 7 had a nonresponse rate above 10 percent. The average rate of item-level nonresponse is 3.3%, although this varied from zero nonresponse to 33.3%. The two items with the highest nonresponse rates are the items that only were relevant for teacher candidates who had turned down all of their job offers. Few teacher candidates did not accept any of the jobs they were offered and the high nonresponse to these items may be due to the small numbers of teacher candidates involved. Items about the industries of the respondent's parents also had higher levels of nonresponse. Teacher candidates were asked about both the occupation and industry of each parent and respondents were more

likely to provide the occupation of each parent, even if they did not provide the industry. Respondents were also more likely to omit their salary information.

Table 7 - Overall Item-Level Nonresponse Rate and Items With Highest Nonresponse for the Follow-Up Survey

<i>Item</i>	<i>Item description</i>	<i>Missing</i>
F18	What will you most likely do during the 2006-07 school year? (Asked of those who did not accept any teaching job offers.)	33.3%
F17	Why did you turn down your job offer(s)? (Asked of those who did not accept any teaching job offers.)	33.3
F3industry	What is your mother's industry?	29.2
F22	What is your base teaching salary? (Asked of those who accepted a job offer.)	21.1
F2industry	What is your father's industry?	17.5
F28c	What are the three features that most influenced your decision to accept the teaching job at your chosen school rather than other schools in which you had job offers? Third most important feature. (Asked of those with more than one offer.)	10.0

Analytic Methods

Details on specific analytic procedures used will be discussed in the relevant chapters. In general, this dissertation uses descriptive frequencies, factor analysis, and multivariate regression techniques to analyze the structure of the teaching field, describe teacher candidate behavior, and analyze patterns in their preferences and ultimate labor market outcomes. The survey included measures of different types of capital, including social capital, embodied cultural capital, institutionalized cultural capital,⁸ and human capital. These measures were used to understand the types of capital teacher candidates think is most valued on the teaching field and as independent variables associated with labor market outcomes. Data on teacher candidates' preferences for schools and

⁸ For the distinction between embodied and institutionalized cultural capital, see Bourdieu (1986). I explain this distinction more fully in Chapter 3.

construction of job alternatives was analyzed by teacher characteristics, such as gender, race, social class background, and academic background. The follow-up survey was used to make connections between teacher candidates' initial preferences and the school in which they ultimately ended up working.

Both the initial survey and the follow-up survey asked teacher candidates to name specific districts or schools. The initial survey asked teacher candidates to name their most desired and least desired schools and the follow-up survey asked them to name where they applied and received offers. Data on these districts and schools were obtained from the Common Core of Data (CCD) or Private School Universe Survey (PSS) through the National Center for Education Statistics. The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was obtained from the CCD and used as a measure of the socioeconomic status of students in the school or district. The racial composition of the student population, overall school size, pupil-teacher ratio, zip code of physical location, and urbanicity were also obtained from the CCD. Data on per-pupil expenditures was obtained from the CCD finance survey. The zip code of the teacher candidate's home address at the time of the initial survey, as provided by the teacher candidate, was used to calculate geographic distances for applications and job offers.

There is no national source of data on beginning teacher salaries and so salary information for districts was obtained from several statewide databases. The primary source for salary data came from the actual salaries of new teachers in the Registry of Education Personnel (REP). The average salary of new teachers in each district was used to calculate the expected beginning teacher salary in that district. This data source provided expected beginning salaries for most districts named by teacher candidates as it

came from the state that is the focus of this study. Information on expected beginning teacher salaries in districts in other states came from the following websites: <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/>, <http://www.nctq.org/cb/>, and <http://www.teachinflorida.com/Jobcenter/flteachersalaries.asp>. In all cases, information on the annual salary for the lowest step on the salary schedule or the annual salary first-year teachers with a bachelor's degree was used as the measure of the beginning teacher salary.

Another strategy to examine the relationship between teacher candidate characteristics and characteristics of where they applied consists of looking at the characteristics of teacher candidates that applied to different districts. For this reason, I restructured the dataset to look at patterns in the districts to which teacher candidates applied. Rather than have one observation per teacher candidate, this dataset has one observation per teacher candidate-application match. Variables in the dataset include characteristics of the school or district where the teacher candidate applied and characteristics of the teacher candidate. The 161 teacher candidates who remained in the labor market and applied to at least one district named a total of 805 districts and/or private schools or charter schools to which they applied.

One limitation of this approach is that it under-represents the applications of teacher candidates who applied to many districts. The survey provided space for teacher candidates to name seven districts.⁹ Nine teacher candidates wrote in multiple districts per space. Eighty-four teacher candidates (52%) named fewer districts than spaces

⁹ Providing seven spaces for names of districts was a compromise between naming all districts and limiting response burden. In the first round of interviews, teacher candidates were asked to name specific districts and could easily name 5-6 districts, while it took more time to remember a larger number of districts.

provided, suggesting that providing more space would not have induced half of the teacher candidates to name more districts. This restructured dataset was used for analyses in Chapters 5 and 6. In Chapter 5, it is used to explore correlations between teacher candidate and district characteristics. In Chapter 6 it is used to analyze which applications resulted in job offers.

Interview Component

The qualitative component of this study consists of interviews with 27 prospective elementary teachers at two points during the teacher hiring season. The first interview took place in March, April, or early May of 2006 and covered topics such as the teacher's social and educational background, their sense of themselves as a candidate, criteria for applying to schools, job search strategies, and methods for gathering information about potential schools. The second interview took place in July or August 2006, and covered topics such as evaluations of particular schools, experiences interacting with school and district staff through interviews and reasons behind the teacher's final job choice. Half of the teacher candidates did not consider their job search over by the second interview and were interviewed again in early September.

The interviews occurred in a time and place convenient for the participants. Most interviews were conducted in a university library, local public library, or coffee house, although a few were in the teacher candidates' elementary school, home, or other workplace. Several teacher candidates indicated during the interview that they associated me with this university; this is important because participants' responses may have been influenced by their perception of my social position: a young, White researcher from a major university. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour, and were taped

and transcribed for analysis. A semi-structured interview protocol provided initial questions and prompts for the interview, but I adapted the interview questions to allow the participants to respond in ways that made sense for their experiences. The second and third interviews also included questions about particular themes or experiences mentioned by participants in the first interview. The interview protocols can be found in Appendix C.

Sampling

All survey respondents were invited to participate in the interview component of this study. Slightly more than one-fourth of survey respondents (26.3%) volunteered for an interview. There were no significant differences in the racial or ethnic background, gender, career status, or high school location of survey respondents who did or did not volunteer. Respondents who volunteered to be interviewed were somewhat more likely to come from Holy Immaculate College and River State University and less likely to come from Fairtown University. Among those who agreed, I compared demographic characteristics from the initial survey to ensure a diversity of backgrounds and experiences in the interview sample. I considered the college or university the prospective teacher attended, his or her racial and ethnic background, gender, and career status when choosing the interview sample. Although I tried to balance characteristics of teachers across universities, this was not always possible due to the different composition of prospective student teachers in each university. For example, most student teachers in River State University are young adults just graduating from college, while those in Holy Immaculate's teacher preparation program tend to be switching into teaching from other

careers. Table 8 shows the demographic characteristics of prospective elementary teachers in the interview sample.

Table 8 - Descriptive Information on the Interview Participants

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Race</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Career status</i>	<i>Social class background</i>
Stephanie	River State	White	Female	College graduate	Mid-high
Claire	River State	White	Female	College graduate	Middle
Heather	River State	White	Female	College graduate	Middle
Daniel	River State	White	Male	College graduate	Mid-low
Rachel	River State	Hispanic	Female	College graduate	Middle
Melissa	Valley	White	Female	College graduate	Middle
Courtney	Valley	White	Female	College graduate	Mid-high
Ryan	Valley	White	Male	College graduate	Mid-high
May	Valley	Asian	Female	College graduate	Mid-low
Samantha	Fairtown	White	Female	College graduate	Mid-low
Daija	Fairtown	African American	Female	College graduate	Mid-low
Valerie	Holy Immaculate	White	Female	Mid-career	Mid-low
Denise	Holy Immaculate	White	Female	Mid-career	Mid-low
Richard	Holy Immaculate	White	Male	Mid-career	Middle
Nicole	Holy Immaculate	African American	Female	Mid-career	Mid-low
Vanessa	Holy Immaculate	African American	Female	Mid-career	Low
Kelly	Oak State	White	Female	College graduate	Middle
Debra	Oak State	White	Female	Mid-career	Middle
Monica	Oak State	White	Female	Mid-career	Middle
Amanda	Oak State	White	Female	College graduate	Middle
Jennifer	Oak State	Hispanic	Female	Mid-career	Mid-low
Zoe	Oak State	African American	Female	College graduate	Middle
Wayne	Capital State	White	Male	Mid-career	Mid-low
Chris	Capital State	White	Male	Mid-career	Low
Joshua	Capital State	White	Male	Mid-career	Middle
Kia	Capital State	African American	Female	Mid-career	Mid-low
Jasmine	Capital State	Asian	Female	College graduate	Low

Teacher candidates' race or ethnicity, gender, and career status come from their responses on the initial survey. I categorized teacher candidates by social class based

upon their parents' occupation and educational background, obtained during a discussion of their background during the first interview. Occupation, educational level, and income are common measures of one's social class (Gilbert, 1998; Nakao & Treas, 1992).

Teacher candidates in the lower class category have parents who did not graduate from high school and held a variety of temporary, part-time work or periods of unemployment.

The mid-low category consists of teacher candidates whose parents completed high school and may have some college education. Their parents also had low-level factory or clerical jobs. Teacher candidates were categorized as middle class if their parents had bachelors' degrees and semi-professional occupations or skilled trades. Participants whose parents were teachers generally fell in this category. The mid-high category consists of teacher candidates whose parents had advanced degrees and professional occupations.

Coding and Analysis Methods

The interviews attempted to capture teachers' preferences for schools in general and specific ways. First, teacher candidates were asked to list features of schools that were important in their job search. Second, teacher candidates were asked to name and talk about specific schools in which they wanted to work and did not want to work and give their reasons. This dual questioning strategy was designed to help teacher candidates talk about the details of their job search decisions. A holistic reading of the interview transcripts suggested that teacher candidates offered different reasons for choosing schools in response to these questions. That is, one teacher candidate, in the course of one interview, gave different information about her preferences when answering different questions.

For this reason, each criteria discussed by teacher candidates was coded as either an espoused preference or a preference in use, depending on the context of the teacher candidates' response. Preferences in use are responses to specific questions in which teacher candidates were asked to name schools in which they are or are not applying and to explain those decisions. They are the characteristics of schools that teacher candidates mentioned when they talked about why they preferred or avoided particular schools and districts. Espoused preferences, on the other hand, are teacher candidates' responses in a general discussion about the features of schools that are important in their job search. Espoused preferences are the features teacher candidates provided when they were asked about what characteristics were important and how they compared schools to one another in general. This method of distinguishing between espoused preferences and preferences in use is consistent with the research by Agyris and Schon (1975) when they developed this framework. In their work with organizational leaders, they asked participants to both write down their goals and assumptions in an abstract situation (to capture their espoused theories) and to describe the reasons and assumptions behind their actions in a specific situation (to capture their theories in use).

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed at two levels. The first stage of data analysis involved creating cases for each teacher (Miles & Huberman, 1994). After the first interview, an initial analytic memo was prepared for each teacher that highlighted the processes and preferences of each teacher candidate. Themes from these analytic memos were discussed with the participants to check the validity of interpretations used by the researcher (Maxwell, 1992).

For the second level of data analysis, the interviews were coded using a constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965) to identify central themes in teacher's decision-making and experiences. The initial coding scheme focused on creating codes that reflected themes from the various theoretical frameworks, including traditional labor market studies, organizational sociology, and Bourdieu's cultural reproduction framework. Labor market codes focus on teachers' statements about salary, benefits, and various working conditions of the schools they considered. Organizational sociology codes focus on statements about teachers' interactions with principals and other school staff to determine the extent to which teachers get a sense of the work environment within the schools and supports offered to new teachers. To capture cultural reproduction processes, I used codes that captured how teachers perceive their position on the teaching field, how they defined the school features that are important in their decision-making, how they perceived the schools in which they applied and interviewed in relation to other schools, and their perception of the structure of the school field. Teachers' perceived position in the teaching field are based on several types of statements, including explicit comparisons teachers make between themselves and other teacher candidates; statements teachers make in relation to their ability or inability to get a job in a particular school; teachers' beliefs about what schools look for when hiring teachers, and factors in their preparation that help them get a job.

Initial coding and analysis required revisions to the list of codes to extend existing themes, create distinctions within heavily used codes, and fill in emergent themes not present in the initial coding scheme (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In particular, teacher candidates offered reasons for preferring or avoiding particular schools that were not

suggested by existing research and additional codes were created to reflect these other criteria. The interviews were coded using Atlas.ti software and allowed me to compare the criteria teacher candidates used in their job search with whether or not the criteria were provided as an espoused preference or preference in use. After the codes were created, another coder and I independently coded 12 interviews. We agreed 76% of the time. In cases where the two coders disagreed, we talked about the discrepancy and came to a consensus about how the interview should be coded. To check internal consistency and possible drifting of codes over time, I coded 20% of the remaining interviews twice. This internal consistency agreement was 93%. These reliability measures are in line with standards for qualitative analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data analysis proceeded with particular attention paid to making connections between the qualitative and quantitative data. Relationships or themes that emerged from the interviews were used to analyze the survey data. Likewise, when significant patterns become evident through the survey analysis, I searched for underlying causes behind those patterns in the qualitative data.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Research Design

One advantage of this research design is that it relies on data collected from prospective teachers currently looking for a teaching job. Most research on teachers' career decisions uses retrospective data about teachers' previous decisions, or it focuses on reasons for teacher turnover. It is possible that reasons teachers leave a school are different from the factors that influence their initial match to their first teaching job. Some researchers may consider this sampling strategy a disadvantage as I do not know in advance which prospective teachers will ultimately be offered jobs, and of those offered

jobs, what types of schools the teacher candidates will choose. I view this as an advantage, however, as interviewing teachers about their decisions about where to apply and understanding their perceptions of schools throughout the application and interview process still provides valuable information about their preferences for schools and the processes involved in finding a job, even if they are not ultimately offered a job.

Further, exploring how prospective teachers conceive of their job alternatives in the face of no full-time job offer also provides insight into how teachers make career decisions. My pilot study suggested that, when teachers did not have a job offer by late August, they either made plans to substitute teach in a desirable district, expanded their search to include different types of schools, or began looking for non-teaching jobs. Understanding why teachers make different decisions when faced with poor job prospects may help to understand how teachers conceive of their job alternatives and their preferences for particular types of schools.

One disadvantage of this sampling strategy is that it emphasizes a particular type of newly hired teacher for schools and districts. While districts frequently hire new teachers, these new hires may fall into four categories: newly prepared graduates of certification programs, other first-time teachers who have delayed entry into teaching after receiving their initial certification, teachers transferring from other districts, and teachers returning to schools after taking a break from teaching (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). This sampling strategy relies on newly prepared teachers. Over time, however, districts appear to be relying more on newly prepared teachers and delayed entrants, rather than transfers or returning teachers. For example, first-time teachers made

up only 30% of new hires in 1987-88, but 45% of new hires in 1993-94 (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

This sampling strategy also relies on prospective teachers who complete their teacher training in university-based programs. As such, the sample is limited to more traditional types of teachers, rather than teachers who enter the profession without completing a university preparation program. Understanding the preferences of traditionally-prepared teachers is not a bad thing, as they continue to be the main source of new teachers. In particular, as this study is based in a state that is a net supplier of teachers, emphasizing university-based programs is less problematic as most new teachers go through this route. Still, it represents one limitation of the generalizability of this study. Although this study does not include teachers from alternative certification programs, the colleges involved did have a combination of undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and master's level certification programs. Thus, the respondents did come from a variety of training backgrounds, even though all were university-based.

Teacher Supply and Demand in the Smithton Metropolitan Area

As teachers' career decisions may be influenced by the conditions of teacher supply and demand, the general labor market, and the structure of the education system, it is necessary to understand the specific context of this study. The research design focuses on teacher candidates in one metropolitan area surrounding Smithton, a large, Midwestern city. The Smithton economy has relied on traditional manufacturing jobs for many years and the rising instability of the manufacturing sector has taken its toll on the city. In particular, the economic woes of several large manufacturers based in the Smithton area led to record job losses as the companies cut back on production and

eliminated jobs. Due to the size of these companies and the state economy's reliance on this industry, the impact was felt throughout the state. In 2006, Smithton and its surrounding area continued to suffer from a sluggish economy.

Smithton's population of about 900,000 has been declining as residents move out of the city into the surrounding suburbs. This population shift has continued for several decades and as Smithton's residents move into the immediate suburban communities, residents of those communities move into more distant suburbs. These demographic trends are exacerbated by the rise in public charter schools and inter-district choice programs in which even more students exit the Smithton Public School District. Charter schools have operated in the state for over 10 years. There are now over 200 charter schools in the state, many of which are clustered around Smithton. This expanding sprawl has had implications for schools in and around Smithton. Districts are funded on a per-pupil basis from the state, so districts losing students through school choice options or residential relocation also lose funding. The result is that the Smithton Public School District has lost significant amounts of revenue in the past decade, forcing the district to close schools and layoff teachers. The district has closed schools each year for the past several years.

The financial troubles of public school districts affects more than the Smithton Public School District itself. Surrounding districts also face financial difficulties as the state per-pupil funding grant has stagnated in the past couple years while health care costs have risen, leaving districts struggling to find ways to keep costs down. Further, the population shift as families moved from the communities closest to Smithton to those farther away has created substantial demographic changes in some communities in recent

years. Manufacturing declines have forced layoffs by major employers in the area and many residents are following jobs out of state. In the past couple years, it has become common for districts to give pink slips to all of their first year teachers near the end of the year. While many of those teachers are hired again during the summer, it creates instability in the teacher labor market.

Overall, the Smithton area has an over-supply of teachers and the job prospects for new teachers looked dim, as there are many more new teachers than there are open positions. The labor market conditions are clearly influenced by enrollment patterns induced by the trends outlined above. Further, the state is historically an exporter of new teachers, with many newly prepared teachers leaving the state for other regions in the nation with an overall shortage of teachers. Still, the state bureau of labor rated elementary teaching among the occupations with the largest number of annual job openings. One recent trend that eases the job market for new teachers is the presence of retirement incentives for experienced teachers. Like the rest of the country, the state teaching force is graying, with many teachers hanging on to jobs until they retire. As district budgets struggle to pay teachers at the top of the salary schedule, many districts in the area have offered incentives for experienced teachers to retire, creating openings for new teachers.

The teacher hiring season in the Smithton area begins in early April when all colleges in the area host teacher job fairs. Districts from around the area—and some from around the country—are brought to campus to recruit potential teachers. While a few districts post vacancies and accept applications before the job fairs, these fairs usually represent teacher candidates' first opportunity to submit applications and talk to hiring

officials. Representatives from schools or districts often hold mini-interviews with teacher candidates at the job fair and collect resumes. There is a combination of districts in the area with centralized or decentralized hiring practices. While most districts have at least a centralized filtering process to assess applicants' qualifications, many districts give principals and individual schools significant hiring authority.

Nearly all districts in the area use online application programs in which candidates submit application materials over the Internet. These online applications are located on both district human resource websites and on county job banks. The Smithton metropolitan area consists of three main counties, which each list vacancies in districts throughout the county. However, not all districts participate in their county job bank, thus the three county job banks do not have all openings in the area. Further, charter schools are not part of these county job banks. There is also a statewide job bank in which teacher candidates can upload application materials to districts throughout the state, but district participation in this state job resource is also sparse. For example, about at the start of the job search season, about 35 districts and/or charter schools participated in this online job bank.

Smithton Public School District

As this study is particularly concerned with the distribution of teachers across schools and how teachers think about working in urban schools that serve high proportions of poor and minority students, some description of the Smithton Public School District is in order. The Smithton School District enrolls around 115,000 students,

although overall enrollment has dropped 40% in the past ten years.¹⁰ The district receives about 70% of its revenue from state sources and faces state restrictions in raising additional local funds. Due to concerns about financial mismanagement, the state took control of district operations and the district returned to a traditionally elected school board in 2005. About 90% of students enrolled in the district and 85% of the city's population under age 18 are African American. About 70% of Smithton students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. About 80% of the adult population has completed high school and 25% have a college degree. The city has an unemployment rate of 7.8 and the median household income is about \$30,000. This compares to a national unemployment rate of 5.8 and a national median income of \$42,000.

The Smithton District has been particularly hampered by the enrollment patterns throughout the region. The district has consistently lost students—due to school choice and residential moves—as well as the funding that accompanies each student. The Smithton teacher union went on strike in the fall of 2006 as the teachers in this study were preparing to start their first year of teaching. Smithton schools canceled the first few days of the new school year. As a result, many parents enrolled their children in other districts or charter schools, causing Smithton to lose more students than expected and freeze new teacher hiring.

As noted above, the district has been forced to close many schools and lay off teachers. Yet, Smithton does hire new teachers each year and some indicators suggest that Smithton has difficulty hiring fully certified teachers. For example, the state Highly Qualified Teacher Report indicated that Smithton employed over 200 teachers who were

¹⁰ District information in this section comes from the National Center for Education Statistics online district profile. Community information in this section comes from the U.S. Census Bureau website.

not highly qualified. Further, many charter schools in Smithton and the immediate suburbs reported over half of their teachers were not highly qualified, suggesting that some schools encounter staffing difficulties despite an overall large supply of new teachers. Smithton's problems in recruiting teachers may be supported in part by portrayals of the city in the local news. For example, the Smithton Public School District was in the news for several attacks on teachers in public schools, including an attack on an elementary teacher. The resulting focus on security in Smithton schools played itself out in the major area newspapers and media outlets.

Although the entire metropolitan area is quite diverse when considered as a whole, the suburbs surrounding Smithton are highly segregated. The main counties around Smithton are predominantly White. Most of the African Americans who live in the area live within Smithton's city boundaries, though several suburban towns close to Smithton also have large proportions of African American residents. There is also a large population of Arab Americans. The suburbs are generally divided into a group of older, more diverse suburbs immediately surrounding Smithton and younger suburbs farther out from Smithton. The older suburbs tend to be less affluent and the younger suburbs are more affluent and predominantly White. These younger suburbs formed during successive population shifts as residents move farther away from Smithton.

Colleges and Universities in this Study

Six colleges and universities that prepare elementary teachers are included in this study. These institutions were chosen because they are located close to the Smithton area and traditionally supply new teachers to schools in and around Smithton. While the colleges must design their teacher certification programs to meet state requirements, the

structure of the programs and the populations served by each institution do vary. As such, recognizing the significant aspects of each institution is important to understanding how teachers graduating from these institutions think about their teaching careers.

Table 9 provides descriptive information on the teachers in this study by the institution from which they were contacted. As is evident from this table, the demographic characteristics of teachers from each college vary dramatically. Except for Oak State University, response rates from each college were reasonably high. This suggests that the differences in teacher characteristics between the colleges stem from real differences in the population of student teachers in each college, rather than from differential nonresponse. In particular, Holy Immaculate College and Capital State University have many more African American student teachers than the other institutions. Teachers graduating from these two institutions also tend to be older, male, and switching into teaching from another career.

Capital State University is located near downtown Smithton and is a large urban research university that prides itself on being accessible to all students. The average age of students in the program is 35, reflecting the fact that many students are entering teaching as a second career. The program serves a nontraditional population of teachers, a large African American population, and almost a third of the students are male. Capital State teachers also have the lowest incoming ACT scores. Capital State offers both undergraduate and graduate teacher certification programs and emphasizes the needs of urban educators in its programs. Capital State also offers a provisional certificate program aimed at mid-career changers in which individuals with full-time positions in Smithton may complete certification requirements while teaching.

Table 9 - Demographic Characteristics of Teacher Candidates From Each Institution

<i>Teacher characteristic</i>	<i>River State</i>	<i>Valley University</i>	<i>Fairtown University</i>	<i>Oak State</i>	<i>Holy Immaculate</i>	<i>Capital State</i>
Age	23.9	23.3	28.3	27.7	36.3	35.0
ACT score	24.2	27.6	22.5	23.1	21.8	20.8
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
White, non-Hispanic	86.4	82.7	91.2	87.5	35.3	53.9
African American, non Hispanic	3.4	3.9	5.9	3.1	58.8	38.5
Other racial minority	10.2	13.5	2.9	9.4	5.9	7.7
Graduated from out of state high school	1.1	13.7	2.9	14.1	25.0	14.8
Mid-career changer	8.0	5.8	48.6	53.1	88.2	88.5
Male	11.4	5.7	8.6	14.1	23.5	30.8
Master's degree	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.4	68.8	15.4

Valley University is the flagship campus of the state's public university system. Over 82% of Valley's teachers are White, with the next largest racial group coming from Asian backgrounds. Few Valley teacher graduates are male and Valley teachers have the highest incoming ACT scores. Valley also stands out among the colleges in this study as having a large percentage of teachers from other states but mostly young new college graduates. While Oak State, Holy Immaculate, and Capital State have large percentages of teachers who grew up in other states, they also have older teachers who are switching into teaching from another career. Valley also attracts traditional age college students from other states. Compared to the rest of the university, Valley's undergraduate

education program is small. Valley also offers an intensive full-time graduate certification program designed for mid-career changers.

Oak State University is a large comprehensive public university and has one of the largest teacher preparation programs in the country. It is located in a large city close to Valley University. Oak State teachers have an average age of 27.7 and over 87% of Oak State teachers are White. Slightly more than half of Oak State teachers are switching into teaching from another career. Oak State has undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and graduate programs to earn certification and education is among the largest programs at Oak State. Oak State has partnerships with schools in the smaller urban area in which it is located as well as schools in suburban Smithton. It also has an urban education program that prepares individuals for teaching in Smithton.

Fairtown University is part of the same public university system as Valley, but the campus operates independently. Fairtown is located closer to Smithton and is just outside the city borders. Nearly all of Fairtown teachers graduated from high schools within the state. Fairtown has the highest percentage of White teachers, with over 91% of teachers being White. Fairtown offers undergraduate and graduate certification programs, including online master's programs. The teacher preparation programs are among the largest programs in the university.

River State University has a nationally ranked teacher preparation program. Although it is located about 80 miles from Smithton, the teacher preparation program places a substantial proportion of its student teachers in schools in and around Smithton, and offers classes for these student teachers in a local school. Most students are White and are new college graduates. Very few River State students attended high school

outside of the state. River State is unique among the colleges in this study for providing prospective teachers with a full year of student teaching experience in the same classroom.

Holy Immaculate College is a small, Catholic college in Smithton with a strong commitment to social justice. Holy Immaculate students are the oldest and most likely to be African American among the colleges in this study. They are also most likely to have graduated from an out of state high school and over 88% of Holy Immaculate students are switching into teaching from another career. Teacher education is the largest area of study at Holy Immaculate. Holy Immaculate offers undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and master's degree programs for certification, but all cater to individuals who work full-time. Most courses are offered in the evenings or weekends. Many students in Holy Immaculate's teacher education programs work as long-term substitutes or uncertified teachers in local schools while completing their coursework. The capstone of Holy Immaculate's teacher education program is a teacher as researcher project in which students participate in a service learning project, reflect on their learning, and present findings in an annual symposium.

CHAPTER 3: TEACHER CANDIDATES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEACHING FIELD

Bourdieu's cultural reproduction framework can help us understand teachers' career decisions by offering insight into how the structure of society and the labor market in particular influences individual teachers' tastes and perceptions. The relational dynamics—or the relationships between positions—that occur through interaction on a specific field are particularly important to developing a framework for understanding teachers' career decisions. As such, this chapter explores how teacher candidates perceive the structure of the teaching field, their place on the field, and the relationship between the teaching field and field of schools.

A study of teachers' career decisions should be aware that teachers occupy different positions on the teaching field. Teachers may hold different positions depending on their possession of the various types of capital valued in the field (cultural, economic, and social). A teacher's position on the teaching field influences the teacher's habitus, or set of dispositions and perceptions that guide his or her decision-making. For example, accepting a job in an urban school could mean many different things to a teacher—it could represent the teacher's inability to secure a position in a more affluent public school, a chance to work with children from low-income backgrounds and help disrupt patterns of social reproduction, or a chance to work with students from backgrounds similar to their own. How the teacher perceives an urban teaching placement is influenced by how the teacher perceives his or her position on the teaching field as well as the position of urban schools.

Teachers are individuals who make decisions about where to work based upon their individual circumstances. Therefore, it does not make sense to assume that all teacher candidates who choose an urban school ascribe the same meaning to this decision. Indeed, many teachers may accept a job in an urban school without attributing any larger meaning to the decision because they simply think the job is a good fit for them. Yet, patterns in teacher candidates' decisions about where to work suggests that teacher candidates' social or cultural background influences these decision processes. Therefore, a study of teachers' career decisions should recognize the relative positions of teachers within the labor market and how they perceive differences among schools.

Bourdieu argues that homologies exist between fields such that an individual's position on one field is associated with his or her position on another field. For a study of the teacher labor market, the relevant fields are the teaching field and the field of schools. Teachers are positioned on the field according the amount and type of capital they possess. Likewise, schools are arrayed on a field according to the capital they have. The types of capital valued on the teaching field or on the school field are empirical questions. Bourdieu's cultural reproduction framework suggests that teachers who occupy a dominant position on the teaching field will work in schools that occupy a dominant position on the school field.

This chapter examines how teacher candidates perceive the structure of the teaching field and the field of schools; it explores the homologies, or structural similarities, between the teaching and school fields seeking to understand how teacher candidates' sense of their position may influence their preferences and behavior. I first describe Bourdieu's concept of field and outline the types of capital that may be valued

on a field. I then review the literature on teacher hiring to identify the characteristics that existing research links to the structure of the teaching field.

I then present the findings in three sections. The first section explores how prospective elementary teachers viewed the structure of the teaching field and their place within it. Teacher candidates recognized the independent influence of cultural, human, and social capital in hiring decisions. While most teacher candidates' perceptions agreed with the literature on principal hiring decisions, a smaller group of teacher candidates thought other factors structured the teaching field. The second section explores how teacher candidates viewed the field of schools. Some teacher candidates noticed that particular schools were selective in their hiring, placing those schools in a more dominant position. Teacher candidates considered other schools, such as charter schools and schools in other states, as not selective and therefore not in a dominant position. Smithton Public Schools and schools in low-income suburbs were described as being in a weak position on the field as they faced financial difficulties. The third section examines the characteristics of teacher candidates who preferred to teach in schools in weak positions on the field in order to explore homologies between the teaching and school fields.

This chapter uses both the survey and interview data. The survey data are used to identify factors teacher candidates think are important in the job search. The interview data are used to explore what these factors mean to teacher candidates. Both the survey data and interview data provide information on the relative importance of these factors, and I search for consistencies or inconsistencies between the two types of data. The interview data are also used to explore how and why teacher candidates describe some schools as being in a dominant or weak position on the field of schools. The survey data

are used to investigate structural similarities between the teaching field and field of schools by examining which teacher candidates preferred to teach in schools in a weak position.

Field and Capital

There are several types of capital that structure fields. Bourdieu's theory focuses mostly on cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) while economic theory includes human capital (Cohn & Geske, 1990). Cultural capital exists in knowing or possessing the cultural norms, habits, and interaction styles that provide access to power and high status positions and exists in embodied, institutionalized, and objectified forms (Bourdieu, 1986). Embodied cultural capital consists of interaction patterns and social norms recognized as appropriate by the dominant culture and resides inside the individual. Embodied cultural capital cannot be directly transferred, although individuals can obtain it through a socialization process. Institutionalized cultural capital represents academic qualifications and credentials that may be used as tools to exclude individuals or make objective distinctions between individuals. Due to its relationship to academic degrees, institutionalized cultural capital is similar to the idea of human capital in the economic literature, which consists of the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge for particular occupations (Cohn & Geske, 1990; Schultz, 1977). Objectified cultural capital consists of physical objects, such as clothing, books, or cars.

In addition to these three types of cultural capital, social and economic capital may also influence the structure of the teaching field or the field of schools. Teachers with social capital have networks of friends, family, or other acquaintances from which they can obtain resources that help them with their job search—either by giving them

access to particular jobs (Bourdieu, 1986) or providing information (Coleman, 1988).

Social capital on the field of schools is also important as parents care about their students' peers, particularly the racial characteristics of their potential peers (Lankford & Wyckoff, 2005).

Economic capital may be more important on the field of schools than on the teaching field. As school funding is usually linked to property values, districts vary greatly in their ability to raise revenue through property taxes (Berry Cullen & Loeb, 2004). In the Smithton area, districts receive most of their funding through per-pupil foundation grants from the state. While this school finance program intended to create more equity in school finance, affluent districts are allowed to raise additional revenue through local taxes. Further, the inability of some districts to adequately fund capital expenditures results in wide disparities in the condition of physical buildings and facilities (Arsen et al., 2005).

Previous Research on Teacher Hiring

Despite the importance of teaching quality and, therefore, teacher hiring, little research exists on the criteria schools and districts use to hire teachers (Harris, Rutledge, Ingle, & Thompson, 2006). Although some research exists on the timing and structure of the hiring process and flow of candidates through various steps in hiring, less research exists on the criteria by which hiring personnel make decisions about which teachers pass through the various steps (Liu & Johnson, 2003; Wise, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 1987). This section reviews previous research on criteria in teacher hiring, focusing on the personal characteristics and professional qualifications of teachers that are important on the teaching field.

Principals predominantly rely on personality characteristics when selecting teachers and making decisions about whom to hire (Harris et al., 2006). In particular, principals want teachers who are caring, enthusiastic, and motivated (Harris et al., 2006). Principals also rate honesty, emotional stability, and confidentiality as among the most important criteria used in hiring teachers, even though there are few objective ways to assess these characteristics (Place & Kowalski, 1993). Districts rate teacher candidates' human relations skills more important than their teaching skills (Ralph, Kesten, Lang, & Smith, 1998). Indeed, even when districts focus on teaching skills, they consider the ability to facilitate relationships (such as communication ability, rapport with students, and creativity) more important than instructional planning and strategies (Ralph et al., 1998). The interview is one of the most important tools principals use (Delli & Vera, 2003; Harris et al., 2006) and job candidates that interviewers consider more "likable" receive more job offers (Delli & Vera, 2003). Principals may look for clues to a teacher candidate's personality, human relations skills, and work ethic in how they talk and the types of questions they ask during an interview (Trimble, 2001).

There is mixed evidence on the importance of demographic factors on teachers' success in the job market. Principals rated age as one of the least important characteristics of teachers in hiring (Place & Kowalski, 1993), although some evidence suggests that principals prefer the enthusiasm and adaptability of younger teachers (Harris et al., 2006). Experimental evidence, however, found that principals prefer older teaching candidates. For example, when principals examined resumes for candidates who were identical except for their age, 49 year old candidates were more likely to be offered an interview than were 29 year old candidates (Young & Fox, 2002). Young and Fox (2002) also

found that age and ethnicity interact in teacher hiring. While young Hispanic candidates were less likely to be called back for an interview than all other candidates, older Hispanic candidates were just as likely as candidates from other ethnic backgrounds to be offered an interview.

Principals' desire to hire teachers who fit into the school may explain the conflicting evidence for the importance of age in teacher hiring. Principals want to maintain a balance on their staff or in a particular grade level or subject matter team such that whether they prefer to hire a younger or older teacher depends on the composition of the existing staff (Harris et al., 2006). Thus, principals are sensitive to the organizational and social context of their schools and prefer to hire teachers who fit in with the rest of the staff. Likewise, principals' hiring decisions suggest that they prefer to hire individuals they consider to be socially proximal to them (Young & Delli, 2002). That is, principals want to hire teachers who are similar to them.

Teacher qualifications appear less important in teacher hiring than personal characteristics (Harris et al., 2006; Ralph et al., 1998). For example, teacher candidates who graduated from the most selective colleges and universities are hired at lower rates than teachers from other colleges (Ballou, 1996), although principals who themselves went to selective colleges are more likely to hire teachers from selective colleges (Baker & Cooper, 2005). Likewise, principals rate intelligence and coming from a specific university as some of the least important teacher characteristics in hiring because they assume that all college graduates meet the minimum threshold of intelligence necessary for teaching (Harris et al., 2006). Principals do consider subject matter knowledge when

evaluating teacher candidates, although it is not as important as personality characteristics (Harris et al., 2006).

The limited importance of general intelligence and specific teaching skills may be due to the structure of the teacher hiring process. While hiring is decentralized, schools and districts still rely mainly on paper credentials and usually do not observe the individual teaching or review a portfolio of the candidate's teaching experiences (Liu & Johnson, 2003). As such, districts usually only have opportunities to assess a candidate's teaching ability only after he or she has been hired and started working (Wise et al., 1987). Still, the interview is an important tool in teacher hiring and a study connecting principal ratings of teachers during interviews with teacher performance data found that most—but not all—principals can accurately distinguish between strong and weak teachers during an interview (Emley & Ebmeier, 1997).

The economic literature refers to qualifications and ability as human capital. In cultural reproduction terms, qualifications are forms of institutionalized cultural capital and personal characteristics are forms of embodied cultural capital. That is, personality traits are characteristics that cannot be learned or transferred to another person while qualifications and human capital are obtained through academic organizations (Bourdieu, 1986). Thus, the literature on teacher hiring suggests that principals and districts emphasize personal characteristics and personality—embodied cultural capital—when hiring teachers. Qualifications and teaching skills—institutionalized cultural capital or human capital—are of secondary importance. The teacher hiring literature provides little evidence on the importance of the third major form of capital—social capital. Principals look for caring, honest, and enthusiastic teachers and they assume that certified

candidates have the requisite instructional skills and intelligence. Principals also want teachers who are similar to them and who complement the existing teaching staff.

In this way, the extant literature suggests that the hiring process may work to reproduce social distinctions among teachers and schools. As principals appear to rely predominantly on personality traits and perceptions of fit with the current staff, their decisions reflect a sense of the field and of which teacher candidate is a fit for the job in their particular school. Thus, principals' hiring decisions are driven by their own sense of the teaching field and its relation to the field of schools. This chapter examines whether teacher candidates make similar distinctions between professional and personal characteristics in the teaching field and what characteristics they think determine which candidates are hired.

Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of the Teaching Field

This section examines the extent to which teacher candidates distinguish between different types of characteristics as structuring the teacher labor market. The teacher hiring literature suggests that principals make distinctions between personal and professional characteristics when hiring teachers (Harris et al., 2006) and the general employment literature suggests that social networks are important in securing a job (Granovetter, 2005; Hanson & Pratt, 1992). Little empirical evidence exists on whether teacher candidates also recognize these three types of characteristics as structuring opportunities for teaching jobs. The survey component of this study asked teacher candidates to rate a variety of teacher characteristics on the extent to which they make a candidate more likely to get a job. The characteristics were chosen to represent the

theoretical constructs of interest in this study, including social capital, human capital or institutionalized cultural capital and embodied cultural capital.

To analyze teacher candidates' perceptions of the structure of the teaching field, I performed an exploratory factor analysis on these 23 items to look for patterns in how teacher candidates think about the characteristics that helps one get a job. Figure 1 shows the scree plot of the obtained factors. As shown in this figure, three factors had an eigenvalue greater than the Kaiser criterion of 1 and the slope of the scree plot starts to flatten out after the third factor. This suggests that three factors should be retained and interpreted. Together, the three factors explain 82.3 percent of the variance in the data.

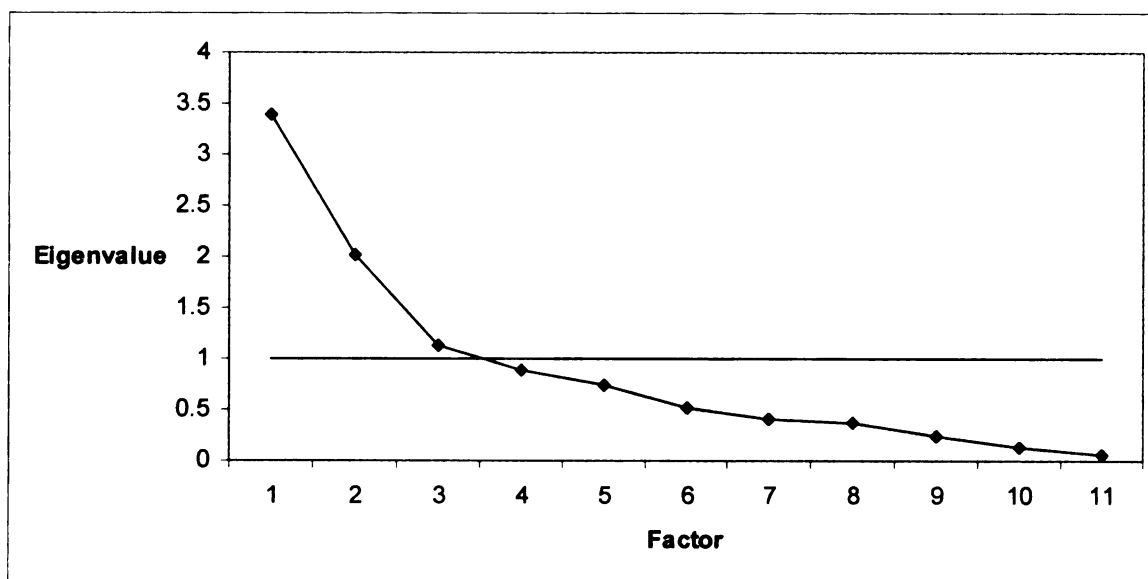


Figure 1 - Scree Plot of Factors in Teaching Field

I obtained factor loadings using a varimax orthogonal rotation method. I considered items to load on a factor if their factor loading was higher than .3. Table 10 shows the items loading on each factor and their factor loadings. As shown in this table, the three retained factors reflect the different types of capital—social capital, embodied

cultural capital, and institutionalized cultural capital or human capital—used to construct the items. Teacher candidates did not distinguish between institutionalized cultural capital and human capital, which was not surprising as these two types of capital are often operationalized using similar measures. For example, having a high GPA may represent human capital (i.e., having the knowledge and skills that teachers and college instructors use to determine grades) as well as cultural capital (i.e., knowing the social norms for student behavior that results in recognition by the teacher and, thus, good grades).

Four characteristics loaded onto the first factor, representing social capital. Of these characteristics, three loaded very strongly on this factor. These included direct measures of whether an individual teacher candidate may have family or friends who are teachers, principals, or school district officials. Teacher candidates who have other education professionals in their social network may have greater access to information about available jobs or how to get a job. A final characteristic loaded weakly on this factor: being in the right place at the right time. While this may be an indirect measure of social capital, it may still represent the idea that meeting the right people—in this case meeting them at an opportune time—makes it more likely that a teacher candidate will get a job offer. The Cronbach's alpha for this factor was .76, indicating that this measure had good internal reliability.

Nine variables loaded onto the second factor, which measured human capital and institutionalized cultural capital. The variables that loaded on this factor all included some measure of work experience, academic credentials, or teacher certification. This measure had a reliability of .70.

Table 10 - Factor Analysis Results and Item Loadings From Teacher Candidates’

Perceptions of Impact of Various Characteristics on the Likelihood of Getting a Job Offer

<i>Item number</i>	<i>Item text</i>	<i>Loading</i>
Factor 1—Social capital		
Q19K	Have a relative or friend who is a teacher	0.64
Q19M	Have a relative or friend who works in a school district office	0.85
Q19N	Have a relative or friend who is a school principal	0.80
Q19W	Are in the right place at the right time	0.35
Factor 2—Human capital		
Q19A	Have experience tutoring or mentoring children	0.53
Q19B	Have several years of teaching experience	0.32
Q19C	Have experience working with children in non-school settings	0.52
Q19D	Have a high GPA	0.46
Q19F	Have a full year of student teaching experience	0.46
Q19H	Have high scores on teacher certification exams	0.51
Q19J	Have experience teaching in urban schools (including student teaching)	0.37
Q19O	Are certified to teach multiple subjects or grades	0.47
Q19T	Come from a highly ranked university	0.46
Factor 3—Embodied cultural capital		
Q19G	Come from the same racial/ethnic background as other teachers in the school	0.59
Q19I	Fit in well socially with the school staff	0.32
Q19P	Look like other teachers in the school	0.54
Q19U	Are male	0.39
Q19V	Are White	0.65
Note: Data come from teacher candidate survey. N=289		

Five teacher characteristics loaded on the third factor. This factor included measures of teacher candidates’ race, gender, physical appearance and ability to fit in socially with the school staff. The Cronbach’s alpha measure of internal reliability for this measure was .64, suggesting that the items in this third factor were less closely related to one another than the first two factors.

Overall, teacher candidates identified three distinct forms of capital as structuring the teaching field and influencing who gets a job offer. Table 11 shows the means and standard deviations for the three factors. The variables ranged on a scale from 1 (much less likely to get a job) to 5 (much more likely to get a job). The 95% confidence intervals for social and human capital overlapped, indicating that teachers thought these two factors are of about equal importance in getting a teaching job. Teacher candidates rated embodied cultural capital rated slightly lower than both social capital and human capital.

Table 11 - Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Measured Factor

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
Social capital	4.02	0.63
Human capital	3.96	0.38
Cultural capital	3.45	0.49
N=278		

The interview data also provided evidence on the relative importance teacher candidates gave to various characteristics in the labor market. During the interviews, teacher candidates were asked open-ended questions about what they thought schools looked for when hiring teachers. Table 12 reports the most frequently mentioned characteristics. Teacher candidates named certification or basic qualifications for the job most frequently and over half of the teacher candidates said having the qualifications to teach in particular subject areas—such as math, science, or special education—help one get a job. Yet most teacher candidates also thought that individuals with particular demographic characteristics—such as being a member of a racial minority group or

male—are more likely to get a job offer. Teacher candidates also thought that schools look for individuals who fit in or have particular personality characteristics.

Table 12 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Named Various Characteristics as What Schools Look for When Hiring Teachers

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Certification, or a generally qualified, competent teacher	66.7
Come from a racial minority background	63.0
Has a credential in a particular shortage area	55.6
Is a good fit with the school or principal	55.6
Personality characteristics	51.9
In the principal's social network	51.9
Are male	48.1
Have experience teaching, are not first-year teachers	40.7
Commitment, passion for children	33.3
Have worked as a substitute in that district	29.6
I don't know what schools look for	18.5
Come from a specific university	18.5
Have a full year of student teaching experience	18.5
Does not matter if White or from a racial minority group	18.5
Are a team player	18.5
Have a certain look	14.8
Demonstrate an interest in that school, court the school	14.8
Experience working with diverse students	14.8
Experience working with children in non-classroom setting	14.8
Positive letters of reference	14.8
Candidates with a master's degree are not hired	11.1
Are female	11.1
Are a good communicator	11.1
Individuals who are similar to the principal	11.1

Note: Data come from teacher candidate interviews. Total number of teacher candidates is 27.

Overall, the interview data suggested a different relative importance of the types of capital that structure the teaching field. The survey data indicated that teacher candidates thought social and human capital are equally important, with embodied cultural capital playing less of a role. The interview data indicated that embodied cultural

capital (which combines personality characteristics, communication skills, and demographics) was most important, followed by human capital and then social capital. While embodied cultural capital and human capital were named by equal numbers of teacher candidates, as discussed below, the ways in which they talked about human capital suggested it was a threshold factor. The next three sections examine each of these types of capital in more detail, including what they meant to teacher candidates, why teacher candidates thought they are important, and whether teacher candidates varied in the importance they placed on each type of capital.

Embodied Cultural Capital

Personality and fit

Similar to existing research on principals' decisions, teacher candidates did not necessarily think that schools hire based only on professional characteristics or qualifications. Although two-thirds of teacher candidates interviewed mentioned being competent or qualified as one factor that schools look for in new hires, they also mentioned personality characteristics and being a good fit for the school. In many cases teacher candidates mentioned certification as a prerequisite before describing other features that play a larger role. For example, Joshua said,

They're looking for people who are qualified and have their certification and looking for teachers who are passionate about what they do. They're looking for teachers who are enthusiastic, looking for chemistry, teachers who will be a good fit with the rest of the teachers.

Joshua first mentioned certification and qualifications as necessary characteristics for a teacher to be hired, but quickly turned to personality traits, such as passion and enthusiasm, and fitting in with a school staff. Based on the interview data, teacher candidates thought that schools hire individuals who are confident, dependable, flexible,

and passionate. Although these characteristics may be highly individualized traits, being identified as confident or dependable requires individuals to exhibit the behaviors and mannerisms that principals can recognize as signs of confidence or dependability. That is, seemingly individual behavior characteristics are identified as positive personality traits through culturally constructed definitions. Further, while enthusiasm and flexibility may be traits necessary for effective teaching, they are best considered forms of embodied cultural capital rather than human capital as they are acquired through a process of socialization rather than training. Thus, it seems that teacher candidates defined elements of embodied cultural capital as important characteristics that schools look for when they hire teachers. As these traits are those that principals also prefer, it appears that many teacher candidates did have a “feel for game” (Bourdieu, 1984).

In addition to personality characteristics, teacher candidates thought schools hire teachers who fit in with the rest of the staff. Over half the teacher candidates said schools look for a “good fit” when hiring teachers; a good fit was the third most frequently cited factor in teacher hiring. Indeed, some teacher candidates placed fitting in as more important than professional qualifications. For example, Daniel said,

First and foremost I think you gotta have a fit... it's all about the fit. And then I think they look at, you know, your abilities. ... And then basically it'd be, you know, what type of person that you are.

Daniel described fit as “just kind of how you connect with one another” and said it is assessed during the interview. Other teacher candidates characterized fit as getting along, feeling at ease, feeling you were having a conversation rather than an interview, and making eye contact. Fit then appears to be a form of embodied cultural capital, as it cannot be separated from an individual and represents interaction skills and habits.

Denise implied that a “good fit” might, at least in part, be based on social class. Denise felt out of place in a school in a wealthy neighborhood where she was initially placed for student teaching. She ended up not student teaching there because the assigned cooperating teacher did not want to work with her. She described how she felt he was brushing her off. She said,

I’m not that upper class so I thought maybe it was a class issue. ... Could he tell that about me? I don’t know.
... Sometimes I get self conscious like I know I’m not a petite [wealthy town] woman, you know. ... I have no idea. Seeing the women in the building, I wasn’t dressed like them. I didn’t have the expensive Saks 5th Avenue clothes. I had Kohl’s clothes.

Denise felt uncomfortable because she did not look like other teachers in the school; she did not think she had the appropriate embodied and objectified cultural capital because she had a different body type and wore different clothes. As a result, she thought she was reassigned to a new student teaching placement because she did not fit in with the other teachers in the school.

Most teacher candidates who talked about fitting in with a school talked about working well with others. For example, Melissa defined a good fit as “being able to interact well with the other staff.” Fitting in, then, is about working cooperatively with other teachers and forming relationships. That Melissa saw fit as a type of capital that helps her on the job market was evident when she expressed concern about competing with teachers who have a couple years of experience. Melissa said,

Maybe there are other candidates that have taught for three years or something and they, you know, kind of already know how the show runs. But I think on the positive side, like I, I do think I fit very well with, I can, I can work with pretty much all people... I think that part could give me, or would be like the part that would give me a good edge in that aspect.

Despite being a brand new teacher, Melissa thought she could be hired over more experienced candidates because she works well with other people. Interestingly, Melissa defined fit as something that is applicable to all schools—she could fit in to all schools—rather than being dependent on matching some characteristic of the school. For Melissa and other teacher candidates who defined a good fit as being able to get along with other teachers, fitting in is a unidimensional construct. Some teachers can fit in with all schools because they are able to work well with others, while other teachers do not fit in with any school because they cannot get along with their colleagues. The ability to fit in then becomes a form of cultural capital and is closely linked to personality traits, such as flexibility and the ability to work in a team.

Other teacher candidates defined fit as a multidimensional construct. When teacher candidates defined fitting in as having things in common with other teachers in a school or sharing the school's instructional philosophy, then they recognized that one teacher could fit in with one school but not with another. For example, Stephanie said,

I think they're also looking for somebody who's a good fit for their school. Like for example, if the person is very, very well dressed, very, like a high maintenance type person ... that person might go well in one school where everyone's like that so then they're gonna get along with the teachers, they're gonna get along with the principals. But they might not get along with ... the high maintenance person might not fit in well there where it's very relaxed. So I think the principals look for people who are gonna fit in with the personalities of the school, as well as the philosophies of the school.

Stephanie talked about fitting in with a school by matching the personality characteristics and teaching philosophies of other teachers in a school, as well as having a certain look. She described a “good fit” as complementing the existing personalities and dispositions in the school. A teacher may fit into one school but not another. Stephanie would only fit

into certain schools—those with a progressive pedagogical approach. This contrasts with Melissa, who described a good fit as more universal.

Teacher candidates did vary in the emphasis they placed on personality and fit in the teacher labor market. In particular, teacher candidates differed over the relative importance of personality traits or professional characteristics in getting a teaching job. For example, younger teacher candidates were more likely to focus on personal traits. All fourteen of the teacher candidates under the age of 25 talked about the importance of personal traits in getting a job, but only three of the seven teacher candidates over age 35 talked about these types of characteristics. Likewise, new college graduates—who tend to be younger—emphasized personality characteristics more than mid-career changers. All 15 new college graduates said that principals and schools care about personal traits, while only 7 of the 12 mid-career changers thought principals considered personality characteristics. As enthusiasm, flexibility, and motivation are traits that evoke youthful images, it is not surprising that younger teacher candidates were more likely to emphasize these personality characteristics.

There was also a relationship between the socioeconomic status of teacher candidates and whether they talked about personal characteristics and fitting in with a school. For example, 75% of teacher candidates who came from upper middle class backgrounds emphasized a good fit when describing what schools look for when they hired teachers, compared to 33% of those from working class backgrounds. Overall, White teacher candidates (16 of 18) were more likely than African American teacher candidates (0 of 5) to focus on personal characteristics when describing what schools look for when hiring teachers. They emphasized traits like good communication skills,

enthusiasm, and motivation. As principals themselves did consider personality and fit with the existing staff most important in choosing teachers, it seems that young, White teacher candidates and those from middle or upper middle class backgrounds had the best feel for the game. That is, they were most likely to emphasize the traits on which principals do in fact base their hiring decisions.

That teacher candidates varied in the relative importance they placed on embodied cultural capital is important for two reasons. First, the characteristics that teacher candidates thought were most important in the job search are likely to be those they emphasized on applications and in interviews. That is, teacher candidates may present themselves in different ways to principals or other hiring personnel depending on what they thought is most important to the hiring official. Second, the distinctions teacher candidates saw as structuring the teaching field may be related to how they thought about their decisions on the job search. Teacher candidates may have approached the job search quite differently if they thought professional qualifications were more important on the teaching field than perceptions of fit.

Demographic Characteristics

To examine how teacher candidates think demographic characteristics influenced the hiring process, I analyzed the survey data on teacher candidates' ratings of the effect of being White or coming from a racial minority background on one's ability to get a teaching job. The variables ranged on a scale from 1 (much less likely to get a job) to 5 (much more likely to get a job). Each variable was standardized (mean = 0 and standard deviation = 1) and teacher candidates' rating of the impact of teacher race (either being White or coming from a racial minority background) was regressed on various teacher

candidate characteristics. Table 13 presents the means and standard deviations for these variables and results from the individual regression analyses. Comparing the means shows that, overall, teacher candidates thought that coming from a racial minority background made a teacher more likely to get a job offer (t-statistic = 3.01, p-value = 0.003).

Table 13 - Regression Analyses of the Influence of Being White and Coming From a Racial Minority Background in Teacher Hiring

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Are White</i>		<i>Are from a racial minority background</i>	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Mean	3.14	0.74	3.34	0.76
<i>Respondent characteristics</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	-0.09	0.08	0.18*	0.08
Master's degree	0.32	0.27	0.15	0.27
Mid-career changer	0.05	0.14	-0.53***	0.14
Male	-0.23	0.18	0.16	0.18
African American	0.62**	0.23	-0.19	0.23
Other racial minority	0.10	0.21	0.07	0.21
R-squared	0.060		0.065	
N	268		271	

Note: The dependent variables for these regression equations are teacher candidates' perception of the impact of being White and of coming from a racial minority background on their likelihood of getting a job offer. The results in this table are different if Oak State respondents are excluded from the sample. See Table A1 in Appendix D.

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

The only statistically significant effect on teacher candidates' perception of the importance of being White on the teaching field is whether the teacher candidate was African American. African American teacher candidates were more likely than White teacher candidates to say that being White made someone more likely to get a job offer. African American teacher candidates seemed to have recognized that they face some

difficulty in getting a teaching job because they were not White. This may reflect the historical racial discrimination that African Americans have faced. The low R-squared, however, suggests this model does not explain much of the variance in teacher candidates' perception of the importance of being White in getting a teaching job.

Due to a low response rate from Oak State University, I also ran the analysis excluding Oak State respondents to test for nonresponse bias. Including Oak State respondents changes the regression results for teacher candidates' rating of the impact of being White on the likelihood of getting a job. African American teacher candidates still gave higher ratings than White teacher candidates (coefficient=.50, SE=.25), but there were differences for the coefficient on teacher candidates with a master's degree and male teacher candidates. Those with a master's degree gave higher ratings to the impact of being White on the likelihood of getting a job while male teacher candidates gave lower ratings. Full results can be found in Table A1 in Appendix D.

Although there were few differences in teacher candidates' perceptions of the value of being White on the teaching field, there were differences in their perceptions of the effect of coming from a racial minority background on getting a teaching job.

Although African American teacher candidates thought that being White gave one an advantage, they rated the importance of coming from a racial minority background the same as other teacher candidates. Thus, it seems that African American teacher candidates thought that White teacher candidates and teacher candidates from racial minority backgrounds had about equal chances of getting a teaching job while other teacher candidates thought that racial minorities were more likely to get a job.

This finding is supported by the qualitative data. Even though equal numbers of African American teacher candidates in the qualitative component said that race did or did not matter, three times as many White teacher candidates said that minority candidates had an advantage than said that race did not matter. Most White teacher candidates said schools wanted to hire minority candidates. For example, Heather said,

I definitely think I'm at a disadvantage because I'm a White female. I had one principal that actually told me that he basically had to hire minorities...they have to be in compliance with some sort of minority quota ... if they're not then they have to hire minority teachers.

Many teacher candidates, like Heather, implied that racial minority candidates benefited from a form of affirmative action in teacher hiring because most existing teachers are White women. Some teacher candidates also thought schools wanted to hire teachers of color because they recognized the diversity in the student population and the need to have teachers reflect that diversity. While these teacher candidates still felt they faced a disadvantage in obtaining a teaching position, they recognized the reasons behind it.

While some African American teacher candidates did recognize that they might have an advantage due to schools' desire to diversify their teaching staff, at least one teacher candidate expressed reservation about teaching in a district that would hire her because of her race. Zoe is avoiding one district because she heard they are facing a lawsuit due to the lack of diversity in the teaching force. She said,

I think with the achievement gap and things, I think they are definitely interested in minorities. But are you interested in my qualifications or just the color of my skin? So, I mean, like I didn't apply for districts like [district omitted] because like I said that's what I think they're interested in.

Many teacher candidates described this district as being one of their top choices and were working hard to get a job in this district. Indeed, several White teacher candidates expressed frustration with their difficulties in getting a job due to racial preferences. Yet Zoe was avoiding this district because she thinks they value her skin color over her qualifications.

Many teacher candidates thought that males were also more likely to get a job offer, especially since they were looking for elementary teaching jobs. About half of the teacher candidates thought males held a privileged position in the teaching field. For example, Valerie said,

I think men normally get hired quicker ... they'll hire them because there aren't that many male candidates, so I think they would pick a man teacher over a women, most likely, even though, you know, most people would say 'we're going to pick the best candidate.'

Valerie, and other teacher candidates like her, recognized that there were few male elementary teachers. Both male and female teacher candidates noted that men held an advantage. It is of interest that three teacher candidates—in particular those who were older and came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds—talked about females having an advantage on the teaching field. For example, Wayne said, “Education is aimed towards females. It’s always had a female basis for the most part because most teachers are females.” These teacher candidates thought that since most elementary teachers were female, female teacher candidates fit into elementary schools. While race and gender are considered secondary characteristics in cultural reproduction theory and are not

foregrounded in Bourdieu's work (Bourdieu, 1984),¹¹ they take on a more primary importance for the teacher candidates in this study.

In summary, most teacher candidates' perceptions of the structure of the teaching field corresponded to the characteristics principals consider most important. Most teacher candidates thought that personality was important in the teacher labor market and many teacher candidates thought personal characteristics were more important than qualifications, assuming that all candidates were certified. White teacher candidates, new college graduates, and teacher candidates from middle or upper middle class backgrounds were most likely to say that personal characteristics were important in teacher hiring, suggesting these teacher candidates had the best sense of the game in terms of what principals consider in hiring.

Most teacher candidates also thought that race mattered on the teaching field. In particular, White teacher candidates thought that racial minority candidates had an advantage, while African American teacher candidates tended to think that race did not matter or that they did not want to work in a school that hired them because of their race. Finally, teacher candidates thought that schools looked for teachers who would fit in with the existing staff. They described a "good fit" as matching the personalities, philosophies, dispositions, and appearances with other teachers in the school. Thus, teacher candidates appeared to understand conclusions from the teacher hiring literature—that schools hire teachers who cohere with the school staff. Yet the teacher candidates in this study used a different definition of "fit" than is evident in the teacher hiring literature. While principals seem to want teachers who supplement others on the staff to create a balanced

¹¹ The relative lack of attention to race in Bourdieu's work is most likely due to the European focus in much of his writing.

teaching force, teacher candidates thought that schools hired teachers who complemented them.

Human Capital/Institutionalized Cultural Capital

The teacher hiring literature suggested that professional qualifications were of secondary importance to principals. While the teacher candidates in this study thought personality, demographics, and a good fit were important, qualifications were mentioned more often in the interview data. Still, as noted above, teacher candidates described the importance of professional qualifications as a threshold factor that did not distinguish candidates above a minimum level. The survey data provided stronger evidence that teacher candidates thought human capital was more important than embodied cultural capital (see Table 11). The qualitative data provided evidence on what teacher candidates meant by professional qualifications. Professional qualifications were a form of human capital or institutionalized cultural capital as they were represented by certifications, subject matter knowledge, and teaching skills. Many teacher candidates did recognize the importance of qualifications and competence for teaching. For example, Vanessa said,

I think schools look for certification, experience, and what you can offer their students. ... And they look at your student teaching evaluation. Did you fulfill everything to the Xth mark? Did you go above and beyond, not just mediocre? So they look for someone that can add to the teaching field, but also adapt. ... They looked for those that can teach but are aware of the laws that are involved. They'll ask you, do you know about the IDEA law? ... And they really want you to be current on everything that is occurring in the teaching field and the pedagogy.

Vanessa referred to qualifications specific to teaching, including certification, pedagogical knowledge, and awareness of specific education laws. Teacher candidates talked about being qualified in general, as well as having specific qualifications that were

particularly in demand. Valerie talked about the need for special education teachers when she said, “I know now that it probably helps to be specialized in an area. Special education is big right now, a lot of people are looking for that.” In addition to special education, teacher candidates noted that schools were particularly interested in candidates with a math or science background, English as a Second Language, and technological proficiency. Thus, teacher candidates’ perceptions of shortage fields in teaching appeared to match conventional accounts of those vacancies schools have the most difficulty filling.

Teacher candidates varied somewhat in the importance they placed on human capital and professional qualifications. Older teacher candidates talked more about credentials and qualifications—in general and in specific teaching areas—while younger teacher candidates emphasized other characteristics. While nearly all teacher candidates said qualifications were a factor in hiring decisions, teacher candidates over age 35 talked about qualifications twice as much, with an average of 3.4 statements about the importance of qualifications, compared to an average of 1.7 statements by candidates under the age of 25. Likewise, African American teacher candidates focused more on professional qualifications than did White and Asian teacher candidates (3.2 and 2.1 statements per teacher, respectively). As the teacher hiring literature suggests that principals place primary emphasis on personality and a good fit, it seems that older teacher candidates and African American teacher candidates had less of a feel for the teacher labor market.

Like the relative importance of embodied cultural capital, the degree to which teacher candidates placed different emphases on human capital in the teacher labor

market could have implications for how they presented themselves to hiring officials they approached the job search. If teacher candidates thought the field was structured by professional qualifications, then they were likely to continue making distinctions in their job search based upon professional criteria, rather than a sense of fit.

Social Capital

In addition to personality and fit, demographic characteristics, and professional qualifications, teacher candidates recognized the importance of social capital in getting a teaching job. About half of the teacher candidates indicated that having social ties with other teachers, principals, and district personnel gave someone an edge in the hiring process. Stephanie described the importance of social networks when she said,

Having a connection gets your resume pulled. ... It gets a good recommendation. Like if my connection in [one district], he's kinda higher up so if he tells the principal, you know, I think she's really good ... he might not give me the job but he's going to at least interview me and look at me in a different light than he would some stranger.

Stephanie thought her chances of getting a job offer were higher than other teacher candidates because she had a contact with a district official that could get principals to look at her resume. Teacher candidates also talked about the importance of making a personal connection and getting one's face known throughout a district. They thought principals were more likely to call them in for an interview if they could put a face to the name on the resume. While social networks may not be enough to guarantee a job, it would get teacher candidates through to an interview, where they would compete in a much smaller pool.

Some teacher candidates actively sought to expand their social network to improve their chances of getting a teaching job. Their strategies included making an

effort to meet principals in person when dropping off resumes so that principals would recognize their face later; getting recommendations from colleagues in their student teaching school who would drop names when meeting new principals; and substitute teaching. By substituting in various schools, teacher candidates thought they could meet new teachers and principals and let them know they were applying for teaching positions. Richard was perhaps the most active in accumulating social capital. He contacted multiple principals and district officials and asked them to do a mock interview with him. He said,

I asked her to do a mock interview and then I asked her if she'd be willing to set up other mock interviews for me in other districts. Because I think giving a face with administrators who haven't seen you before is significant. ... they may say, you know what, if I have any opportunity, or if somebody calls me and says I need a teacher do you have any candidates in mind, I just had an interview with this person that, you know seems great.

Richard set up these mock interviews not to improve his interviewing skills but to meet principals and expose himself to multiple schools. By expanding his educational network in this way, Richard hoped to improve his chances of getting a teaching job.

Finally, teacher candidates whose parents' held occupations with similar salaries and social status as teachers placed the most emphasis on social networks and substitute teaching in schools as giving someone an advantage on the teaching field. Compared to teacher candidates whose parents held occupations with both more and less social status and income than teaching, teacher candidates whose parents had occupations similar to teaching were both more likely to mention social networks as a factor in teaching hiring (8 out of 11 compared to 9 out of 16) and made more statements about its importance (1.7 statements compared to .6 statements). Many of these teacher candidates had parents who

were in fact teachers themselves, so they may have had more extensive networks within schools and districts. White teacher candidates also placed more emphasis on social networks (average of 1.3 statements), and African American teacher candidates (.6 statements) placed less emphasis on social networks.

The principal hiring literature does not provide much evidence on the relative importance of social capital in hiring decisions. If teacher candidates' perceptions were accurate and social capital had an independent effect on who was hired, then this has implications for prospective teachers' equitable access to teaching jobs for teacher candidates who do not have families with educators. If research on principals' hiring practices confirms the importance of social networks, then teacher education programs should explore possible ways to develop teacher candidates' social networks.

The qualitative data suggested that teacher candidates were quite confident in their ability to get a job. Although most teacher candidates were aware of the slack in the teacher labor market and that many districts were laying off teachers, they thought their own chances of getting a job were rather good. Only two teacher candidates were really concerned they might not get a teaching job. One reason teacher candidates seemed secure in the idea that they would find a job is because they described themselves as having the characteristics they thought schools wanted to hire. That is, teacher candidates defined the criteria they thought schools looked for in ways that made them highly desirable candidates. As a result, teacher candidates recognized the poor job prospects for elementary teachers in general but were confident of their own individual prospects because they thought they matched what schools wanted.

While nearly all teacher candidates defined the field in ways that put them in the most dominant position, not all teacher candidates were accurate in their perceptions of the field, given what we know about the characteristics important to principals. Young White teacher candidates from middle class backgrounds had the best sense of the game. That is, these teacher candidates' perceptions of the structure of the field most closely matched the findings from the literature on teacher hiring.

Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of the Field of Schools

A cultural reproduction framework highlights the presence of homologies between positions on different fields. This suggests that teacher candidates who occupy a dominant position on the teaching field will teach in schools that occupy a dominant position on the field of schools. Likewise, teacher candidates in a weak position on the teaching field will teach in schools that occupy a weak position. While the structure of the field of schools is an empirical question, existing research on the characteristics of schools that face persistent staffing difficulties provides some evidence on this question. Schools with high concentrations of poor, minority, and low-achieving students are more likely to have teachers who have failed the teacher certification exam or lack full certification (Lankford et al., 2002).

Schools can vary dramatically in their ability to be selective in teacher hiring. A study of the conditions of schools with chronic teacher turnover (Guin, 2004) found that even within one district, schools in poor neighborhoods received about 3-5 applications for every open position while schools in affluent areas received about 150 applications. My data suggested that teacher candidates did recognize differences between schools' selectivity in hiring. Indeed, some teacher candidates in this study wanted to work in

schools they thought were selective in hiring and did not want to work in schools they perceived as unselective. That is, for those teacher candidates who noticed the relative selectivity of schools, selectivity was a desirable characteristic and made them want to work in that school. Some teacher candidates did want to work in the schools considered unselective by their peers, but the selectivity or lack of selectivity was not a salient feature for them. This suggests that some teacher candidates recognized the structure of the field of schools and wanted to work in schools in a dominant position on the field.

While teacher candidates were aware of the tight labor market in the area in general, they did note that it was harder to get jobs in particular schools. Teacher candidates linked the difficulty of getting a job to the quality of the district. For example, Daija said she was very happy to have secured a job in a suburban district. She called the district “the best district in the state” and explained,

There are a billion screenings for teachers. ... The district is well funded. It is made up of areas that are very rich, that are middle class, that are poor... not poor, but lower. They have a lot of money for supplies. I have \$250 to spend on classroom supplies. ... They have all kinds of programs for their students.

Daija made a connection between better districts and many screenings of teachers. She called the district “hard to get into” and that her acquaintances were impressed that she was hired. Daija also linked the district’s status to the socioeconomic status of the population and their ability to buy materials and support programs for students. Other teacher candidates made a similar connection between a school’s status and funding and their ability to be selective in hiring teachers. Chris described his reaction to a job opening at a secular private school in an affluent suburban area that said they preferred someone with experience.

Chris: They'll be picking who they want. They'll pick and choose. They've got some prestige, they've got the money and they'll pick who they want...Experience preferred. ... Catholic schools put that and that's, they would prefer it but they're saying we'll also consider others. Some people put that, they mean just that.

Interviewer: And how do you know the difference?

Chris: Cause they've got the money, they've got the prestige. And money talks. It's just the way it is.

Chris noted a distinction between this secular private school and Catholic schools in their ability to be selective. He thought both types of schools may prefer to hire similar teachers, but the money and prestige associated with the secular private school allowed them to “pick and choose” among candidates. The implication is that other schools, such as Catholic schools and schools with less money and prestige, are not able to “pick and choose.” One-third of teacher candidates recognized that prestige, socioeconomic status, and money place schools in different positions on the field. While there may be other characteristics of schools that placed them in a dominant position for students or parents—or more experienced teachers—for teacher candidates in this study, schools that served more affluent populations had more money and prestige and thus were in a dominant position. Schools that served less affluent populations and had less money and prestige were in a weaker position.

While teacher candidates thought getting a job offer in most districts in the area would be hard, they made distinctions between districts in the source of the job difficulty. As noted above, some teacher candidates indicated that affluent suburban schools were selective in hiring because they received many applications. Several teacher candidates said they heard stories about 2000 candidates for one job in suburban Smithton districts. These were the districts where teacher candidates thought they really had to be the best to get a job.

Teacher candidates also thought it was difficult to get a job in Smithton or low-income suburbs, but they attributed the difficulty to the lack of funding for jobs rather than selectivity by the district. For example, Rachel said, “they’re shutting down schools so it’s not like I’m gonna go and apply for schools that are laying off teachers.” Teacher candidates frequently mentioned teacher layoffs in Smithton as causing difficulty in getting a job there, not that Smithton was selective because it had many candidates. That it was hard to get a job in a particular school or district was not the same thing as the school or district’s ability to be selective. Teacher candidates’ explanations of why it is difficult to get a job in high-income suburbs or urban districts demonstrated the opposing positions of these districts. Affluent suburban districts were in a dominant position because they could select whom they wanted. Urban districts, on the other hand, were in a less dominant position because of financial instability. Through their explanations of the sources of difficulty in getting a job in different districts, teacher candidates classified districts into opposing positions on the field.

Just as teacher candidates recognized it was particularly hard to get a job in particular schools, they also thought it was easy to get a job in some schools. Teacher candidates thought that it was much easier to get a job out of state. Some teacher candidates moved out of state to get a job, others just lamented the fact that the state did not have as many jobs as other states. For example, Valerie said, “some people are getting hired out of the state, some people don’t even care if you have your teaching certificate, they’ll just hire you right on the spot. The standards in [this state] are so high ... that makes it difficult.” Like the teacher candidates above who equated good schools with selectivity in teacher hiring, Valerie said it is the high standards for elementary

teachers in the state that made it difficult to get a teaching job. Other states have lower standards as they “don’t even care” if the teacher candidate is certified. Samantha described Florida as “desperate” for teachers and she moved to Florida because she did not think she would get hired in this state. She said,

The way that it is here in [state], with nobody getting jobs, I mean, I went down there thinking I’ll be lucky to just get a job. That’s what I thought but oh, no....they’re desperate for teachers down there. The rumor that you heard, it’s true. It’s true. They need them.

Samantha and several other teacher candidates moved out of state because they did not think they could get a job in this state. Teacher candidates thought it was easier to get a job in another state because they thought other states had lower standards and were less selective. These perceptions came from recruiting fairs in which districts from other states offered contracts after short meetings with potential teachers.

Teacher candidates also thought it was easier to get a teaching job in a charter school. While one teacher candidate preferred to teach in a charter school, only 5 of the 27 teacher candidates considered charter schools on an equal basis with regular public schools in their job search. Most teacher candidates either ruled out charter schools completely or considered them only if they did not get a job in a traditional public school. Richard said he would not apply to charter schools initially because “they’re not my first tier job search.” Likewise, Melissa said,

My plan is now is that I’m gonna avoid them as long as I can and then possibly if it gets to like July/August and I really feel like I want a teaching position, I might look into it more.

Most teacher candidates were unfamiliar with charter schools and were wary about the low salaries and lack of union protections in charter schools. Teacher candidates did not

see charter schools as equal alternatives to traditional public schools as a place to work. One exception to this finding was that African American teacher candidates were more likely to consider charter schools as equal to regular public schools. That most teacher candidates thought charter schools occupied a weak position on the field of schools is evident in the fact that most teacher candidates thought they could ignore charter schools for the first part of the hiring season but apply at the end of the summer and still get a job.

Just as teacher candidates viewed schools in a dominant position as having high standards for teachers and being selective in teacher hiring, they thought it was easy to get jobs in charter and out of state schools because these schools were not selective. The lack of selectivity in schools made them less attractive to teacher candidates. For example, Stephanie said,

They ended up asking us one question. They basically gave a contract to every single person that came. So I don't know if I really wanta go there because they're, I mean, they're so desperate... There was a man there in sweat pants and a hat and a plaid shirt, and he got a contract.

Stephanie did not want to work in a district that was “desperate” and would give a contract to any candidate. Note that it was the selectivity of the district, rather than other characteristics, that made the school undesirable.

Teacher Preference for Schools Occupying Weak Positions on the Field

According to Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory, teacher candidates in dominant positions on the teaching field would teach in schools that occupied a dominant position on the field of schools and teacher candidates in a weak position on the teaching field would teach in schools that occupied a weak position on the field of schools. Thus, examining the characteristics of teacher candidates that preferred to teach in schools in dominant or weak positions on the field may provide an assessment of their position on

the teaching field. This section examines the characteristics of teacher candidates who preferred to teach in schools in a weak position on the field. The previous section identified low-income schools, urban schools, charter schools, and out of state schools as occupying a weak position on the field of schools. That some teacher candidates preferred these schools may indicate that they hold a weak position on the teaching field.

Table 14 shows the percentage of teacher candidates who preferred schools in Smithton Public Schools, urban or low-income suburban schools, charter schools, and schools out of state. The percentage of teacher candidates who preferred to teach in Smithton represents the percentage that named a public school in Smithton as their top choice school. The other percentages were calculated similarly.

These frequencies suggest that the patterns of teacher candidates who wanted to teach in Smithton, urban or low-income suburban, and charter schools were similar, while teacher candidates who wanted to teach out of state were somewhat different. African American teacher candidates were more likely to prefer to teach in Smithton. African American teacher candidates were also more likely to prefer charter schools and urban or low-income suburban schools. Teacher candidates who graduated from high schools with a high concentration of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were more likely to prefer to teach in Smithton or other urban or low-income suburban schools. Teacher candidates who were moving into teaching from another career were more likely to prefer to teach in Smithton Public Schools or charter schools. There were no statistically significant differences between male and female teacher candidates except that males appeared more likely to prefer to teach in charter schools.

Table 14 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Preferred to Teach in Various Types of Schools

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Smithton Public Schools</i>	<i>Urban or low-income suburban</i>	<i>Charter</i>	<i>Out of state</i>
Total	6.9%	20.4%	2.2%	9.0%
White	2.1	15.2	0.0	8.7
African American	46.2***	55.6***	14.3***	10.3
Other minority	4.6	19.2	0.0	12.0
New college graduate	3.3**	18.3	0.0**	12.9**
Mid-career changer	13.0**	23.9	5.3**	2.1**
Female	6.6	19.2	0.8**	9.2
Male	9.1	25.0	8.3**	8.3
Non-high poverty high school	4.8***	19.1~	2.0	9.2
High poverty high school	33.3***	36.8~	5.3	5.3

Note: N=289
~ p<.1, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

The patterns were different for out of state schools. There were no differences between racial or gender groups in choosing out of state schools as their top choice school. Likewise, teacher candidates who graduated from low poverty high schools were about as likely to name an out of state school as their top choice as those who graduated from more affluent high schools. New college graduates were more likely than mid-career changers to prefer to teach out of state, possibly because these teacher candidates were also younger and less settled in a particular area.

The pattern for out of state schools may be different due to teacher candidates' recognition that schools in other states occupied different positions on the field, depending on their relative status within their own state. For example, Stephanie is a White, new college graduate whose mother teaches in an affluent district in suburban

Smithton. Stephanie wanted to teach in a neighboring district, but realized that she would face stiff competition in that district and therefore sought out a job in another state that she called “the best district in the country.” Stephanie recognized that some districts in other states might have the same or more prestige as her preferred district in this state.

To disentangle the influence of the various teacher candidate characteristics on wanting to teach in particular types of schools, I ran a binomial logistic regression. The dependent variable is the log odds of the probability that the teacher candidate named an urban or low-income suburban school as their top choice school. Due to the low numbers of teacher candidates who preferred to teach in Smithton, charter schools, or out of state schools, logistic models predicting who named these schools as their top choice did not converge. Therefore, I only present the results for preferring an urban or low-income suburban school.

Table 15 presents the results from a logistic regression on the likelihood of teacher candidates with various characteristics preferring to teach in urban or low-income suburban schools. African American teacher candidates were more likely to prefer to teach in urban or low-income suburban schools; they had over 10 times the likelihood of preferring to teach in an urban or low-income suburban schools than their White colleagues. This may reflect their preference to teach African American students or to teach close to where they lived as most African American teacher candidates lived in urban areas. Table 15 supports the results from the frequencies in Table 14 and underscores the importance of race, as being African American remained statistically significant even when controlling for other teacher candidate characteristics.

Table 15 - Logistic Regression Results Estimating the Likelihood That Teacher Candidates Preferred to Teach in an Urban or Low-Income Suburban School

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
Intercept	-1.68***	0.23	
Mid-career changer	-0.23	0.38	0.80
Male	-0.02	0.51	0.98
African American	2.32***	0.57	10.19
Other minority	0.38	0.54	1.47
High poverty high school	-0.52	0.67	0.60
Pseudo R2	0.082		
N	249		

*** p<.001.

Tables 14 and 15 suggest that the teacher candidates who had the best sense of the field—that is, the teacher candidates whose perception of the field best matched the research on principals’ preferences in teacher hiring—were least likely to apply to schools in weak positions on the field of schools. White teacher candidates and young, new college graduates had the most accurate perception of the teaching field. This suggests they may be in the most dominant position on the field. Yet African Americans and mid-career changers were most likely to prefer urban or low-income suburban schools Smithton Public Schools, or charter schools—schools that most teacher candidates described as being in a weak position on the field. This suggests there are homologies or structural similarities between the teaching field and the field of schools. Teacher candidates who had the best sense of the field wanted to teach in schools that were selective and avoided schools that were not selective. Yet teacher candidates who did not seem to have an accurate perception of the teaching field were most likely to want to teach in schools that were viewed as not selective.

Discussion and Conclusion

Teacher candidates can identify the various forms of capital that structure the teaching field and recognize the independent effects of embodied cultural capital, human capital, and social capital. Teacher candidates' perceptions of the structure of the field correspond to principals' hiring criteria as most teacher candidates emphasize the importance of personality, fit, and demographic characteristics in teacher hiring. That is, teacher candidates realize that even though a successful candidate must have basic qualifications, they think an individual's personality and the ability to fit into a school determine who gets a teaching job and who does not. These characteristics highlight the importance of embodied cultural capital as they represent traits that are acquired through a socialization process (one that begins well before entering college) rather than explicit instruction in a teacher education program. These forms of cultural capital are embodied and present in how an individual carries oneself, interacts with others, and behaves in particular social situations.

The notion of fit is also a form of embodied cultural capital. While traditional ideas of fit define it as a multidimensional construct in which it depends on both the candidate and the potential employer, many teacher candidates in this study define fit as a unidimensional construct. That is, some teacher candidates think they can fit in all schools and others cannot fit in any school. Teacher candidates fit if they have good people skills, work well on a team, and are easy to get along with. From this perspective, fit is another form of embodied cultural capital as it represents interaction patterns and personality traits. This chapter demonstrated how teacher candidates thought that those who can fit into a school are more likely to get a job. The next chapter will show that

teacher candidates also prefer schools where they think they fit. Thus, perceptions of fit become important constructs in the teacher job search process.

While most teacher candidates recognize the criteria important to principals in teacher hiring, some teacher candidates emphasize different characteristics. African American teacher candidates and older teacher candidates, for example, are more likely to emphasize qualifications and human capital rather than personality and embodied cultural capital. White teacher candidates from middle class backgrounds just graduating with their first college degree are the most likely to recognize the structure of the teaching field represented in principals' hiring criteria. That is, White middle class teacher candidates have the best sense of the game and the easiest time negotiating the teaching field. As these teacher candidates also come from backgrounds most similar to principals and the majority of current teachers, it is likely that their cultural background influences the characteristics they view as most important. Their habitus—shaped by their cultural and social upbringing—allows them to see distinctions between teachers based upon cultural traits. The habitus of other teacher candidates—such as African Americans—focuses their attention on qualifications and instructional skills.

The variation in teacher candidates' perceptions of the teaching field is important for two reasons. First, the approach teacher candidates take to the job search is likely informed by how they view the structure of the teaching field. Most teacher candidates have a sense through their interactions with administrators, school personnel, and teacher educators that fit is important in the teacher labor market. Yet some teacher candidates think professional qualifications are most important. As habitus mediates between the structure of the field and one's perceptions, how teacher candidates view the teaching

field may influence how they view schools. For example, teacher candidates who think that personality and fit are most important in hiring decisions may be more attuned to personal characteristics of the schools in which they apply, while those whose attention focuses on professional qualifications may likewise focus on professional attributes of schools.

Second, the characteristics that teacher candidates emphasize on applications and in interviews are likely to be those they think are most important in the job search. That is, teacher candidates may present themselves in different ways to principals or other hiring officials depending on what they think is most important to the hiring official. If teacher candidates emphasize the wrong type of capital in hiring situations, they may be at a disadvantage in getting a job offer.

It is possible that teacher candidates who emphasize professional qualifications over personality and fit have accurate perceptions of a segment of the teaching field. In other words, it is possible that while most principals emphasize personal characteristics when making hiring decisions, principals from urban or low-income suburban schools care most about professional qualifications and teaching ability. Most existing research on principal hiring decisions uses smaller samples that do not allow for making comparisons between principals in different contexts. Future research on hiring decisions should examine this further.

The importance of fit and personality may reflect the particular context of the study—elementary teachers in an area with an over-supply of teacher candidates. Caring is a central component in descriptions of elementary teaching (Nias, 1999); it may be that professional qualifications are emphasized more in secondary schools with their

disciplinary orientation. Further, the labor market context was such that basic qualifications for teaching could be assumed. Principals did not need to make trade-offs between certified teachers and other personal traits. The tight labor market conditions may influence teacher candidates' perceptions of the field.

Many teacher candidates also make distinctions between schools based upon cultural traits—namely prestige and selectivity. Teacher candidates recognize that it is hard to get a job in many types of schools, but they attribute the difficulty to opposing reasons. Affluent suburban schools are considered highly selective and therefore desirable, compared to charter and out of state schools that are perceived to have low standards and therefore are undesirable. Yet teacher candidates attribute the difficulty in getting a job in urban or low-income schools to the financial instability and lack of jobs rather than to a sense of selectivity. Urban, low-income, and charter schools are then perceived by most teacher candidates as undesirable places to teach, in part due to their low prestige. In viewing the selectivity of a school as a desirable characteristic, teacher candidates appear to be engaging in herd behavior and assuming others have received signals that these schools are desirable places to work (Banerjee, 1992). If individual teacher candidates observe large numbers of people choosing a particular school, they tend to ignore any information they do have and follow the behavior of others (Banerjee, 1992; Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, & Welch, 1998).

That teacher candidates are in different positions on the field is important because teacher candidates' positions structure their habitus. As habitus mediates between the structure of the field and one's tastes and behavior, how teacher candidates view the

structure of the field has implications for how they approach the job search. The next chapter explores the practical sense that teacher candidates bring to the job search.

CHAPTER 4: UNDERSTANDING THE PRACTICAL LOGIC OF THE TEACHER JOB SEARCH: ESPOUSED PREFERENCES AND PREFERENCES IN USE

This chapter focuses on the processes by which teacher candidates find teaching positions to explore how their preferences shape their job search. The purpose of this chapter is to develop and apply a theoretical understanding of how teacher candidates make decisions about where they want to teach and how they use information while making these decisions. In doing so, I respond to the limitations that existing frameworks on teachers' career decisions present by using cultural reproduction theory; this framework highlights the practical sense that teacher candidates bring to the job search and how these processes are situated within social and cultural contexts.

My analysis in this chapter indicates that teacher candidates' behavior during the job search leads them to reproduce their own schooling experiences by selecting a job in a school similar to the ones that they attended as children. While teacher candidates espouse preferences for schools with particular organizational characteristics that on the surface reflect rational calculations of costs and benefits, they prefer particular schools partially based upon feelings of comfort, ease, and familiarity that are influenced by their race and class. Further, teacher candidates' methods of identifying open positions filter their job options to schools that are socially proximal to them. In this way, teacher candidates sort themselves into schools in ways that reproduce existing social divisions.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section further develops the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 1 and focuses on the practical sense that

teacher candidates bring to the job search. In doing so, it highlights the social proximity or distance that develops between teachers and schools and the difference between teacher candidates' espoused preferences and preferences in use.

The second section describes the espoused preferences teacher candidates explicitly state as governing their job choice. The third section highlights how teacher candidates are using their practical sense of what differences between teaching jobs are important by focusing on districts rather than schools in their job search. In doing so, many teacher candidates act in ways inconsistent with their espoused preferences. The fourth section describes how the ways in which teacher candidates identify available teaching positions restricts their job choices. Teacher candidates' practical sense leads them to ignore unfamiliar schools that may potentially match their espoused preferences. The fifth section highlights how teacher candidates avoid schools in districts where they think they would feel uncomfortable. These are typically districts with high percentages of minority and low-income students. Rather, teacher candidates seek out districts where they think they would fit in because the school community matches their own background.

Finally, the last section suggests that teacher candidates have few sources of information available to them to gather information about schools, particularly about characteristics represented in their espoused preferences. This results in teacher candidates making assumptions about the work environments in schools based upon information they do have, student demographic and achievement characteristics. I conclude by suggesting that ignoring the cultural and social contexts of teacher candidates' job search decisions may result in ineffective or inefficient policies.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter synthesizes ideas from Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory (Bourdieu, 1984, 1998) and theories of action (Argyris, 1985; Argyris & Schon, 1975) to illustrate how teacher candidates' job choice decisions are guided by their sense of where they belong and their culturally informed perceptions of schools. As discussed in the introduction, Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory emphasizes how individuals have an embodied, practical logic, or a sense of appropriate actions given their position on a field. This practical understanding—rather than an explicit set of rules or preferences— influences behavior. Likewise, a theory of action framework suggests there are differences between an individual's espoused theory—a theory someone uses to explain his or her behavior—and that person's theory in use—the logic that guides actual decisions and actions. Together, these frameworks focus attention on how teacher candidates may engage in actions during the job search that do not have their stated preferences as intended outcomes.

Habitus and Social Proximity

Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory emphasizes how individual behavior is guided by a practical sense of what is appropriate in a given situation (Bourdieu, 1980, 1998). This practical sense is embodied in individuals and guides specific actions even if individuals are not adhering to explicit rules or strategies. Rather, individuals have an embodied understanding of what is a natural course of action. The concept of practical sense is different from a rational actor framework because it assumes decisions are made more holistically, instead of a calculative weighing of the costs and benefits of different

courses of action. It also assumes that individuals have a sense of what is desirable without understanding the specific features that make it desirable.

Understanding one's habitus is central to understanding his or her practical sense, as habitus is the generating principle behind individual behavior. Habitus generates our everyday cultural practices and perceptions and acts as a mediator between the structure of the field and our practices. As our habitus generates our tastes and practices, a social proximity or distance develops between us and other actors. As discussed in the previous chapter, activity occurs on a social field in which individuals occupy a social space defined by the amount and type of resources held. Our position is closer to some social spaces and more distant to others (Bourdieu, 1998).

There are two implications of social distance. First, we are less likely to come into contact with some actors because our tastes and practices put us in different spaces (Bourdieu, 1998). Teacher candidates are more likely to come in contact with schools—and the principals and teachers in those schools—that are socially proximal to their own position. Teacher candidates may become aware of a school because it is close to their home or near a restaurant they frequent, or because themselves, a relative, or a friend attended the school. Thus, what schools are familiar to a particular teacher candidate is related to the teacher candidate's social and cultural context. This explains how habitus, through social distance, may essentially filter the schools to which a teacher candidate chooses to apply.

Second, when we do come in contact with a socially distant position, it does not appeal to us because we have opposing tastes (Bourdieu, 1998). Teacher candidates may still come in contact with socially distant schools during the job search, but they are

likely to feel uncomfortable in these schools or view them as undesirable places to work. Things may seem out of place or their interactions with personnel at the school may feel forced or inappropriate. On the other hand, when teacher candidates encounter a socially proximal school, their expectations for teacher-teacher or student-teacher interactions may be met and their own interactions with school personnel would feel more natural. When individuals with similar habitus are brought together, they feel a kindred relationship with each other (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986). This affinity is the result of similar social experiences and conditionings (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986).

Espoused Theory and Theory in Use

A theory of action framework provides a useful analytic distinction to help understand the notion of practice. This framework highlights the norms, values, and assumptions behind individual behavior. Individuals hold a set of explicitly stated beliefs and goals that constitute our espoused theories of action. These espoused theories outline how we describe our behavior; it is our own explanation of what guides our actions (Argyris, 1985; Argyris & Schon, 1975). Yet individuals may act in ways that are inconsistent with what they espouse as their intentions (Argyris, 1985; Argyris & Schon, 1975). In this way, the distinction between espoused theories and theories in use reflects the distinction between stated and revealed preferences in the economic literature. While individuals may have espoused theories to explain their own behavior, another set of norms, values and assumptions may better predict actions (Argyris, 1985). These theories in use are powerful guides for one's actions, but they are tacit and individuals are usually unaware of how they may be inconsistent with their espoused theory (Argyris, 1985; Argyris & Schon, 1975). Theories in use are tacit because they are undiscussable or

inaccessible to individuals (Argyris & Schon, 1978). In the teacher labor market, teacher candidates may have espoused preferences that they provide as explicit criteria or characteristics of schools that guide their decisions. Yet they may act in ways that are inconsistent with these espoused preferences. Instead, the decisions and assumptions made by teacher candidates during the job search may be better explained by understanding their preferences in use.

Theory in use is similar to practical logic. They both represent explanations of how everyday behaviors are guided by sets of assumptions about how things are related without the individual actor recognizing those assumptions or explicitly following a set of rules. Bourdieu (1977b) makes a distinction similar to that of espoused theory and theory in use, arguing that the hypothesis that best predicts someone's behavior may not be the set of rules or goals that the individual provides for his or her actions. Indeed, the presence of regularities does not mean that rules are being followed. Rather, regularities may occur because individuals from similar social and cultural backgrounds respond to situations using similar practical understandings of the structure of the social field (Bourdieu, 1977b). A theory of action framework suggests that individual actions have "microtheories" that guide behavior in specific situations (Argyris & Schon, 1975). But one person's various microtheories are related to each other as they are all guided by a similar logic, based upon a model of the behavioral world (Argyris & Schon, 1975). This is similar to the practical logic of cultural reproduction theory that specifies the habitus as the unifying principle that generates everyday actions.

Theory in use and practical logic are not identical ideas, however. Indeed, Argyris and Schon's framework continues to assume individuals engage in goal-setting and

rational decision-making that Bourdieu's cultural reproduction theory rejects, even if the goals are tacit or unconscious to the actor. My use of the term preferences in use does not assume that teacher candidates engage in this type of goal-setting. I use the term preferences in use to highlight the perceptions teacher candidates have about what makes a school desirable and the processes that teacher candidates undergo to find a teaching job. Still, the difference between espoused theories and theories in use remains a useful analytic distinction as it emphasizes how individuals may act in ways that are inconsistent with their stated beliefs. Rather, individual behavior may be congruent with a separate, practical logic that is implicit and based upon experience with the social world.

Examining teacher career decisions, then, should involve trying to understand the practical logic teacher candidates possess as well as how their espoused theories and theories in use compare. A cultural reproduction theory predicts that teacher candidates end up working in particular schools not entirely as the result of a rational calculation or adherence to explicit rules, but because they act in accordance with their sense of their social position and where they fit. Existing research on teachers' career decisions suggests that teacher candidates have espoused preferences for particular features of schools, such as supportive principals or small classes. This conception of teacher candidates' job choices assumes that teacher candidates are consciously establishing their preferences and researching schools to find the best match given their list of preferences. A cultural reproduction view of teachers' job choices, on the other hand, suggests that teacher candidates are not acting out these preferences in a linear fashion. Rather, teacher candidates are navigating their way through the hiring process using their practical understanding of how they could make the best match.

Espoused Preferences

Table 16 shows survey data on the percentage of teacher candidates from the initial survey that listed a given characteristic as one of the three most important features of schools in their job search. Teacher candidates' espoused preferences placed the most importance on organizational characteristics of schools, location, and issues of curriculum and curriculum materials. Teacher candidates had strong preferences to teach in schools that support them in their first year of teaching. Thirty-eight percent of teacher candidates said working in a school that provided them with mentors or other forms of beginning teacher support was one of the most important features in their job search. Likewise, 32.5% of teacher candidates said working in a school with a supportive principal was one of the most important characteristics. Teacher candidates also cared about the relationship between teachers in a school. Almost one-quarter of the teacher candidates (22.2%) said they wanted to teach in a school where the teachers get along and 17.0% wanted a school where teachers talk about their instruction.

The qualitative data mirrored this double meaning of staff collegiality. Teacher candidates wanted to work in schools where teachers collaborated and instruction was a collective practice, but they also wanted to be friends with their colleagues and feel part of a family. For example, Heather described visiting a school where her peers had completed their internships. She liked the staff because they were, "part of this whole ... family at the school and ... I really am looking for a school like that, where I feel like I belong and I have friends on the staff." For Heather and other teacher candidates, the social relationships among teachers were just as important as the professional ones.

Table 16 - Teacher Candidates' Espoused Preferences: Characteristics Named as One of the Three Most Important Features in Job

Search

<i>School characteristic</i>	<i>All teacher candidates</i>	<i>By race</i>			<i>By career status</i>	
		<i>White</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Other minority</i>	<i>Mid-career changer</i>	<i>New college graduate</i>
Faculty mentors/ beginning teacher support	37.7%	38.9%	20.7%*	50.0%	36.4%	38.8%
Supportive school leadership	32.5	32.3	37.9	26.9	35.4	30.6
Availability of textbooks and other materials	25.3	25.2	24.1	23.1	22.2	26.2
A staff that gets along well	22.2	24.8*	13.8	7.7~	22.2	22.4
Close proximity to my home	22.2	23.0	17.2	15.4	24.2	21.3
An effective student discipline policy	20.1	21.2	17.2	19.2	24.2	18.0
Mission/vision of school compatible with mine	19.7	20.4	3.5*	30.8	12.1*	24.0*
Good reputation for teaching practices	18.0	19.5	10.3	15.4	19.2	16.4
A staff that talks about their instruction	17.0	16.4	13.8	30.8~	21.2	15.3
Curriculum that I like to teach	16.3	18.1	10.3	11.5	13.1	18.6
High salary	14.5	14.6	20.7	7.7	12.1	15.9
Small classes	13.5	12.8	13.8	19.2	12.1	14.2
Good condition of the facilities	9.3	8.0	17.2~	7.7	9.1	9.3
Many racial/ethnic minority students	8.7	6.6*	13.8	19.2*	7.1	9.8
Students from the same socioeconomic background as me	3.5	3.1	3.5	7.7	4.0	3.3
Low-achieving students	2.1	1.8	3.5	3.9	2.0	2.2
High-achieving students	1.0	0.9	3.5	0.0	0.0	1.6

Note: These data come from the initial survey. N=289.

~ p<.1, * p<.05.

Location was another school feature that was very important to teacher candidates. Slightly less than one-quarter of teacher candidates said that being in a school that was close to their home was one of the most important characteristics. Location appeared to be even more important to teacher candidates in the qualitative data as location was the most frequently mentioned characteristic they preferred. Teachers wanted to work close to home. This was true both of older teacher candidates who own homes and have children in school and of young college graduates, many of whom want to live close to their parents. The interview data also suggested that wanting a school in close proximity to home means that teacher candidates did not want to move in order to find a teaching job.

When teacher candidates shared their espoused preferences, characteristics of students appeared less important to them and many teacher candidates explicitly stated that these features did not matter in their job search. Teacher candidates were least likely to say that student characteristics were one of the most important factors in their job search. For example, only 1% of teachers said teaching high-achieving students was one of the most important features. Yet, several teacher candidates in the interview sample did want to teach in Title I schools or schools that served low-income students. Many of these teacher candidates saw teaching as a form of service. For teacher candidates who wanted to teach students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, they often spoke about wanting to give back to their community or make an impact.

Further, the survey data suggested that the characteristics most important to teachers are likely to vary among schools within a district. Of the ten most important characteristics, seven are school-level characteristics, such as beginning teacher support,

supportive leadership, relationships between teachers, teaching practices, and school discipline policies. Another factor, curriculum, could be determined at either the school or district level. Two characteristics, availability of materials and proximity, are more strongly associated with district characteristics and may vary less within a district.

Teacher candidates' espoused preferences did vary somewhat. White teacher candidates were more likely to say that having a staff that gets along was one of the most important features and less likely to say that working in a school with many racial minority students was most important. The pattern for teacher candidates from other racial minority backgrounds was reversed; they were more likely to say that working in a school with many minority students was one of the most important features and less likely to say that having a staff that gets along was important. African American teacher candidates were less likely to say that having beginning teacher support or a school mission that matches their own were among the most important features in their job search, but more likely to say that good condition of the facilities was. Compared to new college graduates, mid-career changers cared more about having a mission that was compatible with their own and less about having students from the same socioeconomic background as themselves.

Activating Practical Logic and Preferences in Use

The espoused preferences of teacher candidates were consistent with previous research on teachers' career decisions. Teacher candidates cared about how they would be supported in their teaching, including the availability of beginning teacher support, support from their principal, and collaboration with their colleagues (Johnson & Birkland, 2003; Kardos et al., 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). But the way teacher

candidates activated their practical logic during the job search was often inconsistent with their espoused preferences. These preferences in use appeared to give more weight to familiarity, feelings of comfort, and perceptions of schools based on student characteristics. In particular, the way that teacher candidates approached the job search at the district level reduced the importance of school-level organizational characteristics and draws attention to how teachers decided to apply or not apply in particular places due to feelings of where they would be comfortable. As described below, the strategies that teacher candidates used to identify available teaching positions required that they be familiar with and have social connections to schools. Further, the lack of information on schools, especially on characteristics in teacher candidates' espoused preferences, narrowed their attention to student demographics and achievement.

Approaching the Job Search at the District Level

Teacher candidates in this study tended to focus on districts, rather than schools within districts, in their job search. The level that teacher candidates chose reflected their practical sense of what created distinctions between teaching jobs and highlights contradictions between their espoused preferences and preferences in use. Survey respondents were asked to name specific schools that they considered their most desired and their least desired place to teach, although many teacher candidates only named districts. Table 17 shows the percentage of teacher candidates who named a specific school and the percentage that only named a district. When thinking about their most desired place to teach, 39.8% of teacher candidates only named a district. The difference was more apparent when teacher candidates thought about places in which they did not want to work, suggesting that teacher candidates were especially likely to avoid entire

districts as places they did not want to work.¹² To some extent, it made sense to focus on districts rather than schools when looking for a job; districts did organize much of their recruitment and screening through central human resource departments. Thus, teacher candidates appeared to be responding to the structure of the teacher labor market.

Table 17 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Named a Specific School, Named a District but Not a School, or Did Not Name Any District as Their Most Desired and Least Desired Places to Teach

<i>Type of response</i>	<i>Most desired school</i>	<i>Least desired school</i>
Named a specific school	55.7%	30.1%
Named a district but not a school	39.8	53.3
Did not name either school or district	4.5	16.6

Note: These data come from the initial survey. N=289.

Yet the reasons teacher candidates gave for focusing on districts in their job search indicated other motivations. One reason teacher candidates gave was that they did care about district-level features such as geographic location, availability of instructional materials, and, to a lesser extent, salary. In this way, teacher candidates may have acted in accordance with some of their espoused preferences when they focused on districts in their job search. However, the focus on districts also suggests that their preferences in use were inconsistent with their espoused preferences because it placed more weight on district, rather than school, characteristics. Although teacher candidates talked about selecting schools, they actually focused on geographic areas or districts.

¹² The 5% of teacher candidates who did not name either a school or a district represents item nonresponse. Likewise, the 17% of teacher candidates who did not name either a school or a district represents a combination of item nonresponse and, most likely, an indication that some teacher candidates will teach anywhere. Some teachers who did not name either a school or district as least desired wrote in that they would work anywhere.

The second reason that teacher candidates focused on the district in their job search is that they saw fewer differences between schools in a district than they did between districts. Seventy percent of the teacher candidates interviewed saw few differences between schools within their desired districts. For example, Kelly said, “I primarily focused on the district... When I looked at schools within the districts, it seemed from the information I could get that they were the same.” Like Kelly, many teacher candidates saw fewer differences between schools than between districts.

This takes on increased importance as teacher candidates anticipated staying in one district once they were hired. Claire, for example, recognized that district personnel policies reward teachers who remained in one district and she felt she would be “stuck” in a district because, “Well, with retirement and tenure and the job market that it is, it’s really hard to switch districts and once, like if you’re in a district for ten years, you lose all those years if you switch districts.” Claire thus focused her job search at the district level because, if you must spend your whole career in one district, “you want it to be one that you like.” This raised the stakes of where they took their first job because teacher candidates did not want to be “stuck” in the wrong district. Teacher candidates like Claire and others who used the district as the focus of their job search were acting based on their practical sense of what differences between teaching jobs were important. Many teacher candidates who applied to homogeneous districts thought distinctions between districts—such as the community served and location—were the most important in deciding where they wanted to spend their career.

In contrast, teacher candidates who wanted to teach in large urban districts were more likely to talk about differences between schools within a district, which was not

surprising given the greater variation within large districts. Teacher candidates who wanted to teach in Smithton, for example, were more likely to recognize that not all Smithton schools were the same. In particular, African American teacher candidates were more likely to recognize differences between schools in a district. On the survey, 30% of African American teacher candidates named two different schools in the Smithton district as their most desired and least desired schools, compared to only 3% of teacher candidates from other racial backgrounds who chose two schools in the same district as their most and least desired schools. The differences between teacher candidates due to race is noteworthy and suggests that African American teacher candidates were activating a different practical logic or sense of how the teacher labor market is structured than teacher candidates from other racial groups. African American teacher candidates—although they largely confined their job search to Smithton Public Schools and charter schools—saw a lot of distinctions between schools. Other teacher candidates, who were mostly White, avoided Smithton schools and viewed them as all the same. The composition of teacher candidates' social networks, described below, may contribute to how they came to know different districts.

Identifying Open Positions

Teacher candidates could not apply to jobs if they did not know they were available. By far, the number one way teacher candidates identified open positions is through the Internet. Teacher candidates looked at both individual district websites and at consortiums of education agencies, although they were most likely to go directly to the personnel website of specific school districts. According to popular lore, the Internet is supposed to be a great equalizer, providing access to a wide range information in a non-

discriminatory way.¹³ Thus, teacher candidates in one metropolitan area should all have equal chances to learn about job opportunities in various districts; *districts'* use of the Internet to publicize their available teaching positions on the Internet should not have any effect on teachers' job searches, so long as they post jobs in a public space in some manner. *Teacher candidates'* use of the Internet to identify available teaching positions, however, did impact which open positions they identified and pursued.

More than three-quarters of teacher candidates went directly to the websites of specific districts in which they wanted to work to check for available positions. This was not surprising given that job postings and application screening are usually organized by district human resource personnel. Yet the districts which teacher candidates decided to check for open positions were limited to those with which they were already familiar. For example, when asked if she applied to every open teaching position she saw, Claire replied, "Well, the only districts that I'm checking are the ones I'd potentially be interested in. So that kinda narrows it down." Thus, Claire's espoused preferences for a supportive principal and collaboration among teachers were not directly supported by the processes she uses to identify open positions, which emphasized two preferences in use: location and familiarity.

Claire elaborated by saying she was "just going on ones that I have heard about or ones in this area because I think that's the scariest thing about teaching is you don't know what you're getting yourself into unless you know about that school district." In other words, Claire used a self-imposed filter of familiarity. Positions in districts that were

¹³ All teacher candidates interviewed for this study had Internet access and, despite the fact that they were not asked this question directly on the survey or in the interview, the frequency with which they discussed using the Internet suggested they were experienced Internet users.

unfamiliar to her were not even considered. Claire would not know those positions were open because she relied on checking specific district websites. Claire's narrowing of districts she would "potentially be interested in" occurred early in the job search process. She relied on her practical sense of what it would be like to teach in particular districts before she investigated whether there were open teaching positions. This practical sense was structured by informal experiences in or stories about these various communities and it structured whether she perceived these districts as desirable places to work.

In contrast to Claire's strategy of focusing on specific district websites, teacher candidates who identified open positions through county-wide consortiums had more opportunities to learn about positions in districts with which they were not already familiar as they could search a wide geographic area for teaching jobs. Still, even the way teacher candidates used consortiums restricted the types of schools to which they were exposed. For example, about 40% of teacher candidates who used county-level education job banks did not pay equal attention to all teaching jobs posted on those consortiums.

For example, Richard said,

There's a couple of general websites that, they have all the districts, say in [the state], but ... I don't just go out to any district, some of them I don't even know. I think there's this one, [Cross Creek], I have never heard of that one, and it may be here near [Redville]... I've never heard of it before, where is that one? But in general, I'd like to be closer, [River Rock] ... [Orangelake is] starting to get a little bit further north, but I would be interested in going up there, again I have some contacts up there, it draws me up in that direction. And then I have some contacts that are up in [Hampton]. A little farther, probably 40 minute drive, but they have a position that's a middle school math teacher posted right now.

As in Claire's experience, we see the importance of familiarity in Richard's strategies for identifying available jobs. While a short commute was one of Richard's most important

espoused preferences, he did not want apply to districts he had never heard of before.

Richard was hesitant to respond to the Cross Creek job, although he definitely wanted to apply to Orangelake and Hampton—two districts that were farther away but familiar to him through his social network.

In addition to a sense of familiarity and comfort, Richard's experience also emphasizes how teacher candidates relied on their social networks to help them locate teaching jobs. Richard was particularly active in using his social network on the job search. He said,

Then you continue to follow through with word of mouth with friends and friends of friends who are working in districts. Just try to get information, you know, making sure people are aware and knowing that I need help. An administrator that I worked with at student teaching, she did a mock interview for me. ... And then, a friend's dad used to be a superintendent in a district and he, he's at least reviewed some information and given me feedback.

Richard's social network included the principal he worked with during his student teaching and his friend's dad. Like Richard, many teacher candidates relied both on professional colleagues—such as contacts from their student teaching, tutoring, or substitute teaching experiences—and personal friends to help them identify open positions.

Like Richard, Vanessa also had a wide social network because she worked as a teacher aide in Smithton Public Schools and had been tutoring adults in a community college. Thus, she knew many people who worked in education. Yet Vanessa and Richard talked about very different schools when describing their job search, despite graduating from the same teacher preparation program. Richard's network was focused in wealthy suburbs and allowed him to learn about available positions in these more affluent

areas. Vanessa's network was focused in Smithton Public Schools and in low-income suburbs immediately surrounding Smithton. The segregation of the Smithton metropolitan area by race and socioeconomic status resulted in Vanessa and Richard having different social networks. Thus, their similar strategy of using social contacts to help secure a teaching job contributed to teacher sorting as they identified jobs in schools in a familiar social position.

Deciding Where to Apply

Teacher candidates' methods for identifying available positions served as an initial filtering mechanism in their job search as they did not learn about all open positions in the area. Yet many teacher candidates did not apply to all open positions they did identify. Some teacher candidates said they would work anywhere and did not claim to use any filtering criteria once they identified an open position. Yet these teacher candidates were in the minority. While 40% of teacher candidates made it clear in their interviews they would not apply to some districts, 20% of teacher candidates said they would apply to any open position. The remaining 40% of teacher candidates gave conflicting evidence, indicating at one point in the interview that they were open to any job and indicating at other times that there were some teaching jobs they would not accept. Teacher candidates were hesitant to avoid particular schools altogether because of the tight labor market. Still, 80% of teacher candidates in this study who recognized the lack of available jobs in the area indicated they would not apply to every open teaching position they identified. This section explores the extent to which teacher candidates applied to a narrow set of schools and the characteristics associated with where teacher candidates did not apply. The schools teacher candidates avoided were those they told me

they felt uncomfortable in or assumed they would be uncomfortable. This uncomfortable feeling was based on the lack of affinity between their habitus and the school community.

Table 18 reports survey data on the percentage of teacher candidates who planned to apply to various types of schools.¹⁴ It was clear that teacher candidates did not plan to apply to all schools, even within one geographic area. Most teacher candidates—almost three-quarters—planned to apply to moderate-income suburbs around Smithton. Yet under half of teacher candidates planned to apply to low-income suburbs around Smithton and just one-quarter planned to apply to Smithton Public Schools.

Table 18 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Planned to Apply to Various Schools

<i>Type of school</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Regular public schools in Smithton	26.1
Regular public schools in high income suburbs near Smithton	67.5
Regular public schools in moderate income suburbs near Smithton	74.5
Regular public schools in low income suburbs near Smithton	48.0
Charter schools	46.7
Private schools with a religious affiliation	37.9
Private schools with no religious affiliation	46.4
Schools in rural areas	60.0

Note: These data come from the initial survey. N=289.

Denise, like several teacher candidates in the study, would not apply to Smithton Public Schools because it was “an inner city school” where she would be “totally out of [her] element.” Denise explained,

As much as idealistically you’d like to be somewhere to make a difference, I have to recognize my limitations and know if I’m not entirely comfortable I wouldn’t be doing a good job. So I’d like to stick at least somewhere within my realm of experience socially. You know, I mean, like somewhere in the suburbs.

¹⁴ Chapter 5 examines in more detail where teacher candidates applied and the variations between teacher candidates in where they applied.

Denise recognized that inner city schools needed good teachers. But she also believed that she would be uncomfortable in Smithton Public Schools and preferred to teach in a school that was “within [her] realm of experience socially.” Because Denise was not familiar with the experiences of inner city children, she would be “nervous.”

Viewed through a cultural reproduction lens, Denise preferred to teach in a school where her habitus was structured by similar experiences of her students. As our habitus is structured by past experiences, when we interact in situations similar to those past experiences, actions feel natural. It is this sense of feeling that actions are natural or fitting in that teacher candidates described as feeling comfortable. On the other hand, when we are placed in a social situation that is foreign to our past experiences, our habitus provides us with few guides for appropriate behavior and actions feel forced or we notice thinking through what would be an appropriate action. When teacher candidates were unsure of the natural course of action, they described a sense of feeling out of place and being uncomfortable. This was what Denise expected to feel if she were to teach in Smithton.

Denise’s experience highlights a preference in use many teacher candidates had when thinking about where they wanted to work. When teacher candidates explained why they wanted to work in particular schools, about half of them indicated that these schools were desirable because they were places where they felt comfortable. Almost all instances of teacher candidates talking about wanting to work in schools where they felt comfortable occurred when describing why they focused their job search in specific areas or avoided particular districts. Only one teacher candidate explicitly said that comfort was a criterion she used to evaluate potential jobs. This suggests that while feeling

comfortable was an important preference in use, it was not an espoused preference.

Teacher candidates were more active in seeking out job opportunities in places they felt comfortable. These included schools where they student taught and schools they attended as a student, as well as schools they thought were “like” those they with which have previous experience. On the other hand, teacher candidates avoided districts where they felt uncomfortable, or, rather, assumed they would feel uncomfortable.

The role of feeling uncomfortable in teacher candidates’ job decisions illustrates how their practical logic led teacher candidates to sort themselves into schools. Not all teacher candidates felt uncomfortable in Smithton schools, as Denise did. Indeed, African American teacher candidates felt most comfortable in Smithton as they had larger numbers of African American teachers on staff. For example, Zoe said, “I prefer not to work at a school where I am the only minority on the staff...It’s my comfort level. I don’t want everybody to come to me and look at me as the minority spokesperson.” Further, it was not the case that teacher candidates’ comfort level increased monotonically with the socioeconomic status of the community surrounding the school. Actually, several teacher candidates—including Denise—felt uncomfortable in both very affluent and very poor communities. A pre-student teaching visit to a school in Hampton, an affluent community near her hometown, made Denise think she did not want to work there. She said,

Well, like in [Hampton], it was a wonderful building. I’m sure the people were nice but they made me nervous. I didn’t feel like I’d fit in, but I can’t put a finger on why. I just felt it. ... I don’t drive a fancy car. I don’t wear the same clothes. ...I didn’t spend a lot of money on those externals. And when I’m around people that do, I guess I feel intimidated. Sounds awful materialistic but I know that’s one thing that makes me nervous. But in my community, in [Lakeview], I’m comfortable. We’re all working hard to raise our kids. None of us have money.

Denise exemplified the embodied aspect of teacher candidates' practical sense when she described her feelings of discomfort in Hampton. Denise recognized that the tastes and dispositions of teachers in Hampton—their habitus—did not match her own. Denise had a bodily reaction to this mismatch—she was nervous and intimidated. Thus, Denise did not feel comfortable in Smithton or in Hampton, but was most comfortable when the social position of the school matched her own. She could understand the experiences and attitudes of both students and teachers in her home community—that is, there was an affinity between their habitus—and so preferred to work there. Denise's experience on the job search illustrates how teacher candidates avoided schools where their habitus provided them with little knowledge of appropriate behavior and where the social experiences of students and teachers in the school did not match their own. As teacher candidates came from varying social and cultural backgrounds, they sorted themselves into schools based upon their own background.

Denise's experience underscores the role of social class in teacher candidates' perceptions of where they "fit." Denise picked up on the cultural practices of other teachers that may indicate their social class and implied that these practices affected the collegiality in the school. This suggests that beneath teacher candidates' espoused preferences for collegiality is a desire for a sense of familiarity, social ease, and class similarity. Indeed, these factors were interrelated as teacher candidates were most likely to have positive perceptions of staff collegiality in schools where they felt comfortable.

Gathering and Using Information in a Job Search

A rational decision-making approach to teachers' career choices assumes that teacher candidates have espoused preferences for schools and compare schools to each

other based upon those espoused preferences. This assumes that teacher candidates have access to and use information about the school characteristics they most prefer. While the teacher candidates in this study did research schools, the processes they used to gather and interpret information about schools were sometimes inconsistent with their espoused preferences. In particular, teacher candidates' most important source of information focused their attention on student demographic and achievement information. Further, teacher candidates did not seek out information on unfamiliar schools. The practical logic that teacher candidates brought to the job search led them to interpret student characteristics as indicators of school organizational characteristics they preferred and ignored schools where they did not already have information.

Sources of Information

Teacher candidates had access to several sources of information during their job search, although these sources varied in the types of information available and the distinctions they made between schools. Tables 19 and 20 present data on teacher candidates' sources of information. Table 19 presents survey data on their sources of information on their most desired and least desired schools. Table 20 uses interview data and lists the percentage of teacher candidates who named various sources of information as how they know what schools are like. While the qualitative and quantitative data showed differing emphases on the most important source of information—perhaps due to questionnaire wording¹⁵—they both indicated that teacher candidates had three main sources of information: the Internet, word of mouth, and interviews.

¹⁵ There are two possible reasons for this disagreement in the data. One, because the survey data asks teacher candidates to name specific schools as their most desired and least desired places to teach, they listed schools that have high salience for them. Thus, they likely listed schools in which they knew teachers

Table 19 – Sources of Information on Teacher Candidates’ Most Desired and Least Desired Schools, as Indicated on the Initial Survey

<i>Source of information</i>	<i>Most desired school</i>	<i>Least desired school</i>
Conversations/interview with teachers in this school	71.5	54.7
Conversations with family/friends who have direct experience with this school	69.2	62.2
School or district website	66.3	36.1
Other direct personal experience with this school	59.9	49.4
Experience student teaching at this school	48.2	34.2
Conversations/interview with the principal of this school	46.8	25.0
My mentor/cooperating teacher	46.2	28.4
Newspapers/Media/TV	31.3	46.7
My university supervisor	23.3	28.2
N	214	195

Almost all teacher candidates said they used the Internet to gather information about schools, including specific school and district websites and websites such as www.greatschools.net. While the Internet did have information about a broad range of schools, the type of information available was limited. Teacher candidates generally obtained information on student and community demographics and test scores from the Internet. For example, Stephanie described how she used the Internet to help guide her decision-making:

I use GreatSchools.com as one. It gives you statistics on the racial makeup of the school and the free and reduced lunch percentage. And then it gives some parent reviews which are a little skewed ... But they also give you test results, so how the school’s doing ... But then I also use the website epodunk.com which gives you information on community.

or other people with some experience at those schools. Two, the survey asked specifically about using the school or district webpage as a source of information from the Internet. While many teacher candidates did visit school websites directly, they also relied on general websites to gather information on schools.

...And then I also use, this is an odd one but I use Century 21.com just to get an idea of the homes that are in the area and also, it gives you an idea of the schools.

While Stephanie seemed to be a critical consumer of information—that is, she was aware that Internet information was “skewed”—her use of the Internet narrowed the distinctions she was able to make between schools. This illustrates how teacher candidates’ preferences in use did not support their espoused preferences. Websites rarely provided information on teacher candidates’ espoused preferences, such as principal support and teacher collegiality. Instead, the Internet focused their attention on student and community characteristics. Stephanie said she strongly preferred to teach in a school with a progressive instructional philosophy, but when gathering information to “help [her] make that decision,” Stephanie focused on demographics, test scores, and house values.

Table 20 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Said They Know About Schools Through Various Sources of Information, as Indicated Through Interviews

<i>Sources of information</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Internet	85.2%
Ask questions in interview/visit	59.3
Visit, observe, walk around school	59.3
I don't really know	55.6
Educational colleagues-Teachers	51.9
Interactions during interview/visit	44.4
Ask friends who live in the area	40.7
Educational colleagues-Student teachers	29.6
I've lived here for a while	18.5
Educational colleagues-University	14.8
I've been working there	14.8
Look at test scores	14.8
Reading news	11.1
Pretend to be a parent	7.4
Note: N=27	

Just as teacher candidates identified available positions using word of mouth, they also gathered information about what it is like to teach in various schools through their personal and professional social networks. When teacher candidates heard of openings in various schools, they asked their professional network about those schools. Vanessa said, “Well, the schools that I’m going to apply at, other teachers on the outside know those teachers, schools, principals, so I can ask.” Yet teachers relied on personal contacts as much as professional contacts to gather information and form opinions about the desirability of teaching in particular districts. These personal contacts did not work in education and therefore may not have had insight into a school from a teacher’s perspective. For example, when Courtney was researching schools, she sought out information from residents in the area. She said, “If I know somebody in the area, give them a call and say what do you think about this community. Do you know anything about the school district?” While teacher candidates did value information from other teachers who had more first-hand knowledge of working in schools, they also relied on information from community members and parents. This strategy for gathering information about schools illustrates how teacher candidates’ preferences in use may not be consistent with their espoused preferences. While area residents may have information about schools, they were less likely to have information about the characteristics teachers said they most preferred.

Teacher candidates also obtained information on schools during job interviews. Except for the few schools which teacher candidates knew about through direct experience working there (perhaps as a substitute, student teacher, or tutor), asking questions in a job interview was the best way to learn about a school. But teacher

candidates also formed perceptions of schools during the job interview just by interacting with other people. This type of information was distinguished from asking questions in an interview because teacher candidates focused less on the content of the discussion than on the nature of the interaction. Teacher candidates talked about getting a “feel for the principal and other teachers” from their clothes, their manner of speech, and their body language. Amanda thought that talking with potential colleagues was the best way to know what it would be like to work with them. She was looking for “Friendliness, personable. You can just tell people are not being genuine when you see them one on one.” Teacher candidates had a hard time expressing how they get a sense of schools through these types of interactions, but that does not diminish their importance. It was these interactions that guided teacher candidates’ perceptions of whether they felt comfortable in a school.

Indeed, teacher candidates also felt they could get a sense of a school without interacting with anyone. Claire described how she was eager to work in a school due to the positive atmosphere she felt. She said,

I was really, really struck, and I’m being completely honest when I say this, when I walked in the building, there was a very positive atmosphere. ... It was kinda weird actually because ... I didn’t see anyone initially but it just felt like a really good place.

Even though Claire did not talk to anyone when she first entered the school, she was “struck” by a positive feeling about the school and said it “just felt like a really good place.” Claire may have tacitly recognized an affinity between her habitus and that of the school community when she entered the building. A cultural reproduction framework suggests that it is teacher candidates’ habitus that provides them with a feel for where they fit. When teacher candidates interacted in a situation that corresponded to their

habitus, they felt comfortable and did not notice cultural markers that structured the interaction. On the other hand, when they interacted in a situation that did not correspond to their habitus, they noticed distinctions and believed that things were “out of place,” resulting in a feeling of discomfort.

Missing Information

Over half of teacher candidates indicated that they really did not know about some features of schools. Table 21 shows the percentage of teacher candidates who did not know whether or not their most desired and least desired schools had the top ten features teacher candidates most strongly preferred. This table shows that teacher candidates lacked a lot of information about schools they considered their top choice school. For example, while 38% of teacher candidates strongly preferred to teach in a school with beginning teacher support (see Table 16), 48.9% of teacher candidates did not know whether their top choice school provided mentors or beginning teacher support. This suggests that the sources of information teacher candidates had on schools did not provide the information necessary to make informed decisions. Teacher candidates were most likely to have information on the geographic location of the school, the availability of textbooks and other instructional materials, and whether the schools had a good reputation for teaching practices. Significantly, teacher candidates were least likely to know about their most important espoused preferences—the provision of mentors or other forms of beginning teacher support and relationships between teachers in the school. This again highlights how teacher candidates’ preferences in use may not be consistent with their espoused preferences.

Table 21 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Did Not Know Whether Their Most Desired and Least Desired Schools Had the Characteristics They Named as Most Important

<i>School characteristic</i>	<i>Most desired school</i>	<i>Least desired school</i>
Mentors/beginning teacher support are provided to new teachers in this school.	48.9%	66.7%
This school has a supportive school leadership.	23.8	53.2
Textbooks and other instructional materials are available when needed in this school.	12.6	24.3
Teachers in this school get along well.	34.5	56.4
This school is close to my home.	3.57	3.97
This school has an effective student discipline policy.	24.4	33.7
This school's mission or vision is compatible with my own.	22.0	53.0
This school has a good reputation for teaching practices.	14.3	25.2
Teachers in this school talk about their instruction.	33.1	57.5
This school has a curriculum that I like to teach.	19.7	47.4
N	214	201

Note: These data come from the initial survey.

Further, Table 21 shows that teacher candidates were much more likely to lack information about schools in which they did not want to work. For some characteristics, teacher candidates were twice as likely to lack information on their least desired school than on their most desired school. This included whether the school had supportive leadership (53.2% compared to 23.8%), availability of textbooks (24.3% compared to 12.6%), whether the school mission or vision was compatible with their own (53.0% compared to 22.0%), and whether the school has a curriculum that the teacher likes (47.4% compared to 19.7%). This suggests that rather than gathering information about a number of schools to assess which school would give them the most satisfaction, teacher candidates eliminated some schools after very little consideration.

As noted above, teacher candidates focused their job search efforts in places that were familiar to them. If teacher candidates were unfamiliar with a school prior to entering the job market, they were less likely to do research on a school to see if it matched their preferences. For example, Claire received three job offers simultaneously during her job search. Two offers were in districts which she knew a great deal about—one from student teaching and one from extensive research she had done about the district. Claire “never gave much consideration” to the third offer, however. While she did apply, she did not research schools in the district through the Internet or try to visit the schools as she had in the others. Claire did engage in a rational decision-making process as she “looked at the pros and cons” of the various schools, but Claire never included the third school in her list of pros and cons. She just “didn’t know anything about” the third school. Rather than try to gather information about the school to see how it might match her preferences—and despite a positive interview where she liked the principal and thought the “attitude was so welcoming”—Claire never considered the third school alongside the other two.

Claire’s experience, like many of the others’ experiences, suggests that when teacher candidates lacked information about potential schools or districts, they did not always try to fill in the gaps. Rather, teacher candidates used proxies for the characteristics they said they really cared about, again belying their espoused preferences. When teacher candidates did not have information about something, they were likely to make assumptions based on the population of students. For example, Stephanie cared deeply about teaching in a school with progressive pedagogies and approaches to literacy instruction, but her perception of whether schools would have progressive practices came

from her student teaching experience in a suburban school with a high concentration of African American students. Stephanie said,

My assumptions based on what I've experienced are that it's gonna actually be a more White area and a more middle class to affluent community. Now, I could be wrong and I'm willing to be proved wrong but at this point, when you have very little information to go on based on schools, I'm using demographics to guide my decisions.

Stephanie felt she had to make “assumptions” in the face of “very little information to go on.” Her practical sense about the relationship between progressive practices and student demographics came from how her habitus led her to interpret her student teaching experience. She was placed in a predominantly African American community where the median income was lower than other parts of the county (although still higher than Smithton and the state average) that is just outside the Smithton borders. She explained,

I just have had so many problems this year that I've been really turned off by the demographics that I've seen. I get very little parent support and I think that's part of it. And I think nobody really is aware what's going on in the school ...they're failing within the central office so then you would expect them to be failing outside. And I see that as the demographics changed, the infrastructure has changed. And I can't say for sure if it is really related but at this point in my career I'm letting it help me decide.

Stephanie linked the infrastructure of the district to the changing demographics and is “turned off by the demographics.” Because she saw this relationship in one district, she extrapolated to other districts. That is, she assumed that other districts with the same demographic characteristics would also lack adequate infrastructure and parent support, and will be “disorganized” and “failing.”

Heather also thought she knew what it would be like to teach in a school based upon the students it served. Despite a desire to teach in an urban school due to her

religious beliefs, Heather avoided particular neighborhoods in an urban district because of her assumptions about the possibility of success. She said she applied to schools in one neighborhood but not another and explained,

It's, you know, really dangerous and I'd probably be the only White person per mile... There'll probably be some needy kids there but it's not gonna be the lowest of the low, I guess. I don't wanta, in my first year of teaching, go into something that would be like impossible to succeed at.

Heather, like several other teacher candidates, felt that it would be impossible to succeed in some schools, even though she only knew the neighborhood of the schools. Heather drew drawing on cultural characteristics of the community in forming these perceptions and linked the absence of White people from an area to the “lowest of the low” and the ability to be successful as a teacher.

Another proxy that a few teacher candidates used in the face of missing information about schools is test scores. Four teacher candidates said they made assumptions about schools based upon their test scores. Daniel, for example, was concerned about principal leadership. He wanted to work in a school where the principal had a vision for the school. He looked at trends in test scores to give him information about the leadership and teachers in a school. He said,

Just cause you've got the mean state average doesn't mean a lot. But if you're consistently, you know, kind of right there or a school getting better, I think you can kind of gauge off of that. ... I think if you're consistently bad then something's gotta be up. Whether it's teachers, leadership, curriculum, something.

Daniel assumed that schools with consistently low test scores did not have effective leadership. Daniel, like a few other teacher candidates who said they learned about a school by looking at test scores, was not saying that high test scores themselves are

important, but that they served as indicators for features they did consider important.

While these assumptions may reflect beliefs about effective schools present in the media, they also reflected a teacher candidates' practical sense of the field of education.

Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter outlines the practical logic that guides teacher candidates' behavior during the job search. This practical logic is structured by teachers' social and cultural background and focuses their attention on particular districts, leads them to ignore schools in other districts, and affects how they interpret the limited information they have about various schools. In this way, teacher candidates' practical sense of the labor market emphasizes characteristics such as comfort and familiarity that guide job search decisions. The strategies teacher candidates use to identify open positions results in them not learning about opportunities in districts with which they are unfamiliar. Teacher candidates often eliminate unfamiliar districts from their job search without trying to become more familiar with them because they assume they will be uncomfortable in those places. Teacher candidates' strategies for gathering information on schools emphasizes perceptions of comfort as they give equal weight to the nature of interactions and "feeling" of a school as they do to the content of the interviews.

Previous studies of teachers' career decisions emphasized their preferences for organizational characteristics that support their instructional growth and particular needs as new teachers (Johnson & Birkland, 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Other research suggested these decisions result in teachers leaving schools that serve high proportions of racial minority, low-income, and low performing students. This study's focus on how teacher candidates deal with limited information suggests that both of these findings may

represent some truth. Teacher candidates in this study may prefer, for example, to work with a supportive principal that attends to conditions of teaching and learning in the school. But since they have no reliable way to assess this feature in most schools, they make assumptions based upon student demographics and achievement information, which is widely available through the Internet. Further, teacher candidates avoid schools where they feel they do not “fit” and prefer to teach in schools where they share social and cultural experiences with the students and staff. As most teacher candidates come from White, middle class backgrounds, they seek out schools in similar social positions. African American teacher candidates, many of whom in this study come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, also seek out schools in a similar social position as themselves. Thus, teacher candidates from varying socioeconomic backgrounds sort themselves into schools serving different student populations. If the supply of teacher candidates from racial minority or low socioeconomic backgrounds does not meet the demand, some schools will face continual staffing problems.

Consistent with this previous research, teacher candidates’ espoused preferences include a supportive principal, mentoring, ready availability of instructional materials, and location. But the way that teacher candidates navigate through the job search process suggests that other criteria play just as important a role in how teachers come to teach in particular schools. In short, the attributes that teacher candidates say they want in a school do not necessarily match the attributes of the school in which they want to work. These preferences in use include location, familiarity with schools, level of comfort in schools, and the sense of fit. Comfort and familiarity go hand in hand because teacher candidates are most comfortable in schools with familiar social and cultural

characteristics. The lack of explicit talk about comfort and familiarity as espoused criteria for evaluating potential schools does not diminish their importance. Teacher candidates use these features to talk about places where they really want to work and where they focus their job search efforts. As such, being familiar with a district or feeling comfortable in a school are powerful filtering agents in teachers' job searches. Indeed, location may serve as a proxy for familiarity in existing research as teacher candidates speak of familiar districts as those that are both geographically and socially proximal to them. This study underscores the importance of location as an espoused preference that also operates as a preference in use.

Teacher candidates rely primarily on the Internet and word of mouth for information both on which schools and districts have available positions and what it might be like to teach in those schools. Bourdieu (1984) describes how individuals, through interacting on the field, get a sense of their social trajectory. If teacher candidates have homogeneous social networks, they will only be exposed to schools that are socially proximal. Despite the fact that Richard and Vanessa attended the same teacher preparation program, the structural holes (Granovetter, 2005) in their social networks resulted in them learning about open positions in very different schools. Teacher candidates identify open positions in districts that are already familiar to them because they are located in communities where they live or visit. Again, these districts are socially proximal to teacher candidates. Yet, as this study shows, even when teacher candidates do learn about job opportunities in unfamiliar districts, the social distance still results in teacher candidates feeling uncomfortable or out of place and they choose not to apply to

these districts based on their habitus. As their habitus influences how they think they “fit” with other people, it reduces the impact of these novel sources of information.

That familiarity in and of itself made teaching jobs more attractive to teacher candidates is not surprising. Mere exposure to an object leads individuals to have positive evaluations (Zajonc, 1968). Advertising and political campaigns spend millions of dollars to familiarize us with their products and candidates. In other occupations, prior exposure or familiarity with a company leads jobseekers to have a positive image of working for the company and to pursue jobs with the company (Cable & Turban, 2003; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993). The findings presented here suggest a broader notion of familiarity than mere exposure, one that incorporates the degree of social similarity. Teacher candidates want to work in schools that are familiar to them—both literally and figuratively. They want to work in schools with which they have some prior experience, as well as in schools they see as similar to those they attended. Teacher candidates do learn about opportunities in districts that are otherwise unfamiliar to them—meaning they are not previously thinking of those districts as possible places of employment—but as those districts are socially distant they are likely to seem like foreign and unfamiliar places.

Bourdieu’s cultural reproduction theory is distinct from rational choice theory because practical logic rejects the idea that individuals act instrumentally. Rather, individual behavior is spontaneously generated by activating one’s practical logic in a specific situation. This framework may appear limited in the context of teachers’ career decisions because teacher candidates do believe they are acting strategically to secure a teaching job. But teacher candidates are not consciously aware of the ways their actions

narrow their job search. Teacher candidates use explicit strategies to improve their chances of getting a job offer in districts they most desire, but the features that are related to which district they most desire are not chosen strategies. Making decisions with a lack of information or the importance of familiarity in decision-making may be similar to notions of bounded rationality. Yet the contradiction between teachers' espoused preferences and their preferences in use suggest that teachers act in somewhat irrational ways.

The crowded labor market faced by teacher candidates in this study created difficulties in their job searches. The teacher candidates thought they were conducting quite broad job searches as they realized available jobs are scarce. Yet as some of the ways teacher candidates identified open positions narrowed their search, teacher candidates say they apply to every position they saw, not realizing that some districts went unnoticed. Teacher candidates do become more open to schools they initially avoid as the summer stretches on. Yet while some teacher candidates apply to a broad range of districts, they focus their efforts in places they most want to teach. This might mean a difference between submitting an online application on a district website with no follow-up phone call and personally dropping off resumes at every elementary school in a district dressed in a suit and calling later to follow-up with the principal. It could mean the difference between sending a form letter as a cover page or personalizing a cover letter after researching the school's mission statement and curriculum. When teacher candidates focus their job search in particular areas, they also increase the chances they will be offered jobs in those areas.

This chapter illustrates how teacher candidates' embodied sense of where they fit guide their decisions during the job search. Teacher candidates seek out places that are comfortable and familiar. Teachers feel most comfortable in schools that are socially similar to their own backgrounds as they can relate to students and feel they fit with the staff. This chapter challenges existing research on teachers' career decisions that focus on teachers' espoused preferences for schools by outlining how teachers' actions during the job search are sometimes inconsistent with their espoused preferences. The next chapter connects the experiences of the teacher candidates in the interview sample to broader patterns in the teacher labor market. It focuses on where teacher candidates apply and how their preferences relate to where they ended up working.

CHAPTER 5: SORTING AND SELF-SORTING: HOW PREFERENCES AND HIRING PRACTICES RELATE TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS

The previous chapter illustrated how the practical logic that teacher candidates brought to the job search led them to reproduce their own schooling experiences by focusing on preferences in use such as familiarity, comfort, and perceptions of fit. This chapter explores the overall degree of sorting of teachers among schools. In doing so, this chapter attempts to connect the individual decisions made by teacher candidates as portrayed in Chapter 4 with general patterns of teachers' career decisions evident in existing literature.

As discussed previously, existing research suggests that teachers are unequally distributed across schools in ways that disadvantage racial and ethnic minority and low-income students. This chapter explores the labor market processes that lead to the sorting of teacher candidates among schools based upon the racial and class composition of the students in the schools. In particular, this chapter examines the extent to which teacher candidates sort themselves among schools. Some existing research suggests that teacher preferences—such as preferences to work close to where they grew up or to teach students from their own ethnic backgrounds—contribute to the sorting of teachers among schools (Betts et al., 2000; Boyd et al., 2005a, 2005b; Hanushek et al., 2004). The decisions teacher candidates make during the job search process can play an active role in where they end up working. As shown in Chapter 4, the ways in which teacher candidates identify open positions serve as an initial filtering mechanism for the types of schools they see as available. Likewise, teacher candidates may decide to apply for jobs in some

schools or districts but not in others. Each step in the job search—applications, interviews, and offers—provides opportunities for teacher candidates to sort themselves into or out of particular types of schools.

A competing explanation for the inequitable distribution of teachers among schools focuses on school and district hiring practices in high and low-income areas. This explanation minimizes the role teachers or teacher behavior may have in teacher sorting and focuses attention instead on school hiring practices and demand for newly hired teachers. For example, teachers in low-income schools are more likely to be hired late in the summer or after the school year started than teachers in high-income schools (Johnson et al., 2004). Large urban districts—which tend to have poorer students and higher concentrations of racial minority students—have longer or delayed hiring processes due to teacher union transfer provisions, late vacancy notifications, and a reliance on state budgets that are often not finalized until the end of the summer (Levin & Quinn, 2003). As more affluent districts make job offers sooner, they can hire the best teachers, leaving lower quality teachers for districts that hire at the end of the summer, such as urban districts. While exploring the extent to which teachers self-sort themselves into schools, this chapter considers how the timing of job offers received from various districts affects teacher candidates' decisions.

It may be that factors other than student characteristics guide teachers' decisions. As districts with large concentrations of poor and minority students are often also under-resourced districts, then it may be teachers' preferences for high resource districts rather than preferences for particular types of students that lead to an inequitable distribution among schools. Teachers may be seeking out higher salaries or better working conditions,

such as smaller class sizes, availability of materials, or supportive work environments. Chapter 4 provided some evidence against this by demonstrating that teachers' preferences in use focus on feelings of comfort and fit—feelings that are guided by cultural understandings and perceptions—and that teachers rule out some schools or districts even though they have little information about the working conditions in those schools. In exploring how teachers become sorted among schools with varied student characteristics, this chapter will also examine the resource and working condition differences among schools.

To examine the degree of sorting in the teacher labor market, this chapter pays special attention to the extent to which teacher candidates' social and cultural background influences the decisions they make on the job search and how teachers may self-sort into schools. In doing so, it explores the extent to which the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of teacher candidates are related to the types of schools in which they end up working. I do not assume that teachers of particular class or race backgrounds are more or less effective teachers. Rather, examining whether teacher demographic characteristics influence where teachers end up teaching is important given the difficulty in recruiting individuals from particular backgrounds to enter teaching at all. For example, African American teachers are under represented in the teacher labor force (Kirby et al., 1999; Kirby & Hudson, 1993). If White teachers and African American teachers sort themselves into schools that predominantly serve students of their own racial background, then this creates shortages in predominantly African American schools. These shortages may force predominantly African American schools to hire lower quality teachers to compensate for the labor shortage even if the teachers initially

attracted to these schools are equally as effective as those attracted to predominantly White schools.

In addition to differences between teachers based upon their social and cultural backgrounds, this chapter also explores whether teachers' verbal ability influences how they are sorted across schools. Previous research links teachers' general ability with higher student achievement and uses teacher test scores as an indicator of teacher quality (Ferguson & Ladd, 1996; Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996). For this reason, I use teacher candidates' self-reported ACT score as an indicator of general ability. Teacher candidates who score in the top quartile of the distribution of ACT-takers in the sample¹⁶ are compared to those who scored in lower quartiles and those who did not take the ACT. I also explore whether male and female teacher candidates apply to or accept jobs in different schools. These results are located in Appendix E because, in general, there are fewer differences by gender. Further, while there is concern about the overall lack of men among the elementary teaching population, policymakers are less concerned about the distribution of male and female teachers across elementary schools.

This chapter begins by describing the steps in the job search. The rest of the chapter explores how teacher candidates' social and cultural background influenced how they navigated these steps and follows their progression through the job search. The second section examines which teacher candidates removed themselves from the labor pool and the number of applications submitted by those who stayed in the labor market. The second section follows teacher candidates' progression in the job search as they submitted applications, received offers, and accepted jobs. In doing so, it focuses on the

¹⁶ The top quartile of ACT-takers in the sample had a score of 26 or above.

student characteristics, employment conditions such as working conditions and salary, and location of teacher candidates' job options at each stage to examine how teacher candidates were distributed among schools. The third section explores the timing of hiring decisions to see if some schools made job offers later than other schools. The fourth section examines the relationship between teacher candidate initial preferences and their labor market outcomes. In doing so, this section explores characteristics of teacher candidates and their preferences that end up teaching in schools with high concentrations of poor or racial minority students and urban schools.

Steps in the Job Search

Figure 2 presents a model of the steps in the job search. It also shows the number of individuals in this study at each stage. For example, 171 respondents completed the follow-up survey and 90 of these respondents had a teaching job by the end of October 2006. Which teacher candidates ended the job search process with a teaching job and how they were matched to schools depended on decisions by both teacher candidates and hiring authorities in schools and districts (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006). Individuals entered the teacher labor market by deciding to become a teacher and pursuing teacher certification. Some individuals removed themselves from the job market at the end of their certification process but before applying for any jobs. Individuals who stayed in the teacher job market applied for at least one teaching job and may or may not have been offered job interviews by a school or district. Individuals who received no interview offers did not progress further in the job search. Teacher candidates with interview offers may or may not have been offered teaching jobs. Individuals with a teaching job offer could then decide to accept one of their offers or could decide to reject

all of their offers. Individuals who accepted one of their teaching offers ended up teaching while those who did not receive any offers or who rejected all of their offers did not end up teaching.

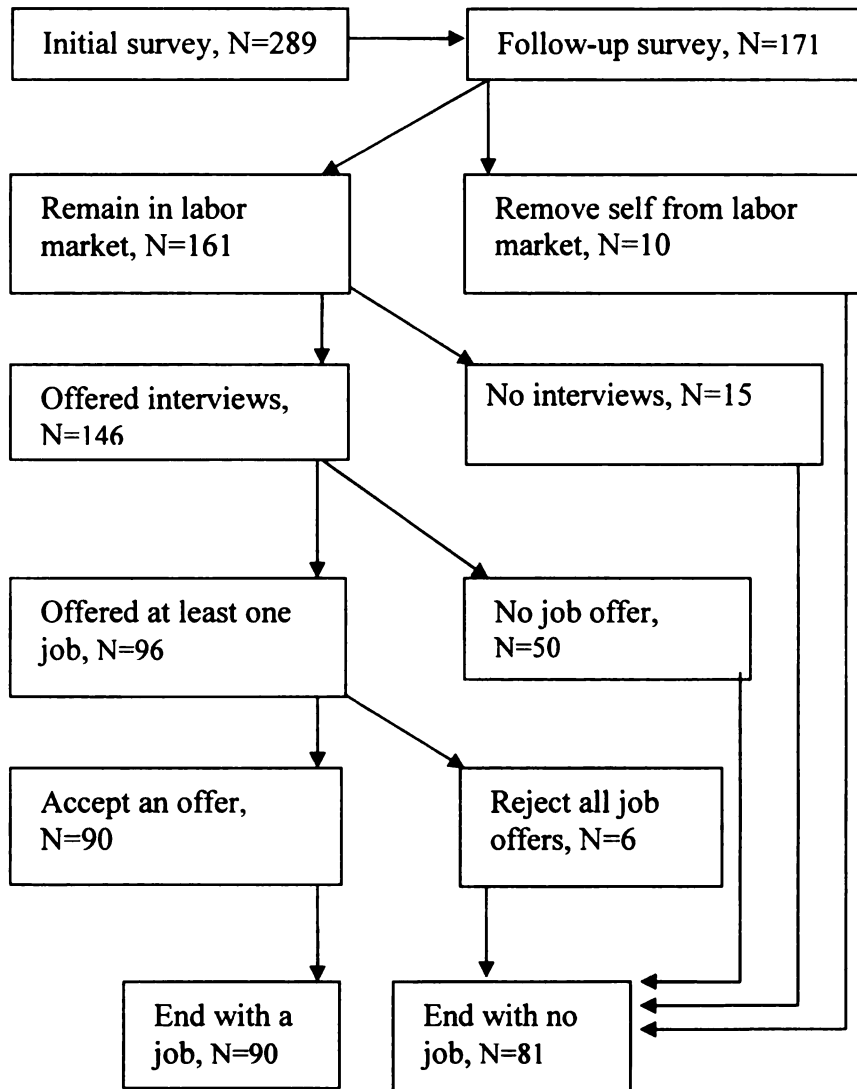


Figure 2 - Steps in the Job Search

This model of the job search highlights the later stages of the teacher pipeline (Goldhaber & Liu, 2003; Henke, Chen, Geis, & Knepper, 2000). All individuals in the sample were prepared to teach and have thus already entered the teacher pipeline. By

focusing on where teachers applied and where they received job offers, this chapter sheds light on how teacher candidates handle the later steps in the job search. Teacher candidates made decisions about where to apply and whether to accept or reject job offers. Likewise, schools and districts made decisions about whom to interview and whom to offer jobs. As such, the overall sorting of teachers among schools is influenced by both teacher and school or district factors (Boyd et al., 2006).

The model in Figure 2 only considers which teacher candidates ended up getting any teaching job; it does not account for any potential sorting of teachers between schools. A more complex model includes such sorting, and this chapter will develop such a model. For example, in making decisions about whether to remove oneself from the teacher labor market altogether or to apply for teaching jobs, individuals may decide to apply for teaching jobs in only particular types of schools or to apply for jobs across a wide range of schools. Teacher candidates' preferences for particular teaching jobs may influence both where they apply and which jobs they accept once offers are made. Likewise, teacher candidates may get job offers only from a particular type of school or from a range of school types. The range of job offers teacher candidates received depends upon the range of jobs to which they applied, but it may also depend on differences in the hiring decisions of schools.

Number of Applications

This section explores the number of districts to which teacher candidates applied. Table 22 presents the means and standard deviations for the variables used in this chapter. It shows descriptive statistics for all respondents to the follow-up survey as well

as the means and standard deviation for only those teacher candidates who remained in the job market because most of the analysis is conducted using only these respondents.

Table 22 - Descriptive Statistics for Chapter 5

<i>Variable</i>	<i>All teacher candidates</i>			<i>Teacher candidates who stayed in the job market</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Stayed in labor market	171	0.942	0.235	161	-	-
African American	169	0.065	0.247	159	0.063	0.244
Other racial minority	169	0.112	0.317	159	0.113	0.318
Male	169	0.083	0.276	159	0.075	0.265
Mid-career changer	169	0.349	0.478	159	0.346	0.477
Mother's education ¹	169	2.12	1.03	159	2.14	1.04
ACT score	171	24.70	3.19	161	24.65	3.17
ACT score missing	171	0.322	0.468	161	0.317	0.467
Named an urban or low-income suburban school as top choice school	151	0.185	0.390	141	0.199	0.400
Named having many racial-ethnic minority students as one of most important characteristics	171	0.088	0.284	161	0.087	0.283
Was offered at least one teaching job	171	0.561	0.498	161	0.596	0.492
Accepted job offer	96	0.938	0.243	96	0.938	0.243
Month of first job offer ²	85	6.54	1.41	85	6.54	1.41

1 Mother's education is coded as 1=high school or less; 2=some college; 3=college graduate; 4=master's degree or above

2 Month of first job offer uses numerical codes for each month (i.e., 5=received first job offer in May; 6=June)

Table 23 shows which potential teachers removed themselves from the teacher labor market prior to applying for any teaching job and the number of districts to which teacher candidates applied. Overall, 5.9% of potential teachers did not apply for any teaching job, thereby removing themselves from the teacher job market. There was some evidence that individuals who did not take the ACT were more likely to remove themselves from the teacher job market while those who had mothers with at least a

master's degree were more likely to stay in the labor market, but no difference was statistically significant. Thus, there did not appear to be strong relationships between potential teachers' social and cultural background and their decision to remain in the teacher labor market.

Table 23 - Percent of Potential Teachers Who Removed Themselves From the Teacher Labor Market and the Number of Applications

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Removed self from market</i>	<i>One to 10</i>	<i>Number of applications</i>			<i>N</i>
			<i>Eleven to 20</i>	<i>Twenty- one to 40</i>	<i>More than 40</i>	
All	5.9%	41.0%	15.5%	14.3%	29.2%	161
White	5.8	37.4	14.5	15.3	32.8	131
African American	9.1	70.0	20.0	10.0	0.0	10
Other minority	5.3	50.0	22.2	11.1	16.7	18
New college graduate	5.5	33.7***	13.5***	13.5***	39.4***	104
Mid-career changer	6.8	54.6***	20.0***	16.4***	9.1***	55
<i>ACT score</i>						
Top ACT quartile	6.3	33.3	22.2	15.6	28.9	45
Lower ACT quartiles	3.0~	37.1	15.5	13.4	34.0	97
Did not take ACT	17.4*	79.0**	0.0**	15.8**	5.3**	19
<i>Mother's education</i>						
High school or below	7.7	45.0	13.3	15.0	26.7	60
Some college	5.7	36.4	18.2	12.1	33.3	33
Bachelor's degree	5.7	42.0	14.0	20.0	24.0	50
Master's or above	0.0	31.3	18.8	0.0	50.0	16

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

There were differences in the number of districts to which teacher candidates applied, however. Forty-one percent of teacher candidates applied to ten or fewer districts, while 15.5% applied to 11 to 20 districts. This is notable given the labor market

conditions in the Smithton area of excess supply of teachers. Just less than 30% of teacher candidates applied to more than 40 districts. There is some evidence that African American teacher candidates applied to fewer districts, but this difference was not statistically significant, possibly due to the small sample size among African American teacher candidates. When all teacher candidates who applied to more than 10 jobs were grouped together, African American teacher candidates were significantly less likely to apply to more than 10 districts. Teacher candidates who were just graduating from college applied to more districts than those who were switching into teaching from another career. There was no evidence that teacher candidates with higher ACT scores applied to fewer districts than those with lower ACT scores, although teacher candidates who did not take the ACT applied to fewer districts. As those who did not take the ACT also tended to be mid-career changers, it is possible the difference in application rates were driven by the findings for mid-career changers.

Progression in the Job Search and the Distribution of Teachers

There were also differences in the characteristics of districts to which teacher candidates applied. This section presents the student characteristics, employment conditions, and location of the districts to which teacher candidates applied, received offers, and accepted jobs. By tracing the patterns from where teacher candidates applied to where they received job offers to where they ultimately ended up working, we can begin to see the relative impact of teacher candidate behavior or district hiring practices on teacher sorting. Differences in where teacher candidates applied are most likely due to teacher candidate behaviors, thus we could describe it as teacher candidates self-sorting into schools. Yet if teacher candidates applied to districts with similar characteristics, but

received offers from districts with varying characteristics in disproportionate rates, then that suggests that school and district hiring practices were sorting teachers among schools. Teacher candidate behavior—and possible self-sorting—becomes more important again in differences between where they had job offers and where they accepted jobs.

Student Characteristics

Table 24 presents the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) where teacher candidates applied, received offers, and ended up working. African American teacher candidates applied to districts that had higher percentages of FRL students. The average district to which African American teacher candidates applied had 47.3% FRL students, compared to 24.6% for White teacher candidates and 33.2% for teacher candidates from other racial minority backgrounds. There was some evidence that African American teacher candidates were more likely to apply to low-income suburban districts.

Both White and African American teacher candidates had job offers from districts with higher concentrations of low-income students than the average of those to which they applied. This suggests that districts with more FRL students made more job offers. Nevertheless, there were still large differences in the percentage of FRL students in districts where African American teacher candidates had offers and those districts where White and other racial minority teacher candidates had offers. The magnitude of the difference was similar to the magnitude of the difference to where they applied. Thus, there was no evidence that district hiring practices contributed to sorting teachers based upon race into districts with varying student socioeconomic backgrounds. This difference

was most likely the result of where teacher candidates applied. African American teacher candidates ended up teaching in districts that had an average of 56.9% FRL students. This was somewhat higher than White and other minority teacher candidates. Also, White and African American teacher candidates received offers and accepted jobs in schools that had similar characteristics to the overall district averages, but teacher candidates from other racial minority backgrounds received offers from schools with more FRL students than the district average.

There were few differences in where teacher candidates applied when looking at teacher candidate career status. Mid-career changers and new college graduates applied to districts with similar percentages of FRL students, however, mid-career changers received offers from districts with greater proportions of FRL students. Mid-career changers had job offers from schools with an average of 61.8% FRL students, compared to new college graduates who had offers from schools with 33.0% FRL students. Mid-career changers also ended up working in schools with greater concentrations of FRL students compared to their peers. Mid-career changers ended up working in schools with 59.9% FRL students, compared to new college graduates who taught in schools with 31.1% FRL students. This difference was likely due to school and district preferences. There were no differences in the average student socioeconomic characteristics of the districts where teacher candidates of different career status applied, although there were differences in where they had offers and where they ended up teaching. This indicates that school and district hiring practices contributed substantially to the sorting of mid-career and new college graduates into different schools.

Table 24 - Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) Where Teacher Candidates Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied to high income suburbs near Smithton</i>	<i>Applied to low income suburbs near Smithton</i>	<i>Mean percent FRL</i>			
			<i>Received offer</i>		<i>Accepted job</i>	
			<i>Applied</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>School</i>
All	55.4 %	35.2%	27.1	35.9	40.8	39.0
White	56.7	34.1	24.6	35.0	37.5	36.5
African American	40.0	60.0~	47.3***	52.5~	56.2	56.9
Other minority	50.0	27.8	33.2	29.7	50.7	47.1
New college graduate	54.0	30.4~	27.0	30.5*	33.0***	31.1***
Mid-career changer	56.4	43.6~	27.3	49.9*	61.8***	59.9***
<i>ACT score</i>						
Top quartile	54.6	31.1	23.6	32.3	34.9	34.2
Lower quartiles	61.7~	36.8	28.5	35.5	40.1	38.3
Did not take ACT	26.3**	36.8	28.9	51.2	63.4*	61.5~
<i>Mother's education</i>						
High school or below	65.5~	49.2**	28.4	46.6*	55.3*	54.9*
Some college	50.0	39.4	24.1	28.8	33.3	32.5
Bachelor's degree	48.0	24.0*	27.3	38.0	44.1	42.8
Master's or above	56.3	12.5*	26.5	19.2**	17.3**	13.1***
N	157	159	151	75	70	69

Note: The results in this table are different if Oak State respondents are excluded. See Table A2 in Appendix D.

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

There were differences in where teacher candidates applied based upon the teacher candidate's socioeconomic status. While there was no evidence that mother's education was related to the average percentage of FRL students in the districts in which teacher candidates applied, there was a negative relationship between a teacher candidate's mother's education and the likelihood they applied to public school districts in low-income suburbs around Smithton. In other words, teacher candidates with more highly educated mothers were less likely to apply to low-income suburban districts around Smithton. On the other hand, teacher candidates whose mother never attended college were more likely to apply to low-income suburban districts. Teacher candidates whose mother never attended college also received job offers from districts with greater percentages of FRL students than those with more educated mothers. They also accepted jobs in districts with greater concentrations of FRL students. Teacher candidates whose mother had a master's degree or above accepted jobs in districts with fewer FRL students. The sorting of teacher candidates from varied socioeconomic backgrounds into districts with different compositions of students by socioeconomic background seems to be due to both teacher candidate behaviors and hiring practices. There was some evidence of sorting in where teacher candidates applied, more sorting in where they received offers, and even more sorting in where they accepted jobs.

Table 25 shows similar patterns in the percentage of minority students in districts where teacher candidates applied, received offers, and accepted jobs. African American teacher candidates applied to districts with higher percentages of minority students than White teacher candidates or those from other racial minority backgrounds. Similar to the findings for percentage of FRL students, both White and African American teacher

candidates received offers and accepted jobs from districts with more minority students than the average district to which they applied. But the large difference in student racial composition between White and African American teacher candidate remained. This suggests that the sorting of teachers into schools with different racial compositions was due primarily to differences in where they applied.

The initial survey included measures of teacher candidate espoused preferences. In particular, it asked teacher candidates to choose which school features were the three most important factors in their job search decisions. It was expected that these preferences influenced where teacher candidates applied and accepted jobs. Teacher candidates who said working in a school with many racial minority students was one of the three most important factors in their job search applied to districts with greater proportions of minority students than those who did not list this as one of the most important factors. Thus, teacher candidates did seem to be acting on this espoused preference in where they applied. However, for teachers who preferred to teach in schools with many racial minority students, there was no difference in student composition in where these teacher candidates received offers or ultimately ended up working than in teachers without this preference.

Table 25 - Percentage of Minority Students Where Teacher Candidates Applied,
Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offer</i>		<i>Accepted job</i>	
		<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>
All	30.8	47.1	43.3	43.3	41.2
White	27.3	45.1	39.8	41.9	38.3
African American	62.0***	73.3*	77.5**	68.2~	79.2*
Other minority	38.4	39.2	43.2	37.5	41.7
New college graduate	30.8	39.3***	32.9***	36.1**	31.5***
Mid-career changer	30.9	66.9***	73.2***	61.5**	68.6***
<i>ACT score</i>					
Top quartile	29.3	44.7	39.9	41.7	39.7
Lower quartiles	31.5	46.6	43.6	44.0	41.1
Did not take ACT	30.6	56.3	54.6	44.4	48.1
<i>Mother's education</i>					
High school or below	28.4	48.6	45.1	44.0	44.3
Some college	26.3	39.3	33.9	34.1	30.4
Bachelor's degree	34.0	54.0	50.5	51.9~	49.5~
Master's or above	37.2	38.9	34.1	33.9	29.3~
Many racial minority students are not most important	28.7***	46.2	42.9	42.4	40.9
Many racial minority students are most important	51.6***	54.7	46.4	50.7	43.7
N	153	81	85	71	84

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Employment Conditions

Employment conditions such as salary and working conditions can refer to many different aspects of work-life in a school. Unfortunately, measures of many of these working conditions are not routinely collected. This section focuses on two specific types of working conditions—pupil-teacher ratios and instructional expenditures—and on salary. Table 26 presents the average pupil-teacher ratios where teacher candidates

applied, received offers, and accepted jobs. Overall, there were few differences in pupil-teacher ratios and no evidence that teacher candidates were sorted among schools with larger or smaller pupil-teacher ratios. One explanation for teacher sorting by student race and socioeconomic background is that teachers sought out schools with better working conditions. Yet these data suggest teacher candidates were sorted across schools with varying student characteristics but not among schools with varying pupil-teacher ratios. Thus if this sorting is due to working conditions, then it is a working condition other than pupil-teacher ratios. Further, teacher candidates who said having a small class size was one of the most important factors in their job search did not apply to or end up working in districts with statistically significantly lower pupil-teacher ratios. While the pupil-teacher ratio is not an exact measure of class size, it is an indicator available to teacher candidates on the Internet.¹⁷

¹⁷ In the interviews, many teacher candidates said they used www.greatschools.net to gather information about schools. This website has pupil-teacher ratios.

Table 26 - Mean Pupil-Teacher Ratios Where Teacher Candidates Applied, Received Offers and Accepted Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offer</i>		<i>Accepted job</i>	
		<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>
All	17.3	18.1	18.1	17.7	18.2
White	17.2	17.8	18.1	17.6	18.1
African American	17.6	19.5	17.0	17.5	17.1
Other minority	17.5	18.9	18.9	18.7	19.2
New college graduate	17.2	17.7	17.7	17.6	17.9
Mid-career changer	17.3	19.1	19.3	17.9	18.8
<i>ACT score</i>					
Top quartile	17.7	18.0	18.6	17.9	18.6
Lower quartiles	17.0	18.2	17.7	17.6	17.8
Did not take ACT	17.3	17.5	19.3	17.6	19.2
<i>Mother's education</i>					
High school or below	17.4	19.2	18.2	18.3	17.7
Some college	17.1	18.1	18.2	18.3	18.7
Bachelor's degree	17.5	18.3	18.7	17.8	18.6
Master's or above	16.7	15.8*	16.7	16.2*	17.3
Class size is not most important	17.3	18.1	17.9	17.7	18.0
Class size is most important	16.8	18.0	19.1	17.9	19.2
N	146	68	74	64	70

* $p < .05$

Similar to the findings for pupil-teacher ratios, there were few differences in the per-pupil instructional expenditures among teacher candidates in where they applied, received offers, and accepted jobs (see Table 27). Teacher candidates whose mother had at least a master's degree applied to districts with higher per-pupil instructional expenditures, suggesting they applied to districts with greater resources. They were also more likely to receive offers and accept jobs in districts with higher instructional expenditures, but the difference was present in where they initially applied. Teacher

candidates whose mother only had a high school education received offers and accepted jobs in districts with lower instructional expenditures. As they applied to districts with similar expenditures as their peers from somewhat higher socioeconomic backgrounds, this difference could be due to district hiring practices.

Table 27 - Mean Per-Pupil Instructional Expenditures Where Teacher Candidates Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offer</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>
All	\$5,163.14	\$4,795.75	\$4,906.14
White	5,181.10	4,785.10	4,873.17
African American	5,237.71	4,712.95	4,654.28
Other minority	5,013.36	4,928.04	5,255.12
New college graduate	5,213.08	4,884.63	5,028.23
Mid-career changer	5,072.94	4,575.49	4,586.39
<i>ACT score</i>			
Top quartile	5258.39	4635.78	4,716.42
Lower quartiles	5104.80	4875.20	4,979.91
Did not take ACT	5232.35	4834.05	5,102.51
<i>Mother's education</i>			
High school or below	5,072.61	4,391.61~	4,410.32*
Some college	5,007.17	4,472.38	4,592.93
Bachelor's degree	5,131.21	4,932.85	5,010.57
Master's or above	5,990.30~	5,700.14~	5,854.19*
Availability of materials is not most important	5,147.00	4,842.1	4,912.25
Availability of materials is most important	5,210.31	4,594.8	4,883.25
N	153	80	76

~ p<.1, * p<.05

Teacher candidates who said that the availability of textbooks and other instructional materials was among the most important factors in their job search did not apply to or end up working in districts with higher instructional expenditures. Instructional materials are categorized as instructional expenditures and thus higher per-pupil instructional expenditures should result in greater resource availability. The lack of difference in these findings may be due to the per-pupil instructional expenditures being too broad of a category to capture variation in instructional material purchases or to teacher candidates not acting on these espoused preferences in where they applied or accepted offers. Overall, the two measures of working conditions—pupil-teacher ratios and instructional expenditures—were not related to the distribution of teachers across schools. In particular, teachers with espoused preferences for these working conditions were not more likely to apply for or accept jobs with these working conditions.

Table 28 presents the average salaries in districts where teacher candidates applied, where they had offers, and where they accepted a job. Salary figures for the districts in which teacher candidates applied and received offers were drawn from salaries for beginning teachers in databases across several states.¹⁸ Teacher candidates provided the salary for the job they accepted on the follow-up survey. Overall, teacher candidates who ended up with a teaching job earned an average salary of \$34,600. The average salary teacher candidates ended up accepting did not vary substantially by teacher candidate characteristics.

¹⁸ See Chapter 2 for more information on the source of this data.

Table 28 - Mean Salary Where Teacher Candidates Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offer</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>
All	\$36,565.01	\$36,510.36	\$34,562.48
White	36,520.65	36,318.28	34,443.49
African American	37,159.71	38,303.64	33,511.75
Other minority	36,622.49	36,253.95	35,965.38
New college graduate	36,679.48	36,773.80	34,645.17
Mid-career changer	36,397.12	36,014.49	34,299.82
<i>ACT score</i>			
Top quartile	36,622.23	36,334.06	34,355.29
Lower quartiles	36,466.50	36,396.72	34,597.05
Did not take ACT	36,884.82	37,685.88	35,316.17
<i>Mother's education</i>			
High school or below	36,403.86	35,207.44	33,565.52
Some college	35,766.58~	35,559.33	34,182.33
Bachelor's degree	36,803.61	37,078.91	35,439.68
Master's or above	38,383.03*	39,012.84*	35,192.56
Salary is not most important	36,471.75	36,399.01	34,515.58
Salary is most important	37,223.34	37,178.51	35,070.50
N	137	49	71

Note: The salary where teacher candidates accepted jobs is not directly comparable to where they applied and where they received offers. The average salaries for where they applied and received offers come from district averages of first-year teacher salaries. The salary for where they accepted jobs comes from the follow-up survey.

~ p<.1, * p<.05

There was also little variation in the average salaries of the districts to which teacher candidates applied and received offers. Teacher candidates whose mother had some college education applied to districts with slightly lower salaries and teacher candidates whose mother had at least a master's degree applied to districts with higher

salaries. Teacher candidates whose mother had a master's degree also received job offers from higher paying districts. Yet teacher candidates' espoused preferences for salary was not related to where they applied, received offers, or accepted jobs. Teacher candidates who rated a high salary as one of their most important features in the job search applied to districts with similar salaries as those who did not rate a high salary as most important.

Location

Table 29 shows the percentage of teacher candidates who applied to, received offers from, and accepted jobs in urban schools. African American teacher candidates were more likely end up working in an urban school. About 66.7% of African American teacher candidates accepted jobs in urban schools, compared to 33.8% and 27.3% of White and other racial minority teacher candidates, respectively. This difference was not surprising as African American teacher candidates also applied to urban districts in greater numbers. African American teacher candidates were also more likely than other teacher candidates to apply to Smithton Public Schools.

Teacher candidates whose mother had at least a master's degree were the most likely to apply to urban districts. This appears to be due to the fact that these teacher candidates applied to urban schools other than Smithton Public Schools. Teacher candidates with highly educated mothers received job offers and accepted jobs from urban districts at similar rates as other teacher candidates whose mother never went to college or had a bachelor's degree. Teacher candidates whose mother had some college education were less likely to have job offers from urban schools. Mid-career changers were more likely than new college graduates to have job offers from and end up working in urban districts. As there were no differences in the districts to which mid-career

changers and new college graduates applied, this difference could be due to urban districts not making offers to new college graduates.

Table 29 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted a Job in Urban Schools

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Applied Smithton Public Schools</i>	<i>Any urban school</i>		
		<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>
All	14.5%	65.4%	40.0%	35.3%
White	10.1	63.2	37.3	33.8
African American	60.0***	90.0~	71.4~	66.7~
Other minority	16.7	70.6	36.4	27.3
New college graduate	13.7	63.4	28.6***	25.4**
Mid-career changer	14.6	70.6	72.7***	63.6**
<i>ACT score</i>				
Top quartile	8.9	65.9	30.0	30.0
Lower quartiles	16.8	64.1	44.7	37.5
Did not take ACT	15.8	70.6	50.0	42.9
<i>Mother's education</i>				
High school or below	22.0*	63.6	42.9	38.1
Some college	12.1	54.6	22.2~	22.2
Bachelor's degree	12.0	67.4	45.5	39.4
Master's or above	0.0~	86.7~	41.7	38.5
N	159	153	85	85

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Table 30 shows the average distance from the teacher candidate's home at the beginning of the job search to where they applied, where they had offers, and where they ended up working.¹⁹ It also shows the percentage of teacher candidates that applied for

¹⁹ I used the location of their home at the beginning of the job search rather than the location of their high school due to missing values on high school location. Some respondents did not provide information on

jobs in other states. African American teacher candidates were less likely to apply to districts in other states, but there were no statistically significant differences between teacher candidates from different racial backgrounds in the average distance from their home to the districts in which they applied or ended up working. New college graduates were more likely than mid-career changers to apply to districts in other states. The average district to which new college graduates applied was 286 miles from where they lived at the beginning of the job search, compared to 97 miles for mid-career changers. Teacher candidates who indicated on the initial survey that proximity to their home was one of the most important factors in their job search decision did not apply to districts that were closer on average than teacher candidates who did not say proximity to home was one of the most important factors.

their high school. I ran similar analyses for the distance from where the teacher candidates' graduated from high school to where they applied, received jobs, and ended up working. The results were similar for new college graduates, but different for mid-career changers. Many of the mid-career changers in this study grew up in other states and moved to the Smithton area as adults.

Table 30 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs in Other States and Average Distance From Home for Applications, Offers, and Jobs

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Schools in other states</i>			<i>Mean distance from home</i>			<i>Distance from home to job</i>		
	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>0-15 Miles</i>	<i>15-100 Miles</i>	<i>100 or more miles</i>
All	41.8%	39.1%	38.9%	223.6	411.1	369.4	36.9	20.2	42.9
White	44.5	38.9	38.0	199.1	398.3	350.6	35.3	20.6	44.1
African American	10.0*	25.0	28.6	203.5	256.4	299.3	33.3	33.3	33.3
Other minority	44.4	50.0	50.0	427.7	621.6	539.0	50.0	10.0	40.0
New college graduate	52.0***	43.8	43.1	286.4**	468.4	400.6	33.3	17.5	49.2
Mid-career changer	24.1***	28.6	28.0	96.8**	254.1	275.7	47.6	28.6	23.8
<i>ACT score</i>									
Top quartile	45.5	33.3	33.3	219.1	407.5	322.8	37.9	24.1	37.9
Lower quartiles	43.2	43.1	45.1	245.6	419.4	415.1	31.3	18.8	50.0
Did not take ACT	26.3	36.4	22.2	119.3	377.8	248.9	71.4	14.3	14.3
<i>Mother's education</i>									
High school or below	25.9**	22.2*	16.7*	185.1	325.8	281.3	30.0**	45.0**	25.0**
Some college	45.5	55.6~	55.6~	280.9	660.1~	614.5~	27.8	16.7	55.6
Bachelor's degree	46.9	39.4	39.4	203.1	299.7	302.0	46.9	9.4	43.8
Master's or above	68.8*	41.7	46.2	247.9	445.2	279.6	38.5	15.4	46.2

Table 30 (cont'd).

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Schools in other states</i>			<i>Mean distance from home</i>			<i>Distance from home to job</i>		
	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>0-15 Miles</i>	<i>15-100 Miles</i>	<i>100 or more miles</i>
Proximity to home is not most important	41.6	42.5	40.9	218.1	449.0	402.6	34.9	19.7	45.5
Proximity to home is most important	42.4	26.3	31.6	243.4	267.6	247.7	44.4	22.2	33.3
N	158	92	90	151	86	84	84		

Note: The mean distance from home and the percentage of teacher candidates with various distances from home to job include both schools in the state and out of the state. The results in this table are different if Oak State respondents are excluded from the sample. See Table A3 in Appendix D.

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

The preceding analysis discussed the average characteristics of jobs to which teacher candidates applied and presented some evidence that teacher candidates from different racial and class backgrounds applied to different districts. Yet teacher candidates could have applied to several districts with varied characteristics. Another strategy to examine the extent to which teacher candidates self-sorted themselves among districts at the application phase involves looking at the characteristics of teacher candidates that applied to different districts. To answer this question, I used the restructured dataset to look at patterns in the districts to which teacher candidates applied.

Table 31 presents correlations between teacher candidate characteristics and the districts to which they applied. There was a positive correlation between being African American, the percentage of minority and FRL students in the district where they applied, and applying to an urban district. While the correlations are statistically different from zero, they are not that large. Likewise, there were positive and statistically significant but small relationships between coming from another racial minority background and the percentage of minority and FRL students in the district. There were negative relationships between being White and the percentage of minority or FRL students in the district where they applied. There was a small negative relationship between coming from another racial minority background and the per-pupil instructional expenditures in the district. This suggests that non-White and non-African American teacher candidates applied to districts with fewer resources. Teacher candidates' socioeconomic background was also related to district characteristics. As shown in Table 27 as well, there was a small positive relationship between the teacher candidate's mother's educational level and the per-pupil instructional expenditures in the district. There was a small negative relationship between

the teacher candidate's ACT score and the percentage of FRL students in the district where they applied, indicating that teacher candidates with higher ACT scores applied to districts with fewer low-income students.

Table 31 - Correlation Between Teacher Candidate Characteristics and the Districts to Which They Applied

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Percent minority students</i>	<i>Percent FRL students</i>	<i>Pupil-teacher ratio</i>	<i>Per-pupil instructional expenditures</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>African American</i>	<i>Other racial minority</i>	<i>Mother's education</i>	<i>ACT score</i>	<i>Mid-career changer</i>
Percent minority students	1.00									
Percent FRL students	0.75***	1.00								
Pupil-teacher ratio	-0.03	-0.02	1.00							
Per-pupil instructional expenditures	0.03	-0.20***	-0.34***	1.00						
White	-0.23***	-0.22***	-0.03	0.02	1.00					
African American	0.27***	0.25***	0.01	0.06	-0.56***	1.00				
Other racial minority	0.08*	0.09*	0.03	-0.07~	-0.78***	-0.08*	1.00			
Mother's education	0.05	-0.06	-0.03	0.11**	0.11**	-0.22***	0.03	1.00		
ACT score	-0.03	-0.09*	0.02	-0.05	0.19***	-0.23***	-0.05	0.19***	1.00	
Mid-career changer	0.02	0.04	0.04	-0.05	-0.10	0.17***	0.00	-0.23***	-0.09*	1.00
Urban	0.58***	0.47***	0.06	0.13***	-0.16***	0.20***	0.04	0.03	-0.01	0.07~

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

Timing of Job Offers

As noted above, previous research found that large urban districts and high-poverty districts lose out on high quality teachers because they hire later than more affluent districts (Levin & Quinn, 2003). For this reason, it is necessary to consider when teacher candidates received their job offers and whether or not they received multiple offers. Table 32 shows the percentage distribution of teacher candidates according the month in which they received their earliest job offer.²⁰ Overall, 68.2% received their first job offer before the start of August. This suggests most teacher candidates who received a job offer did not need to decide at the last minute. Mid-career changers were more likely than new college graduates to receive their job offer in August or later. Half of mid-career changers received their first job offer in August while half of new college graduates received their first job offer in June or July. There was no evidence that African American teacher candidates received job offers later than other teacher candidates. There was limited evidence that teacher candidates who did not take the ACT received their first job offer later than other teacher candidates did, but the difference was not statistically significant. The sample size may limit the detection of small or moderate effects.

²⁰ Only two teacher candidates in the sample received job offers after the start of the school year. The timing of the follow-up survey in late September to October may have limited the identification of teacher candidates who received job offers after the school year started.

Table 32 - Month in Which Teacher Candidates Received Their First Job Offer

<i>Variable</i>	<i>May or earlier</i>	<i>June or July</i>	<i>August or later</i>	<i>N</i>
All	21.2%	47.1%	31.8%	85
White	19.7	47.0	33.3	66
African American	25.0	50.0	25.0	8
Other minority	27.3	45.5	27.3	11
New college graduate	21.3~	54.1~	24.6~	61
Mid-career changer	20.8~	29.2~	50.0~	24
<i>ACT score</i>				
Top quartile	18.5	55.6	25.9	27
Lower quartiles	27.1	41.7	31.3	48
Did not take ACT	0.0	50.0	50.0	10
<i>Mother's education</i>				
High school or below	11.5	50.0	38.5	26
Some college	31.3	43.8	25.0	16
Bachelor's degree	21.9	46.9	31.3	32
Master's or above	30.0	40.0	30.0	10

~ p<.1

Table 33 shows the correlation between school characteristics and the month in which a job was offered. Most school characteristics were not associated with the month in which a job offer was made. The percentage of FRL or minority students was not related to the timing of the job offer. Neither were the pupil-teacher ratios, the instructional expenditures, or the beginning teacher salary in the district. There was a positive relationship between the month the job offer was made and whether the school was an urban school. Urban schools tended to make job offers in later months than non-urban schools.

Table 33 - Correlations Between School Characteristics of Job Offers and Month Offer Was Received

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Month of offer</i>
Percent minority	0.08
Percent FRL	0.05
Pupil-teacher ratio	0.17~
Per-pupil instructional expenditures	0.13
Beginning teacher salary in district	-0.01
Urban school	0.34***

~ p<.1, *** p<.001.

Preferences and Labor Market Outcomes

The previous sections showed there was a sorting of teacher candidates by race and class among schools based upon the percentage minority and FRL students in the school, yet it is still not clear how teacher candidates' preferences contributed to this sorting. Did the schools in which teacher candidates end up teaching reflect their initial preferences about where they wanted to teach? Tables 25 to 30 showed that teacher candidates who named a particular feature—many minority students, class size, availability of materials, and proximity to home—as one of the most important features in their job search did not end up working in schools with these features. For example, teacher candidates who said working in a school with many racial minority students was an important feature did not end up working in schools with more minority students than those teacher candidates who did not say the racial composition of students was an important factor (although they did apply to districts with greater percentages of minority students). Likewise, teacher candidates who said class size or availability of instructional materials were one of the most important features in their job search did not end up working in schools with lower pupil-teacher ratios or higher instructional expenditures.

Chapter 4 introduced the idea of preferences in use and demonstrated how teacher candidates' preferences in use might not be consistent with their espoused preferences. That is, the characteristics of schools that teacher candidates preferred might not reflect teacher candidates' stated preferences about what characteristics were important in their job search. To examine the impact of teacher candidate preferences, we must also explore whether teacher candidates were successful in realizing their preferences in use. Table 34 shows correlations between characteristics of the schools teacher candidates named as their most desired places to teach in the initial survey and the schools in which they ended up teaching. There were moderate and statistically significant positive relationships between the percentage of minority and FRL students in the schools that teacher candidates named as their most desired job and those where they ended up working. There was also a positive relationship between the instructional expenditures of teacher candidates' most desired schools and where they ended up teaching. There was no relationship between the pupil-teacher ratio or beginning teacher salary in teacher candidates' preferences in use and their ultimate job outcome. This notion of preferences in use may seem inconsistent with Chapter 4's focus on familiarity, comfort, and fitting in. Conceptually they are similar as they both highlight attributes of the schools teacher candidates preferred rather than the school characteristics they said they preferred.

Table 34 - Correlations Between Characteristics of Schools Where Teaching and Initial Top Choice School

	<i>Initial top choice school</i>
School where teaching	
Percent minority in top choice school	0.30**
Percent FRL in top choice school	0.26*
Pupil-teacher ratio in top choice school	0.09
Per-pupil instructional expenditures in top choice school	0.31**
Beginning teacher salary in district	.01

* p<.05, ** p<.01.

To examine more closely the factors associated with teaching in schools with greater numbers of minority or FRL students or in urban schools, I ran a series of regression analyses using the school characteristic as the dependent variable. These school characteristics are often associated with hard-to-staff schools, thus it is useful to know the factors that are related to who ended up working in these schools. The estimated regression model is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \textit{TEACHCHAR}_i * \beta_1 + \textit{ESPOUSED}_i * \beta_2 + \textit{INUSE}_i * \beta_3 + \textit{TIMING}_i * \beta_4 + \mu_i$$

(1)

where Y_i is the percentage of minority students in the school where the teacher ended up working. $\textit{TEACHCHAR}_i$ is a vector of teacher characteristics. As shown earlier in this chapter, teacher candidate characteristics were related to the characteristics of the schools in which they ended up teaching. In addition to these teacher candidate characteristics, teacher candidates' espoused preferences, their preferences in use, and timing of the job search may also be related to the concentration of minority students in the school where

the teacher candidate ended up working. *ESPOUSED_i* is a dummy variable indicating if the teacher said working with many minority students was one of the most important features in their job search. Stated or espoused preferences for a particular school characteristic should be related to whether teacher candidates ended up in schools with that characteristic. *INUSE_i* is the percentage of minority students in the school the teacher candidate named as his or her most desired school at the beginning of the job search. Teacher candidate preferences in use may also influence where they ended up working. If teacher candidates started their job search wanting to work in a high minority school, then they may be more likely to have ended up in a high minority school. *TIMING_i* is a vector of dummy variables indicating the month in which the teacher candidate received his or her first offer. The timing of the job offer may also influence the school racial composition if some schools are more likely to make early hiring decisions.

The model for factors that are associated with the percentage of FRL students in the school the teacher candidate ended up working was similar. I added an interaction term for the espoused preferences. The initial survey asked teacher candidates whether working in a school where the socioeconomic status of the students was similar to their own background was one of the most important features in their job search. Thus, it is reasonable to expect a negative relationship between the percentage of FRL students in the school and teacher candidates with highly educated mothers if they have this espoused preference.

The third set of analyses focus on the likelihood the teacher candidate ended up working in an urban school. As the outcome is a dependent variable, I used a binomial

logistic regression model using a logit link function. The dependent variable is the log odds that the teacher candidate ended up working in an urban school:

$$\text{Logit}[\theta(x)] = \log[\theta(x)/(1-\theta(x))] = \beta_0 + \mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\beta}$$

(2)

The independent variables used in this model were similar to those used in the linear models for percent minority and FRL students. It included a vector of teacher candidate characteristics, a vector of espoused preferences, a dummy variable indicating whether the teacher candidate named an urban or low-income suburban school as the top choice as a measure of preferences in use, and a set of dummy variables for the timing of the first job offer.

Table 35 presents the results of regression analyses that examine relationships between the percentage of minority students in a school and teacher candidate characteristics, preferences, and hiring timeline. Column 1 includes the full model. Mid-career changers ended up teaching in schools with about 42.0 percentage points more racial minority students. Teacher candidates who did not take the ACT worked in schools with fewer percentages of minority students, although a teacher candidate's ACT score otherwise had no relationship with the racial background of students in the school. Neither the teacher candidates' race nor socioeconomic status was related to the percentage of minority students in the school where they ended up working when other variables were controlled.

Table 35 - Regression Analyses Predicting the Percentage of Minority Students in School Where Teaching

<i>Variable</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>2</i>	
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>
Intercept	43.46	28.26	43.57	26.56
African American	23.48	16.12	22.13	15.29
Other racial minority	11.11	11.31	10.12	10.76
Male	-11.49	15.85	-16.49	14.80
Mid-career changer	42.03***	9.80	44.71***	8.62
Mother has BA or above	3.14	7.43	5.28	6.82
ACT score	-1.20	1.10	-1.00	1.04
ACT score is missing	-14.84~	8.83	-14.44~	8.36
Many racial minority students is important	1.71	12.40		
Percent minority students in top choice school	0.45**	0.15	0.41**	0.14
Received first offer in June or July	7.89	9.88		
Received first offer in August or later	2.76	10.64		
R ²	0.385		0.384	
N	72		79	

Note: The results in this table are different if Oak State respondents are excluded from the sample. See Table A4 in Appendix D.

~ p<.1, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

Teacher candidates' espoused preferences for working in a school with many racial minority students was not related to the student racial composition of the school in which they ended up working. Their preferences in use, however, were related to where they ended up. Teacher candidates who named a school with greater proportions of minority students as their initial top choice school ended up teaching in a school with more minority students. For every one percentage point increase in the percent minority students in teacher candidates' initial preference, there was a .45 percentage point increase of minority students in the school where they ended up. This indicates that the student racial composition of the school where teacher candidates ended up working was related to the composition of the school they named as their most desired school before

they applied for any teaching jobs, even controlling for the teacher candidate's background.

The timing of the teacher candidates' first job offer was also not related to the student racial composition of the school in which they ended up teaching. Teacher candidates who did not receive any job offers until June, July, August or later did not end up in schools with greater or fewer minority students than teacher candidates who received a job offer early in the hiring season. Further, a joint test of significance found that the month of first offer variables and the espoused preference for working with minority students did not explain much additional variance ($F\text{-value}=.26$, $\text{prob}=.857$).

Table 36 presents regression results for the relationship between the percentage of FRL students in a school and teacher candidate characteristics and preferences. Similar to the findings for percentage minority students, mid-career changers ended up working in schools with higher proportions of FRL students. The findings for the relationship between the socioeconomic background of the teacher candidate and the percentage of FRL students in the school in which they ultimately ended up teaching are mixed. In the full model, the main effect for teacher candidates' mother's education was not related to the socioeconomic status of the students in the school where they ended up working, but there was an interaction with their espoused preferences. Teacher candidates with highly educated mothers who said that working in a school with students from similar socioeconomic backgrounds as themselves did end up working in schools with fewer FRL students. That is, teacher candidates from higher socioeconomic backgrounds who had an espoused preference for working with similar students did end up teaching relatively more affluent students. These coefficients were large but not statistically

significant. Very few teacher candidates indicated that student socioeconomic status was one of the most important features in their job search. Thus, the lack of variation on this variable may be affecting the results.

Table 36 - Regression Analyses Predicting the Percentage of FRL Students in School

Where Teaching

<i>Variable</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>2</i>		<i>3</i>	
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>
Intercept	52.13~	28.41	64.15*	26.87	67.63*	25.51
African American	5.05	15.76	4.04	15.74	5.09	15.18
Other racial minority	7.40	11.69	12.01	11.24	13.02	10.79
Male	6.04	16.92	5.19	16.91	-0.45	15.98
Mid-career changer	24.20*	9.84	23.92*	9.82	24.44**	8.97
Mother has BA or above	-10.43	7.83	-13.69~	7.48	-12.01~	6.96
ACT score	-1.28	1.08	-1.58	1.03	-1.52	0.99
ACT score is missing	-0.68	8.43	-1.85	8.36	-0.59	8.03
Students from same socioeconomic background is important	30.84	22.99				
Students from same socioeconomic background is important*	-48.25	39.41				
Mother has BA or above						
Percent FRL students in top choice school	0.30~	0.15	0.33*	0.14	0.33*	0.13
Received first offer in June or July	18.12~	10.05	13.84	9.59		
Received first offer in August or later	6.18	10.25	3.05	9.95		
R ²	0.330		0.302		0.293	
N	61		61		67	

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01.

Column 2 shows results without including the variables for espoused preferences.

A joint significance tests suggests removing these variables did not significantly affect

model fit (F-value=1.01, p-value=.372). Teacher candidates with highly educated mothers ended up teaching in schools that had 13.7 percentage points fewer FRL students. Also similar to the results for percentage minority students was that teacher candidates' preferences in use were related to where they ended up teaching. Each one percentage point increase in the percent FRL students of teacher candidates' most desired school in the initial survey was associated with a .33 percentage point increase in the percent FRL students where they ended up working. Finally, there was no relationship between the month in which teacher candidates received their first job offer and the percentage of FRL students in the school in which they ended up working. Column 3 presents a model without dummy variables for the timing of the job offer. The timing variables are neither individually nor jointly significant (F-value=1.30, p-value=.281).

Urban schools also face staffing difficulties and it is important to understand how teacher candidates' preferences influence who ended up teaching in urban schools. Table 37 presents results from logistic regression analyses predicting which teacher candidates ended up teaching in urban schools. Mid-career changers had over 6.9 times the odds of ending up in an urban school compared to their peers who were recent college graduates. Other teacher candidate characteristics were not related to the likelihood that the teacher candidate ended up teaching in an urban school.

Table 37 - Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Whether a Teacher Candidate Ended Up Teaching in an Urban School

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>2</i>		
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
Intercept	-2.10	2.53		-3.53***	1.02	
African American	0.50	1.24	1.65			
Other racial minority	0.07	0.96	1.07			
Male	-0.87	1.26	0.42			
Mid-career changer	2.25*	0.89	9.46	1.93**	0.73	6.87
Mother has BA or above	0.76	0.69	2.14			
ACT score	-0.09	0.10	0.91			
ACT score is missing	0.26	0.73	1.30			
Many racial minority students is important	0.07	1.11	1.08			
Small class size is important	0.09	0.96	1.09			
Resource availability is important	-0.10	0.90	0.90			
Close proximity to home is important	-0.51	0.90	0.60			
Top choice school is urban or low-income suburban school	2.16*	0.93	8.70	1.82*	0.77	6.17
Received first offer in June or July	2.94**	1.13	18.91	2.58*	1.02	13.14
Received first offer in August or later	2.00~	1.10	7.36	1.75~	1.03	5.77
Pseudo R ²	0.280			0.240		
N	71			71		

p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

Because logistic regression models use maximum likelihood estimation, they require larger samples. The relatively small sample size in this study may explain the rather large coefficients in this model. Reducing the number of independent variables could compensate for smaller samples. Therefore, I ran a model omitting all independent variables that were not statistically significant in the first model. Column 2 presents the

results of this model. While the coefficients were slightly smaller, the findings were similar.

The first model included measures of teacher candidates' espoused preferences and preferences in use. As in the findings for percent minority and FRL students, teacher candidates' espoused preferences were not associated with the likelihood that the teacher candidate ended up teaching in an urban school. Teacher candidates' preferences in use did seem to be related. Teacher candidates who named an urban or low-income suburban school as their top choice school at the beginning of the job search had 6.2 times the odds of teaching in an urban school.

The month in which teacher candidates received their first offer was associated with the likelihood that teacher candidates ended up teaching in urban schools. Compared to teacher candidates who received their first job offer in May, teacher candidates who received their first job offer in June or July or August or later had between 13.1 and 5.8 times the odds of working in an urban school. Teacher candidates who received their first job offer in June or July had the highest likelihood of ending up teaching in an urban school. These findings support other research that suggests urban districts may lose high quality teachers because they make job offers later in the summer.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, the data indicate that teacher candidates end up working in schools that match their racial background. Further, teacher candidates who are switching into teaching from another career end up working in schools with higher concentrations of poor and minority students than did new college graduates. This chapter analyzed patterns in teacher candidate applications, job offers, and labor market outcomes to shed

light on the job search and hiring processes that contribute to this sorting of teachers across schools. In doing so, this chapter focused on the extent to which teacher candidate preferences or school and district hiring practices contributed to this teacher sorting. The evidence suggests that both teacher candidate preferences and hiring practices are important, but the type of teacher sorting depends upon teacher candidate and school characteristics. Teacher candidate behavior appears more important in explaining how African American teacher candidates and teacher candidates from various socioeconomic backgrounds become sorted among schools, while hiring practices seem to influence why mid-career changers and new college graduates end up teaching in different schools.

The sorting of teacher candidates from different racial backgrounds seems to be largely driven by teacher candidate decisions about where to apply. African American teacher candidates apply to districts with more minority and low-income students than other teacher candidates do. The schools from which both White and African American teacher candidates receive job offers have higher proportions of low-income and minority students than the average district in which they apply. But as African American teacher candidates apply to districts with more minority students, they end up teaching in schools with greater percentages of minority students. Further, the timing of job offers has no relationship to the percentage of minority students in schools where the teacher candidates end up teaching. Rather, teacher candidates' preferences at the beginning of the job search are a better predictor of the racial composition of the school in which they ultimately teach. Thus, the sorting of teachers among schools is influenced by teacher candidate self-sorting. This preference for teaching students of the same race is consistent with other research on the distribution of teachers (Betts et al., 2000; Hanushek et al.,

2004; Strunk & Robinson, 2006). The preferences of African American teacher candidates and their decisions about where to apply results in them teaching in schools with different characteristics of students than White teacher candidates.

The relative influence of teacher candidate preferences and hiring practices in the sorting of teacher candidates across schools of varied socioeconomic contexts is more mixed. Teacher candidates whose mother never went to college are more likely to work in schools with the highest concentration of low-income students and in districts with lower per-pupil expenditures, while teacher candidates whose mother has a master's degree are least likely to work in schools with high concentrations of low-income students and, instead, worked in districts with higher per-pupil expenditures. Similar to the sorting of teacher candidates by racial background, teacher candidates' socioeconomic background and initial preferences for where to teach is significantly related to the social class composition of the schools in which they end up teaching, while the timing of the job offers has no effect. This suggests that initial preferences are at least as important as hiring practices in explaining the sorting of teacher candidates by the socioeconomic status of students.

School and district hiring practices are related to the distribution of mid-career changers and new college graduates among schools. Teacher candidates' career status is not related to the characteristics of districts in which they apply. While new college graduates are more likely to apply to districts in other states, on average they apply to districts with similar proportions of low-income and minority students. Yet mid-career changers ended up working in schools with greater proportions of minority and low-

income students. This difference is most likely due to school and district hiring practices and will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

Previous research indicated that high poverty and urban districts hire lower quality teachers because their late hiring timeline means they lose teachers to more affluent districts (Johnson et al., 2004; Levin & Quinn, 2003). The data presented here offer mixed support for this finding. The timing of teacher candidates' job offers is not related to the racial or socioeconomic backgrounds of students in the school where they ultimately teach. That is, teacher candidates who do not receive any job offers until late in the summer are no more likely than other teacher candidates to work in schools with higher proportions of low-income or minority students. Yet the timing of job offers is associated with whether a teacher candidate ends up in an urban school. Teacher candidates who receive job offers later in the summer are more likely to ultimately teach in an urban school. Thus, as anecdotal evidence would suggest and consistent with the literature, the staffing difficulties in urban schools do seem to be related to their hiring timeline. The different patterns between urban schools and schools with higher concentrations of low-income or minority students is noteworthy. While urban districts do tend to have more low-income and minority students, there are variations among schools within districts. As such, the timing of hiring may not completely explain the sorting of teachers within urban or suburban districts, and this is a question that warrants further research.

Another important finding from these data is that the type of school in which teacher candidates want to teach at the beginning of the job search predicts where they ultimately end up teaching. Teacher candidates who expressed a desire to teach in a

school with more minority or low-income students, or an urban school, end up teaching in schools with those characteristics, while those who do not express that desire work in schools with lower proportions of low-income or minority students or non-urban schools. This also points to the importance of preferences in use in teacher candidates' job search. Teacher candidates who espoused preferences for working in schools with more racial minority students, small class sizes, closer to home, greater availability of instructional materials, and a high salary do not end up in schools with these characteristics. But, teacher candidates end up teaching in schools that are similar to the school they named as their most desired place to work in the beginning of the job search. While few teacher candidates end up working in the exact same school they named, they do end up in schools with similar characteristics, especially in terms of student race and social class composition. Thus, it is their preferences in use—not their espoused preferences—that are associated with where they end up teaching.

Teacher candidate preferences for schools in February and March have a strong relationship to where they end up teaching at the end of the job search. This is supported by the qualitative analysis presented in Chapter 4 as teacher candidates filtered out potential districts on the basis of little information and a perception of where they thought they would fit. Further, these data also support the distinction made in Chapter 4 between espoused preferences and preferences in use. While teacher candidates' espoused preferences for many racial minority students is not related to the racial composition of the school in which they end up working, their preference in use as expressed by the percentage of minority or FRL students in their most desired school or naming an urban

or low-income school as their most desired school is related to where they ultimately teach.

That teacher candidates' initial preferences in use predict their ultimate labor market outcomes has implications for the ability of policy to affect job search decisions. Chapter 4 demonstrated that teacher candidates knew little about the specific features of the school they named as their top choice school and thus do not know whether these schools match their espoused preferences. Despite this limited information about schools, teacher candidates have ideas about where they want to teach and fit in as a teacher. The importance of teacher candidates' initial preferences and the finding that desires to work in particular schools predict where they ended up teaching suggests that current frameworks for understanding how teachers come to work in different schools are limited. In some sense, teacher candidates are not making decisions about where to work during the job search. An initial decision about where to work, at least from the point of view of the teacher candidate, was made before the beginning of the hiring season based on the schools to which they would or would not apply, when teacher candidates completed the initial survey in February or March. Indeed, that initial decision may well have been made even earlier, as the desire to continue one's own educational experiences is a major reason individuals enter teaching (Lortie, 1975). Improving hiring practices or timelines may equalize the distribution of teacher candidates somewhat, but if teacher candidates' initial preferences and ideas about where they fit guide decisions about where they apply, then these policies may have limited efficacy. Rather, policies that try to change the number of qualified applicants in particular districts may have larger effects.

One example might be to stimulate supply in areas with high concentrations of poor or minority students.

School and district hiring practices do affect the composition of teachers in a school. Decisions by teacher candidates about where to apply, however, also influence who ultimately teaches in a particular school. Teacher candidates are thus sorting themselves into and out of schools in ways that alter the composition of the teaching force in schools serving students of varying racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. That minority students are more likely to be taught by African American teachers is not in itself a cause for concern. Indeed, some may think this is advantageous for minority students. But African Americans are under-represented in the teacher labor pool (Kirby et al., 1999) and in a tight labor market context with a greater demand for new teachers, the sorting of teachers by race may lead to shortages and the need to fill vacancies with lower quality teachers in predominantly minority schools. Thus, the tendency for teachers to sort themselves into schools by race can lead to inequities in students' access to high quality teachers, especially those students that reside in urban districts and are from minority and low-income backgrounds. The next chapter examines the impact of school and district hiring practices on teacher labor market outcomes.

CHAPTER 6: THE DEMAND SIDE OF TEACHER HIRING

Teacher candidates did not have complete control over their labor market outcomes. The matching of teachers to schools depends on both teacher and school factors (Boyd et al., 2006). Once prospective teachers applied for jobs, they had to wait for schools or districts to offer interviews and, ultimately, teaching jobs. Chapter 3 reviewed the literature on principals' hiring decisions and examined teacher candidates' perceptions of what influenced whether or not teacher candidates received job offers. It found that embodied cultural capital as measured by personal characteristics and demographics played a large role in structuring decisions on the teaching field. Chapter 3 also highlighted the importance of a sense of fit in teacher hiring as teacher candidates thought schools hired teachers who fit into the school.

This chapter explores the outcomes of hiring decisions made by schools and districts and the effect these decisions may have on the distribution of teachers across schools. In doing so, it extends the findings in Chapter 3 by examining the relative importance of cultural, human, and social capital in predicting which teacher candidates received job offers. Further, this chapter explores whether districts varied in the teacher attributes they used in hiring. Through this analysis, this chapter extends Chapter 5 by investigating whether districts' decisions about whom to hire contributed to the sorting of teacher candidates among districts by race and class.

The first section describes the overall labor market outcomes of teacher candidates, such as how many teacher candidates received job interviews and job offers. The second section examines the teacher candidate characteristics that were associated

with getting more interviews. The third section explores which teacher candidates were the most likely to receive a job offer. The fourth section considers whether school hiring practices contributed to the sorting of teachers among schools by examining whether particular types of schools were more likely to make job offers to particular types of teachers. The fifth section examines the plans of teacher candidates who ended up without a teaching job by the end of my data collection period. The final section concludes with implications from these results.

Overall Labor Market Outcomes

This section describes the ultimate job outcomes of teacher candidates in this study. Table 38 presents descriptive statistics. It shows characteristics of teacher candidates and characteristics of schools to which they applied.

Table 38 - Descriptive Statistics for Chapter 6

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Number of interviews	161	3.40	4.25	0	40
Number of job offers	160	1.20	1.76	0	11
African American	159	0.063	0.244	0	1
Other racial minority	159	0.113	0.318	0	1
Male	159	0.075	0.265	0	1
Mid-career changer	159	0.346	0.477	0	1
Mother's education ¹	159	2.14	1.04	1	4
Professional contacts who gave advice about job search	155	5.59	5.23	0	50
Friends and family who are teachers	156	3.87	3.50	0	20
Friends and family who are principals	157	1.32	2.24	0	20
Friends and family who work in the district office	157	0.62	1.37	0	10
Contacts through teacher education program	154	2.78	3.79	0	25
ACT score	161	24.65	3.17	15	32
Did not take the ACT	161	0.317	0.467	0	1
Additional certificate in math	161	0.217	0.414	0	1
Number of applications ²	161	3.32	1.28	2	5
Applied to schools out of the state	158	0.418	0.495	0	1
Applied to private schools	159	0.333	0.473	0	1
Applied to charter schools	159	0.459	0.500	0	1

1 Mother's education is coded as 1=high school or less; 2=some college; 3=college graduate; 4=master's degree or above

2 Number of applications is coded as 1=did not apply to any teaching jobs; 2=applied to 1 to 10 districts; 3=applied to 11 to 20 districts; 4=applied to 21 to 40 districts; 5=applied to more than 40 districts

Table 39 presents the labor market outcomes of teacher candidates. Over 90% of teacher candidates received at least one interview and the average teacher candidate had 3.4 interviews. Overall, these frequencies do not provide strong evidence on the relative influence of cultural or human capital on teacher candidates' labor market outcomes. New college graduates received more job interviews than mid-career changers. Teacher candidates with low ACT scores received more job interviews and those who did not take the ACT at all received fewer job interviews than those with high ACT scores. Teacher

candidates whose mother never went to college received fewer job interviews than those with more educated mothers. Slightly less than 60% of teacher candidates received at least one job offer and just less than 25% received more than one job offer. New college graduates were more likely to receive multiple job offers than mid-career changers.

Table 39 - Labor Market Outcomes

	<i>Had at least one interview</i>	<i>Number of interviews</i>	<i>Had at least one offer</i>	<i>Had multiple offers</i>
All	90.7%	3.4	59.6%	24.8%
White	90.8	3.4	58.0	22.1
African American	100.0	4.6	80.0	30.0
Other racial minority	88.9	3.1	66.7	44.4
New college graduate	91.4	3.9*	65.4~	31.7**
Mid-career changer	90.9	2.5*	50.9~	12.7**
Female	91.8	3.5	61.2	26.5
Male	83.3	2.7	50.0	8.3
<i>ACT score</i>				
Top quartile	88.9	3.1	66.7	24.4
Lower quartiles	91.8	3.8~	56.7	27.8
Did not take ACT	89.5	1.9**	57.9	10.5
<i>Mother's education</i>				
High school or below	86.7	2.6*	48.3	15.0
Some college	90.9	3.6	54.6	30.3
Bachelor's degree	94.0	3.9	68.0	22.0
Master's or above	93.8	4.6	81.3	50.0

Note: N=161

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01.

Number of Interviews

This section investigates the relationships between teacher candidate characteristics and labor market outcomes more closely through regression analysis.

Several factors may be associated with whether a teacher candidate is invited to interview or offered a teaching job. Teacher candidates' human, social, and cultural capitals were hypothesized to be related to the number of interviews and job offers they received. The estimated regression model is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \text{CULTCAP} * \beta_1 + \text{HUMANCAP} * \beta_2 + \text{SOCIALCAP} * \beta_3 + \text{HARDSTAFF} * \beta_4 + \text{NUMAPPS} * \beta_4 + \mu_i$$

(3)

where Y_i is the number of interview offers received by teacher candidates.

CULTCAP is a vector of characteristics measuring the teacher candidates' cultural capital. Measures of cultural capital include the teacher candidates' racial background, their mother's educational level, and their career status. *HUMANCAP* is a vector of variables indicating the teacher candidates' human capital. Teacher candidates' ACT score and whether they had a mathematics endorsement on their teaching certificate were used to measure human capital.²¹ *SOCIALCAP* is a vector of variables measuring the teacher candidates' social capital. The number and type of individuals the teacher candidate asked for advice about the teacher job search was used to measure social capital. Teacher candidates indicated whether the individuals they asked for advice were professional contacts such as their cooperating teacher or colleagues from student teaching, friends or relatives who were also teachers, friends or relatives who were also principals or school administrators, friends or relatives who worked in a district office, and contacts from their teacher education program. Further, it was hypothesized that

²¹ Having a science or special education endorsement was included in initial models but was consistently found to be non-statistically significant and was dropped.

teacher candidates who applied to more districts or high-demand districts would receive more interviews.

HARDSTAFF is a vector of dummy variables indicating whether the teacher candidate applied to districts that are traditionally hard-to-staff. Given the over-supply of teachers in the state, it was expected that districts in other states had a greater demand for new teachers and thus teacher candidates who applied out of state would receive more interviews and job offers. Charter schools, private schools, and urban districts were also considered to have a high demand for new teachers. *NUMAPPS* is a vector of dummy variables indicating the number of applications submitted by teacher candidates. The number of applications is a series of dummy variables indicating whether the prospective teacher applied to 11 to 20 districts, 21 to 40 districts, or more than 40 districts. Applying to 10 or fewer jobs was the omitted category.

Table 40 presents the results of this regression analysis. The results suggest that teacher candidates' cultural characteristics and social capital, as well as the number of applications submitted, were related to the number of interview offers they received. African American teacher candidates received more interview offers than did White teacher candidates. On average, African American teacher candidates received about 2.6 more invitations to interview. This may reflect recognition on the part of schools and districts about the need to hire a more diverse teaching force. It is not clear how hiring officials could make decisions on who to interview based upon race. It is possible that hiring officials noticed names that are associated with being African American (for instance, the first name Shanise) on application materials. Or, perhaps, they had other personal interactions with teacher candidates through job fairs or substitute teaching.

While male teachers are also under-represented among the elementary teaching population, male teacher candidates did not receive more interview offers than female teacher candidates.

Table 40 - Regression Analyses Predicting the Number of Job Interviews

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>
Intercept	-0.68	2.73
African American	2.63~	1.37
Other racial minority	0.00	1.02
Male	-0.18	1.23
Mid-career changer	-0.71	0.84
Mother has BA or above	0.83	0.69
Professional contacts from field experiences	0.04	0.10
Friends who are teachers	0.17~	0.10
Friends who are principals	0.47**	0.16
Friends who work in the district office	-0.63*	0.29
Contacts through teacher education program	0.19*	0.09
ACT score	0.01	0.10
ACT score is missing	0.66	0.79
Math endorsement	-0.05	0.81
11 to 20 applications	1.81~	0.96
21 to 40 applications	3.33***	0.96
Over 40 applications	1.52	0.96
Applied out of state	1.57*	0.72
Applied charter	-0.70	0.71
Applied private	0.20	0.78
Applied urban	-0.17	0.69
R ²	0.338	
N	142	

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

Social capital also appeared to be related to the number of interviews teacher candidates received, although the direction depended on the type of social capital.

Teacher candidates who talked about their job search with friends or relatives who were principals or teachers or with individuals from their teacher education program received

more interview offers than teacher candidates without these forms of social capital. Teacher candidates who talked about their job search with friends or relatives who worked in a district office received fewer interview offers overall than candidates who did not. It is interesting that one form of social capital may hurt teacher candidates' employment prospects. It may be that teacher candidates who spoke with acquaintances who worked in district offices were given incorrect advice about the job search process.

The largest effect on the number of interviews received was the number of districts to which teacher candidates applied. Teacher candidates who applied to between 21 and 40 districts received 3.3 more interviews, and those who applied to between 11 and 20 districts received 1.8 more interviews, than did their peers who applied to 10 or fewer districts. This is not surprising as teacher candidates must apply to districts before they can receive interview offers and sending out more applications means these teacher candidates can receive more interview offers. Yet teacher candidates who applied to more than 40 districts did not receive more interviews. Teacher candidates who applied to teaching jobs in other states received about 1.6 more interview offers than those teacher candidates who did not apply out of state, although those who applied to urban, charter, or private schools did not receive more interview offers.

It was expected that teacher candidates with greater amounts of human capital would receive more job interviews, although there was no evidence in these data. Teacher candidates with an additional endorsement in mathematics did not receive any more interview offers than teacher candidates without this qualification. Likewise, there was no relationship between a teacher candidates' general ability as measured by the ACT score

and the number of interviews received. This model explained about one-third of the variance in the number of interview offers received.

Which Teacher Candidates Received Job Offers?

While getting an interview offer is an important step in the job search, ultimately teacher candidates need a job offer. Less than half of teacher candidates who received any job offer only received one offer, thus it made sense to use a logistic regression model with the dependent variable indicating whether the teacher candidate received at least one job offer. I used a binomial logistic regression model using a logit link function. The dependent variable is the log odds that the teacher candidate received at least one job offer:

$$\text{Logit}[\theta(x)] = \log[\theta(x)/(1-\theta(x))] = \beta_0 + \mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\beta}$$

(4)

The independent variables used in the model are similar to those used in the linear models for the number of interviews. That is, the same characteristics are assumed to be related to both the number of interview offers and getting a job offer. It includes a vector of human capital characteristics, a vector of social capital characteristics, a vector of cultural capital characteristics, a vector of variables indicating whether the teacher candidate applied to traditionally hard-to-staff schools, and a vector of dummy variables indicating the number of applications submitted. Table 41 presents the results of the logistic regression analyses predicting the likelihood a teacher candidate received at least one job offer. There were some differences between the findings for the number of interviews received and the likelihood of getting a job offer. For example, talking about one's job search with one's social network and applying to more districts did not appear

to be related to the likelihood that a teacher candidate received at least one job offer.

Further, all the social capital measures and the number of applications together did not have a significant effect on the overall model fit (LR statistic=4.26, 8 degrees of freedom, prob=.833). For this reason, the second column excludes these variables in the analysis.

Cultural characteristics were related to whether or not a teacher candidate was offered a job. Just as African American teacher candidates received more interview offers than their White peers, they were also more likely to receive at least one job offer.

African American teacher candidates had 5.4 times the odds of receiving at least one job offer than their White peers. Likewise, teacher candidates who came from a higher social class background as measured by their mother's educational level had almost twice the odds of receiving a job offer than those teacher candidates whose mothers did not have a college degree.

While teacher candidates with an additional endorsement in mathematics received a similar number of interview offers, they were slightly less likely to receive a job offer. Similar to the findings for the number of interviews was that applying to jobs out of state increased the likelihood a teacher candidate would get a job offer. Teacher candidates who applied to jobs in other states had 2.5 times the odds of getting at least one offer than those who only applied in this state. Teacher candidates who applied to urban districts had 2.4 times the odds of getting a job offer, although applying to charter or private schools had no relationship to the likelihood of getting a job offer. A teacher candidate's gender had no relationship to the likelihood of receiving at least one job offer.

Table 41 - Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Whether a Teacher Candidate Was Offered a Teaching Job

<i>Variable</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>2</i>		
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
Intercept	-3.76*	1.77		-2.67~	1.59	
African American	1.80~	0.93	6.07	1.68~	0.89	5.39
Other racial minority	0.59	0.64	1.81	0.41	0.60	1.50
Male	-0.29	0.80	0.75	-0.28	0.74	0.76
Mid-career changer	-0.43	0.53	0.65	-0.66	0.47	0.51
Mother has BA or above	0.70	0.45	2.02	0.68~	0.41	1.97
Professional contacts from field experiences	-0.05	0.06	0.95			
Friends who are teachers	-0.04	0.06	0.96			
Friends who are principals	0.06	0.09	1.07			
Friends who work in the district office	0.15	0.20	1.16			
Contacts through teacher education program	0.03	0.06	1.04			
ACT score	0.11	0.07	1.12	0.09	0.06	1.10
ACT score is missing	0.08	0.50	1.09	0.07	0.45	1.08
Math endorsement	-0.74	0.52	0.48	-0.94~	0.48	0.39
11 to 20 applications	0.83	0.64	2.30			
21 to 40 applications	0.09	0.60	1.10			
Over 40 applications	0.47	0.60	1.60			
Applied out of state	1.03*	0.46	2.81	0.92*	0.41	2.51
Applied charter	-0.21	0.46	0.81	-0.23	0.43	0.80
Applied private	0.29	0.50	1.34	0.24	0.43	1.27
Applied urban	1.13*	0.44	3.09	0.86*	0.41	2.36
Pseudo R ²	0.223			0.188		
N	142			149		

~ p<.1, * p<.05.

While the preceding analysis examines which teacher candidates received job offers, it does not examine which applications submitted by those teacher candidates

resulted in the offer. By taking advantage of the restructured dataset²² we can explore characteristics of both the teacher candidate and the district that were related to an application resulting in a job offer. The model is similar to the model for the likelihood a teacher candidate received at least one job offer, with additional variables included to capture additional district characteristics. Table 42 presents the results from these analyses. The first model in Table 42 is similar to column 2 in Table 41 as it includes teacher candidate characteristics and dummy variables for high-demand schools. As in the previous model, applications by African American teacher candidates had 3.8 times the odds of resulting in a job offer than applications by White teacher candidates. Also similar to the previous models, applications to districts in other states were much more likely to result in a job offer. Applications by male teacher candidates were no more likely to result in a job offer than applications by female teacher candidates.

Some of the findings conflict with the previous model, however. In particular, this analysis shows that applications to charter and private schools were much more likely to result in an offer. Indeed, these coefficients show the strongest relationship with having an application result in a job offer. Applications by mid-career changers were less likely to result in a job offer, suggesting a preference by hiring officials for new college graduates or younger candidates. An application by a mid-career changer had less than half the odds of resulting in a job offer than an application by a new college graduate. The model included whether the application was to a district in another state, so this advantage for new college graduates was in addition to the finding that they were more willing to move outside the state for a teaching job.

²² As described in Chapter 2, the restructured dataset has one observation per teacher candidate-district application match. The 171 respondents who completed the follow-up survey applied to 805 districts.

Table 42 - Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Whether an Application Resulted in a Job offer

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>2</i>			<i>3</i>		
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
Intercept	-2.34**	0.89		-2.73**	0.91		-2.39*	0.97	
African American	1.32**	0.48	3.75	1.10*	0.49	2.99	1.11*	0.51	3.03
Other racial minority	0.51	0.34	1.66	0.43	0.35	1.54	0.43	0.36	1.54
Male	0.28	0.52	1.32	0.26	0.53	1.30	0.16	0.55	1.17
Mid-career changer	-0.92**	0.32	0.40	-0.92**	0.32	0.40	-0.81*	0.33	0.44
Mother has BA or above	0.31	0.24	1.37	0.28	0.25	1.32	0.31	0.26	1.37
ACT score	-0.01	0.04	0.99	0.00	0.04	1.00	-0.02	0.04	0.98
ACT score is missing	0.25	0.29	1.29	0.25	0.29	1.29	0.26	0.30	1.30
Math endorsement	-0.32	0.30	0.72	-0.36	0.31	0.70	-0.18	0.32	0.84
Out of state	2.10***	0.26	8.19	1.80***	0.28	6.08	1.95***	0.28	7.04
Charter	3.09***	0.53	22.06	2.59***	0.56	13.28	2.63***	0.60	13.88
Private	2.87***	0.58	17.60	2.75***	0.61	15.66			
Urban	-0.07	0.26	0.93	-0.49	0.32	0.61	-0.48	0.31	0.62
Percent minority students				1.36*	0.53	3.88			
Percent FRL students							1.42*	0.60	4.15
Pseudo R ²	0.176			0.178			0.161		
N	773			770			721		

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

One advantage to using the restructured dataset is that allows me to use additional characteristics of the specific district as predictors of whether an application resulted in a job offer. Some districts made more job offers than other districts. In analyzing the ultimate labor market outcomes for teacher candidates, determining which districts were hiring is just as important as which teacher candidates they hired. Columns 2 and 3 in Table 42 examine whether the student composition in districts was related to whether an application resulted in a job offer. If districts with large concentrations of low-income or minority students had a greater demand for new teachers, then teacher candidates in these districts would appear more likely to get a job. For example, Tables 24 and 25 in Chapter 5 showed that African American teacher candidates applied to districts with greater concentrations of low-income and minority students. Even if districts did not use teacher candidate race as a factor in hiring, African American teacher candidates would appear more likely to get a job if the districts to which they applied hired more teachers. While including measures of student composition in districts did decrease the relationship between being African American and the likelihood of an application resulting in a job offer, the coefficient is still large and statistically significant. Also, increasing the percentage of minority students in a district to which a teacher candidate applied increased the odds that the application would result in a job offer.

Information on the percentage of FRL students in private schools was not available and thus Column 3 could not include both private school status and percent FRL students. A separate model (not shown) included both the percent minority students and percent FRL students. However, the high correlation between these variables created

multicollinearity concerns. While the individual effects were not statistically significant when they were both included, they jointly affected model fit.

Hiring Decisions and Teacher Sorting

Chapter 5 showed that teacher candidate behavior contributed to the unequal distribution of teachers among schools because teacher candidates applied to different districts. Schools and districts may also contribute to teacher sorting by making offers to different types of candidates. For example, districts with high concentrations of minority students may prefer to hire minority teachers. This may lead to teaching sorting even if teacher candidates distributed their applications among districts equally. Another advantage of the restructured dataset is that it allowed me to investigate whether certain types of schools were more likely to make offers to certain types of teachers.

Table 43 used the restructured dataset to explore whether districts varied in the types of teacher candidates to which they offered jobs. The model is similar to Table 42, but also includes interaction terms between teacher candidate characteristics and district characteristics. I omitted non-significant terms omitted due to sample size constraints. Logistic regression models use maximum likelihood estimation and require larger samples. I omitted the non-significant terms to maintain an adequate sample size per independent variable once interaction terms were included. The first column includes interactions between teacher candidate characteristics and the percentage of minority students in the district. The second column includes interactions with the percentage of FRL students. The third column includes interactions with whether the district is an urban district.

Table 43 - Regression Analyses Exploring Whether Districts Varied in the Teacher Candidates They Offered Jobs

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Percent minority students</i>		<i>Percent FRL students</i>		<i>Urban districts</i>	
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>
Intercept	-2.62***	0.22	-2.61***	0.23	-2.67***	0.21
African American	1.53	0.98	0.72	1.26	1.23~	0.71
Other racial minority	1.46**	0.53	1.63**	0.56	1.13**	0.40
Mid-career changer	-1.74***	0.51	-1.91***	0.56	-1.42***	0.41
Out of state	1.97***	0.29	2.16***	0.28	1.91***	0.28
Charter	2.20***	0.57	2.28***	0.61	2.28***	0.56
Private	2.84***	0.63			2.96***	0.61
Urban	-0.47	0.32	-0.48	0.30	-0.48	0.36
Percent minority students	1.12~	0.62			1.30*	0.52
Percent FRL students			1.00	0.67		
Interaction with main effect						
African American	-1.09	1.40	0.39	2.36	-0.53	0.91
Other racial minority	-2.52*	1.09	-3.27*	1.41	-2.13**	0.76
Mid-career changer	2.21*	0.87	3.22**	1.19	1.47*	0.59
Pseudo R ²	0.189		0.176		0.192	
N	773		724		773	

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

The results are similar across all three types of districts, suggesting that districts with greater numbers of minority students, greater numbers of FRL students, and urban districts made similar hiring decisions. Table 42 found that applications from mid-career changers were less likely to result in a job offer than those from their peers who were just graduating from college. This result was consistent when interaction terms were included in the model, but there was evidence that districts' preferences for mid-career changers varied. Applications to districts with more minority or FRL students and urban districts were more likely to result in an offer if they came from a mid-career changer. This

suggests that districts' preferences for mid-career changer or new college graduate varies by the student composition and urbanicity of the district. Thus, district decisions about who to offer jobs contributed to the sorting of mid-career changers and new college graduates between urban and non-urban schools and the schools serving different populations of students.

There was less evidence that district hiring decisions contributed to the sorting of teacher candidates by race into schools with students from similar racial backgrounds. Applications to districts with greater percentages of minority students were not more likely to result in a job offer if they came from African American teacher candidates. Further, applications from teacher candidates from other racial minority backgrounds in general had a higher likelihood of resulting in a job offer. Yet as the percentage of minority or FRL students increased in a district, or if the district was urban, applications from teacher candidates from non-White and non-African American racial backgrounds were less likely to result in a job offer.

Candidates Who Did Not Get Job Offers

About 44% of teacher candidates did not get any job offers. Table 44 shows the plans for the next academic year for teacher candidates who did not end up with a teaching job, including what their main activity would be and whether they planned to apply for teaching jobs again. Most unsuccessful teacher candidates planned to remain in the education field and continue looking for a teaching job. Slightly less than two-thirds of unsuccessful teacher candidates planned to work as either short or long-term substitute teachers. Another 8% of unsuccessful teacher candidates planned to work in education-related jobs other than teaching, such as working at a daycare or preschool, tutoring, or

working at a YMCA. Twelve percent of teacher candidates without jobs took jobs outside the field of education and 9.3% enrolled in a master's or other degree program.

Table 44 - Future Plans of Teacher Candidates Who Did Not Get Job Offers

<i>Main activity</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Substitute teach	65.3
Work in non-education job	12.0
Work in education-related job	8.0
Enroll in degree program	9.3
Other	5.3
<i>Apply for teaching jobs again next year</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	82.1
No	3.9
Not sure	14.1

Note: N=78

Most unsuccessful teacher candidates also planned to apply for teaching jobs again. About 82% of teacher candidates who did not get jobs this year planned to apply again next year. Few unsuccessful teacher candidates, about 4%, did not plan to apply for teaching jobs again. About 14% of teacher candidates who did not get a job this year were not sure if they would apply again in the future.

Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter explored the relative importance of cultural, human, and social capital in the labor market outcomes of teacher candidates. It also examined variation in districts' decisions about whom to offer jobs to investigate how districts' hiring decisions impacts the sorting of teacher candidates among schools. Overall, the findings suggest that cultural characteristics of teacher candidates are strong predictors of their labor market outcomes, although social capital also plays a role. Districts did vary in the types of teacher candidates to which they offered jobs, but the evidence does not support the

notion that teacher candidates receive job offers in places where they fit or that district hiring decisions significantly contributed to the sorting of teachers among schools.

Cultural characteristics of teacher candidates play a large role in their labor market outcomes. African American teacher candidates receive more interview offers and are more likely to get a job offer, suggesting that hiring officials care about the racial background of teacher candidates. Chapter 3 showed that most teacher candidates thought minority teachers had an advantage in the teacher labor market. The evidence in this chapter indicates those perceptions are accurate, at least for African Americans. Further, the tendency for districts to make job offers to African American teacher candidates is universal. Districts' decisions about whom to offer jobs does not appear to contribute to the sorting of African American teacher candidates into predominantly minority schools. That is, districts with greater proportions of minority students were no more likely than other districts to make offers to African American teacher candidates. The growing number of students of color in the U.S. and the increased focus on the achievement gap between White and racial minority students has focused attention on the need to hire more teachers of color. This suggests that districts are responding to the need for more racial minority teachers.

Districts also appear to prefer younger teacher candidates who are just graduating from college to older teacher candidates with other work experience. Applications from new college graduates are more likely to result in job offers. Further, there is limited evidence that teacher candidates from higher social class backgrounds are also more likely to receive a job offer. Teacher candidates with more highly educated mothers are more likely to have received at least one job offer, although this finding is not very

robust. As discussed in Chapter 3, the teacher hiring literature has found that principals care about personal characteristics—such as enthusiasm, flexibility, and communication skills—when hiring teachers (Harris et al., 2006). Teachers from higher social class backgrounds may be better able to display the appropriate personal characteristics in interviews or new college graduates may have an advantage in appearing enthusiastic to hiring officials. Therefore, these characteristics may represent forms of cultural capital in the teacher labor market.

Social capital also predicts the labor market outcomes of teacher candidates. In particular, social capital is related to the number of interviews teacher candidates received, but is not related to whether or not the teacher candidate received a job offer. Perhaps having the right social contacts gives a teacher candidate an advantage in obtaining an interview, but it does not help them get a job. Further, the type of social capital is important as having contacts that work in a district office decreases the number of interviews received. This finding has implications for future research on district hiring decisions. This literature has not explored the impact of social networks on hiring decisions, instead focusing on professional qualifications and personal characteristics. Yet the importance of social networks in other occupations (Granovetter, 2005) and in this study suggests more attention is needed to the role of social capital in teacher hiring.

Consistent with other research on teacher hiring, professional qualifications do not predict teacher candidates' labor market outcomes. In particular, districts do not show a preference for hiring teacher candidates with higher ACT scores, consistent with research that suggests districts do not hire teacher candidates from selective colleges (Ballou, 1996). There is some evidence that having an endorsement for teaching math in

addition to the general elementary certificate makes it less likely that teacher candidates will get a job offer. While mathematics is a traditional shortage area for secondary schools, the market for elementary teachers does not give an advantage to math specialists. This is noteworthy as many upper elementary grade teachers do specialize in subjects and most elementary teachers lack deep knowledge of mathematics (Ball, Lubienski, & Mewborn, 2001). Additional research is needed on the role of subject matter knowledge in elementary teacher hiring.

Although there are overall patterns in which teacher candidates districts want to hire, there is also variation in districts' hiring decisions. In particular, not all districts prefer new college graduates. Districts with more minority and low-income students, and urban districts, are more likely to make job offers to mid-career changers. This preference for mid-career changers is noteworthy given the proliferation of alternative certification programs. Many alternative certification programs are designed to facilitate the career change of individuals who want to move into teaching and to ease staffing difficulties of districts in shortage areas. All the teacher candidates in this study went through university-based teacher preparation programs and the over-supply of new teachers in the area should not force districts to hire teachers with less than full state certification. Yet it may be that districts serving large proportions of minority students have a higher demand for mid-career changers—usually alternatively certified teachers—because they value the experience of older candidates. The proliferation of alternative certification programs may reflect both the lack of adequate supply of teachers in high minority schools and the preferences of hiring officials in these schools for teachers with additional work experience.

Chapter 3 emphasized the role of fit in teacher hiring. It may be that urban districts and districts with more minority and low-income students are more likely to make job offers to mid-career changers because they are a better fit with the existing staff. The data used in this study cannot answer this question. The data do provide some evidence on whether or not teacher candidates are more likely to get job offers in places where they fit in terms of the race and class composition of the schools. The findings from this study do not support the notion that districts with more minority students are more likely to make job offers to minority teacher candidates or that schools with students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds make job offers to teacher candidates from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. That is, the evidence does not suggest that district decisions about whom to hire contribute to teacher sorting by the race and class backgrounds of teachers.

Indeed, the data indicate that districts with more minority and low-income students are less likely to make job offers to teacher candidates from non-White and non-African American backgrounds. Additional research should examine more closely the interaction of specific racial groups in teacher hiring. The small number of non-White and non-African American teachers in the Smithton area limits the ability of this study to examine this in more depth. Further, research should consider the relationship between the characteristics of teachers already teaching in a school and teacher candidates applying for jobs. The sense of fit that teacher candidates described as important on the teaching field in Chapter 3 focused on fit with teachers rather than students.

Finally, there is no evidence that districts are more likely to make job offers to male teacher candidates. This is noteworthy given that elementary teachers are

disproportionately female. Chapter 3 found that teacher candidates expected males to have an advantage in the elementary teaching job market because there are so few male elementary teachers. Yet this was not the case. Conceptions of caring are central to elementary teaching, which is often compared to mothering (Nias, 1999; Vogt, 2002). Male elementary teachers experience tension and ambiguity in their ability to express care for their students (Hansen & Mulholland, 2005). Therefore, it may be that male teacher candidates are not perceived to fit the idea of an elementary teacher. The results in this chapter may reflect the tension between hiring more male elementary teachers to balance the existing teaching force and hiring officials' perceptions of caring as female work.

One limitation of this chapter is that the data do not provide evidence on the processes through which district and school hiring officials made their decisions about who to interview and who to offer a job. The data are limited to the outcomes of these decisions; that is, which teacher candidates had interview offers and which applications by teacher candidates resulted in a job offer. Despite this limitation, the data do provide evidence on the relative importance of cultural characteristics on teacher candidates' labor market outcomes and that the outcomes of districts' decisions contribute to the sorting of teacher candidates into different schools by teacher candidate career status but not race or class background.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Over 150,000 new teachers are hired every year throughout the country and elementary schools have almost the highest number of annual job openings among occupations in the state in which this study was conducted. This dissertation focused on the processes through which new teachers come to fill the job openings in particular schools. I approached this by highlighting the strategies and processes teachers use to find teaching jobs and make decisions about where to teach. Using a theoretical framework not previously applied to teacher career decisions—cultural reproduction theory—I explored how these processes are related to teachers’ social and cultural backgrounds. In summarizing the main findings of the dissertation and connecting these findings to the larger body of research on teachers’ career decisions, this chapter develops a more comprehensive framework to understand the forces that influence the current distribution of teachers. It also suggests avenues for future research and implications for policy and practice.

Summary

Overall, my research shows a tendency for teachers to self-sort into schools that serve students from similar social and cultural backgrounds as themselves. Some of these forces are deliberate—such as African American teachers’ preferences to work in a school with many racial minority students. Others are more tacit—such as what teachers think it takes to get a job, how they identify open positions, and how they perceive schools during interviews. My study corroborates previous research which has shown that district and school hiring practices also contribute to the sorting of teachers among

schools. Together, these forces lead to different labor market outcomes for African American and White teacher candidates, teacher candidates from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and mid-career changers and new college graduates.

Chapter 3 found that teacher candidates recognize the independent influence of cultural, social, and human capital in the teacher labor market. While teacher candidates recognize the importance of basic qualifications and certification, most of them emphasize the role of fitting in at a school and their own personal characteristics as vital to getting a job. These traits represent forms of embodied cultural capital because teachers' communication and interaction styles, the ways they present themselves, and how teachers behave in particular social situations are traits acquired through a process of socialization rather than instruction. This structure of the teaching field corresponds to what we know about principals' hiring decisions and thus it seems that most teacher candidates understand the "rules of the game." A smaller number of teacher candidates, however, downplay the importance of personal characteristics to focus on human capital and teaching ability. These teacher candidates—who are more likely to be African American, older mid-career changers, or from less affluent backgrounds—also prefer to teach in schools that the majority of teacher candidates consider less desirable, such as urban or low-income suburban schools or charter schools. This suggests that similarities exist in the structures of the teaching field and the field of schools, as teacher candidates who appear to understand how principals make hiring decisions prefer to teach in schools serving more affluent communities and those that they view as selective.

Chapter 4 outlined the practical logic that teacher candidates bring to the job search. This practical sense of the labor market emphasizes characteristics such as

comfort and familiarity as guiding job search decisions. The strategies teacher candidates use to identify open positions results in them not learning about opportunities in districts that were previously unfamiliar to them. Teacher candidates have a sense of where they want to teach and where they do not want to teach even though they know very little about these schools. Teacher candidates' strategies for gathering information about schools emphasize perceptions of comfort and fit as they give equal weight to the nature of interactions and "feeling" of a school as they do to the content of the interviews. Thus, even though teacher candidates have espoused preferences for particular school attributes such as beginning teacher support and a supportive principal, their preferences in use (as suggested by the processes that guide their job search) emphasize familiarity, comfort, and fit.

Chapter 5 followed the progression of teacher candidates through the job search as they sent out applications, went on interviews, received offers, and accepted jobs. Teacher candidates become distributed across schools in part through a process of self-sorting. For instance, African American teacher candidates apply to districts with greater concentrations of minority students. Likewise, teacher candidates from higher socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to apply to districts in low-income neighborhoods. This results in African American teachers ultimately teaching in schools with greater concentrations of minority students and teacher candidates from higher social class backgrounds teaching in schools with fewer low-income students. Further, the attributes of the top choice school that teacher candidates initially identify are related to the attributes of the school in which they end up teaching. If teacher candidates act on their espoused preferences in the job search, then we would expect to see teacher

candidates with different espoused preferences applying to and accepting jobs in different schools. Yet teacher candidates who say that working with minority students, being close to home, having small classes, having readily available instructional materials, and earning a high salary do not end up in schools that differ on these characteristics any more than teacher candidates who do not say these features are important. Instead, teacher candidates' preferences in use for a school with greater numbers of minority or low-income students, or an urban school, are associated with where they ultimately teach.

Chapter 6 focused on the school and district side of the hiring process. Cultural characteristics predicted the likelihood that teacher candidates would get offers. In particular, African American teacher candidates are more likely to get job offers. Social capital is also related to teacher candidates' labor market success, although human capital seems to be less important. Schools and districts do have varying preferences for the candidates they hire. Although new college graduates are generally more likely to get a job offer, schools with more minority or low-income students tend to hire mid-career changers. This may explain why mid-career changers receive job offers in schools with greater percentages of minority and low-income students than new college graduates even though mid-career changers and new college graduates apply to schools with similar characteristics.

Throughout these chapters, we see themes about the social and cultural context of teachers' career decisions. Cultural understandings and perceptions influence both how teacher candidates view their position on the teaching field and their opinions of schools in which they apply and interview. A cultural reproduction framework highlights the role of habitus in mediating between the structure of the field and individual's preferences,

perceptions, and behavior. Viewed through this perspective, it is not surprising that fitting in to a school's culture becomes a central theme in teachers' job search decisions.

Through interacting on the field, teachers get a sense of the importance of fit in hiring decisions. In turn, teachers' perceptions of whether they want to work in a school are influenced by how they think they fit, socially and culturally, with the existing staff.

Teachers do not ignore school working conditions or economic incentives that are important in existing literature. They describe school organizational conditions such as beginning teacher support and supportive leadership as central components in their job search. Even though these responses may have been influenced by a social desirability bias, I believe they were honest. Yet the ways that teachers' socio-cultural backgrounds influence their job search are sometimes hidden to the teacher. For example, initial perceptions about their top choice school in which they see themselves teaching influence their behavior about where to apply. The reliance on familiar districts and social networks for identifying open positions inherently filter the types of schools to which they initially apply. Further, the lack of information about salaries, professional culture, instructional programs, and resources increase the importance of culturally informed perceptions and (often negative) assumptions about schools.

To put it a different way, we could ask, "Did teachers end up in a school that they wanted?" The answer to this question depends on how we define what they "want." If, on the one hand, we use teachers' espoused preferences for particular characteristics of schools in which they want to work, then teachers do not necessarily get what they want from the job search. If, on the other hand, we define what they "want" as a school similar to what they describe as their top choice school at the beginning of the hiring season—an

exemplar of what they define as a desirable place to work—then most teachers do end up where they want to be. This distinction is important as it speaks to how researchers conceptualize teachers' preferences and the use of those preferences during the job search. Teachers have a picture of the school and classroom in which they will work and the job search process actualizes this picture despite the preferences they espouse.

This study suggests that school selection involves both rational calculations concerning school organization, and, more fundamentally, a process of adjustment in which teachers adjust their school selection to their perceived social position. Previous studies have shown that teachers are distributed across schools in particular ways (Lankford et al., 2002); this study shows that teachers themselves contribute to that sorting process. As it illuminates this adjustment process, a cultural reproduction framework expands our understanding of teacher labor markets to include teachers as active participants in the process, noting that their actions are sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious decisions.

Limitations

I addressed some limitations of the study in Chapter 2, including the focus on newly prepared teachers as a source of new hires and the reliance on teachers from traditional, university-based, teacher education programs. I want to address three additional limitations here.

First, all data collection came from the teacher side of the hiring process. Some of the findings, particularly in Chapter 6, explore hiring practices and focus on who schools and districts want to hire. A more complete analysis of school and district hiring

preferences would collect data from the school or district, such as characteristics of their applicant pool.

Second, the excess supply of elementary teachers in the Smithton area places limitations on the generalizability of the study. The study took place in a metropolitan area with a history of exporting teachers to other states due to over-supply and current economic constraints that limited demand. Yet, I speculate that it is more likely that these market conditions decreased, rather than increased, the impact of teacher decision-making throughout the job search. Teachers in the interview component of this study indicated they applied to some districts because they recognized the labor market conditions. Thus, it is reasonable that a labor market with a greater demand or lower supply of elementary teachers would allow teacher candidates to be more selective in where they apply and possibly increase the degree of self-sorting.

The third limitation is related to the second as it speaks to generalizing to the larger teaching population from a specific study of prospective elementary teachers. Elementary teaching has—for better or for worse—often been compared to mothering with a primary concern for the child rather than the content. Thus middle and high school teachers, with their disciplinary background, may focus on content concerns rather than feelings of comfort and fit when thinking about where they want to teach. Secondary teachers may make quite different decisions, although that is certainly a question that could prove to be very interesting for study in a cultural reproduction framework.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Despite these limitations, this study suggests several implications for policy and practice. I outline these implications for state and federal policymakers, teacher educators, and school and district administrators.

There are several policy proposals to create incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools. While these policies may improve the quality of teachers in hard-to-staff schools given the right incentives, this dissertation suggests teachers' job search processes will limit the efficacy of these policies. Because of their socio-cultural backgrounds and inability to see how they are limiting their own job searches, teachers simply do not know about all the jobs that were available in the Smithton metropolitan area. How and where teachers look for a job influence where they end up teaching. Developing a statewide job bank for teaching jobs and encouraging its use throughout the state could help expose teachers to a greater range of jobs. The lack of such a resource in this state forced teachers to rely on familiarity with districts and social networks to find jobs. Further, the statewide job bank should emphasize the position characteristics of the vacancy, rather than the district. The Smithton area did have county job banks, but these job banks were primarily organized by districts within the county so the district in which the vacancy was located remained a prominent feature.

Teachers' decisions are also hampered by the limited information available to them about various schools. Their searches for information on what it is like to work in a particular school turned up little more than school performance indicators, student demographics, and the geographic location of the school. Creating an online database of school characteristics could give teachers more information. This database could include

characteristics such as beginning and average salaries, class size, teacher turnover or percentage of new teachers, induction policies, instructional expenditures, length of tenure of the principal, and characteristics of other teachers in the school. As states are creating workforce databases, this information is likely to be available. States should also take advantage of these databases to help teachers make informed decisions about where to teach.

But improving the hiring process would not solve all staffing problems. Even with objective data about schools, teachers formed subjective opinions about what it would be like to teach in various schools. An effective set of policies should also include ways to stimulate supply in traditionally under-served areas. If urban or rural areas continue to face persistent staffing difficulties, policymakers should find ways to develop a pool of individuals who want to teach in these areas. Examples include the Broad Partnership at Michigan State University and Temple University's Urban Education Collaborative. Further, many alternative certification programs are designed to prepare teachers for hard-to-staff schools. Ensuring that these alternatively certified teachers are effective educators is vital.

Teacher educators also have a role to play. As I mentioned above, we need research on how teacher education practices can affect prospective teachers' perceptions of what it is like to teach in various schools and their preferences for where to teach. Teacher education practices may be able to change prospective teachers' preferences and perceptions by helping them feel comfortable in socially distant schools. These practices may likely include designing student teaching and pre-student teaching field experiences in hard-to-staff schools. But caution should also be taken so that prospective teachers are

successful in these environments; otherwise, teachers' negative perceptions of these schools may be reinforced. If prospective elementary teachers have a series of positive field experiences in urban schools, for example, then they may perceive urban schools as places where they can feel comfortable and succeed as teachers. While these policies could help, they are unlikely to solve persistent staffing difficulties by themselves, as teachers' perceptions may be hard to change.

This dissertation also has implications for school and district administrators. First, urban districts could streamline their hiring process so that their late hiring timeline does not affect whom they ultimately hire. Second, school and districts administrators should also be cognizant of the need to help teachers gain information on what it is like to teach in their schools. Teachers were disappointed with the information about the schools and salary structure available to them on district websites. Attending to the needs of potential teachers and current applicants in designing district and school websites can help districts manage teachers' perceptions of what it would be like to work for them. Finally, the trend to decentralize hiring and give more control to principals or site-based teams emphasizes the need to gather information about the teacher candidates. Yet teachers are also using these opportunities to gather information about the school. Principals and other hiring officials should be aware of the messages they are sending to potential teachers through their recruitment processes and interview situations and be conscious of using their technology resources as marketing tools to teachers.

Extending Frameworks on Teachers' Career Decisions

What does this mean for how researchers think about teachers' career decisions? I want to highlight three main themes based on their implications for understanding job

search processes. First, teachers value a sense of comfort and fit in choosing where, and with whom, they want to work. Second, teachers approach the job search with a picture of a school in which they want to teach that subsequently filters the options available to them for where they might work. Third, teachers' perceptions of schools are subjective and despite the best efforts of teacher education and policy, habitus is difficult to change.

Comfort and Fit

A sense of fit was an important factor in teachers' job search processes. Teachers think a good fit determines whether they receive a job offer. They also want to work in schools where they think they fit. Existing work on teachers' career decisions highlights the trade-offs teachers make between economic incentives, location, and working conditions such as class size, instructional supports, and professional culture. Yet ideas about comfort and fit represent quite different conceptions of work-life in schools. They are distinct from "working conditions" in that conditions suggest characteristics of schools that impact an individual's ability to perform a job while fit is a more subjective, affective response to a school itself. Yet comfort and fit are central to how teachers think about what it is like to work in a particular school.

Existing research on teachers' career decisions also highlights the need for teachers to feel successful in their work (Johnson & Birkland, 2003). Teachers interviewed for this study indicate their comfort and sense of fit with a school affect whether they think they can be successful. Comfort and fit relates to interactions with both students and with other teachers. Teachers do not think they can be successful in places where they feel uncomfortable relating to students. They also do not think they will be supported in schools where they do not fit in with the rest of the staff.

Some recent research has begun to explore the professional aspects of fit and how hiring practices can affect teachers' fit with a school (Liu & Johnson, 2006). My dissertation highlights the idea that fit is both professional and personal. Teachers have both a sense of themselves as teachers and a sense of their social and cultural identity. Both of these components affect where teachers think they fit. Strunk and Robinson (2006) found some support for the idea that teachers try to maintain their social identity by working with teachers of similar races. Likewise, Podgursky, Monroe and Watson (2006) found that female teachers with high ACT scores are more likely to exit teaching if the colleagues in their school have lower ACT scores. This dissertation extends this work by highlighting the role that social distance or proximity plays in teachers' sense of where they fit and where they can maintain their social and cultural identity.

Initial Frames on Decisions

The importance of fit and comfort on teachers' career decisions can be incorporated into a rational choice framework. A teachers' utility function may include a sense of comfort in the school and can be weighed against more traditional forms of working conditions or economic incentives. But the importance of initial decision frames in early stages of the job search suggests other theoretical perspectives can shed light on these processes. Teachers bring initial guiding principles to their job search that then structure their subsequent choices. These initial frames include:

- a sense that principals hire teachers who “fit” with the rest of the school;
- strategies for identifying available positions—based both on social networks and the reliance on specific district websites—that filter what options they see as available to them;

- unspoken preferences that limit the schools to which they apply, such as in-state or out of state schools, charter or traditional public schools, or schools in unfamiliar neighborhoods; and
- strategies for gathering information about schools that focus their attention on student demographic characteristics and feelings of comfort and fit.

My data provide some evidence that teachers do care about working conditions and salary and do engage in some deliberative thought consistent with rational choice theory when they were presented with multiple job offers. But the choices open to them had been filtered by the guiding frames and strategies at earlier stages in the job search. Further, teachers' initial ideas about where they picture themselves teaching serve as frames for subsequent perceptions of schools. Teachers end up working in schools quite similar to their initial preferences, even though those initial preferences are not always consistent with their espoused preferences. Individuals enter the teaching profession with ideas about what it is like to be a teacher and pictures of themselves as teachers which come from many years in the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975). These ideas are deeply ingrained and difficult to change through teacher education practices (Feiman-Nemser, 1983). This dissertation suggests that teachers have ideas about what it means to teach in particular contexts and the visions that teachers have about themselves as teachers subconsciously place them in particular contexts.

Subjective Perceptions

Some of the research on teachers' career decisions suggests that characteristics of schools are objective and universally perceived as good or bad by teachers. Yet teachers' perceptions of what it is like to work in schools are inherently subjective. There are

objective features of schools that lead to tangible differences between schools, but what these features mean to teachers and whether these tangible differences are perceived to be important are structured by the habitus. What types of interactions do teachers expect with their students or colleagues? What reference group are they using to compare the working conditions or salary in a particular school? Answering these questions involves understanding the teachers' socio-cultural background. Did teachers attend schools where students acted in particular ways? How are they used to interacting with individuals in a supervisory role, such as principals and teacher leaders?

Thus, teachers' perceptions of schools as workplaces depend, in part, on the assumptions and expectations teachers bring to the school. Some research has focused on workers' subjective perceptions of salary. For example, satisfaction with pay depends upon what reference group individuals use to assess their pay and what expectations they have for salary (Young, 1999). The findings from this dissertation suggest similarly extending conceptions of working conditions to highlight their subjective nature. In particular, frameworks guiding research on teachers' career decisions should consider how perceptions of working conditions interact with the social and cultural contexts of schools and their students. Teachers' sense of responsibility for student learning is affected by the race and class status of their students (Diamond, Randolph, & Spillane, 2004) and teachers have culturally-based expectations for their interactions with other teachers, parents, and especially students (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Lipman, 1998; McDermott, 1974).

Even the relative proximity of a school is subjectively constructed by teachers. While teachers do recognize the objective distance and commuting time between their

home and potential schools, this objective distance interacts with socially and culturally constructed ideas about the social distance to the school. As we saw in Chapter 4, longer commutes are acceptable if they lead to schools that are socially and culturally familiar to teachers. Thus, in trying to understand the importance of location in teachers' job search decisions (Boyd et al., 2005a), we should consider the interplay between social and geographic proximity.

Future Research

The previous section outlined ways in which this work extends the current literature on teachers' career decisions, yet many questions remain. Here, I outline four sets of questions for future work.

First, what happens when teacher candidates receive multiple offers? The small sample size and labor market conditions in this study limited the ability to closely examine the processes teachers used when deciding between multiple offers. There was some evidence that the receipt of multiple job offers allowed teachers to engage in rational decision-making, but that also their initial ideas about where they wanted to work still influenced their decisions. More work is needed to understand these processes.

Second, what is the impact of different colleges or universities' teacher education programs on teachers' careers? The role of the colleges was kept in the background of this study. What can universities or colleges do to influence teacher candidates' preferences or perceptions of schools? Nearly all the teacher candidates in this study indicated that their teacher preparation program encouraged them to teach in urban schools, yet this did not impact their job search decisions. Are there particular practices in teacher education programs that can facilitate prospective teachers' sense of comfort in

socially unfamiliar schools? Are there ways in which teacher education programs can make prospective teachers familiar with hard-to-staff schools or extend their networks? Also, do hiring officials have preferences for teacher candidates from particular colleges or universities? Given the current state of reform in teacher education and the growing number of alternative certification programs, this line of research will become increasingly important.

Third, why do some teachers counter the tendency to choose schools that reproduce their own schooling experiences? The sample size in this study precluded the ability to focus on teacher candidates who were conscious about wanting to teach in schools that are quite different from those with which they are familiar. Subsequent research should focus on these teachers. Do they use different processes when making decisions? Have they had significant life events that force them to rethink their career decisions? What about the impact of programs such as Teach For America that recruit individuals with high social status from prestigious universities into hard-to staff schools? How do these programs affect teachers' decisions?

Fourth, how do teacher candidates present themselves to schools and districts? While most teacher candidates think personal characteristics and fit are important in getting a job, some emphasize qualifications and teaching ability. Do these differences in what teachers think guides hiring decisions affect how they present themselves to potential schools? Analyzing teacher candidates' resumes may help us understand what information they think hiring officials want to know. Further, the interview protocol in this study focused on what teacher candidates were learning about schools during

interviews. A related study could focus on what teacher candidates try to convey about themselves to schools on interviews.

Each of the policy suggestions and lines of inquiry mentioned above can improve our knowledge of teachers' career decisions and ultimately facilitate access to high quality teachers for all students. For policymakers and school administrators, no one proposal is a silver bullet; addressing the staffing needs of schools serving traditionally under-served students requires a multifaceted approach. For researchers, understanding how teachers approach the task of finding a teaching job and the processes through which they make decisions will inform this multifaceted approach to policymaking. This dissertation represents the first step in understanding teachers' job search processes as it expands our understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which teachers make their job search decisions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INITIAL SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Note: The formatting on this instrument has been altered to fit within the margin constraints of the dissertation.

Section 1—Preferences for schools

This section asks about your opinions of different types of schools.

- What will you most likely do in the 2006-07 school year?
 - Teach in a K-12 setting
 - Work as a substitute teacher
 - Work in a non-teaching job
 - Student at a college or university
 - Other (Please specify: _____)
- Will you apply/did you apply for teaching positions in elementary schools to start teaching in the 2006-07 school year?
 - Yes → Please continue filling out this survey.
 - No → Thank you for your time. There is no need to complete this survey. Return it in the enclosed envelope.

3. In considering where you would prefer to teach, how do you view each of the following characteristics?

Circle one in each row.	Would prefer not to have this	Neutral	Would somewhat prefer this	Would prefer this	Would strongly prefer this
a. small classes	1	2	3	4	5
b. close proximity to my home	1	2	3	4	5
c. students who remind me of myself at their age	1	2	3	4	5
d. an effective student discipline policy	1	2	3	4	5
e. good reputation for teaching practices	1	2	3	4	5
f. availability of textbooks and other instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5
g. low-achieving students	1	2	3	4	5
h. high-achieving students	1	2	3	4	5
i. many English as a Second Language students	1	2	3	4	5
j. many racial/ethnic minority students	1	2	3	4	5
k. a staff that talks about their instruction	1	2	3	4	5
l. teachers from the same racial/ethnic background as me	1	2	3	4	5
m. students from the same racial/ethnic background as me	1	2	3	4	5
n. faculty mentors/ beginning teacher support	1	2	3	4	5

o. parents at the school who remind me of my own parents	1	2	3	4	5
p. good condition of the facilities	1	2	3	4	5
q. high salary	1	2	3	4	5
r. curriculum that I like to teach	1	2	3	4	5
s. a staff that gets along well	1	2	3	4	5
t. school that is similar to the one I attended as a student	1	2	3	4	5
u. mission/vision of the school compatible with my own	1	2	3	4	5
v. supportive school leadership	1	2	3	4	5
w. students from the same socio-economic background as me	1	2	3	4	5

4. Of the features listed in question 3, what are the three features that are most important to you?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features that are most important to you. For example, write in d, k, m.

_____ First feature _____ Second feature _____ Third feature

Sometimes it helps people to talk about their opinions when given a specific example. The next set of questions asks for you to name a specific school in which you would like to work and to describe that school.

5. Write the name of a specific school in which you would most like to teach.

Note: Write the name of the school you consider to be your top choice at this time. If you do not have a single top choice at this time, write the name of any school in which you would be happy to teach. If you can't think of a specific school, write the name of a district. If your preferred school is a private or charter school, write the name of a specific school. This information is only being collected for research purposes. The school you name will not be contacted in any way.

a. School name: _____

b. District name: _____ State: _____

6. How would you best describe the academic performance of this school? *Circle one.*

- a. High achieving school
- b. Average achieving school
- c. Low achieving school

7. How would you best describe the community surrounding this school? *Circle one.*

- a. Mostly urban
- b. Mostly high income suburbs
- c. Mostly moderate income suburbs
- d. Mostly low income suburbs
- e. Mostly rural or small town

8. Think about the school you named above in which you want to teach. Please circle the descriptor to indicate your level of agreement with each statement about features of this school. The scale of responses ranges from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (4). If you are unsure of some feature of the school, circle, “Don’t Know.”

Circle one in each row.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
a. This school has small classes.	1	2	3	4	DK
b. This school is close to my home.	1	2	3	4	DK
c. The students in this school remind me of myself at their age.	1	2	3	4	DK
d. This school has an effective student discipline policy.	1	2	3	4	DK
e. This school has a good reputation for teaching practices.	1	2	3	4	DK
f. Textbooks and other instructional materials are available when needed in this school.	1	2	3	4	DK
g. This school has many low-achieving students.	1	2	3	4	DK
h. This school has many high-achieving students.	1	2	3	4	DK
i. This school has many English as a Second Language students.	1	2	3	4	DK
j. This school has many racial/ethnic minority students.	1	2	3	4	DK
k. Teachers in this school talk about their instruction.	1	2	3	4	DK
l. Most teachers in this school come from the same racial/ethnic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK
m. Most students in this school come from the same racial/ethnic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK
n. Mentors/beginning teacher support are provided to new teachers in this school.	1	2	3	4	DK
o. Parents of students in this school remind me of my own parents.	1	2	3	4	DK
p. The school building and facilities are in good condition.	1	2	3	4	DK
q. This school has high teacher salaries.	1	2	3	4	DK
r. This school has a curriculum that I like to teach.	1	2	3	4	DK
s. Teachers in this school get along well.	1	2	3	4	DK
t. This school is similar to ones I attended as a student.	1	2	3	4	DK
u. This school's mission or vision is compatible with my own.	1	2	3	4	DK
v. This school has a supportive school leadership.	1	2	3	4	DK
w. Most students in this school come from the same socio-economic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK

9. Of the features listed in question 8, what are the three features that make this school MOST desirable to you?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features that make this school most desirable. For example, write in d, k, m.

_____ First feature
_____ Second feature
_____ Third feature

10. Do you have information about your top choice school from the following sources?
Circle Yes or No for each item.

a. My mentor/cooperating teacher	Yes	No
b. My university supervisor	Yes	No
c. Conversations/interview with the principal of this school	Yes	No
d. Conversations/interview with teachers in this school	Yes	No
e. Experience student teaching at this school	Yes	No
f. Other direct personal experience with this school	Yes	No
g. Conversations with family/friends who have direct experience with this school	Yes	No
h. School or district website	Yes	No
i. Newspapers/Media/TV	Yes	No

The next set of questions asks for you to name a particular school in which you would NOT like to work and to describe that school.

11. Write the name of a specific school in which you would NOT want to teach.

Note: Write the name of the first school that comes to mind. If you can't think of a specific school, write the name of a district. If your least desirable school is a private or charter school, write the name of a specific school. This information is only being collected for research purposes. The school you name will not be contacted in any way.

a. School name: _____

b. District name: _____ State: _____

12. How would you best describe the academic performance of this school? *Circle one.*

- a. High achieving school
- b. Average achieving school
- c. Low achieving school

13. How would you best describe the community surrounding this school? *Circle one.*

- a. Mostly urban
- b. Mostly high income suburbs
- c. Mostly moderate income suburbs
- d. Mostly low income suburbs
- e. Mostly rural or small town

14. Think about the school you named above in which you would NOT want to work. Please circle the descriptor to indicate your level of agreement with each statement about features of this school. The scale of responses ranges from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (4). If you are unsure of some feature of the school, circle, “Don’t Know.”

Circle one in each row.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
a. This school has small classes.	1	2	3	4	DK
b. This school is close to my home.	1	2	3	4	DK
c. The students in this school remind me of myself at their age.	1	2	3	4	DK
d. This school has an effective student discipline policy.	1	2	3	4	DK
e. This school has a good reputation for teaching practices.	1	2	3	4	DK
f. Textbooks and other instructional materials are available when needed in this school.	1	2	3	4	DK
g. This school has many low-achieving students.	1	2	3	4	DK
h. This school has many high-achieving students.	1	2	3	4	DK
i. This school has many English as a Second Language students.	1	2	3	4	DK
j. This school has many racial/ethnic minority students.	1	2	3	4	DK
k. Teachers in this school talk about their instruction.	1	2	3	4	DK
l. Most teachers in this school come from the same racial/ethnic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK
m. Most students in this school come from the same racial/ethnic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK
n. Mentors/beginning teacher support are provided to new teachers in this school.	1	2	3	4	DK
o. Parents of students in this school remind me of my own parents.	1	2	3	4	DK
p. The school building and facilities are in good condition.	1	2	3	4	DK
q. This school has high teacher salaries.	1	2	3	4	DK
r. This school has a curriculum that I like to teach.	1	2	3	4	DK
s. Teachers in this school get along well.	1	2	3	4	DK
t. This school is similar to ones I attended as a student.	1	2	3	4	DK
u. This school's mission or vision is compatible with my own.	1	2	3	4	DK
v. This school has a supportive school leadership.	1	2	3	4	DK
w. Most students in this school come from the same socio-economic background as I do.	1	2	3	4	DK

15. Of the features listed in question 14, what are the three features that make this school LEAST desirable to you?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features that make this school least desirable. For example, write in d, k, m.

_____ First feature
_____ Second feature
_____ Third feature

16. Do you have information about your least desirable school from the following sources?

Circle Yes or No for each item.

a. My mentor/cooperating teacher	Yes	No
b. My university supervisor	Yes	No
c. Conversations/interview with the principal of this school	Yes	No
d. Conversations/interview with teachers in this school	Yes	No
e. Experience student teaching at this school	Yes	No
f. Other direct personal experience with this school	Yes	No
g. Conversations with family/friends who have direct experience with this school	Yes	No
h. School or district website	Yes	No
i. Newspapers/Media/TV	Yes	No

Section 2: Hiring Process

This section asks about your perception of how schools hire teachers and your preferences for teaching in particular schools and general types of schools.

17. Overall, how would you rate your chances of securing a teaching job.

Circle one.

- a. I am confident I will be offered a good teaching job.
- b. I am unsure about whether I will be offered a teaching job. I might be offered a teaching job, but it might not be the job I want.
- c. I doubt I will be offered any teaching job. My job prospects are low.

18. If you ARE NOT offered a full-time teaching job, what will you most likely do during the 2006-07 school year?

Circle one.

- a. Serve as a substitute teacher
- b. Work in a non-teaching job
- c. Teach in a preschool program
- d. Go back to school
- e. Other (Please specify: _____)

19. How more or less likely are individuals with the following characteristics to be offered a teaching position? Please circle the descriptor to indicate your perceptions about what it takes to get a teaching job. The scale of responses ranges from “Much Less Likely” (1) to “Much More Likely” (4).

Individuals are more likely to get a teaching job if they...	Much less likely	Slightly less likely	Neither more or less likely	Slightly more likely	Much more likely
a. have experience tutoring or mentoring children	1	2	3	4	5
b. have several years of teaching experience	1	2	3	4	5
c. have experience working with children in non-school settings	1	2	3	4	5
d. have a high GPA	1	2	3	4	5
e. have a master's degree	1	2	3	4	5
f. have a full year of student teaching experience	1	2	3	4	5
g. come from the same racial/ethnic background as other teachers in the school	1	2	3	4	5
h. have high scores on teacher certification exams	1	2	3	4	5
i. fit in well socially with the school staff	1	2	3	4	5
j. have experience teaching in urban schools (including student teaching)	1	2	3	4	5
k. have a relative or friend who is a teacher	1	2	3	4	5
l. come from a racial/ethnic minority background	1	2	3	4	5
m. have a relative or friend who works in a school district office	1	2	3	4	5
n. have a relative or friend who is a school principal	1	2	3	4	5
o. are certified to teach multiple subjects or grades	1	2	3	4	5
p. look like other teachers in the school	1	2	3	4	5
q. are qualified to teach special education	1	2	3	4	5
r. feel comfortable talking about personal interests with the principal	1	2	3	4	5
s. are qualified to teach English as a Second Language	1	2	3	4	5
t. come from a highly ranked university	1	2	3	4	5
u. are male	1	2	3	4	5
v. are White	1	2	3	4	5
w. are in the right place at the right time	1	2	3	4	5

20. Of the features listed in question 19, what are the three features you feel will most HELP your own chances of obtaining a teaching job?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features you feel will most help you get a teaching job. For example, write in d, k, m.

_____ First feature
 _____ Second feature
 _____ Third feature

21. Of the features listed in question 19, what are the three features you feel will most HURT your own chances of obtaining a teaching job?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features you feel will most hurt you get a teaching job. For example, write in d, k, m.

_____ First feature
 _____ Second feature
 _____ Third feature

22. Will you apply (or have you applied) for teaching positions in the following types of schools?

Circle Yes or No for each type of school.

a. Regular public schools in Detroit	Yes	No
b. Regular public schools in Lansing	Yes	No
c. Regular public schools in Flint	Yes	No
d. Regular public schools in Chicago	Yes	No
e. Regular public schools in high income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
f. Regular public schools in moderate income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
g. Regular public schools in low income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
h. Regular public schools in suburbs near Lansing	Yes	No
i. Regular public schools in suburbs near Flint	Yes	No
j. Regular public schools in suburbs near Chicago	Yes	No
k. Schools that serve primarily at-risk students	Yes	No
l. Charter schools/Public school academies	Yes	No
m. Private schools with a religious affiliation	Yes	No
n. Private schools with no religious affiliation	Yes	No
o. Schools outside of Michigan	Yes	No
p. Schools in rural areas	Yes	No
q. School(s) you attended as a student	Yes	No
r. School(s) where you student-taught	Yes	No

23. How much do you think your teacher preparation program emphasized teaching in the following settings?

The scale of responses ranges from “Not emphasized at all” (1) to “Strongly emphasized” (4).

	Not emphasized at all	Somewhat emphasized	Strongly emphasized
a. Schools in urban areas	1	2	3
b. Schools with many low income students	1	2	3
c. Schools with many racial/ethnic minority students	1	2	3
d. Schools with many students who struggle academically	1	2	3

Section 3—Teacher Preparation and Certification Information

This section asks about your teacher preparation program and certificate areas.

24. Are you certified or do you expect to be certified to teach in an elementary school by the start of the 2006-07 school year?

- a. Yes
- b. No → Skip to question 28

25. Which of the following endorsements do you have or will you have on your teaching certificate?

Circle all that apply.

- a. General Elementary certificate
- b. Middle School certificate
- c. Bilingual Education
- d. Early Childhood Education
- e. Language Arts
- f. Social Studies
- g. Science/Integrated Science
- h. Mathematics
- i. World Language
- j. Music Education
- k. Art Education
- l. Visual Arts Education
- m. Special Education
- n. Other (Please specify: _____)

26. In what year did/ will you complete your initial teacher certification program? _____

27. What is the name of the university in which you obtained/will obtain this certification?

- a. Eastern Michigan University
- b. Marygrove College
- c. Michigan State University
- d. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
- e. University of Michigan-Dearborn
- f. Wayne State University
- g. University of Detroit Mercy
- h. Siena Heights University
- i. Other (Please specify: _____)

28. In what year did/ will you complete your first undergraduate degree? _____

29. What is the name of the university in which you obtained/will obtain your first undergraduate degree?

- a. Eastern Michigan University
- b. Marygrove College
- c. Michigan State University
- d. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
- e. University of Michigan-Dearborn
- f. Wayne State University
- g. University of Detroit Mercy
- h. Siena Heights University
- i. Other (Please specify: _____)

30. What is/was your undergraduate major and/or minor?

Mark (X) all that apply.

	Major	Minor
Elementary education	[]	[]
Early childhood education	[]	[]
Math education	[]	[]
English education	[]	[]
Science education	[]	[]
Bilingual education	[]	[]
Special education	[]	[]
Other subject-specific education (e.g., social studies education, arts education)	[]	[]
Other education (e.g., counseling or guidance)	[]	[]
Ethnic or Global studies (e.g., African-American or Latin American studies)	[]	[]
Business or Professional studies (e.g., Marketing, Agriculture, Law)	[]	[]
Arts (e.g., fine arts, drama, music, design)	[]	[]
English (e.g., English Literature or Composition, Journalism or Communications)	[]	[]
Foreign Languages	[]	[]
Mathematics (e.g., Mathematics or Statistics)	[]	[]

Engineering or Computer Science	[]	[]
Science (e.g., Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Geology or Earth Sciences)	[]	[]
Social Sciences (e.g., Psychology, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science)	[]	[]
Other Humanities (e.g., History, Philosophy, Religious Studies)	[]	[]
General Studies or other Interdisciplinary Studies (e.g., Liberal Studies)	[]	[]

31. Do you have a master's degree, or will you have a master's degree by the start of the 2006-07 school year? •

- a. Yes
- b. No

32. For how long have you done each of the following?

Circle one in each row. Do not include activities you have done as part of your teacher preparation program, such as field experiences or student teaching.

	Not at all	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6 or more years
a. Taught your own class in a preschool or child care facility, either part-time or full-time	1	2	3	4	5
b. Substitute taught in either a public or private elementary or secondary school, either part-time or full-time	1	2	3	4	5
c. Worked as an instructional aide or paraprofessional in either a public or private school full-time	1	2	3	4	5
d. Worked in another non-teaching position in the education field full-time	1	2	3	4	5
e. Worked in another position outside the field of education full-time	1	2	3	4	5
f. Had primary care-giving responsibilities for small children or older adults in need of care, either part-time or full-time	1	2	3	4	5

Section 4: Background Information

This section asks for demographic and background information.

33. What is your year of birth? _____

34. Are you male or female?

- a. Male
- b. Female

35. a. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

- a. Yes
- b. No

b. What is your race?

Circle one or more races that you identify yourself to be.

- a. White
- b. Black or African-American
- c. Asian
- d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- e. American Indian or Alaska Native

36. What is the name of the high school that you graduated from?

37. In what city and state is this high school located?

City: _____

State: _____

38a. Did you take the ACT college entrance exam?

If you did not take the ACT, please go to question 39.

- a. Yes _____
- b. No _____



b. If yes, what was your highest ACT score on the test?

_____ Highest score on the ACT

39. Please write your first and last name. _____

Note: You will not be identified individually in any way. As this research involves surveys at two points in time, your name and contact information are necessary to link information from the multiple versions of the survey. After we link the data, your name and contact information will be deleted.

40. What is your mailing address? _____

Note: Please provide a mailing address that will still be valid and in use in September. You will not be identified individually in any way. As this research involves surveys at two points in time, your name and contact information are necessary to link information from the multiple versions of the survey. After we link the data, your name and contact information will be deleted.

41. What is your email address? _____

Note: Please provide an email address that will still be valid and in use in September. You will not be identified individually in any way. As this research involves surveys at two points in time, your name and contact information are necessary to link information from the multiple versions of the survey. After we link the data, your name and contact information will be deleted.

Thank you for completing this survey!

APPENDIX B: FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Note: The formatting on this instrument has been altered to fit within the margin constraints of the dissertation.

Name: _____

Note: Your name is necessary so your responses to this survey and the previous survey and be linked.

Section 1—Additional information on your background

The initial survey you completed included a few questions about your background. To save you time in completing the initial survey, some questions about your background were not included on that survey.

1. What is your mother's highest level of education? *Circle one.*

- a. Below high school
- b. High school
- c. Some college
- d. Bachelor's degree
- e. Master's degree
- f. Doctorate or Professional degree

2. What is your father's occupation and industry? If your father is no longer working, write in his former occupation.

Father's occupation: _____

Father's industry: _____

3. What is your mother's occupation and industry? If your mother is no longer working, write in her former occupation.

Mother's occupation: _____

Mother's industry: _____

Section 2—Experiences on the job market

This section asks about your experiences searching for a teaching job and the types of schools you applied to.

4. Think about the people you talked to or who gave you advice about your job search. How many of those people fit into each of the following categories? *Write in a number for each type of role.*

- a. Professional contacts such as your mentor or cooperating teacher, colleagues from work or student teaching _____

- b. Friends, family members, and acquaintances who are also teachers _____
- c. Friends, family members, and acquaintances who are principals or other school administrators _____
- d. Friends, family members, and acquaintances who work in a district office _____
- e. Individuals who work for your teacher preparation program _____

5. How many teaching jobs did you apply for since January 2006?

- a. 0
- b. 1-10
- c. 11-20
- d. 21-40
- e. More than 40

6. List 7 districts to which you applied and seriously pursued teaching jobs.

If you applied to more than 7 districts, list those you most seriously pursued. If you applied to less than 7 districts, list all that you applied to. If you applied to charter or private schools, list the name of the school.

District	State

7. Did you apply for teaching jobs in the following types of schools? Circle Yes or No for each type of school.

a. Regular public schools in Detroit	Yes	No
b. Regular public schools in Lansing	Yes	No
c. Regular public schools in Flint	Yes	No
d. Regular public schools in Pontiac	Yes	No
e. Regular public schools in Chicago	Yes	No
f. Regular public schools in high income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
g. Regular public schools in moderate income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
h. Regular public schools in low income suburbs near Detroit	Yes	No
i. Regular public schools in suburbs near Lansing	Yes	No
j. Regular public schools in suburbs near Flint	Yes	No
k. Regular public schools in suburbs near Chicago	Yes	No
l. Charter schools/Public school academies	Yes	No
m. Private schools with a religious affiliation	Yes	No
n. Private schools with no religious affiliation	Yes	No
o. Schools outside of Michigan	Yes	No
p. Schools in rural areas	Yes	No
q. School(s) you attended as a student	Yes	No
r. School(s) where you student-taught	Yes	No

8. How many schools offered to interview you for a teaching job?

_____ Number of schools

9. Did you turn down any interview offers?

a. No → Go to question 11.

b. Yes → Go to question 10.

10. Why did you turn down an interview offer?

11. Were you offered a teaching job for the 2006-07 school year?

a. No → Go to question 12.

b. Yes → Go to question 14.

12. What will you most likely do during the 2006-2007 school year?

Circle one.

a. Work as a substitute teacher

b. Work in a non-teaching job (Specify: _____)

c. Teach in a preschool or daycare program

d. Go back to school, get a master's degree

e. Other (Please specify: _____)

13. Will you be applying for teaching jobs in other schools for next year?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Not sure at this point

If you were not offered a teaching job, your survey is complete. Thank you for completing this survey.

14. How many schools offered you a teaching job?

_____ Number of teaching job offers

15. Please list the schools and their districts and states where you had job offers, and the month in which you received each offer. *This information is only being collected for research purposes. These schools will not be contacted in any way.*

	School	District	State	Month offer received
Offer 1:				
Offer 2:				
Offer 3:				
Offer 4:				
Offer 5:				

16. Did you accept any of these teaching job offers?

a. No → Go to question 17.

b. Yes → Go to question 20.

17. Why did you turn down your job offer?

18. What will you most likely do during the 2006-07 school year? *Circle one.*

- a. Work as a substitute teacher
- b. Work in a non-teaching job (Specify: _____)
- c. Teach in a preschool or daycare program
- d. Go back to school, get a master's degree
- e. Other (Please specify: _____)

19. Will you be applying for teaching jobs in other schools for next year?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure at this point

If you did not accept any teaching job offers, your survey is complete. Thank you for completing this survey.

20. Write in the name of the school and district in which you accepted a job offer and will be teaching this year.

This information is only being collected for research purposes. This school will not be contacted in any way.

a. School name: _____

b. District name: _____ c. State: _____

21. How would you classify your position at this school, that is, the activity in which you spend most of your time?

- a. Regular full-time teacher
- b. Regular part-time teacher
- c. Itinerant teacher (i.e., your assignment requires you to provide instruction at more than one school)
- d. Long-term substitute teacher
- e. Short-term substitute teacher

22. What is your base teaching salary? _____

23. Did you have any of the following types of experiences with this school or district?
Circle Yes or No for each type of experience.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| a. Student taught | Yes | No |
| b. Other field experience during teacher preparation program | Yes | No |
| c. Worked as aide or paraprofessional | Yes | No |
| d. Worked as a substitute teacher | Yes | No |
| e. Attended the school or district as a student | Yes | No |
| f. Have a child who attends/attended this school or district | Yes | No |
| g. Have friends or family who work in this school or district | Yes | No |
| h. Other type of experience with this school or district (Specify:
_____) | Yes | No |

24. How satisfied are you to be teaching in this school?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Somewhat satisfied
- c. Somewhat dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied

25. Will you be applying for teaching jobs in other schools for next year?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure at this point

26. Did you have more than one job offer for a teaching position?

- a. No → Your survey is complete. Thank you for completing this survey.
- b. Yes → Please continue filling out this survey.

27. How would you rate your chosen school compared to other schools in which you had job offers in terms of each of the following aspects? *Circle one in each row.*

	Better in chosen school	Not better or worse	Better in other schools	No information to make this comparison
a. Class size	1	2	3	NA
b. Proximity to my home	1	2	3	NA
c. Student behavior	1	2	3	NA
d. School discipline policy	1	2	3	NA
e. Reputation for teaching practices	1	2	3	NA
f. Availability of textbooks and other instructional materials	1	2	3	NA
g. Student achievement	1	2	3	NA
h. Instructional dialogue among teachers	1	2	3	NA
i. Parent involvement	1	2	3	NA
j. Support from school leadership	1	2	3	NA
k. Availability of faculty mentors/beginning teacher support	1	2	3	NA
l. Condition of the school facilities	1	2	3	NA
m. Salary	1	2	3	NA
n. School curriculum	1	2	3	NA
o. Social relationships among teachers	1	2	3	NA
p. Mission/vision of school	1	2	3	NA
q. School leadership	1	2	3	NA
r. Student motivation	1	2	3	NA
s. Safety of environment	1	2	3	NA
t. Job security	1	2	3	NA
u. Opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others	1	2	3	NA
v. Sense of personal accomplishment	1	2	3	NA
w. Teaching assignment (i.e., subject or grade level)	1	2	3	NA

28. Of the features listed in question 27, what are the three features that most influenced your decision to accept the teaching job at your chosen school rather than other schools in which you had job offers?

Write in the letter corresponding to the three features that most influenced your decision to accept this particular teaching job. For example, write in a, e, h.

- _____ Most important feature
- _____ Second most important feature
- _____ Third most important feature

Thank you for completing this survey!

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Initial Interview Protocol

1. Could you describe your background in education and your reasons for enrolling in an elementary teacher education program? (Probe for why they are interested in becoming a teacher, when they first began considering teaching as a career, how family responded when they expressed interest in teaching)
2. I am interested in other careers you may have considered or pursued. What other careers did you seriously consider or actually pursue? Why are you going into teaching as opposed to these other careers? (Probe for whether the respondent is a career changer and whether they are applying for any non-teaching jobs)
3. Thinking back to when you first decided to go into teaching, describe the school in which you pictured yourself working.
4. Could you describe to me what you think schools look for when they hire teachers? How do you think you compare to the characteristics that schools look for? (Probe for how successful they think they will be, how they perceive job alternatives, what do you think will hurt chances of getting a job?, Race, class, gender)
5. Please describe one of the schools to which you are applying. (Probe for salary, benefits, other features, how people respond when they say they are applying there).
6. Could you describe your job search process? (Probe for how the respondent identifies job openings and how many jobs they've applied to thus far)
7. How will you evaluate potential job openings? (Probe for the criteria used in deciding whether to apply for a particular job, how much do you know?).

8. What features of a school are most important in determining whether or not to apply for a job there? Why are these features important? When did you first begin to think about these features? (Probe for physical building, students, principal, other teachers, community, geographic location)

9. How do you get information on these important features? (Probe for how different individuals know about schools, sources and accuracy of information)

10. Do you plan to apply to any public charter schools or private schools? If so, how will you get information about these types of schools? (Probe for whether the respondent has a preference for public charter schools or private schools, what they think it would be like teaching in a charter or private school)

11. Are there schools in which you would prefer not to work? (Probe for characteristics of schools in which respondent would prefer not to work, how do they learn about these characteristics)

12. Can you describe to me some of the interviews you had at different schools? (Probe for what, if anything, made them excited, comfortable, or uncomfortable)

13. Please describe one of the schools in which you had an interview. (Probe for salary, benefits, other features, how people respond when they say they are interviewing there, how it compares to their stated preferences, whether school is good match for them)

14. Who do you talk to about your career decision?

15. In what ways, if at all, is (will) your preparation program likely to affect your ability to find a job? (Probe for effects of program reputation, relationships with mentors, instructional supervisors, university instructors)

Second Interview Protocol

This interview was tailored to the teacher candidate's progress in the job search process.

It was also based upon information learned in the first interview.

1. Can you tell me how your job search has gone since we last spoke? (Probe for additional schools applied to, any interviews or callbacks)

2. Can you describe to me some of the interviews you had at different schools? (Probe for what, if anything, made them excited or uncomfortable)

3. Please describe one of the schools in which you had an interview. (Probe for salary, benefits, other features, how people respond when they say they are interviewing there, how it compares to their stated preferences, whether school is good match for them)

4. Can you tell me about any job offers you may have received? (Probe for whether accepted or rejected, reasons behind decision, why this school is different)

5. If you haven't received any job offers yet, can you tell me why you think that is? (Probe for what they think would need to be different to get a job, what are their plans now)

APPENDIX D: ANALYSIS TABLES EXCLUDING OAK STATE UNIVERSITY RESPONDENTS

Respondents from Oak State University had low responses. To check whether this low response rate affects the results, I ran all quantitative analyses twice: once including Oak State respondents and one excluding Oak State respondents. Most analyses were not substantially changed by the inclusion of Oak State respondents. The tables in this appendix are those in which including Oak State respondents substantially change the results.

Table A 1 - Regression Analyses of the Influence of Being White in Teacher Hiring,
Excluding Oak State Respondents

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Mean	3.13	0.79
<i>Respondent characteristics</i>		
Intercept	-0.13	0.09
Master's degree	0.83*	0.32
Mid-career changer	0.08	0.18
Male	-0.42~	0.22
African American	0.50~	0.25
Other racial ethnic minority	0.16	0.25
R-squared	0.107	
N	206	

Note: The dependent variables for these regression equations are teacher candidates' perception of the impact of being White and of coming from a racial minority background on their likelihood of getting a job offer. Results including Oak State respondents can be found in Table 13.

~ p<.1, * p<.05.

Table A 2 - Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) Where Teacher Candidates Applied, Received

Offers, and Accepted Jobs, Excluding Oak State Respondents

Variable	Applied to high income suburbs near Smithton	Applied to low income suburbs near Smithton	Mean percent FRL			
			Applied	Received offer		Accepted job
			District	School	District	School
All	53.7%	36.6%	27.3%	33.3%	31.6%	33.0%
White	55.6	35.6	24.6	31.8	31.1	31.5
African American	33.3	55.6	47.1***	52.9*	51.4~	49.7
Other minority	53.9	30.8	33.2	27.8	24.5	36.3
New college graduate	53.4	31.1*	26.4	29.4*	28.1*	29.5*
Mid-career changer	54.6	51.5*	29.9	49.6*	48.0*	49.5*
ACT score						
Top quartile	53.9	32.5	23.7	26.5~	24.8	28.1
Lower quartiles	58.8	37.7	28.7	34.8	32.6	33.5
Did not take ACT	28.6*	42.9	31.3	51.5	50.1	52.3
Mother's education						
High school or below	61.5	57.5**	29.7	39.4	37.6	42.5
Some college	48.0	34.6	23.2	30.0	30.5	31.5
Bachelor's degree	51.2	26.8	26.9	36.2	35.1	37.8
Master's or above	53.3	13.3*	27.5	20.5*	15.7**	14.0*
N	121	123	116	62	58	56

Note: Results including Oak State respondents can be found in Table 24.

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Table A 3 - Percentage of Teacher Candidates Who Applied, Received Offers, and Accepted Jobs in Other States and Average Distance From Home for Applications, Offers, and Jobs, Excluding Oak State Respondents

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Schools in other states</i>			<i>Mean distance from home</i>			<i>Distance from home to job</i>		
	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>0-15 Miles</i>	<i>15-100 Miles</i>	<i>100 or more miles</i>
All	45.1%	36.8%	37.3%	236.8	389.0	359.5	37.1%	18.6%	44.3%
White	47.0	35.6	35.6	199.9	356.4	321.6	35.7	19.6	44.6
African American	11.1*	28.6	33.3	200.1	257.9	352.6	40.0	20.0	40.0
Other minority	53.9	50.0	50.0	562.4	690.2	598.8	44.4	11.1	44.4
New college graduate	52.2**	43.1*	43.3*	294.6***	460.2**	410.9*	32.8	17.2	50.0
Mid-career changer	25.0**	16.7*	13.3*	59.4***	99.2**	111.0*	58.3	25	16.7
<i>ACT score</i>									
Top quartile	46.2	30.8	30.8	225.5	424.1	325.8	40.0	24.0	36.0
Lower quartiles	47.8	42.9	45.2	278.0	423.4	423.5	30.0	15.0	55.0
Did not take ACT	28.6	25.0	14.3	32.4***	13.6***	15.0***	80.0~	20.0~	0.0~
<i>Mother's education</i>									
High school or below	25.6**	15.0*	11.1*	159.1	183.7~	209.7	21.4***	57.1***	21.4***
Some college	50.0	50.0	50.0	312.4	633.9~	582.5	31.3	12.5	56.3
Bachelor's degree	50.0	40.7	40.7	234.3	344.4	347.3	48.2*	3.7*	48.2*
Master's or above	66.7~	36.4	41.7	251.6	381.5	207.4	41.7	16.7	41.7

Table A3 (cont'd)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Schools in other states</i>			<i>Mean distance from home</i>			<i>Distance from home to job</i>		
	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Received offers</i>	<i>Accepted job</i>	<i>0-15 Miles</i>	<i>15-100 Miles</i>	<i>100 or more miles</i>
Proximity to home is not most important	44.8	39.0	37.9	232.3	414.9	383.7	35.2	18.5	46.3
Proximity to home is most important	46.2	29.4	35.3	252.6	300.0	277.6	43.8	18.8	37.5
N	122	76	75	118	71	70	70		

Note: The mean distance from home and the percentage of teacher candidates with various distances from home to job include both schools in the state and out of the state. Results including Oak State respondents can be found in Table 30.

~ $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table A 4 - Regression Analyses Predicting the Percentage of FRL Students in School

Where Teaching, Excluding Oak State Respondents

<i>Variable</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>2</i>		<i>3</i>	
	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Error</i>
Intercept	86.35*	32.22	104.03**	29.52	87.19**	29.34
African American	18.63	17.44	18.68	17.45	17.39	17.91
Other racial minority	-6.92	12.24	-0.81	11.46	3.21	11.64
Male	16.70	19.94	12.02	19.67	7.14	19.55
Mid-career changer	4.78	12.79	6.86	12.70	7.74	12.73
Mother has BA or above	-7.60	7.99	-11.71	7.45	-11.20	7.32
ACT score	-2.37~	1.22	-2.89*	1.15	-2.23~	1.13
ACT score is missing	-7.24	9.01	-10.12	8.75	-7.71	8.99
Students from same socioeconomic background is important	28.90	21.85				
Students from same socioeconomic background is important*Mother has BA or above	-47.66	37.33				
Percent FRL students in top choice school	0.28~	0.16	0.34*	0.16	0.34*	0.15
Received first offer in June or July	17.36~	10.19	13.34	9.78		
Received first offer in August or later	-6.34	10.11	-9.58	9.78		
R ²	0.385		0.350		0.231	
N	49		49		54	

~ p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01.

APPENDIX E: DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHER CANDIDATES BY GENDER

This appendix includes data on the districts and schools to which male and female teacher candidates applied, from which they received offers, and where they accepted jobs. Table A5 presents characteristics on the districts to which male and female teacher candidates applied. Overall, there were few differences in the characteristics of districts where male and female teacher candidates applied. Male teacher candidates applied to districts that were closer to where they lived at the beginning of the job search and districts with higher pupil-teacher ratios. There were no differences in the student composition of the districts to which men and women applied.

Table A 5 - District Characteristics Where Male and Female Teacher Candidates Applied

<i>District characteristic</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
High income suburbs near Smithton	55.2%	50.0%
Low income suburbs near Smithton	35.9%	25.0%
Mean percent FRL	27.3	25.1
Mean percent minority	31.3	25.6
Mean pupil-teacher ratio	17.1*	18.7*
Mean per-pupil instructional expenditures	\$5,186.48	\$4,904.25
Mean salary	\$36,626.12	\$36,054.4
Smithton Public Schools	13.8%	16.7%
Any urban district	66.7%	54.6%
Schools in other states	43.1%	33.3%
Distance from home	239.2***	26.1***

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Table A6 presents characteristics on the districts and schools from which male and female teacher candidates received job offers. As male teacher candidates applied to districts that were closer to where they lived than female teacher candidates, they also

received jobs in schools closer to their home. They were also less likely to get a job offer from a school in another state. Male teacher candidates received job offers from districts with higher percentages of FRL students than female teacher candidates.

Table A 6 - District and School Characteristics Where Male and Female Teacher Candidates Received Job Offers

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Mean percent FRL		
District	34.7~	58.3~
School	39.6	67.0
Mean percent minority		
District	46.1	66.3
School	42.3	64.9
Mean pupil-teacher ratio		
District	18.0	19.4
School	18.0	21.3
Mean per-pupil instructional expenditures	\$4,784.36	\$5,012.28
Mean salary	\$36,573.60	\$35,799.30
Urban	38.3%	75.0%
Schools in other states	41.9%*	0.0%*
Distance from home	433.6***	45.6***

~ p<.1, * p<.05, *** p<.001.

Table A7 presents characteristics on the districts and schools in which male and female teacher candidates accepted jobs and ended up working. The results for where male and female teacher candidates ended up working are similar to where they received offers. Female teacher candidates ended up working in schools that were farther from where they lived at the beginning of the job search than male teacher candidates. They were also more likely to end up teaching in schools out of state. Male teacher candidates

ended up working in districts with greater percentages of FRL students than female teacher candidates.

Table A 7 - District and School Characteristics Where Male and Female Teacher Candidates Accepted Jobs

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Mean percent FRL		
District	33.8~	62.2~
School	38.0	56.0
Mean percent minority		
District	42.5	58.9
School	40.6	50.3
Mean pupil-teacher ratio		
District	17.7	18.8
School	18.2	18.3
Mean per-pupil instructional expenditures	\$4,918.02	\$4,617.19
Mean salary	\$34,650.53	\$32,566.67
Urban	35.0%	40.0%
Schools in other states	41.2%~	0.0%~
Distance from home	390.4***	38.0***

~ p<.1, *** p<.001.

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