



Onboarding Success in an Independent School: Relationships and Resilience

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### Dedication

To Evelyn and Charlotte, know that I wrote this paper in part to prove to you that a strong-willed woman can do anything she sets her mind to. May you both accomplish whatever it is that captures your hearts in the coming years.

To Michael, thank you for your support and guidance throughout this process, without you it would certainly not have been possible. I know we are stronger partners for it. I hope you are proud of this accomplishment and your role in it.

To my parents, thank you for your belief in me, your encouragement, and your support. It means the world.

To my dear friends, Michael, Kip and Charlene, I would not have made it this far without you. I came into this seeking a degree, but I'm walking away with so much more. Thank you for support. Now that they've crossed, I hope our paths will never part. Love you awesome nerds!

To Darwin, you came to every class and kept me company through every hour of reading and writing. Your silent doggie support was a comforting presence throughout this work.



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## Executive Summary

Pacific Ridge School is a relatively new institution with the guiding mission to prepare students for college and a purposeful life. Serving students in grades six through twelve, PRS strives to be dynamic, challenging and to impact positive change. For this research, a quality improvement project was developed to determine what work could be done to codify and improve the faculty onboarding process. The conceptual framework of organizational socialization creates the scaffold upon which this mixed methods study is based and to answer the three research questions:

1. To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?
  - Do they feel they have a clear understanding of their roles?
  - Do they feel effective in their duties?
  - Do they feel accepted by colleagues? Integrated into the community?
  - Do they feel competent in terms of organizational knowledge?
2. What behaviors did teachers engage in during their first year to feel satisfaction and organizational commitment?
3. What organizational efforts resulted in teachers feeling satisfaction and organizational commitment?

By surveying and interviewing teachers from the previous three cohorts of new faculty (2018, 2019, and 2020) several findings emerged:

1. Ambiguity necessitates resilience.
2. Experience plays a role in knowing what you don't know.
3. Adults need choice when learning.
4. Self-efficacy can be a long term objective.
5. When strengths are appreciated by current faculty, newcomers feel seen and integrated.
6. Fellow new colleagues provide space to commiserate and norm-reference.
7. New faculty's ability to bond with experienced faculty is strengthened by shared tasks.
8. Existing faculty should be trained in responding to newcomers' questions encouragingly.
9. Incoming teachers need be prepared for ambiguity.
10. Employees need opportunities to norm-reference.
11. Onboarding requires differentiation.

Recommendations were then organized into the categories found in the qualitative research: structure, belonging, norm-referencing, and resilience.

- 1) Recommendations for onboarding STRUCTURE:
  - a) Add in learning objectives, reflection time and checklists within the orientation schedule
  - b) Use time to train existing faculty around responses to new faculty inquiries
  - c) Allow for multiple pathways to knowledge.
  - d) Provide opportunities for new faculty to observe existing faculty.
  - e) Provide check-in opportunities with structured questions.
- 2) Recommendations for creating BELONGING:
  - a) Build relationship building opportunities among new faculty and between new and existing faculty.
  - b) Create shared tasks between new and existing faculty.
  - c) Identify new faculty members' strengths and highlight those for existing faculty.
- 3) Recommendations for allowing for NORM-REFERENCING:
  - a) Build in extra supports such as checklists for new teachers.
  - b) Continue to place new faculty members in grade level rooms.
  - c) Encourage learning-goal orientation.
- 4) Recommendations for creating RESILIENCE:
  - a) Include self-efficacy measures in check-ins.
  - b) Encourage flexibility through improvisation, bricolage, virtual role systems, and an attitude of wisdom.

### **Onboarding Success in an Independent School: Resilience and Relationships**

The process of entering into a new workplace is a time of questioning both for the individual and the organization. Individuals may question their self-efficacy, identity, skill set or goals; while organizations are primarily concerned with how proficient new employees are with their responsibilities and how they are conducting themselves. Chief among these questions is one asked on both sides – am I or is the employee “fitting in?” The process of organizational socialization is an essential course of action for any organization that wants invite new members into their midst. For many, this critical period can determine whether the employee goes down a path of longevity and success or chooses to leave the organization quickly (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). In today’s educational job market, successful onboarding will become more critical, as teachers choose to leave the profession in higher numbers than ever before (Sainato, 2021). This means that creating an onboarding process that leads to satisfaction and commitment to school will become essential practices for schools everywhere to avoid staffing shortages.

For teachers, onboarding has typically been referred to as induction or orientation, and has sought to introduce new teachers to the culture and systems in a building or district. This orientation process usually takes place in the opening days before school begins and at meetings throughout the year. The goal of new

teacher orientation is to get everyone “up to speed” as quickly as possible so they can be successful in their work. Indeed, Bauer and Erdogan, 2011, describe onboarding as “the process by which employees learn the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to succeed in the organization” (p. 51). What makes this work difficult is the same thing that makes our world wonderful – the diversity in experiences and attitudes that each individual brings to the workplace. There is no single path that serves all new teachers once the facts are taken into account that all come to their work with different capabilities, outlooks, and personal goals. However, for teachers a successful induction experience is critical as it leads to job satisfaction, efficacy and retention (Fletcher, Chang & Kong, 2008, Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Once the school year begins, teachers can find themselves alone with their students for hours a day. With little time to norm-reference behaviors of parents, students, and colleagues, successful onboarding of new teachers must acculturate them to the school and empower them to make mission-aligned decisions very soon after they start their new jobs.

The organization at the focus of this study, Pacific Ridge School (PRS), is an independent, 6-12 school located in California. Pacific Ridge welcomes new faculty each year – many with experience in teaching and some who are newly graduated. PRS, considers onboarding to be a priority, already dedicating several days to the process as well as time and energy of

staff throughout the year to support their new colleagues. As such, Pacific Ridge's orientation process followed the pattern typical of many schools. However, the leaders of PRS wanted to improve this process and learn from the inevitable changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Also a priority was codifying the process so that transitions in leadership would not hinder the already strong program.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the current orientation process at Pacific Ridge and ensure that it inclusively meets the needs of all new employees as they transition from organizational outsider to insider. The research will attempt to explain what a new teacher needs from a high quality orientation program, and attempt to give an order of importance to the elements of the program in order to prioritize trainings, especially in non-routine years. Completing this work will mean that Pacific Ridge and other schools can successfully fold newcomers into their cultures and systems such that the new teachers are quickly empowered to do their jobs at a high level of effectiveness.

### **Organizational Context**

Pacific Ridge is an independent 6-12 school outside of San Diego. Founded recently in 2007, the school seeks to provide students with opportunities to grow through a challenging Harkness style curriculum, and a diverse set of community and globally oriented experiences. Students

at Pacific Ridge are encouraged to discover their passions and develop autonomy while considering their place in this interconnected world. Says one alumnus, "At Pacific Ridge I got the practice I needed to identify a daunting problem and create a novel situation. I wouldn't trade my school experience for any other" (Pacific Ridge, n.d.). Leading students in immersive educational experiences takes passion and dedication. Pacific Ridge is lucky to have both of those qualities in many of its' educators, and especially in Tim Betzala, their Dean of Faculty. As the school leader in charge of new teacher orientation, Tim oversees the onboarding of new employees, and is eager to make the experience an inclusive and empowering one so that new teachers can live up to the school's mission of preparing students for success in college and life through academic excellence, ethical responsibility and global engagement (Pacific Ridge, n.d.).

### **Problem of Practice**

This study seeks to better understand and propose solutions for teacher adjustment for teachers new to the Pacific Ridge School. The onboarding period for any new employee is one full of disorientation, foreignness, and sensory overload (Louis, 1980). Although Pacific Ridge is not afflicted with high turnover (a common reason to study onboarding in an organization) as an independent school the work of new teachers is held to a high



standard; and Pacific Ridge wants new employees to be successful with students from day one. This means that they need to feel not just welcomed, but empowered with a sense of understanding and belonging. The driving forces behind the need to evaluate the onboarding program at Pacific Ridge stem from the need to codify the program in such a way that facilitation can be shared and the process can be streamlined and differentiated to make it accessible and achievable for new faculty. The need of all schools in this critical time for education to retain teachers only adds to the urgency of this initiative.

Currently, there already exist many structures in place that support new teachers as they enter into teaching at Pacific Ridge. Teachers have a jam-packed two-day orientation session before working with their colleagues for eight days in preparation of welcoming students. This is certainly helpful, but typically overwhelming for new employees. Once the school year begins, teachers new to the school will meet with the dean of faculty weekly at first and then monthly to address any issues that arise. One main issue that comes up without fail is the Harkness teaching style that Pacific Ridge has adopted. Harkness is a teaching methodology that is more akin to conversation as opposed to lecture, and focuses heavily on shared problem solving. This is a crucial piece of pedagogy for any teacher new to the style, and thus many of the new faculty meetings are centered around this concept. Hence, there is need

for ongoing coordination and implementation practice with Harkness. This necessitates coordinating common meeting times, an issue currently. Beyond Harkness training, there is also the need for establishing collegial relations across faculty, and extending onboarding responsibilities to more faculty. Finally, creating a level of codification of the process so that it can be reproduced yearly and by various facilitators serves as the final motivating factor.

Having teachers who are confident and prepared to teach Harkness-style well is incredibly important to the families that entrust their children's education to Pacific Ridge. It is also critical to the individuals who are beginning or continuing their careers at Pacific Ridge. Because a teacher influences students every day, their impact is immense. From acting as role models to influencing choices, and hopefully changing lives for the better, teachers need to be in the right frame of mind to do their work well. Indeed, feelings of confidence and accomplishment are directly linked to self-efficacy (Terada, 2018, para. 2), a key identity factor. Organizational socialization can set an employee up for long term success or for failure (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014, Ashforth, et. al. 2007). The interconnectedness of student success and teacher efficacy cannot be denied, as the research by Tournaki and Podell (2005) and Ross (1994) shows. With proper onboarding, teachers feel confident and find success sooner, therefore gaining

critical time helping their students be successful in the classroom.

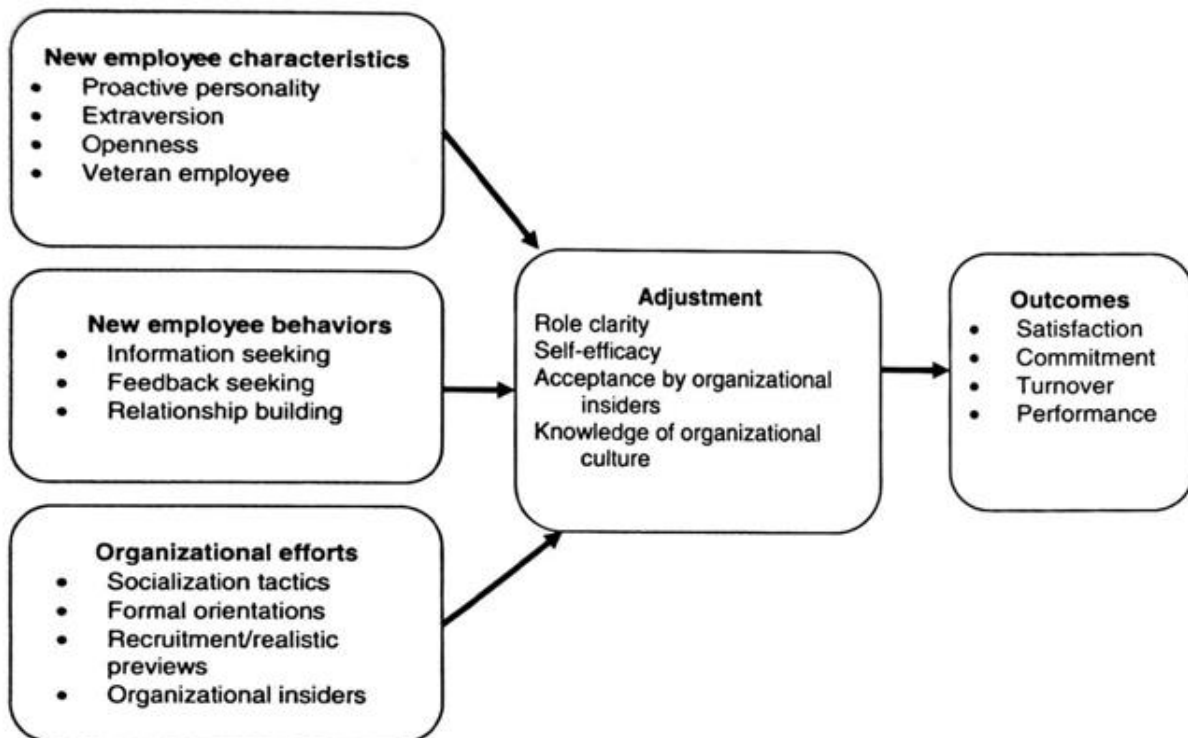
**Literature Review**

The literature chosen to inform this work comes from publications around onboarding and mentoring in general, research done specifically about teacher induction process, as well as new employee behaviors and adjustment factors such as role clarity, self-efficacy, acceptance and knowledge. Successful onboarding would be represented by high scores in the outcomes of employee satisfaction and commitment. These outcomes can be measured and compared to employee behaviors, organizational strategies and employee

adjustment factors. The literature review for this study will be centered around the socialization model of Bauer and Erdogan (2011). The primary focus will be to examine the three employee behaviors of information seeking, feedback seeking and relationship building and two categories of organization practice: socialization tactics and formal orientation. Then, by assessing the adjustment factors of role clarity, self-efficacy, acceptance by organizational insiders and knowledge of organizational culture, parallels will be drawn between the behaviors, organizational efforts, and adjustment factors to see how they relate to the outcomes of employee satisfaction and commitment.

**Figure 1**

*Bauer and Erdogan’s (2011) model of organizational socialization.*



Bauer and Erdogan (2011) use this model to convey the idea that several different types of factors are inputs into the adjustment phase of new employees. For the purposes of this study behaviors and organizational efforts are prioritized for the study as these are seen as changeable during the orientation process. After defining some key terms that will be used throughout the study, each individual input and adjustment factor will be further explained separately.

Onboarding has previously been described as the process by which employees get up to speed in their new organization. Louis (1980) expands upon this definition and says that it is “the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member” (p. 229). Bauer and Erdogan (2011) perhaps put it more simply, as the process of moving from outsider to insider; which situates itself nicely with Wanous’ (1980) definition of onboarding as how individuals are changed by organizations. All these definitions recognize that as a person enters a new workplace they will learn, grow and be changed; they will be socialized. It must be acknowledged that socialization is a constructed process, that there is an interactive process between the newcomer and the organization, and that the teacher is modified by their context but so too is the context modified by the teacher (Kuzmic, 1994, Zeichner & Gore, 1990, and Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), so

as the teacher grows into their role, they too will have impactful change on their new school.

Three distinct adjustment needs were outlined by Feldman (1981): resolution of role demands or the understanding of job tasks, task mastery or gaining confidence, and adjustment to one’s group. Bauer, et. al (2007) crystallize these three aspects as role clarity, self-efficacy and social acceptance. Because Pacific Ridge refers to the time period of welcoming teachers back to school with in-service days as “orientation,” in this paper I will refer to the yearlong process of socialization of new faculty (teachers) as “onboarding” to differentiate it from the August activities that Pacific Ridge refers to as orientation. This process is also often referred to as induction in much of the literature. It should also be noted that the term “new faculty” will be used to describe teachers that are new to working at PRS, but not necessarily new to working in the teaching profession, they will be referred to as first-year teachers. Louis (1980) notes that employees coming from a background of previous work experience (as opposed to being a recent college graduate) need to let go of their old jobs’ expectations in addition to learning the new role.

### **New Employee Behaviors – Information and Feedback Seeking, Relationship Building**

As newcomers to the organization, teachers are looking to fit in at their new

school, whether they come with previous teaching experience or not. “Fitting in” is more critical than just liking or disliking your job say Carrick & Dunaway (2017), it’s the difference between languishing and thriving. One potentially proactive behavior new employees might take to fit in is called information seeking and it is linked to positive socialization and better acclimation (Bauer & Erdogan, 2014). As they progress through their first year, teachers will be looking to determine how their actions align with their coworkers and the expectations the school has of its teachers. Louis (1980) calls the process by which newcomers understand their environment, “sensemaking.” In order to make sense of what they see happening, new employees must start to see things contextually, or through the lens of the new institution’s culture. Oftentimes, this sensemaking occurs through observation of coworkers, with the newcomer noticing the actions and reactions of seasoned faculty and staff. Osstroof and Kowalski (1992) note that new employees use observation as their primary source of information acquisition, and for task and role clarity. Likewise, Swap, et. al. (2011) specifically call out the learning that happens through observation as a best practice for gaining knowledge in the workplace. Other examples of information seeking behaviors include listening to directions from colleagues, which supports relationship development, and reading or watching nonpersonal sources such as tutorials or manuals, and

even trial and error (Osstroof & Kowalski, 1992).

It would be overly optimistic to think that a new employee will have flawless performance, but mistakes are not necessarily bad unless nothing is learned from them. Hence, seeking feedback becomes a critical new employee behavior. De Stobbeleir and Ashford (2014), researched the effects of seeking feedback from peers as opposed to supervisors and found that it positively correlated with task interdependence which then generated more positive evaluations. Peer feedback is critical for teachers who generally work in department or grade specific teams. The act of seeking out feedback increases an employee’s creativity in the workplace and can mean that the employee receives feedback from more distal sources that normally may withhold their advice. In terms of beginning a new role, creativity is important as it increases one’s capacity to absorb information, one’s motivation and openness (De Stobbeleir, Ashford, & Buyens, 2011). Although Ashford, Blatt and VandeWalle (2003) recognize that there are three motivations for feedback seeking behavior – instrumental, ego and image based, VandeWalle (2003) deepens the conversation by explaining the costs and value of seeking feedback. Important to note for our discussion of new teachers is that while feedback seeking behaviors can improve performance and help one learn about one’s new work environment, there is also the potential cost of self-

preservation and ego when one receives feedback indicating a lack of competency.

Relationship building is the final and arguably the most important of the new employee behaviors. Coming to feel liked and trusted by peers as well as receiving positive feedback and identity affirmation from organizational insiders - social acceptance (often accomplished by relational information seeking) is positively linked with several job outcomes, including satisfaction and commitment (Bauer, et. al. 2007). Bauer and Erdogan (2011) suggest that employees must participate in the culture of the workplace by having informal conversations and being present at voluntary events so that they can make the connections that they will need to support them throughout the journey from outsider to insider. "People sensemaking," as DiMarco, et. al. (2009) refer to relationship building, is the process by which new employees come to understand others' roles within the organization, including what sorts of problems might benefit from collaboration. Without building relationships, longevity at the company or school may be in jeopardy, as this behavior is strongly correlated with long term satisfaction at work (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011) and commitment to the organization (Bauer, et. al., 2007). Opportunities to connect with like-minded colleagues are critical for new teacher success, says Watkins (2005). And Kelchtermans and

Ballet (2002) link relationship building with positive self-esteem for beginning teachers. In their study of the links between communication, leadership, and organizational knowledge Marshall and Stohl (1993) found that more relationships don't necessarily increase organizational knowledge, but rather that the right relationships do. Many schools put into place a mentoring program to encourage these impactful relationships and systematize relationship building. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor speaks to the power of relationships, especially those between mentee and mentor:

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When asked to contemplate relationships that have made a difference in our lives' relationships that have given us the courage to do the things we think we cannot do, relationships that have guided our professional development or even changed the course of our lives' many of us think of mentoring relationships. At its best, mentoring can be a life altering relationship that inspires mutual growth, learning, and development. Its effects can be remarkable, profound, and enduring; mentoring relationships have the capacity to transform individuals, groups, organizations, and communities (p. 1).

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### **Mediating Factors of Adjustment – Role Clarity, Self-Efficacy, Acceptance by Social Insiders, and Knowledge of Organizational Culture**

Role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance are three important indicators of newcomer adjustment (Bauer, et. al., 2007). Here, we consider adjustment in the sense that Daniel Feldman (1981) did, the time period of change and acquisition that follows the anticipatory socialization and encounter stages of onboarding and that of working through task and social transitions (Bauer, et. al. 2007), as well as an evaluation of how well a newcomer is adjusting to their new environment (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). These formative moments in a new employee's entry into the organization can heavily influence the adjustment and success of that employee. In terms of role clarity or definition, newcomers are looking to define "exactly what tasks they have to do, what the priorities are among those tasks, and how they allocate their time at work" (Feldman, 1981). For teachers, this would include expectations around grading, extra-curricular work, coaching, etc. Role clarity is an important aspect because it is strongly linked to job satisfaction, (Bauer, 2013, Bauer & Erdogan, 2011) organizational commitment (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011) and supports motivation (Zahra, Iram & Naheem, 2014).

While role clarity seeks to define the what and how of the job, self-efficacy or task mastery, refers to the learning and an

individual's belief about themselves at becoming successful with the tasks required (Bauer, et. al. 2007). Self-efficacy affects human thought, motivation and action (Bandura, 1991), all of which come into play for newcomers to organizations. Theories of self-efficacy from Albert Bandura's work on social cognitive theory are critical to this study as new teachers' belief in themselves will serve as a determinant in how they think, feel and behave (Bandura, 1997). Although past performance is a source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) the fact that teachers' past experiences are based in another context might undermine those previous positive experiences. As new employees to the school, new teachers lack context with which to self-monitor their performance or set attainable goals; both critical parts of self-efficacy described by Bandura (1991). "Resilient self-efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant effort," (Bandura, 2012, p. 13) and new employees may not have yet had time to live through and learn from those touchstone experiences. Mauer (2002), adds that beliefs about oneself influence attitudes and feelings during learning activities, which can subsequently have effects on behavioral persistence and participation. This is consistent with Bandura's findings around positive self-talk being linked with accomplishment, and that negative self-talk can be discouraging (1991). Self-efficacy is an important mediating factor as it reduces stress (Caldwell & Peters, 2017). The factor of self-efficacy is also closely related to



organizational commitment (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011).

Another adjustment factor that will be considered is acceptance by social insiders, or connections. Bauer (2013) highlights the four best practices of onboarding as connection, compliance, clarification and culture. Of the four, she stresses that connection as most important because it helps in communicating the other three and influences important organizational outcomes. Bauer, et. al. (2007) explain that newcomers need sounding boards, i.e. relationships, to make sense of their new surroundings. New employees need others to help them bring meaning to their experiences, and the interpretations of others allow for that framing says Louis (1980). Feldman contends that throughout his research he has found that newcomers need to first develop trust with their colleagues before they feel comfortable enough to ask them for help and to engage in the information seeking behaviors that allow them access to the role clarifying information they need (1981). He goes on to explain that newcomers need these relationships to interpret events in the workplace and understand the particular nuances and networks. "In order for information to become knowledge, the learner must share in some context, some meaning, with the one imparting the knowledge" (Swap, Leonard, Shields, et al., 2011, p. 101). Connection is foundational in the process of bringing a newcomer into a community. In their work around community building

McMillian & Chavis (1986) describe how emotional connection emerges from memberships, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs. Schools are a special type of workplace as all employees are working towards the same goal, to educate children, although they all contribute in different ways, and so new members must form bonds to fulfill these mutual objectives. "The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits in the group and has a place there, *a feeling of acceptance by the group*... It may be represented in the reciprocal statements "It is my group" and "I am part of the group." (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 10, emphasis added). For teachers specifically, Sergiovanni calls out that "social capital and relational trust are the DNA of community" (2005, p. 117). When that trust is there, employees can feel empowered to take risks, ask questions and are in a better place to learn about their role and the organization (Bauer, 2013).

Lastly, knowledge of organizational culture, the politics, goals, values and language of an organization is a key aspect of employee socialization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011). Culture is to an organization what personality is to the individual, says Schein (2010), with invisible forces acting upon the actors all the time. It is the beliefs, values, habits and assumed way of doing things (Hargreaves, 1992). It is within us, as well as constantly evolving. New employees, even or especially those who come with previous experience in the field, need to understand

what their new culture prioritizes. The challenge becomes then, for those employees to develop their organizational knowledge such that they can be successful. Organizational knowledge “depends on employees’ experiences and perceptual skills, their social relations and their motivation” (Tsoukas & Vladimirou, 2001, p. 137). Chao, et. al. (1994) delineates six content areas of organizational knowledge: history, people, politics, performance proficiency, language and goals/values, each described in greater detail here:

- Performance proficiency deals with the knowledge of tasks involved in the job.
- People refers to relationships developed that help new employees acquire information, heavily dependent on both individual and organization.
- Politics concerns work relationships and power structures within the organization
- Language refers to both technical language common throughout the field, as well as terms and acronyms unique to the organization.
- Organizational goals and values, which link the individual to the organization, can be thought of as the rules and principles that define the organization, often determined by leadership.
- History includes traditions, customs, myths, and rituals, all used to transmit cultural knowledge (Chao, et. al., 1994, p.732).

The importance of a newcomer forming relationships and finding themselves in a

community of practice cannot be understated. Filstad (2004) found that knowledge was gleaned through everyday shared experiences, making time with established coworkers an important part of the onboarding experience. Given that schools are, like almost any organization, communities of practice where learning takes place through joint creation and participation in social interaction (Farnsworth, Kleanthous, & Wenger-Trayner, 2016), a critical look into how newcomers integrate successfully into the community will be beneficial to the organization.

### **Outcomes – Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment**

Job satisfaction can be generally described as the emotions that people have towards their employer. Schultz (1992) describes it as a worker’s psychological disposition towards their work, while Milkovich and Boudreau (1997) describe job satisfaction as a pleasurable response to job contents. This last explanation is particularly applicable for teachers, who have many distinct role functions, some of which may be more pleasurable than others. Pepe, Addimando & Veronese (2017) do a wonderful job summarizing the past literature on the benefits of job satisfaction, including but not limited to organizational citizenship behaviors, enhanced work environments, teaching competence, and organizational culture. They also note that job satisfaction is



negatively correlated with absenteeism, counterproductive interpersonal and organizational behaviors, job related stress and intention to leave the organization. Increasing job satisfaction through the four adjustment factors will benefit individuals and organizations.

Job satisfaction is closely linked with another outcome of interest, organizational commitment. Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) define organizational commitment as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (p. 226). Organizational commitment is largely comprised of three factors: acceptance of goals and values, willingness to invest efforts, and attachment or loyalty (Bogler & Somech, 2004). Organizational commitment is linked with school effectiveness (Shann, 1998), underscoring the value for the school. Role clarity in particular closely corresponds with organizational commitment (Bauer, et. al., 2007). Social networks also play a large role in a newcomers commitment to the organization; deep relationships with mentors, co-workers and supervisors all contribute to organizational commitment (Fletcher, Chang & Kong, 2008).

The preceding new employee behaviors, organizational efforts,

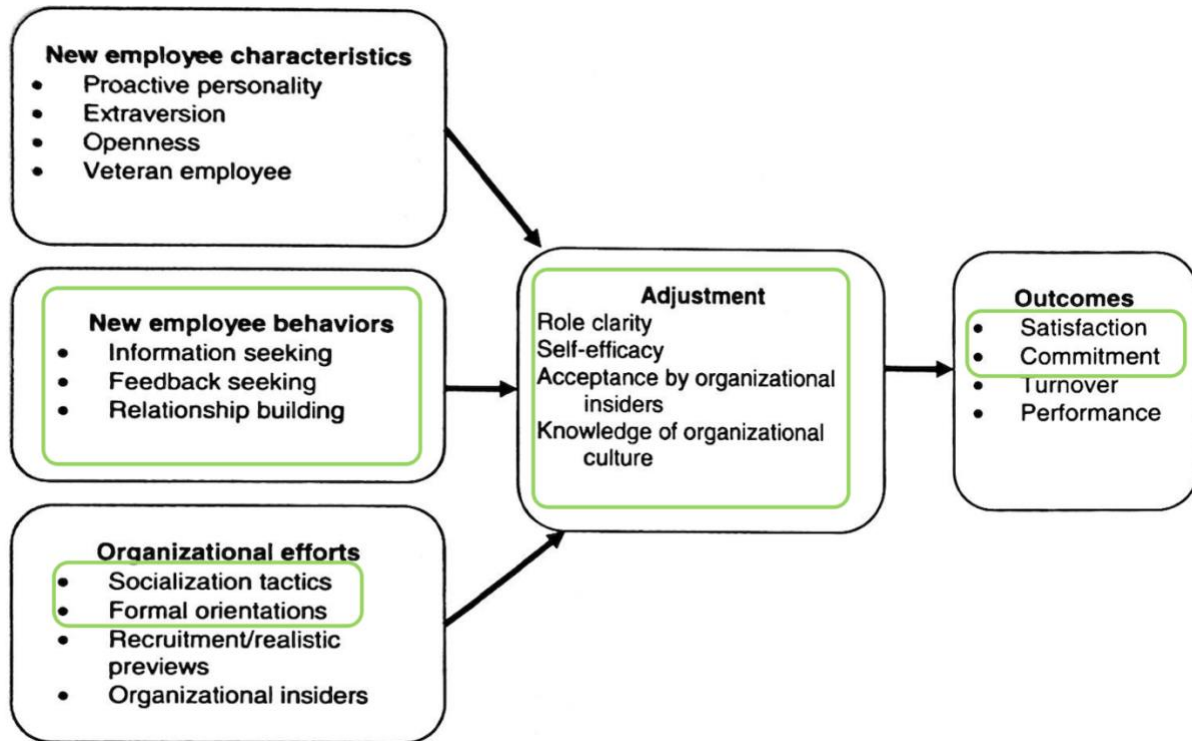
adjustment factors and outcomes all come from the conceptual model of organizational socialization written by Bauer and Erdogan (2011). While the factors discussed do not comprise the entirety of the model, they were all chosen for their applicability to the context of schools. My hope was that by narrowing the framework somewhat, more pointed and pertinent findings would emerge.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Bauer and Erdogan’s (2011) conceptual model of organizational socialization will be the focal point of this work. Bauer is well respected for her extensive research in onboarding and organizational socialization. This model considers all the details relevant to this study, and by focusing only on the highlighted behaviors and organizational efforts (which are adaptable), recommendations can be made to the school that will ultimately increase satisfaction and commitment.

**Figure 2**

*Bauer and Erdogan's (2011) Framework for Organizational Socialization with highlighted focus areas*



### Project Questions

1. To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?
  - Do they feel they have a clear understanding of their roles?
  - Do they feel effective in their duties?
  - Do they feel accepted by colleagues? Integrated into the community?
  - Do they feel competent in terms of organizational knowledge?
2. What behaviors did teachers engage in during their first year to feel satisfaction and organizational commitment?
3. What organizational efforts resulted in teachers feeling satisfaction and organizational commitment?

## Design

This study utilized both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to answer the research questions. Mixed methods approaches are increasingly common, especially in the social science fields. The benefits of combining both quantitative and qualitative data are many, most importantly the insights that can be derived at the intersection of the two (Creswell, 2003). Expanded understandings of complex problems leads to more nuanced answers to research questions, where qualitative data can help explain the quantitative data or vice versa. The approach allows for breadth and depth, understanding and corroboration (Johnson, et. al., 2007). The triangulation of using the qualitative data to arrive at the findings from the survey and vice versa results in firmer, more confirmable findings.

Survey distribution and interviews took place concurrently, and the combination of the data sources took place in the data analysis and interpretation stages. This integration of the data allowed the researcher to make choices about the type of analysis that took place, and was critical in determining the coding for the qualitative analysis. This is most closely associated with Bryman's (2006) "context" category of mixed methods research, since the two methods provided contextualized understanding of the findings within each method. The survey data was analyzed and used in conjunction with the conceptual framework to generate the initial coding for

the qualitative analysis, which then provided further insight into the institutionally specific details to allow the researcher to make the recommendations.

The survey questions and quantitative data were used to answer the first research question around the extent that new teachers have adjusted to their new work environment. Comparing results among cohorts of start year also allowed some additional conclusions to be drawn, which were further justified by the interview responses. The second and third questions around employee behaviors and organizational action were elaborated on through the interviews that took place. However, since the questions are intertwined, in the final analysis both methods helped to support answers to all three questions.

## Quantitative Data

To gather quantitative data about the employee's onboarding process, a survey of 50 questions grouped into six scales was compiled (See Appendix A). One question asked the respondents to indicate which year they began their employment at PRS. No further demographics were collected past the start year, as the small sample size could have created the possibility of identification of the respondents (e.g. there was only one male teacher hired during one of those years). The scales for role clarity, self-efficacy, acceptance by social insiders, and organizational knowledge were combined

with scales for job satisfaction and school commitment, the outcome measures. The surveys were sourced from peer-reviewed journals from the fields of psychology (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004), business (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979; Kirk-Brown & Wallace, 2004), and education (Pepe, Addimando, & Veronese, 2017). Organizational knowledge scales are by necessity site specific, so those measures were written for the purpose of this study. All but the job satisfaction scale had a seven point Likert scale with options of *Strongly*

*Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. The job satisfaction scale was a Likert scale of one to five, corresponding from *Strongly Disagree* or *Strongly Agree*. The survey was given to a colleague of the researcher and was estimated to take seven minutes to complete. All teachers who began working in school year 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 were invited to take the survey and to participate in an interview via a message from one of PRS's academic leaders:

### Figure 3

#### *Letter soliciting participants for survey and interviews.*

Dear Faculty Firebirds who joined PRS over the past three years,

I have been working on a special project with the Coordinator of the Center for Teaching and Learning at Episcopal Academy, Allison Schultz. Over the past year, we have been taking a deep look at how I might improve our New Faculty Orientation and New Faculty Academy throughout the year. We are hopeful that you might be interested in completing a brief survey by the time we leave for travel – It should only take you about 15 mins.

Allison would also love to interview a few of you via a phone/Zoom call at some point over the summer. It would be extremely helpful to me and to our incoming folks if you are willing to participate. I asked her to do this piece over the summer because I know so many of you are very busy right now.

If you are willing to help out, please let me know, and I will forward the survey to you, and I will connect you with Allison for the summer convo. She will reach out with more details once we have our list of participants.

Would you be willing to help out our new Faculty Firebirds for 2021-2022 and beyond?

Thanks so much,  
Tim

The survey included the following header to make the participants aware that their answers would be anonymous and would not affect their employment. Submission of

the survey was interpreted as their consent to participate.

**Figure 4**

*Survey header*

Hello! You are invited to participate in a research project about your onboarding experience to Pacific Ridge. This online survey should take about 15-20 minutes to complete. You will be asked questions about your job satisfaction, commitment to the school, the clarity around your role, and your feelings of self-efficacy and acceptance. Participation is voluntary, and responses will be kept anonymous to the degree permitted by the technology being used. You have the option to not respond to any questions that you choose. Participation or non-participation will not impact your relationship with Pacific Ridge. Submission of the survey will be interpreted as your informed consent to participate and that you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Allison Schultz, via email [allison.b.schultz@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:allison.b.schultz@vanderbilt.edu) or the faculty advisor, Dr. Chris Quinn Trank at [chris.quinn.trank@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:chris.quinn.trank@vanderbilt.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Vanderbilt Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (615) 322-2918.

Thank you for your participation, which will help shape the onboarding process for future members of PRS!

All 15 of the new employees from those start years submitted responses from the survey. Data was transferred into an Excel sheet, and each respondent was assigned a

letter a-o as an identifier. Responses were recorded as numerical entries as below, with reverse scoring used on the negatively worded questions:

**Table 1**

*Scales for survey questions*

**All Scales except for Job Satisfaction**

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Strongly Agree</b>             | 7 |
| <b>Agree</b>                      | 6 |
| <b>Somewhat Agree</b>             | 5 |
| <b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b> | 4 |
| <b>Somewhat Disagree</b>          | 3 |
| <b>Disagree</b>                   | 2 |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b>          | 1 |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  |   |
| <b>Job Satisfaction Scale</b>  |   |
| <b>I am highly satisfied by this aspect of the school.</b>                   | 5 |
| <b>I am satisfied by this aspect of the school.</b>                          | 4 |
| <b>I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied by this aspect of the school.</b> | 3 |
| <b>I am dissatisfied by this aspect of the school.</b>                       | 2 |
| <b>I am highly dissatisfied by this aspect of the school.</b>                | 1 |

This coding resulted in the ability to average the responses for each respondent in each scale.

Responses to those survey questions were used to determine the current success of PRS's onboarding program, to compare entry year groups, and to note associations between specific employee adjustment factors and job satisfaction or school commitment outcomes. Interview responses integrated into those results to were used to drive recommendations.

### Qualitative Data

It was essential to dive into the stories of the newer PRS employees and glean insight into their emotions and experiences while being onboarded, work that could not be done effectively through a survey. In order to get this insight, a set of interview questions was devised and six semi-structured interviews took place with three individuals from the 2020 cohort, one individual from the 2019 cohort, and two individuals from the 2018 cohort.

In addition to the interviews of faculty, several conversations took place

with PRS leadership and notes were taken about the logistics of the beginning of school routine for new and returning teachers. Schedules were shared, as was feedback from the 2020 work days before school. This feedback was gathered from all faculty, not just new faculty, but served as a valuable overview into the mindsets of all teachers as they prepared to return to in-person teaching for the first time during the pandemic. The open-ended feedback responses were integrated into the qualitative coding. The schedule shared included plans for new teacher onboarding days as well as for in-service days for the entire faculty.

Interview questions were written to allow for the interviewees to share what they remembered about their orientation experience throughout the first year, and additional questions were added to ask about specific employee behaviors. Questions were sourced from peer reviewed research as well as generated for this study. The questions were workshopped with other doctoral students and edited for flow, clarity, and to align

with the conceptual framework. The result was the following interview instrument:

**Figure 5**

*Interview questions for semi-structured interview.*

| <b>Interview Instrument</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What was it about PRS that made it a place that you wanted to work?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What have you learned about PRS since then?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. What do you remember about the orientation?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Were there particular moments that have stuck in your head? Strong emotions?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. What sorts of experiences prepared you for work at PRS?</li> <li>4. What do you wish you had known in those early orientation days?</li> <li>5. What surprised you during your first year?</li> <li>6. What expectations were unmet during your first year?</li> <li>7. If you previously worked at another school, what was helpful from the previous experience, what was so different at PRS that it made your previous experience detrimental?</li> <li>8. What about the New Faculty Academy?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What was valuable in those experiences?</li> <li>b. If you were in charge of creating the new faculty academy, what would it look like?</li> </ol> </li> <li>9. Can you tell a story about when you felt included within PRS?</li> <li>10. Who was your mentor? Do you find yourself turning to different people for different things?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Make sure to collect data around the similarities and differences in grade level, subject taught, etc.</li> </ol> </li> <li>11. What place did having an office in the grade level team play in your journey towards acceptance and confidence in working for PRS?</li> <li>12. Tell me about a challenging experience during your first year and how you responded. Did you feel confident and in control with your response? Did you seek advice?</li> <li>13. How would you describe your commitment to working at PRS?</li> <li>14. How would you describe your satisfaction with your job at PRS?</li> </ol> |  |

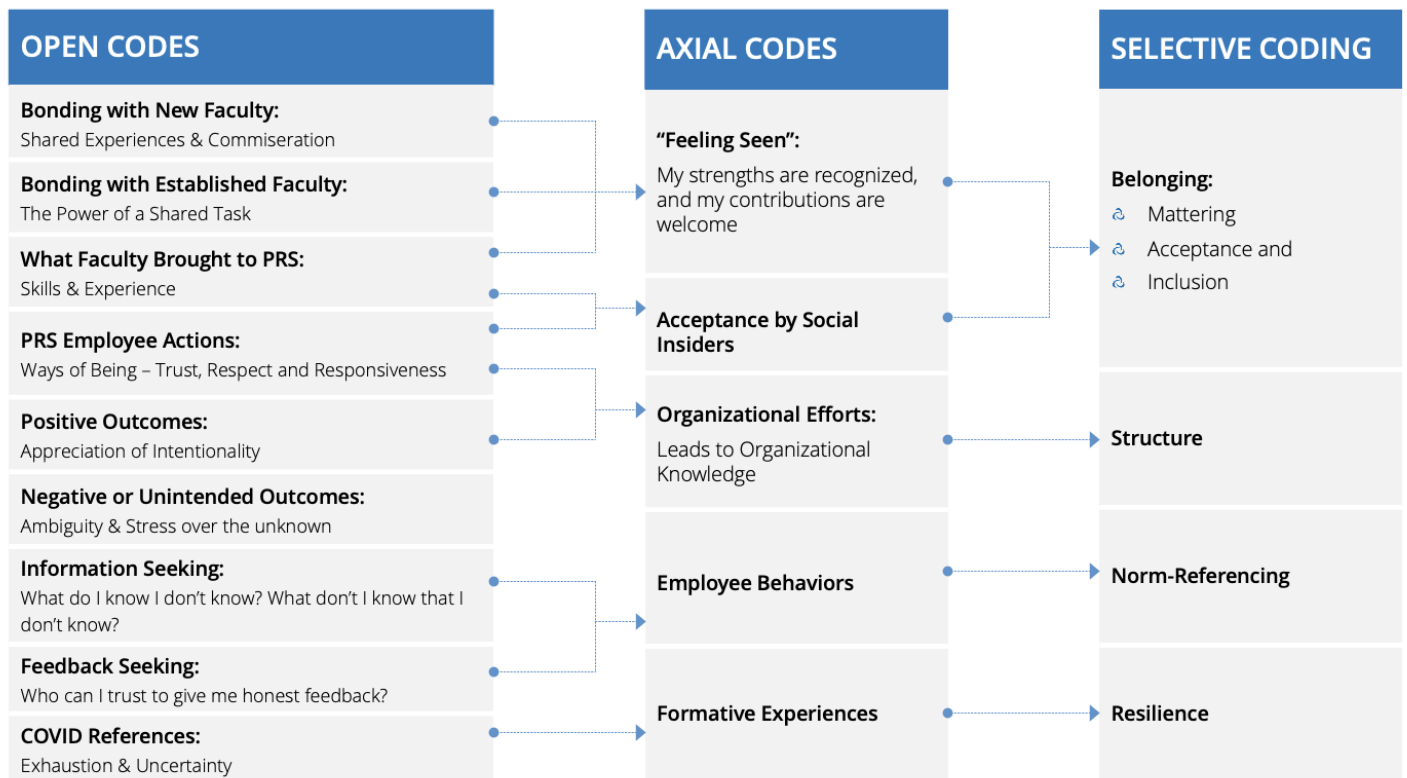
Interviews took place at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Although both the site coordinator and the researcher were hesitant to ask teachers to take on another task at the end of one of the most

stressful school years in history, it was essential to interview while the memories of their first year were as fresh as possible. The site coordinator was able to arrange for the six interviews between the initial

solicitation email and a few more individual invitations. The interviews were recorded using the Zoom recording feature and I took notes during each interview. Interviewees varied in their previous school experience from one to twenty years, and were a range of ages. All interviewees were white. The interviews took place over Zoom, and ranged from 30 to 60 minutes. Interviewees were encouraged to tell stories that illustrated their feelings throughout the orientation process, as well as illustrate what made them feel included within the school. As such, the interviews tended to take different paths and focus on different aspects of the onboarding process. The interviews were then transcribed using a

transcription service, and further edited to ensure for accuracy.

I read through each interview until I reached a familiarity level that allowed me to navigate the documents easily. Early coding involved highlighting significant quotes relating to the employee adjustment factors and the organizational efforts from the conceptual framework. I arrived at the final codes by following the sequence of open coding, axial coding and selective coding categories. After first placing quotes into the open codes and analyzing the patterns within, I was able to move from the concrete to the abstract as described in Creswell and Poth (2018).





The open codes (See Table 2) emerged after reading the interview data and combining that effort with the literature review concepts of employee behaviors and organizational efforts (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011; De Stobbeleir & Ashford, 2014; DiMarco, et. al., 2009; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) the employee behaviors emerged as feedback seeking and information seeking, but the relationship building category became so large that it was broken into relationships with other new employees, relationships with established employees, self-perception of the attributes new faculty brought to the job, and actions established employees took around newcomers. I made notes when interviewees expressed feelings that indicated that these behaviors were welcomed and encouraged, or when they

found it difficult to undertake these essential onboarding behaviors. Organizational actions were at first separated into two categories – positive and negative. Within the positive category stories were also classified as intended and unintended, or “happy coincidence”. Within the negative category of organizational actions, there appeared to be two separate narratives: that which was under-delivered as well as that which was completely overlooked. Finally, often a teacher being interviewed would reference the unique circumstances or the impact that the pandemic had lent to their experiences. This final open category, though not in the literature review, was added as a direct result of some of the early data collection and analysis.

**Table 3**

*Categories, definitions and quotes for qualitative coding*

| Open Codes                       |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Category                         | Definition of Category  | Qualitative Quote Example   |
| Bonding with Fellow New Faculty  | Experiences shared and lessons learned as a result of working with others onboarded during the same year.       | “You want to turn to people who get it too. And it’s like, did you understand that? No? Okay, I’ll find someone to help us.”                  |
| Category                         | Definition of Category  | Qualitative Quote Example   |
| Bonding with Established Faculty | Experiences with established PRS employees that helped new faculty make sense of their roles and feel included. | “I leaned on my department chair and my fellow history teachers because they were the ones who had the information I needed.”                 |
| New Faculty Established Skills   | The knowledge, experiences, expertise, and opinions that new faculty entered PRS with.                          | “I just think having been at another independent school for 12 years and not being a new teacher, you know, like I knew what I needed to do.” |

|                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| PRS Established Faculty Actions | Actions taken by PRS established faculty to aid in creating understanding and bringing new faculty into the fold.                                 | "She made room for my ideas, which I thought was really exciting, and I really appreciated that."  |
| Positive Outcomes               | Outcomes that helped teachers understand their role, feel accepted, feel effective and grow in their knowledge of the organization                | <i>Intended:</i> "Learning how to use PowerSchool, feeling set up for what I was going to actually have to do."<br><i>Unintended:</i> "It was helpful having coworkers that understood the projects inside and out, so my students weren't at a disadvantage." |
| Negative Outcomes               | Events (or non-events) that hinder role clarity, acceptance by social insiders, organizational knowledge or self-efficacy                         | <i>Under-delivered:</i><br>"I would be confused at times about who I would refer to if I had a question."<br><i>Not delivered/considered:</i> "I didn't even know what time to get on campus this year, like, to start my day."                                |
| Information seeking             | Asking or seeking out information about the organization or clarity in role   | "I didn't really know what I was teaching, I wish I had asked more about curriculum."<br><br>"What's my class schedule? Who's in my class? How do we rotate?" That's what I needed to hear."   |
| Feedback Seeking                | Reaching out to ask for an established faculty member's opinion or to ask for direction when making a decision that would affect student outcomes | "There are people I can go to here and be like, can I get a gut check?"  |
| COVID References                | Any statements made or questions asked in regard to struggles or circumstances because of the pandemic  | "We're reflecting upon onboarding in what was a very unusual year, but there's still some learning to be had from it."   |

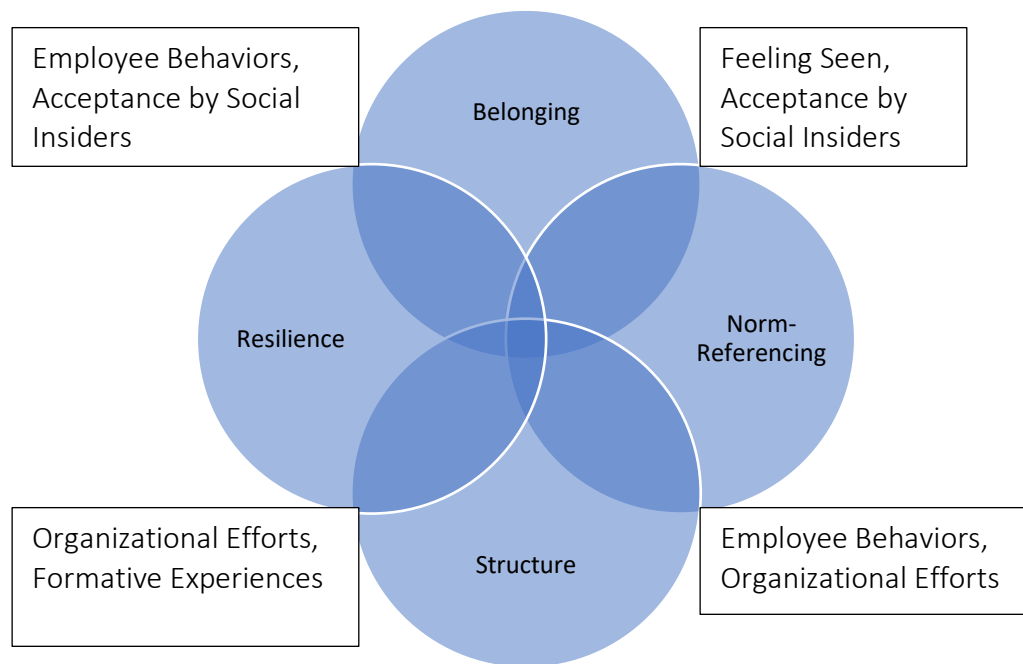
From these open codes, themes were drawn from the groups of quotes to create the axial codes of "Feeling Seen",

"Acceptance by Social Insiders", "Organizational Efforts", "Employee Behaviors" and "Formative Experiences".

Figure 6 illustrates the four final selective codes and how the axial codes fed into each of the final categories.

**Figure 6**

*Interconnectedness of Selective and Axial Codes*



Lastly, the selective categories emerging from the qualitative analysis communicated the aspects of belonging: the sense of mattering, of having one's identity known and appreciated, of being included socially and with decision making inside the school (Carr, Reece, Kellerman & Robichaux, 2019). Stories that illustrated feeling accepted when one was vulnerable, having a trusted friend to rely on, feeling

that their opinion was respected and valued, and feelings that the new employee could make contributions to this school, as well as feelings of mutual respect were all included in this section. The richness of the stories illustrate that it is truly the smallest moments where meaningful relationships begin to bloom. The relationships developed during the onboarding process as a result of vulnerability and acceptance

serve as the foundation for belonging. The selective category of structure dealt with the concrete aspects of what worked and what didn't work within the organizational efforts to plan onboarding experiences. Norm-referencing encompassed the behaviors of new faculty throughout their sense-making process of making their way through their first year, mostly the actions of information seeking and feedback seeking. The third employee behavior of relationship building comprised a majority of the interviews, and while it was a foundational piece of almost all open categories, though the main motivation for relationship building seemed to be belonging. The last selective code was comprised of references to the difficulties experienced because of the pandemic. Although not a large category in the qualitative coding, the quantitative analysis shows the impact of this year, especially for teachers at the beginning of their careers.

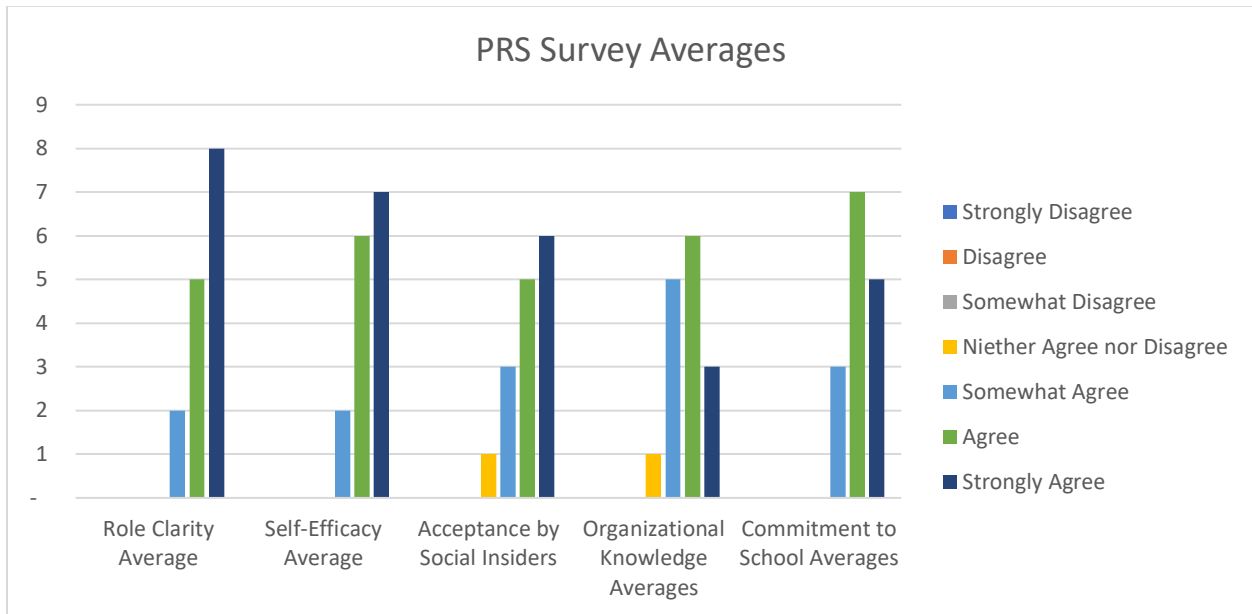
After the categorical coding took place quotes from interviewees were noted

within the above categories and connections were made between the original themes and the adjustment factors displayed by the teachers interviewed.

### **Data Analysis**

The overwhelming story told by the data was that PRS is doing an excellent job onboarding their new employees. The positive stories that arose out of the interviews far outweighed the negative stories, both in number and magnitude of impact. While teachers noted some minor inconveniences or oversights as well as some typical growing pains that come with figuring out a new social situation, they overwhelmingly told stories of being welcomed, included and made to feel belonging. Table 4 shows the results of the survey, indicating that in no category did anyone feel as though they were below average in any of the six scales.

**Table 4**  
*Averages of survey categories.*



The results were particularly striking in the category of role clarity, with over 50% of the scores in the highest possible category for that employee adjustment factor. Self-efficacy ranked almost as highly. This is not a surprise given the feedback that PRS leaders collected after the in-service days. The feedback largely commented that although there was a lot to learn, the way the information had been delivered (pre-recorded videos) allowed for the pace to be adjusted for each individual, and the staff were appreciative of the efforts made by administration. The schedule allowing for teachers to work together in teaching teams allowed for a good amount of collaboration and norm-referencing so that

teachers could feel good about approaching the task at hand.

**Unanticipated Findings**

While the positive results that PRS is achieving during the onboarding of their new faculty as a whole are impressive, there was one unanticipated result of the research findings. The initial step in analyzing the data from the survey was to compare cohorts. As seen in the bar graphs, there was a consistent trend of the class of 2019 to have lower scores in the four adjustment factors, and to be less satisfied on the two outcome scales. This data was comprised of six people from the class of 2018, five from the class of 2019 and four from the class of 2020.

**Table 4**  
*Adjustment and outcome factor averages by cohort*



Note. Recall that Job Satisfaction was on a scale out of 5, and all other scales were out of 7.

To show that the data between the cohorts was statistically significant a single factor ANOVA test was performed for each of the four adjustment factors and the two outcome scales to determine if the entry cohort had an effect on the outcome of that factor. The ANOVA showed that there were

significant differences for all categories except for the organizational knowledge adjustment factor (see table 5). The lack of significant difference in terms of organizational knowledge follows logic since the school systems and procedures were rapidly changing during the pandemic and

one cohort would not have necessarily had an advantage over another. In fact, teachers at PRS prior to the pandemic might have even struggled a bit more, given that they

experienced a paradigm shift, while those that joined in 2020 knew that their year would likely entail much change and ambiguity.

**Table 5**

*One-Way ANOVA on each factor showing significant differences in factors and outcomes for all but organization knowledge*

|                                      |         | <i>SS</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>P-Value</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| <b>Role Clarity</b>                  | Between | 2.252     | 2         | 1.126     | 5.070    | 0.025*         |
|                                      | Within  | 2.665     | 12        | .222      |          |                |
| <b>Self- Efficacy</b>                | Between | 3.086     | 2         | 1.029     | 3.975    | 0.038*         |
|                                      | Within  | 2.847     | 12        | .259      |          |                |
| <b>Acceptance by Social Insiders</b> | Between | 9.643     | 2         | 4.821     | 15.837   | <.001*         |
|                                      | Within  | 3.653     | 12        | .304      |          |                |
| <b>Organizational Knowledge</b>      | Between | 1.268     | 2         | .634      | .737     | .499           |
|                                      | Within  | 10.313    | 12        | .859      |          |                |
| <b>Commitment to School</b>          | Between | 4.587     | 2         | 2.293     | 7.967    | .006*          |
|                                      | Within  | 3.454     | 12        | .288      |          |                |
| <b>Job Satisfaction</b>              | Between | 2.025     | 2         | 1.013     | 7.420    | .008*          |
|                                      | Within  | 1.638     | 12        | .136      |          |                |

*Note.* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

After the ANOVAs were calculated, a post-hoc test, Tukey’s honest significant difference test, which controls well for Type 1 error, was then used since the sample

sizes were uneven. The Tukey’s HSD was performed on all categories that showed a significance after the ANOVA test, with the results shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
*Tukey HSD test for differences of means*

|                                      |              | Ab. Difference of Means | SE of Difference | 95% CI         | Q Value | Sig? |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|------|
| <i>Role Clarity</i>                  | 2018 v. 2019 | 0.793                   | 0.208            | (.032, 1.555)  | 3.931   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2019 v. 2020 | 0.86                    | 0.224            | (.017, 1.703)  | 3.846   | Yes  |
| <i>Self-Efficacy</i>                 | 2018 v. 2020 | 0.067                   | 0.215            | (-.745, .878)  | 0.309   | No   |
|                                      | 2018 v. 2019 | 1.05                    | 0.218            | (.228, 1.872)  | 4.820   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2019 v. 2020 | 0.738                   | 0.241            | (-.173, 1.650) | 3.056   | No   |
| <i>Acceptance by Social Insiders</i> | 2018 v. 2020 | 0.313                   | 0.232            | (-.564, 1.189) | 1.345   | No   |
|                                      | 2018 v. 2019 | 1.725                   | 0.236            | (.834, 2.616)  | 7.301   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2019 v. 2020 | 1.663                   | 0.262            | (.675, 2.650)  | 6.352   | Yes  |
| <i>Commitment to School</i>          | 2018 v. 2020 | 0.063                   | 0.252            | (-.888, 1.012) | 0.248   | No   |
|                                      | 2018 v. 2019 | 1.183                   | 0.229            | (.317, 2.050)  | 5.150   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2019 v. 2020 | 1.157                   | 0.254            | (.197, 2.117)  | 4.546   | Yes  |
| <i>Job Satisfaction</i>              | 2018 v. 2020 | 0.026                   | 0.244            | (-.897, .950)  | 0.106   | No   |
|                                      | 2018 v. 2019 | 0.65                    | 0.158            | (.031, 1.554)  | 3.931   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2019 v. 2020 | 0.9                     | 0.175            | (.017, 1.703)  | 3.846   | Yes  |
|                                      | 2018 v. 2020 | 0.25                    | 0.168            | (-.745, .878)  | 0.309   | Yes  |

Given the large number of statistically significant results, analysis led to the conclusion that there was a critical factor that affected the teachers who began in 2019 as opposed to the other years, which was significant in role clarity, acceptance by social insiders, commitment to school and job satisfaction. For the 2020 cohort, self-efficacy was not significantly different from the other two cohorts, but there is a difference for the comparison between the 2018 and the 2019 cohort. Of course, 2019 was the year that ended with schools worldwide having to go remote after they were forced to close during the COVID-19 pandemic. Qualitative analysis supports that the transition time to remote teaching was a difficult switch for all teachers, but none more so than those who began working at PRS that year. One teacher that was interviewed from that year noted that she felt less commitment to her colleagues,

and was the only one to mention considering the possibility of leaving the school within the interview. She bracketed her answer to the question “How satisfied are you with your job at PRS?” with the note that she was exhausted and cried a lot that year.

As a result of the quantitative analysis it is clear that a cosmology event (Weick, 1993) occurring in the first year of a teacher’s tenure at a school is upsetting and affects the adjustment factors of role clarity, self-efficacy and acceptance by social insiders, further affecting that teacher’s satisfaction with their job and the commitment they have to their schools. The qualitative analysis of the feedback from orientation supports the finding that ambiguity necessitates resilience.



Morning sessions were informative, but not building in a little immediate time for questions added to the anxiety and stress as people waited to figure pieces out or get clarity.

The idea that people were left without an opportunity to test understandings or ask follow-up questions speaks to the inability to make sense of the situation. As Weick (1993) so elegantly explains, as sense-making and structure fall away and ambiguity grows, small events can grow into major misunderstandings and missteps.

### Research Question 1

*To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?*

- *Do they feel they have a clear understanding of their roles?*
- *Do they feel effective in their duties?*
- *Do they feel accepted by colleagues?*
- Integrated into the community?*
- *Do they feel competent in terms of organizational knowledge?*

The first research question sought to find out to what extent newcomers to the PRS family felt that they had adjusted to the expectations of their new workplace. Each sub question will be looked individually and findings will be stated as a result of the data related to that sub question.

### Research Question 1A

*To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?*

- *Do they feel they have a clear understanding of their roles?*

In general, role clarity was high in all survey participants. In addition to the quantitative data that supported the hypotheses that role clarity did impact job satisfaction and commitment to school; several themes, stories and quotes in the qualitative data indicated that clarity around tasks and their prioritization and allocation of time made for a better onboarding experience. Organizational efforts that assisted in role clarity were the structure of the orientation which focused on the skills that teachers would need to be successful with the new protocols for teaching during the pandemic, “I found orientation to be very helpful and informative. I especially appreciated learning more about the research on remote learning, the exposure to different tech tools and time to practice, and learning about the protocols for keeping everyone safe during Covid.” During the 2020 orientation, due to the pandemic, many of the sessions that typically would have happened in-person were recorded and placed in a video library that teachers could access at their leisure. As the quote below illustrates, many appreciated the new structure, this sentiment was echoed over and over again.

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I thought that the faculty orientation this year was the best of any I've been to, at PRS and elsewhere. Using the how-to videos as a self-directed resources freed a lot of individual and co-teacher prep time. I feel more prepared to begin classes than I ever have.

---

However, there were a few teachers who felt the video library didn't address all their learning needs about the novel school year, "I found the amount of videos in the library very overwhelming, it would be more helpful to have a short 20-30 minute meeting with people who made the videos to give us the information we are required to know." This speaks to the fact that everyone has learning preferences and just as we do for students, differentiation must occur for adults. Incorporating choice into the onboarding process via technology is the best way to do this reliably and sustainably.

Additionally, new teachers especially found that the care that administration took to personalize the orientation to their needs was incredibly helpful, "And so this is a theme that I found throughout the onboarding and the follow up during the year, that they were willing to actually personalize for the cohort of new teachers, you know, what is individually more amenable to you." They emphasized the importance of focusing on the first days and preparing for the sorts of tasks that would have them in front of students without anyone else to rely on: what their PowerSchool pages needed to include, how to post homework, and what was expected

in terms of relationship building vs. content delivery. Important but not as pressing were surprises that came to teachers later on in the semester such as grading scales and curricular details.

The employee behavior of information seeking allowed some new employees to be more clear than others on their roles and responsibilities. De Vos and Freese (2011) found that this is sometimes related to age, with younger employees being more willing to ask questions of their fellow new colleagues. Miller and Jablin (1991) note that differences in information seeking also varies with previous experience. One new faculty member noted that his previous experience allowed him to know what questions to ask, "having worked at a school before leads you to know to ask questions like, "what's the homework posting policy?" Others noted that they wish they had been given some discretion in how they learned the material, or that a few important things slipped through the cracks during the busy orientation schedule.

---

What is really hard when you come into a new school, you don't know any of the teachers, and you don't know any of the students, and you don't know any of the policies.

---

One teacher explained that she had been fearful of seeming inept, but her mentor encouraged her partway through the year to ask more questions, reassuring her that it was okay to say she didn't know something. When being onboarded, new employees must seek out social insiders to bring clarity

to their roles (Miller & Jablin, 1991). As new employees, we are trying to learn about our organizations while simultaneously attempting to impress our co-workers with our competence. This can be a difficult balance, but organizations can help by structuring check-points into their onboarding routines and encouraging current employees to have a welcoming and non-judgmental attitude. Creating a culture of feedback is essential to reducing the image risk that we encounter when we ask for help (de Strobbelair, Ashford, & Buyens, 2011). Osstroff and Kowalski (1992) recommend that in order to increase their confidence, new employees need time to observe others so that they can gain clarity about their roles. Experienced teachers are able to better adjust because they have a framework with which to reference “how things are done” here. Therefore, brand new teachers will need additional supports to understand expectations.

When you come into a new environment, you do feel like you have to prove yourself.

### Research Question 1B

*To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?*

- *Do they feel effective in their duties?*

Although the interview tool did not explicitly lead to conversations that focused on self-efficacy, notes from the interviews about tone that new faculty used indicated

that teachers coming into PRS with experience were likely to have more confidence about their ability to be successful than teachers that were coming in with less than a few years teaching prior to their start. Also interestingly, with one exception, the teachers who portrayed themselves more confidently were males. One male teacher had only a few years of experience but presented as extremely sure of himself, sharing only stories of his success. Contrast this with another teacher who came to PRS with three times the teaching experience, but spoke equally about her struggles as well as her successes. These observations further support that the findings that orientation needs to be differentiated for everyone and that relationship building with new faculty is critical so that all employees can be sure to get the individualized support they need to feel confident without fear of judgement. Self-efficacy comes with time, and should be a long-term objective that extends past onboarding.

I just think having been at another independent school for 12 years and not being a new teacher, you know, like I knew what I needed to do.

### Research Question 1C

*To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?*

- *Do they feel accepted by colleagues? Integrated into the community?*

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the results from the qualitative interviews supported

the data that relationships mattered a great deal during onboarding, with an overwhelming majority of the quotes and stories referencing relationships and the valuable feedback and advice that new faculty gleaned from the interactions with fellow new staff and experienced PRS employees.

As new faculty members seek to establish their reputations at PRS, they have to integrate their previous knowledge with the new rituals and routines of the school. Building trusting relationships that can be leveraged as a norm-referencing tool can accelerate a sense of belonging. Several interviewees commented with a sense of appreciation that their ideas were valid and should be taken into serious consideration.

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She made room for my ideas, which I thought was really exciting, and I really appreciated that.

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Buoyed by the confidence of her ideas being integrated into the curriculum, this teacher was then able to go on to propose a new course that ran in her second year of working at PRS. When people feel they can bring their authentic selves to the workplace, then they are more likely to invest themselves at work (Cable, Gino, & Staats, 2013).

Conversely, when tenured faculty do not recognize the talents or are dismissive of the ability of new faculty to contribute, the adverse effect of new faculty failing to feel belonging can happen. This was illustrated by the example of a department chair who did not make room for newcomers' ideas and instead felt that he

knew what was best. "There was a little bit of like, well, I'm the department chair and I'm here to, like tell you what you're doing wrong versus, like, I'm here to learn what you guys do and maybe talk through how we can make it better."

The second half of the quote underscores the desire that new faculty members have to have their ideas respected, to feel that they can make a contribution to their school community.

It can be difficult for teachers to transition to a new school when they have been previously successful at another school, but those types of employees are exactly the type that PRS wants to attract: accomplished teachers with previous experience. When asked when she felt a sense of belonging after beginning her work at PRS, one interviewee told a wonderful story about being on a beginning of the year field trip and running into a former student from her own school who ran up to her exclaiming how lucky her new students were to have her as a teacher. One of the school leaders who witnessed the interaction then asked permission to share the story at a beginning of the year faculty meeting, giving the new faculty member instant credibility with her colleagues. Moments like this help bolster a new faculty members self-efficacy and allow their more established colleagues to imagine the valuable contributions the new employee might make. When strengths are appreciated by current faculty, newcomers feel seen and integrated, an idea supported by Bauer and Erdogan (2014). When

newcomers are given the opportunity to share their strengths it can lead to authenticity, well-being and a sense of purpose (Cable, Gino & Staats, 2013).

The structure of the orientation at the beginning of the year called for the new faculty to gather for a few days of training before the rest of the faculty joined for their pre-school year in-service days. This resulted in the new faculty forming their own cohort, which one of the members of the 2018 cohort I interviewed remembered as being one of the most valuable experiences of the orientation process.

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By the time Wednesday rolled around, I had like my little crew.

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As a result of the relationships formed between fellow newcomers, they had the ability to check their understanding of essential tasks and clarify if they were missing key pieces of information. There was validation to be found when you were not the only one to be questioning a scenario, and with that validation came the empowerment to go find the answers one needed. "You want to turn to people who get it too. And it's like, did you understand that? No? Okay, I'll find someone to help us." Several of the interviewees spoke of the power of proximity to other teachers in the shared grade level rooms. The ability to simply turn around to ask a question of a fellow new colleague or an experienced one was invaluable to productivity and growth in organizational knowledge for many of the new employees. Fellow new colleagues

provide space to commiserate and norm-reference.

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The workroom builds so much comradery.

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To fully integrate the new faculty into the fabric of the school, they must feel that they are on the same level as the existing faculty members. As a precursor to the work that they would do together, opportunities to get to know each other on a personal level were sought out and appreciated by new faculty. Stories were told about gatherings at department chair's homes and ice breakers in the faculty room, "Breaking the ice, getting to know little tidbits about each other so that it's easier to then do the hard work of a Harkness lesson around a difficult passage in the Odyssey, for example." As the quote suggests, knowing and feeling known led to assuredness of acceptance and trust, enabling teachers to be vulnerable in their norm-referencing behaviors.

The theme of shared tasks came up a few times, and it was within these moments that new faculty felt a true sense of belonging. One teacher bonded with her colleagues around being nervous to present an award at the graduation, "I was asked to be the speaker to give one of the awards. I was nervous, but so were the other teachers. So it was like, oh my goodness, we're all in this together." Another described the shared activity of trouble shooting together as a helpful collaborative experience. Even tenured PRS faculty noted in the 2020 orientation feedback that time

to work on shared tasks with colleagues was one of the benefits of a restructured in-service day schedule.

One new faculty member spoke at length about the experience he had developing an AP course with another teacher who had taught previously at PRS, but not this course. The novelty of the task to both men gave them a more equal playing field where they could each contribute to the final curriculum. The new teacher's opinions about textbook usage and scope & sequence were able to be heard while the established PRS employee could contribute knowledge about what worked and didn't within the culture. Thus, both men walked away with a healthy respect for each other and a connection formed over a shared task. New faculty's ability to bond with experienced faculty is strengthened by tasks that are novel to both of the teachers and where both can make contributions.

### Question 1D

*To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?*

- *Do they feel competent in terms of organizational knowledge?*

Part of being a new teacher is figuring out what's the deal with the new school. What are they, what are they not? What do they want to see and what do they not care about?

Organizational knowledge was the final employee adjustment factor, it was

this category of findings where the new faculty members I interviewed were more likely to point out the little things about organizational knowledge that had not gotten answered in the onboarding process, and the negative feelings clearly creating an uncomfortable memory.

It is most likely unrealistic to expect that all teachers will be able to be onboarded so that they have no questions as they proceed through the school year. However, it is the organization's job to minimize the uncertainty new faculty feel so that they can effectively serve students. When the structure of orientation failed in minor ways leaving new faculty in a place of ambiguity, this caused some stress. Adding a session into the new faculty orientation to remind teachers ambiguity is to be expected is a great step towards mitigating the effects of doubt.

However, when teachers noted the minor stresses of not knowing exactly what time they were supposed to arrive for work, or the grading scale, or resetting gradebooks for the new semester, the larger story was that the new faculty hired were able to form connections with others to get these questions answered. It was within the category of organizational knowledge that teachers were most likely to reach out for feedback.

There are people I can go to and be like, can I just get a gut check? Like, I feel like I'm screwing up here. And they'll give me that outside perspective.

These interactions were powerful enough to stick with new employees months and



years after they happened, with reassurance a huge theme throughout, “She gave it to me straight, like you know, ‘Go to this. Prioritize this. Don’t worry about this.’ And that was really helpful to me.” Others noted the importance of honest and timely feedback as they navigated their new roles. Smart (2012) underscores the importance of new employees receiving coaching as soon as they begin their work in order to establish a culture of feedback. Again, stories of vulnerability emerged: a story of a teacher who wondered how it looked if all the students in his class were earning A’s, or the story of a new faculty member realizing her analysis of a book the students were reading wasn’t as deep as a colleagues’. In both instances the questions were met with reassurance and respect for their professional decisions. So, while organizational knowledge itself doesn’t have a strong effect on an employee’s onboarding (and it likely doesn’t in this case partly because of the already strong program in place), the response to employees when they sought out information or feedback was clearly impactful. Miller and Jablin (1991) point out that there are costs to information seeking such as the risks that coworkers might see them as incompetent or that they are bothering their coworkers with their questions. Thus, care must be taken to establish with existing faculty an understanding of the new faculty’s situation where questioning is met with welcome, and mistakes are understood as part of a growth mindset. Creating and maintaining a

culture of respect and welcoming questions is baked into the fabric of PRS and allows new employees easy access to others for norm-referencing activities. Thus, it makes sense that existing faculty should be trained or primed to respond to new faculty’s needs with compassion and encouragement.

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Genuine respect, which there really is from the leadership and through the ranks here, it just completely changes the culture of the school.

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## Research Question 2

*What behaviors did teachers engage in during their first year to feel satisfaction and organizational commitment?*

Based on the answers to the first research question, it was clear that although all four employee adjustment factors had some measure of impact on the feelings the new faculty had about their school or their job, acceptance by the established teachers and administration seemed to play a significant role in feelings of belonging.

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That occasion both just socially made me feel, “Wow, okay, these guys are really welcoming, I’m part of their crew. And then also the fact that professionally, um, it made me feel like, ‘Okay, now we’re on the same page.’ ”

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Employees were most likely to reach out for feedback or information to those with whom they felt a connection. These connections might have developed through

a shared project, a close desk in the workroom, a planned social event or an assigned mentor. When trust was felt, employees took advantage of opportunities to ask questions so that they could perform their jobs well. The activity of sensemaking – when people seek to understand ambiguous or confusing events (Brown, Colville & Pye, 2014) – is critical to those entering a new school. Interpreting their environment and making sense of the happenings around them consumes much of a newcomers mental energy in the first days and weeks of their employment.

Within PRS's onboarding of new employees, participants used the following strategies to make sense of their new situation:

- Seeking out experienced coworkers
- Asking questions to gain perspective
- Leaning on department chairs and those most available
- Attending New Faculty Academy meetings
- Eating lunch with coworkers
- Coming to campus even when they didn't have to
- Coming in early over the summer to work on curriculum with other teachers

During onboarding sessions before school started, before many relationships had had the chance to deepen, new faculty mostly relied on their own intuition and knowledge from previous work experiences to make sense of the piles of information coming their way, "Orientation was largely me kind of asking myself, what do I need to

make this work, and just asking the right questions." Even here though, it is clear that structures were in place for new employees to ask questions. One interviewee spoke about the opportunity to sit down one on one with a technology coordinator in a way that prepared him logistically for the beginning of the school year. In his story he is clearly making connections between the knowledge he began with and the new expectations that he would be required to follow. This type of sensemaking is reminiscent of Lave and Wenger's communities of practitioners (1991), where newcomers work to achieve full participation through legitimate peripheral participation. It is not that newcomers are voids to be filled, but rather they come into a new school with previous experiences and opinions that need to be recalibrated to fit with their new situation. In the most productive circumstances, the community is changed for the better because of the strengths of their new members. Thus, while the new faculty member shifts to adjust to their new school, so too does the school shift to accept the talents of the newcomer.

Some employees choose to focus on the concrete applications of their job, such as how to use technology or set up their learning management systems, especially during the beginning of the school year orientation sessions. As the year progressed, teachers turned to more nuanced versions of sensemaking, carefully observing the ways that others taught and recalibrating their own teaching. We see



this with the previously illustrated stories of the English teacher who wondered about her choice of foci for teaching the *Odyssey* and the economics teacher who wondered about how assigning all A's to his students made him appear as a teacher – highly competent or as an easy grader? In both cases, the teachers were able to reach out to trusted colleagues and gauge their progress against others' work.

While some opportunities for feedback result in affirmation, others allow for a change to take place within the new faculty member's practices that gets them closer to full participation. In one example a teacher was motivated by her desire for her students to do well. She knew that her students had projects coming up that all English teachers assigned to their sections. Knowing that these projects were a large part of their grades, the teacher was motivated to find out more about the projects so that she could set her students up for success. This sort of information seeking needs to be rewarded with time and attention from those the information is sought from in order to encourage the behavior to continue. This requires flexibility from the new teacher as well as patience from the established teacher. Or as one new faculty member put it, "I had to be really, really open on how they do things for particular classes." This flexibility is part of the resilience needed as one adjusts to a new work environment. Also important are being able to adapt to change, finding a sense of control, and problem solving skills. A fifth characteristic of resilient people

listed by Cherry (2021) is strong social connections. Once again, we circle back to the fact that new faculty members need to form connections in order to engage in another critical employee behavior: norm-referencing.

### Research Question 3

*What organizational efforts resulted in teachers feeling satisfaction and organizational commitment?*

There were many things that PRS intentionally did to create a space where new faculty members could learn what they needed to be successful in their classrooms. However, the most well received interventions were those that were individually tailored to the new teacher. The new teacher that was paired with a mentor from the admissions team who helped her to understand the kids is an example. Another is the English teacher who would be teaching AP U.S. History who was sent to a course about teaching the class. That same teacher felt taken care of because a PRS employee helped him to find housing from afar so that he would have a place to live once he arrived in the states. The tailoring of after school meetings to calendar specific tasks like comment writing. These stories illustrate that when the needs of the individuals are met, the new faculty member feels seen and can better adapt to their new teaching home.

On the other hand, much can be gleaned from the minor complaints that many teachers vocalized about their

onboarding experience. It is important to note that interviewees were specifically asked about what they wish they had been taught during orientation, provoking these responses. Overwhelmingly, the reflection on new teacher onboarding was positive. But there were a few common themes when teachers were pressed to say what could have been improved during the process.

**Personalize the process.** Several of the teachers said that they felt bored in sessions because they were not able to access the material in a way that served them well. When acquiring information, adults need to understand their motivation for learning, and thus the learning must connect with their work. What is important for all adults as they learn is that they see the new knowledge as relevant to their work. To overcome this particular challenge, orientation leaders must make sure that the proper framework and motivation is in place for newcomers. Providing choice for the process promotes buy in according to Malcolm Knowles and his theories of adult learning (1978) and as evidenced by the majority of positive reviews that PRS received after creating the video library for their 2020 in-service days. These video libraries are an example of knowledge management described by Rosenberg and Foreman (2016) - just-in-time, easily accessible (and re-accessible!) material. The goal is for employees to get answers quickly and to do that organizations must “provide easy and

reliable access to information” (Rosenberg & Foreman, 2016, p. 14).

I’m the type of person to explore things on my own. I really enjoy exploring computer programs rather than being taught them. So, I know other people need the support through guidance, but I felt like that was frustrating and a little boring.

**Create a list of current faculty members and their key responsibilities.** A sentiment that was most widely shared was the confusion around who to go to for what. As a sensemaking new employee, it takes time, energy and vulnerability to ask questions, so it makes sense that the employee would want to make sure that they are asking the right person when they seek out information. The words of the interviewees say it all:

What would be helpful is a resource list, like if this problem happens, go to this person.

Just knowing the people I can go to with my questions.

I would be confused at times about like, who do I refer what question or issue to?

It would be good to have more clarity, and I think this is about actually having clarity in the school itself, as to who in the administration is in charge of what.

**Allow time for reflection and questions.** While no one disputed that there was good information presented at new faculty orientation, they did feel that more time was needed to absorb and implement the learning, “There were really full days, and it was all good information

but you didn't really have time to do them." The idea of reflection came up during the closing of one of the interviews, when the teacher remarked at how beneficial it had been to reflect on the past year. Reflection is increasingly being recommended as a way to train new teachers, and Dinkleman (2003) writes that through reflection critical insights can be made that can assist in growth for teachers.

Having time to digest it all could have been a little helpful too.

**Build the time into the day.** Hosting meetings after school hindered those who had sports practice and couldn't attend, those who weren't working full time and thus had to wait beyond their day to attend a meeting, and those with childcare concerns. While teachers generally appreciated the sessions, saying, "It was always something important. It wasn't like you get together because you have to check in with someone." There was also a general consensus that by the end of the day new

employees were tired and unable to focus and absorb important information.

The structure of the new teacher orientation was jam packed with informational sessions (see Appendix B). One interviewee from the cohort of 2018 commented, "It's a complete blur minus the fact that I met some really nice people." The sheer volume of information thrown at new faculty members who are still struggling to figure out a new way of being is overwhelming. Therefore, it is important to create a master list of everything new teachers need to know and limit it to just the items relevant for the first weeks of school at the beginning. Ideally, that information is provided in a variety of different ways, allowing the new faculty choice so that they can learn the way they do best *after* the proper framework and motivation has been laid out.

**Table 7**  
*Summary of Research Questions, Findings and Recommendations*

| Study Question  | Finding                                     | Recommendation   |
|---|---|--|
| <i>To what extent have teachers adjusted to their new work environment?</i> | <i>1. Ambiguity Necessitates Resilience</i> | <i>Recommendation: Counteract vulnerability by building resilience through improvisation and bricolage, the attitude of wisdom (improves flexibility), and respectful interaction.</i> |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>•Do they feel they have a clear understanding of their roles?</b></p>   | <p>2. Experience plays a role in knowing what you don't know.<br/>3. Adults need choice when learning.</p>   | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Build extra supports for first year teachers.<br/><i>Recommendation:</i> Allow for multiple pathways to knowledge and check for understanding.</p>  |
| <p><b>•Do they feel effective in their duties?</b></p>  | <p>4. Self-efficacy can be a long term objective.</p>  | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Include self-efficacy measures in check-ins throughout onboarding and beyond.</p>   |
| <p><b>•Do they feel accepted by colleagues? Integrated into the community?</b></p>  | <p>5. When strengths are appreciated by current faculty, newcomers feel seen and integrated.<br/><br/>6. Fellow new colleagues provide space to commiserate and norm-reference.<br/><br/>7. Finding: New faculty's ability to bond with experienced faculty is strengthened by shared tasks.</p> | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Work with new faculty to identify their strengths and make a plan for them to those strengths with the current faculty in a productive way.<br/><br/><i>Recommendation:</i> Add team building activities for new employees and mixed groups of employees. Continue to place faculty in grade level rooms when possible.<br/><br/><i>Recommendation:</i> When possible, assign an experienced faculty member and a newcomer to a shared task, ideally one that is novel to both parties.</p> |
| <p><b>•Do they feel competent in terms of organizational knowledge?</b></p>   | <p>8. Existing faculty should be trained in responding to newcomers' questions encouragingly.<br/><br/>9. Incoming teachers need to be prepared for ambiguity.</p>   | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Use time with returning faculty at the beginning of the year to explicitly teach existing faculty how to be welcoming to new faculty.</p>   |
| <p><b>What behaviors did teachers engage in during their first year to feel satisfaction and organizational commitment?</b></p> | <p>10. Employees need opportunities to norm-reference.</p>   | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Build both relationship opportunities with experienced faculty as well as intentional checkpoints into the process to ensure employees can calibrate their work. Encourage learning-goal orientation.</p>   |
| <p><b>What organizational efforts resulted in teachers feeling satisfaction and organizational commitment?</b></p>              | <p>11. Onboarding requires differentiation.</p>  | <p><i>Recommendation:</i> Add learning objectives and space for reflection into the orientation schedule. Plan for multiple ways of obtaining information. Checklists within frameworks should be considered and exemplars provided.</p>  |

## Recommendations

Onboarding is a series of lessons, not unlike a unit that we would teach to our students. It makes sense then, that many of the recommendations follow classroom best practices. This is even more logical when we consider that modeling is one of the teaching methods that shows a positive effect in John Hattie's metanalysis (2013). But effective modeling goes beyond just demonstration, and also includes clarity of the goal, reflection and an opportunity to practice with feedback says Michael Anderson (2021). At PRS, the administrators strive to provide teachers and students alike with solid instruction and inspiration.

Starting new teachers off correctly by modeling best teaching practices throughout the orientation process stands to reason.

The recommendations followed findings that arose from the combined quantitative and qualitative research. In order to streamline the recommendations, I have reorganized them from the table above (divided by research question) to the table below, which groups them by the selective qualitative coding categories of structure, belonging, norm-referencing and resilience.

**Table 8**  
*Recommendation groupings*

| Structure  | Belonging  | Norm-Referencing  | Resilience  |
|--|--|---|---|
| Add learning objectives and space for reflection into the orientation schedule. Plan for multiple ways of obtaining information. <i>Checklists within frameworks should be considered and exemplars provided.</i>                          | Build both relationship opportunities with experienced faculty as well as intentional checkpoints into the process to ensure employees can calibrate their work. | Build extra supports for first year teachers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create list of everything that the best teachers do during the year/semester/week. Checklist manifesto style.</li> </ul> | Include self-efficacy measures in check-ins throughout onboarding and beyond.   |
| Use time with returning faculty at the beginning of the year to set expectations around responding to new faculty questions.   | When possible, assign an experienced faculty member and a newcomer to a shared task, ideally one that is novel to both parties.                                  | <i>Continue to place new faculty in grade level rooms when possible.</i>  | Counteract vulnerability by building resilience through improvisation and bricolage, virtual role systems, the attitude of wisdom (improves flexibility), and respectful interaction. |
| Allow for multiple pathways to knowledge: independent video library access and small group Q and A sessions seem to be what emerges out of the surveys. Opportunities for observation are also critical. <i>Provide check-ins for all.</i> | Add team building activities for new employees before all employees come back to work. <i>Continue to place new faculty in grade level rooms when possible.</i>  | Encourage learning -goal orientation.   |   |
|  | Work with new faculty to identify their strengths and make a plan for them to those strengths with the current faculty in a productive way.                      | <i>Provide check-ins for all.</i>   |   |
|  |  | <i>Checklists within frameworks should be considered and exemplars provided.</i>  |   |

*Note.* Italicized items are included in multiple categories.

## Structure

In order to provide further role clarity for teachers new to PRS, administrators should concretely communicate the what, when, where, who and how of getting the job done. By increasing the clarity, Bauer (2013, b) says new employees are more likely to take risks, ask questions, learn more about the job, their colleagues, role and organization and be more effective. Orientation programs can reduce anxiety and help them be proactive (Bauer, 2013b). And when combined with technology that allows the teachers to make choices and have access to information at their fingertips, onboarding can be efficient as well. By providing multiple pathways to knowledge acquisition, PRS will be tailoring their onboarding process to align with the principles of adult learning explained by Knowles (1978), especially those of self-concept (the need for autonomy and choice) and readiness (there is a problem that needs to be solved for success in the immediate future.) **To model clarity of learning that PRS would want for their students, clear learning goals for each of the new teacher orientation sessions should be explicitly stated, and choices of how to access information should be offered.**

Carucci (2018), writing for Harvard Business Review, makes several logistical suggestions for onboarding new employees, among them defining what good looks like, setting up meetings at regular intervals to check in and educate new employees about culture, history and how to be successful, as well as building a sense of community through intentional partnerships. The take-away from his piece is that a new hire's first year should be

“productive and positive.” **Throughout the one-on-one check-ins, self-efficacy should be assessed.** Questions around how confident teachers are in solving their own problems, their self-perception of their resourcefulness and their ability to accomplish their goals will be key in these meetings.

**PRS should make arrangements for new teachers to observe their fellow teachers in the classroom.** This will provide the observation opportunities necessary for identifying role models the new teacher connects with illustrated by Filstad (2004). Swap, et. al. (2011) and Osstroff & Kowslowski (1992) also note the power of observation as a main source for newcomers learning and making sense of their workplace.

Skerrett (2006) uses her own experience with reflection to underscore the importance of the practice within a well-functioning school building. When talking with me, one of the interviewees mentioned the benefit of reflecting back on her year through my questioning. **Adding in reflection to the structure of the orientation will benefit new teachers especially, and should be considered for all teachers in the PRS community.** Johnson, et. al. (2014) also lists reflection as one of their top five practices for building a positive teacher identity.

The final recommendation for PRS as they consider the structure of their new teacher orientation will be to prepare their current employees for their important part in onboarding new teachers. There are multiple ways that current employees help to socialize the newcomers: they serve as important sources of information (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992), they



help to facilitate group interactions (Kammeyer, Mueller & Wanberg, 2003), and they communicate pieces of culture and value, giving context to the expectations of the new role (Schein, 1968). **PRS should explain to established faculty the ways in which they will be instrumental to new employees and create a shared responsibility between all faculty for onboarding new faculty well.**

### Belonging

Team building is critical to form the emotional connections needed for trust, belonging and acceptance. **Team building should take place between cohort groups of new faculty as well as in mixed groups of new and experienced faculty.** Team building builds the skills of communication, empathy, and problem solving, as well as improving workplace functioning (Klein, et. al., 2009). Sergiovanni (1996) also supports the idea that collaboration in professional learning communities is critical for success of the new teacher. Likewise, Watkins (2005) supports the idea of study groups as opportunities for development

When it comes helping newcomers to feel belonging, both the research and the results of this study both point to the benefits of acknowledging the strengths that new teachers bring to their school. New teachers must feel that their new school community is willing to value their strengths and perspectives (Watkins, 2005). Bauer (2013a) encourages reinforcing the authentic-self of each new employee by focusing on what the employee brings to the employer.

“Teaching is first and foremost about relationships” explains Johnson, et. al. (2014),

continuing on to establish that feelings of belonging are essential to developing relationships for support. Employers should provide formal and informal ways for networking (Bauer, 2013a) and **continuing to place new faculty in grade level team prep rooms helps to provide for these informal interactions**, this also allows for easy norm-referencing for new employees. Catherine Filstad’s research on the use of role models for social organization suggests that because a newcomer has their own identity, they need to connect with multiple organizational insiders to learn different facets of the culture and ways of being (2004). This is to say, there won’t be a singular mirror with which a newcomer can see themselves in an organizational insider, so multiple connections will be necessary. In order to develop themselves within the community, Filstad says, newcomers need to participate and interact in social communities.

Organizational insiders play an important part in the onboarding of newcomers. With the ability to undermine or support new teachers, it is critical that the latter effect is embraced by all current PRS employees. Rink et al. (2013) lists three underlying practices for teams that are welcoming to newcomers: team reflection, team knowledge utilization, and newcomer acceptance. **The recommendation to have newcomers and current faculty work on a novel project** lends itself to these three practices. The first step, reflecting on what works and what doesn’t work, can serve as a way for newcomers to get to know the culture and history of the school if done collaboratively. When a team employs knowledge utilization they are using the strengths of all employees –



new and established. If all members of the team are treated equally then the third practice of employee acceptance is seen in action.

### Norm-Referencing

Ensuring that the new teacher is clear on the expectations of PRS is the job of the administration, but all employees can help build self-efficacy with feedback (Workforce Achievers Institute, 2019). **Creating checklists as supports for new teachers will be an effective way to codify and communicate expectations to new teachers.** Atul Gawande (2009) explains that checklists help us to create order when we deal with volume and complexity – both of which are true for teachers entering a new school building.

When teachers enter a new school, they must take their framework from their past experiences and reshape it to fit the expectations and culture of their new place of employment. Often described as sensemaking (Weick, 1995), this involves making sense of ambiguity. In their piece that describes the interaction between sensemaking and institutions, Weber and Glynn (2006) insist that people make sense with institutions rather than in spite of them, explaining that the institution is akin to the code, while the people are using the code to create their understanding. Formalized understanding is central to the goals of the administration running onboarding programs, and it is affected by four mechanisms that influence sensemaking: focus of attention; articulation, deliberation and reflection; interaction; and biases, judgement, errors, completeness and consistency (Vlaar, Van den Bosch & Volberda. 2006). The formalization of

sensemaking is akin to turning ambiguity into explicit action. As PRS seeks to codify their onboarding process, it will be key to keep these mechanisms in mind. As Feldman (1981) reminds us, relationships are a key part of the information seeking and feedback loop that is necessary to make sense of the expectations of a new workplace.

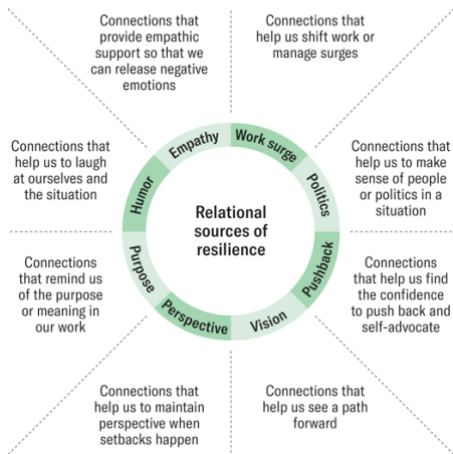
When new employees are seeking feedback, VandeWalle (2003) defines two orientations: performance vs. learning goal orientations. Of the two, a person with a learning goal orientation will be more likely to engage in feedback-seeking behavior, and this tendency is increased when there is value placed on the learning. **PRS leaders can show that their institution places value on learning by offering time to all faculty to learn together and by publicly rewarding individuals or groups who demonstrate implementing learning into their practice. As part of new teacher orientation, PRS leaders can highlight teachers who are growth-minded to illustrate their commitment to learning and a learning mindset.**

### Resilience

Resilience, often thought to be some magical well deep within, is actually a team sport, argue Cross, Dylan, and Greenburg in a 2021 *Harvard Business Review* piece. Being able to connect with others who can offer us perspective, support, empathy, sensemaking, laughter or remind us of our purpose is the true source of resilience they explain in their piece. The first step to cultivating resilience is choosing which type of support you find most helpful, eight are shown in the graphic below.

**Figure 7***Relational sources of resilience.***What Are Your Top Relational Sources of Resilience?**

A well-developed network of relationships can help you rebound from setbacks. Identify the spheres that are most important to you. Are you falling short in some categories?



Source: Rob Cross, Karen Dillon, and Danna Greenberg

HBR

Secondly, one should identify connections that will be valuable during trying times that will provide that sort of resilience. In the case of PRS, the time of stress is the start of the new job, and what makes this exercise difficult, if not impossible, is that the newcomers do not necessarily know who they might connect with to lean on for vision, perspective, purpose, etc. **PRS can help new employees develop the resilience that they need to transition into their new roles by explicitly listing who among the existing faculty can fill these eight roles. Time should then be offered throughout the year, especially at stressful times like six to eight weeks in, when many teachers are facing disillusionment, to connect with these identified people.**

Elena Aguilar, noted instructional coach, also describes ways in which teachers can build resilience both working individually and with

others. In her book, *Onward* (2018), she highlights twelve ways that teachers can build resilience. She agrees with Cross, Dylan and Greenburg that building a community is important, but also notes that key to resilience is knowing yourself and your emotions, telling yourself empowering stories and focusing on the bright spots. Some of Aguilar's other recommendations for building resilience align with other recommendations, such as being a learner and celebrating accomplishments. **When leaders conduct the recommended check-ins with new faculty, they may want to educate new employees about the practices of building community, knowing yourself, celebrating accomplishments, and telling empowering stories.**

Lastly, **PRS will want to build up in new employees the mindset of a bricoleur, the attitude of wisdom and respectful interaction** as described by Weick (1993). These actions and mindsets allow new employees to rise above vulnerability and to make good decisions under the pressure of not knowing all the answers of how to do everything in their new roles. Bricoleurs expect problems to arise, and therefore are not thrown off when they do. They use improvisation and their past experiences and knowledge to problem solve. This mindset aligns with an attitude of wisdom, which Weick reminds us aids in adaptability, akin to the flexibility all teachers need on a daily basis. Finally, schools are social units dependent on interaction, and so building trust, and practicing honesty and respect paves the way for team work and problem solving whenever a situation should arise.

## Study Limitations

PRS leadership was actively involved in the process of creating the research questions and delineating the scope of research. However, there are still a few limitations that should be noted.

### Small n

Although the study was able to survey 100% of the new teachers for 2018, 2019, and 2020 cohorts, this still consisted of only fifteen people in total, with six, five and four in the respective cohort groups. A small sample size has low statistical power and the potential for unjustified discoveries. However, given the fact that the sample was equivalent to the population in this instance, there is little room for variability and bias. A Type II error of a false negative may have been obtained because of the small sample size.

### Time

Depending on the cohort the interviewee was from, up to three years might have elapsed between the interview and their onboarding experience. This may have caused important details to have been omitted or misremembered. This was mitigated by asking for examples and encouraging interviewees to elaborate on their opinions or to return to sections of the interview for corrections as memories reemerged.

### Bias

Even though interviewees were assured that the discussions would be held in confidence, there is still the potential that teachers feared being judged or that information would get back to their employer and so the potential for untrue but socially

desirable answers exists. As teaching is a deeply personal job without many measurable outcomes, my interviewees might have been seeking validation or to protect themselves from judgement in their interviews. To mitigate this bias to the best possible degree open ended questions were used and rapport was established.

As a researcher there is always the possibility of confirmation bias. I took care to connect findings back to other published research in order to validate them. When qualitative coding occurred, care was taken to examine coding categories for bias and to correlate the codes with published research at each step of coding.

### Researcher Positionality

My gender, race, and age were easily discernable to those whom I interviewed over Zoom. I also shared with interviewees my title and that I was completing this work for my doctorate degree from Vanderbilt. Thus, the potential for socially acceptable answers might have been heightened for my interviewees. Not being a member of the PRS staff might have limited my understanding of the culture and thus skewed my understandings. Since I was the only one coding these interviews, my bias must be noted as a limitation.

## Conclusion and Discussion

Although the program of onboarding designed and delivered by PRS was incredibly strong to begin with, there is always room for improvement. Centering the improvements around strategies that will provide differentiated access to information as well as

additional opportunities to norm-reference and develop relationships will guarantee that time spent planning and executing onboarding of new teachers results in well-connected and adjusted new faculty. Actionable items from the recommendations include giving additional structure to the days prior to the school year starting with explicit goal statements, choice in learning strategy and time for reflection. These items are recommended from the research and practice of Elena Aguilar, Tayna Bauer, and others.

As other researchers have found (Bauer, 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2014; and May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004), relationships tend to be the biggest antecedent to acceptance and satisfaction in the workplace. Especially in schools and in new jobs, we can feel lost when we don't have a trusted person with whom to check our understanding or to calibrate our expectations. As Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) explain, many of the negative side effects of onboarding (such as stress and a sense of being overwhelmed) can be overridden with a strong social support network. Creating situations where new faculty can observe the existing family, as in a Harkness table demonstration, can be beneficial, especially for faculty who are new to a particular pedagogy. When possible, pairing new and existing faculty to work together on a project that is novel to both may set new faculty on a more level playing field and

help them to work towards legitimate participation within the learning community. Even in the absence of this sort of opportunity, administrators at PRS can get to know the strengths of their new faculty members and create situations where new faculty are appreciated for what they bring to the organization.

Resilience, although not an employee characteristic I set out to explore, emerged as an important finding. It will become an increasingly desired trait as the workforce is expected to be more and more flexible, adaptable and to deal with ambiguity. PRS can safeguard itself from unnecessary turnover by proactively teaching new faculty (and existing faculty) how to deal with uncertainty and how to be resilient in the face of an unknown situation. Most of the negative feelings expressed by the interviewees took place in times of uncertainty, but when resilience is built and the attitude of a bricoleur can be found, then problems become just one more opportunity for creativity, just one more opportunity to prove oneself. Reinforcing the need for reflection that includes challenging assumptions, beliefs and values helps even new teachers to develop the resilience that they need to make it through ambiguity (Johnson, et. al., 2014).

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## Appendix A

### *Survey Instrument*

#### Role Clarity

Answers on a scale:

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4                          | 5              | 6     | 7              |

1. I know what is expected of me.
2. Explanations of what have to be done are clear.
3. I know what to prioritize in my day-to-day.
4. I know what my responsibilities are.
5. My main objectives are clear.

#### Self-Efficacy Scale

Answers on a scale:

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4                          | 5              | 6     | 7              |

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.
2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.
3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.
4. I believe that I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.
5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.
6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.
7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks well.
8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.

#### Acceptance by Social Insiders

Answers on a scale:

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4                          | 5              | 6     | 7              |

1. My interactions with co-workers are rewarding.
2. My co-workers value my input.

3. My co-workers listen to what I have to say.
4. My co-workers really know who I am.
5. I believe that my coworkers appreciate who I am.
6. I sense a real connection with my co-workers.
7. My co-workers and I have a mutual respect for each other.
8. I feel worthwhile when I am around my co-workers.

Answers on a scale:

|                   |          |                   |                            |                |       |                |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1                 | 2        | 3                 | 4                          | 5              | 6     | 7              |

1. I have a general awareness of the structure and the culture of the organization.
2. I have an understanding of the policies and practices of the organization.
3. I understand the components that make up a Harkness lesson.
4. I can answer the institutional questions posed to me by families and students.
5. I am clear on the curriculum I am expected to teach.
6. I can use the learning management system.

Answers on a scale:

|  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| I am highly dissatisfied by this aspect of the school. | I am dissatisfied by this aspect of the school. | I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied by this aspect of the school. | I am satisfied by this aspect of the school. | I am highly satisfied by this aspect of the school. |
| 1  | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5   |

1. The quality of your relations with co-workers
2. The extent to which your co-workers encourage you and support you in your work
3. Your overall satisfaction with your co-workers
4. The extent to which students act in a self-disciplined manner
5. Your satisfaction with the behavior of students in your school
6. The degree of interest shown by parents in the education of their children
7. The extent to which parents are supportive of the school and its programs
8. Your overall satisfaction with parents where you work

**Commitment-to-School Scale**

Answers on a scale:

|                   |          |                   |                            |                |       |                |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Neither Agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this school be successful.
2. I talk up this school to my friends as a great organization to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this school.
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this school.
5. I find that my value's and this school's values are very similar.
6. I am proud to tell others I am a part of this school.
7. I could just as well be working for a different school as long as the type of work were similar.
8. This school really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this school.
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this school to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this school indefinitely.
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this school's policies on important matters relating to its employees.
13. I really care about the fate of this school.
14. For me this is the best of all possible schools for which to work.
15. Deciding to work for this school was a definite mistake on my part.



**Appendix B**

*New Faculty Orientation Schedule*

| Date   | Time          | Activity   | Who should attend?   | Where?                                  | What should I bring?                           | Facilitator/s   |
|--|---------------|--|--|---|--|---|
| <p><u><a href="#">Breakfast and/or Lunch Survey</a></u> For New Faculty &amp; Staff Orientation -<br/>                     Deadline to place order: Friday, August 6th at noon</p> |               |  |  |   |  |   |
| <p><b>Wednesday 8/11/21 NEW FACULTY ORIENTATION</b></p>  |               |  |  |   |  |   |
| Wed, 08/11   | 8:30 - 9:00   | Light Breakfast from Panera Bread - Oatmeal, Yogurt, or breakfast sandwich<br><br><b>Quick warm up activity</b> - Getting to know one another. Meet some of your new colleagues and get to know them a bit | All New Faculty & Staff and Administrators who are available | Community Hall                          | A water bottle, casual dress, and an open mind | Jamie Serafini - Food<br>Tim Betzala - Warm up Activity                 |
| Wed, 08/11   | 9:00 - 9:15   | Introduce yourself: Name, Where you're from, Where you live now, What you'll teach, and one interesting thing you learned about someone else   | All New Faculty & Staff                                      | Community Hall                          |  | Everyone  |
| Wed, 08/11   | 9:15 - 9:25   | Welcome Overview of Orientation -Locations, Breaks,  | All New Faculty & Staff                                      | Community Hall                          |  | Tim Betzala - Assistant Head & Dean of Faculty / World Language Faculty |
| Wed, 08/11   | 9:25 - 9:45   | Welcome, History, & Mission  | All New Faculty & Staff                                      | Community Hall                          |  | Bob Ogle - Head of School / English Faculty                             |
| Wed, 08/11   | 9:45 - 10:00  | Campus Tour: -Important locations and people to know -Your desk and workroom   | All New Faculty & Staff                                      | Around campus - Start at Community Hall |  | Tim Betzala, Jamie Serafini, and Cori Zammetti                          |
| Wed, 08/11   | 10:00 - 10:45 | Human Resources -New Hire Documentation  | All New Faculty & Staff                                      | Community Hall                          |  | Phil Hua - HR Manager<br>Stephanie Holly - CFO&O                        |



|            |               |  |   |                                       |             |   |
|------------|---------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|
|            |               | -Benefits for eligible employees         |   |                                       |             |   |
| Wed, 08/11 | 10:45 - 11:45 | Laptop Pick up and Set up Part 1         | All New Faculty & Staff   | H104                                  |             | Bill Maynard - Director of IT Dept.<br>E'Lan Holman - IT Support Technician<br>Eric Tillman - IT Support Technician |
| Wed, 08/11 | 11:45 - 12:30 | Lunch with Admin - Rubio's Coastal Grill | All new faculty<br>Head of School<br>Assistant Head of School & Dean of Faculty<br>Asst. Head of School for Academic Affairs<br>Division Heads<br>Assistant Division Heads<br>Grade-Level Deans<br>Department Chairs<br>Dir. of the Learning Center<br>Dir. of Community And Inclusion<br>Director of Athletics<br>Asst. Ath. Director of Ath.<br>Dir. of Enrollment<br>Dean of College Guidance<br>Dir. of Arts Programs<br>Dir. of Service Learning | Community Hall<br>Eat in MS Courtyard | An appetite | Jamie Serafini  |
| Wed, 08/11 | 12:30 - 1:30  | Laptop Set up Part 2                     | All New Faculty and Staff   | H104                                  | New Laptop  | Bill Maynard - Director of IT Dept.<br>E'Lan Holman - IT Support Technician<br>Eric Tillman - IT Support Technician |
| Wed, 08/11 | 1:30 - 1:40   | Break - Take care of yourself            |   |                                       |             |   |

|            |             |  |   |  |                 |   |
|------------|-------------|--|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Wed, 08/11 | 1:40 - 2:10 | <p><b>Teaching @ PRS Session 1: Digital Communication Platforms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Our Learning Management System - Schoology Training #1</li> <li>-Grading - Veracross</li> <li>-Google Drive</li> </ul>   | All New Faculty & Staff<br>Tim Betzala<br>Brooks Park                       | Community Hall                                 | New Laptop      | Brooks Park - Instructional Technology Coordinator / Science Faculty            |
| Wed, 08/11 | 2:10 - 2:40 | <p><b>Facilities Overview:</b></p> <p>Intro and Walk through Key Cards<br/>Alarm System - walk around<br/>Emergency procedures<br/>-Yellow Cards<br/>-Red Cards<br/>-Evacuation and Lock Down Protocols<br/>-Alarm Panels, Getting in and out of the buildings</p>   | All New Faculty & Staff<br>Tim Betzala<br>Matt Marasciullo<br>Matt MacKinen | Start in Community Hall and walk around campus | Just yourselves | Matt Marasciullo and Matt MacKinen  |
| Wed, 08/11 | 2:40- 2:50  | Break - Take care of yourself  |   |  |                 | You   |
| Wed, 08/11 | 2:50 - 3:30 | <p><b>Teaching @ PRS Session 2: Your Teaching Role and Our Approach with Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Faculty Growth &amp; Development Cycle</li> <li>---Phases, CELL Framework, Indicators of Teaching Excellence</li> <li>-General Homework Expectations</li> <li>--Length of HW</li> <li>--By when should we post HW. If it's not posted, it's not due</li> <li>--No HW due for first odd/even days after any break of 4 days+</li> <li>-Co-teaching Expectations.</li> <li>-Grading Scale and Where to find it</li> <li>-Grading Periods and Comment Writing</li> <li>-Our relationship and</li> </ul> | All New Faculty & Staff<br>John Comforto                                    | Community Hall                                 |                 | John Comforto - Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs / Science Faculty |

|            |             |   |  |                                     |  |             |
|------------|-------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|
|            |             | communication expectations with Parents   |  |                                     |  |             |
| Wed, 08/11 | 3:30 - 3:40 | Rounding out the day - Debrief  | All New Faculty & Staff<br>Tim Betzala | Community Hall                      |  | Tim Betzala |
| Wed, 08/11 | 3:40 onward | Preparation for tomorrow:<br>Go home, go to the beach, relax, and rest<br>Don't worry, there'll be plenty more over the next week and a half.<br>Remember, don't hesitate to ask for help - we are all here to support you. | All New Faculty & Staff                | <a href="#">Wherever you'd like</a> |  |             |

## Thursday 8/12/21 - **NEW** FACULTY ORIENTATION

|              |               |  |  |                           |        |  |
|--------------|---------------|--|--|---------------------------|--------|--|
| Thur, Aug 12 | 8:30 - 8:45   | Breakfast Burritos from On a Roll  | All New Faculty & Staff                | Community Hall            |        | Jamie Serafini   |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 8:45 - 9:00   | Warm Up/Icebreaker:<br>Tower activity<br>-Valerie, Rodney, Haley, Sunny<br>-Armando, Teresa, Marciela<br>-Ghiya, Esther, Caitlin   | All New Faculty & Staff                | Community Hall            |        | Tim Betzala  |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 9:00 - 10:00  | <b>Teaching @ PRS Session 3: Digital Communication Platforms Part 2</b><br><br>-Schoology<br>-Setting up your class page<br>-Gradebook, posting HW<br>-Setting up your email signature, etc. | All New Faculty & Staff<br>Brooks Park | Community Hall            | Laptop | Brooks Park - Instructional Technology Coordinator and Science Faculty |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 10:00 - 10:15 | Break - Take care of yourself  |  | Wherever you like         |        | You  |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 10:15 - 11:00 | <b>Teaching @ PRS Session 4: Student Support Team</b>  | All New Faculty & Staff                | Learning Center / Library |        | Student Support Team:  |



|              |               |   |   |  |  |  |
|--------------|---------------|---|---|--|--|--|
|              |               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring for our students' needs</li> <li>- Student Support and Accommodations</li> </ul>  | -Student Support Team   |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Erika Pike - Director of Learning Center</li> <li>-Marcy Ryan - Student Support Specialist</li> <li>-Haley Reitman - Student Support Specialist</li> </ul> |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 11:00 - 11:30 | <p><b>Teaching @PRS Session 5: Calendar and Schedule</b></p> <p>The Academic Calendar and Our Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Yearly Schedule - Breaks</li> <li>-Weekly Block Schedule</li> <li>-Major Moments in the year and vacations</li> <li>-Your schedule and where to find it</li> </ul> | All New Faculty and Staff<br>Sarah Peeden   | M122                                       | The packet with your schedule in it that we gave you yesterday morning | Sarah Peeden - Assistant Head of Middle School / English Faculty   |
| Thur, Aug 12 | 11:30 - 12:15 | Board & Brew Lunch Options - With Admin   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All New Faculty</li> <li>Head of School</li> <li>Asst. Head of School for Academic Affairs</li> <li>Division Heads</li> <li>Assistant Division Heads</li> <li>Grade-Level Deans</li> <li>Department Chairs</li> <li>Dir. of the Learning Center</li> <li>Dir. of Community And Inclusion</li> <li>Director of Athletics</li> <li>Asst. Ath. Director of Ath.</li> <li>Dir. of Enrollment</li> <li>Dean of College</li> <li>Guidance</li> <li>Dir. of Arts Programs</li> <li>Dir. of Service Learning</li> <li>The Matts</li> </ul> | Food in Ki's Café<br>Eat in US Town Square |  | Jamie Serafini   |

|                    |                 |  |  |                      |  |  |
|--------------------|-----------------|--|--|----------------------|--|--|
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 12:15 -<br>1:00 | <b>Teaching @ PRS<br/>Session 6:<br/>Community<br/>Responsibilities / Co-<br/>Curriculars and being<br/>involved in the life of<br/>the school</b><br><br>Community<br>Responsibilities<br>-Advisory<br>-Affinity Spaces<br>-Global Travel<br>-Clubs<br>-Service Learning                      | All New Faculty<br>& Staff<br>Susan Woods<br>(unable to<br>attend)<br>Germaine<br>Jackson<br>Spencer Burrows<br>(Allegra<br>Molineaux) | M218                 |  | Germaine Jackson -<br>Dir. of Service<br>Learning<br>Spencer Burrows -<br>Clubs Coordinator<br>(Allegra Molineaux<br>will step in for<br>Spencer)<br>Susan Woods - Dir.<br>of Community and<br>Inclusion |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 1:00-<br>1:15   | Break - Take care of<br>yourself   |  | Wherever<br>you like |  | You  |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 1:15 -<br>2:00  | <b>Teaching @ PRS<br/>Session 4: Harkness<br/>Session 1</b><br><br>-General Philosophy,<br>Resourches on Campus<br>and approach - Luke   | All New Faculty<br>& Staff<br>Luke Michel  | M126                 |  | Luke Michel - Head<br>of Middle School<br>and History<br>Faculty   |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 2:00-<br>2:15   | Break - Take care of<br>yourself   |  | Wherever<br>you like |  | You  |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 2:15 -<br>3:00  | <b>Teaching @ PRS<br/>Session 7: Harkness<br/>Session 2</b><br><br>Harkness in practice.   | All new Faculty<br>Sarah Peeden  | M124                 |  | Sarah Peeden -<br>Assistant Head of<br>Middle School   |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 3:00 -<br>3:15  | Finalizing HR<br>Paperwork   | Phil Hua   | Community<br>Hall    |  | Phil Hua   |
| Thur,<br>Aug<br>12 | 3:15 -<br>3:30  | <b>Rounding out the day<br/>and who's here to<br/>help</b><br>-Meeting Jamie Serafini<br>and Academic Support<br>Team<br>-New Faculty Academy<br>focus - dates and times<br>to come<br>-Dress Code for school<br>days<br>-Summer Reading<br>-Ready for school<br>series - Monday<br>afternoons | All New Faculty<br>& Staff<br>Academic<br>Support Team   | Community<br>Hall    |  | Tim<br>and Academic<br>Support Team<br>Jamie, Cori,<br>Chastity, Andrea  |



|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | <a href="#">-PRS "How To" Training Library</a> |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

