

# Evaluating Prospects: The Criteria Used to Hire New Teachers

Jerome A. Cranston

University of Manitoba

*Teacher hiring decisions have far-reaching effects. Accordingly, it is important that prospective teachers be scrutinized carefully. The process that yields new teacher hires also deserves careful analysis. This article reports on key findings derived from a larger study that examined the overall organization of the hiring process and how criteria were weighted in both the screening and selection phases of the process throughout school divisions in Manitoba, Canada. The study, which used a Likert-like scale questionnaire, obtained information from superintendents in three-quarters of Manitoba's school divisions. Using a multi-criteria decision making analysis approach, the findings suggest three general themes, namely: (a) there is significant variation among divisions regarding the degree of centralization of hiring, (b) evaluations made during interviews are the most important factor in deciding whom to hire, and (c) orthodox measures of academic proficiency are de-emphasized. The findings suggest that while candidates obviously deserve careful scrutiny, so too does the process that purports to yield the best results from any given group of applicants.*

*Les décisions relatives à l'embauche de personnel enseignement engendrent des conséquences de grande ampleur. Il est donc important d'examiner minutieusement les dossiers des candidats. Le processus menant à l'embauche de nouveaux enseignants mérite également une analyse attentive. Cet article présente les principaux résultats tirés d'une plus grande étude ayant porté sur l'organisation globale du processus d'embauche et explique l'évaluation des critères lors de la phase d'examen préliminaire et celle de sélection dans les divisions scolaires du Manitoba, au Canada. L'étude a eu recours à un questionnaire avec échelle de Likert pour obtenir des renseignements de la part de surintendants dans les trois-quarts des divisions scolaires du Manitoba. L'application à la prise de décisions d'une méthode d'analyse multicritères a débouché sur des résultats qui révèlent trois thèmes généraux, notamment : (a) il existe une différence significative entre les divisions quant au degré de centralisation de l'embauche, (b) les évaluations réalisées durant les entrevues constituent le facteur le plus important dans la prise de décisions quant au candidat à embaucher, et (c) on ne met pas l'accent sur les mesures orthodoxes du rendement scolaire. Les conclusions portent à croire que si les candidats méritent évidemment un examen minutieux, le processus qui prétend tirer les meilleurs résultats à partir d'un groupe donné de candidats doit également faire l'objet d'une analyse rigoureuse.*

When divisional office administrators begin the process of hiring a new teacher they typically consider some variables as stronger indicators of effectiveness than others. While the definitions of an 'effective' teacher vary, those responsible for hiring teachers must ensure that the criteria applied to application documentation and information gleaned from interviews be evaluated and weighted in a way that correlates with elements of effective teaching (Harris & Rutledge,

2007; Harris, Rutledge, Ingle & Thompson, 2007; Harris & Sass, 2009). Thus, while it may be that the definition of an effective teacher is somewhat nebulous (Moore, 2004), potential employers consistently attempt to hire the most seemingly effective teachers while trying to avoid hiring those that are likely to struggle in classrooms and schools.

Decades of research underscore the fact that good teachers have a profound effect on students' successes (Dinham, Ingvarson & Kleinhenz, 2008z; Hattie, 2008; Stronge, 2010). In fact, many researchers have concluded that the single-most crucial strategy for school improvement is found in preparing, recruiting, hiring, and retaining effective teachers (Harris, 2004; Stronge, 2010; Walsh & Tracy, 2004). As such, superintendents and principals need to be apprised of what makes an effective teacher in their school or divisional context, and, more importantly, ascertain that the hiring process that is in place results in the employment of the most effective teachers from the available pool of candidates. It is their responsibility to ensure that candidates who demonstrate the capacity to be effective in teaching are recruited successfully, hired thoughtfully, and retained.

Nevertheless, the teacher hiring process is one of the least researched areas of educational administration (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford & Wyckoff, 2007; DeArmond & Goldhaber, 2005; Guarino, Santibañez & Daley, 2006); in fact, little research exists on the effectiveness of the practices used to screen and select teachers (Walsh & Tracy, 2004). Therefore, this study takes an initial step towards filling this gap by documenting teacher screening and selection practices in a Western Canadian province in order to discover which criteria administrators consider to be the most important in hiring teachers. By analyzing the tendencies of divisional office administrators to value certain attributes in applications and applicants, important trends and assumptions are revealed.

### **The importance of effective teachers**

The most striking finding in recent education research is the significant effect of teachers' attitudes and behaviours on their students' achievement. Of the many in-school factors that contribute to the success of children, there is overwhelming consensus among experts that the effectiveness of their teachers is the single most important determinant (Aaronson, Barrow & Sander, 2007; Allen, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2000; DeStefano, 2002; Dinham et al., 2008; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien & Rivkin, 2005; Hattie, 2008; Rockoff, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to ensure school administrators choose effective teachers who will foster both students' learning and success.

Staffing, which is concerned with the recruitment, selection, placement, evaluation, and promotion of individuals is fundamental to how schools secure human resources (Peterson, 2002; Rebore, 2007; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009). However, hiring decisions necessarily take place in a context of incomplete information; in other words, employers cannot know the capacities of prospective teachers and any hiring decision is inevitably made under considerable uncertainty (Bills, 1990).

Even though there is wide-ranging debate over what constitutes good practice (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Stronge & Tucker, 2003), there is consensus that a teacher's classroom teaching is critical for student success (Wenglinsky, 2000). What teachers know, do and care about have a powerful affect on student achievement (Hattie, 2008). It is important, then, to assess how effective current teacher selection procedures are in identifying the most capable applicants based on actual or strongly indicated teaching ability (Harris & Sass, 2009).

The matter is complicated by the fact that it is difficult to find sources of data that permit researchers to identify effective teachers and examine how they were hired (Guarino et al., 2006). Additionally, there is little research regarding how human resources management practices affect teacher quality (DeArmond & Goldhaber, 2005). Of the studies that exist on teacher hiring practices, most focus on the legal compliance of school divisions to ensure that teacher candidates are protected from discrimination under human rights legislation (Harris, Rutledge, Ingle & Thompson, 2007) or they focus on the need to recruit and retain teachers using induction and/or mentoring programs (Breux & Wong, 2003). Effectively, there are very few studies that critically view hiring practices in relation to teacher quality (Guarino et al., 2006). An initial step then, is discerning how the process is managed overall between school divisions and school sites, and discovering how different criteria are weighted or valued in the hiring process (Rebore, 2007).

A 1996 report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future suggested that a key obstacle to creating a professional teaching workforce could be found in the "slipshod recruitment and hiring" patterns of school districts (p. 34). More recently, researchers have criticized the teacher hiring process as being "bureaucratic," "haphazard," "inefficient," and "rushed" (DeArmond & Goldhaber, 2005; Liu & Johnson, 2006; Schlueter & Walker, 2008). Schlueter and Walker (2008) noted that the literature on the hiring of educators is largely anecdotal, unpublished and atheoretical. Taken together these findings illustrate some of the shortcomings of current practices.

If teacher hiring is as problematic as some suggest (Boyd et al., 2007), then focusing on the practices and policies associated with hiring teachers should be a top priority for schools. A better understanding of the underlying dynamics of personnel selection is crucial if administrators are to honour their commitment to school improvement.

### **A conceptual framework for analyzing teacher hiring**

According to Gatewood and Field (2001), employee selection is the process of collecting and evaluating information about an individual in order to extend an offer of employment. In occupational research, hiring is typically comprised of four distinct steps: recruitment, screening, selection, and job offer (Kogan, Wolff, & Russell, 1995). It is commonly accepted that applicants differ along many dimensions, such as educational and work experience, personality characteristics, innate ability, and levels of motivation (Gatewood & Field, 2001). Thus, the logic of employee selection begins with the assumption that some of these differences are relevant to an individual's employment suitability.

Hiring decisions require the assessment of multiple, and possibly conflicting, criteria that are applied to a candidate and his/her application documentation. Evaluation of these criteria during screening and subsequently selection is used as the best indicator of the potentially effective teacher (Sackett & Lievens, 2008). This generalized understanding of the hiring process fits well within traditional definitions of decision-making and allows for teacher selection to be analyzed as a decision-making process (Green, 2005; Hoy & Miskel, 2007).

At least as far back as 1951, formal theories have been presented to illustrate the nature of the employment relationship (Simon, 1951). Since then, researchers, for example Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2010), Sackett and Lievens (2008), Schmitt and Chan (1998) among others, have suggested that human resource management approaches draw on numerous theoretical strands, such as: cognitive-choice theory, motivational theory, self-determination

theory, social judgment theory, to list but a few. Thus, while not the only theoretical approach available, it is possible to theoretically explore teacher screening and selection from a generalized understanding of multi-criteria decision-making or multi-criteria analysis approaches (Dursun & Karsak, 2010; Ho, Higson & Dey, 2006; Honig & Coburn, 2008; Müller, Alliata & Benninghoff, 2009).

Multi-criteria decision-making and multi-criteria analysis approaches encompass a number of variations, even though they both support decision-makers who must make numerous and potentially conflicting evaluations. Although the two approaches may be applied in different ways and diverse contexts, there are certain aspects that are central to all possible variations (Ballesterro & Romero, 1998). These foundational elements involve determining the relevant criteria to be assessed and assigning values to indicate the importance of the criteria as it relates to the desired outcome of the decision-making process.

While there are a variety of decision-making approaches available (Green, 2005), identifying the criteria that are considered in the decision-making process clarifies the approach and how the actual decision is rendered. Effective decision-making is more than a simple sequential process and most certainly depends on the judgment and dispositions of the decision-maker (Hoy & Miskel, 2007). However, many conventional definitions of decision-making unnecessarily narrow the process to a routine task that ultimately discounts the influences that individuals bring to the decision-making process (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995). As a decision-making process, teachers' selection requires the balancing of multiple criteria. Administrators who hire teachers are presumed to have thoughtfully and deliberatively considered certain criteria that are indicators of teaching effectiveness, while dismissing others that are considered less valid or reliable predictors of on-the-job success. Clearly, this process is a profoundly human activity in which individual value judgments are crucial (Bana e Costa & Vasnick, 1999; Hoy & Miskel, 2007); for this reason, no simplistic model of human activity can adequately represent the complexity of human thought.

With the above limitations noted, the conceptual framework employed in this study drew on Rebore's (2007) approach for understanding human resource management decisions in school systems (for other examples see, Peterson, 2002; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009). As Rebore stated:

The goals of the human resources function are basically the same in all school systems—to hire, retain, develop, and motivate personnel in order to achieve the objectives of the school district, to assist individual members of the staff to reach the highest possible levels of achievement, and to maximize the career development of personnel. (p. 11)

Rebore's framework, then, helps to examine school divisions' practices regarding the collection and processing of information in the decision making process of hiring new teachers. It illustrates that one of the first key decisions that should be addressed before the activity of screening and selecting prospective candidates begins is deciding who will manage the various stages of the hiring process.

### **Managing the process**

Liu and Johnson (2006) noted that the structure and management of school divisions' hiring practices influence the opportunities school personnel and candidates have to exchange

information about each other. Moreover, they conclude that some divisions rely on centralized processes where the hiring is managed at the divisional level, while others rely on decentralized processes that situate the hiring process at the school-level. Additionally, Rebore (2007) suggested that a number of questions need to be taken into consideration before the hiring process begins that include:

1. What materials must applicants submit, and how should the material be submitted?
2. What deadlines must be adhered to, and what happens if someone misses a deadline?
3. How are applications to be assessed?
4. Who reads, analyzes, and assesses the applications, and are these people properly prepared for this work?
5. Who will be involved in the interviews, to what extent will these individuals be involved (e.g., asking questions, observing, taking notes, etc.) and are they prepared for the work?
6. What kinds of questions will be asked (e.g., hypothetical or behavioural descriptive questions), and how will responses be assessed?
7. What are the most important criteria in hiring decisions and what decision-making process is used (e.g., consensus, consultative, etc.) in deciding whom to hire?

## **Screening**

Once decisions have been made about managing the process, a critical practice involves the initial screening of applicants because it eliminates the applicants who do not meet the set requirements. Furthermore, it facilitates the selection process by narrowing a pool of applicants to those with the relevant occupational characteristics (Cable & Gilovich, 1998).

Although not a comprehensive definition, screening can be regarded as a process that evaluates and identifies applicants who are to be interviewed for available teaching positions (Rebore, 2007). In fact, this might involve a process of comparing a candidate's qualifications against those listed in the position profile and/or job advertisement; it may also involve comparing his/her credentials against those viewed in the other applications (Rebore). Ultimately, the goal of the initial screening process is to create a list of qualified applicants who will be interviewed.

## **Selecting**

Rebore (2007) proposed that screening evaluates an individual's potential to be successful in a specific teaching position. Once screened, candidates and their applications move into the selection process. While the selection process can involve a number of tools, the interview is considered pivotal in the selection process (McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt & Maurer, 1994; Peterson, 2002; Rebore, 2007; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009). As McDaniel et al., (1994) state: "The interview is a selection procedure designed to predict future job performance on the basis of applicants' oral responses to oral inquiries" (p. 599). Perhaps because of its intuitive appeal (McDaniel et al.), the interview is relied on heavily to make determinations of who should be offered teaching jobs (Liu & Johnson, 2006).

In its simplest form the interview is an exchange of information between an employer and a potential employee. More generally, it can be understood as an opportunity to hear about a prospective employee's work experience, education, and interpersonal abilities. Also, an interview provides employers with a first-hand chance to witness certain individual characteristics, such as enthusiasm and energy, which are rarely conveyed in resumé's.

Once completed, however, Rebores (2007) offered that prospective employers should engage in a process of verifying candidates' references and credentials because misleading information can have profound implications. Sorenson and Goldsmith (2009) write, "today, more than any other time in the school business, social conditions and safety concerns require thorough background checks of prospective employees" (p. 112). Besides conducting reference checks, there is an increasing expectation that hiring authorities will conduct various forms of criminal-background checks prior to hiring (Rebores, 2007). However, once administrators have decided which candidates are most likely to be effective based on the interview and background check, they move to the phase of awarding contracts, and at that point beginning teachers gain their initial entry into the profession.

### **Purpose**

When teacher candidates complete their pre-service programs, they are considered for employment based on an assessment relative to set criteria. Before extending a job offer, administrators make assumptions that certain criteria hold some predictive validity and reliability related to on-the-job success. Using Rebores's (2007) framework, this study provides some insight regarding how effective teachers are vetted from ineffective ones. This being said, three key questions emerge, namely: How is the hiring process shared between divisional and school-based administrators? What criteria are used in screening and selecting prospective teachers? And, which criteria are considered to be more or less important in making hiring decisions?

Because this study is descriptive in nature, it attempts to provide a better understanding of some of the criteria used at various stages in the hiring process and to determine the relative weightings assigned to those criteria. While school divisions may not follow each stage in Rebores's (2007) model, the framework provides a general understanding of some of the processes and criteria used by a number of Manitoba's school divisions as they decide who teaches the children in their care.

### **Methodology**

This study used survey methods as exploratory research to collect information about divisional office administrators' tendency to apply explicit or implicit values to different aspects of the screening and selection processes. In doing so the underlying beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours toward hiring could begin to be revealed (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). Although many educational research methods are descriptive, surveys and questionnaires are ways to gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of exploring current practices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Thus, a 23-item questionnaire was developed to solicit feedback from the superintendents of Manitoba's public school divisions' central offices about the processes and criteria, and their respective weightings, used in their hiring practices (Gall et al., 2003; Cohen et al., 2007).

The list of topics that could be included in a survey of teacher hiring practices is extensive and could easily become unwieldy. Therefore, to keep the survey manageable, the questions were intentionally focused on important practices identified in the literature on personnel administration (Peterson, 2002; Rebore, 2007; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009). The questionnaire structure elucidated data by using a Likert-like scale in which participants were asked to rate the relative importance, such as from "Not Considered" to "Always Considered", or "Not Important" to "Very Important", on a range of criteria used in teacher hiring decisions (Cohen et al., 2007; Gall et al., 2003). A pilot study was conducted with two former superintendents so that individuals with practical experience in personnel administration could provide feedback that would ultimately refine the questions, the answer options and the overall flow of the survey (Cohen et al., 2007).

Using SPSS software, descriptive statistics and composite rankings were calculated to determine who managed various parts of the hiring process, what criteria were assessed, and which of the criteria were considered to be the most important and least important in hiring decisions (Cohen et al., 2007).

### **Study participants**

Every superintendent of a Manitoba public school division was invited to participate in the study; of the 37 contacted, 28 divisions (76% of all school divisions in Manitoba) agreed to participate. Some non-participating school divisions cited confidentiality regarding hiring practices as a reason not to partake in this study. At the time of the study, these participating divisions employed 9,305 teachers, which accounted for about 72% of the 13,029 teachers employed in the province. Furthermore, these divisions reported hiring approximately 755 teachers in the 2008/09 school year, which represented 8.2% of their total teacher workforce. At that rate, whether through turnover or growth or some combination, it is easy to project that in just over six years almost half of all teachers in Manitoba will have been subject to the hiring process.

The divisions ranged in size, geographic location, and in their approaches to teacher hiring. For example, Flin Flon School Division, the smallest division in the study, serves approximately 1,092 students and employs about 87 teachers in its four schools. Conversely, River East Transcona School Division is the largest as it serves approximately 16,890 students and employs 1,189 teachers in 42 schools.

The participating divisions completed the surveys differently; for the most part, either the superintendent of schools, an assistant superintendent, or a divisional human resource manager completed the questionnaire. However, some surveys were photocopied and sent to school principals for initial completion based on site-based practices and then these data were aggregated into a single divisional survey and returned to the researcher. As a result, there was variability in the way in which the data were initially compiled, but not in the final format of submission. Thus this study points out the overall divisional perspective, shaped in some cases by principals' input, to hiring practices across the majority of the province of Manitoba.

### **Findings**

The survey results provided a broad picture of the teacher hiring processes in Manitoba and the opportunity to analyze teacher-hiring practices on a provincial scale. Clearly, all of the divisions

used formal decision-making processes for teacher hiring, but the approaches to screening and selection differed. The findings indicated that a great deal could be learned from an analysis of current practices to support the goal of hiring the best candidates.

Three general trends emerged from the data analysis. First, the school divisions employ a range of hiring practices that can be characterized as almost exclusively centralized in some divisions to virtually site-based in others. Second, though many criteria are elicited as a part of the application and hiring process, the two criteria that emerged as most influential might also be the most subjective and interpretive: an applicant's personal characteristics as demonstrated in an interview and her/his background as demonstrated by references. Consequently, other criteria such as the reputation of the Faculty/College of Education that applicants graduated from are less valued. Third, academic competencies, such as teaching portfolios and grade point averages, though of great import in most teacher preparation programs, appeared as significantly less important in the final decision that most divisions find themselves making.

### Managing the process

The management of organizational practices related to the key phases of the teacher hiring process from the planning to the final hiring begins with the question of centralization and decision-making within different degrees of shared governance. The majority of the participating divisions (about 71%) reported that their hiring process is essentially centralized, that is, primarily organized by divisional administration. In approximately 29% of the divisions, the hiring process was a shared endeavour between school and divisional administration. Notably, it is reportedly never managed solely at the school level. Table 1 illustrates the responses in percentage values.

In examining the preliminary screening of applications and accompanying materials, nearly half of the divisions (about 47%) reported it as a shared activity between central office and school-level personnel. A smaller number of divisions (approximately 32%) reported that screening is managed at the school level alone, and even fewer (about 21%) reported that central office personnel completely managed screening.

Once the application materials are screened, in 39% of the cases, interviews are a shared

Table 1  
*Who manages the hiring process? (N = 28)*

		Organizing the hiring process	Screening the applicants	Interviewing the applicants	Selecting the candidates for hire
Percentage of respondents who reported who manages the various parts of the hiring process	Division level	71%	21%		4%
	School level		32%	61%	11%
	Shared between division and school	29%	47%	39%	85%



responsibility between divisional and school personnel whereas 61% of interviews are largely organized at the school level. Evidently, the interview process is never solely managed by divisional office. In other words, this phase of the hiring process is either a shared endeavour or becomes a delegated responsibility handled at the school.

Finally, in about 85% of divisions, the process of selecting candidates to hire is predominantly shared between the divisional office and the schools. In less than 11% of the divisions, hiring is managed solely at the school level, and in about 4% of cases it is managed solely by central office. Provincially, then, the process of making the final decision of selecting the best candidate to hire is largely a joint endeavour managed by both central office and school-site personnel.

### Screening criteria

Based on assessments of the contents of the candidates' application packages during the initial screening process, decisions are made to interview some candidates. Table 2 reflects the relative weighting that school divisions assign to various parts of the candidates' application packages. As indicated, a candidate's general educational background and work experience are the two most important criteria when deciding to grant interviews (both items are regarded as "very important/important" by about 96% of divisions). Other important criteria are the written quality of the résumé (about 86% of the cases) and cover letter (about 82%), with slightly less consideration given to applicants' practica reports (approximately 79% of divisions). Moreover, about 61% of divisions also consider letters of reference as "important/very important", while 54% consider the applicant's prior knowledge in a similar light.

Conversely, less value is given to criteria that include submitted statements of teaching philosophy (less than 36%) and quality of teaching portfolios (about 32%). Interestingly, an applicant's university grade point average is considered important by less than 22% and the reputation of the faculty or college of education she/he attended by less than 18%. Although,

Table 2

*Criteria and Weighting Used to Screen Application Packages (N = 28)*

Rank	Criteria	Percentage of respondents who listed criteria as "Very Important" or "Important"
1	Educational background listed in application and/or résumé	96%
1	Work experience listed in application and/or résumé	96%
3	Written quality of résumé	86%
4	Written quality of cover letter	82%
5	Student teaching practicum report(s)	79%
6	Letter(s) of reference	61%
7	Prior knowledge of applicant	54%
8	Statement of teaching philosophy	36%
9	Quality of teaching portfolio	32%
10	University grade point average(s)	22%
11	Reputation of the Faculty/College of Education	18%

arguably, integral parts of a teacher candidate's academic preparation, these items are reported as less relevant to those who assess applications for teaching positions than many other criteria.

### Selection criteria

After the initial screening process, what is formally known as the selection process begins. In this phase of the decision-making process, new criteria come into focus and the findings demonstrated that some of these criteria heavily influenced administrators' hiring decisions. Table 3 illustrates the relative importance of factors that influence the final hiring decision.

The interview was considered by all of the divisions that participated in this study to be the most important criterion when hiring, while 97% reported that a candidate's résumé was also considered as very important and/or important. The third most important criterion, according to the participating divisions, was the oral comments made by an applicant's professional references (considered as "very important/important" in 93% of the cases). In short, these three criteria are thought to be superior indicators of potentially effective teachers.

Relative to the above criteria, candidates' practica reports are considered somewhat less important (considered as "very important/important" by 72% of divisions), while 54% considered letters of reference in this light. About half of the divisional administrators considered the prior knowledge of an applicant to be a very important/important criterion. The two least important criteria taken into consideration in hiring decisions are: the quality of an applicant's teaching portfolio (fewer than 44% of divisions considered, it "very important/important") and grade point average ("very important/important" in less than one-third of the cases).

### Discussion

While it has been suggested that the process by which administrators search for an effective teacher is a fairly simple one (Staiger & Rockoff, 2010), scant research exists on the effectiveness of this simple process (Walsh & Tracy, 2004). The reality is that, in general, very little conceptual or empirical work has focused on how specific human resource management practices affect hiring decisions (Butler & Duncombe, 2005). Thus, while only provisional, the

Table 3

*Criteria and Weighting Used in Decisions to Offer a Job (N = 28)*

Rank	Criteria	Percentage of respondents who listed criteria as "Very Important" or "Important"
1	Interview	100%
2	Application/Résumé	97%
3	Oral comments from reference checks	93%
4	Student teaching practicum report(s)	72%
5	Letter(s) of reference	54%
6	Prior knowledge of applicant	50%
7	Quality of portfolio	44%
8	University grade point average(s)	32%

findings of this study suggest that administrators at all levels re-consider their current hiring practices because although intuitive in appeal, they may lack an evidentiary and/or theoretical basis that is consistent with reliable and valid metrics that help identify potentially effective teachers (Sackett & Lievens, 2008).

### **Managing the process of hiring**

Similar to the findings in earlier studies (for examples, see Harris et al., 2007; Liu & Johnson, 2006), Manitoba's school divisions have human resource practices that fall somewhere along a continuum of extremes; in other words, their hiring processes range from virtually complete divisional office centralization to near complete decentralized site-based management. Yet, very little is known whether either approach, or even a shared one, might result in a greater likelihood that ineffective teachers are not hired.

Arguably, while some administrators believe that school systems using decentralized human resource management approaches are more likely to staff schools with effective teachers (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2010), this may not be the case (Ouchi, 2003). Blind trust in decentralized approaches reflects an incomplete understanding of what the research indicates (Fullan, 2005). With respect to school improvement initiatives, research supports neither complete centralization nor decentralization because centralization errs on the side of over-control, while decentralization errs towards chaos (Fullan, 1993).

From a structural viewpoint, since teacher hiring should be tied to a school division's multi-year improvement plan, it cannot lean too heavily on single site-based decision-making. Teachers are hired into a division and subsequently assigned to schools, implying that both divisional and school administrators have a vested interest in hiring only effective teachers. In short, a new teacher must do more than fill a current vacancy; he/she should offer the skills, experiences, and attitudes that move the entire system in its intended direction (Peterson, 2002). In reality, school systems must balance two competing needs: on the one hand there is the necessity to efficiently manage school systems tied together by divisional standards from a centralized authority and on the other hand is the need for local principals to effectively select candidates who they perceive as "best" for their schools (Wise, Darling Hammond & Berry, 1987).

The findings indicate that there is significant variation in the extent to which school systems' hiring processes are centralized, decentralized, or approached as shared endeavours, even though there is little empirical evidence to indicate which parts of the hiring process might benefit from being either more divisionally or school-based (Harris et al., 2007).

Teacher hiring, as a practice intended to support school improvement initiatives, is the byproduct of the deliberative choices made between centralized and decentralized approaches to decision making (Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). However, little is known about how to balance the tensions between centralized and decentralized control of the multiple steps of the hiring process in an ideal manner that would result in more effective teachers being hired. Ultimately, the effective organization and management of teacher hiring should be a shared responsibility between divisional and school administrators, where central office administrators keep in mind the larger picture of a divisional hire and principals focus on the unique context and needs of each school.

This being said, divisional administrators need to consider how the processes of teacher screening and selection might be shared effectively with school principals to achieve this

objective. Although it may be true that principals might know which candidates are best for their particular schools (Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009), employed teachers often move from one school to another. In this context, then, they must be a “good fit” not only for a specific school but also for the school division as a whole (Cranston, 2012).

### **What matters most in decisions to interview?**

In the end, Manitoba school divisions consider work experience and educational background, as represented in résumés and cover letters, as the most important criteria during the initial level of the sifting and sorting process. This finding alone is not surprising and reflects similar human resource management practices in other professions (Harris & Rutledge, 2007).

Perhaps more surprising given the nature of teaching was the fact that the quality of the candidate’s portfolio, his/her grade point average, and the reputation of the college or faculty of education from which they obtained their degree are among the least important factors in the screening process. Interestingly, then, while a university-based teacher preparation program might espouse the value of a portfolio as evidence of a teacher candidate’s knowledge, skills, and disposition as “evidence of the events of lives in classrooms” (Lyons, 1998, pp. 117-118), this finding suggest that portfolios are only considered an important factor in hiring decisions by less than a quarter of the participating divisions. Taken together, these findings, namely the undervaluation of what might be termed as “academic indicators” of proficiency, mirror those of earlier studies (Abernathy et al., 2001; Harris et al., 2007; Theel & Tallerico, 2004).

Even more thought provoking, perhaps, is that less than 75% of the school divisions ranked students’ practicum reports as a “very important/important” criteria in deciding who to interview. This is an especially unanticipated finding given that earlier studies have consistently identified student teaching reports as one of the most important criteria used to screen applicants (Abernathy et al., 2001; Braun, Willems, Brown & Green, 1987; Cain-Caston, 1999; Ralph et al., 1998; Theel & Tallerico, 2004). In a Canadian study completed about 15 years ago, Ralph et al., (1998, p. 49) declared: “School division administrators consider candidates’ teaching performance during the internship the most important indicator of their future success.” While the Ralph et al., study reflected the opinions of educational administrators in Saskatchewan rather than Manitoba, it seems fair to conclude that educational administrators in the two provinces presumably share more in common than a border.

There are numerous reasons that could be offered to explain the differences in opinions in 14 years, but perhaps the findings suggest that the devaluation of the practicum evaluations as a predictor for job-success is because of the multiple purposes of the assessment, the tensions that exist regarding the nature of effective practice, and the traditional barriers existing between teacher candidates, their collaborating teachers, and academics often converge to create a practicum report that is largely inconsistent or unreliable (Haigh & Tuck, 1999). Alternatively, the low value placed on practicum reports might ultimately reflect administrators’ trust in their own subjective judgments relative to other educators’ written evaluations.

It is common for faculties and colleges of education to invest considerable resources into improving the quality of their preparation programs, which they presume is a proxy measure that demonstrates the quality of graduating candidates (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Yet, it should be noted that the findings demonstrate that perceived reputational rankings of these programs are considered to be among the least important criteria in the hiring process by the participating divisions.

## What matters most in decisions to hire?

Even though it has been suggested that classroom performance is the single most effective way to establish a teacher's success (Glaeser, 2008), administrators hiring teachers have greater confidence in interviews, résumés, and reference checks than they do in reports of student teachers' practice. Evidently, the findings confirm that of these three criteria the most important one hiring decisions is the employment interview. This fact reflects what many that if prospective employers believe, which is if they simply ask the right questions, they are more likely to select good teachers (Peterson, 2002; Rebore, 2007; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009).

However, the fact is, what is considered a "good" interview is often contested. Interviews are wrought with inherent biases that interviewers hold relative to the candidate's appearance, gender, age, and non-verbal cues; in addition, research (Judge, Cable, & Higgins, 2000) indicates that most interviewers have a poor recollection of information shared during an interview. Nevertheless, employers still rely on the interview as the most important component of the hiring decision (Judge et al., 2000; Macan, 2009). Such blind trust led Scriven (1990) to provocatively state:

Interviews are ... the chosen battleground of used-car salesmen, when what we need is a warranty. Interviews are the province of the peak performer, when what we need is a stayer. Nobody shines in an interview better than a psychopath, and the usual interviewers for school jobs are surely not competent at identifying psychopaths in an interview ... This lust to interview is illicit (pp. 93-94).

Indeed the findings indicate an unambiguous adherence to valuing the interview above all other criteria that lead to job offers. Arguably, this indicates a belief held by administrators about the general reliability of both the interview and the interviewer to select the best candidate.

The findings also indicate that at the final stage of decision-making when administrators are embarking on job offers, the third most important input after interviews and résumés are the subjective interpretations of the confidential comments derived from candidates' professional references. Across many professions, pre-employment reference checks have long been a part of the ritual of hiring (Fenton & Lawrimore, 1992) and the process is generally regarded as a way to limit some of the "uncertainty" that is inherent in the employment of teachers (Bonnani, Drysdale, Hughes, & Doyle, 2006). As such, background checks are considered to be a significant aspect of a process of "due diligence" (Lentz, 1999) in the hiring of teachers to work with children.

However, it is questionable why the interpretive act of assessing the oral comments of a confidential reference is so highly valued given that research has demonstrated that the predictive validity between assessments made from reference checks and on-the-job performance measures is relatively weak ( $r = 0.26$ ) (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). This correlation might be even weaker given that, at present, there is a general unwillingness of former employers, due to concerns of potential litigation, to provide negative information about an employee's past performance (Schmidt & Hunter).

At the other end of the spectrum of the decision making process of teacher hiring, there is a de-emphasis on the academic criteria of candidates, such as their student teacher practica reports, the quality of their portfolios, and their grade point averages. Interestingly, the findings indicate a lack of application of previous research on best practices that maintains that teachers with strong academic credentials are more likely to produce greater student learning gains than

those who fared more poorly (Walsh & Tracy, 2004). In fact, a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2005) stated:

A consistent finding is that effective teachers are intellectually capable people who are articulate and knowledgeable, are able to think, communicate and plan systemically. Students achieve more with teachers who perform well on tests of literacy and liberal ability...positive relationships have also been found between teachers' academic qualifications and student achievement. (p. 99)

This being said, however, academic proficiency is considered the least important criteria by Manitoba administrators in hiring effective teachers.

These findings, then, could lead some to speculate that Ballou's (1996) assertion was correct, that is to say that academic achievement in teacher preparation programs is undervalued in the hiring process. In fact, compared to other organizations, some have concluded that school system administrators are less likely to hire applicants with strong academic credentials (Harris & Rutledge, 2007). If this is indeed the case, it illustrates that little has changed in the 25 years since Wise, Darling-Hammond & Berry (1987) cautioned that there was a completely unfounded belief that sometimes existed among administrators that the stronger a teacher candidate was academically, the more he/she would struggle as a classroom teacher

Conversely, another interpretation of the finding might be that divisional administrators do not in fact undervalue academic abilities. It may be that administrators expect or assume that university and college programs, as well as teacher certification requirements ensure that a minimum threshold of academic achievement has been attained and this level of achievement is sufficient for anyone to assume the role as teacher (Harris et al., 2007).

Taken together the findings suggest that in most teacher hiring practices in Manitoba, while personal attributes, professional knowledge and skills, and relevant work experience are important factors in choosing effective teachers, relatively less consideration is being given to academic criteria as predictors for on-the-job success (Ballou, 1996; Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2009; Walsh & Tracy, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

Hiring teachers is one of the most important activities a school division can undertake given the permanence of the appointment, the cost to the division, and the influence on children's lives. Admittedly, hiring practices are complex and not easily explained by survey data. However, this study's findings illustrate some of the key facets of the hiring processes throughout Manitoba's school divisions.

It is evident that school systems use of a wide range of practices aimed at identifying effective teachers that may or may not be based on criteria that are considered valid and reliable correlates to definitions of effective teaching. In addition, the findings call into question whether or not the hiring protocols employed by school divisions, as is the case with many other organizations, have a theoretical basis.

Tomorrow's teachers must be "good" enough to meet the challenges of a 21st century education system and its students. In order to successfully employ effective teachers, serious consideration needs to be given to examining the practices and procedures that have been established, either formally or through repeated practice, that assist and support administrators in the hiring process. This is particularly important given the impact of teacher hiring decisions on student success.

Considerably more research needs to be done to ensure that administrators have the best information available as they decide how to manage the balance of centralization and decentralization in the process of hiring teachers, and subsequently choose and prioritize criteria in ways that yield the best teachers for schools and divisions. Such research might increase the likelihood of employing a truly effective teacher in each classroom. The presence of some less than effective teachers, even if only a small minority of them, in today's schools should prompt a serious examination of factors that converge to create an educational system's hiring process; furthermore, it is important to analyze whether current practices aimed at screening and selecting teachers are ensuring the consistent employment of effective teachers. The desire for certainty in hiring prospective effective teachers within the context of a highly complex profession has led some to believe that administrators' current hiring practices are sufficient in effectively identifying strong and capable teachers. If nothing else, the study's findings call this assumption into question.

## References

- Aaronson, D., Barrow, L., & Sander, W. (2007). Teachers and student achievement in the Chicago public high schools. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 25(1), 95-135.
- Abernathy, T., Forsyth, A., & Mitchell, J. (2001). The bridge from student to teacher: What principals, teacher education faculty and students value in a teaching applicant. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 28(4), 109-119.
- Allen, M. B. (2005). *Eight questions on teacher recruitment and retention: What does the research say?* Denver, CO: Communications Department, Education Commission of the States.
- Ballestero, E., & Romero, C. (1998). *Multiple criteria decision making: And its application to economic problems*. Boston, MA: Kluwer.
- Ballou, D. (1996). Do public schools hire the best applicants? *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 111(1), 97-133.
- Bana e Costa, C., & Vasnick, J.C. (1999). Preference relations and MCDM. In T. Gal, T.J. Stewart & T. Hanne (Eds.), *Multicriteria decision making: Advances in MCDM models, algorithms, theory and applications* (pp. 4.1-4.23), Boston, MA: Kluwer.
- Bills, D. B. (1990). Employers' Use of Job History Data for Making Hiring Decisions: A Fuller Specification of Job Assignment and Status Attainment. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 31(1), 23-35
- Bonnani, C. Drysdale, D. Hughes, A., & Doyle, P. (2006). Employee background verification: The cross-referencing effect. *International Business & Economics Research Journal*, 5(11), 1-7.
- Boyd, D, Goldhaber, D. D., Lankford, H. & Wyckoff, J. H. (2007). The Effect of Certification and Preparation on Teacher Quality. *The Future of Children*, 17(1), 45-68. Retrieved from <http://muse.jhu.edu>
- Braun, J., Willems, A., Brown, M. & Green, K. (1987). A survey of hiring practices in selected school districts. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(2), 45-49.
- Breaux, A. L., & Wong H. K. (2003). *New Teacher Induction: How to Train, Support, and Retain New Teachers*. Mountain View, CA: Harry Wong Publications.
- Butler, D. & Duncombe, W. (2005). *Teacher hiring in New York state school districts: A condition report of the Education Finance Research Consortium*. Retrieved from <http://www.albany.edu/edfin/year5.html>
- Cable, D. M., & Gilovich, T. (1998). Looked over or overlooked? Prescreening decisions and post-interview evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 501-508.

- Cain-Caston, M. (1999). A survey of opinions of North Carolina school administrators regarding factors considered most important in hiring teachers for their first teaching positions. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 26(2), 69-73.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Furnham, A. (2010). *The psychology of personnel selection*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2001). The outcomes question in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(5), 527-546.
- Cohen L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education* (6th ed.). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Cranston, J. (2012). Exploring school principals hiring decisions: Fitting in and getting hired. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 135. Retrieved from <http://www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/currentissues.html#2012>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000, January). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(1). Retrieved from <http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/392/515>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- DeArmond, M., & Goldhaber, D. (2005). The back office: A neglected side of Teacher quality. *Education Week*, 2005(February 9), 31-32.
- DeStefano, J. (2002). *Find, deploy, support, and keep the best teachers and school leaders*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. Retrieved from <http://annenberginstitute.org/publication/portfolio-district-redesign>
- Dinham, S., Ingvarson, L., & Kleinhenz, E. (2008). *Teaching talent: the best teachers for Australia's classrooms*. Teaching Standards and Teacher Evaluation. Retrieved from [http://research.acer.edu.au/teaching\\_standards/12/](http://research.acer.edu.au/teaching_standards/12/)
- Dursun, M., & Karsak, E. (2010). A fuzzy MCDM approach for personnel selection. *Expert Systems With Applications*, 37(6), 4324-4330. doi:10.1016/j.eswa.2009.11.067
- Fenton, J. W., & Lawrimore, K. W. (1992). Employment reference checking, firm size and defamation liability. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 30, 88-95.
- Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform*. Levittown, PA: Falmer Press.
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership and sustainability: Systems thinkers in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational Research: An Introduction* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gatewood, R. D., & H. S. Field. (2001). *Human Resource Selection* (5th ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Dryden Press.
- Glaeser, E. D. (2008). *Want better schools? Hire better teachers*. Retrieved from [http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2008/11/07/want\\_better\\_schools\\_hire\\_better\\_teachers/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/11/07/want_better_schools_hire_better_teachers/)
- Green, R. L. (2005). *Practicing the Art of Leadership: A Problem-based. Approach to Implementing the ISLLC Standards* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Guarino, C. M., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. A. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2), 173-208.
- Haigh, M., & Tuck, B. (1999). *Assessing student teachers' performance in practicum*. A paper presented at the annual Australian Association of Research in Education conference held Nov 29-Dec 2, 1999 in Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.aare.edu.au/99pap/tuc99118.htm>
- Hanushek, E. A., Kain, J., O'Brien, D. M., & Rivkin, S. G. (2005). *The market for teacher quality*. NBER Working Paper no.11154, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA.
- Harris, D. N. (2004). *Putting a high quality teacher in every Florida classroom*. Temple, AZ: Educational Policy Studies Laboratory, Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education, Arizona State University.



- Harris, D. N., & Rutledge, S. A. (2007). Models and predictors of teacher effectiveness: A review of the literature with lesson from (and for) other occupations. Retrieved from [www.teacherqualityresearch.org/](http://www.teacherqualityresearch.org/)
- Harris, D. N., Rutledge, S. A., Ingle, W. K., & Thompson, C. C. (2007). *Mix and match: What principals look for when hiring teachers and what this means for teacher quality policies*. Retrieved from [www.teacherqualityresearch.org/](http://www.teacherqualityresearch.org/)
- Harris, D. N., & Sass, T. R. (2009). What makes for a good teacher and who can tell. Retrieved from [www.teacherqualityresearch.org/](http://www.teacherqualityresearch.org/)
- Hattie, J. (2008). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analysis relating to achievement*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ho, W., Higson, H. E., & Dey, P. K. (2006). Multiple criteria decision-making techniques in higher education, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 4(5), 471-86.
- Honig, M. I., & Coburn, C. (2008). Evidence-based decision making in school district central offices toward a policy and research agenda. *Educational Policy*, 22(4), 578-608.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2007). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice* (7th ed.). Toronto, ON: McGraw Hill.
- Judge, T. A., Cable, D. M., & Higgins, C. A. (2000). The Employment Interview: A Review of Recent Research and Recommendations for Future Research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 10(4), 383-406
- Kogan, D., Wolff, K., & Russell, M. (1995). *Changes in the hiring process: New actors, new practices, and new challenges. Final Report, Volume 1: Findings and Implications* (Research Report 143). Menlo Park, CA: Social Policy Research Associates. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/detail?accno=ED400383>
- Leithwood, K., & Steinbach, R. (1995). *Expert problem solving: Evidence from school and district leaders*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Lentz, J. (1999). Employment screening: Risk management tool and essential compliance utility. *Home Health Care Management & Practice*, 11(5), 16-20. Retrieved from <http://hhc.sagepub.com/>
- Liu, E., & Johnson, S. M. (2006). New teachers' experiences of hiring: Late, rushed, and information-poor. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42(3), 324-360.
- Lyons, N. (1998). Constructing narratives for understanding: Using portfolio interviews to scaffold teacher reflection. In N. Lyons (Ed.), *With portfolio in hand: Validating the new teacher professionalism* (pp. 103-119). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Macan, T. (2009). The employment interview: A review of current studies and directions for future Research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 19(3), 203-218.
- McDaniel, M. A., Whetzel, D. L., Schmidt, F. L., & Maurer, S. D. (1994). The validity of employment interviews: A comprehensive review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(4), 599-616.
- Moore, A. (2004). *The good teacher: Dominant discourses in teaching and teacher education*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge Falmer.
- Müller, K., Alliata, R., & Benninghoff, F. (2009). Attracting and retaining teachers: A question of motivation. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 37(5), 574-599. doi:10.1177/1741143209339651
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most; Teaching for America's future*. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- National Council on Teacher Quality. (2010). *Bumping HR: Giving principals more say over staffing*. New York: Author. Retrieved from [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org)
- Ogawa, R. T., Crowson, R., & Goldring, E. (1999). Enduring dilemmas of school organization. In J. Murphy & K. Seashore-Louis (Eds.). *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration*. (pp. 277-296). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2005). *Teachers matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers*. Paris, FR. OECD.
- Ouchi, W. G. (2003). *Making schools work: A revolutionary approach to get your children the education they need*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Peterson, K. (2002). *Effective teacher hiring: A guide to getting the best*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Ralph, E. G., Kesten, C., Lang, H., & Smith, D. (1998). "Hiring new teachers: What do school districts look for?" *Journal of Teacher Education*, 49(1), 1-10.
- Rebore, R. W. (2007). *Human Resources administration in education*, (8th ed.). Toronto: Pearson.
- Rockoff, J. E. (2004). The impact of individual teachers on student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Economic Review*, 94(2), 247-252.
- Sackett, P. R., & Lievens, F. (2008). Personnel selection. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 2008(59), 419-450. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.59.103006.093716
- Schlueter, K., & Walker, J. (2008). Selection of school leaders: A critical component for change. *NAASP Bulletin*, 92(1), 5-18. doi:10.1177/0192636507312964
- Schmidt, F. L., & Hunter, J. E. (1998). The validity and utility of selection methods in personnel psychology: Practical and theoretical implications of 85 years of research findings. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 262-274.
- Schmitt, N., & Chan, D. (1998). *Personnel selection: A theoretical approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Scriven, M. (1990). Teacher selection. In J. Millman & L. Darling-Hammond (Eds.), *The new handbook of teacher evaluation: Assessing elementary and secondary school teachers*, (pp.76-103). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Simon, H. A. (1951). A formal theory of the employment relationship. *Econometrica*, 19(3), 293-305. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1906815>
- Sorenson, R. D., & Goldsmith, L. M. (2009). *The principal's guide to managing school personnel*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Staiger, D. O., & Rockoff, J. E. (2010). Searching for effective teachers with imperfect information. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 24(3), 97-118. doi:10.1257/jep.24.3.97
- Stronge, J. H., (2010). *Effective teachers=student achievement: What the research says*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Stronge, J. H. & Tucker, P. D. (2003). *Handbook on teacher evaluation: Assessing and improving performance*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Theel, R. K., & Tallerico, M. (2004). Using portfolios for teacher hiring: Insights from principals. *Action in Teacher Education*, 26(1), 26-33.
- Walsh, K., & Tracy, C.O. (2004). *Increasing the odds: How good policies can yield better teachers*. Washington, DC: National Council on Teacher Quality.
- Wenglinsky, H. (2000). *How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussions of teacher quality*. Princeton, NJ: The Milken Family Foundation and Educational Testing Service.
- Wise, A. E., Darling-Hammond, L., & Berry, B. (1987). *Effective teacher selection: From recruitment to selection*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

---

*Jerome Cranston* is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, teaching, researching and writing in the area of educational administration with a focus on the ethics of personnel management and school leadership, and organizational culture and behaviour. Formerly, he worked as a superintendent and deputy superintendent as well as being a teacher and principal.