Why K-12 public school bus drivers stay in their jobs

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to understand why K-12 public school bus drivers stay in their jobs. Currently, there is a perceived shortage of public school bus drivers nationally and locally. Many students ride the bus to and from school every day and without bus drivers, student access to education maybe at risk. This study was undertaken to learn if there is anything that public school administrators can do in the work environment to reduce turnover intentions of bus drivers.

In 2021, surveys were provided to 301 bus drivers in 32 school districts in upstate New York to assess their turnover intentions. The theories of Job Satisfaction, Meaningful Work and Public Service Motivation, grounded in the overarching theory of Person-Environment Fit, were used to better understand what aspects of the bus driver role might reduce driver turnover intention. The three main research questions were: 1) Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of their work as satisfying and their turnover intention? 2) Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of meaningful work and their turnover intention? and 3) Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of public service and their turnover intention? Measures reflecting each of the theories were administered, and a number of open-ended questions were asked of the bus drivers to gain further context and voice from the driver’s perspective.

Findings indicated lower turnover intention when drivers reported higher extrinsic satisfaction, when they found their work to hold personal meaning, significance or purpose, and when they saw their work as a source of broader meaning for their lives. It was also found that drivers viewed themselves as making a difference in the lives of the students they transport and considered themselves a significant part of a student’s education. They also indicated that pay
were why they would stay, what they would change about their job, and why they would leave. These findings are discussed in terms of implications for future research and for guidance on what can be done in the educational setting to create work environments that may reduce bus driver turnover intentions.
DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my son, Connor Beck Carey.

May you find passion in lifelong learning.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my wife, Kathleen, and our son, Connor—thank you for your love, support, strength and for all the time you allowed me away from our family, so I could fulfill this dream. Without you, this would not be.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In order for students to have the opportunity to learn in person, they need to be at school. For many public-school students, the only way to get to and from school is by riding a school bus. In fact, the New York Department of Education, State Pupil Transportation Department, states that in New York State alone, “approximately 2.3 million pupils…are transported to school each day” [New York State Education Department (NYSED), 2018]. However, K-12 public school systems throughout New York State and across the country find themselves in a crisis. Industry projections and media reports predict a scarcity of school bus drivers.

According to a 2016 National Association of Pupil Transportation survey of Transportation Directors, 52% of their 992 respondents (transportation directors) claimed that “driver shortage is…(their)… number one problem/concern” [National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), 2018, p. 2]. In this same survey, 58% of the respondents believed the trend in driver retention is getting a little more difficult, or much more difficult for their company or school district (Driver Shortage, 2018). According to the New York State Department of Labor (2016), in their Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections, 2016-2026, there were 54,970 bus drivers throughout New York as of 2016. They also stated that this group of employees tends to experience a turnover rate of 12.66% a year. This level of turnover is high, based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) separation rates in all occupations, at just below 4% for July 2017- January 2020. The BLS report is comprised of all nonfarm sector employment, with turnover defined to include quits, layoffs, and separations as well as other separations (Job Opening and Labor Turnover—October 2020).

Many school bus drivers of yesterday were mothers who wanted to be home after school with their children; today these same mothers have entered the workforce with full-time
employment. In rural school districts, drivers used to be farmers who would work at the school for 10 months and were given health insurance benefits by the district. Today, terms of employment often do not provide for such benefits, making the job less attractive for some who may consider working as a school bus driver. Perhaps as a consequence, K-12 public school bus drivers today are generally older, second career employees who are end of their careers and are beginning to age out of the workforce altogether.

Another reason for the driver shortage may be that driving a school bus is a difficult and complex task. The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services defines an effective bus driver as a driver who is:

…good at basic tasks of safely maneuvering a 40 foot vehicle, of course, but must also be able to: manage students in a firm, consistent, yet friendly manner; recognize, intervene, and report signs of sexual harassment, bullying or abuse; communicate effectively with parents, co-workers, and administrators; perform pre-and post-trip inspections of the school bus; learn and effectively operate new and ever-improving equipment and technologies on the bus; deal with confidential student information in a legally compliant and responsible manner; avoid distractions; deal with road and weather hazards; deal with student medical issues; adapt to changes in routes and stops; be knowledgeable of individual students’ needs, especially those of students with disabilities, while ensuring confidentiality; know federal, state and local laws; and on and on (2018, p. 5.)

The role of the bus driver is one that is unique in public schools. Within the school setting, drivers are as seen as support staff. Minimal formal educational requirements are necessary to drive, and pay is low as compared to other district employees. There are strict
requirements that a bus driver must meet in order to become and remain a bus driver. Per New York State requirements, school bus drivers must:

- pass a background check through the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles before employment may begin;
- be able to obtain a commercial driver’s license (CDL), Class B with a passenger and school bus endorsement which is renewed every eight years;
- pass a medical physical and a defensive driver test yearly;
- participate in refresher trainings twice a year; and
- pass a behind-the-wheel road test and physical performance test every two years.

K-12 public school bus drivers in New York are also unique because they are unionized, and labor contracts specify benefits and working conditions. Local contracts are bargained for by unions and leave K-12 public school administrators limited options to meet the driver demands that are not agreed upon in negotiations. This creates difficulties in recruiting and retaining bus drivers if they want more extrinsic rewards or the market conditions call for providing more than what is prescribed in the contract. Compensation is prescribed by district-specific collectively bargained contracts with a base of guaranteed hours and additional hours that are generally available based on seniority. The number of hours worked is limited throughout the day, and most schedules include an unpaid break of upwards of 4 hours between morning and afternoon runs. Additional hours are available for things such as field trip runs midday, sport runs after school, and occasional weekend runs as needed. These hours do contribute to the overall compensation of the bus driver but are not guaranteed. As school budgets have become tighter, many of today’s drivers do not have the opportunity for full-time work and are not being offered health or other benefits for the hours they do work.
In New York, according to the May 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) classification 53-3022, Bus Drivers, School or Special Client, the mean salary for bus drivers is $37,980 - $44,830 (Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2018). As of May 2019, commercial drivers BLS classification 53-3032, i.e., Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver, has a mean salary of $45,870-53,720 as of May 2019 (Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2019). With school bus driver pay and benefits being bargained for, and in the era of New York State mandated school district tax caps where revenue generation is limited and prescribed, school districts may not have the financial flexibility they may need to attract and retain drivers. They cannot react to market conditions for recruitment and retention efforts such as sign-on bonuses, retention bonuses, or offering mid-contract pay increases as the private sector can do for their employees with similar driving licenses.

We know little about why school bus drivers are drawn to this work, and what incentivizes them to remain. This study seeks to fill this gap, and so enable a better understanding of the kinds of steps public school systems in New York might take to lower bus driver turnover.

It is a commonly held belief that pay and benefits are the two characteristics of employment that motivate K-12 bus drivers to stay in their jobs (Heisser, Manella, & Martin, 2019). However, this may not be true. In the most recent report by The New York State School Boards Association, National Association for Pupil Transportation, and New York Association for Pupil Transportation on school bus drivers, only 40% of Transportation Directors reported that rate of pay was a “major factor” in recruiting and retaining bus drivers while 60% said that this was a minor factor or no factor. In this same report, “benefits/lack of benefits” was reported to be a major factor” for only 37%, with 63% saying that this was a minor factor or no factor at
all (Heisser, Manella & Martin, 2019).

Currently, throughout the transportation industry, there is a shortage of employees that have a CDL license. According to a July 2019 report by the American Trucking Association there is a record shortage of 60,800 truck drivers nationally (Costello & Karickhoff, 2019). This has resulted in a high demand for commercially licensed drivers in the private sector. Throughout New York and the rest of the country, transportation companies have increased recruitment using incentives, higher salaries, and generous benefit packages to attract and retain employees. Yet, even as employment rewards have increased in the private sector for CDL licensed drivers, there are K-12 bus drivers who forgo the greater earning potential to become or remain K-12 public school bus drivers. A better understanding of why someone remains a K-12 driver is the aim of this research.

**Present Research**

The role of the school bus driver has unique characteristics among the professionals who have their commercial driver’s license. Drivers with a commercial driver’s license often move freight; school bus drivers move human beings—i.e., students. Students have behaviors to contend with, requiring school bus drivers to manage the road and the students at the same time. School bus drivers typically work a split day: early morning and late afternoon, with unpaid free time between these two mid-day shifts. Because school bus drivers pick up and drop off at the home, they have a connection to students’ home environment that no one else in the educational setting tends to have. As such, school bus drivers are also a major part of the educational mission of a school district. If they are not there to drive the school bus, many students will not be able to get to school to have the opportunity to learn. Lastly, most school bus drivers work on the school calendar, which is shorter than a traditional work year. When students are not in session, school
bus drivers do not work. In New York this non-working period is 2 full months of the year, plus holiday breaks. Because of the unique characteristics found in the role of the school bus driver, it is important to consider what it might be about the driver and the role they play that inspires them to stay.

**Theoretical Framework:**

This study used the overarching theoretical model of person-environment fit (P-E fit) to explain why K-12 bus drivers stay in their jobs. The theoretical model of P-E fit states that the match of person and environment leads to job satisfaction, and, in turn, to tenure or longevity as seen in their intent to stay in their job. Within the overarching umbrella of P-E fit, this study utilized three theories of “fit” that may help to describe employment situations/conditions in which drivers remain employed as K-12 bus drivers, manifesting lower turnover intentions and greater longevity. The three theories are:

- *The Theory of Work Adjustment* (TWA) (Dawis, 2005) asserts that the more the person’s needs are satisfied in the job they do, the better the “fit,” and the more likely it is they will remain employed in that position;

- *The Theory of Meaningful Work* (MW) (Steger et al., 2012) states that the more the person experiences their work as meaningful, the better the “fit,” and the more likely it is that the person will want to continue to do the work they are doing; and

- *The Theory of Public Service Motivation* (PSM) (Perry, 1996) claims that the more the person is motivated to do public service, the better the “fit” with a public service job, and the more likely the person is to stay doing the work they are doing.
Research Question:

The overall goal of this study was to better understand turnover among K-12 public school bus drivers. The research questions that this study addressed were: Why do K-12 public school bus drivers stay in their jobs? Specifically, do K-12 public school bus drivers stay because they find this job satisfying their needs, and/or because they find meaning in the work they do, and/or because they are strongly motivated to engage in public service? This study sought to understand if differences in turnover intention are associated with differences in “satisfaction,” as measured by TWA, “meaning” as measured by MW, and/or “motivation” as measured by PSM.

Studying School Bus Drivers during a Pandemic

This research was conducted at a time when New York State public schools were struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic. With a national emergency declared on March 13, 2020 (AJMC Staff, 2020), schools throughout New York State shut their doors to in-person learning on March 16, 2020. Throughout the summer of 2020 school districts were mandated to create reopening plans to safely bring students back to school in the fall.

Spreading COVID-19 on buses was and remains a major concern for public and school officials. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) (2020) recommended that “when reasonable,” students who ride buses should maintain 6 feet of separation, wear face coverings, and buses should have windows open to lessen the risk of spreading the virus (NYSDOH, 2020). School bus rider capacity was reduced to 22 students to the extent possible. Pre-COVID-19, ridership could be as much as 66 persons. School buses had to be disinfected when student cohorts changed and at the end of their driving day. The reality for school bus
drivers at that time was that they were at great risk of contracting the virus. Given this reality, the present research also included inquiry about turnover intention due to COVID-19.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

New York public school systems report having a shortage of school bus drivers. The New York School bus driver shortage has been recently documented in research by the New York School Boards Association (NYSBAA) in 2017-2018 that reported that 74% of New York school districts had school bus drivers positions unfilled. Sixty percent of transportation directors reported that the percentage of unfilled positions was between 1% and 10%. Nearly 30% of transportation directors said they had as many as 20% vacant school bus driver positions at that time. One transportation director reported having more than half its school bus driver positions unfilled at one point during 2017-18 school year (Pupil Transportation Services, 2018).

Of particular interest for this study, the New York State School Boards Association (NYSBAA) and the New York Association of Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) reported in Yellow Buses, Red Flags: New York’s School Bus Driver Shortage that the problem of unfilled bus-driver positions has gotten worse in recent years. Reduced bus driver turnover among current drivers would help to address the current shortage. Further, drivers staying in their jobs would create a stable environment for students to be moved to and from school. And finally, being able to understand why drivers stay in their jobs has garnered increased attention as school district budgets become more and more constrained and competition for drivers with CDL licenses from public sector companies has grown.

Theoretical Framework

The question of why people stay in their jobs is a subject generally addressed in vocational psychology. In that literature, Person–Environment Fit (P-E) provides a theoretical framework for understanding why bus drivers decide to leave or stay. This framework looks at the person (P) in an environment (E), the fit between the two, and their interaction with one
another (Dawis, 2005). Within this study, the “P” or person in this theory is the employee and the “E” or environment in this theory is not singular, but rather, consist of settings such as school, work, family, home, social venues involving many or even one other person (Dawis, 2005). P and E variables are used to account for behavior or behavioral outcomes, which are assumed to be the result of a reciprocal relationship and interaction between the person and their environments. Succinctly stated, people influence their environments, and environments influence the people in them (Walsh et al., 1992). As such, P-E theorists look for an explanation for behavior or behavioral outcomes that are related to not the individual P and E variables, but rather, the combination of the P and E variables.

P-E theories use two constructs to denote the P-E combination: fit and interaction. Different employees (P) may or may not have different skills or other characteristics that the job (E) needs. Fit refers to the degree in which P characteristics correspond to E characteristics. The more that an employee has characteristics that meet what the job requires, the greater the fit. Fit is a predictor of an employee’s (P) satisfaction and tenure (Swanson & Schneider, 2013). Interaction refers to P and E action on and reaction to each other in a mutual give and take. Neither employees nor work environments are static; they can and do change to meet an optimal state of fit. In the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis, 2005), for example, it is asserted that a dissatisfied employee will do something to change dissatisfying work situations to find satisfaction. Management may or may not respond to or accept those changes. The environment will also change if there is lack of fit, for example, this could be termination of the employee.

Three predictors of turnover of the school bus driver may be found in the P-E Fit theories of Theories of Work Adjustment (TWA), Meaningful Work (MW), and Public Service Motivation (PSM). All three of these possible explanations are based in the overarching theory
of P-E Fit. It is the interaction of the P and E that establishes satisfaction for the employee. An employee’s level of satisfaction in the role, in turn, is a predictor of their intent to remain in their job. Understanding the relationship between a driver’s turnover intention and the satisfaction they find in the work they do (TWA), the meaning they find in their work (MW), and/or their commitment to Public Service (PSM) offers a way for public school administrators to understand how they can change the characteristics of the bus driver role and/or the environment in which the drivers perform their functions to decrease employee turnover intentions. Within that conceptual framework, public school leaders can identify actions to increase the likelihood that drivers will become and remain satisfied in their role, and thereby decrease the likelihood that drivers would leave their jobs.

Employee turnover has been studied for many years. Turnover is a concern for management in all job functions, industries and across the world. Mobley and associates (1978) defined employee turnover intent as the probability that an individual would leave his or her employer. Employees leave through voluntary and involuntary turnover behaviors (Sun & Wang, 2017). Hom and Griffeth (1995) defined turnover as the voluntary separation of employment by the employee. Involuntary turnover has been defined as discontinuation of employment by an employee resulting from poor job performance or downsizing (Allen et al., 2010).

Employee turnover affects the quality of service (Childs et al., 2017), creates increased service costs both directly and indirectly (Childs et al., 2017; Fisher & Connelly, 2017), and results in higher recruitment, training, and retention costs (Chowdhury & Hasan, 2017). Organizations may gain some benefit when there is turnover as the new employee may bring commitment, skills and ability to their new role. When turnover is relatively high, however, as is the case with school bus drivers, there may be both increased costs associated with that turnover
(recruitment efforts) and uneven delivery in the transportation services provided. As such, putting at greater risk those educational opportunities for children who depend on school busses to get to and from school. This study sought to understand if turnover intentions are lower when K-12 public school bus drivers are satisfied with the work they do, when they find meaning in the work they do, and/or when they believe that the work they do adds to a greater public good.  

**Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA)**

Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) is a P-E fit model where vocational choice is maximized by “specifying important characteristics of the individual and the environment and then attempting to find the best match or fit between individual and environment” (Swanson & Schneider, 2013, p.29). In TWA, the concept of fit describes the degree of similarity between a person and an environment.

TWA was first advanced in 1964, based on research results from the Minnesota Work Adjustment Project (Dawis et al., 1964; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). This federally funded project studied how vocational rehabilitation clients adjusted to work. Following many different refinements, the model resulted in a number of propositions and corollaries that make predictions about how workers choose and adjust to work environments, based on both individual and work environment characteristics (Dawis, 2005). The Minnesota Work Adjustment Project introduced the notion that work is conceptualized as an interaction between an individual and a work environment (Dawis et al., 1964). The work environment requires that certain tasks be completed, and the individual brings skills to complete the task. In exchange for task completion and worker contribution of skills, the individual requires compensation and the provision of certain work conditions. It is important to note that the Person (P) always exists in an Environment (E) and also that neither the P nor the E are stagnant; both change as needs are
redefined over time (Dawis, 2005). The TWA framework used today includes two models: a) the predictive model, which describes the match between a person and the environment; and b) the interaction model, which describes the ongoing interaction process between a person and the environment. Although TWA can be used to understand both the person and the environment, most times the focus of the theory is the person (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Dawis, 2005).

**Predictive Model (Match/Fit)**

The predictive model of TWA uses the variables of P and E to explain whether individuals are satisfied (satisfaction) with their work environments and whether they are satisfactory (satisfactoriness) to their work environments. TWA establishes that an individual has a set of needs and values that may (or may not) be met by rewards available in the work environment. Similarly, the work environment has a set of job requirements that may (or may not) be met by the skills and abilities that the individual possesses (Dawis, 1980). When the needs and values of the person are met by the rewards of the environment, then the employee will find satisfaction; when the job requirements of the work environment are met by the skills and abilities of the person, then the employee is satisfactory. According to the theory, satisfaction and satisfactoriness predict stability or tenure in the work environments; the more satisfied and satisfactory, the longer the person is predicted to stay at the job.

Employees are complex and their decisions about staying or leaving a job and organization are not a simple. Rather, these decisions are an intricate set of personal reactions to how they perceive themselves in the work environment. Research has shown the greater the P-E fit the greater the likelihood of lower turnover (Uysal-Irak, 2014). Employees who are not satisfied with their jobs have a lower organization-fit and will have more turnover intentions (Van Dick et al., 2004). Many studies have demonstrated that employee satisfaction and tenure
can be predicted (Dawis, 1980; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Dawis, 2005; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Rounds et al., 1987; Eggerth, 2008; and Cable & Edwards, 2004). There are also benefits to the organization as well when employees have a good fit. Research demonstrates that good P-E fit is associated with reduced employee deviance, cynicism, withdrawal, and turnover (Follmer et al., 2018).

TWA also suggests that individuals and environments adjust as they strive for correspondence or match between the abilities and skills that workers supply and the reinforcers and ability requirements that characterize the environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Rounds, Dawis & Lofquist, 1987). Correspondence refers to the degree to which the requirements of both the person and the environment are met (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). On the person side, it has been said that “if a person’s needs are met by his or her work environment, then the person and environment are in correspondence; if not, then they are in discorrespondence.” (Blustein, 2013, p. 52). In turn, the degree of correspondence is thought to reflect a personal individual level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the work environment for each employee. On the environment side, “if the work environment’s requirements are met by the person, then person and environment are in correspondence, if not, then they are in discorrespondence” (Blustein, 2013, p. 52). This reflects an individual’s level of satisfactoriness to the work environment. In the end, the individual has needs, the work environment has rewards; if needs and rewards correspond, then the individual is satisfied. Satisfaction and satisfactoriness lead to longevity (Bright, 2013). Discorrespondence yields dissatisfaction, which then represents a disequilibrium in the person-environment system that creates motivation for change (Swanson & Schneider, 2013). The environment and individual must continue to work towards meeting each other’s requirements.
for the interaction to be maintained. If correspondence (satisfaction or satisfactoriness) cannot be achieved, then the employee will leave or be asked to leave.

**Interaction Model/Work Adjustment**

The interaction part of the TWA model describes the ongoing interaction process between a person and the environment. The interaction model emphasizes how dissatisfaction drives work adjustment behavior (Dawis, 2005). This adjustment process is used by individuals and environments to change their behavior in order to achieve correspondence. Work adjustment is the process of seeking, achieving, and maintaining correspondence. Workers with dissatisfaction may change one of two things: the work environment (i.e., attempt to change work hours or tasks) or themselves (i.e., attempt to get to work earlier or become more skilled at a task). The work environment may also adjust, changing itself (i.e., raising the pay or reducing the hours) or changing the worker (i.e., providing additional training). Both person and environment engage in this adjustment process, seeking to attain satisfactoriness and satisfaction. This in turn results in intent to return. It is this intent to return that translates into a principal indicator of successful adjustment (Dawis, 1980; Dawis, 2005).

Dawis (2005) suggests that successful work adjustment where satisfaction can be achieved has three outcomes: a) satisfaction, b) satisfactoriness, and c) tenure. When correspondence is low or missing between a person and their environment, the results will be voluntary turnover by the employee or termination by the environment. Simplified, in this framework, correspondence (match or fit) drives satisfaction and in turn satisfaction drives tenure, the length of time employees stays on the job, or the employee leaves (Dawis, 2005).
**Using TWA to Understand Turnover Intentions**

Using TWA to focus on the person may provide a view of why an employee has turnover intentions. In the case of school bus drivers, TWA would predict that those drivers whose needs and values match the work environment and who are therefore more satisfied would stay on the job longer than those who were not able to achieve that correspondence.

**Theory of Meaningful Work (MW)**

Employees work for varied reasons. For many people, work is related to wages, but research has shown that there are other personal, non-economic reasons why people work as well. When an employee has “desirable work attitudes” the outcome can be individual flourishing, citizenship, commitment, and engagement and in terms of long-term, sustainable innovation, culture maintenance, and performance in organizations (Steger et al., 2012, p.326).

Meaningful Work is a multidimensional construct with specific facets (e.g. experience of unity with others, developing the inner self, greater good or service motivation) that both conceptually and empirically link to a global or overall sense of work as meaningful. One’s life has meaning when it stands for something. Meaning is created through people’s interpretations of their experiences, and the overall significance thereof gives meaning in terms of the purpose they ascribe their lives. Meaningful Work may lead to greater perceptions of life meaning, which refers to the subjective experience that one’s life is significant and worthwhile. Others have argued that, as in the broader psychological tradition of meaning in life, work is meaningful not only when it is judged to be significant, but also when it understood as having a distinct purpose or point (Steger & Dik, 2009).

Michael Steger, a founder of the Meaningful Work construct, articulates that when an employee believes their work is meaningful, that employee have less absenteeism and turnover.
Steger also showed in his research that Meaningful Work is a better predictor of absenteeism from work than job satisfaction (Steger et al., 2012). When looking at factors that contribute to the longevity of public school bus drivers in New York, it is important to understand if Meaningful Work is a contributing factor. If it is found that drivers in fact believe their work is meaningful, district administrators have a chance to adjust working conditions and environments to enhance the staff’s view of the job, therefore increasing likelihood of a driver continuing in the position across time.

Meaningful Work Defined

The idea of Meaningful Work was first seen in the research of psychiatrist Viktor Frankl. In 1957, Frankl described how the innate human quest for meaning is so strong that, even in the direst circumstances, people will seek out their purpose in life. Frankl’s concept of *freedom of will*, was revealed in his study of 545 blue-, pink-, and white-collar occupations—in which he argued that even in the most adverse conditions, the individual can still choose to act from an ethical inner core (Frankl, 1959).

Maslow, after establishing his hierarchy of needs early on in his career (during the 1950’s), began to explore the meaning of work and the impact that it has on employees. Maslow (1971) wrote that individuals who do not perceive the workplace as meaningful and purposeful, will not work up to their professional capacity. This exploration was expressed in his research as Being Values, referred to as B-values. B-values were defined by Maslow to include truth, transcendence, goodness, uniqueness, aliveness, justice, richness, and meaningfulness. Maslow believed that individuals have the potential to reach what he called self-actualization—i.e., the process of developing one's potential or expressing oneself to the fullest extent in a manner that is personally fulfilling. He found that individuals tend to experience their work as meaningful
when it mattered to others more than just to themselves (Maslow, 1971).

In the late 1960’s, while exploring further dimension of needs, Maslow (1971) created what he referred to as self-transcendence: a state beyond self-actualization.

Transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos” (p. 269).

This state is achieved when it gives to some higher outside goal such as altruism and spirituality (Maslow, 1971). Maslow positioned self-transcendence at the top of his pyramid of human motivation, beyond self-actualization in importance. In Maslow’s research, he found that people did not just talk about themselves when they talked about Meaningful Work; they talked about the impact or relevance their work had for other individuals, groups, or the wider environment (Bailey & Madden, 2016).

These are important concepts for employees who are school bus drivers since they give to others more than just the function of driving a school bus when behind the wheel. They are the first school representative that children see in the morning, and they are the last that the children see at night. Drivers, among others in the school system, are likely to care about children, their well-being and their safety. They continually give more of themselves than is expected.

Hackman and Oldham (1976) have posited that meaningfulness experienced in work is the key psychological state that mediates the relationships between core job characteristics and outcomes. Hackman and Oldham (1976) suggested that this psychological state mediates between the job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, and task significance and the outcomes of internal (intrinsic) work motivation, work performance, satisfaction with work, and
absenteeism and turnover. They proposed a new model of Meaningful Work which specified the conditions under which individuals will become internally motivated to perform effectively on their jobs. This model focuses on the interaction among three classes of variables:

- the psychological states of employees that must be present for internally motivated work behavior to develop;
- the characteristics of the jobs that can create these psychological states; and
- the attributes of individuals that determine how positively a person will respond to a complex and challenging job (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

From this new model, Hackman and Oldham created the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) which identified conditions necessary for people to be intrinsically motivated and have high performance at work.

The JCT proposed a set of job qualities and a set of valued personal and work outcomes. This theory proposes that five job dimensions must be in place to achieve employee satisfaction:

- Skills variety: Do tasks vary, and are they challenging? Or are they monotonous and too easy?
- Task identity: Do tasks have a defined beginning, middle and end? Without this, it’s hard to achieve the satisfaction of an attained goal.
- Task significance: Does the employee feel that their role has meaning?
- Task autonomy: Can individuals have a say in how they carry out their work?
- Job feedback: Are employees receiving feedback on their performance?

These five dimensions lead to three critical psychological states: meaningful work, responsibility, and knowledge of results. These three psychological states then result in the following beneficial outcomes: internal work motivation, quality work performance, job
satisfaction, and low absenteeism (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). When these psychological states are experienced by the employee, there will likely be lower turnover found in this group of employees creating a stable workforce that remains in their jobs.

**Measuring Meaningful Work--Job Diagnostics Survey**

As part of this research, Hackman and Oldham developed the Job Diagnostics Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1975), which defined the experienced meaningfulness of the work as “the degree to which the employee experiences the job as one which is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p.162). According to Hackman and Oldham, Meaningful Work may strengthen an employee’s emotional attachments to their organizations and careers. To establish meaningfulness in this way requires that the employee knows about the impact he or she has on others. The more someone can directly experience the positive impact they have on other people, the more we would expect such an impact to be a source of meaningfulness. In general, this early scholarship on Meaningful Work suggested that different types of work may offer more or less meaningfulness for the employee due to differences in job design. In contrast, contemporary Meaningful Work research tends to explore meaningfulness as a function of individual attitudes and behavior regardless of context.

Kahn’s (1990) research extended the Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) in order to understand the conditions that lead people to engage in their work. He defined Meaningful Work as people’s expression of themselves is worthwhile and valued, and he defined work engagement as the expression of workers’ preferred selves. Kahn (1990) further argued that Meaningful Work and work engagement go beyond environmental job conditions to encompass deep aspects of oneself, including one’s values and aspirations. When a worker’s job characteristics and tasks
align with their own values and personal identities, they experience a higher degree of Meaningful Work. Subsequently, they are more likely to engage at work.

Bonebright, Clay and Ankenmann (2000) showed in their research that meaning in work has the possibility to lead people towards experiencing more positive work attitudes, less boredom, less workaholism, better psychological adjustment, as well as better overall health and wellbeing. They concluded that meaning also leads to different important work outcomes such as increased motivation, improved performance, enhanced job satisfaction, and higher engagement levels. Bonebright, Clay and Ankenmann (2000) furthered the Meaningful Work conversation by stating a person experiencing meaning is likely to invest more effort and energy into his or her work. Chalofsky (2003) advanced the research on Meaningful Work, concluding that Meaningful Work has been generally defined as the value of work goals seen in relation to an individual’s own ideal and passions, and, specifically, as work that “gives essence to what we do and brings fulfillment to our lives” (p. 74).

Cascio (2009) showed meaningfulness to be more important to employees than any other aspect of work, including pay and rewards, opportunities for promotion, or working conditions. Pratt and Ashforth (2003) stated that one’s work is meaningful when it not only has particular meaning, but also when it is perceived as somehow significant and purposeful. Their research also added that Meaningful Work can be highly motivational, leading to improved performance, commitment, and satisfaction when a connection between employee’s daily tasks and service to others when more effort is made by their managers (Grant, 2007; Pratt & Ashforth., 2003). Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, and McKee (2007) proposed that Meaningful Work is found when an employee “finding a purpose in work that is greater than the extrinsic outcomes of the work” (p. 195). Lips-Wiersma, Wright, and Dik (2016) concluded that Meaningful Work refers
to significance or value of work, which by definition has positive valence. Their early research showed that meaningfulness is largely something that individuals find for themselves in their work.

Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski (2010) suggested that because work has a particular meaning does not necessarily determine that it is meaningful. They expanded on this by noting “meaningfulness refers to the amount of significance something holds for an individual” (p. 95). They proposed a theory of Meaningful Work that included a role for helping others in promoting meaningful work. They further asserted that the pathways to meaningful work can be understood by the intersection of two dimensions: the self-other dimension and the agency-communion dimension. The self-other dimension refers to whether work activities are directed toward the self or toward other people; and the agency-communion dimension refers to efforts to separate and expand the self or to connect and unite the self. They contended that these dimensions create four quadrants, each represent a unique pathway to meaningfulness at work: self-connection, individuation, unification and contribution. Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski (2010) defined the four quadrants as:

- **Individuation**, which reflects the meaningfulness of actions that define and distinguish the self as valuable and worthy;
- **Contribution**, which reflects the meaningfulness of actions perceived as significant and/or done in service of something greater than the self;
- **Self-Connection**, which reflects the meaningfulness of actions that bring individuals closer into alignment with the way they see themselves; and
- **Unification**, which reflects the meaningfulness of actions that bring individuals into harmony with other beings or principles.
Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski (2010) asked participants what makes their work meaningful and found that by far the largest category of responses reflected themes of helping others directly or contributing to the greater good.

The research around Meaningful Work could explain why employees who believe the work they do brings meaning to them personally are more likely to stay in their jobs. An employee who has greater satisfaction and commitment to their work would not leave the job as quickly. For school bus drivers, Meaningful Work may help to identify why some school bus drivers intend to stay in their jobs—in other words, they find meaningful purpose of the work they do. The theory of Meaningful Work may provide insight into how to reduce turnover intention of drivers. Succinctly stated, school administrations who are trying to recruit and retain drivers could use this theoretical perspective to understand what motivates a bus driver and creates meaning for them in their role.

**Dimensions of Meaningful Work**

Steger, Dik, and Duffy (2012) presented a model in which meaningful work is comprised of three dimensions: a) personal meaningfulness—subjective meaningful experiences regarding what a person is doing (the person’s activity); b) meaning making through work when a person can entirely connect the significance of his or her work to the meaningfulness of his or her life; and c) greater good motivations “reflecting ideas that work is most meaningful if it has a broader impact on others” (p. 4).

Bailey and Madden (2016) defined Meaningful Work as arising “when an individual perceives an authentic connection between their work and a broader transcendent life purpose beyond the self” (p. 55). Meaningfulness is rarely experienced in the moment, but rather, in retrospect and on reflection when people are able to see their completed work and make
connections between their achievements and a wider sense of life meaning. Meaningfulness is seen to be personal and individual. Work that is meaningful is often understood by the people not just in the context of their work but also in the wider context of their personal life experiences.

Initial research with an earlier version of a survey called the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) found that Meaningful Work scores were positively correlated with using one’s strengths at work and with job satisfaction (Littman-Ovadia & Steger, 2010). In validating the WAMI, Steger and colleagues found that total and subscale scores correlated with measures of well-being, job satisfaction, work motivation, withdrawal intentions, organizational commitment, and days absent from work. The Meaningful Work total score explained unique variance in job satisfaction, above and beyond withdrawal intentions, organizational commitment, and calling. This score also explained unique variance in the number of days absent from work compared to above and beyond job satisfaction, withdrawal intentions, organizational commitment, and calling. This result is important as it shows that Meaningful Work, is a better predictor of absenteeism, measuring satisfaction and meaning than that of the widely-used variable, job satisfaction, above and beyond known predictors of job satisfaction, days absent from work, and life satisfaction.

Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007) and Schnell, Hoge, and Pollet (2013) wrote that the perception that one’s work positively benefits others has constantly emerged as one of the strongest predictors of Meaningful Work, suggesting that the significance of one’s job task may be the key variable for enhancing Meaningful Work. Meaningful Work is the key vocational construct linked to well-being and positive work outcomes such as performance, commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction (Allan, et al., 2016; Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012; Harris, Kacmar & Zivnuska, 2007). Researchers such as Chalofsky and Krishna (2009), Littman-
Ovadia and Steger (2010), Arnold and associates (2007) and Steger and associates (2012), have posited that the construct has importance in predicting critical employee outcomes such as work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Meaningful Work strongly predicts work engagement, job satisfaction, commitment. Work engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment, however, do not predict Meaningful Work as strongly as Meaningful Work predicted these variables (Steger et al., 2012). In predicting days absent from work, Meaningful Work has been shown to be a significant predictor of not being absent from work (Steger et al., 2012). This result is particularly notable because it suggests the need to reevaluate our understanding of why people are absent from work. In the data, absenteeism was not related to whether or not people were satisfied with their jobs, but it was related to how committed they were to their organization. It was not related to intentions to leave their employer.

The Positive Meaning scale, the Meaning-Making Through Work scale, and the Greater Good Motivations Scale, tracked the total score in the direction and magnitude of relations (Steger et al., 2012). The positive meaning of work is, in many ways, the main indicator of the overall construct of Meaningful Work. Accordingly, it should not be surprising that the Positive Meaning subscale showed consistently stronger bivariate correlations with work and well-being variables (Steger et al., 2012).

This analysis of the Meaningful Work literature suggests that people are more likely to be absent from work that holds no meaning for them and suggests that the less employees find their work meaningful, the higher the likely staff turnover and lower likely intent to remain in their jobs. The research has shown when someone finds their work to be meaningful they stand to be more satisfied, more committed to their work, absent less and are likely to remain in their job longer. When applying these findings to public school bus drivers, it seems likely that the
significance of their work—creating the opportunity for students to access their education—may well serve as the basis for drivers finding their work meaningful and therefore being more likely to stay in their jobs.

**Theory of Public Service Motivation (PSM)**

The theory of Public Service Motivation (PSM) was developed to explain why certain employees have the desire or propensity to work for governmental organizations rather than for private industry. Scholars have hypothesized that Public Service Motivation is an ethic to serve the community and help others, with a person’s level of Public Service Motivation eventually driving that individual into a public service career (Perry, 1996). It has long been thought that employee motivation is increased by the perceived economic return they will receive for efforts the employee exerts. In contrast, the theory of Public Service Motivation looks to explain why governmental employees will forgo earning opportunity in the private sector for similar employment in the public sector that pays less.

This would seem to be a relevant perspective when considering public school bus drivers. These drivers could take the required driving licenses that they have earned for driving a school bus and use them to work in other private organizations that would pay higher wages. A bus driver could perform in the private sector in roles such as truck driving (both local and long-haul), driving a bus for local tour companies, or driving a transportation bus for a local privatized/municipal bus system. Some do so, but some do not, suggesting that Public Service Motivation may be a mitigating reason in why some New York K-12 public school bus drivers stay in their jobs.
**Defining Public Service Motivation**

The idea of Public Service Motivation began in the 1960’s. Vroom (1964) defined motivation as a process that guides individual choice among different forms of voluntary activities. Studying the motivation of public sector managers, a number of researchers observed that public sector managers were motivated by a high need for achievement and placed high values on service to society as opposed to monetary rewards (Guyot, 1962; Kilpatrick Cummings, Jr., & Jennings 1964; Warner, Van Riper, Martin, & Collins, 1963). Downs’ (1967) research further argued that “commitment to a public program because of personal identification…” (p. 292). Greenleaf (1970) concluded that some employees have a “feeling that one wants to serve” (p. 6).

The concept of Public Service Motivation was formalized in the late 1970s and early 1980s by authors such as Buchanan (1975), Mosher (1982); Perry and Porter (1982), and Rainey (1982). The term “Public Service Motivation” was officially coined by Perry and Wise in 1990. They provided the now widely accepted definition of Public Service Motivation as an individual's "predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations” (Perry & Wise, 1990, p. 368). They argued that individuals with high levels of Public Service Motivation are attracted to public service work for various reasons, such as self-interest, an ethical stance, or emotional attachments (Perry & Wise, 1990).

Public Service Motivation as a theory contributed the understanding one's overall motivation to choose to work in jobs that serve the public interest is fundamentally different than the motivation working for the purposes of wages. Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) defined Public Service Motivation as “a general altruistic motivation to serve the interests of a community of people, a state, a nation, or humankind” (p. 23). Houston’s (2000) research showed that
individuals who are employed in public organizations value different motives than those employed in private organizations. In his study he found that “public employees are more likely to place a higher value on the intrinsic reward of work that is important and provides a feeling of accomplishment, and they are less likely to place a high value on extrinsic rewards…” (p. 725). Vandenabeele (2007) defined Public Service Motivation as “the beliefs, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest” (p. 547). Houston, Harding and Whaley (2007) continued this argument when they concluded that civil servants are committed to public, not self-interest. Perry and Hondeghem (2008) later revised this statement by suggesting that Public Service Motivation is not government sector–specific but relates to motives of serving the public good more generally. Taken together, the theory and research agree with the basic premise that Perry and Wise (1990) wrote when they stated that “the greater an individual’s public service motivation, the more likely the individual will seek membership in a public organization” (p. 370).

**Public Service Motivation – Foregone Wages**

One element of Public Service Motivation is that the individual’s altruistic values are more important than financial rewards. Downs (1967) argued that the desire to serve the public interest is essentially altruistic, even when the public interest is conceived as an individual's personal opinion. Perry makes this point when he writes of Macy (1971), the Civil Service Director in the Kennedy administration in 1971, that he knew many public servants that had a “willingness … to forgo financial rewards for intangible rewards they receive from serving the public” (Perry, 1996, p. 7). Perry and Porter (1982) and Rainey, and associates (1976) also concluded in their research that financial rewards were less important than nonpecuniary rewards. Rainey (1983) found public managers perceived a relationship between performance and extrinsic rewards to be weaker than a comparatively stronger relationship between expected
timeliness, quantity and quality of work, and sense of meaningful public service for public sector managers. A comparative study of individual’s sectoral employment choice done by Blank (1985) showed that clear correlations exist between wages and sectoral choice. Her research showed that sectorial choice involves more than wage comparison. Blank concluded in this study that highly educated and more experienced workers were more likely to choose the public sector for employment, offsetting lost wages with the rewards that come from the characteristics of the public sector jobs they filled. Crewson (1997) stated that “although there is no significant difference between sectors in the importance placed on high pay, public employees’ rate other extrinsic rewards lower in importance that do employees from private sector” (p. 503). Wright (2007) concurred when he furthered this construct in his research of 807 New York state agency employees, that “the intrinsic rewards provided by the nature or function of the organization may be more important to public sector employees than—or compensate for the limited availability of—performance-related extrinsic rewards” (p. 60).

The theory of Public Service Motivation advances the idea that an employee with public service motivation also have a sense of altruism. Piliavin and Hong-Wen (1990) observed that altruism traditionally has been defined in terms of costs, but they argue that motives should be central to its definition and focus on acts that appear “to be motivated mainly out of a consideration of another’s needs rather than their own” (p. 30). Perry (1996) re-entered the conversation with his view that public service requires an individual’s self-sacrifice, “the willingness to substitute service to others for tangible personal rewards” (p.7). Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) defined public service motivation as “a general altruistic motivation to serve the interests of a community of people, a state, a nation or humankind” (p. 23). Vandenabeele et al. (2014) found that those who wanted to work for government attached more importance to the
social significance of a job as well as to job characteristics related to quality of life, but this did not mean that they attached less importance to extrinsic factors. This research would support the idea that one’s sense of public service motivation may well be more important than wages received for the work they do or wages they could earn doing similar work in the private sector.

**Public Service Motivation—Attrition.** There is a great deal of research that has found that employees with public service motivation stay because not because of the wages they earn but for myriad other reasons. This motivation may be what is behind the intention of school bus drivers to stay in their jobs. Public Service Motivation research has shown that government employees have been reported to value job security more than private sector employees (Baldwin, 1987; Houston, 2000; Jurkiewicz et al., 1998). Public school bus drivers are part of a governmental agency they have job security. Drivers with Public Service Motivation may value the security of their job over increased wages they could earn in the private sector.

Crewson (1997) linked Public Service Motivation empirically to higher organizational commitment and lower turnover. Naff and Crum (1999) in their research found a positive association between Public Service Motivation and intent to remain as well. They also found that Public Service Motivation has been related to decreased turnover and increased job satisfaction. Steijn’s (2008) research showed while looking at the Dutch population that workers with high Public Service Motivation were more satisfied and less inclined to leave their jobs and organization they work for than workers without such a fit.

This research seeks to understand if employees with Public Service Motivation are more committed to the organization, and if they tend to value intrinsic rewards of the job more and turnover less. It will be important to understand if bus drivers who are motivated by public service have lower turnover intentions. If school bus drivers are staying in their jobs because
they want to serve the public, then school administrators will want to capitalize on this fact and work to emphasize this unique aspect of their role in order to lessen turnover within employees they currently have.

**Public Service Motivation and Education.** Public Service Motivation has also been applied to the field of education. Ackerina (2015), for instance, reported a significant positive relationship between Public Service Motivation and professional commitment, supporting the premise that educators who possess Public Service Motivation are truly committed to education. Findings may suggest that individuals who view education as public service work may be less likely to leave the profession (Ackerina, 2015). Although school bus drivers have not been the focus of any study to date, it seems likely that Public Service Motivation may point to causality in why drivers are staying in their jobs. That is, if the school bus driving job is seen as part of an educational mission, drivers with a strong Public Service Motivation might seek and persist in school jobs (rather than moving to private sector employment). Further, if administrators can create a culture where bus drivers feel as though they are a part of the larger educational puzzle that provides the opportunity for students to learn, then the drivers may have a greater professional commitment to their job and not leave it.

**Public Service Motivation as a Predictor of Turnover Intention.** The idea that Public Service Motivation may play a role in K-12 public school bus drivers’ intent to return is important to understand because it may help school administrators learn how to market the bus driving role to potential employees and may help them shape the culture of the bus driver workplace. Public Service Motivation may help administrators better understand why employees may be willing to forgo greater wage opportunity in other similar jobs they are qualified for with
employers other than the schools. This study works toward a better understanding if bus drivers with Public Service Motivation intended to remain longer than those drivers without PSM.

**Summary**

Understanding why school bus drivers stay in their jobs—defined here as lower turnover intention—is vital to the core mission of public education. Students need to be at school to learn in person. They need transportation to get to school, and without school bus drivers, they would not be able to get to school regularly. Knowing why bus drivers choose to remain employed as school bus drivers instead of obtaining more lucrative work would also help school administrations identify the culture that will provide the best opportunity to increase the longevity of these employees.

The framework of P-E fit is key to providing this understanding why school bus drivers might want to stay in their jobs, with the basic premise that a better “fit” would predict more job longevity. The three theoretical models proffered here consider the important dimensions of fit: First, the Theory of Work Adjustment would predict that if the needs and values of the bus driver are met by the rewards provided by the environment, there is a higher probability that employee will find satisfaction and greater intent to remain in their job. Second, the theory of Meaningful Work would predict that the more meaningful the employees find their work, the more likely they are to stay on the job. And third, the Public Service Motivation perspective would predict that for this group of public service employees, the greater their public service motivation, the more likely they would be to stay in their jobs.
Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology for this quantitative study regarding why New York State K-12 school bus drivers stay on their jobs. This study uses three possible perspectives—the Theory of Work Adjustment, Meaningful Work, and Public Service Motivation—to understand why New York K-12 public school bus drivers intend to stay in their jobs. This chapter describes the participants, design, instruments, demographic data, procedure, and sample size.

Research Questions

This study looked to understand if the dependent variable of “turnover intention” among currently employed K-12 bus drivers was associated with any or all of the independent variables as posed by Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), Meaningful Work (MW) or Public Service Motivation (PSM). This research addressed the following research questions:

Theory of Work Adjustment

**Q1: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of their work as satisfying and their turnover intention?**

Meaningful Work

**Q2: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of meaningful work and their turnover intention?**

Public Service Motivation

**Q3: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of public service and their turnover intention?**
Participants

Participation in this study was limited to bus drivers currently employed by school districts within upstate New York that are in the Capital Region, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery (HFM), Washington, Saratoga, Warren, Hamilton, Essex (WSWHE) and Questar III Board of Cooperating Services areas. Ninety-four school districts that are in Albany, Saratoga, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Greene, Columbia, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery Washington, Saratoga, Warren, Hamilton and Essex counties were used in this study. These districts encompass urban, suburban and rural community settings. Given that public school district employees have collective bargaining agreements (CBA) that establish working conditions as well as pay and benefits, districts with bus driver services that are contracted to private companies were excluded from this sample.

Research Design

This was a survey based, ex post facto correlational study, with one dependent variable (turnover intention) and three independent variable clusters (job satisfaction, meaningful work, and public service motivation).

Sample

Public School Transportation Directors at each district were invited to assist in this research in conveying the invitation to bus drivers to participate in the survey. Data were collected by having currently employed public school bus drivers answer questions from four established instruments in paper format.

Ninety-one K-12 public school districts in upstate New York were sent invitations to participate in this study. Two districts responded that they did not want to participate in this study. Six districts reported that they contracted their transportation services out to a private
transportation provider. This study focused solely on transportation provided by public school districts, and therefore these six districts were ineligible for participation. Eighteen districts did not respond to the request to participate. Twelve districts were given approval by their administration, but no returned driver surveys were received. Of the remaining 53 school districts in the sampling frame, 32 provided administrative approval and generated more than 5 returned surveys. The 301 respondents from these 32 districts comprised the sample used for analysis. The 32 participating districts belong to four Board of Cooperating Education Services (BOCES), ten districts from Capital Region BOCES (31.25%), ten from Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES (31.25%), nine from Questar III BOCES (28.13%), and three from Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES (9.38%).

To estimate an overall response rate, school administration who sent back approval for participation were also asked how many school bus drivers they had in full time equivalents (FTE). The 32 responding districts reported that they had 1,301 FTE drivers, which will be considered the maximum possible number of respondents for this study. The 301 surveys returned represented a 23.14% response rate, with 21.88% coming from seven small school districts (student populations of 509-1,000), 56.24% from 18 medium size school districts (student populations of 1,001-4,000), and 21.88% from seven large size school districts (student populations of 4,001–9,335). The response rates within district size categories were 37.74% (small), 35.03% (medium), and 16% (large). The average number of surveys returned from districts included in the study was 9.41 per district.

**Instruments and Variables**

Turnover intention was measured by the Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6); job satisfaction was measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ); meaningful work
was measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI); and public service motivation was measured by the Public Service Motivation Scale. Each is described below.

**Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention**

The original Turnover Intention Scale (TIS) (Roodt, 2004) consisted of 15 items, a second iteration of the TIS consists of 13 questions, and a shortened question TIS-6 (v.4) has been developed with 6 items (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). The TIS-6 measures a person’s turnover intention. The original scale as well as the TIS-6 uses a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always), to measure one’s turnover intention (three items are reverse-scored). The total score is derived from summing responses on all six items. Scores range from 6 to 30, with higher scores indicating a greater intention to leave the employer. Explicit permission was obtained to use this scale with the stipulation that it was not to be used for commercial purposes and that it is properly referenced as “(Roodt, 2004)” as is done in Bothma & Roodt (2013).

**Reliability.** Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to establish the reliability of the original 15 question TIS scale, a second iteration of the 13 question TIS scale as well as the TIS-6. Jacobs (2005) reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.91 for the original 15-item version of the TIS tool. Martin (2007) and Martin and Roodt (2008) reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.90 for a 13-item version of the scale. Bothma and Roodt (2013) reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.80 for the TIS-6.

**Validity.** Evidence for the validity of the TIS-6 was provided by Bothma and Roodt (2013) when they studied 2,429 information, communication and technology employees. In their study they used the TIS-6 as one of the criterion variables and found that TIS-6 could significantly distinguish leavers (those who left the company) and the stayers (those who stayed). The scale also demonstrated statistically significant differences between leavers and stayers with
respect of a number of the remaining theoretical variables used in the study, confirming its
differential validity. Criterion-predicative validity of the TIS-6 was established by Bothma and
Roodt (2013) by gathering the mean score differences from those who resigned and compared
those values to those who stayed at the organization they studied. These comparisons were made
at 4 months as well as the 4–year period after the survey was conducted. “The obtained TIS-6
mean score differences were significant, and the effect size was large (for the 4-month period),
which suggest that the TIS-6 could effectively predict turnover” (Bothma & Roodt, 2013, p. 10).

Independent Variables: Job satisfaction, Meaningful Work, and Public Service Motivation

Three established survey tools were used to measure job satisfaction (The Minnesota
Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)-Short Form), meaningful work (Meaningful Work and
Meaning Inventory (WAMI)), and public service motivation (Public Service Motivation Scale
(PSMS)). As described below, all three of the surveys have psychometric properties that have
been deemed reliable and valid.

Job Satisfaction (Theory of Work Adjustment). Job satisfaction is derived from the
perspective of the Theory of Work Adjustment. In the original format job satisfaction was
measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ; Weiss, et al., 1967). This is a 100-
item instrument which has scales that yield scores for 20 facets, two factor-based scores and a
total score (General Satisfaction) which is created by taking a sum across all items. The 20 MSQ
facets are: 1) ability utilization; 2) achievement; 3) activity; 4) advancement; 5) authority; 6)
company policies and practices; 7) compensation; 8) coworkers; 9) creativity; 10) independence;
11) moral values; 12) recognition; 13) responsibility; 14) security; 15) social service; 16) social
status; 17) supervision—human relations; 18) supervision—technical; 19) variety; and 20)
working conditions (Weiss, et al., 1967). The MSQ also has the ability to measure employee
intrinsic job satisfaction which refers to how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves; and extrinsic job satisfaction which refers to how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (pay, benefits, bonuses) (Spector, 1997). Still today the MSQ is considered one of the best constructed, most useful measures of job satisfaction (Heneman & Schwab, 1985).

Due to the long forms length and the time it took to administer, a shorter 20 item of the original 100 item form was developed that could be used to measure intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction (10 items each). This is known as the MSQ Short Form (MSQ-SF). The Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire indicates that the short form should take 5 minutes to complete rather than the 15-20 minutes the long form takes (Weiss, et al., 1967). The MSQ-SF was created at a 5th grade reading level.

The MSQ-SF was used in this research study. It has three scales designed to measure three types of satisfaction. These three scales include: Intrinsic Satisfaction, drawn from 12 items (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 20); Extrinsic Satisfaction, drawn from 6 items (5, 6, 12, 13, 14 and 19); and General Satisfaction drawn from all items (1-20). All items are presented in a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 (Very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job) to 5 (Very satisfied with this aspect of my job). Spector (1997) has stated that one advantageous feature of the MSQ short form is that it can also be used to measure the two distinct components: intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction which the long form did but the short form takes less time.

Scoring of the MSQ-SF was completed by summing items in each subscale, as well as all items to create a summary total score, which provides a measure of general job satisfaction—with a lower score representing a lower level of job satisfaction. For the overall scale, the
minimum score was 20, and the maximum score was 100. For the subscale of *intrinsic job satisfaction*, the minimum score was 12 and the maximum was 60; for *extrinsic job satisfaction* the minimum score was 6 and the maximum was 30. Responses were analyzed at the subscale level first, with subsequent analysis using the overall score if indicated.

**Reliability.** Test-retest reliability has been reported at 0.89 over one-week and 0.70 over one year for General Satisfaction. Test-retest estimates for intrinsic and extrinsic sub-scales were not provided (Weiss et al., 1967). The alphas for the intrinsic scale ranged from 0.84 to 0.91 with the median of 0.86. Extrinsic satisfaction ranged from 0.77 to 0.82 with the median of 0.80. General Satisfaction scale ranged from 0.87 to 0.92 with the median be 0.90 (Weiss et al., 1967).

**Validity.** The validity of the short form was implied from validity demonstrated when using the long-form. Construct validity of the MSQ to explore job satisfaction has been reported by many. Anderson (1982), studying school psychology, reported strong concurrent validity when examining the source of job satisfaction. Worrell (2004) in his study used Pearson correlation coefficients and found validity to be significant, with job satisfaction scores on the MSQ being significantly related to personal estimates of job satisfaction as well.

Empirical evidence exists involving the MSQ-SF subscales shows that it is consistent with the theoretical distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction (Arvey, et al., 1994), but researchers have suggested that assigning MSQ-SF items to extrinsic and intrinsic subscales as specified by the MSQ manual (Weiss et al., 1967) results in lower construct validity (Arvey et al., 1978; Spector, 1997).

**Theory of Meaningful Work**

Meaningful Work was measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI), a measure of the multidimensional model of work as a subjectively meaningful experience
consisting of experiencing positive meaning in work (Steger et al., 2012). The WAMI includes three subscales: Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making Through Work, and Greater Good Motivations. The WAMI was originally 40 items. Simple cross-validation strategy and confirmatory analysis was performed on the original 40 question survey which reduced the WAMI to a 10-question survey, with a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Absolutely Untrue) to 5 (Absolutely True).

Three subscale scores are derived from WAMI scoring. The Positive Meaning subscale, drawn from 4 items (1, 4, 5 and 8), reflects the degree to which people find their work to hold personal meaning, significance, or purpose. The Meaning-Making through Work subscale, drawn from 3 items (2, 7, and 9), reflects work as a source of broader meaning in life for people, helping them to make sense of their lived experience. The Greater Good Motivations subscale, drawn from the 3 remaining items, reflects the degree to which people see that their effort at work makes a positive contribution and benefits others and society (Steger et al., 2012). The present study used all three subscales of the WAMI separately and also a composite meaningful work score that could range from a minimum score of 10 to a maximum score of 50. Responses were analyzed at the subscale level first with subsequent analysis of the composite score if indicated.

**Reliability.** Steger, Dik and Duffy (2012) reported that reliability of the WAMI subscales was consistent when examining their sample of 370 participants. Alpha coefficients were reported to be 0.89 for the Positive Meaning subscale, 0.82 for the Meaning-Making through work subscale, and 0.83 for the Greater Good Motivations subscale. They also reported the summing all subscale (Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work and Greater Good
Motivations) scores together resulted in a composite Meaningful Work score that was found to have an alpha coefficient of 0.93.

**Validity.** Validity information can be found in studies of the relationship between scores on the WAMI and expected correlates. It has been reported that people who have a high overall score on the aggregate WAMI also report a greater sense of well-being, view their work as more central and important, place higher value on their work, and report greater job satisfaction. Workers who score higher on the purpose subscale also report greater job satisfaction and work unit cohesion (Steger et al., 2012). Validation for the WAMI is also evident in significant correlations found with employee job satisfaction, fewer days reported absent, and life satisfaction (Arnold et al., 2007). Meaningful Work scores (the combined score of the Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work and Greater Good Motivations subscales) were positively correlated with using one’s strengths at work and with job satisfaction (Littman-Ovadia & Steger, 2010).

**Theory of Public Service Motivation**

Public service motivation (PSM), defined as an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions (Perry & Wise, 1990), was measured by the Public Service Motivation Scale (Perry, 1996).

The Public Service Motivation Scale (Perry, 1996) was created to translate theory about public service motivation into a measurement scale to better understand if a person is motivated by public service. This was done by creating a 40-question survey asking respondents about the aforementioned motives utilizing a 5-point Likert Scale: 1 (Strong Disagreement) to 5 (Strong Agreement). The construct of the survey has been associated conceptually with six dimensions: attraction to public policy making, commitment to the public interest, civic duty, social justice,
self-sacrifice, and compassion (Perry, 1996). Through the use of confirmatory factor analysis, a good fit was found for the thirty-five observed variables and related dimensions.

Later advances in the tool reduced original 35 questions to 24 questions. These 24 questions have provided data on the following four subscales: *Attraction to Policy Making*, measuring an individual’s opportunity in the formulation of public policy (Kelman, 1987); *Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty*, representing the degree of the person’s desire to serve the public interest (Downs, 1967); *Compassion*, demonstrating the level of one’s emotional response to humankind (Perry, 1996); and *Self-Sacrifice*, measuring the willingness to substitute service to others for tangible rewards (Perry, 1996).

Scoring the Public Service Motivation Scale was done by averaging the value of all items for each scale, with some items being scored in reverse (“R”). The *Attraction to Policy* subscale was scored by averaging items 5(R), 11(R), and 17(R), producing scores ranging from 1 to 7. The *Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty* subscale was scored by averaging items 2, 4, 7, 20(R), and 22, producing scores ranging from 1 to 7. The *Compassion* subscale was scored by averaging items 1, 8, 9, 13, 14(R), 16(R), 18(R) and 23(R), producing scores ranging from 1 to 7. The *Self-Sacrifice* subscale was scored by averaging items 3, 6, 10, 12, 15, 19(R), 21 and 24, producing scores ranging from 1 to 7. Responses were analyzed at the subscale level first with subsequent analysis using an aggregate score if indicated.

**Reliability.** Scale reliability was calculated by Perry (1996) at .90 (coefficient alpha) for a subset of the twenty-four items being studied using the Public Service Motivation Scale and coefficient alphas for the four subscales ranged from .69 to .74. Perry (1996) reported that the alpha coefficients provide independent corroboration for the results obtained from the use of the confirmatory factor analysis.
Validity. The Public Service Motivation Scale has been validated in an iterative process. Perry (1996) used confirmatory factor analysis to test the construct validity of the original public service motivation framework. His sample consisted of 376 managers, public managers, public employees as well as graduate and undergraduate students studying public affairs. From the survey analysis and results, Perry reduced the original dimensions to the four dimensions used in this study: attraction to public policymaking; commitment to public interest and civic duty; compassion; and self-sacrifice (Perry, 1996). Perry argued that "based on the developmental process and statistical analysis, the PSM scale presented here has good overall face and construct validity, discriminant validity among four component dimensions…” (p. 21).

Naff and Crum (1999) found a significant relationship between score on the PSM scale and federal employees’ job satisfaction, performance, intention to remain in the government, and support for the government’s reinvention efforts. Houston (2000) showed that public employees who score high on the PSM scale are more likely to place a higher value on the intrinsic reward of work that is important and provides a feeling of accomplishment. Lewis and Frank (2002) found that higher PSM scores increase the likelihood of working for government. Brewer (2003) showed that public employees score higher on items related to social trust, altruism, equality, tolerance, and humanitarianism and that they are more civically active.

Characteristics of the Researcher

The researcher is a middle age, white male, father of a school age child, who has held various roles in public school educational administration for over 21 years. The researcher holds a New York State School District Business Leader Certificate. He has worked in a large urban school district, a Board of Cooperating Educational Services (BOCES) and is currently employed at a small (900 student) suburban public school district in upstate New York.
Currently the researcher is employed as a school district Business Administrator. His work in this role, over the past 5 years, includes supervising employees in the district transportation department (director, mechanics, drivers and bus aides).

**Characteristics of the Sample**

Data related to the sample and demographic characteristics of the participants were gathered to enable comparison of survey data across multiple demographics. To that end, the survey sought to capture the following descriptive information from respondents:

- *How many years have you…*
  - a. Held a CDL license?
  - b. Driven in your current district?

- *Before your current position at this school have you…*
  - a. Driven K-12 buses in another district?
    - i. If yes, in how many districts?
    - ii. If yes, for how many years did you drive for another district?
  - b. Been a driver with a CDL but not for a school?

- *The district you currently work in is considered:* Urban, Rural or Suburban

- *Do you have children/grandchildren in the K-12 public school that you are currently driving for?*

- *What is your gender?*

- *What year were you born?*

- *What is your marital status?*

- *What level of education have you completed?*
Because of the educational setting and mission of schools, the work of bus drivers can be seen as occurring in a different context than other transportation jobs. Given this context, it was important to be able to evaluate how the drivers, themselves, viewed the context of their work. To provide information about their view, participants were asked to respond to four student efficacy questions intended to reflect the extent to which they saw their work as contributing to the unique educational setting and mission of their jobs. Participants were asked to answer the following questions using a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

- Students would not be able to receive an education without me.
- I am a significant part of student’s education.
- I am making a difference in the lives of the students I transport;
- My school district values me for the work I do.

In addition, to provide information about how participants feel about their jobs in the public school setting and during the current pandemic, the survey asked the following open-ended questions:

- I would stay with this current job for a long while if...?
- I would leave this job at the first opportunity if...?
- What do you like the most about your current job?
- If you could change one thing about your current job what would it be?
- How is COVID-19 influencing your thinking about returning to or leaving your job as a bus driver at your district?
Procedures

The procedure for this research included an initial pilot test to determine any adjustments that needed to be made, followed by the data collection via mail.

Pilot Test

Pilot testing of the survey was conducted with retired school bus drivers. The pilot test obtained participant feedback regarding how easy it was to understand the survey and how much time was needed to complete the survey. A cover letter was sent explaining the study’s purpose, background and procedures (see Appendix A). Participants were asked to indicate any areas of the survey that were not clearly understandable, and they were asked to provide suggestions on how to make improvements to the survey. Pilot study participants were asked to fill out an evaluation form (see Appendix F).

Linking District Characteristics to Individual Responses

In order to explore the contextual factors of district characteristics, such as enrollment, percent economically disadvantaged, and BOCES affiliation, the surveys that were sent out for completion included a randomly assigned district identification number. This was accomplished by generating a randomly unique number for each school district and placing that number on each set of packets that were sent to school districts. By adding this random number to each survey packet, it was then possible to determine the number of responses returned by a given district and was also used to connect district characteristics to responses received from participants. The following sequence of procedures was used to create and assign the unique randomly chosen identifier number for each school district.

1. Districts to be sent survey packets were identified.
2. A district-level EXCEL file was created containing the district name, urbanicity, enrollment, percent economically disadvantaged, BOCES affiliation, and a randomly generated number as the replacement identifier. In order to further protect schools and participants from being identified, the percent economically disadvantaged variable was transformed into a categorical variable.

3. Each survey packet that was sent out included the randomly assigned number.

4. After the packets were sent out, a "link file" version of the district-level EXCEL file that had both the district name and the random identification number was created. This file was saved away from all other data by providing the file to the dissertation co-chairs. The only purpose of this file was in case a link needed to be verified. The “link file” was created using only the principal investigator’s computer which is password protected.

5. In order to de-identify the data, after creating the link file, the district name was removed from the district characteristics file so that identifying districts could not be easily done.

6. When entering data from each survey, the random district identifier was included. This identifier was used to merge in the district characteristics with the EXCEL file. This EXCEL file was password protected, only known by the principal investigator.

7. Once data analysis is completed, this “link file” was destroyed.

**Data Collection**

1. A district introduction letter (Appendix A) was sent to each District Superintendent, Business Administrator and Transportation Director. This letter described the goal of the research that was being conducted, outlined the importance of the research, and
use of the data collected within this dissertation study. This cover letter also conveyed that participant anonymity was guaranteed. Included with this letter was a copy of the District Authorization Approval Form (Appendix B) requesting that the appropriate district representative provide authorization, by returning a complete form, in order for their district to participate in this study.

2. In a separate mailing 2 days after the original district introduction letter,

Transportation Directors were mailed a copy of the same introduction letter (Appendix A), a copy of the District Authorization Approval Form (Appendix B) and 15 - 35 participant survey packets (15 for districts with less than 1000 students, 20 for districts with between 1001-1500 students, and 35 for districts with more than 1000 students). The participant survey packets consisted of a Driver participation cover letter (Appendix D), survey instrument (Appendix G), and a self-addressed postage paid envelope. It was asked of the Transportation Director that they provide the survey packets to drivers only if their district approved participating in this study. If the district did not approve participation, Transportation Directors were asked to throw out the survey packets.

3. Within the Driver participation cover letter (Appendix D), it was asked to return the completed survey within 2 weeks of being provided the survey using the self-addressed, U.S. postage paid return envelope. This envelope was provided to each participant to eliminate district administrators from being able to review survey results and to remove any financial barriers that the district might incur for returning the completed surveys.
4. Two weeks after the mailing of these surveys, a reminder e-mail was sent to all Transportation Directors, whose schools had not sent back a District Authorization form, with a copy also sent to the Superintendent and Business Administrator, requesting to know if their district had approved participation in this study and was allowing drivers the opportunity to participate in the survey if they would like to (Appendix C).

5. After 2 weeks from date of the reminder e-mail, districts in which the number of returned surveys was less than 5 were identified. The Transportation Directors in these districts were sent a further e-mail, also copied to the Superintendent and Business Administrator, reminding them of the request that, if the district had authorized the study, survey packets needed to be made available to bus drivers and to alert drivers that any driver (either voluntarily and anonymously participating) was being asked to return a completed survey in the pre-addressed, U.S. postage provided envelope within 2 weeks.

6. If there were any surveys received and no District Authorizations Form, the District Superintendent was contacted directly for their permission, requesting a signed District Authorization form be sent back. No surveys were used if there had not been a District Authorization Form received.

All data that was returned was entered into an EXCEL spreadsheet and then processed through a commercially recognized statistical program to study the statistical relationships of the dependent and independent variables.
The University at Albany IRB protocol was approved before data collection began. There was no personally identifiable information collected or stored. Participant anonymity was guaranteed.

**Informed Consent**

Ethics were a top priority of this study. Therefore, following the methods as outlined in this chapter was paramount in ensuring the validity and reliability of the study. Participants of the study were provided a description of informed consent, including what the study’s purpose was and the potential benefits and concerns with participating in the study. It was explained that participation in the study was voluntary and that all information collected would be confidential. If the participants were not willing to provide informed consent, they were asked not to return the survey. If they needed further explanation, they were referred back to the Participants Cover letter (Appendix D) for contact information.

**Sample Size Calculation**

School bus drivers in 94 school districts were surveyed. It was estimated that the school districts on average have 15 drivers. The estimated population size was 1,410 drivers. Using $N$ as the population size (1,301), $e$ as the margin of error (5%), $z$ as the Confidence Level (95% using a z-score of 1.96), and the $p$ as the percentage value, (using 50% represented by .5), it was determined that 297 completed surveys were needed to be 95% confident that the answers provided will represent the whole population with a 5% margin of error.

**Data Verification**

Data entry from 301 surveys was outsourced and entered into an EXCEL spreadsheet. After all data were entered, randomly 10 surveys were selected and examined for input accuracy. Three errors were found. Data validation was suspended, the data set was returned to the data
enterer and each cell was rechecked for accuracy against surveys returned. A second file was returned. Once the second data file was returned, a second validation was completed. Randomly another thirty (30) were drawn and examined for accuracy in data entry. For this sample of thirty (30) surveys, no data entry mistakes were found. The second file was used for the purposes of statistical analysis.

Statistical Product and the Social Sciences (v.26) (SPSS) was used to analyze the data and create all quantitative results. The quantitative analysis employed correlation and regression; qualitative responses were analyzed post hoc to identify themes. Those themes are presented below in Chapter 4.
Chapter Four: Results

The fundamental purpose of this study was to identify predictors of turnover intention among K-12 school bus drivers. This chapter begins with a description of the demographics of the sample, using tables to complement the summaries. It then presents the quantitative results of the analysis of the overarching theory of person-environment fit within K-12 public school bus drivers by determining if there is any effect on one’s turnover intention when looking through the lens of conceptual frameworks of the Theory of Work Adjustment, Meaningful Work and Public Service Motivation. Finally, a supplementary analysis of qualitative responses to open-ended questions is offered.

This study looked to address the following research questions:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of their work as satisfying and their turnover intention?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of meaningful work and their turnover intention?

RQ3: Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of public service and their turnover intention?

Demographic Data

Descriptive statistics were produced for demographic variables identified in prior studies of vocational behavior and turnover intentions as being relevant, including gender, education level achieved, marital status, and work history (Al Zamel, et al., 2021; Hasan Zari Matin, et al., 2012). Demographic findings for this study are presented in Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4. Just over half (54%) of the participants were male. A large majority (73%) were married and about 48%
reported having some post-high-school education or training. About a quarter reported that they had children or grandchildren in the public school in which they were currently driving.

Table 1. Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>54.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>45.61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>72.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Highest Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GED</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highschool</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>44.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certification</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Children/Grandchildren in their School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>74.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25.68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5. On average, drivers were about 59 years old, held their CDL license an average of 15.5 years, had driven in their current school...
district for an average of 10 years, and had not driven for another district. For those who had

driven outside their current district, most had driven for only one other district.

**Table 5. Age, years in service, and education (in years)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>58.72</td>
<td>10.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years held a CDL license</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>15.56</td>
<td>12.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years driven in your current district</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>8.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level of education achieved (in years)</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6. Driven K-12 buses in another district**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>79.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7. Number of other districts driven**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>64.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8. Years driven for another district**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This sample of responding drivers corresponds with local observation. That is, these drivers seemed “typical” in terms of gender, age, and number of years they held a CDL license. They seemed atypical in that few had driven for other districts.

**Characteristics of the Districts of Respondents**

**District Locale Classifications.** The 301 respondents came from 32 districts. Districts were distinguished by type, following definitions applied in the NCES Locale Classifications and Criteria (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). One hundred and seventy-two surveys (57.14% of responding districts) were returned from “Suburban – small/large” districts’ 19 surveys (6.31% of the responding districts) were returned from “Town - distant/remote” districts, and 110 surveys (36.55% of the responding districts) were returned from “Rural - fringe/distant” districts. “City” districts, the fourth type in the NCES, were not represented in the present sample.

**District Student Enrollment.** Student population of the districts of the respondents ranged from 509 – 9,335. Small sized districts (districts with student population less than 2,000) were represented in 41.53% of the sample, medium sized (populations of 2,001 – 5,000) in 44.52% and large sized (populations of 5,001 – 9,335) students in 13.95% of this sample.

**Economically Disadvantaged School Population.** The percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the districts of respondents was obtained from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Public School Enrollment report card (NYSED, 2021). NYSED defines “economically disadvantaged” as:

Economically disadvantaged students are those who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs, such as the free or reduced-price lunch programs, Social Security Insurance (SSI), Food Stamps, Foster Care, Refugee
Assistance (cash or medical assistance), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified as low income, all students from that household (economic unit) may be identified as low income (para. 1).

The 32 school districts in this sample ranged from 14.02% to 71.80% of their student population being economically disadvantaged, with an average of 37.18%.

**Descriptive Statistics for the Theoretical Variables**

Descriptive statistics and internal consistency reliability estimates were calculated for Turnover Intention (as the dependent variable) and all of the scales and subscales of Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), Meaningful Work (MW), Public Service Motivation (PSM). These are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Descriptive statistics for theoretical variables**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TURNOVER INTENTION</strong></td>
<td>293</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TWA – GENERAL WORK SATISFACTION</strong></td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>74.50</td>
<td>12.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>46.91</td>
<td>7.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extrinsic Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>27.76</td>
<td>6.56</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MW – MEANINGFUL WORK</strong></td>
<td>285</td>
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<td>38.40</td>
<td>7.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive Meaning</td>
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<td>0.84</td>
<td>15.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meaning-Making through Work</td>
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<td>0.85</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Good Motivations</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSM – PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</strong></td>
<td>271</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction to Policy Making</td>
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<td>0.58</td>
<td>3.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compass</td>
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<td>0.65</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.81</td>
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<td>Self-Sacrifice</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>0.90</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Turnover Intention was measured by the TIS-6, which includes 6 items with a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The total score is derived from summing responses on all six items. Scores can range from 6 to 30, with higher scores conveying a stronger intention to leave. The means of the current sample are consistent with previous research where teacher turnover intention was studied (TIS-6 $M=12.83$, $SD=6.02$) (Sanchez, 2020). Cronbach’s alpha for the Turnover Intention scale ($\alpha = .84$) can be considered good (George & Mallery, 2003).

Job satisfaction (from the Theory of Work Adjustment) was measured by the MSQ Short Form, which includes 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 (Very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job) to 5 (Very satisfied with this aspect of my job). A General Satisfaction score was drawn from all 20 items. Scores can range from 20 to 100. Intrinsic job satisfaction is a subscale that was drawn from 12 items, and has a range from 12 to 60. Extrinsic job satisfaction is a subscale that was drawn from 6 items and has a range from 6 to 30. The means of the current sample are consistent with previous research where janitors and maintenance workers were studied (General Satisfaction $M=78.01$, $SD =11.51$; Intrinsic Satisfaction $M=49.03$, $SD=6.91$; Extrinsic Satisfaction $M=20.99$, $SD=4.86$) (Weiss, et al., 1967). Cronbach’s alpha for the General Satisfaction scale ($\alpha = .92$) can be considered excellent (George & Mallery, 2003).

Meaningful Work was measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory which is a 10-question survey with a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Absolutely Untrue) to 5 (Absolutely True). The Meaningful Work scale is created by using all 10 questions and has a minimum range of 10, and a maximum score of 50. There are also three subscales: the Positive Meaning subscale uses four items and can range from 4 to 20; Meaning-Making through Work subscale uses three
items, with a minimum score of 3, and a maximum score of 15; the Greater Good Motivations subscale uses three items, with a minimum score of 3, and a maximum score of 15. The means of the current sample were consistent with previous research where employees in higher education were studied (Positive Meaning, $M=15.12$, $SD=4.01$; Meaning Making, $M=10.70$, $SD=3.05$; and Greater Good, $M=11.82$, $SD=2.85$) (Steger, Duffy & Dik, 2012). Cronbach’s alpha for the Meaningful Work scale ($\alpha = .91$) can be considered excellent (George & Mallery, 2003).

The Public Service Motivation Scale uses 24 questions answered on a 7-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The Public Motivation scale total score is constructed using all items which are averaged, with a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 7. Subscales included Attraction to Policy Making, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion and Self-Sacrifice. All subscales have a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 7. The means of the current sample were consistent with previous research where 30,000 public sector European employees were studied (Attraction to Policy Making, $M=3.42$, $SD=1.20$; Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, $M=3.76$, $SD=1.01$; Compassion, $M=3.27$, $SD=1.21$; Self-Sacrifice, $M=3.36$, $SD=1.00$) (Vandenabeele et. al, 2008). Cronbach’s alpha for the Public Service Motivation scale ($\alpha = .84$) can be considered good (George & Mallery, 2003).

**Intercorrelations**

Correlations between each of the major demographic and the independent and dependent variables are presented in Table 11. In order to evaluate a possible role of demographic variables in the main data analysis, three categorical variables were recoded: Gender was coded male as 0 and female as 1; marital status was recoded to have single, divorced and widowed as 0 and
married as *I*; and the highest level of education achieved variable was recoded to approximate the number years of formal education completed (GED and High School was recoded as 12, associate’s degree as 14, bachelor’s degree as 16, and master’s degree as 18). Significant correlations (*p* < .05) are described below.

**Correlations among Demographic Variables**

**Age and Years held Commercial Driver License (CDL).** The relationship between age and years held CDL exhibited a positive correlation at .35 (*p* < .01). The older a driver is, the more years they have had a CDL.

**Age and Years in Current District.** The relationship between age and years in current district exhibited a positive correlation at .21 (*p* < .01). The older a driver is, the longer they have been driving in their current district.

**Age and Gender.** The relationship between age and gender exhibited a negative correlation at -.29 (*p* < .01). Male drivers tended to be older.

**Years held Commercial Driver License (CDL) and Years in Current District.** The relationship between the number of years the driver held a commercial driver license (CDL) and years in current district exhibited a positive correlation at .56 (*p* < .01). The more years a driver held a CDL, the more years they have driven in their current district.

These demographic variables were related in unsurprising ways. Older drivers are likely to have obtained their CDL and continued to use it throughout their work life and in the years driving for their current districts. Male drivers, many of whom may drive a bus as a second career, stay longer and age in their role.
Correlations between Demographic Variables and Turnover Intention

Age and Turnover Intention. The relationship between age and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.15 ($p<.05$). The older the drivers, the lower turnover intention they had.

Correlations between Demographic Variables and Independent Variables

Age and Extrinsic Satisfaction. The relationship between age and Extrinsic Satisfaction exhibited a positive correlation at .13 ($p<.05$). The older a driver was, the more extrinsic satisfaction they reported.

Age and Attraction to Policy Making. The relationship between age and Attraction to Policy Making exhibited a positive correlation at .13 ($p<.05$). The older a driver was, the more attracted to policy making they were.

Years held Commercial Driver License (CDL) and Meaning-Making through Work. The relationship between years held CDL Meaning-Making through Work exhibited a positive correlation at .13 ($p<.05$). The more years a school bus driver held their CDL, the more they reported work as a source of meaning in their life.

Gender. Several correlations between gender and independent variable scales and subscales were statistically significant in the correlational analysis. Because gender was recoded (0, 1) for the correlational analysis, these correlations are better understood by examining the means for each. Table 10 reports the relevant means.
Table 10. Gender differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male M (SD)</th>
<th>Female M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Satisfaction</td>
<td>45.98 (6.64)</td>
<td>48.13 (6.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic Satisfaction</td>
<td>28.39 (5.65)</td>
<td>26.61 (7.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful Work</td>
<td>36.93 (7.73)</td>
<td>40.15 (6.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Meaning</td>
<td>15.31 (3.06)</td>
<td>16.65 (2.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning-Making through Work</td>
<td>10.29 (2.57)</td>
<td>11.33 (2.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Good Motivations</td>
<td>11.48 (2.46)</td>
<td>12.17 (2.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>4.33 (0.81)</td>
<td>4.58 (0.94)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender and Intrinsic Satisfaction. The relationship between gender and Intrinsic Satisfaction exhibited a positive correlation at .16 (p<.01). Females reported more intrinsic satisfaction compared to males.

Gender and Extrinsic Satisfaction. The relationship between gender and Extrinsic Satisfaction exhibited a negative correlation at -.14 (p<.05). Males reported more extrinsic satisfaction compared to females.

Gender and Meaningful Work. The relationship between gender and Meaningful Work (the overall scale) exhibited a positive correlation at .22 (p<.01). Females reported their work as more meaningful, valuable and worthwhile more than did males.

Gender and Positive Meaning. The relationship between gender and Positive Meaning exhibited a positive correlation at .22 (p<.01). Females reported their work holding greater personal meaning, significance or purpose more than males did.

Gender and Meaning-Making through Work. The relationship between gender and Meaning Making Through Work exhibited a positive correlation at .21 (p<.01). Females reported their work created a broader meaning in their lives more than males did.
**Gender and Greater Good Motivations.** The relationship between gender and Greater Good Motivations exhibited a positive correlation at .15 ($p<.05$). Females reported their efforts at work made a more positive contribution and benefits others and society than did males.

**Gender and Compassion.** The relationship between gender and Compassion exhibited a positive correlation at .16 ($p<.01$). Females reported greater concern for the welfare of others or society at large in their work than males did.

Taken together, the demographic variable correlations suggest a sample in which females reported higher scores than did males on the meaningful work dimensions and intrinsic satisfaction, while males—who also tended to be older—scored higher on extrinsic satisfaction. Regardless of gender, drivers who were older were less likely to intend to leave, and more satisfied with the extrinsic elements of their work.
### Table 11. Intercorrelation

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<td>Years in current district</td>
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<td>0.08</td>
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<td>0.16 **</td>
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<td>0.27 **</td>
<td>0.23 **</td>
<td>0.25 **</td>
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<td>0.76 **</td>
<td>0.14 **</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Sacrifice</td>
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<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.06</td>
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<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19 **</td>
<td>0.21 **</td>
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<td>0.30 **</td>
<td>0.35 **</td>
<td>0.33 **</td>
<td>0.95 **</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Sample size $n = 301$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. 

Correcting for likely Type 1 error

Demographic variables have been used as possible control variables in other studies of turnover intention (Rosser, 2004; Arnup, & Bowles, 2016), and were included in the present study as well. However, including all of these variables would result in a large number of statistical tests, and, as Emerson (2020) and Armstrong (2014) argue, as the number of tests increases, so does the likelihood of a Type I error. In order to reduce this likelihood, a Bonferroni strategy was used to determine which demographic variables, if any, should be included as control variables in the major analysis. Correlations between each of the major demographic variables and the dependent and independent variables were calculated, and the results were evaluated against an adjusted standard. To control for Type I error, a Bonferroni type adjustment was made by dividing the p value of .05 by the number of correlations calculated (63), yielding an adjusted p value of .0008 as the significance level that would need to be exceeded if a given variable were to be included in the final analysis.

Gender (included as a dichotomous variable) was found to exceed this value in the correlation with three of the independent variables [Meaningful Work (r= .22), Positive Meaning (r= .22), and Meaning-Making through Work (r= .21)]. Gender was therefore included in the main analysis as a control variable. No other association with the remaining demographic variables was found to be significant at that level. Except for gender, then, all demographic variables were excluded from subsequent analyses. Means and standard deviations for all theoretical variables for males and females are presented in Table 12.
### Table 12. Gender differences for theoretical variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Meaning Making through Work</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Good Motivations</td>
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<td><strong>PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</strong></td>
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<td>Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty</td>
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<td>Compass</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Sacrifice</td>
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<tr>
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**Regression Analysis**

**Initial Correlation Analysis**

In order to provide a preliminary analysis of the strength and direction of the association between the major variables, Pearson product correlations were calculated for all of the variables to be entered into the regression analysis. The subscales associated with Work Satisfaction,
Meaningful Work, and Public Service Motivation were the independent variables in the regression analysis. Full correlation results are presented Table 13.
Table 13. *Correlations for variables in the regression analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 TURNOVER INTENTION</th>
<th>2 Gender</th>
<th>3 WORK SATISFACTION</th>
<th>4 WORK SATISFACTION</th>
<th>5 MEANINGFUL WORK</th>
<th>6 MEANINGFUL WORK</th>
<th>7 PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</th>
<th>8 PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</th>
<th>9 PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</th>
<th>10 PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</th>
<th>11 PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION</th>
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<tr>
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<td>** 0.03 ** 0.12</td>
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</table>

*Note.* Sample size *n* = 301, *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01.
**Correlations with Turnover Intention.** Both of the Job Satisfaction subscales (intrinsic and extrinsic), all three Meaningful Work subscales (Positive Meaning, Meaning Making through Work, and Greater Good Motivations), and two of the Public Service Motivation subscales (Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty and Self-Sacrifice) were significantly correlated with turnover intention.

**Job Satisfaction Subscales and Turnover Intention.** The relationship between Intrinsic Satisfaction and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.53 ($p<.01$). Drivers with greater intrinsic satisfaction had lower turnover intentions.

The relationship between Extrinsic Satisfaction and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.58 ($p<.01$). Drivers with greater extrinsic satisfaction had lower turnover intentions.

**Meaningful Work Subscales and Turnover Intention.** The relationship between Positive Meaning and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.51 ($p<.01$). Drivers who reported their work as more meaningful, valuable and worthwhile had lower turnover intentions.

The relationship between Meaning Making Through Work and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.48 ($p<.01$). Drivers who reported work creating a broader meaning in their lives had lower turnover intentions.

The relationship between Greater Good and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at -.44 ($p<.01$). Drivers who perceived their work making a positive contribution and benefiting others and society had lower turnover intentions.

**Public Service Motivation Subscales and Turnover Intention.** The relationship between Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty and Turnover Intention exhibited a
negative correlation at - .13 (p < .05). Drivers who had greater motives to fulfill societal obligations or pursue public values had reduced turnover intentions.

The relationship between Self-Sacrifice and Turnover Intention exhibited a negative correlation at - .12 (p < .05). Drivers who believed they are making a personal sacrifice in order to contribute to the well-being of others or society at large had lower turnover intention.

Correlations among independent variables. Correlations among independent variables were examined. Of note, Attraction to Policy Making did not correlate significantly with any of the other subscales in the other independent variable clusters.

Job Satisfaction subscales were significantly correlated with three Meaningful Work and three Public Service Motivation subscales. Those scoring higher in Intrinsic Satisfaction also scored higher in Positive Meaning, Meaning Making Through Work, and Greater Good Motivations. Those scoring higher on Extrinsic Satisfaction also scored higher on Positive Meaning, Meaning Making Through Work, and Greater Good Motivations. Extrinsic Satisfaction was positively correlated with Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, and Self-Sacrifice.

Meaningful Work subscales were also positively correlated with three Public Service Motivation subscales. Those scoring higher in Positive Meaning, Meaning Making Through Work, and Greater Good Motivations scored higher on Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, and Self-Sacrifice.

With regard to Public Service Motivation, those scoring higher on Intrinsic Satisfaction also indicated a higher score on Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion and Self-Sacrifice.
Correlations within independent variable clusters. Within the Job Satisfaction cluster, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Satisfaction were positively correlated to each other, indicating those scoring higher in either subscale would score higher in the other.

Within the Meaningful Work cluster, Positive Meaning, Meaning Making Through Work, and Greater Good Motivations were positively correlated with each other. Those scoring higher in any meaningful work had a higher score in the remaining subscales.

Within the Public Service Motivation cluster, varying levels of correlation were found. Attraction to Policy Making, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty and Compassion were positively correlated. Those scoring higher in any of these subscales also scored higher in the remaining subscales. Attraction to Policy Making and Self-Sacrifice were negatively correlated indicating a those scoring higher on Attraction to Policy Making had a lower Self-Sacrifice score.

Preliminary Regression Analyses

Preliminary regression analyses were conducted for each cluster of theoretical variables, separately, to evaluate if Job Satisfaction, Meaningful Work or Public Service Motivation, predict turnover intention in school bus drivers.

Job Satisfaction. A regression analysis (shown in Table 14) was used to assess whether Job Satisfaction, comprised of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Satisfaction variables, significantly predicts bus driver turnover intention.
Table 14. Summary of Job Satisfaction regression for Turnover Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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<td>294</td>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Satisfaction, Extrinsic Satisfaction

Table 15. Individual regression coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>32.42</td>
<td>19.37</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Intrinsic Satisfaction</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>-0.40</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

The results of the regression suggested that a model with both the Intrinsic and Extrinsic Satisfaction variables, together, explained about 37% of the variance in Turnover Intention. Intrinsic Satisfaction significantly predicts turnover intention, $\beta = -.20, t = -4.42, p < .001$, such that greater intrinsic satisfaction was associated with lower turnover intention. Greater extrinsic satisfaction also significantly predicted lower turnover intention, $\beta = -.33, t = -6.69, p < .001$.

**Meaningful Work.** A regression analysis (shown in Table 16) was used to assess whether Meaningful Work, comprised of Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, and Greater Good Motivations variables, significantly predicts bus driver turnover intention.
Table 16. Summary of Meaningful Work regression for Turnover Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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<td>4.51440</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>38.939</td>
</tr>
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</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, Greater Good Motivations,

Table 17. Individual regression coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Beta</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Interception</td>
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a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

The results of the regression suggested that Greater Good Motivations, Meaning-Making through Work and Positive Meaning, together, explained about 28% of the variance. Higher scores on the Positive Meaning subscale significantly predicts lower turnover intention, $\beta = -0.48$, $t = -2.93, p = .004$. Meaning-Making through Work significantly predicts lower turnover intention, $\beta = -0.42, t = -2.53, p = .012$. Greater Good Motivations does not significantly predict turnover intention when the other variables related to meaningful work are included in the model, $\beta = -0.29, t = 1.81, ns$.

Public Service Motivation. A regression analysis (shown in Table 18) was used to assess whether Public Service Motivation, comprised of the Self-Sacrifice, Attraction to Policy
Making, Compassion, and Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty variables, significantly predicted bus driver turnover.

Table 18. Summary of Public Service Motivation regression for Turnover Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>F Change</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Attraction to Policy Making, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic duty, Compassion, Self-Sacrifice

Table 19. Individual regression coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Compassity</td>
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</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

The results of the regression suggested that Self-Sacrifice, Attraction to Policy Making, Compassion, and Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, together, were not significant, $R^2 = .02$, $F(4) = 1.50$, $ns$. The Attraction to Policy Making variable did not significantly predict bus driver turnover intention, $\beta = -.27$, $t = -0.96$, $ns$. The Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty variable did not significantly predict bus driver turnover intention, $\beta = -.50$, $t = -.84$, $ns$. The Compassion variable did not significantly predict bus driver turnover intention,
\[ \beta = .36, t = .73, \text{ns} \] The Self-Sacrifice variable did not significantly predict bus driver turnover intention, \[ \beta = -.55, t = -0.95, \text{ns} \].

**Full Regression Analysis**

The full regression analysis included Gender, the two Job Satisfaction subscales (Intrinsic and Extrinsic), the three Meaningful Work subscales (Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, Greater Good Motivations) and the four Public Service Motivation subscales (Attraction to Policy Making, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, and Self-Sacrifice). Results (Table 20) show that variance in the dependent variable, Turnover Intention, is not significantly associated with Gender. Entering gender on the first step of the regression then allows a view of the contribution of the main independent variables beyond the contribution of gender.

The second step of the full regression analysis (including the full set of independent variables—Intrinsic Satisfaction, Extrinsic Satisfaction, Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, Greater Good Motivations, Attraction to Policy, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, Self-Sacrifice and Gender) showed an \( R^2 \) increase of .5 (\( p < .001 \)) and an overall model explaining approximately 48% of the variance in Turnover Intention.
Table 20. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression for Turnover Intention*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Model</th>
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<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
<th>Sig. F Change</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.71b</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>29.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender
b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Intrinsic Satisfaction, Extrinsic Satisfaction, Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, Greater Good Motivations, Attraction to Policy Making, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, Self-Sacrifice.

Examining the contributions of individual independent variables, shown in Table 21 below, one of the Work Satisfaction variables, (Extrinsic Satisfaction), and two of the Meaningful Work variables (Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work) were statistically significant at the .05 level and show a trend in the predicted direction. The other Meaningful Work variable (Greater Good Motivations), and none of the Public Service Motivation variables, were significant predictors of turnover intention. With one exception, these findings from the full regression analysis are consistent with what was shown in the preliminary regression analyses that included only individual clusters of the theoretical variables. The one exception was the failure of Intrinsic Satisfaction to serve as a significant predictor of Turnover Intention in the full model. This exception may be because the construct of intrinsic satisfaction may be very closely related to the constructs elaborated about meaningful work and, as such, the impact of the Intrinsic Satisfaction scale could be absorbed into the effects attributed to the cluster of Meaningful Work scales. The correlations between Positive Meaning, Meaning-Making through Work, Greater Good Motivations and Intrinsic Satisfaction, as reported in Table 11, support such a relationship.
# Table 21. Individual regression coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>33.96</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Work Satisfaction**

- Intrinsic Satisfaction: -0.06, -0.08, -1.2, 0.23
- Extrinsic Satisfaction: -0.32, -0.39, -6.5, <.001

**Meaningful Work**

- Positive Meaning: -0.36, -0.2, 2.43, 0.02
- Meaning-Making through Work: -0.35, -0.17, 2.37, 0.02
- Greater Good Motivations: -0.27, -0.12, 1.87, 0.06

**Public Service Motivation**

- Attraction to Policy Making: -0.23, -0.05, -1.09, 0.28
- Commitment to Public Interest/Civic Duty: 0.36, 0.06, 0.78, 0.43
- Compassion: 0.44, 0.07, 1.19, 0.24
- Self-Sacrifice: 0.01, 0.02, 0.24, 0.81

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention
Results of Tested Hypotheses

The analyses reported above provided a test of the three major hypotheses of this study. Results are summarized below.

**Hypothesis 1**

Hypothesis 1, framed as a research question (*Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of their work as satisfying and their turnover intention*) looked to understand if a driver’s level of satisfaction has any association with their intent to leave.

The full analysis indicated that Extrinsic Satisfaction served as a significant predictor of school bus drivers’ turnover intentions. The more satisfied a driver was with the extrinsic elements of the job (such as pay, health insurance, policies, and supervision) the less likely it was that they intended to leave.

**Hypothesis 2**

Hypothesis 2, framed as a research question (*Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of meaningful work and their turnover intention?) looked to understand if a driver’s level of finding meaning in the work they do has any association to their turnover intentions.

The full analysis indicated that there was a relationship between two of the Meaningful Work subscales and Turnover Intention. Positive Meaning and Meaning-Making through Work were predictors of driver’s turnover intention. This suggests that the more the driver found their work be-meaningful, valuable and worthwhile, and the more they reported their work as a source of broader meaning (Steger & Dik, 2010), the less likely they were to have high turnover intention.
Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3, framed as a research question (*Is there a relationship between K-12 public school bus drivers’ perceptions of public service and their turnover intention?*) looked to understand if a driver’s level of Public Service Motivation had any association with their turnover intentions.

The results of the analysis found no support for a relationship with any of the four subscales of Public Service Motivation, Attraction to Policy, Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, Self-Sacrifice and one’s turnover intention.

**Supplemental Analyses**

**Student Efficacy**

To gain perspective on how drivers see themselves in the role of educating students and if they see their school district as valuing the work they do, four “student efficacy” questions were asked of drivers. Responses were constructed with the following response options: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Undecided), 4 (Agree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). As shown in Table 22 below, responses indicate that the drivers see themselves as making a difference in the lives of the students they transport, and consider themselves a significant part of a student’s education. On average, drivers were more undecided if their district values them for the work they do and about the idea that students would not be able to receive an education without them.
Table 22. Descriptive statistics for Student Efficacy questions

(N=292)  |  M   |  SD
--- | --- | ---
Students would not be able to receive an education without me | 2.69 | 1.22
I am a significant part of a student's education | 3.58 | 1.01
I am making a difference in the lives of the students I transport | 4.00 | 0.84
My school district values me for the work I do | 3.29 | 1.09

Open Ended Questions

In addition to the formal scales and demographic questions, several open-ended questions were asked of all survey participants. This gave drivers the ability to add personal thoughts and context about the current job they hold. Questions asked of survey participants included:

OEQ 1: *What do you like most about your current job?*

OEQ 2: *I would stay with this current job for a long while if...*

OEQ3: *If you could change one thing about your current job what would it be?*

OEQ4: *I would leave this job at the first opportunity if...*

OEQ5: *How is COVID-19 influencing your thinking about returning to or leaving your job as a bus driver at your district?*

Participant responses to these questions were evaluated to suggest more (and less) common themes in the sample. The tables below note the main themes evident in respondent’s answers; additional details are provided in Appendix H.
“Making a difference in students’ lives/Helping students/families” was the most frequent theme in responses to this question. This theme was reflected in responses that spoke to the centrality of the students to what they like about their work. Less frequent were responses that spoke to how the job fit with other elements of the driver’s life (such as their schedule, time off, other tasks that need tending), or that addressed compensation or working conditions.
“Pay/Benefits” was the most frequent theme in responses to this question. This theme was reflected in responses that spoke to the extrinsic rewards (pay, insurance, length of day) that drivers receive for the work they do. Less frequent were responses that spoke to how the job fit with other elements of the driver’s life (such as their health, age and schedule), or that addressed aspects of their role such as advancement and job consistency.
“Pay/Benefits” and “Leadership” were the most frequent themes in responses to this question. These themes were reflected in responses that spoke to the extrinsic rewards provided and department leadership, specifically a desire for more/better communication and support from departmental leadership. Less frequent were responses that spoke to how the job fit with other elements of the driver’s life (hours/start time), or that addressed aspects of the job that would make it better (such as aides on buses and less rules/paperwork).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN MORE THAN 25% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better Pay/Benefits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN 10% TO 25% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>48</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal reasons/Personal health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Won the Lottery</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age/Retirement/Death</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not leave</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN FEWER THAN 10% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving safety</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Pay/Benefits” was the most frequent theme in responses to this question. This theme was reflected in responses that spoke to the extrinsic rewards could be provided elsewhere. Less frequent were responses that spoke to how the job fit with other elements of the driver’s life.
(personal, health, driver age/retirement/death), or that addressed characteristics of the job that would make the job better (work environment and management).

Table 27. OEQ5: How is COVID-19 influencing your thinking about returning to or leaving your job as a bus driver at your district? n = 277

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN MORE THAN 25% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>193</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN 10% TO 25% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES REFLECTED IN FEWER THAN 10% OF RESPONSES</th>
<th>26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Concern, but still driving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No opinion/Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of drivers responded that COVID-19 was not influencing their thinking about returning to or leaving their bus driver job.

Administrative Responses

Along with authorizing participation in this study, school district administration was asked to respond to questions that were used for descriptive analysis:

AQ1: Compared to previous years are you experiencing a change in the amount of applications for bus driver positions? With responses ranging from 1 (A lot less), 2 (Somewhat less), 3 (No less – no more), 4 (Somewhat more) to 5 (A lot more), the responses averaged 2.04 or a “somewhat less” score. The range of responses was from 1 to 4.

AQ2: Are you experiencing greater separations than in prior years?” With responses ranging from 1 (A lot less), 2 (Somewhat less), 3 (No less – no more), 4 (Somewhat more) to 5
(A lot more), the average for the 32 districts was 3.30 or “no less – no more.” The range was from 1 to 4.

This information provided a perspective into how, the district administrators believed this year, 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, on average compared to previous years in regard to driver recruitment (applications). Findings indicate Administrators believed not only that in the year of this study there were fewer applicants (“somewhat less”), but also that there was no change in current drivers leaving their roles as bus drivers (“no less—no more”).

**Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the statistics and analysis to answer the three research questions addressed by this study. The study drew on a sample of 301 bus drivers from primarily small- and medium-sized suburban districts. Just over half of the responding drivers were male, averaging 59 years in age. They were experienced drivers, holding their CDL licenses for an average of over 15 years, and driving for their current district over 10 years. Major findings in the analysis of their responses indicate that their turnover intentions were predictable by their level of extrinsic satisfaction with their current work, and the extent to which they: a) experience their work activity as meaningful; and b) connect the meaningfulness of their work to the meaningfulness of their lives.

Bus drivers in this study viewed themselves as making a difference in the lives of the students they transport, and generally agreed they are a significant part of a student’s education. They were less affirmative about whether students would be able to receive an education without them and whether their school district values them for the work they do.

Responding to open-ended questions, drivers indicated that making a difference in students’ lives and helping students/families was what they most liked about their job. Pay and
benefits were the most common reason drivers would remain in their current role. Pay and benefits—as well as leadership and communication/support—were most commonly cited as what they would change about their current job, if they could. Drivers most commonly reported they would change jobs if they could find better pay and benefits somewhere else.

The sample for this study was collected in the spring of 2021 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. School district employees across the country were asked to continue their service with high COVID-19 Delta variant transmission rates. However, 70% of the bus drivers reported that COVID-19 had no influence on their decision to return to or leave the bus driver role in their current district. Although subsequent trends may differ, at the time district administrators responded (May of 2021), there were somewhat-fewer bus driver applicants in the year of the study, but that they were not experiencing greater separations of bus drivers as compared to prior years.
Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter reviews the context for the present study and provides a summary of the sample characteristics and interpretation of the findings. Also provided are implications for theory, practice, and future research, limitations, and conclusions related to turnover intentions of K-12 public school bus drivers.

Context for Present Study

Public school districts across the country and in New York State are facing a bus driver shortage that endangers the opportunity for many students to learn in person. As of 2016, projections for New York alone suggested a need to replace about 1 in 8 school bus drivers every year through 2026 (New York State Department of Labor, 2019). While hiring new drivers is one way to look at solving this problem, another way is to reduce the turnover among current school bus drivers. The present study focused on reducing turnover by examining how person-environment fit (P-E fit) might explain why drivers remain employed as K-12 bus drivers. Three “P-E fit” theories were used in this study: Theories of Work Adjustment (TWA; Dawis, 2005), Meaningful Work (MW; Steger et al., 2012) and Public Service Motivation (PSM; Perry, 1996). Three hundred and one (301) drivers from thirty-two (32) districts in the New York capitol region participated in the study.

Characteristics of the Sample

The characteristics of the current sample painted a picture of a stable workforce that is aging, and on average, seems invested in remaining in their employment as drivers. The demographic information provided indicated that this is an older population, about 59 years old on average, and is nearly evenly distributed between male and female. They tend to be married, and have not continued their education past high school. Their experience, on average, as a
driver is lengthy; with most having held a commercial driver’s license for over 15 years, and having driven for their current district for more than 10 years. Contrary to historical views of driver work, when mothers made up much of the driver population—which allowed them to follow the school schedule and be home after the school day and during school breaks with their children—there were very few respondents that were driving for the district in which they have children/grandchildren attending.

**Turnover Intention**

In this study, turnover intention was evaluated with a 6-item Likert-type scale on which scores could range from 6 to 30. Although the drivers in this study scored just below the midpoint (mean scores around 14, with a possible midpoint of 18), and their actual employment duration was relatively stable (about 10 years), there was also considerable variability in their reported intention to leave, as evident in the observation that about two thirds of the sample had turnover intention scores between 8 and 19. Their scores are consistent with previous research that reported similarly average turnover intentions among teachers in the education field (Sanchez, 2020).

**Job Satisfaction**

Assessment of job satisfaction, a main tenet of the Theory of Work Adjustment, indicated that these drivers tend to be very satisfied with their jobs (averaging about 75 on a 100-point scale). Their extrinsic (i.e., pay, benefits, working conditions) satisfaction was high, averaging about 28 on a 30-point scale. Their intrinsic satisfaction (i.e., how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves) was also high, averaging about 47 on a 60-point scale. This is consistent with previous research that reported similarly high extrinsic satisfaction among janitors and maintenance workers (Weiss, et al., 1967).
Meaningful Work

Assessment of the components of meaningful work showed that drivers experience their work as meaningful, something they are personally invested in, and that they feel they are flourishing in their type of work (Steger, 2011). Responses on the Positive Meaning subscale (averaging about 16 on a 20-point scale) indicated that drivers do find their work to hold personal meaning, significance, or purpose (Steger, 2011). Responses on the Meaning-Making through Work subscale (averaging about 11 on a 15-point scale) suggested that the drivers see their work as a source of broader meaning for their lives and potentially helps them to make sense of their life experience (Steger, 2011). Lastly, responses on the Greater Good Motivations subscale (averaging just under 12 on a scale of 15) indicated that drivers see the work they do making a positive contribution that benefits others or society (Steger, 2011). This is consistent with previous research where employees in higher education reported average scores in a similar range on these scales (Steger, Duffy and Dik, 2012).

Public Service Motivation

Assessment of public service motivation revealed that drivers tend to be motivated by public service in general and, in particular, are motivated by fulfilling societal obligations or public values and view themselves as making personal sacrifices in order to contribute to the well-being of others or the society at large. In contrast, lower responses on the Attraction to Policy Making subscale (about 3 on a 7-point scale) indicated that drivers tend not to have a desire to be part of the formulation of public policy. Higher responses on the Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty subscale (5 on a 7-point scale) suggested drivers have a personal desire to fulfill societal obligations. Responses on the Compassion subscale (averaging about 4 on a 7-point subscale) revealed that drivers have love and concern for others and they have a
desire to protect them (Kim and Vandenabeele, 2010). Lastly, high responses on the Self-Sacrifice subscale (just under 5 on a 7-point subscale) indicated that drivers believe they are making a personal sacrifice in order to contribute to the well-being of others or society at large. Scores on Attraction to Policy Making were consistent with previous research where 30,000 public sector European employees were studied and reported similarly low responses (Vandenabeele et. al, 2008). It is noteworthy that the current sample was found to have somewhat higher scores on Commitment to the Public Interest/Civic Duty, Compassion, and Self-Sacrifice than previous research of European employees and Chinese civil servants (Vandenabeele et. al, 2008; Kaipeng, et al., 2013).

Gender Differences

Although gender did not sustain a significant role in the full regression analysis, the significant individual zero-order correlations reported earlier are of note: Compared with men, women were more satisfied with the intrinsic elements of their work (the nature of the work itself) and less satisfied with the extrinsic elements, such as pay and benefits. They also reported that they found their work to hold more personal meaning than did men, saw their work more as a source of broader meaning for their lives, saw their work more as making a positive contribution to society, and held a higher concern for others than did men. These differences may be important to consider in further study of why drivers stay in their jobs, and in how districts might develop stronger driver retention strategies.

Summary of Findings

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine if elements of the three theories in the P-E fit framework could predict turnover intention. Findings indicate that specific aspects of the Theory of Work Adjustment (Extrinsic Satisfaction) and Meaningful Work (Positive
Meaning and Meaning-Making through Work) play a role in bus drivers’ turnover intentions. Drivers with higher intention to leave their job tend to be less satisfied with the extrinsic components of their work, with this group of respondents reporting that their work provides less personal meaning, significance or purpose, and also does not establish a broader meaning in their lives. Public Service Motivation was not found to be a predictor of bus drivers’ turnover intentions.

Supplemental findings indicated that school bus drivers viewed themselves as making a difference in the lives of the students they transport, and agreed they are a significant part of a student’s education. They were less affirmative about whether students would be able to receive an education without them and whether their school district values them for the work they do. In addition, drivers indicated that making a difference in the lives of students and helping students/families is what they “most liked” about their job. Pay and benefits were seen as being the most common reason why drivers remain in their current role, but interesting, was also the most common reason they gave for why they would change jobs.

**Interpretation of Findings**

Findings indicate that for these very satisfied public school bus drivers, those who find their work to provide them with greater extrinsic satisfaction (pay, benefits, work schedule) are less likely to intend to leave. Further, those drivers who find their work creating a broader meaning in their lives are less likely to intend to leave.

This study did not find intrinsic satisfaction to be a significant predictor of bus driver turnover intention. Although intrinsic satisfaction themes are found in answers to the open-ended questions, the Intrinsic Satisfaction subscale did not significantly contribute to the explanation of turnover intention. One potential explanation for this is that some Meaningful Work subscales
may be tapping into intrinsic satisfaction concepts, and that the role of the intrinsic satisfaction scale is absorbed into the effects demonstrated by the cluster of Meaningful Work scales. These subscales ask questions of study participants such as: “I view my work as contributing to my personal growth,” “I understand how my work contributes to my life’s meaning,” and “I have discovered work that has a satisfying purpose.” Some support for this explanation is found in examining the strong, positive, correlations between these scales and the Intrinsic Satisfaction scale (Table 15).

This study did not find Public Service Motivation as a significant predictor of turnover intention within this sample of bus drivers. That is, despite having overall relatively strong views about the societal obligation of their work, and the sacrifice that they make to contribute to the welfare of others, drivers with stronger public service motivation are as likely to intend to leave as their peers with less such motivation.

Supplemental information provided by drivers revealed the context of how they view their role in educating students and how they perceive the degree to which the organization values them as employees. Although drivers tended to feel they are a significant part of a student’s education and that they are making a difference in student lives, they did not necessarily see themselves as playing an important part in the school’s mission of educating students, nor did they think they were valued by the organization they work for.

In addition, responses to open-ended questions provided further contextual understanding about what drivers liked about their jobs, why they would stay in their current role, what they would change about their job if they could, and why they might leave their job. From these responses, it is clear that the role drivers play in lives of (and the connection to) students and families, were important to them. However, pay and benefits were of major importance to
drivers; it is the single highest “reason” given for staying or leaving their position. Themes of leadership support and communication were notable as well, as this was the most common item that drivers would change in their current role. Of particular note is that when asked whether the COVID-19 pandemic was playing a role in their work decisions, over 75% indicated that it was not.

Lastly, contrary to the reported bus driver shortage reported by National Association of Pupil Transportation where 52% of transportation directors in their study reported that the “driver shortage is…(their)… number one problem/concern” (NAPT, 2018, p.2.) administrators in the districts of participating drivers in this study did not report seeing worrisome shifts in turnover, and only a slight reduction in driver application. While it may be that the responding administrators are simply less concerned about driver shortages, it is also possible that the more severe shortage concerns evidenced nationally and statewide are not reflective of the capital region’s current experience.

Implications for Theory

The results of this study have implications for the overarching Person-Environment Fit (P-E) framework which would predict that a better “fit” would accompany a lower intent to leave one’s job. In general, the findings reported here support this overarching model in that two models of “fit” significantly explained turnover intentions.

Although these results supported the use of P-E fit theories to predict turnover, some ways of defining “fit” seem to be more fruitful than others. The Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), which defines fit in terms of the satisfaction of intrinsic and extrinsic needs, received some support from these findings. The importance of the fit of the driver’s extrinsic needs with what is provided in their work was indicated in both their responses to formal measures and their
responses to open-ended questions. Results indicated that drivers whose extrinsic needs were met were likely to have lower intentions to leave their jobs. Through the open-ended questions drivers replied that extrinsic needs were the reasons they would stay in their current role, but were also the primary reason for seeking another job. Support for intrinsic satisfaction was not conclusive through the job satisfaction responses; however, concepts associated with intrinsic satisfaction were significant when seen through the Meaningful Work scale responses.

The Theory of Meaningful Work (MW), which defines “fit” in terms of employees who find their work as meaningful and significant are more likely to stay in their jobs. Two dimensions of meaningful work (Positive Meaning and Meaning-Making through Work) were found to be predictors of turnover intention. Drivers who indicated they find their work as a source of broader meaning for their lives and saw their work as helping them to make sense of their life experience were likely to have lower intention to leave their jobs.

**Implications for Research**

Using the theories of Work Adjustment, Meaningful Work and Public Service Motivation, along with the open-ended questions, this study provided an in-depth view of what can impact an employee’s decision to leave as well as what could be changed to retain them. The design of this study also added to the body of research turnover intention by looking at a population that had not been studied previously, K-12 public school bus drivers. Prior studies of turnover intention have not included a focus on public school bus drivers; furthermore, the historical emphasis in prior research has been on the topic of public school driver shortages—i.e., the perspective and focus of the central office or the transportation department leader. The present study moved the research beyond the immediate concern of those in hiring positions to that of the actual driver.
The Theory of Work Adjustment predicts that if the needs and values of the bus driver are met by the rewards provided by the environment, the employee will find satisfaction, and greater intentions to stay in their job will be likely. The findings of this study suggested that K-12 public school bus drivers who are motivated by extrinsic factors such as pay and benefits are more likely to stay in their jobs. However, although these factors were confirmed in this study, there were other issues identified that were shown to play a role in a driver’s turnover intention. This study suggests that while extrinsic satisfaction is important in turnover intention, it is also important that individuals find their work meaningful.

The importance of intrinsic satisfaction was evident in open ended responses but not in the scale responses. Intrinsic Satisfaction did not prove to significant indicator of Turnover Intention in this group of drivers. However, there seemed to be a clear conceptual and statistical correlation between Intrinsic Satisfaction and the various subscales of the Meaningful Work Inventory. The Meaningful Work Inventory contains questions relating to intrinsic satisfaction within the Positive Meaning scale. These include, “I know my work makes a positive difference in the world,” and “I have discovered work that has a satisfying purpose.” A deeper examination of intrinsic satisfaction concepts within the Meaningful Work subscales to evaluate possible overlap may help in clarifying this unexpected finding. Future research, examining the overlap within these variables could provide a greater understanding of the role of intrinsic satisfaction moving forward.

The Theory of Meaningful Work predicts that the more meaningful the employees find their work, the more likely they are to stay on the job. The K-12 public school bus drivers in this study who find meaning from the work they do, did indeed report lower turnover intentions. Future research might further expand on this finding by examining the individual tasks within the
bus driver work that they find meaningful. This additional research would establish a more granular understanding of where school districts might focus efforts of change to establish the opportunity for greater meaningful work for their drivers.

Public Service Motivation, specifically a person’s desire to serve the public interest and the willingness to forgo wages so they can serve the public, describes the employment conditions of public school bus drivers. However, this was not found to significantly affect drivers’ turnover intentions, even when considered individually or as a group separately, from the other theoretical perspectives. This finding was unexpected and raised questions about whether there is a uniqueness of the school setting that is different than others who work for governmental agencies where public service motivations have been demonstrated to be a powerful predictor (Naff & Crum, 1999). Further research as to why public service motivation did not play a similar role with this group of employees may help school administrators to make better choices when creating a work environment that impacts employee satisfaction positively, thus resulting in predicted lower turnover intention.

Overall, the responding drivers in this study were generally fairly satisfied. Further research with drivers who are, on average, less satisfied would be a natural extension of this research. Ultimately, knowing what reduces turnover intention for all drivers would provide a more rounded understanding for administrators of what could be changed in the educational system to reduce driver turnover.

Additional research that would be beneficial could also be directed to the other side of the employment equation, the recruitment of bus drivers. Research on how school administrators can establish work environments that satisfy new drivers entering the field, not just drivers who are already employed, could help in reducing overall departmental turnover intentions as well.
Finally, this study did not address the question of why drivers actually leave; rather, the focus was only on their intention to leave. A future research study of drivers who actually left for another job would help educational administrators to better understand job characteristic preferences of drivers. Themes of characteristics found in the new jobs taken by drivers might well reveal what kinds of strategies could be introduced into the work environment of K-12 public school system drivers.

**Implications for Practice**

Learning how to retain drivers will remain important to the educational community as the bus driver shortage continues throughout New York and the country. Without school bus drivers at work, students may not be able to access their opportunity to learn. While adding new drivers is one avenue for addressing the shortage, identifying, recruiting and situating new drivers is costly and district leadership will most likely need to continue to find ways to retain the drivers they already have. Drawing on the research presented here, district leadership can intentionally change the elements of their school systems to establish environments where the needs of the bus driver are met. In particular, by adjusting the elements of work to better match what bus drivers want—particularly in terms of extrinsic elements of satisfaction and by enabling drivers to find meaning in the work they do—districts may be able to reduce the turnover intention of their drivers.

Extrinsic satisfaction refers to how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself (pay, benefits, bonuses) (Spector, 1997). The responses from the drivers who participated in this study showed that satisfaction with the extrinsic aspects of their job such as pay/benefits, supervision and recognition remain major reasons why they do not intend to leave. To address extrinsic satisfaction issues, contract negotiations are likely the
necessary venue through which to address the pay and benefits portion of bus drivers’ needs. School administrators and Boards of Education may also consider the pay and benefit structure of school bus drivers. With the articulated current labor shortage, it may be time for districts to consider better pay and greater access to benefits for bus drivers in their next contract negotiations to reduce driver’s turnover intention. Bonuses of many types might also need to be considered to increase extrinsic satisfaction. Districts could think of creating safety, merit, or productivity bonus programs that would increase monetary rewards to drivers. This would provide greater extrinsic satisfaction and should result in lower turnover intentions.

In open-ended question responses, drivers stated that districts transportation department leadership/supervision might also be an area of extrinsic satisfaction that could be addressed to create satisfaction. Drivers stated the following about leadership: “the people making policies and decisions [sh]ould spend time in our environment and see just how hard we do our job and how important it really is” and that they should “replace management with someone who has leadership management skills.” In other words, quality supervisors who know the bus driver role and who have done it, may help in increasing satisfaction and reducing turnover intentions. This was evidenced in the following response from one bus driver: a “supervisor should understand that the challenges are for bus drivers—he never was a driver.”

To increase extrinsic satisfaction of bus drivers further, districts may look to driver recognition. Formalized recognition programs within a district could provide the opportunity for drivers to feel connected to mission of the district and to the students they transport. Drivers in this study responded they would stay in their job a long while if “the job got greater respect from school administration.” To create connection to the mission of the district, Boards of Educations could recognize bus drivers at one of their meetings for example. This would allow drivers to
know that the work they do is understood by all levels of the organization. A simple thank you writing campaign by district administration would indicate to bus drivers that they are a major part of the educational mission of the district.

Finally, extrinsic satisfaction may be affected by matching the scheduling of work hours to the personal needs of drivers. Drivers responded that they would leave the job if “continued flexibility is not allowed.” Other responses included: “my schedule became rigid;” and the degree to which the “the split day - flexible schedule” was problematic. Today, most district bid runs based on seniority. One potential fix to consider may be looking at the number of hours that a driver has to drive. For example, districts may consider job shares where two part-time drivers come together to make a full FTE. Present findings in this study suggest that an alternative means to assigning work could potentially result in lower turnover.

From the perspective of Meaningful Work, employees find their work as meaningful when it is something they are personally invested in—and which is source of flourishing in their lives (Steger, 2011). School district policies represent a place to begin to change current organizational cultures that today make school bus drivers feel separate and apart from the mission of the school. Policies that allow drivers to take a larger role in the educational organization inside and outside the bus, may establish a sense of purpose and connection to students, parents and the community. For example, to establish a sense of purpose and connection to students, parents and the community districts could include drivers in activities with students outside of the bus run.

Drivers responded in this survey to what they like most about their current role with students: “I enjoy the student interaction and the opportunity to help teach them about road safety;” and “being able to work on my own. Helping the students if they ask.” To create purpose
and connection for drivers, districts could include drivers in the bus ridership safety trainings that typically take place in the classroom today. Today, classroom teachers provide students this training, but allowing drivers to participate or even lead these discussions may help to create meaning for drivers because they will be interacting with students outside the bus.

Another way that meaning could be shaped for drivers is by openly talking with drivers about why they do the work they do. If district administration can connect with drivers and show them how their work fits into the mission of the school district, then meaning may be found by drivers. Including drivers in opening day ceremonies, trainings with the educational staff of districts may also establish this meaning for an employee. Having district communication teams spotlight bus drivers and the work they do through the district webpage, electronic signage, and social media platforms might connect drivers to the mission of the district and convey a sense of purpose for the work that they do.

Districts may look to build sense of purpose amongst employees by organizing potluck lunches where drivers would have time to connect with one another and department/district leadership. Deliberate policies changes throughout the system can establish working conditions and environments where a driver finds meaning from the work they do ultimately reducing driver turnover intention.

The importance of meaningful work was also evident in the supplementary analyses, where making a difference in students’ lives/helping students and families was noted. This was, illuminated by driver responses such as “working with kids on the buses. And feeling you mean something to them.” Also, “I have been on the same run for 10+ yrs love my kids & I have a great rapport with the parents especially my elementary students.” Districts might work to engage in a district wide campaign teaching and showing drivers what happens to the student
when they are not there to drive them to and from school. Making it explicit that drivers are a major part of the school mission, educating students, and without them education may not happen for the riders of their buses may establish a greater sense of meaning for drivers and show them how important they are to the students and families of the district.

Connecting the bus driver to the students (both on the school bus and as part of the school building) may help to make connection to students. One way to make this connection could be for districts to allow for job sharing for those that want to work with students outside their normal bus duties. This could include, for example, using drivers as teaching assistants, monitors and aides in buildings between their driver responsibilities.

Including the drivers in teams that deal with students’ behaviors could help to show how the drivers are making a difference in the lives of their students and demonstrate how they help families. If the district includes bus drivers as part of the solution to correcting misbehaviors of students, they may feel the importance of their role in the overall system and to the child as well. Another way that drivers may realize how they are helping students and families is by having drivers participate in back-to-school nights, allowing them the opportunity to meet and connect with parents/guardians and creating a relationship that moves beyond the bus stop.

Drivers seem to want the support of, communication from, and leadership that has experience in the bus driving role, as noted by the following comments offered when asked what is the one thing they would change about their current role. There, they noted, “my boss could be more of a leader. Very non-confrontational. No Praise,” and they should “replace management with someone who has leadership management skills.” One respondent noted: “I wish our district level management took us more seriously, and cared more about transportation.” Including the drivers in a leadership selection process might help to connect
drivers to departmental leadership. District level leadership might also take a more directly active role with school bus drivers, establishing a presence in the bus garage not only when there is an issue, but also when there is a celebration and even in merely routine day to day operations. These efforts will demonstrate to the drivers that they have support, that they are being communicated to, and the drivers may feel a part of the greater district which may lead to lower turnover intention in drivers.

One particular finding that has surfaced from this research that is of note is that although there is a reported shortage of bus drivers locally, statewide, and nationally, the responding school administrators did not identify that as a major concern. Administrators responded that they were not seeing any more or fewer drivers leaving their districts and that there were only somewhat fewer applications than from previous years. With the NYSDOL data showing a smaller turnover of drivers for the capitol region, there may or may not actually be a driver shortage for the 32 responding districts. Alternately, these districts—whose administrators agreed to allow their drivers to participate in the study—may be locations where the relationship between district and employee is closer (or more positive), possibly reflecting the fact that these administrators have an accurate reading on the likely turnover and replacement pool. However, these results could also illuminate a possible disconnect by district administrators from the true problem. If there are in fact shortages found within these districts, then this study would point to an observation that administrators need to become better acquainted with their operations. Furthermore, if there is an actual shortage of drivers, then districts may be well served to look at the recruitment of more drivers and also seek to reduce currently employed bus driver’s turnover intentions.
Future research may also look to understand if making changes in the driver work environment actually changes a driver’s turnover intention. It would be beneficial to the body of knowledge to study if drivers in school systems that enact change in fact stay in their role longer. In the end, if drivers actual reduce their turnover intention in the systems where these kinds of changes were made, it would be important to understand which changes were most effective and what impact those changes had on the individual driver’s turnover intention.

**Limitations**

Limitations with this study include, first, that it relies on self-reporting. While valuable from some perspectives, self-reports are also subject to individual interpretations, social desirability, and even misunderstanding the rating scales.

Second, this study relies on surveys that have been returned. The answers provided by those who choose to return surveys may be different than those that did not choose to complete it. This could have the effect of creating bias in the research findings.

Third, this study relied on a two-step process for drivers to participate in this research. The first step was the district administration had to approve their drivers taken part in this research and the second step was the driver actually had to fill a survey out and return it. A district administrator’s relationship with the transportation department or with specific drivers may have led to their decision to include their districts (or not) in this research. This may have created sample bias by virtue of the way sampling was conducted.

Fourth, the survey questions are standardized and generalized. However, with this as a novel sample, these survey questions may not have been viewed similarly by the drivers, who may not understand the purpose of the questions being asked or understand how the questions fit them or their jobs.
Fifth, this study reports correlation, a statistical indicator of relationship between variables. The variables change together, which may or may not be in a predictive way. There is no way to show that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between variables. There is also no way to conclude which variable causes a change in the other.

Sixth, there are no drivers from urban districts included in this study. Given that urban districts in the study area do not employee their own drivers, but rather, they contract to private corporations, results of the study should only be considered in relation to drivers in rural and suburban school districts.

Seventh, this study only uses current drivers who are employed by a district and does not look at drivers who have actually left the profession. The latter group of individuals would give a perspective that may not be found in this sample of currently employed bus drivers. Studying drivers who have left their jobs, school administrators would be able to gain even further, more granular, reasons as to why drivers may leave their jobs.

Eighth, the sample of drivers in this study were bus drivers that were working for a public school district and not a private company. School districts hiring district employees are constrained by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). A CBA establishes the working conditions for those covered by the agreement as well as the pay and benefits that are provided for work completed and is ratified by a majority of the membership. In most public schools the CBA is established for many different categories of employees of the district such as administrative support, food service department as well as district facility and maintenance department. Districts that contract with private transportation companies to provide the bus service have a different relationship with the terms and conditions of employment. In this situation, private transportation companies have one just group of employees to deal with –
transportation – and they also have the ability to adjust to market conditions to recruit and retain employees where the public school system cannot. The current study drew only on district employees, thereby limiting its potential relevance for districts that contact with private transportation companies.

Last, this study was conducted while COVID-19 was in its first wave. School bus drivers were asked to be front-line workers, interacting with students who may or may not have had COVID daily. This was a stressful time for bus drivers as they worried about the health of their students and the health of their own family. This stress may have impacted the way they felt about their role at that moment and how they answered the survey questions. As the districts were faced with the second wave and beyond, the cumulative effect of COVID-19 may in fact change a driver’s thoughts on their turnover intention. The data collection for this study ended in June of 2021 as the United States was seeing a decline in new COVID-19 cases and there was a some sense of returning to “normal.” As we entered the fall of 2021 a virus variant was becoming evident and cases were rising once again. Because of the timing of this study pandemic fatigue could not be studied or addressed. Additional research is needed to better understand if the cumulative effect of COVID-19 will change bus driver’s turnover intentions.

Conclusion

The current shortage of K-12 public school bus drivers is a serious problem if not already a crisis. Retaining current drivers may be one way to lessen the effect of not being able to recruit enough K-12 public school bus drivers into the system. Understanding what reduces K-12 public school bus drivers leaving their role is imperative to keeping school operations open and running smoothly. Without K-12 public school bus drivers available to drive buses risks students access their education.
Educational leadership has one mission, to educate students. This begins with getting students to and from school daily in a safe and consistent way. Until now school administrators have not been offered research-based solutions to consider as they try to decrease K-12 public school bus driver turnover intention. The research conducted in this study provides a roadmap of changes that can happen at the system level to decrease school bus drivers’ intentions to leave.
References


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doi:10.1080/17439760.2013.830763


Appendix A: Director Letter

District Superintendent, Business Administrator and Transportation Director

Dear District Superintendent, Business Administrator and Transportation Director,

My name is Brian Carey and I am currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Policy & Leadership at the University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, NY 12222 working under the supervision of Dr. Alan Wagner, Dr. Kathryn Schiller, and Dr. Susan Phillips.

I am seeking your approval to invite your school bus drivers to participate in a research study on the reasons why NYS Public School bus drivers stay in their jobs. This research will be done via a paper survey that can be completed anytime. It is expected that it should take 20-30 minutes to complete this survey and there will be a self-addressed postage paid envelope included for drivers to return the survey to me. The survey consists of background questions and a set of items seeking to learn about how bus drivers feel about the job.

There are no anticipated risks to your bus drivers or your school district from participation in this study. The study asks a bus driver who voluntarily and anonymously agrees to participate to complete and return a paper survey to me (a pre-addressed, postage affixed envelope in provided to each participant for that purpose). Moreover, the data collected will be aggregated across individual school districts in the analyses. One possible benefit of the study is its identification of the motivations and interests of school bus drivers which might be linked to recruitment and retention. Each participating district will receive a report of the findings of the broader study.

I will be sending survey packets to the Transportation Director attention in a separate mailing. If you agree to have your district participate in this study, I ask you make available to your bus drivers the survey packets (containing a covering letter, paper survey, and a pre-addressed, postage affixed envelope) and also return to me a signed “District Authorization Approval Form” (postage affixed envelope provided for that purpose). If you do want your bus drivers to participate, please throw the survey packets out. I ask that all completed surveys are returned to me within 2 weeks of your drivers receiving them.

If you need additional surveys or have any questions, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Brian Carey at bpcarey@albany.edu or faculty advisor, Alan Wagner, Ph.D. at awagner@albany.edu.

Thank you in advance for your support of my research.

Brian Carey
Doctoral Student
Appendix B. District Authorization Approval Form

This form, signed by the person authorized to approve, provides confirmation of agreement of the district to participate in the research study titled “Why do K-12 public school bus drivers stay in their jobs?” being conducted by Brian Carey, Ph.D. Candidate at the University at Albany, Albany, NY.

School Name: _______________________________________________

Authorizing Name (Please Print): __________________________________

Authorizing Signature: __________________________________________

How many drivers does your district currently employ? ______ (FTE)

Compared to previous years are you experiencing a change in the amount of applications for bus driver positions?

A lot less       Somewhat less       No Less – No more       Somewhat more       A lot more

1------------------2------------------3------------------4------------------5

Are you experiencing greater separations than in prior years?

A lot less       Somewhat less       No Less – No more       Somewhat more       A lot more

1------------------2------------------3------------------4------------------5

Please use a self-addressed postage paid envelope provided to return this form or mail it to Brian Carey, __________________________.
Appendix C: Reminder Email to be sent to Transportation Directors, copied to
District Superintendent and Business Administrator

Dear Transportation Directors,

My name is Brian Carey and I am currently a doctoral student in Educational Policy & Leadership at the University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, NY 12222 working under the supervision of Dr. Alan Wagner, Dr. Kathryn Schiller, and Dr. Susan Phillips.

This email is a follow up to the letter I sent to you, your superintendent, and your business administrator in which I invited the participation of your school district in a study of the reasons why NYS school bus drivers stay in their jobs. I asked for your help to convey the invitation to your bus drivers in the study, by making available survey packets sent to you. I am writing to you today to again ask for your help, if your district has agreed to participate, by making available the survey packets. If the packets have been made available or if the district has not agreed to participate in the study, please accept my thanks for your consideration and help.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me back or call me at [phone number]. Returned forms can be mailed to: Brian Carey, [address].

Thank you,

Brian Carey
Doctoral Student
Appendix D. Participants Cover Letter

Dear Bus Driver,

My name is Brian Carey and I am currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Policy & Leadership at the University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, NY 12222 working under the supervision of Dr. Alan Wagner, Dr. Kathryn Schiller, and Dr. Susan Phillips.

I invite your participation in a research study on the reasons how NYS Public School bus drivers feel about their jobs.

Through this letter, I am seeking your consent to participate. The letter provides information on the survey, the processes of data collection and use, and invites any questions that you may have.

What is involved? You are asked in this survey to respond to background questions and a set of items seeking to learn about how you feel about your job as a bus driver. The survey should take about 30 minutes to complete. Once you have completed the survey, you are asked to place it in the pre-addressed postage paid envelope, seal it, and place it in any US Postal mailbox or mail it to Brian Carey, [Deleted] within 2 weeks or receiving the survey.

Potential Benefits and Concerns? There are no anticipated risks from your participation, because I seek no personally identifiable information nor ask for responses to questions on sensitive matters. One possible benefit of the study is the information it can provide about the range of motivations and interests of school bus drivers. School districts could take this information into account as it seeks to recruit and retain drivers.

Participation is voluntary. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no requirement or expectation that you participate and no sanction if you choose not to participate. You may refuse to answer any question or withdraw at any time. Participation will have no impact on your employment or employment benefits. Participation is anonymous. Individual responses that you provide will not be identified with you or your school district, and reporting will be based on groups of surveys.

Information is confidential. Your responses will be confidential and will be used for research purposes only; in other words, your name is neither requested nor used or linked to a response to any specific question. Please do not put any identifying information on any of the questionnaires. Your responses in this survey will be combined with responses in other completed surveys for analysis. The risk that any individual could be identified in the study is minimal.

Questions? If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Brian Carey at [Deleted], bpcarey@albany.edu or faculty advisor, Alan Wagner, Ph.D. at 518-442-3300, awagner@albany.edu.
Your completion of this survey indicates that you have read this letter and understand its content. You give your consent to participate in this study by completing the survey and returning it to me. Please keep this Informed Consent for your records. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator or if you wish to report any concerns about the study, you may contact the University at Albany Office of Research Compliance at 518-437-3850 or abonilla@albany.edu.

Thank you,

Brian Carey
Doctoral Student
Appendix E. Pilot Test Cover Letter

I am interested in understanding why school bus drivers stay in their jobs and have designed a study to gain a better understanding of why K-12 New York Public School bus drivers intend to remain in their jobs. As a retired school bus driver, your opinions and feedback are valuable in helping me create a survey that will be answered thoroughly and returned by drivers who are given the opportunity to participate. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this pilot test.

Purpose of the pilot test:

The purpose of the pilot test is to get your feedback in how easy it was to understand the words and questions throughout the survey and the total time needed to complete the survey.

Procedures:

1. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.
2. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone and is completely confidential.
3. This form will ask you if the questions were easily understood, the amount of time that it took you to complete and if you have any suggestions for improvement.
4. After the survey and the attached form is complete, please return it to me via the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope or by mailing it to: Brian Carey, [redacted], [redacted].

If you have any questions, please contact me at the e-mail address listed below or at the phone number listed below. Thank you in advance for your support with this research.

Regards,

Brian Carey
PhD. Candidate
The State University of New York - Albany
bpcarey@albany.edu
Appendix F: Pilot Test Evaluation Form

1. How long did it take you to complete the survey?

__________________ Minutes

2. Were the questions easy to understand?

_____ Yes   _____ No*

*If no, please indicate below (or directly on the survey) which question was not easy to understand and need to be clarified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Clarification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. Do you have any other suggestions to improve the survey?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time taking part in this pilot study. Please mail this form and the survey if you made comments on it in the included self-addressed, stamped envelope or by mailing it to: Brian Carey, [redacted].
Appendix G: Survey Instrument

K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS SURVEY

This survey is anonymous. No individual responses will be reported with demographic information that might be identifying. The researcher will group individual responses prior to reporting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For the following set of questions please answer each question thinking about: How satisfied am I with this aspect of my job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being able to keep busy all the time.</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The chance to work alone on the job.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to do different things from time to time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to be &quot;somebody&quot; in the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The way the boss handles his/her workers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The way my job provides for steady employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to do things for other people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to tell people what I do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The way my employer policies are put into practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My pay and the amount of work I do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The chances for advancement on this job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The freedom to use my own judgment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The working conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The way my co-workers get along with one another.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The praise I get for doing a good job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What do you like the most about your current job?

If you could change one thing about your current job what would it be?

How is COVID-19 influencing your thinking about returning to or leaving your job as a bus driver at your district?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is difficult for me to contain my feelings when I see people in distress.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meaningful public service is very important to me.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I unselfishly contribute to my community.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't care much for politicians.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think people should give back to society more than they get from it.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests.</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most social programs are too vital to do without.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am often reminded by daily events of how dependent we are on one another.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am one of those rare people who would risk personal loss to help someone else.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The give and take of public policy making doesn't appeal to me.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To me, patriotism includes seeing to the welfare of others.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have little compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving other citizens would give me a good feeling even if no one paid me for it.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are few public programs that I wholeheartedly support.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics is a dirty word.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seldom think about the welfare of people I don't know personally.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing well financially is definitely more important to me than doing good deeds.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is hard for me to get intensely interested in what is going on in my community.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much I do is for a cause bigger than myself.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider public service my civic duty.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am rarely moved by the plight of the underprivileged.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in putting duty before self.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This survey is anonymous, responses will be combined by the research team before any of the information is shared, and no individual responses will be published with identifying demographic information.
The following items ask about how you see the role of work in your own life. Please indicate how true each statement is for you and your work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Absolutely Untrue</th>
<th>Mostly Untrue</th>
<th>Neither True nor Untrue</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Absolutely True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have found a meaningful career.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I view my work as contributing to my personal growth.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work really makes no difference to the world.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how my work contributes to my life’s meaning.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a good sense of what makes my job meaningful.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that my work makes a positive difference in the world.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work helps me better understand myself.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have discovered work that has a satisfying purpose.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work helps me make sense of the world around me.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The work I do serves a greater purpose.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check off how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students would not be able to receive an education without me</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a significant part of a student’s education</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am making a difference in the lives of the students I transport</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school district values me for the work I do</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DURING THE PAST 9 MONTHS** – check the box that reflects . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often have you considered leaving your job?</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs?</td>
<td>Very Satisfying</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Totally Dissatisfying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?</td>
<td>Highly Unlikely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Highly Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you look forward to another day at work?</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please complete the following sentences.

| I would stay with this current job for a long while if... |  |
| I would leave this job at the first opportunity if... |  |

Please check or provide the answer to the following questions about yourself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many years have you...</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Held a CDL license?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Driven in your current district?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before your current position at this school have you...</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Driven K-12 buses in another district?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ No ☐ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many districts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many years did you drive for other districts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Been a driver with a CDL not for a school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.............................................................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ No ☐ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The district you currently work for is considered?  ☐ Urban  ☐ Rural  ☐ Suburban

Do you have children/grandchildren in the K-12 public school that you are currently driving for?  ☐ No  ☐ Yes

What is your gender?  _________  What YEAR were you born?  _________

What is your marital status?  ☐ Single  ☐ Married  ☐ Divorced  ☐ Widowed

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

☐ GED  ☐ Highschool  ☐ Associates  ☐ Bachelors  ☐ Masters  ☐ Professional  ☐ Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing this survey!

Please use the self-addressed postage paid envelope to return your survey or mail to:
Appendix H. Open-ended Question Responses

Question 1:

“Making a difference in students’ lives/Helping students/families/Interaction/relationship with Student and Parents” (49%) was the theme that was seen the greatest amount of times. This theme is represented in the following responses provided by the drivers: “Seeing the kids daily”, “I like working with kids”, “The children. I love to see my children on and off the bus”, “Being with the kids every day is fun especially the K-5 students. Seeing their smiles and making them laugh”, “The children. Some are on your bus K-12. Wiping their tears, problem solving, sharing their joy. Some need a hug. Some like to hear they look nice!”, “All of my kids. I look forward to seeing them each day” and “I love the kids. I love to be able to speak into their lives and be a 'big sister' to kids who need that!”. “Working with kids on the buses. And feeling you mean something to them”, and “I have been on the same run for 10+ yrs love my kids & I have a great rapport with the parents especially my elementary students”.

“Schedule/Job Fit” represents the second largest (19%) theme found. This theme is represented by the drivers providing the following: “Fits into my non-work life”, “As a semi-retired person. I like the schedule”, “Schedule matches children’s Schedule - vacations etc.”, “The split day - flexible schedule”, “Being able to have the same time off as my children”, and “The break during the 2 runs to get other things done”.

All other themes each accounted for fewer than 10% of the responses individually but are worth noting to allow us to better understand what drivers like most about their job. “The hours I work. Benefits are the most important thing”, “The pay!”, “I like the pay for a part time job since
from semi-retired”, “The insurance & pay”, “For a part time job the pay is very good and you do get paid time off”, “I enjoy the student interaction and the opportunity to help teach them about road safety”, “Being able to work on my own. Helping the students if they ask”, “Co-workers have a team approach (we all get along good + help each other)”, “being able to work independently without management on my back”, “The managers + supervisors are the best I have worked for they are very easy to talk with and understanding”, “Steady work”, and “Keep(s) me busy and the money”.

Question 2:

“Pay/benefits” (28%) was the theme that was seen with the greatest frequency. Drivers responded with the following comments: “The pay would increase along with benefits for everyone”, “I got better pay and raises each year, were also not paid on the weeks of recess, that’s three week a year and no days in July and August”, “The current level of benefits continues or doesn't get reduced”, and “The salary and healthcare stay's competitive with other districts”.

“Personal health” (18%) was the next greatest theme found. Drivers responded with the following comments about their person health. “My health permits”, “My health holds out”, “My body holds up…”, “If my health holds up and am able to pass DOT (Department of Transportation) physical”, “My health was better”, and “I’m always physical capable”.

“Feeling wanted/supported” (15%) was the next theme found. Drivers responded with the following comments: “feeling wanted/supported”, “The job is got greater respect from school administration not up service”, “There were greater support from district to handle student behavior, reduce during distraction”, and “Supervisor should understand that the challenges are for bus drivers - he never was a driver”.
“My age” (12%) was the next greatest theme found. Drivers responded with the following comments in regard to their age: “When my CDL is up for renewal I'm done. I'll be 65”, “This is a retirement job for me. I have retired once already. So, I am going to get up one morning say I have had enough and retire permanently”, and “I were younger. I'm 62 and have been driving bus for 13 yrs. I love it and should have started earlier”.

“Schedule – Hours/flexibility” (11%) was the next greatest theme seen. Drivers responded: “Later start time” and “It allows me to continue pursuing my other career and provides me the extra time to spent with my wife & kids few other jobs can” and “My schedule remain flexible”.

All other themes each accounted for fewer than 10% of the responses individually but are worth noting to allow us to better understand why drivers would stay in their job. Others included “I was able to continue with the school and children at currently have”, “I'm still able to drive & manage students”, “Room for advancement. But unfortunately, once bus driver always a bus driver”, “Nothing changed at all. Even if I have to continue to wear a mask”, and “There was an opportunity to do something different in this department. A change would be nice”.

**Question 3:**

“Pay/Insurance/Benefits” (31%) was the theme that was seen the greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the follow comments: “Pay-way below for the amount of responsibility and requirements”, “Better pay for the responsibilities we have, Stewart(s)/walmart etc., pay more than new employee receives”, “pay scale - We have a duty to get pay scale-children to school and home safety disputes all the distractions on the bus and road, including distracted drivers! We are also held to-a higher standard than other drivers”, “A small pay increase. We take on a lot of responsibility with the vary hours. Holidays snow days, regents it’s
hard to get another PT job to supplement my part time income”, “The pay rate. I been here 7 years only making $20.00 hour. Knowing that I can go somewhere else and make more in the first year”, “I am 67, I currently get over 6 hrs a day and have health ins. If I fall below 6 hrs, I lose health Ins and my over 1,000 hrs of sick time!” and “To be consider full time employees with all benefits”.

“Leadership - Communication/ Support” (21%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the follow comments: “My boss could be more of a leader. Very non-confrontational. No Praise”, “Replace management with someone who has leadership management skills”, “I wish our district level management took us more seriously, and cared more about transportation”, “I'm satisfied with job. Boss could offer a simple "HELLO" occasionally”, “That everyone followed the same rules”, “Have a supervisor that doesn't have favorites and treats all fairly”, and “More oversight. Bus fleet is too offer "Every man for himself. Directives from admin are not enforced”, “Better communication between driver & dispatch”, and “The people making policies and decisions would spend time in our environment and see just how hard we do our job and how important it really is”.

“Hours/Start time” (15%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the follow comments: “At this time there is lengthy down time between runs in the afternoon. Try to reduce this time”, “Work full time hours instead of part time”, “To be able to have more hours. 90% of us only work 4 - 6 hours driving. We have to work other jobs, nights, weekends to make a living”, “To get more hours”, “Wish I didn't have to find other work to supplement during our times we are off (i.e., summer & vacations)”, “Shorter day (split shifts make a long day - leave house at 6 AM, home 6 PM)”, and “The early hours and working”, “Extremely early hours” and “The early morning hours".
“Nothing (10%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “I can’t think of anything”, “There is nothing”, “I don’t have anything I would change”, “I don’t honestly have any complaints”, and the majority responded 14 times “Nothing”.

All other themes each accounted for fewer than 10% of the responses individually but are worth noting to allow us to better understand the one thing that drivers would change about their job if they could. “Rules/paperwork”, “COVID-19” and “Student accountability”, “Hiring an aide on all buses, especially if more than 20 riders”, “Less state mandates and regulations so more people would want to do it, or more pay for the DS”, “With Covid-19 students, faculty and other staff have been insulated. It should be brought out as to who is involves. Things are kept secret in the school district”, and “There needs to be more consequences for the students”.

**Question 4:**

“Pay/Benefits” (33%) was the theme that was seen the greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the follow comments: “Another job offered better pay, benefits and schedule”, “I can find a higher paying job, especially with a CDL license, specially a lot of people don't realize the big responsibility of a school bus drivers. Way under paid, this is why schools can't keep my good drivers around”, “Offered a job with better compensation!”, “I got an appointed full time position elsewhere”, “I was offered more money and respect for being a trained, professional school bus drivers’, “Per day more hours”, “Pay/benefits cuts”, “The school took away my health insurance”, “Benefits were cut and if a job came about that I preferred”, and “Could get same pay rate for doing a different job”.

“Personal reasons/Personal health” (20%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “I wasn’t all alone at home”,
“I was getting sick from it”, “I became independently wealthy”, “My schedule became rigid”, “If I no longer enjoyed being around the kids to where it could affect my ability to drive safely”, “Continued flexibility is not allowed”, “I could make same money for same amount of hrs”, “My health deteriorated”, “I’m unable to drive”, and “I caused a accident”.

“Won the Lottery” (14%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded they would leave with the following comments: “I won millions and millions in the lottery”, “I won the lottery!”. Answering this question 33 drivers had a response with the word “Lottery” in it.

“Age/Retirement/Death” (13%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “I qualify for retirement”, “We had a good incentive”, “It was time to retire”, “My husband and I could retire”, “Retirement are offered prior to 30 years without penalty”, “I had a job that had the same retirement system. Pay scale and hours offered on available to one” and “I was younger”.

“Would not leave” (10%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “I will not leave I love where I am”, “No reason to leave”, “Never”, “I haven’t considered leaving”, “I love my job and don’t have a desire to leave”, and “I wouldn’t leave even if I won lotto, I love being a driver”.

All other themes each accounted for fewer than 10% of the responses individually but are worth noting to allow us to better understand why drivers would leave their job if they could. Themes such as: “It became a negative work atmosphere and if the bad days ever out weight the good days”, “The vaccine becomes mandated”, and “I feel that the administration doesn't appreciate what I do”.

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**Question 5:**

“ Doesn’t” (70%) was the theme that was seen the greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “Covid has not influenced my thinking about leaving, clam always wearing my mask and the kids for the most part have also”, “Not afraid of Covid-19. Keep my distance and hope for everything goes back to normal”, “I worked threw Covid, I don’t have a problem coming back they have worked hard to keep us safe”, “No influence - I have continued to work while school open + with vaccine feel comfortable working”, “From the onset I know I was going to drive. Both of my parents were infected and survived. I was strong through the pandemic and had a job to do”, and “Not at all”.

“Yes” (10%) was the theme that was seen the next greatest amount of times. Drivers responded with the following comments: “The districts refused to shut down and willingness to change the rules when it suits their desire is making me look elsewhere for employment”, “It has had a huge impact in me medically and financially. Also, not knowing who is potentially sick, that you are driving. If I could, I would leave this job”, “The social restrictions (distancing, masks, limited across to break area) caused several workers to retiree and leave. This, is causing the question if I should be thinking the same way”.

All other themes each accounted for fewer than 10% of the responses individually but are worth noting to allow us to better understand how COVID-19 may be impacting their decision to drive a school bus. Other drivers’ responses to this question included themes such as: “Concern, but still driving”, “No opinion”, and “Some level of concern, but if everyone follows the guidelines I am OK with it.”