

# Washington State University College of Education

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Will defend the dissertation

Date: March 21, 2017

Time: 9:00 A.M.

Location: Pullman – Cleveland 353

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend.

### **IMPROVING TEACHER HIRING IN A HIGH-NEEDS URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT: A STUDY ON ADOPTING A HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK WITHIN A HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

Chair: Gordon Gates

Teachers matter for student achievement and educational attainment. Excellent teachers have a positive influence on student learning. Students benefit when excellent teachers are hired. Improving teacher hiring is an important component of improving education outcomes for students. The hiring of teachers in a high-needs urban school district provides unique challenges for the hiring of teachers. This dissertation describes the action research undertaken in a high-needs urban school district (PSD) in the north-western region of the country to address the improvement in hiring of teachers. Specifically, the screening and processing of applicants and the experience of the hiring manager were addressed. The design of this action research study was guided by Stringer's (2014) Look, Think, Act model of action research.

The intended outcome of this study was to reduce systems incoherence in the hiring of teachers via establishing predictable structures, verifying processes with check-lists, and identifying/delineating stakeholder roles in the hiring process for PSD. Further, the study sought to increase the reliability of the hiring process for teachers through instituting specific and measurable outcomes for improvement which included ten improvements for screening and processing of applicants and nine improvements for the hiring manager's experience. There were three areas of concern for screening and processing of applicants, which combined together had nine specific improvements identified. There were four areas of concern that ten improvements were noted for, as it relates to the hiring manager's experience.

Several "tools" were used or created to help with the improvement in the hiring of teachers. Data for both the screening and processing of applicants as well as the experience of hiring managers were primarily provided by district forms and records (e.g., application forms, screening forms, HR guidelines, evaluation rubrics, etc.). One of the key tools in this study was Winocular. The Winocular electronic application tool was modified as part of this projects as was the 60-point-screening rubric. In addition, two instruments were developed for the study including: the check-lists for hiring procedures, and satisfaction survey for hiring managers.

This study includes an interpretation of the action research process and reflections of the researcher. Additionally, the study's significance, limitations and recommendations are presented.