

**UNDERSTANDING RESIGNATIONS OF  
SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, AND READING TEACHERS – PHASE TWO  
(UR-SMART-2)**

**A PROPOSAL TO THE  
MULTI-UNIVERSITY READING, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE INITIATIVE  
(MURMSI) FOR THE SECOND PHASE OF A PILOT STUDY**

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**1. Abstract**

Teacher resignations are of major concern in the nation and especially in Florida. Voluntary teacher resignations in Florida have increased from 3.2% in 1995/6 to 6.5% in 2001/2, twice the 3.3% that retired, died, or were discharged in 2001/2. Resigned teachers accounted for more than a third of the 22,500 new teachers Florida needed last year. The recommendations resulting from this research will be designed to reduce unwanted teacher turnover, especially in subjects where there is a critical need.

This proposal describes the second phase of a pilot study. In the first phase we developed a telephone survey script based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, trained callers, established procedural protocols and statistical data analysis procedures, and obtained data from 255 resigned teachers. We found that the strength of teachers' beliefs in each of the three major categories (outcomes of personal actions [behavioral beliefs], influence of family and colleagues [normative beliefs], and perception of their freedom of choice over conditions and actions [control beliefs]) depended significantly on a number of factors, such as school locale and level. The proposed work expands the scope and adds representation of resigned teachers from several locales not represented in the original partner counties, and enhances the confidence in findings for subgroups with no or low representation among resigned teachers surveyed in Phase I. The second phase of this study will allow extrapolation of the survey results to the entire state.

Telephone surveys will be conducted of two teacher cohorts in 14 additional districts (Brevard, Citrus, DeSoto, Gadsden, Glades, Hardee, Henderson, Hernando, Highlands, Leon, Madison, Okeechobee, Polk, and Seminole). The first cohort includes all teachers that have resigned or retired in 2003/2004. The second cohort is a stratified, demographically matched sample of continuing teachers in those districts. The surveys are constructed in accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior and ask paired questions that assess teacher beliefs and the importance teachers assign to those beliefs. Districts will provide names, schools, and contact information for teachers. Teacher names will be replaced with assigned code numbers and school names will be replaced by demographic information before data analysis. The master list associating names with codes will be accessible only to the P.I. and project director. Analysis includes identification of significant differences between population subgroups of resigned teachers, and differences between matched groups of resigned and staying teachers. Results will be disseminated in publications, on the web, electronically and at state and national meetings. Recommendations for intervention strategies customized for each population subgroup will also be made directly to key personnel in each of the districts.