Where should I teach?

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Where Should I Teach?

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Abstract

Teacher attrition and migration are a continuing problem within American schools. In order to help decrease these rates, a website was created that provides information about various types of schools including public, private, Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic schools. In order to help undergraduates begin researching school types, the website provided a short quiz that, based on respondents' answers, pointed them to specific school types to research. With this information undergraduates will be more informed about their teaching options, and make career choices that better suit their teaching expectations. Thus, in being more informed and satisfied in their teaching positions, teacher attrition and migration rates may decline.
**Backstory**

Research shows that 33% of teachers leave their jobs within their first five years of teaching (Eggen, 2009, p.2). I do not want to be a part of this statistic just because I chose to work somewhere that doesn’t make me happy. If teachers knew more about the options that they have for teaching, then they might choose to teach at a school that is a better fit for them instead of just going into teaching at a school that is similar to one they have previously attended.

I have never been taught much about the different types of schools that I can teach in after I get my credentials. It is generally assumed that teachers will go into public schools, but there are so many different options for teachers besides public schools such as: private, Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic schools. A class is offered at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) that introduces students to some of these different teaching pathways, however, this class is only taken if the student is trying to meet the outcomes for the traditional pathway and not the integrated pathway. I myself had never even heard of this class until my final semester in capstone.

Throughout elementary school and junior high I attended public schools, but in high school I transferred to a private parochial Anglican school. These were two very different academic worlds. Class sizes, structure, parent involvement, discipline, student opportunities, all looked different between the schools. In public school I was one of thirty students in my class while at private school there were five in my graduating class and the high school combined all grade levels into one classroom of nine students. In public school the environment was more relaxed and I saw students and teachers on a more equal level. In private school all students rose, greeted, and remained standing whenever an adult entered the room until they were told they may sit down. It was clear that students were the pupils of teachers and were not at the same
level. As for parent involvement, in public school the only time I saw my friends parents were back to school nights. In private schools parents were always in my classroom or at school events. In public school students who misbehaved were given several warnings and were rarely sent to the vice principle. In private school students were given one warning and were sent to the headmaster, sometimes they remained out of class for long periods of time. Finally student opportunities were limited and abundant in each school type. In public school I had few travel opportunities, those field trips we did have were around the local area. However public school did offer extended classes such as GATE. In private school I had no class choices but I had travel opportunities where the school took us to Italy, England, the East Coast of the USA, and all over California.

I saw the positives and negatives of teaching at both schools. If I were to teach at a public school I would be teaching in a context that I am familiar with. However, I would also be paying out of pocket for many of my classroom supplies and I would have to worry about standardized tests, NCLB, Race to the top, and layoffs that are ever-present. Within the private school I saw how parents were expected to be involved and were much more willing to do so, classrooms are very structured around academics and all students were really pushed to do their best, the smaller class sizes also allowed for more one-on-one instruction. However, there was less freedom for students to make classroom choices, less diversity, and less individuality.

I want to find a school type that I believe would be the best fit for me whether that is Public, Private, Montessori, Waldorf, or Democratic schools, to name a few. I know that all of the schools that I look into, and all of the teachers that I interview, will not be able to provide a full representation of all schools in that category. My goal is to open up future teachers’ eyes, as
well as my own eyes, to the fact that there are numerous types of schools out there that one can teach in.

During my time at CSUMB I have had the opportunity to complete my service learning hours as an aid in local elementary classrooms. I have heard teachers complain that they have to adhere to what the school board wants done in their classrooms, even if they as teachers don’t want to follow it. An example of this was one teacher finally had a math program in her classroom that was working for her students. The children understood the material better than ever, all of their test scores were up. Then, in the middle of the year, the administration wanted a new math program implemented, the teachers tried to convince the board otherwise but, in the end, they had to go with the new math instruction booklet, and test scores once again began to drop. I have to ask myself, do I really want to be in a school where I have virtually no say in what I am teaching, and can I handle being told by someone not in a classroom that what I am teaching I can no longer teach? I have no personal experience working in other types of schools so this is only one example of a complaint for public schools. However, every type of school probably has some characteristic that doesn’t work for different individuals.

I will be entering the teaching field in several months and I am not sure where I want to teach. This is a huge decision, and I want to make the best choice so that I don’t have to continuously change schools until I find one that suits me. I want to make the best choice so that I am not another statistic.

If teachers are well informed on how the type of school that they are interested in is structured, how resources are obtained, the amount of parent involvement, the amount of academic freedom, and how discipline is carried out, then they might find that a different type of school than they have ever been to might be more suitable for the way in which they want to
teach. This will make the teacher happier at the school, and hopefully, decrease the teacher attrition rate.

Reference

Eggen (2009). p.2
Literature Review

Introduction to the Issue

Undergraduate students pursuing their teaching credentials need to understand that there are several different types of schools in which they might start their first teaching positions, and each type of school operates differently as an institution such as how teachers are compensated, supported, and expected to teach. Once undergraduate students have a clear idea of different schools that are in the district where they want to teach, and the institutional norms for how these schools operate, then they will be able to make an informed decision on which school will best suit their desired expectations about working environment and compensation. Teachers who go into teaching at a type of school without doing this type of research on types of schools are more likely to migrate to a different type of school within the first three years of teaching (Borman & Dowling, 2008). If students begin researching schools as undergraduates they will have more job satisfaction when they go into the teaching profession and thus they will stay in that school for a longer time. There are several factors that contribute to teacher satisfaction within schools including; administrative support, compensation, class sizes, student body composition, resources, academic freedom, and forms of discipline allowed (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Horng, 2009). In this literature review I examine how the lack of understanding of the different types of teaching positions available results in high rates of new teacher mobility.

The Nature of the Problem

The problem is that undergraduate students are graduating college from pre-service programs like Liberal Studies often with no clear idea as to what would be the best school type for them to begin their teaching career. California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) offers two different teaching pathways; Traditional and Integrated. The Traditional Pathway means that undergraduates will obtain their Bachelor’s degree at CSUMB, but will get their
teaching Credentials at another institution besides CSUMB. The Integrated Pathway means that students will obtain both their Bachelor’s degree as well as their Credentials through CSUMB. The undergraduate course, Liberal Studies (LS) 383, Innovative Approaches to Schooling, is a class that “expands students’ understanding of alternative education models and philosophies (e.g., Montessori, Waldorf, etc.), [and a class in which] students also explore the social environment in classrooms, and current trends and obstacles in teaching and learning” (http://catalog.csumb.edu/course-descriptions/LS). This class is designed to help undergraduates better understand the different school options they have as future teachers. However, this class is typically only required by students following the Traditional Pathway. With teacher attrition rates being such a concern, we also need to focus on teacher migration rates. In 2007-2008, 8% of public school teachers left the profession within their first three years of teaching while 7.6% moved to a different school (Keigher, 2010). Teacher mobility leaves schools with high turnover rates. Teacher mobility is clearly a problem within our schools, not only in Monterey County, but all across the nation.

The Options

Undergraduates pursuing a career in teaching have numerous school types to choose from. These school types include; public school, private school, Charter school, and Montessori, to name a few. Each of these school types offer different factors that undergraduates will need to consider when selecting a school.

Since compensation is a major concern for many undergraduates they should consider teaching in a public school. Public school teachers receive better benefits and make on average $10,000 more a year than private school teachers once they are established in a school (Ross, 2009). The 2007-2008 School Data File showed that in Public schools across the United States
the average beginning salary for a teacher with no experience who holds a bachelor’s degree is $33,600. However, after they have ten years of experience the average salary is $43,000. Nearly all school districts offer medical insurance to their teachers and many offer dental and life insurance. A quarter of school districts even offer pay incentives for teachers to teach in areas of shortage or when they get special certification (Aritomi, Coopersmith, Gruber, & National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Every school district offers different medical for their teachers and it should be investigated when selecting a school.

Private schools are a good choice for undergraduates who want academic freedom, more one-on-one interaction, and better facilities to teach in. Private schools typically have smaller classroom sizes which allows for more control over their students. According to the 2007-2008 Private School Universe Survey, forty-three percent of private schools have less than fifty students (Broughman, Swaim, & Keaton, 2009). Private schools would also be a good choice for those who do not believe in teaching to the test or being told what to teach by the superintendents of the district since these teachers have much more academic freedom. Private schools would also be a smart choice for those who want to teach but do not want to go on to get certified. Many private schools do not require credentials, only a test needs to be taken in order to teach. Finally, if the facility that you work in and the resources that you will be using is a concern, then a private school is your best choice because they generally have nicer facilities and newer books (Ross, 2009; Dorner, Spillane, & Pustejovsky, 2011). Private schools come in various forms including parochial and religious. Private schools can suit the teaching style and beliefs of various types of teachers.

Charter Schools are a positive choice for teachers who enjoy trying out new educational methods without being caught up in the political standards of No Child Left Behind, and Race to
the Top. These types of schools have to still meet local and State Standards, but they are allowed more autonomy in their classroom to meet the standards. In a comparative study of private, charter, and public schools, charter schools were found to be organized like a family and use a guiding form of instruction (Dorner, Spillane, & Pustejovsky, 2011). Guiding instruction means that the teacher helps the student choose what they would like to learn or do but the teacher only assists them with the knowledge that they need to complete the task. The teacher does not stand in front of the classroom and lecture the students and assign specific assignments to them. Charter schools also vary on what type of certification is needed, thus, if you do not want to get your credentials, you may be able to find a charter school that does not require you to have them (Ross, 2009). Charter schools can be found in most towns and generally follow a format similar to public schools.

A Montessori school is a great choice for teachers who believe that it is important for students to learn life lessons through education. Montessori schools are for the teacher who enjoys structure in his/her classroom as long as that structure is child centered. Montessori schools require special Montessori credentials but traditional credentials are not necessary.

These are only a few of the school types that are available as choices for undergraduates who are getting ready to enter the field of teaching. If undergraduates are more aware that there is a school type that fits their desired expectations about working environment and compensation, then they can focus on what needs to be done to achieve a position teaching in that type of school. This includes researching all schools of that type in the area which they want to teach. Once this research has been completed students will have a clear idea of the school they are getting into and will be happier there because it was a clear choice.
Consequences

Teacher migration is an ongoing issue that needs to be addressed. Between 1987 – 1988 and 1988-1989 50% of private school teachers who migrated left private schools to teach at a public school. Between 1993-1994 and 1994-1995 this number increased to 52% leaving for public schools. In 1999- 2000 and 2000-2001 this migration number increased to 54% (Holt, 2006). In 2007-2008, 8% of public school teachers left the profession within their first three years of teaching while 7.6 % moved to a different public school (Keigher, 2010). The statistics show that teacher migration has not ceased and the rate that it is happening in schools continues to increase.

Teachers who are unhappy where they are working affect their student’s performance. When students sense that their teachers are unhappy in their job or they are getting new teachers all the time, the students begin to perform lower on tests, do not want to attend classes, and have more discipline problems. (Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin, 2004; Louis, Marks, and Kruse, 1996; Ostroff, 1992). When teachers change schools, especially in the middle of the school year, new, inexperienced, and under-qualified teachers usually take their place. This can have emotional, physiological, and academic effects on students and student learning (Wolff, 2010). The financial cost of teacher turnover takes money away from other projects that could be used for students. Also, the school community and routine for students can be destroyed when a teacher that they care for and respect leaves (Wolff, 2010). It needs to be remembered that migration affects not only the teacher, but also his/her students.

Programs are available to support and guide new teachers as they begin their first teaching job. One such program is the New Teacher Center out of Santa Cruz, CA. This center
provides various training for teachers to mentor and encourage them in specific areas over one or two day periods including; planning instruction, mentoring for equity, technology, and math and science among others (Baron & Gless, http://www.newteachercenter.org/index.php, n.d.).

Research has shown that teachers who participated in these programs were less likely to move to other schools or leave teaching altogether (Smith; Ingersoll, 2004). In schools that do not provide strong teacher connections but otherwise meet the teacher’s expectations, programs such as this are very helpful.

Mentoring programs help new teachers in areas of need while letting them know that there are teachers out there that support them and have the same issues in the classroom that they are having. The New Teacher Center is mentoring all teachers, no matter what type of school in which they work. However, this is supporting teachers once they are already in a school. Undergraduate students would greatly benefit in having a mentoring program, or other type of guidance, while they are still in their pre-service undergraduate education and credentials training. A program such as this will help undergraduates choose a school that best fits their expectations about working environment and compensation.

At CSUMB, LS 383 is the only class for undergraduates that provides the opportunity to explore other types of schools besides public schools, and even takes field trips to provide students to observe in different types of schools so they can see what goes on and ask questions. Yet, when this class is not required for the students in the integrated pathway, who will be staying at CSUMB for their credentials program, how are they supposed to know about their many options in the teaching profession? One’s undergraduate career is supposed to prepare them for a career in teaching, but there may be a serious gap in students’ undergraduate
education when exploration of different types of working environments they can select from is not being offered as part of their pre-service professional development.

**Conclusion**

Teacher mobility is an issue in our schools just as teacher attrition is; however, if teachers select a school that fits their expectations about working environment and compensation, they will be much happier and less inclined to leave. In order to do this, future teachers, as undergraduates, must be taught the various school options that exist. In doing this the undergraduate will have time to contemplate the right school for them so that by the time they are ready to select a school they will have made an informed decision, rather than following the assumed public school pathway.
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Community Partnership

The Community Partner with whom I will be working on my Capstone Project is Dr. Scott Waltz. Dr. Waltz is an Associative Professor of Social Foundations of Education for the Liberal Studies Department at California State University, Monterey Bay. Dr. Waltz earned his Ph.D. in 2001 in the area of Social Foundations of Education. He has been actively involved in collaborating with local elementary schools in order to provide them with service learners who are pre-service teachers, and to provide CSUMB students with valuable in-classroom preparation. His collaborative efforts with local elementary schools have earned him the 2006 Marian Penn Partnership Award.

Dr. Waltz is currently teaching a class at CSUMB which he created, known as LS 383, Innovative Approaches to Schooling. This class requires students to look at alternative education models and philosophies such as Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic. Currently this class is only offered as a requirement for students who do not wish to pursue their credentialing at CSUMB. LS 383 requires students to research various types and report back on them to the class. This way the students are better informed of the various types of schools that exist.

In my discussion with Dr. Waltz I realized that there are not any readily available sources that students can use to look at different types of schools all in one place. Students would need to know about the different types of schools already, and then research them further in order to see if that school type fits their expectations about working environment and compensation. However, when students do not know that a certain type of school exists, such as Democratic schools, then they will not be searching for that particular school to find out more. This also means that when teachers are not well informed of each of their teaching options, they
may not be able to make the best decision on a school that fits their teaching expectations. This will cause them to become dissatisfied and migrate to another school.

In speaking with other students pursuing the field of teaching, most have not considered teaching at any type of school other than Public school. A public school is what they know, where they have completed their service learning, and where the university is preparing them to teach. When I spoke to them about schools such as Waldorf or Democratic, they had no idea what those schools value, their qualification requirements for teachers, or whether or not they use child-centered or teacher-centered teaching approaches. Future educators need to be informed of all areas.

Dr. Waltz suggested that I look to those who are undergraduates, like myself, and consider what would be the way that I would begin researching the best type of school for me to teach in. He also made me consider how I would even get undergraduates to begin looking into other schools besides public schools. We discussed the possibility of creating a site that contained information about several different types of schools. I could distribute this site to undergraduates by making it available to Service Learning teachers. That way the students have the site that they can use in a class that prepares them for teaching.

The problem is that many students do not even realize that they ought to consider different types of schools until they are a couple of years into their career and realize that they should have considered what they value as a teacher and pursue a school that fits their values. This corresponds with what I learned from the literature review that a large number of teachers migrate to another school in their first three years of teaching. The purpose of my site would target undergraduates, in order to encourage them to consider and explore these issues early on so that they will be better informed in choosing a school that fits their values and expectations as
a teacher. This would decrease the amount of teacher migration within schools because they have considered many options before deciding on their school to teach in.

The literature review did not address strategies or programs designed to guide undergraduates’ decision regarding the different type of teaching positions they might pursue. All of the studies that I found focused on teachers who were unsatisfied with their schools once they were already in them. Dr. Waltz and I discussed the benefits for knowing about various types of schools early. This issue was not addressed in the literature review as a possible cause of the new teachers’ job dissatisfaction. I think this is because the literature assumes students get this information already as undergraduates whereas Dr. Waltz, who is actually in the classrooms teaching the Undergraduates, realizes that they do not all have this information introduced into their undergraduate education and training as pre-service teachers.

Since Dr. Waltz teaches a class on Innovative Approaches to Schooling, he will allow me to have some access to research that has been done on different types of schools. This will help me gain a better understanding of the different types of schools that I want to focus on for my online site. I will meet with him every couple of weeks to let him know how I am doing on my project, ask him any questions that I have about schools, and he will put me in contact with members from various types of schools through the connections that he has. In turn I will be creating a site that he will be able to use in the future for his Service Learning classes to help inform his students about the different teaching options that they have.
Project Plan

Project Goals

Through the development of my project my goal is to inform future teachers of various teaching options they have all on one convenient website. My aim for the website is that it will lead undergraduates to make more informed decisions before going into teaching at a school. Finding a school from the website that meets the undergraduates teaching expectations will decrease teacher migration between schools.

Project Context

On my website I plan to examine several major schools such as; public, private, Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic. In looking at these various types of schools I will examine compensation, degree requirements, whether the school is child-centered or teacher-centered, how discipline is conducted, and what standards, if any, teachers must meet. The website will include enough information to give all who log onto my site a well rounded understanding of each type of school.

Project Participants

My project is geared towards undergraduate students who are pursuing a degree in teaching. However, it can also be used by those who are in the credentialing or teaching fields already. Within my project I will be speaking to teachers from each of the types of schools that I am examining. These teachers will vary in age as well as in years that they have been teaching. Throughout my project I will also be speaking with undergraduate students to see what they would like to know about various schools. I will also ask undergraduates which parts of my website are most helpful in order to make sure that it is truly beneficial to my targeted audience.
Project Procedure and Role in Project Development and Implementation

The first step that I will take is to research each of the schools that I am focusing on. I will conduct online research as well as printed resources for this step over the period of one week. I will then examine all of the data that I have on each school in order to find similarities and differences between the schools, as well as the important information that really sets the school apart from the rest. This step will take place over another week. After the research has been completed I will begin to setup the website. Now that my research has been conducted I will add it all onto the website. I will give myself one week for this. During this week I will also be creating a quiz that I will add onto my website. This quiz will help guide the viewer towards a school that would best meet their expectations based on their answers. The following week I will ask students to use my website and see what they like about it, don’t like about it, and what they want to know more about.

Community Partner Role

My community partner, Dr. Scott Waltz already teaches a class at CSU Monterey Bay that looks into different schools. I am working with him to gain knowledge of the various schools that I am examining in my project. Dr. Waltz is also suggesting great examples of public, private, Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic schools that I should contact for interviews since his knowledge on this subject is much greater than my own. Once the website is established he will examine it for anything else that he believes may be beneficial to my target audience since he has had so many students over the years and knows what works well and what doesn’t as a means of teaching.
**Project Deliverables**

Evidence of my capstone project is in the form of a completed website. The completed website has a main welcome page and tabs to various schools for information. Each of these tabs has links which connects the researcher to a specific school that exemplifies that type of teaching as well as content for each school type. From the main page there is also a link to a quiz which asks questions to determine the viewers teaching and compensation expectations which will suggest a school, based on their answers, to begin looking into. See Appendix D for completed website.

**Project Timeline**

Can be found in Appendix E.
Assessment

The goal of this project is for participants who use the informational website I designed to gain a better understanding of the various types of schools that exist for prospective teachers. By being more informed about the various types of schools through the content of the website, pre-service teachers can make a more informed decision on where they want to teach. Helping new teachers find a school that matches their teaching expectations may be a way to reduce teacher migration and attrition in schools.

The method that I will be utilizing to assess my project will be a pre- and post-survey (see Appendix A and B) given to California State University, Monterey Bay undergraduate Liberal Studies majors in their classrooms. I will provide the survey to Liberal Studies Capstone students, and Upper and Lower Division Liberal Studies Service Learning Students.

The purpose of the pre-survey is to find out if Liberal Studies Undergraduates are aware of the different options that they have in regards to different schools to teach in, what type of school they are currently planning on teaching in, and what is important to them in teaching at a school. I will ask them questions regarding public, private, Montessori, Waldorf, and Democratic schools. I will use the information from the pre-survey in order to assess whether I am correct in assuming that most undergraduate students are not aware of the teacher-student ratios, teaching philosophies and practices, or the academic freedom that these schools have. After I show the group my website I will provide a short post survey which will assess if they found the website helpful in increasing their knowledge about the types of schools in the specific areas that I assessed for in the pre-survey. I will also examine whether or not their perception changed about what type of school they plan on teaching in. The pre and post surveys will be kept to less than five minutes each so as not to take up too much of the instructor’s time. The pre and post surveys
will not be longer than one page and will be used to assess the usefulness of my website for undergraduate students. The surveys will also help guide me to make any changes to the website based on what students want to learn more about for future improvements. These surveys allow me to see that there is a need for my project due to the lack of knowledge seen in the pre-survey, as well as a gain in knowledge after viewing my website which is seen by the results in the post survey. Comparing the results of the two surveys and examining the increased understanding between the two, I am able to see that my website has done what it was meant to do, that is, provide undergraduate students with a better understanding of their teaching options.

The survey method was the best choice of assessment for measuring my project because it was a quick method that would not interfere too much with the professor’s time. I also had specific questions that I was targeting that did not require more that Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree, answers. In the post survey I do ask more specific questions that allow for a short answer so that I can improve my website as needed. If I had showed my website and interviewed each person who took it I would not have been able to reach as large of an audience in my time frame.
Results

User Frequency Data

The “Where Should I Teach?” quiz can be accessed online under the *Go to Quiz* website. Anyone on this website can take the quiz and comment on the quiz. Once they have their results they have the option of posting their results on Facebook so that others can also take the quiz. This quiz has a link underneath the results section to direct the quiz taker to the website created for more information on their results. In the past two weeks since the website and quiz have been made public there have been fifty hits on the quiz. Two people have commented on the quiz site happy with their results. Those who have taken the quiz and have ranked the quiz out of 10 stars have given it a 9.6 rating.

The website has been online for two weeks and has currently had sixty views. These views have come from promoting the website to future teachers on Facebook and showing students in Liberal Studies (LS) 298S, Introduction to Teaching and Learning. Requests have been submitted to Google, Bing, and Yahoo to be included on their “crawl” list so that future teachers can more easily access the website. This request may take up to two weeks to be confirmed. As Figure 1 shows (see Appendix F) has been a fluctuation of visitors to the website over the past two weeks. The data will have 0 views some days, 2 views other days, 6 views some days, with the most being twenty four views in one day. This sudden spike in data is believed to be due to the fact that the website had been presented in an LS 298S classroom at CSUMB.
Pre and Post Survey Comparisons

As the website was presented to the LS 298S classroom the students were first given a simple Pre-Survey. The Pre-Survey was designed to measure the students’ initial knowledge about Democratic, public, private, Montessori, and Waldorf schools. The Pre-Survey also asked what type of school they are interested in teaching in if they had already decided.

As Figure 2 shows (see Appendix F), results from the Pre-Survey indicated that those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Democratic school made up 6% of the survey takers while 44% “Disagreed” with this statement. The results from the Post-Survey indicated that the those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Democratic school made up 33% of the survey takers while 67% “Agreed” with this statement.

As Figure 3 shows (see Appendix F), results from the Pre-Survey indicated that those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Waldorf school made up 11% of the survey takers while 50% “Disagreed” with this statement. The results from the Post-Survey indicated that the those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Waldorf school made up 39% of the survey takers while 61% “Agreed” with this statement.

As Figure 4 shows (see Appendix F), results from the Pre-Survey indicated that those who “Strongly Agreed” and “Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Montessori school made up 6% of
the survey takers each. 61% “Disagreed” with this statement. The results from the Post-Survey indicated that the those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Montessori school made up 22% of the survey takers while 78% “Agreed” with this statement.

As Figure 5 shows (see Appendix F), results from the Pre-Survey indicated that those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a private school made up 11% of the survey takers while 28% “Agreed” with this statement. The results from the Post-Survey indicated that the those who “Strongly Agreed” and “Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a private school made up 50% each of the survey takers.

As Figure 6 shows (see Appendix F), results from the Pre-Survey indicated that those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a public school made up 22% of the survey takers while 28% “Disagreed” with this statement. The results from the Post-Survey indicated that the those who “Strongly Agreed” that they could adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a public school made up 61% of the survey takers while 39% “Agreed” with this statement. The few respondents that felt they could not describe the characteristics of a public school in the pre-survey all respond that they could do so in the post-survey.

Most respondents reported being familiar with the characteristics of public and private school types, but not familiar with the characteristics of Democratic and Montessori school types. The pre- and post-survey data comparisons indicate that the respondents who felt that
they did not initially have an understanding of the different characteristics of Democratic, Montessori, and Private school types gained an understanding of these different types of school through their use of the website. This suggests that the website was effective for providing website users with information about the important characteristics of different types of schools. Knowing the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom of different school types may be helpful to pre-service teachers as they make decisions about the type of school to pursue for their first professional position.

**Pre and Post Survey Comparisons of School Choice**

The Pre and Post Survey data also showed a slight change in the schools where pre-service teachers are thinking of teaching. During the Pre-Survey 50% of the participants wrote that they planned on teaching in a public school. 66% of these Pre-Service teachers admitted to selecting a public school because that is what they grew up in and what they knew. The number of participants who chose that they were unsure of what type of school they wanted to work in amounted to 17% in the Pre-Survey. The Post-Survey, however, showed that 28% were still certain a public school was right for them while 33% became undecided about which school was right for them. As Figure 7 shows (see Appendix F).

After taking the Post-Survey, 50% of the pre-service teachers claimed that their school choice was made stronger after viewing the other types of schools on the website. The school that they believed was the best fit for them they continued to be the best fit. The goal in creating this website was not to change pre-service teacher’s minds about teaching in one type of school over another type. The goal was to inform pre-service teachers of their options so that they would be sure that the school upon which they enter to begin their career is one where they can be the teacher they want to be. Since, 67% of the Surveys had responses claiming that they didn’t
know what a Montessori and Waldorf school even was; there is clearly a need for instructing future teachers about the various types of schools available to them. The hope is, now that pre-service teachers have heard about other career options in teaching they will research all of their options more thoroughly taking into consideration what they feel is the most important so that they may select wisely for their career. In being at the school that best fits their teaching style and expectations they will be less likely to quit or move to another type of school since they have a better understanding of what to expect when entering the school.

Conclusion

Through my work on this capstone I have learned so much that I didn’t know about many different schools. For example, I didn’t even know that Democratic schools existed prior to this project. I have felt as if my website has opened pre-service teachers eyes to a wide array of possibilities in teaching that they never before knew existed. I know that this website with all of its easily accessible links and information will help me throughout my career as well as future teachers for years to come. This website can be used to find a teaching field that fits a pre-service teacher’s style, and once they have decided on a type of school they can use the links to find schools like that in their area as well as available jobs within those schools. This is a website with many possibilities and I know that I will always refer back to it.

If anything is to be changed in the future for this project I would expand the project. This means that I would expand the website to more undergraduate classrooms, thus, making more students aware. I would also expand the website itself so that it includes charter schools and Native American schools as well as any others. Finally, I would include videotape testimonies of teachers who are passionate about working in each of the types of schools examined. Then I would post these videos on the website so that pre-service teachers can be inspired by a real
person in the field. I had attempted to do this; however, there were several time conflict issues. Anyone who tries to expand on this project in the future should attempt to have interviews scheduled as early as possible in case any time conflicts arise.

Through my surveys I learned how much of a need there is even just at CSUMB for more information on different types of schools. Pre-service teachers, 66% who took the surveys, did not even know schools such as Waldorf and Montessori existed. These future teachers need to be instructed and if they are not able to take a class which does instruct them on the topic such as LS 383, then my website will be the next best source for them to use to find out more information. I am hopeful that this website will be available to increasing amounts of students following the teaching pathway and that it will be able to help those outside of CSUMB. In connecting around the United States with future teachers through this online website we are supporting each other towards a brighter, better informed career, and we become teachers teaching teachers.

Website link: http://www.whereshoulditeach.yolasite.com
Appendix A. Where Will I Teach? Pre Survey

Where Will I Teach? Pre Survey

Instructions: Please circle the best answer from the choices listed below or fill in the blank space provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Democratic school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Waldorf school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Montessori School.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a private school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a public school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


7. What would you like to know about the different types of schools there are?
Appendix B. Where Will I Teach? Post Survey

Where Will I Teach? Post Survey

Instructions: Please circle the best answer from the choices listed below or fill in the blank space provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Democratic school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Waldorf School.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Montessori School.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Private School.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I can adequately describe the teacher-student ratio, teaching philosophy, and level of academic freedom in a Public School.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What information about the different type of schools was helpful to you for deciding what type of teaching position you’ll pursue for your first job?

7. What information from this website was new to you? What links/sources from this website do you think would help you gain more information about potential school choices?

9. After seeing other types of teaching options, is your choice for the type of school where you’d like to teach stronger, the same, or has it been changed? Explain how the information in the website has made your original choice stronger, or has changed it. If you weren’t sure where you wanted to teach before viewing the website, in what ways, if any, has the website helped you in your decision making?
Appendix C: Online Where Should I Teach? Quiz

The quiz created asks questions such as;
1. Having academic freedom in the classroom is very important to me.
2. Small Class sizes are important to me.
3. I believe that students should have a vote in how they learn.
4. The arts (i.e. music, painting, singing, and dancing) are a very important part of education
5. Should children learn through prepared activities that they freely choose?
6. Should children set their own learning pace?
7. Should teachers assign grades to students?
8. Is it important for you to teach in a school where you can express religious beliefs?
9. Having new materials in my classroom is important to me.
10. Having a more diverse student population is important to me.
11. Having a higher salary is important to me.
12. Having a strong teacher support system is important to me.
13. I want to teach in a school that is very structured.
Appendix D. Website

Figure 1: Welcome Page of the Where Should I Teach? Website

Figure 2: Montessori Informational Page
Figure 3: Quiz Link Page

Figure 4: Quiz Result Page. This page shows the quiz rating, comments posted by visitors, the top school choices for the person based on their answers to the questions, and a code to paste the results on Facebook.
Appendix E. Project Timeline

**Week 7- March 11**  
Project Plan due

**Week 8- March 18**  
Conduct research on schools

**Spring Break-March 26**  
I will examine all of the data that I have on each school in order to find similarities and differences between the schools as well as the important information that really sets the school apart from the rest.

**Week 9- April 1**  
Significance/Assessment Segment

**Week 10- April 8**  
Set-up website

**Week 11- April 15**  
Set-up and add data to website  
Create Quiz

**Week 12- April 22**  
Get user feedback and make changes to website as needed.

**Week 13- April 29**  
Retrospective Paper

**Week 14- May 6**  
Capstone Notebook

**Week 15- May 13**  
Capstone Rehearsal

**Week 16- May 19**  
Capstone Festival-Podium Presentation
Appendix F.

Figure 1: Where Should I Teach? Total website views from 4/21/11-5/4/11. This figure shows the fluctuation in visitors to the Where Should I Teach? website.
Appendix G. Pre and Post Surveys

Democratic School Pre and Post Survey Results

Figure 2: The ability to adequately describe Democratic schools by pre-service teachers based on the Pre-Survey and Post-Survey Data. This figure shows the amount of pre-service teachers who strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with their ability to describe a Democratic school.

Waldorf School Pre and Post Survey Results

Figure 3: The ability to adequately describe Waldorf schools by pre-service teachers based on the Pre-Survey and Post-Survey Data. This figure shows the amount of pre-service teachers who strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with their ability to describe a Waldorf school.
Montessori Schools Pre and Post Survey Results

Figure 4: The ability to adequately describe Montessori schools by pre-service teachers based on the Pre-Survey and Post Survey Data. This figure shows the amount of pre-service teachers who strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with their ability to describe a Montessori school.

Private Schools Pre and Post Survey Data

Figure 5: The ability to adequately describe private schools by pre-service teachers based on the Pre-Survey and Post Survey Data. This figure shows the amount of pre-service teachers who strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with their ability to describe a private school.
Public School Pre and Post Survey Data

Figure 6: The ability to adequately describe public schools by pre-service teachers based on the Pre-Survey and Post Survey Data. This figure shows the amount of pre-service teachers who strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with their ability to describe a public school.
Appendix H. School Result Survey

Figure 1: The Pre and Post Survey Results of which type of school pre-service teachers want to teach in. The data shows a transfer in the Post-Survey away from public school towards undecided.