

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS  
TO TEACH EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Leadership and Education in  
the Adrian Dominican School of Education of

Barry University

by

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Area of Specialization: Leadership

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ABSTRACT

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS  
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Barry University, 2009

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Purpose: The purpose of this phenomenological research study was to identify the motivational factors of online high school teachers. Because very little if any research has been conducted relevant to K-12 online teachers, this study will contribute to the understanding of those teachers' motivations to teach exclusively online. This may be helpful to the field of online education and to the relatively new arena of online education providers. Understanding what motivated online high school teaching staff will provide school administrators with insight into areas of focus for teacher hiring, professional development, and online teacher retention.

Method: This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted with ten full time high school teachers who teach exclusively online classes. Participants respond to an online open-ended questionnaire and described in their own words what they believed motivated them to teach online. These descriptions provided by the participants were analyzed to understand their relationship to the field on motivation and to the field of online K-12 education.

Major Findings: Full time high school online teachers acknowledged that they are motivated by four main factors to teach in an online environment. Participants believed that personal impact,

the teacher student relationship, professional development, and taking on a new challenge were all factors that motivated them to teach online. Results of this study indicated the examples of themes and sub themes that school administrators need to take note of and provide support to online high school teachers to enhance their ability to continue to teach online.