Teacher Induction in Illinois and Ohio: A Preliminary Analysis

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SRI International

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Executive Summary

This report examines the different approaches that Illinois and Ohio have taken to support new teachers. Ohio provides financial support for a statewide induction program; in contrast, with the exception of a recent $2 million investment in 10 pilot programs, Illinois does not fund a statewide program, although district programs are common. Both states provide guidance on the features of state-approved teacher induction program; yet, both states exhibit significant variation in the characteristics of induction programs and the ways in which teachers experience their induction. Evidence from nine case study districts across the two states suggests six key conclusions:

1. Districts need adequate and stable funding to be able to plan for and provide comprehensive support to new teachers. Inadequate, untimely, and unstable funding results in inequitable access to induction.
2. Districts and states need evidence about their induction programs to ensure that resources are well spent and to allow for data-driven decisions about program structures. Districts need assistance in building capacity to collect and analyze outcome data (e.g., teacher retention and effectiveness data).
3. New teachers need time and support to be prepared on the first day of school. Being prepared means understanding district and school procedures as well as planning for instruction. Providing adequate orientation and preparation requires that teachers be hired before the start of school and paid for their preparation time.
4. Induction is best thought of as part of a continuum of teacher development and should be closely entwined with teacher preparation and professional development.
5. New teacher induction is not just about new teachers. Induction can be used as a vehicle to advance the professionalization of teaching.
6. New teacher induction is a promising vehicle for school improvement when it is used as a vehicle for building a professional community.

The first year of this 2-year study set out to identify overarching themes impacting the design and implementation of induction programs in general. The second year of data to be collected in the 2006-07 school year is designed to dig deeper into the operational details to guide policymakers and practitioners in their efforts to create effective teacher induction programs.

I. Introduction

For over a decade, policymakers' sustained attention to improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers has resulted in a variety of reforms and new programs at the federal, state, and local levels. One prevalent approach to improving teacher quality is the implementation of induction programs—programs designed specifically to support the development of new teachers and encourage their retention in the classroom. At least 17 states fund formal induction programs for beginning teachers. Even in states without financial support for induction, local district programs are common.

Illinois and Ohio are two states that have been active in developing teacher induction policies and programs, albeit, in significantly different ways. This report examines induction policies in the two states and reports on findings from nine case study districts. Following a description of the study's methods, the report begins with an overview of teacher induction policies in Illinois and Ohio. Next, we describe the variation in the characteristics of induction programs and the ways in which teachers experience their induction. We find that despite clear guidance from both states about the characteristics of an induction program, new teachers have widely different induction experiences from district to district and even within districts. The remainder of the report focuses on the policies and practices most likely to raise the quality of induction programs.

Methods

Data for this report come from state and district case studies. In both Illinois and Ohio, we interviewed representatives from the state departments of education and others with a statewide perspective on induction. In addition, in Illinois we also drew upon an analysis of survey results from new teachers who graduated from Illinois public colleges in 2004 and 2005 and who are working in Illinois public schools (Wall, 2006). The survey analysis was designed to determine the extent to which new teachers are participating in induction programs and the breadth of their supports.

We conducted case studies of five district programs in Ohio and four in Illinois to understand the variation in design, implementation, funding, and impact of induction programs within and across states. Case study programs were selected to represent policy-relevant examples of induction programs. They include a range of programs in terms of the number of teachers they serve, urbanicity, structure (i.e., single district or consortium), administrative center (i.e., district, regional office of education), and program design. Program-level case studies included interviews with key officials (e.g., program administrators, union representatives, district directors of human services, district directors of professional development), focus groups with mentors, focus groups with first- and second-year teachers, as well as a review of program-related documents.

Overview of Current Induction Policies in Illinois and Ohio

Through legislation tying induction to teacher credentialing, both Illinois and Ohio have recognized explicitly the professional benefits to new teachers of participating in a formal support program geared specifically to their developmental needs. Despite the

common commitment to support new teachers, however, the induction policies and available state funding vary between the states.

Ohio Induction Policies

Ohio mandates and funds induction programs—called Entry Year Programs—for all new teachers. The Entry Year Program (EYP) requirement took effect in 2002-03, and was part of the Teacher Education and Licensure Standards (TELS) legislation of 1998. TELS redefined the teacher licensure system by eliminating permanent teaching certification and replacing it with a two-tiered system. Under the new system, new teachers obtain a 2-year provisional license and are required to complete an EYP and pass the Praxis III, a performance-based teacher test, before progressing to the 5-year renewable professional license.

The goals of the EYP are to increase retention of high quality educators and enhance student achievement by doing the following:

- "Promoting the successful transition from educator preparation to classroom practice through professional development opportunities;
- Aligning mentor training with professional standards and performance-based assessment;
- Creating collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders;
- Establishing a solid foundation in professional practice to enhance student learning" (Ohio Department of Education [ODE], 2002, p.2).

The Ohio EYP reflects an attempt to bring coherence to the teacher development system by institutionalizing induction as part of a new teacher's preparation and by aligning the induction program and the teacher's performance assessment to the state's 10 areas of licensure standards. Although TELS established only broad guidelines for EYPs, leaving most decisions to the district or regional educational agency, TELS tied teacher credentialing to passing the Praxis III. As a result, Praxis III and its companion Pathwise training program became the de facto curricula or focus of many EYPs. In a survey of the 220 schools that had funded EYPs in the first year of the mandate (2002-03), the Ohio Department of Education found that 85% of schools used Pathwise (Hanby, 2004). Ohio policymakers revised the state standards for the teaching profession in 2006 and will be reassessing the EYP in light of the new standards.

Ohio's formal program of support is designed to last one academic year and teachers are expected to take the Praxis III during their first year of teaching. Mentoring is the core of the EYP supports, and the ODE provides guidelines for the selection of mentors, mentor assignment and load, and mentor training. In addition to mentoring, the Ohio Guidelines for Quality Entry Year Programs establishes guidelines, compliance indicators, and rubrics to assist districts and other program operators in self-assessing the quality of their EYPs and in completing evaluation reports (ODE, 2002).

Ohio has funded the EYP each year since its inception. Initially ODE provided school districts with $2,000 per entry year teacher but those funds were reduced to $1,100 per entry year teacher in 2003 and to $800 in 2005-06. ODE also pays the Praxis III assessment fees for entry year teachers. Although the current policy is funded, most case study districts said that they augment the state funds with their own general funds. Additionally, the state does not require that

districts pay mentors; instead, the rate of pay, if any, is at the discretion of the districts.

Illinois Induction Policies

Illinois has been working toward a statewide induction policy since 1996. From 1996 to 2000, several advisory groups convened to research best practices for effective new teacher induction and mentoring programs and to make recommendations for establishing induction programs and mentor and administrator training programs. In 2003, the state allocated $8.1 million for a new statewide teacher mentoring and induction program; however, the funds were diverted to various categorical programs. Since 2003, the state has provided no funding for a statewide program. Thus, although state legislation includes a provision for the support of new teachers through induction and mentoring activities, funding has not been allocated to support the legislation.

While the state was initiating a teacher induction policy, it also revised the teacher credentialing system to loosely tie credentialing to induction. In 2000, the state created a three-tiered credentialing system (initial, standard, and master) that became effective in July 2004. Under the new system, to reach standard certification, teachers holding an initial certificate were required to accrue 4 years of teaching and complete one of 10 professional development options (e.g., earn an advanced degree, earn a subsequent Illinois certificate or endorsement). One of those options is the completion of a state approved induction program.

The Illinois State Board of Education established guidelines and requirements for the induction and mentoring programs. For a program to be used for eligibility for the Standard teaching certificate, the program of support has to last 2 years[1] and include observation of the new teacher's classroom practice by an experienced teacher, review and analysis of written documentation prepared by the new teacher, and reflection by the new teacher on his or her teaching practices in relation to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. Because of the critical role mentors play in the induction and mentoring program as outlined by the state, the state board also established requirements for mentor selection and training and outlined their responsibilities.

There are 350 approved induction programs in Illinois, some serving multiple districts. It is not known how many of Illinois' 883 districts provide some form of new teacher induction that is not part of a state-approved program. In addition, the total number of teachers who participate in state-approved programs is not readily available.

In 2006, Illinois provided $2 million to fund 10 pilot programs for new teacher induction and mentoring. The pilots will give policymakers an opportunity to assess the value of teacher induction as they consider moving to a statewide system.

[1] Teachers who were issued initial teaching certificates prior to September 1, 2007 may use a 1-year induction and mentoring program.

II. Induction Variations

Although policies differ in Illinois and Ohio, both states provide school districts with clear guidelines for their induction programs. Yet, across the nine case study districts we found a good deal of variation in the duration, frequency, intensity, and focus of the supports novice teachers receive.

Two contrasting district programs illustrate the range of supports available to beginning teachers. District A's Entry Year Teacher Mentor Program offers new staff a comprehensive set of supports designed to help them quickly become effective teachers, meet the district's expectations, address the needs of all of their students, and pass Praxis III. The program is described by teachers and administrators as "high support for high expectations." It begins with a 6-day orientation to the district that covers administrative topics, technology training, and licensure requirements. The year-long mentoring is officially kicked-off during the orientation with a half-day seminar for both the entry year teachers and their mentors. During the school year, new teachers and mentors together attend the district's three professional development seminars for new teachers that focus on instructional strategies. Mentor and new teacher pairs are required to observe each other quarterly, and they are allocated 8 days total release time for observations and other professional development. Additionally, the program offers support to administrators including a review of administrative responsibilities, materials, supplies, and other supports. A faculty member from a nearby university has collaborated with the district to design and deliver the mentor training program, develop a manual with monthly activities to guide the work of mentors, and design and deliver the training program for principals to evaluate teachers. The district's 15-year old induction program is governed by the District Mentor Committee, a joint district and union collaboration comprised of four teachers and three district administrators.

Although District B's induction program has many of the same structural components as District A's program, including a multiday orientation, mentoring, and workshops, the individual components are not as tightly linked and support does not begin as early, making it easier for important information and activities to fall through the cracks. The program begins before the school year with a 3-day orientation consisting of a 1-day retreat with team building activities, time for the new teachers to prepare their classrooms, and a half-day for convocation and training from the lead mentor and district staff. However, unlike in District A where the District Mentor Committee selects and assigns mentors to the entry year teachers before the school year begins, the entry year teachers in District B select their own mentors during the first few weeks of school. Therefore, new teachers' school-based support does not begin until mid-fall. Mentors do not join the teachers at the orientation nor are they available to orient them to the school, help them set up their room, or help them establish their classroom procedures during the first days of school. As a result, simple procedures like learning the bell schedule and locating materials create unnecessary confusion for the new teachers. Further, District B's program lacks the comprehensiveness and coherence present in District A. For example, there are

neither mentoring guidelines nor a strong, consistent focus on instruction. Without a focus on instruction or materials to guide their work, new teachers in District B describe workshops as an unstructured support group. Although they value their mentor, some reported that the mentor did not complete the necessary observations.

Many induction programs fall somewhere in between the programs offered by Districts A and B, with some induction components implemented in a way that teachers find beneficial, and other components considered less valuable. While such variation across programs may be expected, the case studies revealed that even within the same program, individual teachers can have very different experiences.

Alternative certification teachers, for example, experience induction quite differently than their traditionally prepared peers. Alternative certification teachers reported that their induction program was problematic because they were still completing coursework while teaching. In some cases, these teachers were unable to participate in most induction program activities because of scheduling conflicts with their alternative certification program. Most reported that teaching full time, completing certification requirements, and participating in an induction program was extremely burdensome.

Teachers' induction experiences also vary by their academic discipline. Some specialty teachers who were the only teacher of a subject in a school reported that it was difficult to have regular contact with a mentor because often their mentor came from a different school. Matching mentors by discipline also is difficult in districts with a full-time release model and a declining enrollment. In those cases, decreasing numbers of new teachers proportionately decrease the number of mentors, making discipline matches difficult. In addition, officials from districts with declining enrollments reported that beginning teachers often found themselves teaching different grades or even subjects in their second year, and therefore in need of continuing induction support in their second year.

Finally, induction experiences differ from school to school within a district. Teachers pointed to variations in school leadership, school climate, and the level of collegial support as factors influencing the quality of their induction experience.

Thus, although both Illinois and Ohio provide induction programs with clear guidelines for program components, guidelines alone are not enough to control the program quality and the actual experiences of individual teachers. That said, policymakers and practitioners can take steps to address these variations, as we discuss in the next section.

III. Policy and Practice for Improving Induction

There are a variety of policy decisions that impact access to induction and the quality of the programs themselves that go beyond program guidelines. Some of these are obvious, such as increased and stable funding, and some are less so, such as linking teacher preparation to induction. In this section, we begin by examining the role of funding, data systems, and hiring policies on teacher induction programs. We then turn to other policies and practices that can improve induction: integrating preparation and induction, using induction to promote professionalism, and embedding induction in broader school improvement efforts.

Financial Resources

> *Districts need adequate and stable funding to be able to plan for and provide comprehensive support to new teachers. Inadequate, untimely, and unstable funding results in inequitable access to induction.*

Teacher induction costs money. Financial resources are needed for new teachers' and mentors' time, mentor stipends, professional development leaders, materials and supplies, and program coordinators' time, among other expenses. Yet, even in Ohio where induction is supported through state funds, funding varies considerably across districts. Without adequate and stable funding, districts tend to fall into one of three categories: those that prioritize induction and are able to secure or budget adequate funds, those that prioritize induction but are not able to secure or budget adequate funds, and those that do not prioritize induction. The result is that some beginning teachers enjoy strong support and others do not. There is evidence of significant equity issues in both Ohio and Illinois.

With the initial implementation of Ohio's Entry Year Program in 2002, the Ohio Department of Education allocated districts $2,000 per entry year teacher. However, as described above, per teacher funding was reduced 60% by 2005. As a result, all of the Ohio case study districts supplemented state dollars with dollars from their own general funds.

In Ohio, demographic shifts appear to have undermined programs in urban districts. With funds for induction programs shrinking in urban districts due to declining enrollments and increasing in suburban districts due to rising enrollments, policymakers are faced with significant equity issues based on the special needs of urban districts. Although Ohio's funding formula for teacher induction appears fair as the funds follow the new teachers, the state's changing demographics essentially redistribute resources from urban to suburban districts. This redistribution does not, however, take into account the special challenges beginning teachers face in urban schools.

In Illinois, with the exception of the recent investment in 10 pilot programs, districts largely have been responsible for funding their own programs. In addition to general

district funds, districts utilize a number of funding sources such as federal Title II teacher quality grants (e.g., to provide stipends for teachers) and Title 1 teacher resource funds (e.g., to cover professional development workshops). District C exemplifies a district that has been creative in patching together funding from a number of sources to support its induction efforts. Through the acquisition of foundation and business grants, a Congressional earmark, and the other sources, the district amassed $225,000 for the annual funding of its program. However, program leaders worried about their ability to continue to raise this level of funding. By contrast, another district we examined had been unable to pass a school referendum for over 20 years and was unable to obtain outside funding. At a time when the district is struggling to keep schools open, these circumstances have had a significant, negative impact on the district's ability to provide additional support for induction.

Illinois faces a larger equity problem. Without statewide funding, access to induction is uneven throughout the state of Illinois. Survey results from new teachers who graduated from Illinois public colleges in 2004 and 2005 and who are working in Illinois public schools indicate that induction programs are more likely to be located in urban and suburban districts in the northeast part of the state than in the more rural areas (Wall, 2006). Specifically, only 29% of teachers in Southeastern Illinois reported having a mentor compared to 90% of teachers in Northeast (i.e., Chicago and Cook County). Similarly, only 18% of teachers in the Southeast region participated in six or more induction activities compared to 54% in the Northeast region. With regard to school characteristics, districts with high levels of mentoring and induction had lower levels of students living in poverty (i.e., those participating in the free or reduced-price lunch program).

Of course, adequate and stable funding is only part of the solution to raising the quality of and equitable access to induction. We also believe that gathering information on program outcomes is necessary to program improvement. We turn to the data needs of induction programs next.

Outcome Data

Districts and states need evidence about their induction programs to ensure that resources are well spent and to allow for data-driven decisions about program structures. Districts need assistance in building capacity to collect and analyze outcome data (e.g., teacher retention and effectiveness data).

Teacher induction is widely believed to help reduce teacher attrition and improve teachers' effectiveness. However, information about the outcomes of teacher induction is scarce in both Illinois and Ohio. At the state level, neither Illinois nor Ohio has a data system that makes it possible to determine the contributions of new teachers to their students' achievement. Perhaps more surprising given the ease at which it can be measured, neither state regularly reports the attrition rates of beginning teachers. Instead, Illinois and Ohio limit their assessment of teacher retention to overall rates that are not broken out for new teachers or cohorts of teachers over time. For example, Illinois reports that 93% of 2004 Illinois teachers were still teaching in the state in 2005

(Illinois State Board of Education, 2005). In Ohio, about 91% of 2004 teachers remained in the profession (Levin et al., 2005).

Fortunately, some efforts are underway to provide retention data on beginning teachers. For example, the Illinois Education Research Council currently is examining new teacher attrition and mobility in Illinois public schools, and findings will be available in summer 2007. But without current and readily available data on new teachers' retention, program directors and policymakers are at a disadvantage in determining the effectiveness of specific programs or understanding the benefit of the state's investment.

At the district level, we found few attempts to gather outcome data among the nine case study districts, perhaps due to the complexity of linking induction to outcomes such as student achievement. While district induction programs typically survey beginning teachers to determine their satisfaction with program elements, student achievement and teacher retention data were not routinely collected nor reported. Despite the fact that both states encourage districts to evaluate their induction programs, we found only a few examples of programs collecting outcome data. For a few years, one district compared the retention rate of teachers who participated in its mentoring program to those who did not participate and found that those teachers who received mentoring had considerably higher retention rates after 1, 2, and 3 years in the district. Another district tracked the number of new teachers whose contracts were not renewed each year due to unsatisfactory evaluations.

More systematic evaluations at the local level could aid in the implementation and improvement of induction programs. And, they could ensure that resources are being used productively.

A significant barrier to data collection is that not all districts have the capacity to conduct informative evaluations. In some cases districts are unable to bring together necessary information because it is housed in different departments. For example, a likely scenario is that a district's human resource department has data on teacher retention, the professional development office has data on teachers' satisfaction of professional development workshops, and the assessment office has data on student learning. Drawing conclusions about the implementation and impact of induction will require putting all of these types of data together, which often is problematic. Even if data are accessible, many districts lack the skills and resources to appropriately analyze the data and draw accurate conclusions.

The lack of outcome data at the state and local levels is a major barrier to devising good policy. Policymakers need to encourage and fund evaluations of local programs. States and districts are committing substantial resources to induction and expecting positive outcomes. Evaluations can help improve programs and justify the expenditures.

In addition to funding and evaluating induction programs, policies need to address hiring practices so that teachers can benefit from early induction, discussed next.

Hiring Policies and Early Support

New teachers need time and support to be prepared on the first day of school. Being prepared means understanding district and school procedures as well as planning for instruction. Providing adequate orientation and preparation requires that teachers be hired before the start of school and paid for their preparation time.

The start of a school year is a demanding time for new teachers, and early support for new teachers is critical for the successful start of a school year. Teachers need time to prepare for the first few weeks of school by reviewing the existing curricula, preparing lessons plans, gathering materials, and perusing student records so they understand their incoming students' achievement levels and special needs. Teachers also need to learn local routines and procedures such how to take attendance, where to get textbooks, how to order materials, how to get a substitute, and where to park. Early orientation and induction support can help teachers with both realms of their jobs.

However, one complication to early support is that some new teachers are not hired in time for them to participate in the early induction experiences. Teachers hired late in the summer or after the start of the school year are at a severe disadvantage in that they have little, if any, time to set up their classrooms, gather materials, make curricular choices, and plan for instruction. Importantly, late hires miss out on critical induction services that may make these early preparations easier and more instructionally sound.

Late hiring creates an untenable situation for new teachers. Districts tout the importance of developing strong working relationships between mentors and mentees, yet only teachers who are hired early enough can meet their mentors before the school year starts and engage their mentors in helping with the first days on the job. A mentor in one district described the breadth of activities she does with new teachers prior to the first day of school: helping her mentees set up their classrooms, informing them of the process for ordering materials and helping them place their first orders, providing information on district resources and assisting them in borrowing materials, and discussing ideas for upcoming instructional units. Late hiring means that new teachers miss out on these supports.

Districts have many reasons for hiring late. Late vacancy notification requirements mean that schools and districts are delayed in learning of their exact hiring needs, undermining any efforts to hire earlier (Levin & Quinn, 2003). Some districts have outdated data systems that make the tracking and processing of applicants unwieldy and slow. Other districts have poor estimates of their hiring needs.

Whatever the reason for late hiring, efforts need to be taken to improve hiring practices so that new teachers are identified not only prior to the start of the school year, but prior to district orientation and training programs. While new teachers often are told that they will set the tone for the entire school year in the first few weeks of school, we do not take the same advice when it comes to getting new teachers started.

All three of the policy areas discussed thus far—funding, evaluation, and hiring—impact the integrity of the induction programs offered by districts. For states to provide quality programs for all new teachers, policymakers will have to address all three policy areas, not just induction program characteristics. Next, we encourage policymakers and program directors to reconceptualize teacher induction as a nexus for supporting teacher learning from preservice throughout teachers' careers.

Integration of Teacher Preparation and Induction

> *Induction is best thought of as part of a continuum of teacher development and should be closely entwined with teacher preparation and professional development.*

Induction often is conceptualized as a discrete program meant to influence the skills and retention of new teachers. We argue, however, that induction should not be seen as a disconnected program; rather, it is part of a larger continuum of teacher development and must be considered in this context for it to reap the maximum benefit. The Illinois Professional Teaching Standards recognize that professional development extends from initial preparation throughout a teacher's entire career. Whether formalized or not, states currently support a loosely-coupled system of teacher development, from teacher preparation to new teacher induction to ongoing professional development. Typically each component of the teacher development system is isolated from the others.

The lack of coordination between the different parts of the system can lead to three different types of failures. One, teachers may experience overlaps in their learning when both a teacher's preparation program and his/her induction program cover the same material. With all that they have to do, new teachers find such duplication of efforts frustrating and a waste of precious time. Two, teachers may experience gaps in their learning. For example, neither their preparation program nor their induction program may provide guidance on teaching English learners. Three, different parts of the system may send contradictory messages. For example, a teacher preparation program may stress a whole language approach to reading instruction and an induction program may encourage a phonics approach.

As we noted earlier, the lack of coordination between teacher preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development is particularly acute for teachers in alternative certification programs. This population of teachers, who simultaneously participate in teacher preparation, induction, and the professional development activities required by their school or district, are too often confronted with redundant activities and mixed messages about teaching. But alternative certification teachers are not alone; traditionally prepared teachers also are likely to experience similar problems when teacher preparation, induction, and professional development are not linked.

When close linkages are made between components of the teacher development continuum, however, there is a healthy blurring of the lines between preparation, induction, and professional development. Coordination can be achieved, and teachers

can engage in a process of steady learning from preservice through inservice. One case study program provides a model for integration, albeit a radical departure from traditional preparation and induction. The Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (SIUC) Teaching Fellows Graduate Program completely reconceptualizes teacher induction through a program that elevates induction to an apprenticeship model in which the new teacher delays becoming the teacher of record in favor of an additional year of supervised clinical practice. By combining teacher preparation and induction, SIUC has produced a powerful form of early teacher development.

Southern Illinois University Carbondale Teaching Fellows Graduate Program

The SIUC Teaching Fellows Graduate Program is an example of an apprenticeship model of teacher education in which recent graduates of a teacher preparation program have intense, extended supervised practical experience. The SIUC Teaching Fellows Graduate Program is a 1- or 2-year intensive graduate training program for certified teachers, which combines practical classroom experience with graduate coursework leading to a master's degree.

Hired by a district to co-teach with a veteran teacher, Fellows are in the classroom with a mentor 4 days a week for an entire school year, and have an additional one-half day twice a month for planning with their mentor. Fellows gain practical experience with starting a school year, lesson planning, teaching, working with students, collaborating with other teachers, holding conferences, managing open house visits, and communicating with parents. Fellows earn a graduate student stipend and a tuition waiver for their classroom work. Simultaneously, Fellows are enrolled in 6 to 9 credit hours per semester of graduate coursework at SIUC where they study action research and literacy. Tying the classroom apprenticeship to their coursework, Fellows write focused reflections and conduct a research project based on their classroom practice as part of their graduate seminar.

SIUC works toward program coherence by providing several opportunities for mentor support, including a 2-day workshop on mentoring new teachers, and twice per semester meetings for troubleshooting. In addition, there are opportunities both before and during the school year for mentors and Fellows to meet as a group. A curriculum map guides the mentors to address specific topics over the course of the year. Mentors, who are selected by their districts through varying processes, receive a tuition waiver each semester for 6 hours of coursework.

The participating districts and SIUC split the cost of the Teaching Fellow stipends, approximately $11,000 per Fellow. Districts use different funding sources including federal Title I and Title II grants, foundation money, gifts, and other sources.

The SIUC Teaching Fellows Graduate Program illustrates a dramatic model of integrating teacher preparation and induction. Although it is not easily replicated due to high costs and local labor market circumstances, it does point to the value of apprenticeships for beginning teachers. Most importantly, the model challenges the widely held belief that all new teachers must struggle in their first year. When new teachers work in tandem with accomplished teachers, they are not left to learn their profession through trial and error; rather, they can build on the knowledge of their partner teachers who provide the scaffold for success.

Induction to Advance Professionalism

New teacher induction is not just about new teachers. Induction can be used as a vehicle to advance the professionalization of teaching.

The Toledo School District has developed a national reputation for redefining the purpose of induction as the advancement of the teaching profession. For 25 years, the Toledo School District and the Toledo Federation of Teachers have worked in partnership to implement the Toledo Plan—Toledo's induction program. The program is designed to ensure that all teachers new to the district meet high professional standards by providing professional development and implementing an evaluation system that detects and screens out those teachers who are unable to succeed as classroom teachers.

The union is unwavering in its strict adherence to its teaching standards and will not let teachers who are below standard remain in the classroom. Since the program's inception in the 1981-82 school year through 2001-02, an annual average of 8.4% of teachers in the induction program were denied further employment with the Toledo Public Schools because of their failure to meet standards set forth by the union (Toledo Public Schools and Toledo Federation of Teachers, 2006).

The Toledo Plan exemplifies an induction program that does more than support new teachers. By defining and promoting standards of practice, rather than defending unsatisfactory teachers, the Toledo Federation of Teachers both improves new teachers' instructional practices and elevates the teaching profession by having teachers hold teachers accountable for reaching the established standards of practice. If the ultimate goal of induction is to improve teacher quality, then it only makes sense to conceptualize induction in a way that addresses the teaching profession as a whole, and not just individual teachers.

Toledo, Ohio: The Toledo Plan

The Toledo Plan—Toledo's induction program—is run jointly by the Toledo Federation of Teachers (TFT) and the district management. It is both a mentoring program and a peer evaluation system. Started in 1981, it was the first peer evaluation program of its kind.

All first-year teachers and teachers new to the district—dubbed interns—are assigned a consulting teacher who conducts formal observations and in-person consultations, and who ultimately is responsible for recommending whether or not the intern's teaching contract is renewed. Consultants, who are released full time from their regular classroom duties, are selected through a rigorous screening process. Consultants participate in a series of professional development activities on mentoring and evaluating new teachers prior to and after assuming their new role.

Consultants typically observe and counsel first-year teachers an average of 20 hours each semester. During both the first and second semesters, the consultant presents an evaluation of each intern's work to the Intern Board of Review—a joint union-management panel that governs the program. The Intern Board of Review votes to accept or reject the consultant's evaluation of the intern, including whether or not the intern's contract should be renewed.

The Toledo Plan is an effort to change the roles and responsibilities in the mentoring and evaluation process to get more effective and accurate results. The underlying assumption is that experienced teachers are in the best position to screen new entrants into the profession and to mentor first-year teachers. The union asserts that the Toledo Plan brings a sense of professionalism to teaching. As the union president said, "It's a real point of pride that we are taking responsibility for enforcing standards for our profession. It sends a message about the value that we place in classroom teaching." In addition, the consultant's role as evaluator creates leverage for change because the interns know that their consultant's recommendations matter.

Despite drastic district budget reductions over the past few years, the district spends about $600,000 of its general funds to pay for the full-time release of the consultants, supplemental pay, and pay for the teachers who replace the consultants.

Embedding Induction in School Improvement

New teacher induction is a promising vehicle for school improvement when it is used as a vehicle for building a professional community.

Among the many interviews we have conducted about teacher induction, one stood out as particularly surprising and thought-provoking. At the first mention of induction during the interview, a government official who formerly was a highly-regarded teacher, said, "I hate those programs." Taken aback, we asked her to explain. She argued that teacher induction programs too often are band-aids on bad schools. She went on to explain that teacher induction should be the responsibility of the whole school community, and induction programs tend to narrow the responsibility to one individual, the mentor. While she admitted that she was overstating her opposition (she was not opposed to providing support for new teachers), she wanted to avoid marginalizing teacher induction from the larger purpose of school improvement.

Traditionally, teacher induction is conceptualized as a discrete program. There is a tendency for state and local policymakers to provide a prescriptive set of requirements for the number of contact hours between mentor and beginning teacher, requirements for mentor training, and sometimes a curriculum for new teacher improvement. Yet, as the provocative interview suggested, it takes a professional community to induct a new teacher. Relegating responsibility for teacher induction to a mentor fails to employ the full set of skills and knowledge of the entire faculty and administration. In contrast, building a professional community that supports and nurtures the new teacher benefits not only the new teachers, but the experienced teachers as well.

Though infrequent, the case studies revealed instantiations in which broader support for teacher induction created the opportunities for an entire school faculty or a subset of the faculty (e.g., department or grade level team) to improve instructional practices. One innovative approach to induction was creating specific times either daily or weekly for teams of teachers to meet to analyze student work together, work together to develop teaching materials or activities, seek each other's advice about instructional issues or problems, or discuss student assessment data to make decisions about instruction. Although done under the guise of new teacher support, meetings like these that focus on teaching and learning spur improvement for all teachers. Other similar approaches that involve teams of teachers coming together around instructional improvement include mentor teams (rather than individual mentors), and co-teaching or apprenticeship models.

Another innovative approach to induction is the creation of formal policies that grant new teachers reduced duties for the sole purpose of creating time for them to observe experienced teachers' classrooms and discuss their observations. New teachers find it difficult to find time for the luxury of observing others, yet they report this activity to be one of the most valuable for learning. Thus, when the time is provided, even mandated, professional discourse ensues between the new and experienced teachers,

practice is made public, and the whole school community benefits.

Support for new teachers as a means of promoting professional community is not always so formal. In one school, for example, all of the teachers at a grade level work together to set up new teachers' classrooms by cleaning, organizing materials, and decorating the bulletin boards. Though not necessarily contributing directly to instruction, such activities create a culture of community and support, and they set the foundation for collaborative work throughout the school year.

When induction is deemed the responsibility of the whole school community, then it is both a vehicle for improving new teachers' skills as well as a vehicle for school improvement writ large. Granted, expanding the purpose of induction to include school improvement is difficult to legislate. That said, policymakers and practitioners can encourage the use of induction funds to reduce new teachers' loads, provide time for teams of teachers to work together to improve teaching and learning, and support other innovations in teacher induction that place school improvement as the central purpose of the program.

IV. Conclusion

Both Illinois and Ohio have embedded teacher induction in their credentialing system and are taking steps to improve induction programs. Although Ohio has made a much larger financial commitment to teacher induction than Illinois, neither state invests enough in induction programs to cover the cost of comprehensive programs. Despite the lack of adequate state support, local school districts in both states have developed impressive and sometimes innovative approaches to supporting beginning teachers. However, there is wide variation across programs in terms of the levels of support available. In addition, neither state nor districts report crucial data to enable policymakers to assess the effectiveness of induction programs. In both states, district hiring practices are sometimes obstacles to giving new teachers adequate orientation and planning time before the school year starts.

While both states and their local districts attend to the particular program structures and practices, the broader issues of adequate financial support and timely information on the outcomes of induction deserve more state-level attention. In addition, policymakers should consider leveraging induction to support a larger continuum of teacher development rather than just a set of discrete programs. In order to better integrate teacher preparation and teacher induction, active partnerships need to be made between universities and school districts so that the distinction between preparation, orientation, and induction is lost and replaced with a coherent program of teacher development. Similarly, district officials need to be able to articulate the linkages between teacher induction and teacher professional development, and avoid operating two isolated efforts to raise teacher skills and knowledge. In that same vein, teacher induction can have an even more important purpose: school improvement.

These conclusions are based on the first of 2 years of data collection and analysis. The next round of data collection will include a broader set of research activities to enable more detailed conclusions. Data collection for the second year of the study (2006-07) has been customized for each state to respond to state-level priorities and leverage unique opportunities for data collection. Upon the conclusion of the study, we will be able to provide policymakers and program directors with information about induction supports provided to teachers and their perceived effects on teachers, implementation successes and challenges, the relationship between induction support and teacher retention, and other policy issues related to funding and model specificity (e.g., the trade-offs between having full-time release mentors versus classroom teachers as mentors). The study, thus, will inform both Illinois and Ohio as they continue their efforts to provide new teachers with the support that they need to be successful classroom teachers.

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