

Chapter 2

Preparing and Supporting Classroom Teachers Through Induction

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ABSTRACT

While teacher mentoring programs are highly recommended to support new teacher graduates, not all states require teacher mentoring. Other professions such as medicine and law require supervision under the tutelage of a mentor. With the need to ensure teacher quality to effect higher student achievement, most teacher preparation programs place teachers in residencies and practicums before students graduate; few follow up with graduates to ensure teachers have required competencies as they transition into teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Despite years of studies that support the need for new teacher induction, there are few consistencies in state, district, and school requirement to provide teacher induction. The inconsistencies begin in teacher preparation programs (DeMonte, 2015; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wechsler, Caspary, Humphrey, & Matsko, 2010).

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Teacher preparation programs differ across countries, states, and institutions in requirements for coursework, residency programs for students preparing to be teachers, and a connection between preparation programs and teacher induction programs once teachers are working in the profession.

Mentoring for new teachers, according to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), is the provision of support, assistance and advice, provided by a veteran teacher. Researchers' recommendations for mentoring and induction suggest minimally, the need for early career teachers to have structured, systematic induction programs for at least one year or longer with trained mentors (Buchanan, Prescott, Schuck, Aubusson, & Burke, 2013; DeMonte, 2015; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014; Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016a, 2016b).

The time has passed when we can simply allow a teacher to walk into classrooms, close the door, and just wing it alone. Few—if any—professions allow practitioners to work in such a manner. The fact of the matter is people become better at their jobs by observing and sharing with experts in their field as they do their work. Given what we want and expect our teachers to be able to do—turn out students who are college and career ready—it is critical that we give them the tools and support that will allow them to learn, improve, and do their jobs better even as we hold them accountable for their work (DeMonte, 2013, p.21).

Researchers also suggest teachers who do not participate in formal induction programs, do not remain in the education field as long as those who participate in induction programs, which contributes to teacher attrition (Buchanan, Prescott, Schuck, Aubusson, & Burke, 2013; Fetherston & Lummis, 2012).

Teacher Preparation Programs

Education reform has changed the educational landscape; the educational reform movement in the 2000s forced teacher preparation institutions to critically examine the rationale and the methods used to prepare classroom teachers, including teacher residencies and the connection for formal mentoring when teachers begin to teach (Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning, 2010; Freedberg & Rice, 2015; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014; National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2016). Medical programs and some law school programs, according to DeMonte (2015) mandate residencies with students following practitioners through the workday processes allowing time for observation, reflection, and interaction, both with mentors and peers. Formal mentoring processes continue for more than one year. Guha, Hyler, and Darling-Hammond (2017) contend teacher preparation residency models based on medical

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