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The Interdependency of Impactful Teacher Induction Programs and Teacher Retention

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Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

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Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

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Abstract

The goal of new teacher induction programs was to improve the instruction of new and beginning teachers through ongoing professional development and instructional coaching with the hopes of retaining highly-qualified teachers and improving student learning. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of new teacher induction programs based on teacher satisfaction and retention rates. This study addressed the following research questions: (1) What are the known qualities of a highly-effective teacher induction program? and (2) What can school district leaders do to improve a teacher induction program to increase teacher satisfaction and retention rates? The context of this inquiry was a low achieving Title I school in an urban district with a school-based new induction program. The study demonstrated outcomes indicating the school's culture and the participants' connection with their mentors positively impacted the effectiveness of the new teacher induction program. The evaluation resulted in a need for change. I developed a change leadership plan to address increased administrator participation, a deliberate approach to supporting new teachers entering the profession, a conscious approach to using nonevaluative observations and feedback, and an intentional focus on infusing the school culture into the program. I concluded from the research that many programs lack formal implementation of program components needed to bring intentionality and fidelity. I recommended a change in district policy to mandate a semi-scripted, formal program to be implemented by district leaders and school-based leaders.

Preface

What happens to beginning teachers during the early years on the job determines if they stay in teaching and what kind of teacher they become (McDonald, 1980; Adleman, 1991 as cited in Feinman-Nesser, 1999, p. 4). Society charges educators to support new teachers with nurturing their adult development within their professional craft. Often, if the new teacher is fortunate, this nurturing and development happens by participating in an induction program. Other times, when new teachers are less fortunate, their development is left to the teacher's discretion or, at best, supported by a helpful colleague.

My work as a lead mentor for a school-based induction program inspired this program evaluation. For more than five years, I worked as the lead mentor, supervising teacher mentors and mentees, providing professional development, and supporting new teachers in the classroom. When I began this role, the school-based induction program model lacked many elements to make it effective in the lives of the new teachers it served. There was little to no accountability for mentor-mentee collaboration, no scope and sequence to guide implementation, and no standards for learning. As I committed myself to developing teachers and teacher retention, I was inspired to focus my program evaluation on this topic. I decided to explore the emotional, professional, and instructional supports given to new teachers and how these supports affected teacher retention. I learned through this study that new teacher induction programs cannot function as a separate silo within a school. Instead, induction programs need to be an extension of a school's culture.

An effective induction program will help new teachers to gain support from the

entire school community and grow in their sense of belonging. In addition, I learned that induction programs can support schools as effective learning environments. Through developing teachers, school leaders can raise student achievement and boost teacher retention rates. Developing teachers by strengthening teacher practice can positively affect student performance. This leads school leaders, like me, to better serve adults and students.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation would not have been possible without the village that supported me through all my endeavors. First, I want to thank my professional learning community at work. This team of teachers, staff, and administrators had been a driving force for many educational and professional experiences. We have learned from each other throughout the years. Next, I want to thank my mentor, Dr. David J. Hardrick, for allowing me to experience excellence in leadership and the skills, courage, and confidence to succeed as a leader. Thank you to my grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hill, my in-laws Mr. and Mrs. Jacques Duroseau, Papa T., SM, and the countless other village members who have cheered me on and motivated me along the way.

Dedication

To my God for sustaining me. To my children who look up to me. To my husband, who supports me. To my sister, who is always watching me. To my mother, who has always led me. To my Nanny, who always covered me.

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Chapter One: Introduction

New teacher mentor programs, or induction programs, provide ongoing, systematic support to beginning teachers in and out of the classroom. Many induction program leaders set their goal to improve teacher retention. Yet, leaders of the programs do not always systematically create and execute the programs with the appropriate tools for optimal retention. New teacher induction programs have many components, such as professional development (PD), coaching, and mentorship. Mentoring is a significant component, but mentorship could only provide minimal support at best, especially when mentors were classroom teachers. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) noted, "if mentoring duties are simply tacked on top of teaching duties, it limits the time and energy available for quality mentoring—resulting in new teachers who receive inconsistent and compliance-driven support" (2018, p. 3).

Educators need to incorporate many aspects of teacher induction programs into school-based, and district-based programs that are frequently left out. Components often left out by leaders are regularly planned time for peer observations and protected time for mentor collaboration. The omission may result from a lack of resources or capacity in the leader or program. School-based and district-based teacher induction programs need revamping to create quality standards for educator induction, ongoing job-embedded professional development, and support for mentors and mentees.

This study examined a school-based new teacher induction program in a Title I school located in the United States. Historically, the school under study had a staff make-up and characteristics that included high turnover rates, teachers acquired from alternative hiring agencies such as Teach For America and AmeriCorps, and teachers

with limited experience levels. The school's administrators adapted the mission and vision from the school district's mission and vision, including the support and inclusiveness of families and community and ensuring that every student had a promising and prosperous future.

The school under study was in a low- socioeconomic inner-city area, and 100% of the students qualified for the free lunch program. The students had low achievement in the areas of reading and math. The school's student population was majority Black (84%). The other races represented at the school were White (14%) and Asian (less than 1%). Students who were English speakers of other languages accounted for 18% of the student population. The instructional staff population was unstable, with 31% of the staff with longevity of five years or more. Of the 66 instructional staff members, 62% were Black, 37% were White, and 1% were Other. The administration consisted of two assistant principals and one principal. From the 2015-2016 school year until the year of this study, the school experienced an average of 20 new teachers joining the staff each year.

Given the high turnover rate at the school under study, the school-based leaders saw the need to provide new teachers with high-quality support, reliable mentorships, and consistent professional development. The teacher retention rate averaged 21% each year. Unfortunately, this school was not alone in the failure to meet the needs of the new teacher population.

Purpose of the Program Evaluation

The purpose of my study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a new teacher induction program based on teacher satisfaction and retention rates. In the United States,

31 out of 50 states required induction or mentoring support for new teachers (Goldrick et al., 2012, p. 11). According to Goldrick:

Beginning teachers are, on average, less effective than more experienced ones. High-quality induction programs can accelerate new teachers' professional growth, making them more effective and faster. Research demonstrated that comprehensive, multi-year induction programs accelerate the professional development of new teachers, reduce the rate of further teacher attrition, provide a stronger return on states' and school districts' investment, and improve student learning (p. i).

Because induction programs are so important to the development of new teachers, I evaluated the effectiveness of the program at one school. Using the results of my study, I then provided ways school leaders could enhance the program at the school under study. My recommendations could be employed by any school or district leaders looking to improve a school based teacher induction program.

State-level induction program legislation mandated programs at the district level. The goals of the induction program at the school level were to provide high levels of support to new classroom teachers, improve teacher retention, and increase student achievement. The necessity here was simple; new teachers must maneuver many obstacles in their first year. Some of these obstacles, such as learning content, grading work, communicating with parents, and progress monitoring, are done simultaneously (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999).

Teachers need support to facilitate their job duties and work effectively to increase student achievement and personal pedagogy. This support for new teachers often came firsthand from induction program mentors and leaders. In the school under study,

the induction programs leaders charged themselves with engaging new teachers in practices that would build a new teacher's skill set and help them see the connections between their job's task demands and responsibilities. In addition to working directly with the new teachers, program leaders also worked to support the mentors assigned to the new teachers.

Rationale

As the lead mentor for the induction program at a school, supporting and leading new and beginning teachers, I knew first-hand the struggle of new teachers. I had been a teacher in both the suburban areas of a city and the inner city. The experiences were vastly different. In the high-performing suburban neighborhood, I could transition into the classroom seamlessly without the support of a new teacher program or a mentor. On the other hand, I struggled with adjusting when I arrived at the inner-city school, failing Title I school. I struggled with the student population, lack of resources, and the severe learning deficits of the students. At that time, the new teacher induction program was simple and uninviting.

In my experience as an induction program participant, there was no sense of urgency within the program, and the mentorship provided was relaxed. The accountability for induction standards and program responsibilities was nonexistent. The failure stemmed from a lack of mentee participation and mentors' lack of communication and resources for classroom success. I saw the cycle of failure repeat year after year. I began taking an active interest in the inner workings of professional development, specifically as it related to new teachers. After many cycles of watching a failed induction program, I received the task of taking over the new teacher induction program.

A lack of stability in teachers who complete full school years or provide longevity in their tenure can be unsettling for school communities. The strength of school districts relies on quality teachers. Quality teachers develop by being supported and nurtured within the schools they serve. Ultimately, if leadership fails to produce high quality teachers, schools fail children. Alma Harris (2014) explained that "as educated leaders…struggle with many demands of their day job, it is important to highlight where ideas, research, and evidence reinforce each other and overlap" (p.11). Ultimately, induction programs aim to help new and beginning teachers improve the effectiveness of their instruction through ongoing professional development and coaching of instructional practices, thereby leading to improved student learning.

Goals

The intended goals for my new teacher induction program evaluation were to evaluate the effectiveness of a program at the school level based on teacher satisfaction and retention rates and create a list of best practices to be included in school-based new teacher programs. The best practices identified were based on the results of the program evaluation. These best practices when implemented would lead to effective teacher development, which would directly impact student learning.

According to the University of Tennessee's Value-Added Research and Assessment Center, "the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher" (Sanders & Rivers, 1996, p. 63). Ultimately, teacher induction programs are created to make teachers more effective with all aspects of teaching that ultimately impact student learning growth. The programs are based on cyclic ideas that with support, new teachers grow in their craft and pedagogy. As a result of participating in the program, they will

increase and elevate their teaching practices which will lead to an increase in student achievement. An additional benefit of induction programs with an effective mentorship component was the positive effect on improving the teacher attrition rate of new teachers (Izadinia, 2015).

Definition of Terms

1. Job satisfaction - Perceptions of fulfillment derived from day-to-day work activities (Judge et al., 2001).

2. Professional support - Strategies and techniques to support the professional growth of a professional (Gamble, 2020).

3. Emotional support - Emotional skills (encouragement, trust, reflection, etc.) used to support how one feels and wants (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020).

4. Induction - "Comprehensive systems of support and training for beginning teachers" (Johnson et al., 2010, p. 1).

5. Mentoring - A way for preservice teachers to engage productively with a more experienced teacher on learning how to teach (Hudson, 2013).

Research Questions

My study addressed the following research questions:

- What are the known qualities of a highly-effective teacher induction program?

- What can school district leaders do to improve a teacher induction program to increase teacher satisfaction and retention rates?

Conclusion

Understanding what school-based and district-based leaders must do to prepare and retain new teachers was the essence of this research. This study explored new

teachers' professional and emotional support related to program effectiveness and teacher retention in an induction program. In the next chapter, I examined research conducted around new teacher induction programs, mentoring, and teacher retention.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of new teacher induction programs based on teacher satisfaction and retention rates. This purpose stemmed from the high-teacher shortages in most states. Teacher shortages, or a lack of teachers, mean a lack of learning and success for students. Likewise, a lack of teachers means schools potentially closing and not serving the community. Seemingly, one of the most natural responses may be to revamp new teacher induction programs (Garcia & Weiss, 2019).

Educators and legislators created new teacher induction programs at the state level and executed them at the district level. These programs set out to provide high levels of support to new classroom teachers to increase teacher retention. The necessity for induction programs stemmed from the number of obstacles new teachers maneuvered in their first year. Some of these obstacles, such as learning content, grading work, communicating with parents, and progress monitoring, are done simultaneously. Feiman-Nemser et al. (1999) saw this period of transition as a time when "new teachers have two jobs to do—they have to teach, and they have to learn to teach" (p. 11). As a result, teachers needed support to facilitate their job duties and worked effectively to increase student achievement and personal pedagogy.

For this chapter, I reviewed literature from databases of scholarly works. I used the database hosted by the Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO). I also used the database hosted by Journal Storage (JSTOR). Both contained reputable educational online publications, scholarly books, and public material produced from federal and state education departments. The majority of the literature was current within the last ten years from the inception of my program evaluation study in the year 2019. I conducted my

search focused on the history of teacher induction programs, an analysis of mentoring and induction processes, teacher attrition and retention, and teacher shortages.

History of Teacher Induction

From the early 1970s, lawmakers, reformists, and essential players in the educational arena have noted the need for more attention dedicated to new teachers. In response to this realization, as far back as in the mid-1980s, state educational leaders began to address the lack of pre-employment teacher preparation and the necessity to grow the capacity of new teachers and invest in their retention by establishing teacher induction programs. According to Hellsten et al. (2009), "induction programs, including mentorship, serve to bridge the transition from pre-service to in-service teaching" (p. 2). The idea of helping teachers transition from their formal training to teaching in a classroom was not considered by leaders in the early teacher preparation programs.

Teacher Preparation Programs

The first formal teacher preparation schools began in 1820 with normal schools in Vermont and Massachusetts. The establishment of normal schools came after a high demand for teachers occurred (Ducharme & Ducharme, 2012). Labaree (2008) noted communities had a need for teachers and a request for those with higher teacher qualifications. The purpose of normal schools was simply the preparation of new teachers. "Major cities set up normal schools or normal departments within high schools, to train teachers for the local system" (Labaree, 2008, p. 3). State training for teachers began in high school with a curriculum that mixed liberal arts and professional courses, lasting one or two years. According to Davies (1986), much of the preparation was in doing specific tasks, likely those associated with the administrative or managerial side of

teaching: opening and closing windows, creating crafts to hang on school walls, and classroom arrangement. Later in the 19th century, almost every state had at least one normal school to prepare teachers.

By the 1940s, normal school structures expanded into four-year professional colleges. These colleges later transformed into state universities in the1960s (Ducharme & Ducharme, 2012). According to Labaree (2008), the original design of normal schools morphed into teacher colleges with a primary intention to prepare teachers with subject matter knowledge and pedagogy. These newly created de facto liberal arts schools served more than teachers, yet, unfortunately, were unable to compete for students with the notoriety, perks, or cost of colleges and universities. Eventually, in the 1950s, these teacher college institutions replaced the word *teacher* with a more marketable label of *state college*. This form of institutional evolution took on another form when in 1970, a former normal school received the title of *university*. Labaree (2018) further explained that professional schools had difficulty surviving independently because of the university's attractiveness. "Only schools for training practitioners of the lesser trades— like cosmetology and truck driving—could survive independently. For teacher education, as with other programs of professional preparation, there was nowhere else to go but the university" (p. 297).

By the end of the 19th century, most states required teachers to pass a locally administered test—usually consisting of essential skills and American history, geography, spelling,and grammar—to get a state teaching certificate (Ravitch, 2002). Consequently, in the late 20th century, educators saw state lawmakers begin to develop licensure requirements based on coursework. Further, during the era of professional licensure,

formally organized induction and mentoring began to emerge.

Teacher Induction Programs

Induction, the support given to novice teachers at the beginning of their career, was organized into programs geared towards improving teaching performance, combating the survival stage of teaching, and grooming successful teachers (Wong, 2004). Induction programs served as a second line of defense for new teachers to learn pedagogy after formal education or teacher preparation programs. Historically, one of the oldest forms of this practice would be illustrated by when Plato learned to teach while sitting with Socrates (Ducharme & Ducharme, 2012).

However, despite the growing number of new teachers entering the workforce–an increase of roughly 1% each year in the 1980s (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009) - by 1984, only eight states reported having some organized type of induction program (Weiss & Weiss, 1999, p.5). One of the first induction programs was the New York State Mentor Teacher Internship Program. This program began in 1986 with a premise to support new teachers by pairing them with peer teachers throughout their first and second years of teaching (Bullough, 2012). These peer teachers, known as mentors, were supplemented with stipends and in-service points for the extensive work done with the new teacher to guide and support the teacher. The peer teachers in the New York State Mentor Teacher Internship Program did not evaluate the new teachers.

According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), new teacher induction programs for beginning teachers have become more numerous since 1990. However, research showed that only 40% of new teachers nationwide participated in an induction program. Notably, Bullough (2012) explained that in 1998, the California government leaders signed into

existence Senate Bill 2042. This bill created and required teachers to complete a two-year

induction program. In this program, new teachers were assigned a mentor for the duration

of the program. The program included collaborative professional development and tasks

for both the mentor and mentee to complete. Although the mandate existed, the amount

of funding to implement it was not as clear. The funding remained unstable for years.

This led to the concern among educators as discussions spread about the instability of the

funding. This resulted in stakeholders deeming mentoring would soon become an

unfunded mandate.

In contrast to the New York State Program, a voluntary mentoring program in

Texas gave teachers the ability to choose participation or non-participation (Bullough,

2012, p. 62). The Texas program funding continued and expanded for the voluntary

program to improve the program's quality. The funding allowed for an increase mentor

stipends and training, thus enhancing the desirability of the program. In 1999, Texas state

legislators adopted an induction program with additional frameworks for educator

certification and preparation.

By the 1999-2000 school year, with 40% of teachers in the United States

participating in an induction program almost doubled in quantity (Ingersoll & Smith,

2004). Gasner (2005) found the number of states with induction programs increased from

seven in the 1996-1997 school year to 33 states in 2002. By 2008, 91% of beginning

teachers took part in an induction program (Ingersoll, 2012).

Goldrick (2016) in a New Teacher Center Policy Report, published every four

years, reported that only 29 of 50 states required a mandated teacher induction program

for the first year of teaching. Even though states have increasingly made the shift to

require induction programs, they drastically varied in the length of program requirements. Of these 29 states listed in the 2016 document, three states had no identified time period needed for the length of induction programs. The New Teacher Center's (NTC) 2016 Policy Report stated that 13 states required one year of induction, while 11 states required two or three years. Also, the report showed that 24 states required schools and districts to provide multi-year support for new teachers as a requirement for professional licensure.

In addition to state requirements, the federal government added requirements for teacher induction programs. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act added legislation that led to increased teacher induction programs in schools. The initiative to meet NCLB requirements forced school leaders to use Title II funding to implement induction programming (McMurrer, 2007). When NCLB was replaced by The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, there was continued support for teacher induction programs. The Title II Guidelines within ESSA stated: "SEAs and LEAs are encouraged to use Title II, Part A funds to establish and support high-quality educator induction and mentorship programs that where possible are evidence-based and designed to improve classroom instruction (ESEA sections 2101(c)(4)(B)(vii)(III) and 2103(b)(3)(B)(iv)). However, these two acts did not define how the induction programs should be implemented.

Mentoring and Induction

Mentoring and induction programs, terms sometimes used interchangeably, were created with sophisticated research-based approaches (Ingersoll, 2012). Mentoring can be traced back to the 13th century when an apprentice copied an experienced teacher's style, speech, and technique, thus gaining practical experience without any theoretical

background. Similar historical information dates back to a tall tale about Mentor, the friend of Ulysses. Mentor was charged with the unwavering care of Ulysses' son before he set out on many legendary voyages. Mentor cultivated Ulysses' son to allow him to shine morally, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. This anecdote revealed the need for more than just professional support from mentors. It explicitly supported the need for more than "mentors and novices to work together to learn to teach as they grow professionally at their respective levels of practice" (Schwille, 2008, p. 164). It highlighted the need of the support for the mentee beyond the improving the level of the mentees' skills.

Notably, the historical background and distinguished advancement of mentoring were illustrated in the research from Zembytska (2016), depicting mentoring periods as distinguishable by years. Zembytska identified four periods of teacher mentoring. There was the pre-institutional period of the 1960s through the 1970s as the beginning of mentoring when it was informal and provided practical assistance. The next period was identified as the institutional period. This period encompassed the years of the 1980s through the 1990s where there was increasingly formal mentoring. He identified incorporate as the period from the early 21st century through current time as a conceptual modification of mentoring programs (pp. 68-69).

As early as the 2000s, professional standards influenced the approach to designing mentoring programs for teaching. This was in contrast to the personal implications and limited scope of programs in previous years. The use of professional teaching standards, documentation of mentoring conversations, and data collection on various components of classroom practice ensured a solid structure for focusing on continuous instructional

growth (New Teacher Center, 2016). Zembytska (2016) found that a common requirement across states was that new teacher induction and mentoring program plans aligned with the professional teaching standards adopted in a particular state. The programs had to also align with content area standards as well as with applicable local school improvement and professional development plans.

Powell (2014) affirmed that induction programs had grown from the past inception. Historically dating back to the early 19th century, induction programs functioned solely with a curriculum supervisor or professional development manager in charge of the program's responsibilities. However, programs evolved to create a team of persons dedicated to the program's shared intended goals and working knowledge.

According to Zembytska (2016), mentoring was the core element of any induction program. Positive outcomes for the programs were more probable when mentoring was combined with the district and school-based induction support. He identified support as activities such as orientation sessions, workshops, seminars, summer training (summer institutes), lectures, debates, formal and informal meetings, surveys, assessments, interviews, and so on. Zembytska also stated mentoring programs needed to include mentors who received the necessary training and were highly knowledgeable about teaching and coaching.

According to research, to be an effective mentor one needs to have at least three years of teaching experience and demonstrate skills in classroom training, effective implementation of classroom instructional practices, and coaching (Rivers, 2016). The most successful mentoring situations were when mentors provided new teachers with tools, strategies, support, resources, and professional development. In addition, the

program needs to be consistent and aligned with the district's vision (Cook, 2012).

While some state education leaders strived to support and retain their teachers, there was room for improvement. Many states had only limited mentoring for new teachers. In addition to the lack of mentoring for new teachers, many states still lacked adequate support for new school principals. There was also a lack of quality standards for educator induction, ongoing professional development, and support for mentors. Based on the most current data from the New Teacher Center's (NTC) 2016 Policy Report, researchers found that few states had comprehensive policies to require high-quality induction for beginning teachers. The key findings from this 2016 report were as follows:

- 24 states required schools and districts to provide multi-year support for new teachers as a requirement for professional licensure;

- 15 states required support for years one and two; nine states require three years;

- since the 2012 NTC report, 16 states were providing funding for induction programs;three states had stopped;

- 30 states offered mentoring; 18 of those states required ongoing professional development for mentors (p. iv).

Teacher induction programs, even when equipped with mentorships, were not without criticism. Criticism occurred mainly when programs were not producing desirable results or demonstrating effectiveness. Induction programs, from the beginning, had varied from state to state with a wide range of implementation.

Additionally, the scope of the mentor's role was not universal within all induction programs. In some cases, mentoring was more of a *buddy* system. In the buddy system, mentors were more of a friend who provided the new teacher with emotional support and

friendly assistance (Wong, 2004).

According to researcher Henry Wong (2004), the buddy system mentoring proved ineffective in increasing retention rates of new teachers. This was because teachers needed a systemic, sustained induction program. On the contrary, according to DeCesare et al. (2016), "National studies indicate that mentoring may be an effective intervention for improving teacher retention and performance" (p. 1). There was a difference in teacher retention based upon the type of mentoring provided to the new teacher.

Izadinia (2015) conducted research on the effect mentoring had on the attrition rate of beginning teachers. She found the relationship between a mentor and a beginning teacher impacted whether the teacher remained in education. If there was a positive relationship between the mentor and mentee, the beginning teacher remained in the profession. If there was a negative relationship between the mentor and mentee, the mentee was less likely to remain.

Retention and Attrition Issues

In response to ever-increasing new teacher attrition rates and declining retention, "in recent decades a growing number of states, school districts, and schools have developed and implemented induction programs for beginning teachers" (Ingersoll & Strong., 2011, p. 202). However, as Garcia and Weiss (2019) reported, research from the Economic Policy Institute suggested that teacher attrition, teachers leaving the teaching field, was upwards of 13.5% and steadily on the rise. Researchers looked for reasons as to why attrition was on the rise. Garcia and Weiss speculated that the rise in attrition was due to the numerous daunting tasks required of educators daily coupled with a lack of pre-employment teacher preparation. Researchers also speculated that teachers not being

able to cope with the challenges they faced, such as classroom management, pedagogy, and so on, led to teacher burnout and high rates of attrition for school districts of any kind (Stanulis & Floden, 2009).

Notably, attrition in Title I and inner-city schools was more intense. In these schools, turnover rates were higher, the number of vacancies was higher, and the number of highly-qualified teachers was not high (Carver-Thomas & Hammond, 2017). Yet, these identifiers plagued more than the Title I and inner-city schools. Across the country, teachers were entering school buildings to shape young minds and help create creative, critical thinkers; many obstacles obstructed the finish line of these tasks.

Daily, administrators assigned teachers with daunting tasks that seem to grow quicker than they could move. The demands on the teachers seemed to become increasingly pressing. Challenges accompanied more challenges instead of solutions. As Baker-Drayton (2019) referenced, nearly half a million United States teachers transferred between schools or left the profession each year (p. 34). This attrition was estimated to cost the educational system in the United States up to $2.2 billion each year to replace employees who left the profession prematurely or in less than five years of starting teaching (Wise, 2014; Baker-Drayton, 2019).

As accountability measures for student achievement were growing more rigorous through the impact of ESSA, teachers more than ever needed support from the administrators at the school and district levels to meet the assessment and accountability expectations set before them. When the support was not in place, there were no resolutions created, no resolutions sought after, and the minor problems continued to grow until reaching a boiling point. This led to a steady increase in the teacher shortage

category (Garcia & Weiss, 2019).

In the United States, school leaders were experiencing a national teacher shortage, mostly attributed to the lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession and conditions of the trade, including general trends of high stress and burn-out (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). However, another factor was also impacting the teacher shortage. There was a declining rate of students majoring in education or enrolling in teacher preparation programs. According to the Title II Higher Education Act of 2018 National Teacher Preparation Data Report, approximately 36% of students who enrolled in a teacher preparation program completed the program. In 2018, Edweek.org reported in an article written by Madeline Will that "between the 2007-08 and 2015-16 academic years, there was a 23 percent decline in the number of people completing teacher-preparation programs. The largest decline—32 percent—has been at alternative programs" (p. 3). The decline in the number of people who wanted to enter the profession with the increase in the number of people leaving the profession worked together to create a perfect storm.

A common theme on teacher retention rates was that new teachers tended to remain in the profession at a higher rate if given the proper support (Baker-Drayton, 2019, p. 18). Such support could come in programs with goals that met the need for instructional and emotional support and resources to retain teachers and build teacher capacity. According to Feiman-Nemser et al. (1999), "what happens to beginning teachers during their early years on the job determine if they stay in teaching and what kind of teacher they become" (p. 4). School and district leaders have the opportunity to make a difference in the attrition rate for the new teachers in their building.

Despite teachers having to navigate evolving phases of education, teaching is

considered a profession of longevity. Unfortunately, the lack of longevity of teachers in the profession has become problematic for most of the United States. To illustrate, Izadinia (2015) stated that 50% of new teachers in the United States leave the teaching profession within the first five years. Struyven and Vanthournout (2014) found attrition rates were higher among new teachers. According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), it was not only the attrition of new teachers that was problematic. They stated one-third of experienced teachers retire each year. With these statistics, whether a school's staff was losing a new or veteran teacher, the school leaders were left with a deficit of teachers. In Izadinia's (2015) research, an alarming fact was stated that two-thirds of the new teachers leaving were potentially highly-effective, and those teachers typically left the profession within the first two years.

The factors and challenges leading to the decline in the number of teachers could be related to any combination of demands that teachers faced in a typical day. These demands included classroom management issues, meeting professional responsibilities, evaluative observations from administrators, and so on. Wong (1998) declared in his text *The First Days of School* that teachers flow through four stages of teaching: fantasy, survival, mastery, and impact. In the first stage, fantasy, teachers believe that teaching is composed of successive days of fun and excitement. Many neophyte teachers leave preservice education programs in the fantasy stage and enter reality when they get stuck in survival mode as they enter their first years of teaching. Unfortunately, many new teachers never get past the survival stage and find a way out of teaching altogether. Bobek (2002) stated that teachers encounter many situations that cause conflict and stress, and therefore teacher resiliency is critical to teacher retention (p. 1).

Teacher Shortage

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) stated 90% of the demands for new teachers happened when experienced teachers left the profession. Nationally, growing teacher shortages made filling vacancies with qualified teachers increasingly difficult (Carver-Thomas & Darling- Hammond, 2017). When there were not experienced teachers available, school officials opted to hire inexperienced teachers or long-term substitutes. This resulted in decreasing student achievement. In low-achieving schools, usually Title I schools, hiring inexperienced teachers and long-term substitutes resulted in academically disadvantaged school systems. "Instability in a school's teacher workforce (i.e., high turnover and/or high attrition) negatively affects student achievement and diminishes teacher effectiveness and quality" (Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Jackson & Bruegmann, 2009; Kraft & Papay, 2014; Sorensen & Ladd, 2018, as cited in Garcia & Weiss, 2019, para. 4). When a high attrition rate is accompanied by a lack of effective teachers to replace the outgoing teachers, the outcome for student achievement is dismal.

In the United States, 8% of teachers left the profession annually, and more than 50% quit teaching before reaching retirement age (Abitabile, 2020, para. 1). In comparison, in high-achieving school systems as identified by student achievement, such as those in Finland, Singapore, and Ontario, Canada, annual teacher attrition rates typically averaged as low as 3% to 4%. Based on the research conducted by OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (2018), countries like Finland attributed low attrition rates to the overall satisfaction of the teaching population and their satisfaction with teacher salaries and their value derived from the public's opinion. If attrition rates in the United States could be reduced by half to be more comparable with these systems,

officials could eliminate the national teacher shortage (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

In a Learning Policy Institute's (2016) research reports, an alarm was sounded about the teacher shortage. In those reports, a shortage was defined as "the inability to staff school at current wages with individuals qualified to teach in the fields required" (p. 1). Since the Great Recession of 2008, many school district administrators struggled to fill vacancies and combat teacher shortages (Walker, 2019). School officials were trying to recoup from earlier teacher layoffs and budget cuts. In addition to recouping from teacher layoffs and budget cuts, they faced additional obstacles. The obstacles included the negative stigmatism of the teaching profession with the public, low wages, and the declining student enrollment of in teacher preparation programs. These forces came together to attribute to the growing problem of hiring qualified teachers.

General erosion of respect by parents and community members for the teaching profession aided in decreasing the number of highly-qualified teachers (Walker, 2019). Given these facts, there was a high-powered need to nurture and cultivate the cohorts of teachers entering the profession. Society needed to consider looming increasing percentages and trends of teacher attrition (i.e., teacher shortages are nationwide and vary by state, city, district, and subject area) when committing to growing teacher numbers and maintaining the current teacher population. The pool of teachers was shallow and sparingly stocked with highly-qualified teachers.

According to the United States Department of Education (2018), to be deemed highly qualified, teachers were required to have a bachelor's degree, full state certification or licensure, and prove that they knew each subject they taught. Teachers

considered highly qualified had options of where they wanted to teach. Garcia and Weiss

(2019) found that teachers typically did not choose to teach at inner-city Title I schools

with less attractive characteristics than non inner-city Title 1 schools. The Title I schools

had issues such as higher class sizes, demanding student behaviors, and reduced

resources. For those reasons, Title I schools had the highest teacher shortage percentages.

Garcia and Weiss argued that when issues such as teacher quality and the unequal

distribution of highly-qualified teachers across schools serving different concentrations of

low-income students are considered, the teacher shortage problem was much more severe

than previously recognized.

Garcia and Weiss (2019) provided thoughts on how to reduce the teacher shortage

crisis and the effect on student learning. Addressing multi-layered factors which

attributed to the teacher shortage was necessary for the multi- dimensional solution.

Moreover, creating a more equally attractive teaching profession with better teaching

conditions and higher pay could be the start of a promising solution. Understanding the

factors contributing to the growing shortage of high-quality teachers would allow the

practical design of policy interventions and better guide institutional decisions to find the

missing teachers (para. 1).

Conclusion

The literature I reviewed suggested that induction programs involving trained and

supported mentors were the part of the remedy to nurturing beginning teachers. Even

though induction programs varied on many levels, the alternative, having none, was a

surefire way to lose teachers from the profession early in their careers. Districts around

the nation were facing a sizeable two-fold problem of hiring highly-qualified teachers and

retaining them in the profession (Garcia & Weiss, 2019, para. 5). Although the research

pointed to declining numbers of students majoring in education, there was a way to

support those who desired to be career teachers through structured support with an

induction program. Wong (2004) suggested that a distinguishing factor of a school with a

low attrition rate was the existence of an organized, comprehensive program that trained

and supported new teachers. The research I presented in the review of literature supported

a framework for creating and or remodeling induction programs to increase teacher

satisfaction and retention.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This program evaluation collected information on the perceived impact of a new teacher induction program at a school in the United States. I used the study's outcomes to make judgments about ways to increase the positive impact on the program's participants. This chapter described the participants, data collection procedures, limitations, and ethical considerations.

Research Design Overview

Michael Quinn Patton (1997) defined program evaluation as "a systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming" (p. 23). This study was a program evaluation of a new teacher induction program to evaluate the effectiveness of a school-based program. It added to the literature on best practices when creating and designing future induction programs.

Teacher induction practices varied by region, state, and even school district. The variations of teacher induction programs included their mission and implementation. The mission of induction programs ranged from creating systemic support for beginning teachers to checking off a box of required components to comply with state law. According to Ingersoll (2012), some programs were a valued component of a school community that teachers and administrators trusted. Administrators executed other teacher induction programs to meet requirements by law based on the energy and resources allotted to meet the standards. While the implementation was only one component of a teacher induction program, the effectiveness of these programs was key

to the overall necessity for teacher induction. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the new teacher induction program as measured by teacher satisfaction with the professional and emotional support received from faculty mentors and the end of year teacher retention rates at a school in the United States.

For this study, I gathered qualitative data by inviting teacher induction program participants from one middle school to participate in a semi-structured interview that evaluated the program's effectiveness as measured by the satisfaction of professional and emotional support provided by faculty mentors. The methodology utilized helped answer the research questions by providing analyzed data to determine the program's effectiveness through the perspectives of program participants with regards to their professional, emotional, and instructional support. By isolating these three components, I could analyze the teacher induction participants responses on their experiences systematically, ultimately determining if their experiences led to retention. Through the participant's eyes, the complete picture of the program led to an understanding of the level of effectiveness of this school's new teacher induction program.

Participants

The participants in the study were members of a school-based teacher induction program during the 2019-2020 school year at one Title I middle school in the United States. The school-based program stemmed from the district's plan to support new teachers with mentoring and a comprehensive induction process. Leaders at the school under study initiated a program adjustment that led to the program's current practices at the time of this study, which included monthly meetings, a mentor-mentee collaboration log, and mentor professional development.

There was one stakeholder group in the study, middle school teachers participating in a school-based induction program. I invited 36 teachers to participate, voluntarily, in an interview. Of the teachers invited, 19 were willing to be interviewed. The participants had a range of teaching experience from 0-3 years either at a previous school or at the school under study, and they taught middle school Grades 6, 7, or 8. The study participants included six males and 13 females ranging in age from 25-50.

Data Gathering Techniques

The program evaluation data collected came from a single source of one-on-one semi-structured virtual interviews of participants in a teacher induction program. The data was collected using 15 interview questions. I analyzed the data for trends and themes of the induction program participants' perceived support and intent to return to school.

Interviews

I conducted interviews to understand the teachers' degree of support and satisfaction from participating in the induction program. I recorded and transcribed the interviews using the Google workplace suite technology. I obtained permission from the participants to record the interviews. The qualitative data from the interviews provided insight from the new teacher's perspective of the support given during the induction period. I asked fifteen preplanned questions of each participant (see Appendix A). In addition, I asked follow-up and clarifying questions if a participant's answer was unclear as it pertained to the question asked.

I divided the first 14 questions into four research-related categories with three sets of questions: professional support, emotional support, confidence in instructional practices and pedagogy, and faculty mentor relationship. Each set of questions followed a

similar form with the category as the changing variable agent. The last question, Question 15, was a generic question to allow the interviewee a chance to add any additional thoughts on the topic.

I constructed Questions 1, 4, 7, and 10 to generate a response that provided a general idea of their feelings towards their participation in the program based on the designated category. Questions 2, 5, 8, and 11 allowed the participants to elaborate on a more specific answer as the questions reflected on their induction program involvement and their feelings while at their current school. Finally, I asked Questions 3, 5, 9, and 14 to probe for answers from the participants reflecting upon elements outside of the school or induction program that may have impacted their experience with the induction program and research category.

Data Analysis Techniques

I analyzed the participants' responses to the interview questions using the Google Workplace Suite and Microsoft Word transcripts. I searched the transcripts for repeated words and phrases within the interviews. These words and phrases became the code used for organizing the interviews. Codes included any derivative of support, including non-supportive, non-induction related satisfaction, administration, mentor, and instructional strategies.

The next step of my analysis was to organize the data based on trends from the participants' responses. First, I identified similarities and commonalities between answers from the participants in each category of questions. Then, I identified emerging trends. The trends helped clarify the data withing the themes. I used the trends and provided recommendations for the district and school-based induction programs to enhance the

induction program to make it more beneficial for future cohorts.

Ethical Considerations

I invited current induction program participants at the time of my study to participate. I chose these persons to acquire new teachers' perspectives of the induction program based on their first-hand experiences. I excluded no one from being invited to participate in the study. After an induction program participant accepted the invitation to participate in the study, I obtained a consent form from that person. I sent consent forms electronically and had each form digitally signed by the participant permitting to conduct the interview. I only scheduled interviews after receiving the completed consent form.

The consent form provided full disclosure of the collection methods, the usage of the data, and the right to abstain from the study with no negative consequences, along with a copy of the interview questions. I provided a copy of the consent form to the participant, and I kept another copy in a secured and encrypted digital file. In addition, I maintained the confidentiality of the state, the school district, and study participants throughout the evaluation process by excluding identifying information in reporting results.

I made the teachers aware that their participation would be optional. They had the autonomy to choose to participate in this study with no penalty to them. Also, I made each teacher aware that participation would not affect their professional status at the school. Lastly, I informed the participants that there would be no tangible rewards for their participation in this study; however, their participation would be beneficial, as it would be a valuable addition to the research, and findings could lead to a greater understanding of delivering a high-quality teacher induction program.

There were no anticipated risks to participate in this program evaluation beyond everyday life. Participants taking part in this study may have benefited by reflecting on their teaching experience at their school or with the induction program. Additional benefits included sharing the findings of my study to allow program administrators to identify ways to enhance their induction programs to benefit future new teachers. Likewise, other school leaders who consider developing or evaluating an induction program could use the evaluation.

Limitations

Limitations of the program evaluation included the size of the group of potential participants, varying degrees of participants' education and experiential background, and professional connections with the participants. The number of invited participants was large (36 persons); however, the number of teachers who chose to participate was approximately 54% of invitees (19 persons). The varying backgrounds of each participant led them to various levels of background knowledge and possible expectations of a teacher induction program. Participants who previously experienced an induction program in another school may have provided responses based upon a comparison of the two programs. Participants who had previous teaching experience may viewed the induction program differently from a teacher who had no teaching experience. This presented the challenge of having their answers influenced by outside factors. New teachers for which the school under study was their first school did not have this background knowledge, therefore lacked the ability to compare programs or program components.

Another limitation, possibly perceived as a significant limitation, is the prior

connection or relationship I had with the participants. Some of the participants have worked with me in some capacity. This professional relationship could have influenced their answers, positively or negatively, depending on the relationship. This influence could be reflected in the results of the study by presenting a false sense of teacher satisfaction.

Conclusion

This study investigated the data and trends from school-based new teacher induction program participants. The many data points from the various teachers exposed multiple perspectives to be analyzed and later validated through updated best practices included in school-based new teacher programs. I detailed this analysis in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Results

The goal of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the new teacher induction program as measured by teacher satisfaction with the professional and emotional support received from faculty mentors and the end-of-year teacher retention rates at a school in the United States. The assessment results revealed best practices to enhance induction programs and increase the benefit for future new hires. This chapter detailed the evaluation results and the implications using Wagner's (2006) arenas of change.

Findings

For this study, I gathered qualitative data using interviews of teachers participating in the teacher induction program. I began my data analysis by transcribing the interviews. After I transcribed the interviews, I identified frequently used terms among the responses. I then coined the frequently used terms as trends for each of the themed question sets.

Through the interviews, I gained an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the teachers. My focus was on the induction program related to the professional and emotional support they derived from the program. An additional focus of my study was how the induction program developed their instructional capacity.

Interview Data

I invited 36 middle school teacher induction program participants to voluntarily participate in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. I received 19 responses from teachers who agreed to participate; however, I interviewed 15 teachers because of scheduling conflicts. This process resulted in a 54% response rate. I used a 15 question

semi-structured interview instrument (Appendix A). The average time per interview was 22 minutes. I used the collected data to determine trends from the participants' responses that addressed the areas of professional support, emotional support, instructional practices, mentor satisfaction, and teacher retention. I maintained the confidentiality of the participants by assigning each person a code: T for the teacher and a number representing the order in which they interviewed (e.g., T1).

I asked participants interview questions surrounding the theme of professional support in Questions 1-3:

- To what degree do you feel professionally supported as a result of participating in thenew teacher induction program?

- How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your feelings of professional support while employed at this school?

- Other than the new teacher induction program, what other elements of your current school year impacted your feelings of professional support?

The most frequently reported trend was the use of the term *helpful*. With a response rate of 53%, the participants responded that the professional support provided to them was helpful. At the school under study, the professional support specifically offered to teachers in the induction program came from monthly meetings on assorted topics that supported the teachers' professional development, such as incorporating reading in the content area, understanding teacher evaluations, and traditional or alternate pathways to certification. Co-lead mentors led the monthly meetings. They sometimes included administrative personnel or district support staff to bring more in-depth information on specific subjects. Although these meetings were for the mentees, the co-lead mentors

invited the mentors to join. This set the expectation for mentors to follow up on the material presented.

Notably, the next frequently reported trend was using the term *the people*. Therefore, I used this term in describing how the people who provided professional support were supportive. The term was presented by almost half of the interviewees (46%) indicating that the mentor chosen to support their professional growth had a positive impact. In defining *the people,* participants specifically identified mentors, other supportive teachers and staff, administrators, or district personnel invited to support the practices being used in the induction program. Table 1 illustrates the trends in the participant's responses to Questions 1-3.

Table 1

Trends in Participant Responses to Interview Questions 1-3

Trends	Response Rates	Participant
Helpful	53%	T1,T2,T3,T4,T7,T8,T10, T15
The people	46%	T1,T6,T11,T12,T13,T14, T15
My mentor	26%	T2,T3,T5,T11,
Supported my career change	20%	T4,T10,T15

I asked the participants interview questions that encompassed the theme of emotional support in Questions 4-6. I asked the following questions:

- To what degree do you feel emotionally supported as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

- How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your feelings of emotional support while employed at this school?

- Other than the new teacher induction program, what other elements within the school day impacted your feelings of emotional support?

I identified the frequently used terms in the participants' responses. The term presented as the most frequent response, from 73% of participants, was citing other teachers and staff as a part of their emotional support. Witnessing such a high number of responses was notable because a significant amount of the school staff's social and emotional learning goal was to create a family atmosphere among the teachers and staff.

The participants indicated receiving emotional support when they responded with answers that used the phrases "coworkers became like family" and "other teachers and staff." Lastly, 59% of the participants referenced their mentor or the verbal encouragement they received in describing the high level of emotional support. The number of participants who referred to their mentor as a source of emotional support was higher than the number of participants who stated the use of verbal encouragement. The bright spot was the ability of the participants to find emotional support from so many of the other teachers and staff members at the school. Table 2 illustrates the trends in the participant's responses to Questions 4 - 6.

Table 2

Trends in Participant Responses to Interview Questions 4-6

Trends	Response Rates	Participants
My mentor	26%	T2,T5,T8,T11
Coworkers became like family	26%	T1,T4,T12,T15
Other teachers and staff	73%	T2,T3,T4,T6,T7,T9,T10,T12,T13,T14,T15

Trends	Response Rates	Participants
Admin was helpful	13%	T10, T11
Verbal encouragement	33%	T2,T6,T10,T11,T13

Participant interview Questions 7-9 surrounded the theme of instructional support. I asked the following questions:

- To what degree do you feel confident with your instructional practices and pedagogyas a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

- How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your confidence in your instructional practices and pedagogy?

- Other than the new teacher induction program, what elements of your current school year have impacted your feelings of confidence with instructional practices and pedagogy?

The trend in responses from 53% of participants was the confirmation that the teacher induction program increased their confidence in their instructional practices. Further, 33% of participants cited *professional development* (PD), *professional learning communities* (PLC), and *common planning* as a method that increased their confidence in instructional practices. This area was significant because of the school schedule for PD, PLC, and common planning. At the school under study, common planning occurred a minimum of three days a week. Common planning time was facilitated within the teacher's content area PLC during their free period. They received PD three times a month. Also, I noted from the participants' responses that student progress and mentor support were trends for confidence with instructional practices.

Participants responded 26% of the time with mentor support being a factor of

confidence-building within instructional practices. Student progress was next in percentage of responses, with 20% of the respondents declaring this trend. One participant reported that they often received evaluations based on their student data and performance that their students did well. Due to the low achievement and performance level students at this school, positive feedback on student data and performance significantly boosted confidence in providing sound instruction. Table 3 indicates how the participants responded to Questions 7- 9.

Table 3

Trends in Participant Responses to Interview Questions 7-9

Trends	Response Rate	Participant
Increased confidence	53%	T1,T2,T4,T6,T7,T10,T14,T15
Student progress	20%	T2,T14,T15
Mentor support	26%	T1,T4,T10,T11
PD, PLC, Common Planning	33%	T3,T8,T9,T11,T12

I used Interview Questions 10-12 to address the theme of mentor relationships. Table 4 shows their responses. I asked the following questions:

- To what degree do you feel satisfied with your faculty mentor or lead mentor as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

- How much of an impact did your mentor or lead mentor have on your feeling of support during the current school year?

- How much of an impact did your mentor or lead mentor have on your feeling of confidence with instructional practices or pedagogy?

Overwhelmingly, the emerging trend, with 60% of participants' responses, was

that they had a great mentor. Participants described these great mentors as having terrific

relationship and communication skills, being helpful and approachable, providing sound

guidance and constant encouragement, and contributing to their sense of belonging. In

conjunction with these positive mentor descriptors, 20% of participants explained that

their mentors helped to increase their confidence by giving actionable feedback after

visiting their classrooms, giving suggestions, and sharing instructional practices.

Likewise, 20% of participants mentioned that observations performed by their mentor in a

nonevaluated manner were helpful. Table 4 reflects the responses to Questions 10-12.

Table 4

Trends in Participant Responses to Interview Questions 10-12

Trends	Response Rate	Participant
Great mentor	60%	T1,T2,T3,T4,T10,T11,T12,T13,T15
Increased confidence	20%	T1,T4,T14
Observations	20%	T2,T6,T9

The participant interview Questions 13 and 14 surrounded the theme of teacher retention

in teacher intent to return. I asked the following questions:

- To what degree did the new teacher induction program influence your intent to

  returnto the school in the following school year?

- What other factors, if any, influenced your intent to return to your current

  school?

An emerging trend from the responses to these questions was the reference to both

students and school culture as reasons for staying at their current school. I recognized this

trend due to the participant response rate of 26%. Participants reported that the

relationships they built with students were valuable and meaningful.

Whether these participants would remain in the same grade or loop up with their students, they deemed their relationships as largely why they stayed. The close-knit relationship between students and teachers was evident across the school campus. It had become a integral part of the school's culture.

For most participants (53%), the teachers, staff, and administrators played a significant role in their decisions to return. Many participants expressed the positive relationships between teachers, staff, mentors, and school-based administrators. These relationships supported their feeling of belonging to the school. Table 5 reflects the participants' responses to Questions 13 and 14.

Table 5

Trends in Participant Responses to Interview Questions 13 and 14

Trends	Response Rates	Participant
Mentors	20%	T2,T11,T13
Teachers, staff, admin (school-based)	53%	T1,T2,T5,T7,T10,T13, T14,T15
Students	26%	T3,T7,T8,T14
School culture	26%	T6,T7,T8,T12

The participant interview Question 15 was the culminating question of the interview. I asked the question, "Is there anything else you would like to add?" Eighty percent of the participants said a personal thank you to their lead mentor during this final question. The thank you messages were in appreciation of providing them with a place to be vulnerable, accepted, and supported. Table 6 reflects the responses to the question.

Table 6

Trend in Participant Responses to Interview Question 15

Trend	Response Rate	Participant
Thank you	80%	T1,T2,T3,T5,T6,T7,T8,T9,T10, T11,T13,T15

Contexts

Wagner et al. (2006) defined context as the social, historical, and economic factors that influence the organizational systems, demands, and expectations (p. 104).My AS-IS chart recognized several statements for the study (see Appendix B). The school under study was a Title I school beginning in the 1998-1999 school year. Title I status meant 100% of the students receive free breakfast, lunch, and supper, and 40% or more of the students attending came from low-income families (USDOE, 2018, Title I, Part A). The students at the school under study demonstrated low achievement in the areas of reading and math. During the 2018-2019 school year, students achieved 23% proficiency in reading and 32% proficiency in math on the state standardized assessment. As a result, state law required the school under study to receive support from district and state leadership teams. District administrators for the school under study provided extra instructional support materials and personnel to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The mandated support from the state and district leadership teams often caused teacher stress and anguish because of the strict framework established for the school teams.

Another context factor was the high teacher turnover rate the school administrators experienced each year. The school under study had an average of 66 instructional staff members each year. During the 2015-2016 school year, teacher

turnover resulted in 26 new teachers. The year of this study (2019-2020) yielded an 85%

retention rate of teachers. The instructional staff make-up was 39% induction program

participants. The novice teachers (20%) who started at the school had less than three

years of teaching experience. Many novice teachers were categorized as working toward

alternate certification because they changed career status and lacked formal teacher

preparation schooling. Among the novice teachers, 46% were seeking alternative

certification. Developing these novice teachers' skills was a tumultuous task given the

need to build their skills in instructional practice and the simultaneous pressures to raise

achievement levels of students.

The mentorship of experienced teachers played a significant part of teacher

development in response to supporting many new teachers. The school had a 1:3 ratio of

certified mentors to induction program participants. This ratio was high as the number of

qualified and willing experienced teachers to serve mentors was significantly less than the

number of mentees. In addition, the criterion for becoming a mentor was burdensome.

Pursuant to state statutes of the state under study, in order to become a mentor, teachers

needed to have completed clinical educator training, have a valid professional certificate,

at least three years of teaching experience, and have earned an effective or highly

effective rating on the prior year's performance evaluation (Citation withheld to protect

the confidentiality, 2020).

Conditions

Wagner et al. (2006) defined conditions as the "external architecture surrounding

student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources" (p. 101). The

school in this study lacked a formal structure for the induction program. The autonomy of

school based leaders to develop their school-based programs could lead to self-destruction through the lack of proper structures to breed sustainability. Reeves (2009) highlighted the need for leaders to refocus their energies beyond short-term effectiveness and look towards the greater good. The greater good for induction programs was to lessen the teacher turnover rate and produce quality, highly-qualified teachers who would be contributing school members for many years.

Mentor-Mentee Matching

According to Alabi (2017), matching mentors and proteges is essential. He elaborated on the notion that both parties should desire the relationship and reside within appropriate proximity of each other. These conditions for a conducive working relationship between mentor and mentee were integral in developing new teachers. Mentors and mentees at the school under study were paired based on various criteria such as similar teacher responsibilities, personal and professional characteristics (American Institute for Research, 2015).

While the criteria for paring mentor and mentees met Alabi's criteria, it was still problematic at the school under study. The number of mentees was consistently triple the size of the mentor population. These numbers posed a strain on the available mentors and increased the ratio of mentee-to-mentor from one-to-one to one-to-three. The increased numbers diluted the amount of focus the mentor could provide the mentee.

Dedicated Collaboration Time

The next condition with constraints was the lack of dedicated time for mentor-mentee collaboration. The district and school administrators placed many demands on teachers. The lack of allocated time within the workday for accomplishing all the

necessary tasks made it inevitable that working after hours was necessary. For example, in the school under study, teachers had 45 minutes of uninterrupted individual planning time before students entered the classroom at the start of the school day. Another 45 minutes each day was nonstudent contact time, but school leaders dictated this time to be used as common planning three days a week.

There was an additional 15 minutes of teacher planning at the end of the student contact time. School leaders expected teachers to plan lessons, grade papers, display student work, make parent phone calls, update data charts, analyze data, and more during their non-student contact time. In addition to this list of demands, teachers in the new teacher induction course had other responsibilities such as induction program courses and alternative certification classes. Time for mentor-mentee collaboration was challenging to fit into the schedule for both persons.

The district leaders highly recommended such collaboration time, yet the time was not dedicated or protected at the school level. State and district leaders did not provide school administrators sufficient funding to provide substitutes to support the additional time needed for the mentors and mentees. Therefore, time during the school day for collaboration, planning or conducting peer observations was not sufficient to meet the needs of the mentees.

White (2009) suggested, "when school leaders have more than half a dozen goals, they tend to lose focus and ultimately abandon their ability to monitor the performance of their organization" (p. 58). The lack of time and focus on the cycle of professional improvement at the school under study was an excellent example of White's statement. At the school under study, administrators stretched the time and focus for professional

development between many foci such as district initiatives and data chats. These topics were relevant and necessary. However, the components missing to make it meaningful and sustainable were monitoring, measuring, and modifying the implementation of the professional development.

Competencies

Wagner et al. (2006) defined competencies as the "repertoire of skills and knowledge that influence student learning" (p. 99). I identified three competencies missing for the mentors at the school under study. In the school under study, mentors lacked the skills needed to support mentee development. Specifically, mentors lacked awareness of best practices to address adult learners.The primary goal of many induction programs is to build new teacher capacity, yet administrators at the school under study failed to address building the capacity of the mentor. Mentor capacity building is just as crucial to an induction program's effectiveness as the capacity building of its new teacher. Mentors at the school under study did not experience ongoing professional development to facilitate and support teacher-learners.

Mentors had a vast working knowledge of how to support and increase student learner success. Yet, they were novices in adult learning practices. The result of this was that mentors lacked the skills needed to build teacher capacity. After a mentor was certified, there were limited opportunities to continue their learning in building teacher capacity. This limited knowledge did not create conditions for an effective induction program.

In addition, mentors lacked the skills for sustaining mentor-mentee relationships. There was the lack of ongoing professional development to support the mentors in their

work with their mentees. Sustaining relationships among adults through trust and respect, including mentors' professionalism, open communication, attentive listening, and friendly dispositions, is critical when applying to teacher mentor-mentee relationships. The missing piece for the school under study was teaching and cultivating these skills in the mentors.

Culture

Wagner et al. (2006) defined culture as the "shared values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations and behaviors related to students and learning, teachers and teaching, instructional leadership, and the quality of relationships within and beyond school" (p. 102). In the AS-IS chart in Appendix B, I identified six statements of about the culture of the school under study. At the school under study, 20% of participants had mentors who observed their class or invited the participant to observe the mentor in action in their classroom. In this school, classrooms were visited frequently observed by leadership team members, school based administrators, and district leaders. These evaluative observations were sometimes uncomfortable for new teachers. If they had the experience of being observed by a colleague in a nonevaluative manner, their confidence with evaluative observations would improve.

Leaders in the school under study did not include opening-up practices for new teachers to gain confidence in being observed and the opportunity to learn from other teachers in action. Opening-up practices allow teachers to learn from each other in a nonevaluative manner. If new teachers were able to participate in opening-up practices frequently, they would have benefited. This vulnerable practice can support new teacher development when the established culture includes opening up one's classroom to others

(citation withheld to maintain confidentiality).

Each year there was a high number of teachers leaving the school under study, resulting in multiple vacancies. This meant there was a less likely chance that students gained support in ways that helped increase achievement. A concern for the school under study was the number of varied resources, not always appropriately chosen, used to train and groom the new teachers. As a result many new teachers, for different reasons, ultimately left after a year at the school. Some of the participants stated that their reason for leaving was not because of school-based staff or the teachers; it was because of the interactions with district staff and leaders when they made their state mandated visits.

However, the teacher retention rate in the induction program at the school under study was 85% in the 2019-2020 school year. This may have been related to the global pandemic. The country and many parts of the world pivoted to remote learning during this time. As a result, remote learning constrained the teachers' ability to transfer to other schools as well as the administrators' ability to hire or terminate them.

The school under study in the years prior to the 2019-2020 school year had an average 21% teacher retention rate. The years of high turnover and instructional vacancies were sometimes marked by high teacher turnover during the school year in specific classes. For example, during the 2018-2019 school year, students in one math class experienced three teacher changes before the third quarter. A similar situation occurred for students in a reading classroom with two teacher changes, ultimately resulting in the consolidation of two classes into one due to a lack of teachers to hire.

In the school under study, the mandated state and district support framework focused on working with teachers in the tested content areas because of low student

achievement. There was little to no support for teachers in non-tested content areas. There

disparity between the support provided, left new educators not in state-tested content

areas underdeveloped, unsupported, and not nurtured as teachers.

The school under study created and embedded a family culture among the adults,

reflected in the close-knit relationships cultivated through large and small gestures from

the administrators, school-based leaders, and staff. Off-campus outings, courtyard

luncheons, thematic dress-up days, holiday celebrations, and open-door policies

supported this family-school community. The participants (26%) in my study cited the

school culture as an example of emotional support, reporting that other teachers and staff

became like family.

Interpretation

The teacher induction program at the school under study was adequate based on

the results of this study. School culture and the connection with mentors and other school

personnel contributed to the effectiveness of the program. The interview data indicated

the effectiveness of the program through the participants' responses of gratitude to their

mentors and teachers, staff, or administrators at a rate of 67%. Unknowingly, this school

had successfully intertwined their induction program with their family school culture.

The school under study had built a school culture that included building strong

relationships between adults. This culture quickly became infused in the teacher

induction program and was evidenced by participants nodding to emotional support and

reasons for *feeling like family*.

Many mentees elaborated that the program and school culture added to their sense

of belonging and family feel. These feelings warranted a level of dedication to the school

by the participants. The ranked high among the characteristics stated by the mentees that influenced their return.

My study results did not indicate teacher retention increase could be credited solely to the induction program. Instead, participants indicated that their intent to return was because of the coupling of the induction program with the school culture and environment. This revelation did not deem the program ineffective. Instead, it alluded to the necessity of an induction program to not operate in isolation from the school culture and climate. Notably, during the year of study, the retention rate was dramatically higher than in previous years. The year of the study yielded an 85% teacher retention rate. In the years before this study, the average teacher retention rate had been 32%. The increase may have been in part because of the global pandemic.

Further data I reviewed highlighted areas of that could be improved. The results of my study showed the need to connect the induction program to student learning and explore ways to increase mentor facilitation of effective instructional practices. Few of the participant responses included examples where the mentees had increased confidence because of student academic success. Stronge et al. (2011) noted in a study that "student achievement in language arts and mathematics was higher for effective teachers than for less-effective teachers by more than 30 percentile points" (p. 348). Increased teacher effectiveness will come as the participants get more experience and exposure to varied instructional tools and strategies. In addition, teachers and administrators should explore student success in other ways, not just through academic achievement scores. School based administrators and mentors should help the participants to look at student success through academics, behavior, and other student-centered factors to increase the levels of

success of retaining teachers.

As the educators at the school under study continued to fight to retain a rating of a C grade or higher in the state accountability system, teachers were subjected to the increased demands. District leaders' expectations included common planning times of up to three days a week, ever-changing revisions to lesson plans, and mandated constant data collection. The participants in my study viewed much of the scrutiny as negative because of the constant criticism and frequent changes. As a result, many participants indicated that part of their thoughts for leaving the school was the additional leadership oversight from district personnel.

The participants shared there was a high degree of professional and emotional support from school-based personnel. The data trends were positive with high response rates (53%) using the term *helpful*. In addition, there were positive results towards the degree to which the mentees built confidence towards instructional practices due to the program. This was good and was demonstrated as the mentees frequently used *increased my confidence* when speaking of instructional practices. The frequency of using this phrase may have been a reflection on the number of alternative certification teachers in the program.

The experience of the participants interviewed showed how the induction program was effective and contributed in a positive way towards their decision to remain at the school. However, the data revealed that the mentoring experience alone was not the only indicator of the participants' decision to continue to teach at that school. Additional factors were the other teachers, staff, and administrators who seemingly played an essential role in the new teachers' experiences at the school. Allen (2009) noted five ways

to boost a sense of belonging at a school. Without much deliberate thought, this school incorporated the top two ways: encouraging positive relationships and creating a positive peer culture of belonging.

Judgments

The first research question in the study was "What are the known qualities of a highly effective teacher induction program?" As a result of the data I collected in this study, I identified the primary quality that surfaced as necessary for an effective induction program was a positive school culture among the mentors, teachers, and staff. The school under study had a positive culture that created a family environment for the teachers and staff. This type of school culture became infused into the induction program and added a much-needed layer of support. The participants painted the lasting effect of the school culture on their emotional support with the comments they made during the semi structured interviews. I noted comments such as "*other teachers and staff provided emotional support*" and "*I could count on other teachers and staff*" in abundance.

The need for a village of people to support the induction participants was clear from these comments. I found the effects of the school culture reflected in the participants' reasons for staying at the school under study. This revelation solidified the necessity for infusing a positive school culture into the program.

In addition, having a quality mentorship was revealed as a necessary attribute for an effective induction program. Mentorship in an induction program needs consistency with collaboration time and mentors supported with resources to effect change within their mentees. The school under study provided the induction participants with a mentor, yet the mentor ultimately did not have the support they needed to be successful. There

was a lack of resources, training, and professional development to arm mentors with the skills to support the induction participants in the school under study.

The participants indicated a positive connection to their mentors. There was evidence of camaraderie from their comments. However, an area of improvement was in the limited targeted professional support given to the mentees. There was a need for building the capacity of the mentors to provide them with the pedagogical and content skills to support the participants in successfully moving the academic achievement of students.

The second research question that guided my study was: "What can school district leaders do to improve a teacher induction program to increase teacher satisfaction and retention rates?" The most heard response from the participants during the interviews was the need for more time. Induction program participants were required to shadow other teachers, engage in research, and participate in professional development. Many participants desired to collaborate with their mentors on school and district-based tasks without repeatedly using their evenings or weekends. The school-based administrators did not provide protected time during the school day to allow the participants and mentors to engage in practices such as peer observations, including reflection and feedback time.

More than half of the participants in the study (66%) were pursuing alternate certification. These participants entered education as a career change and had no formal education regarding the expectations for teachers or how to perform their job duties. The time for collaboration and peer observations would support their learning of new instructional practices and help to sustain them. The school district administrators could

increase funding to the induction program to allow school budgets to add in the cost related to supporting the time needed for collaboration. Such costs would be substitutes for out-of-class time and resources for professional development. Curt Dudley-Marling and Patricia Paugh (2004) suggested that struggling readers benefit from frequent, intensive, individualized instruction. Struggling readers need support to acquire the skills to be proficient readers; struggling teachers need support to master the skills to be proficient.

Recommendations

The intended goal of my evaluation of a new teacher induction program was to evaluate the program's effectiveness at the school level based on teacher satisfaction and retention rates. As a result of my study, I created a list of best practices to be included in school-based new teacher programs. After reviewing the interview data, I identified one area that required enhancement for the induction program's continued effectiveness. There was an overwhelming need to build capacity within the mentors to continuously provide a high level of support for mentees assigned to the induction program. Building the capacity of the mentors includes arming the mentors with skills needed to support mentee development. For example, through ongoing professional development, school leaders could execute opening-up practices, instructional rounds, and effective observation and feedback practices. In addition to these components, I recommend that school administrators allow for periodic teacher professional development days or protected time for mentors to engage in these practices with their mentees. Likewise, administrators should participate in these practices in a nonevaluative manner to provide encouragement and support for the continuous improvement of the mentees.

Conclusion

  Overall, the induction program evaluated in this study was progressing well and incorporating substantial components that helped yield positive results from the new teachers.The intended goal of the induction program was to positively influence a teacher's decision to remain at a school. Unfortunately, without structures to make programs effective and sustainable, teachers were not groomed for the long run of teaching but rather focused on the nearest exit. I recommended dedicated time for collaboration, opening-up practices, actionable feedback, and establishing relationships the structures needed to build and sustain an induction program. In response to this goal and to support the continuous growth and improvement of the induction program, the context, culture, conditions, and competencies should be changed and improved. I provided an ideal scenario in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: To-Be Framework

The program evaluation of the teacher induction program revealed several issues negatively impacting the success of the program. Resolving these issues could lead to a more significant number of teachers retained each year and ultimately lead to student success. The change leadership plan focuses on increased administrator participation, a deliberate approach to supporting new teachers entering the profession because of a career change, a conscious approach to using nonevaluative observations and feedback, and an intent focus on infusing the school culture into the teacher induction program.

The data collected indicated that administrator support was cited in less than a third of the participants' responses (13%) about their emotional support. Few participants noted administrators' presence or assistance as a means to their professional support or confidence in instructional practices. When asked why they returned, 53% of the participants identified other teachers, staff, and administrators. Yet, none of the participants named administrators in isolation. Similarly, participant response rates for being supported with their career change into education was low (20%). I calculated the same percentage rate for participants who responded that observations and verbal encouragement affected their teacher satisfaction.

Last, the school culture was an influential contributor to the teachers' satisfaction with the induction program. This factor is being included in the change leadership plan because this finding was unexpected. The new teacher induction program at the school under study did not intentionally or deliberately infuse school culture; as a pleasant surprise, the school culture played a significant role in the teacher's satisfaction. Participant responses (26%) referred to the school culture and or teachers and staff being

like family consistently across many themes, including school culture into the teacher induction program are necessary as a best practice to thedevelopment of new teachers.

Envisioning the Success To-Be

Wagner et al. (2006) suggested danger in jumping to doing without preparing. Preparation for the vision of the *To-Be* for the teacher induction program includes ideal contexts, culture, conditions, and competencies. Located in Appendix C is a chart depicting my *To-Be* ideals. These ideals will increase teacher retention and capacity while improving student achievement.

Future Contexts

The school under study will continue to be an inner-city Title I school because of the location and socioeconomic status of the student population. However, the school culture will transform from a low-performing school by increasing the current student achievement levels by 17% in reading and 8% in math. This increase in proficiency will initially increase the school's grade from a C to a B. Measures will be put in place to continually sustain or increase the school grade. Such support measures will be instructional plans supported by data, including review and remediation, and ongoing professional development that uses improvement cycles.

As a high-performing school, the school under study will have state and district support that follows a framework that collaborates with the school-based administrators and teachers. Instead of being told what to do with instruction, school-based instructional leaders, administrators, and the state or district level counterparts will collaboratively create the instructional plans. School-based administrators and teachers will be welcoming of the support and consistently see the benefit of their efforts. These healthy

working relationships will add to the positive school culture and increase teacher retention. In addition, an increase in teacher retention will lower the number of new teachers, thereby lowering the mentor-mentee ratio.

Future Conditions

Harry Wong (2004) wrote that "effective induction programs for new teachers have to be delivered as a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained process" (p. 1). The school under study will have these components and support systems, which will work in tandem with one another, not in isolation. The school leaders will provide protected time for mentor and mentee collaboration through a budgetary line item to fund the hiring of substitute teachers when mentors and mentees are participating in job-embedded professional development.

The professional development schedule will include fewer foci and a deliberate adherence to the professional improvement cycle to support the new teachers and the mentor teachers. Mentors and mentees will have regularly scheduled meetings to help refine the skills of the new teachers through observations of mentor teachers, sharing ideas, asking questions, working with curriculum, and celebrating success. Also, meetings will offer time to learn and explore instructional practices and help mentees integrate their new learning into their classrooms. Sessions will be tailored to the individual needs of the teachers and will provide equality of support to tested and non-tested content area teachers. Induction program participants will have consideration given to their school-based workload sensitive to the fact that they have district-level responsibilities for completing the program and gaining professional certification.

Future Competencies

Creating a sustainable new teacher program at the school level takes having leaders who understand the fundamentals of mentoring and how to address adult learners. So often, educators want to change their teaching practices drastically when instructing children versus adults. The art of teaching is a standalone skill; however, when teachers are fine-tuning this skill, one factor that requires attention is that a learner is a student, no matter the age. Therefore, the school under study will support mentors for the new teacher induction programs by engaging in ongoing professional development to address adult learners.

The provided professional development will include how to engage, motivate, and teach adult learners. As a result of this refined focus, mentor capacity will grow alongside the capacity of the new teachers. The complex skill of capacity building can make the difference in implementation and achieving set goals for induction programs. Curt Dudley-Marling and Patricia Paugh (2004) suggested that struggling readers benefit from frequent, intensive, individualized instruction.The leaders in the school under study will use this same notion when working with new teachers. The mentors will own the responsibility of providing meaningful opportunities and support relevant to the many obstacles new teachers face.

Mentors will cultivate and sustain relationships with their mentees by infusing the family culture and beginning the relationship-building process at the time of hire. Mentors will begin to create relationships with new teachers before the start of the school year by connecting with new teachers before they enter the school while setting up their classrooms and even pre-school-year professional developments or fellowship

opportunities. This practice will help to alleviate the feeling of isolation and not belonging as a new teacher. When thinking of Maslow's hierarchy, social needs are in the middle of the five-tiered chart, necessitating the need for love and belonging (Taormina & Gao, 2013). Likewise, according to Salinas-Ovideo (2019),"teaching is an emotional profession, and the teachers of the emotional state bring to the classroom notonly affect how the teacher performs but also how students behave and learn" (para. 2). Therefore, mentors will build professional relationships with their mentees that will support their professional and emotional well-being.

Future Culture

The school under study values family relationships, and the actions of the adults evidence this. Positive testimonies from the induction program participants regarding their professional and emotional support will consistently include other teachers and staff because of the school's social and emotional learning goal of creating a family atmosphere among the teachers and staff. Continuing the positive school culture means building and supporting the team of teachers working towards higher student achievement and positive student culture. Further, the staff culture will work harmoniously to achieve the vision of high student achievement and positive student culture. These tasks will not take place for short gain; they must be nurtured and cultivated to create "habits of excellence" (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018, p. 190).

Consistency will stand out as a critical element of sustainable positive staff culture. The consistency to showcase the habits of excellence becomes apparent when the school leaders use a culture tracker (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018, p. 210). This tracker allows school leaders to chart their efforts towards building a solid staff culture,

emphasizing what they did, when they did it, and the why behind the actions. The next step is to secure the efforts towards building and sustaining positive staff culture is to evaluate the progress. Bambrick-Santoyo (2016) presented some criteria for assessing such progress. The three criteria are setting the leader's tone, staff culture-building events, and principal teacher communication (p. 213). Paul Bambrick-Santoyo emphasized that a school's leadership team will build a strong culture where learning can thrive out of these efforts.

The leaders at the school under study will have a shared value for teacher success across content areas. This unified value system will help increase the school's effectiveness and ultimately affect more students for higher student achievement. Also, opening-up practices will be embedded and encouraged for teachers. The instructional staff will be supported based on their needs as new teachers, not as a one-size-fits-all school approach to professional development.

Likewise, teachers will receive support for extended durations, not just in their first year of teaching. This approach will allow for specialized help for teachers whose instructional needs vary based on years of experience and years at the school.The new teachers will gain encouragement to use the gradual release model from years zero to three, like an incremental release model used with students. Building leaders want new teachers to grow as individuals, learn to self-monitor independently and seek support before becoming overwhelmed or frustrated. It is important to note that the learning that will take place in a school is for students and teachers. Further, Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) stated that "strong adult culture creates more teacher expertise and higher achievement (p. 263).

Staff members in the school under study will have an established culture of welcoming and working with state and district-based leaders to support new teacher capacity building. These two teams of leaders will collaboratively plan, implement, and modify instructional plans to be carried out by the teachers. The framework for this collaboration will be adopted from the instructional and cultural levers as defined by Bambrick-Santoyo (2018). The framework will include data-driven instruction, planning, observation and feedback, professional development, and student culture. Implementation of this framework will begin during the summer planning time for collaboration and cohesiveness before the instructional time at the school starts.

This cohesiveness will make the working environment and conditions conducive for stakeholders involved. The instructional staff will see the collaborative nature and have buy-in for the instructional plans. A shared goal by the joint leadership team will be that practice and feedback are the norms. This team, along with the mentors of the induction program, will build an observation and feedback cycle. Evaluative and nonevaluative observations by the school, state, or district-based leadership teams will view the process as mutually beneficial to the success of the teachers and students. Feedback will be nonjudgmental and used as a reflection tool for the teacher. According to Bambrick-Santoyo (2018), teachers need to see a model, practice, and receive precise direction.

Conclusion

Transforming the context, conditions, competencies, and culture will ultimately result in positive teaching experiences. Hopefully, these positive experiences will create a lasting effect on the new teachers and positively influence their decision to remain at their

schools. When teachers are longstanding and committed to a school, the effectiveness becomes the trademark of the school culture, teacher success, and student achievement. In the next chapter, I outline further exploration of transforming the school under study through specific and measurable actions.

Chapter Six: Strategies and Actions

For this study, the *AS-IS* and *TO-BE* charts reflect the realities of the school under study (AS-IS) and ideal future (TO-BE). In this chapter, I outline an organizational plan to bridge the AS-IS to the TO-Be. The organizational plan focuses on increased collaboration between mentors, administrators supervising induction programs and district leaders of induction programs. It includes a deliberate approach to supporting new teachers by using individualized support methods, a conscious approach to using nonevaluative observations and feedback, and an intense focus on infusing the school culture into the teacher induction program.

I used the critical areas of change from Wagner et al.'s (2006) 4C's framework in my Strategies and Action Chart (see Appendix D). The strategies and actions to support the leaders at the school under study in their plight to be successful utilize research and best practice in organizational theory, professional development, leadership, and communication strategies are notable in the *Kotter Change Theory* (2014). School leaders, and mentors at the school under study will be successful with the new teacher induction program using the strategies and actions detailed in the organizational change plan. The induction program leaders at the school under study will adhere to the details outlined through the organizational change plan's context, culture, conditions, and competencies portions.

The professional learning community in the school under study has the foundation to be a stellar school with high student achievement and low teacher turnover rates. In addition, the school community under investigation has a strong core upon which they base their school culture and climate. Using this foundation, the teacher induction

program, without intent, has successfully embedded the positive aspects of the school's culture and environment into the program. To continue this path of success, the leaders at the school under study will implement some changes to their organization with a direct focus on creating symbiotic relationships with district-level leadership personnel, building mentor capacity, and embedding cycles of professional development. The changes to the organization will follow Kotter's (2014) framework employing his eight accelerators to set up the organization for success.

Create a Sense of Urgency

The first accelerator from Kotter's (2014) framework is to create a sense of urgency. The first step for the organizational change within the school under study is to develop a sense of urgency with the district-level leaders who support teacher induction. The school under study was mandated to a turnaround plan via state directive after cycles of low student achievement on the state standardized assessment. Under the state governed plan, the student achievement levels on standardized assessments were higher, yielding a school grade of C in the state accountability system. This progress prompted a decrease in the intense oversight by the state, and the school administrators, teachers, and staff were placed under the care of a district-based leadership team to continue the school's transformation. In the time the school has been with the district team, the school grade has not increased.

Since school leaders implemented the state-mandated plan, the teacher retention average at the school under study has hovered at 36%. The teacher retention average for the district of the school under study was 88%. Further, in the state where the school under study resides, there was an average of 3,100 vacancies each year. I will establish a

sense of urgency by gathering the district leaders who support teacher induction and presenting those facts and data from my study to compel urgent action.

The district leaders who support teacher induction and teacher recruitment and retention will gather to review data that reveals the norms for the induction program culture and climate, data from this program evaluation, and research on academic achievement and beginning teachers. In addition, these leaders will be informed of the perception of the induction program from the perspective of the induction participants who participated in my study. I will highlight how participants benefited from the positive school culture derived from the school-based administrators, teachers, and staff in this program evaluation. I will also present data how, on the contrary, the participants had negative experiences with the district leaders. I will highlight how often the participants in my study felt unsupported and diffident when the district leaders were in attendance. I will include how my study in this program evaluation found that only 13% of the participants felt that the support from district administrators was helpful.

As Kotter (2014) explained, "establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation" (p. 36). Presenting this data will create a sense of urgency between the district-level leaders and school-based leaders to collaborate and have increased cooperation. In addition, developing the sense of urgency will lead to discussions identifying and addressing the potential crisis for the district of a failing teacher retention rate.

Build a Guiding Coalition

After successfully highlighting the division and disconnect between the school-based and district-based leadership teams, the next step is to create a guiding coalition

(Kotter, 2014). The guiding coalition will include the district leadership team and school-based leadership teams that support teacher induction. The school-based leadership team will consist of the lead mentor, school-based administrators, and teacher mentors. This guiding coalition will develop the vision and the strategic initiatives to implement changes with deliberate speed.The coalition will be empowered with information and be committed to the process of change.

Kotter (2014) further explained that one could build an effective team based on trust and a common goal (p. 61). Though the working relationship between the school-based leadership team and the district-based leadership team never cultivated in a way to produce trusting and lasting professional relationships, the guiding coalition will function in harmony to embody the new vision and be leaders of change with the initiatives. "Major change is difficult to accomplish; therefore, a powerful force is required to sustain the process" (Kotter, 1996, p. 51). This guiding coalition will operate to measure the data relating to the teacher induction program and devise a plan for monitoring and modifying the program to achieve the program's goals. The guiding coalition will be committed to critical decisions without conflict of interest. The coalition will need to function as a high-performing team with loyalty to the mission and vision of the induction program, developed trust with team members and induction program participants, and value given to student achievement.

Form a Strategic Vision and Initiatives

In the Kotter (2014) framework, the next accelerator is to form a strategic vision and initiatives to carry out the vision. The guiding coalition will create a vision to support the future that includes having a higher teacher-retention rate. The new vision will

involve stretching resources and capabilities for both the mentors and mentees to help the organizational goal ofincreasing the teacher retention rate, specifically of the participants in the induction program. In the previous years, the retention rate of teachers at the school under study averaged 36%. In addition, the vision will include measures to alter the "fundamental rethinking and change" (Kotter, 2014, p. 75) needed to shift the induction program's success positively. Also, this vision will include implementing initiatives to support and sustain the changes.

The first initiative is an intense focus on improving teacher retention. Teacher retention in this school will increase by creating classes and workloads based on the novice level of the teacher. As another initiative, teacher retention will be positively affected by the implementation of professional development cycles. These cycles will include additional dedicated time for professional development during student contact hours. The extra time will be spent conducting mentor-mentee classroom observations with strategic feedback and debrief sessions, studying and modeling best instructional strategies, and completing certification requirements. Next, an initiative regarding collaborative planning for the school year will commence. This initiative will strengthen the connection between school goals and teacher induction goals. Teacher effectiveness is the essential factor in students' academic growth; better teachers equal better student achievement (Sanders & Rivers, 1996).

There is a need to nurture and support teachers whether they teach a state-tested subject or an elective subject. Therefore, the leadership team at the school under study will focus their efforts on new teachers in every subject area to support their instructional growth and increase their productivity. In addition, higher teacher retention within the

school under study will ultimately lead to a decrease in vacancies and smaller new teacher cohorts.

Additional initiatives include the teacher induction program leaders at the school under study facilitating collaboration and positive interactions with the teacher induction program participants. The new collaboration and exchange will result in district-based leaders increasing their compassion and nonjudgmental support to new teachers. The district=based leaders will be supportive of and committed to the betterment of the school leader's mission and vision and the new vision for the induction program. In addition, the leadership team of the induction program at the school under study will communicate the vision change to yield mass buy-in and empower broad-based action (Kotter, 1996).

The final initiative will be collaborative planning. Collaboration during pre-and post- school-year planning will happen using persons from both the district and school levels. Working in concert to support teacher capacity building by reviewing the teacher data regarding retention, the educators at the school will experience success with instructional strategies, developing pedagogy, and increasing student achievement. The reviewed data will inform the district-level team on how to improve the effectiveness of the induction program. Jointly, both leadership teams will create plans at the school under study.

In addition, district officials will schedule yearly district leadership team meetings for teacher induction. These officials will include the district's leader for induction programs, the district's professional development coordinator, the learning community personnel, and the teacher recruiting office personnel. The initial yearly meeting will include data from this program evaluation and a presentation of research on academic

achievement and beginning teachers. The subsequent annual meetings will set agendas to review the prior year's data regarding the number of induction program participants and the number of induction program teachers who retained the school's culture and climate. Next, steps regarding students' academic success have new teachers.

Enlist a Volunteer Army

As a part of the initiatives, the district officials will enlist a volunteer army to act upon the urgency of teacher induction reform. This army of people will understand the value of the change and help craft, evaluate, and communicate change initiatives. In addition, the volunteer army will "communicate information about the change vision and the strategic initiatives to the organization in ways that lead large numbers of people to buy into the whole flow of action" (Kotter, 2014, p. 31).

The volunteer army will consist of experienced teachers, instructional staff, administrators at the school, and retired teachers and administrators who register as school volunteers. These persons will work alongside the lead mentor, school administrators, and teacher mentors to carry out the initiatives to respond to the urgency of change needed to support teacher growth. By enlisting experienced and retired educators, the coalition will begin to create buy-in for the changes made to smooth the process for putting change into action.

Kotter (1996) explained that a shared sense of the desired future could help motivate and coordinate the kinds of activities that create transformations (Kotter, 1996, p. 85). The volunteer army, alongside the guiding coalition will deliver messages to the school community and shareholders to convey the vision for the program and outline program components and responsibilities. The induction program leaders will

communicate the message by using a common language. This united front of communication will eliminate inconsistencies in conveying the vision and create a sturdy foundation for change.

Enable Action by Removing Barriers

District officials and stakeholders will attack broad-based obstacles with a positive and sustainable organizational change for induction programs. Officials will create formal structures, train mentors for needed skills, rethink informational systems, and support the mentors alongside the mentees in the induction program. For these tasks to work, everyone involved must remove barriers. The first barrier is the use of a one size fits all teacher support system. School and induction program leaders will replace this barrier with specific support. Second, teacher induction participants will engage in pre-observation protocols to support planning for lessons during an observation. This will help teachers be self-confident when planning and participating in observations. Third, teachers in the induction program will assess their current skills and goals for instructional improvement and pedagogy. Finally, the lead mentor and teacher mentors will use the gathered data to design individualized deliberate practice plans for each teacher induction participant. The second barrier is the use of global sessions of teacher professional development. The cycles of professional development will replace thisfor the individual needs of teachers.

The third barrier is the inequity of support based on the subject area. It will ensure that teacher induction participants receive the amount and depth of support relative to their skill level. Leaders will assign mentors and coaches to teachers based on their individual needs, not a predetermined list of subject areas.

The fourth barrier is the lack of time and funding for the teacher induction program. School district leaders will remove this barrier by having secured funding for each of the mandatory three years of participation in the program. School officials will protect time for professional development and other induction-related tasks regardless of student contact time. In addition, updated operational systems used to report and record the needs and cost of the induction program will support restructuring the induction program budget to allocate funding for substitutes for meetings during student contact time and provide resource materials such as trainers and professional literature.

The fifth barrier is the lack of formal structures. Formal structures of the induction program will replace this barrier from the time of hire to the program graduation. In creating standard designs, the induction program leaders will be "poised to make good choices about what they need to do to be more effective" (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005, p. 87).

Generate Short-Term Wins

Seeking buy-in from others typically requires strategically relevant wins, both big and small. One way to achieve this with the induction program is to call deliberate attention to the teachers' needs. Teacher-specific support will begin with mentor-mentee conversations surrounding the mentees' needs and personal and professional growth desires. Like an instructional coaching interview, the questions asked will aid in designing a plan of action for the teacher, including classroom observations, note-taking and reflection documentation, and one-on-one debriefing and feedback. A personalized plan of action will support the teacher in their needs instead of providing a one-size-fits-all layer of support that may not address the teachers as individuals. Teachers, both new

and veteran, will see this as a win because the personalized support and success will be more significant.

Another way to generate short-term wins is to create a monthly check-in meeting with mentors and mentees. The lead mentor and school administrator will be led the meetings. School officials will use this meeting to celebrate success with building relationships, instructional practices, classroom management, and student achievement. The monthly check-ins will highlight the success of the changes implemented for the program participants and the school community. This type of broadcast will demonstrate the positive direction the program is going and create a win to fuel further change.

Sustain Acceleration

Like short-term wins, Kotter (2018) explained that the next step towards progress is to use increased credibility to change systems, structures, and policies that do not fit together or with the transformation (p. 27). The mentors for the induction program at the school under study have a deep investment in the current structures in terms of personal loyalties and functional expertise that makes changes to the organizational structures of the program daunting.In response to this, the induction program leadership team will collaborate to share in the decision-making and process of change by creating formal structures and rethinking informational systems and support the mentors alongside the mentees in the induction program. Thus, the induction program leadership team will begin to sustain acceleration with the increased credibility ofachieving the initial initiatives and tackling additional initiatives.

First, the induction program leadership team will implement beginning, middle, and end-of-the-year check-ins for mentors and mentees. These check-ins will collect

feedback from the participants, and which will be shared as information during the planning meeting with the guiding coalition. Next, school-level administrators will review the mentor-mentee collaboration logs with input from the school-level administration. School-level administrators will forward the collaboration log information and feedback to the guiding coalition for review during the post-planning meeting. Last, the induction program leadership team will plan a biannual mentor-mentee day-long retreat to build relationships and secure positive school culture.

Institute Change

The last accelerator for the change process is to institute change by infusing the changes into the school's culture. First, the leadership team at the school under study will institutionalize wins by employing an annual meeting with the district guiding coalition to review the previous year's information and develop a plan for the following year. The successive institutionalized win is secured funding for induction program needs and ensuring the funds areprotected in the budget each year. Next, professional development cycles will become part of the culture at the district and school level as a response to the core value of the induction program, which is teacher growth and retention. Finally, due to instituting change and carrying out the initiatives, shareholders will witness a successful effort for the organizational changes.

Continued success means the change efforts will begin to revise the culture of the induction program. Consequently, to anchor new approaches into the school's culture (Kotter, 1995), it is necessary to institute additional components to secure and support the deep rooting of newpractices.

First, cycles of professional development will include in the formal structure of

the program. Professional development cycles will consist of training, professional readings, opportunities for safe practice, observing colleagues, measuring, monitoring, and modifying rules, reviewing multiple data points, receiving feedback, and repeated cycles (Citation withheld to protect the confidentiality, 2020). These eight components will support the new teachersin their pedagogy by providing a structure to anticipate and follow. Training will help direct instruction on how to implement strategies and best practices. Professional readings will include articles about powerful techniques learned. Opportunities for safe practice, observing colleagues, and receiving feedback will allow teachers low-risk opportunities to experiment withnew strategies. Finally, mentors will keep mentees engaged in collaborative discussions and provide feedback to reinforce positive actions and suggestions for improvement.

During mentor-mentee meetings, multiple data points will be reviewed, implementing the vital practice of using structured protocols for examining data points connected to the professional learning cycle. Monitor, measure, and modify refers to the ongoing observation, feedback, and decision-making process for the professional learning implementation.

Last, repeated cycles are protocols to ensure that the professional learning cycle is cyclicby allowing multiple experiences to the cycle with implemented information. Next, there will bean annual meeting with the district and school level guiding coalitions to review the previous year's data and develop a plan for the following year. During this meeting, the guiding coalition will employ data-driven decision-making as the protocol for informing decisions about the program and participants. Also, this meeting will solidify the protected yearly budget for theprogram to fund related induction program

costs. These institutions of change will support the continuous efforts to ensure the transition.

Assessing the Effectiveness of the Strategies and Actions

To assess the effectiveness of the change plan's strategies and actions, there must be several checkpoints throughout the year to monitor the progress of mentors with their mentees and get a temperature gauge on the mentees' self-perception of their progress. Wagner et al. (2006) noted that "it is important to track incremental changes that occur in this work because having a clearer picture of what changes look like as they are in progress will improve your capability" (p. 164).

The increments will begin as pre-and post-induction program mentee planning at the beginning, middle, and end-of-the-year meetings with mentors and mentees and constant review of feedback from professional developments and mentor coaching observations. Before the school year begins, the mentees will begin pre-induction program planning by taking a self-assessment and creating a deliberate practice plan for their professional goals. School administrators will share the projects with the lead mentor, supervising administrator for the teacher induction program, and the mentee's mentor. This plan will support differentiation by addressing teachers' needs. School based administrators will review the progress of these projects during individual conferences during the school year.

The review will utilize a three-point system described by Orme and Combs-Orme (2012): measure, monitor, and modify. First, the leadership team that supports teacher induction will measure the plan with a predetermined measuring and evaluation system. Also, the leadership team will share the components of the evaluation system with the

mentees, so they will fully understand the process for using it with their plan. Next, the leading mentor and mentor will monitor the measuring system and deliberate practice plan on a predetermined basis. The monitoring system will use various forms of monitoring such as classroom observations, written reflections, and anecdotal records of the teachers' practice as gathered by leadership team members. Last,collaboratively, the lead mentor, mentor, and mentee will determine if the plan needs to be modified to increase the action items for professional growth or decrease the plan to create more success for the mentee.

To further assess the effectiveness of the strategies and actions, a beginning-of-the-year meeting with the mentors and mentees will take place to share the experiences with relationship building regarding conditions for a time, planning, locations, etc. The school administrators will share these discussions to support others who may have less favorable conditions. Also, there will be a discussion on trends from initial classroom observations and professional development to practice items. These trends will be discussed with the whole group to address commonalities and next steps.

In addition, there will be individual conversations to address particular concerns and next steps. The middle-of-the-year meeting will have the same agenda items and address celebrations of success from the mentors and mentees. The middle and end-of-year meetings highlight new teachers applying new learning to their practice and demonstrating an improved performance because of their enhanced professional behaviors. The end-of-the-year meeting will highlight the success experienced through the year and lessons learned along the way. Also, mentors and mentees will share personal testimonies about their partnership.

Each of the checkpoints will have a feedback-reflection activity to allow for the lead mentor and administrators. They support teacher induction to reflect on the program through the perceptions of the mentors and mentees. Review and reflection from feedback forms will be ongoing and occur after each PD and coaching-observation cycle. This practice of having frequent and real-time feedback is to accelerate and sustain the changes. The regular reflection allows the leadership team that supports the induction program to prioritizethe level and accuracy of the support given to teachers. In addition, reviewing the feedback and data collected throughout the year helps keep track of the program's alignment to the district's vision and goals incrementally.

As a part of the change plan, the district and school-based teams will create a vision and attainable goals for the induction program. The job of the school-based induction program leaders is to track the progress and chart the growth. School officials will view and discuss the data at each of the meetings held throughout the year. In addition, they will share with community partners and stakeholders via Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, student and staff advisory committees, booster clubs, and so on. It is essential to the sustainability of the changes to showcase the teachers' success and the students' achievement through the program's transparency.

The final measure for assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and actions is to quantify the number of retained teachers. District leaders will gather this data at the end of the year and review it with the school-based leadership team. Also, an effort by the group will collect the narrative data from the teachers who left to qualify their reasons for leaving. This data will help plan for future years of the program.

Involving Community Partners in Decision-Making

As a part of the organizational change plan, district officials will create a guiding coalition of school-based and district-based leaders for the induction program that includes stakeholders and community partners. School-based leaders include the administration staff, lead mentor, and induction program mentors. The district-based leaders have the district lead mentor and the district professional development coordinator. Stakeholders include the persons listed previously, and district teacher evaluation leadership team, and area superintendents. The community will consist of school community shops, restaurants, and service stores. These persons will support the strategies and actions by being a part of the collaborative decision-making for the vision, goals, and initiatives. Thus, the induction program vision and goals will be parallel with the vision and goals of the district. This harmony will occur with collaboration on initiatives, implementation, and monitoring of the induction program. Likewise, as seen in the results of this program evaluation, the induction program will be seen as an extension of the school culture.

Consequently, as a part of the school's culture, the induction program will encompass various community and stakeholder support for student and teacher success. Community partners, such as shops, restaurants, and service agencies, can support celebrating, rewarding, and incentivizing teachers and students. Allowing the community members and stakeholders to participate in the guiding coalition will create amore effective program for new teachers. Kemp (2017), a school superintendent in California, stated, "community collaboration with schools complements and reinforces values, culture and the learning opportunities" (para. 1).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined a system for instituting change within the teacher induction program. This plan included Kotter's (2014) eight steps for leading change. The next chapter contains recommendations for policy change to support the organizational change plan for teacher induction programs on the district level.

Chapter Seven: Implications and Policy Recommendations

As derived from state statutes related to teacher induction programs, district policy for the school under study is a vague policy of light suggestions and minimal formality in creating district or school-based programs. Many gray areas of the induction and mentoring policies leave room for interpretation, unreliability, and deviance from the goal of effective recruitment and retention. District and school leaders implement these ill-prepared programs without a systemic foundation to support inducting new teachers. The continuum of skills to be taught, topics to be covered, and requirements set are too large to allow for programs that start or grow organically. Instead, induction programs need to be intentional and created and implemented with formality.

Policy Statement

My recommendation is a change in district policy to mandate district leaders and school-based leaders implement a semi-scripted, formal induction program. The difference in the policy will provide new teachers with a formalized induction program. In addition, the policy will result in better-equipped mentors and administrators who will provide a higher level of support coupled with a better understanding of the elements of the induction program and the intended benefits of each induction activity and component. The changes to the policy will create a semi-scripted, three-year program for teachers who are new to teaching. A lead mentor will conduct this restructured induction program. In addition, the lead mentor will train and oversee teacher mentors.

District leaders will train teacher mentors multiple times a year on andragogy strategies and participate in professional development to support their work with the new teachers. New teachers will complete cycles of professional development various times

throughout the year to incorporate learned teaching practices. Also, new teachers will have protected time to participate in peer observations, reflections, and conferences. The program will be semi-scripted to allow for individual teacher support based on needs.

Moreover, this policy change will provide a basis for higher student achievement by increasing one of the critical components to student learning. According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), "teachers are the number one in-school influence on student achievement" (para. 2). Thus "how well teachers are prepared to be effective in the classroom determines student achievement" (Wong, 2004, p. 55). The policy change I am recommending will result in well prepared teachers who positively influence student achievement.

As a result of the policy change, the increased effectiveness and retention of teachers who participate in induction programs will positively affect their students' achievement. Stronge et al. (2011) concluded that based on percentile points from standardized assessments, the difference in student achievement from effective teachers and less effective teachers was 30 percentile points. Stronge et al.'s conclusion was supported by data arrived at by analyzing effective teachers' teaching practices, behaviors, and classroom management techniques. The skills, practices, and behaviors of effective teachers can be taught and cultivated in beginning teachers through a formalized teacher induction program (p. 348).

My recommendation comes as a result of my review of the literature on induction programs and the results of my study. The research findings revealed that many induction programs were not meeting the needs of teachers because of the openness of interpretation in how to implement teacher induction programs (Kearney, 2015). The

policy for the state of the district under study for teacher induction creates guidelines and identifies best practices. However, it does not mandate or require the much-needed consistent support for a new teacher from a mentor and induction program. Kearney (2015) made the case that "one major problem with the provision of comprehensive induction programs is the significant confusion as to what induction means and how to structure effective programs" (p. 3). I found this problem existed for the district of the school under study which resulted in the same problem being replicated in the program at the school under study.

The program as implemented lacked structure formality, much of which was attributed to the district leaders' lack of guidelines supporting teacher induction. The data from this study indicates the induction program at the school under study exhibits effectiveness in two specific areas: a sense of belonging and providing a positive school culture. However, these areas are not included as a part of the official teacher induction program components for the district or school under study. It is the limited and lack of understanding and comprehensive knowledge of teacher induction programs that has resulted in the lack of structure in the program. My recommended changes will provide both the school and district leaders a way to gain the knowledge and understanding needed to implement a comprehensive and effective teacher induction program at the school and district level.

Analysis of Needs

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) explained that teacher turnover rates are 50% higher in Title I schools, which serve more low-income students. Turnover rates are 70% higher for teachers in schools serving the largest concentrations of students

of color (Carver- Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017, para. 8). While the turnover rates at Title 1 schools are higher, it is still a concern for all schools. Consequently, policy considerations need to include key components to support the battle of teacher shortages throughout all schools. In the following sections, I analyze six distinct disciplinary areas for a comprehensive understanding of the problems and the effects of my policy change recommendation.

Educational Analysis

New teachers need to be equipped with skills to develop and achieve mastery of their pedagogy. For this to happen successfully, leaders of induction programs will need to embed principles of andragogy into their instructional support when working with new teachers (Vikaraman et al., 2017). In short, understanding of pedagogy will support the new teacher's education of students, and understanding of andragogy will support the techniques mentors use to instruct new teachers. These two concepts need to work in tandem to achieve the goals for induction programs. Currently, there is an absence of andragogy in induction programs. There is an identified need to find more effective ways to support adult development within schools and across school systems (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 4). The recommended policy change will incorporate the principles of andragogy with the new teachers and mentors to support the goals of increasing the pedagogy of the new teachers, accelerating teacher effectiveness, and increasing student achievement.

As mentioned above, one of the goals for induction programs is to accelerate teacher effectiveness (American Institute for Research, 2015). However, without induction programs with dedicated mentors, cycles of professional development, and a goal-oriented plan of action, novice teachers are left to their own devices to increase their

instructional effectiveness. "Dedicated and knowledgeable mentors can boil down the wisdom of their experiences as an educator into concrete skills that a new teacher can practice" (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016, p. 4). By providing mentors with instruction in andragogy, they will be more successful in increasing the mentees' effectiveness. This is important because researchers strongly link teacher effectiveness to student achievement. It is the connection between the effectiveness of teacher practices and routines that ensures student achievement increases.

Unsurprisingly, the connection between teacher effectiveness and student achievement is probably one of the most powerful connections in the world of teaching. According to the groundbreaking report of Coleman (1966), "the quality of a teacher shows a stronger relationship [than school or curricula] to pupil achievement" (p. 22). This notion was supported in the work of Stronge and colleagues (2011). If the student is to be academically successful, the teacher must be successful.

In most cases, if teachers are not successful, neither are their students. Low student achievement can harm a teacher's longevity at a school, namely, teacher retention. In addition, low student achievement can be reflected negatively in teachers' observations and evaluations, sometimes resulting in additional pressure from administrators causing teachers to leave the profession. The policy change for induction programs will play a vital role in curbing this pressure. By supporting new teachers so they remain in education and become experienced effective teachers, student achievement will increase.

Economic Analysis

The economic implications for the policy change stem from the need for

dedicated funding for the implementation of the induction program with fidelity. With the proposed policy change, induction program leaders and participants will have secure funding to carry out the program components, leading to successful teachers and a stable school staff. According to Mader (2015), "only 30 percent of teachers improve substantially with the help of district-led professional development, even though districts spend an average of $18,000 on development for each teacher per year" (para. 1). Therefore, the policy will allocate funding to produce systemic growth and serve as reputable investments in teachers and student achievement. In addition, the policy change will mandate funding for the three years of the implemented induction program cycle. These funds will pay for stipends for mentors, professional development during student contact and non-student contact time, and summer opportunities for learning.

First, funds will be allocated for stipends for mentors as compensation for their time and efforts with their assigned mentees. Next, school officials will receive substitute teacher funding so that the mentors and mentees can attend professional development held during student contact time. Teachers will not have their time away from the classroom deducted from their sick leave or personal leave balance.

In my experience as an educator, professional development during student contact hours merited a higher ranking from teachers than professional developments held during non-student contact hours. Teachers can participate in professional development during student contact time and see strategies at work in real-time with live student actions.

Lastly, there will be secure funds for summer opportunities for teacher learning. A stipend will be paid to teachers for attending these summer opportunities for professional development. To earn the stipend, teachers must not only attend but complete any

coursework assigned by the professional development leader. Economically speaking, when teachers, new or veteran, are successful at their craft and meet the goals of the school to increase student achievement, there is a chance that the school grade and rating will increase.

In the state where the school under study is located, there are immediate benefits when the school accountability grade is either maintained a high level or increases by one letter grade. This produces a better economic outlook for the school and community. Higher school grades produce more funding for school programs and activities, better opportunities for the students, and even bonuses for the teachers. Moreover, the policy change will help the school district leaders receive a higher return on their investment. Support rendered to new teachers and their salaries and benefits are lost if teachers do not remain at the end of the year. This tendency is represented as K-12 Return on Investment (ROI), as Frank and Hovey (2014) noted. The policy change for induction programs will change the fundamental use of people, time, and money, focusing on increasing teacher retention–the return on investment (Miles & Frank, 2008).

Social Analysis

When new teachers begin at their new school, one component of gaining comfort and security is having a sense of belonging (Allen, 2009). This sense of belonging is necessary to help new teachers overcome new teacher isolation. Further teacher isolation happens when new teachers do not develop meaningful relationships with other teachers at the school, professionally or personally. These meaningful relationships help new teachers support the positive school culture and climate. The provide a way to allow the new teachers to contribute to the school community. When these relationships are

unfostered, new teachers become like hermit crabs staying in their shells. Cookson (2005) explained, "One of the ironies of teaching is that it is one of the most social occupations but is also one of the most isolating professions" (p. 14). Teacher induction programs must break the isolation new teachers feel as they endeavor to succeed in the first years of teaching.

Teacher induction programs that span to a few years for implementation, instead of one or two short years have a more positive outcome for participants. Programs that are comprehensive, like the one suggested by my policy change, will help prevent teacher isolation, leading to lower teacher attrition (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Wong, 2004). In addition, the policy change will support new teachers by integrating them into the school community through participation in the induction program and strategic mentorship. This action will encourage the new teacher's commitment to the school. Pratt and Holmyard (2020) noted that the antidote to isolation is a collaboration (para 4). This is complemented by the anecdotal story as told by Allen (2009) to support fostering collaborative relationships with new teachers.

On her first day as a teacher, a high school teacher felt alone and uncomfortable at an in-service breakfast. Her first day was replete with awkward and uncomfortable situations with adults. The sense of feeling alone continued beyond the first day. She felt alone for the first two years of teaching. That was until an invitation from a group of teachers to collaborate and plan with other colleagues. This collaboration brought on a tremendous sense of community and belonging (Allen, 2009, pp. 9-10).

In addition to combating new teacher isolation, mentor-mentee relationships are vital to the social needs of induction programs. Socially, mentor-mentee relationships are

necessary to prevent teacher isolation, which can later result in teacher attrition. Also, the mentor-mentee relationship is essential to the induction program practices and commitments. In the policy change, mentor-mentee relationships will require careful pairing and delicate trust-building.

Political Analysis

Student achievement becomes integral into teacher induction program measurements of success. My aim in this policy change is to support retaining more new teachers. I also aim through this policy change to increase the success of new teachers, which advances student achievement. With these goals accomplished, there will be fewer political nuances that require working around. For example, when school administrators have little to explain to superintendents about low performance on progress monitoring assessments, superintendents spend less time explaining to state education officials about low-performing and failing schools. In the state of the school under study, student achievement connects to the assignment of school and district accountability letter grades. These grades can determine the success of superintendents and school administrators. Consequently, teacher retention rates weigh on school administrator and superintendent success rates.

The subsequent political implication of the policy change is related to teacher evaluations. School administrators observe new teachers several times per year to determine a final evaluation score. If a teacher fails to achieve a minimum score, the administrator does not rehire the teacher. Similarly, when new teachers receive evaluation overload without success, their will to remain in the profession diminishes. Retaining teachers often demands that teachers have successful evaluations even though

evaluations and the metrics of their measurements are constantly changing. Unfairly, these changes often come from policymakers who are unfamiliar with what goes into being a successful teacher. Klein (2013) stated, "many education leaders who design teacher evaluation systems, training systems, and even policies and standards have never been teachers" (para. 1). The policy change will help new teachers gain confidence and success in their evaluation ratings to respond to these unfair practices. The policy change enforces a comprehensive teacher induction program to support new teacher coaching, leading to confidently navigating the components of teacher evaluations.

Legal Analysis

The policy change will create a semi-scripted program, free of vague language that allows interpretations. There will be equity in implementing induction programs because the programs will be formal in the specific components carried out in school-based programs. The policy change will eliminate the vagueness that educational leaders at the state and district levels use to free themselves from being blamed when induction programs fail. The language of a formally implemented teacher induction program will cover teachers. Being covered by the language means teachers will be aware of the components of the mandated program, which will empower them to hold the people implementing the program accountable for their success as new teachers.

Moral and Ethical Analysis

District and school-level administrators have a moral and ethical duty to protect the investment made in a new teacher on behalf of students. Administrators have a moral and ethical obligation to provide the highest quality of education to students, which means employing, training, and supporting effective teachers. The components of the

policy change will ensure the implementation of a program that will protect the investments made on behalf of students.

It is also morally and ethically right for school leaders to place a new teacher in an assignment that provides the best potential outcome for the teacher and the student. School leaders of teacher induction programs will yield certain dispensations to the new teachers on campus to help with their transition and acclimation period. These concessions include lighter class loads for the first year and protected time for mentor interactions. Lighter class loads for teachers are classes that are not heavy with students with poor behaviors or low achievement. These classes are manageable for new teachers in relation to student behavior and achievement level. As teachers grow in their craft, the administrator can adjust courses to match the teacher's capacity.

Another moral implication is the need for highly qualified teachers in specific subject areas. Across the nation, unfortunately, many schools trust their low-achieving students, second language learners, students with disabilities, and students with extreme behaviors to first-year teachers (Barnum, 2019). Unfortunately, this practice leaves the advanced classes assigned to the more experienced teachers. The disparity in teaching assignments often leaves students in these critical areas without instruction from a highly-qualified teacher. Although the notion is that new teachers in the induction program will get better, these fragile students are struggling in the meantime. It is moral and ethical to provide the most fragile students with the most highly qualified teacher.

My policy change will mandate that school administrators and counselors "prepare master schedules that are equitable for students and built around the skills and competencies of teachers" (Ekchian, as cited in Barnum, 2019, para. 13). The policy

change will allow new teachers the best chance for success. New teachers will have the assistance and support of an effective induction program. The policy change will give the new teachers an opportunity to become effective teachers who will be able to address the needs of all students.

Implications for Staff and Community Relationships

This program evaluation of a teacher induction program at one middle school revealed that one of the significant trends that promoted teacher satisfaction and retention was the climate and culture at the school under study. I found positive interactions and a high level of satisfaction identified by the mentees was the family-like climate and culture at the school under study. With my policy change, schools can provide a similar family-like climate and culture and infuse it within the induction program.

New teachers need a sense of belonging to help them flourish in their new environment and job duties. The sense of belonging comes from solid staff relationships, purposeful mentorship, and high levels of communication. Likewise, new teachers can benefit from solid community relationships, especially in lower-socioeconomic areas like the school under study. Teachers in areas of lower socioeconomic status thrive from positive community relations. Community relations infused into teacher induction programs help to create integrated supports. Those supports help students come to class more prepared to learn, hands-on and innovative teaching and learning opportunities to deepen and extend learning, and sustainable workplace conditions to promote teacher satisfaction and retention (Daniel et al., 2019, p. 454).

Last, in a school scenario, the students are always seen as stakeholders. When this new policy change takes effect, new teachers will hopefully see their growth's benefit on

student learning. As a result, students benefit from teachers who are striving to increase their pedagogy. As teachers are supported and growing in their craft, they directly affect the students in their classes, helping them gain tremendous academic success. The new policy change will be effective in changing student outcomes. The formality of the program and the extension of support lasting more than one year will support student, teacher, and school community growth.

Another implication for staff and community relationships is school culture. The proposed policy change will help foster appropriate culture and climate to support the feeling of belonging of the new teachers to their school communities. The requirement of a three-year program builds community among the new teacher cohorts and mentors. During the three years induction program, participants will be immersed in a supportive culture and climate conditions that emit personal value, respect, and empowerment to support those new teachers on their journey to possessing effective pedagogy. The program evaluation research revealed that at the core of successful induction programs was school culture and climate. As deemed by the participants, the school's culture was the primary influencer of the success of the induction program. The school community of staff, students, and shareholders will reap the benefits of the positive school culture as they work together in shared accountability for the program and school goals, missions, and visions.

Conclusion

Induction programs executed with thoughtful planning to include appropriate program participation from the mentees and mentors can create a better chance for increased retention (Wong, 2004). In this chapter, I delineated the recommended change

to district policy regarding teacher induction programs to incorporate a formalized system of supports for new teachers. In the next chapter, I will provide a comprehensive conclusion and culminating thoughts.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

Good teacher induction programs are the antidote to the annual organizational malpractice of sending unprepared educators into classrooms (Eshleman, 2018, para. 7). This program evaluation investigated a teacher induction program at one school with a limited number of participants. I used the study results to develop a policy that will enable the school, district, and state-level program coordinators to provide better teacher induction programs. The reoccurring theme of the program evaluation was the need for a formalized system to use when implementing induction programs at the school level. Leaders will infuse formalized induction programs with mentorships, elements of positive school climate and culture, relationship building, and rigorous cycles of professional development. As the components of induction programs become strengthened, the goal of teacher growth and retention will be met, which will lead to increased student achievement.

Discussion

Education leaders have embraced the need for induction programs and mentors, yet the program implementation and inclusion of the school culture is lacking. With these deficits, the lack of teacher retention is on the rise, and the perceived satisfaction of teachers from induction programs is suffering. This program evaluation studied one school's new teacher induction program. The purpose of the study was to examine the program's participants perceived satisfaction and plans for retention. Through the semi-structured interviews, I captured the participants' experiences and their perceptions of satisfaction with the program through the lens of professional, emotional, and instructional support.

I identified trends among the participants' responses to elicit perceptions related to their satisfaction with the teacher induction program. I captured the participants' responses through conversations during the semi-structured interview process. I identified many similarities in their responses. For example, participants conveyed positive feelings about their connections with the mentors and family-like staff, yet they lacked trust and relationships with administrators.

My goal for the new teacher induction program evaluation was to evaluate the program's effectiveness at the school level based on teacher satisfaction and retention ratesand create a list of best practices to be included in school-based new teacher programs. I addressed these goals by creating an organizational change plan based on the work of John P. Kotter (2014). The change plan outlined how induction program leaders, both school-based anddistrict-based, can collaborate on strategies and initiatives to create induction programs with higher effectiveness rates as seen by retention rates. Induction program leaders will be motivated to make the changes after thoroughly reviewing the program evaluation data, past retention rates, and literature on the connection between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The last part of the intended goal is to create a list of best practices for induction programs. I detailed this list in the next section of this chapter.

The organizational change plan addressed the issues that arose during the program evaluation. The issues take on the form of barriers that are preventing induction programs from higher levels of success. I identified these barriers from the participants' responses during the interview process. My change leadership plan provided a way to combat and replace the barrier. In addition, my organizational change plan addressed issues from

the program evaluation by creating a list of initiatives to be implemented in induction programs. These initiatives included new and revised components to the induction program. I explained the initiative with consideration for who will carry out the initiative and when it would be implemented. After reviewing the data from the evaluation and the recommended strategies and actions, I also recommend a policy change to support the new teacher induction program implementation. The policy change will formalize the program to include a semi-scripted induction program system to support new teachers. Also, the policy change advocates for a mandatory three-year mentor training program infused with andragogy structures, cycles of professional development, and secure funding. Moreover, the policy change highlights the need to provide focused career assistance to new teachers to impact teacher retention positively.

Last, one of the intended goals of the program evaluation is to create a list of best practices for implementing teacher induction programs. After conducting the program evaluation, this list is derived mainly from the consolidated responses of the participants, the themes that emerged from my data collection, and my professional experience. My recommended best practices for implementing teacher induction programs are:

- create a system of formalized structures that shape the basis of the program; induction program mentors and mentees need to be aware of program goals and components to add meaning and accountability to their participation;

- mentorships need to expand to include a meticulous and deliberate pairing of mentors and mentees with constant mentor development and training on adult learning practices;

- induction programs need to have individualized support based on teacher-

specific needs; these needs need to be measured, monitored, and modified when necessary;

- induction programs need to serve to support the development of teachers through instructional leadership;

- induction programs need a connection to the positive school culture; instead of working independently of the program. It needs to exist as an extension of the positive school culture; if it takes a village to raise a child, it takes five best practices to 'raise' a teacher.

Leadership Lessons

While conducting the program evaluation, a leadership lesson I learned is how valuable a good teacher induction program is to a school's teacher and student population. I learned that many direct effects that can be positive or negative for the school community would come from a good induction program. The teacher induction program impacts several different school-based characteristics such as student achievement, teacher retention, quality of education, teacher evaluations, school grades, and more. School-based and district-based leaders must be aware of these associations and emphasize securing a positive connection to yield positive results. In addition, leaders must see the larger picture of building positive school culture and climate and student achievement as an outcome of their teacher induction program. Finally, leaders need to banish the idea that induction programs work independently of the school community and embed the program within the school community–ultimately bringing exposure of the induction program to stakeholders.

Another leadership lesson I learned is that district leaders need to collaborate with

school leaders to facilitate goals for teacher development. Teacher development, by way of induction programs, is measured by favorable teacher retention rates. High retention rates are a product of good induction programs. School district leaders and individual school leaders have a responsibility to create and implement good teacher induction programs. Leaders from the district and school level need to collaborate for the induction program planning, implementation, measuring, and modifying phases. This leader-shared responsibility will help to ensure the sustainability and success of induction programs.

Last, as a leader, I learned that leaders of induction programs need to include andragogy and other adult learning theories to support mentors and mentees. "Support for beginning teachers should adopt the theory of adult learning for effective transfer of knowledge and contribution of their learning" (Vickaraman et al., 2017, p. 164). New teachers are learners as they embark on their first years as teachers. Induction program leaders and mentors must support, nurture, and encourage them as learners with systems that reflect that very notion. I understand that new teachers need the depth and richness of purposeful support to survive in the classroom (Allen, 2009, p. 3). Learning takes place over time with scaffolds to integrate the new knowledge and elements of gradual release to sustain new practices (p. 5). When educators instruct students, they utilize these concepts of learning without hesitation. My lesson learned is that educators teaching new teachers need to employ the same measures.

Conclusion

Bambrick-Santoyo (2016) stated that teachers who participate in teacher induction programs "are like a violinist who wouldn't yet book a solo concert, but who can certainly contribute great music to an orchestra of other musicians who are among the

most skilled in the nation" (p. 3). New teachers have much to contribute to their schools'

culture, community, and student achievement. With a systematic and comprehensive

induction program, teachers can flourish with implementing new instructional practices

and positively impact student performance.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions for New Teachers

Appendix B: As- Is Chart

Appendix C: To-Be Chart

Appendix D: Strategies and Action Chart

Appendix A: Interview Questions for New Teachers

1. To what degree do you feel professionally supported as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

2. How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your feelings of professional support while employed at this school?

3. Other than the new teacher induction program, what other elements of your current school year impacted your feelings of professional support?

4. To what degree do you feel emotionally supported as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

5. How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your feelings of emotional support while employed at this school?

6. Other than the new teacher induction program, what other elements, within the school day impacted your feelings of emotional support?

7. To what degree do you feel confident with your instructional practices and pedagogy as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

8. How much of an impact did the new teacher induction program have on your confidence inyour instructional practices and pedagogy?

9. Other than the new teacher induction program, what elements of your current school year have impacted your feelings of confidence with instructional practices and pedagogy?

10. To what degree do you feel satisfied with your faculty mentor and/or lead mentor as a result of participating in the new teacher induction program?

11. How much of an impact did your mentor or lead mentor have on your feeling of

support during the current school year?

12. How much of an impact did your mentor or lead mentor have on your feeling of confidence with instructional practices or pedagogy?

13. To what degree did the new teacher induction program influence your intent to return to the school in the following school year?

14. What other factors, if any, influenced your intent to return to your current school?

15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B: As-Is Chart

Wagner's 4Cs	*Mentors in the teacher induction program lack skills and strategies to meet the needs of the new and beginning teachers*
Context	20% of staff are new teachers 12% of new teachers are seeking alternative certification Since 2015, the turnover rate has produced an average of 26 new teachers each year
Culture	Lack of opening-up practices Lack of Return on Investment Family-like environment Lack of relationship building between teaching staff and district administrators
Conditions	Mentor-mentee relationship and pairings Time and focus towards PD Time for mentor-mentee collaboration Funding
Competencies	Mentors lack skills needed to support mentee development Mentor capacity Addressing adult learners Creating structures

Appendix C: To-Be Chart

Wagner's 4Cs	*Mentors in the teacher induction program have skills and strategies to meet the needs of the new and beginning teachers*
Context	The district leadership team would work in concert with school-based leadership to support teacher capacity Higher teacher retention Smaller mentee cohorts
Culture	Opening-up practices Teacher-specific support Shared Value in student success (not just core)
Conditions	Mentor-mentee pairings are strategic Protected time for meeting and collaboration Funding for substitutes Planning Completion of district requirements
Competencies	Cycles of PD for mentors to support mentees Awareness of best practices to address adult learners Formal structures for the mentoring program

Appendix D: Strategies and Action Chart

Strategies	*Actions*
Create a sense of urgency	Meet with district leadership team (district induction program leader, district professional development coordinator, learning community personnel, teacher recuring office personnel) Review three-years data – number of induction program participants and number of induction program teachers who remained Induction program culture and climate at the school level Data from program evaluation Present research on academic achievement and beginning teachers
Build a guiding coalition	The district leadership team and school-based leadership teams who support teacher induction will form a guiding coalition. The school-based leadership team will include the lead mentor, school-based administrators, and teacher mentors.

Strategies	*Actions*

Form a strategic vision and initiatives	The guiding coalition will develop a strategic vision for the induction program and develop the following initiatives:
	• The district leadership team would work in concert with school-based leadership to support teacher capacity
	• Planning (future year, pre-planning, and during the year planning) would be collaborative between school-based and district leadership teams
	• Yearly review of teacher retention data
	• Create smaller new teacher cohorts by increasing the focus on teacher retention
	• Collaborative planning for the school year, including preplanning and post planning
	• Smaller mentee cohorts
	• An Intensive focus on new teacher retention
	• Including in the professional development cycle:
	    o The strategic pairing of mentor-mentees using multi-layered factors
	    o Opening-up practices
	    o Building relationships
	    o Peer feedback
	    o Non-evaluative observations with feedback

Enlist a Volunteer Army	Experienced teachers and retired teachers who register as school volunteers will work with teacher induction program participants to support their growth
Enable action by removing barriers	District issue