NCTAF/GSU Induction Project
Final Report

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Introduction
The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) and Georgia State University (GSU) developed a model for induction of new teachers in urban high need schools. This model has been funded by the Wachovia Foundation and implemented in high needs schools in metropolitan Atlanta. The goals of the model are to support new teachers with current technological aids, opportunities for professional development, and a supportive community that enhances teaching ability and careers. The expected outcomes of this support for teachers are a higher retention rate for teachers and increased student achievement.

To implement the model, GSU and NCTAF created a model induction program along with the process and resources that support a cooperative model between GSU and its twelve professional development schools (PDS). The major components of the induction program evolved over the course of the three year project and currently are composed of the following items:

1. The BRIDGE (Building Resources: Induction and Development for Georgia Educators) is an online, peer-reviewed bank of teacher resources organized by *The Georgia Framework for Accomplished Teaching* and *Guiding Teacher Questions.* The BRIDGE also includes space and protocols for online Cross Career Learning Communities work.
2. The *Professional Growth Plan* (PGP) is an individual growth plan which is developed by GSU teacher candidates and CCLC members in collaboration with their learning community. It includes reflection on a modified version of *The Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching*, choice of professional goal(s), selection of evidence of teacher and student success, and plans to revisit the goals over time.
3. Cross Career Learning Community (CCLC) is the name of the professional learning community designed to emphasize induction support by groups that include GSU student teachers, GSU beginning teachers, and experienced teachers as well as university faculty. CCLCs provide both face-to-face and online support and dialogue to help new teachers and their colleagues grow in the knowledge and skills identified by the modified version of the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching.* CCLCs meet monthly for at least 1.5 hours, are facilitated by trained educators, and use structured Critical Friends Group (CFG) protocols to examine student and teacher work and dilemmas. They also support GSU teacher candidates and each other as they write their *Professional Growth Plans.*

Efforts during the first year (2005-2006) of the project focused on familiarizing district, school, and faculty representatives with the Induction Project design and then soliciting their feedback. In addition, the first cohort of Cross Career Learning Community (CCLC) facilitators was trained in June, 2006. At that time, the project was composed of six tools, resources and models and was called the PETTCOS project. The first piece was developed by the *Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP)* grant which was founded at the University of Georgia and Valdosta State and Albany State Universities in 2000. Statewide focus groups were used to develop the *Principles* and *Framework for Accomplished Teaching and Learning,* which are at the heart of GSTEP and were incorporated into the NCTAF/GSU project as its first piece. The second and third components were the BRIDGE and the Critical Friends Group protocols which were already available, and the GSTEP team at Valdosta State University developed a *Self-Assessment Rubric* and an *Accomplished Teacher Observation Instrument* which were the fourth and fifth tools. Finally, the *Professional Growth Plan (PGP)* was proposed as the sixth tool once it was developed.

Based on Year 1 lessons, the project staff shifted the implementation of a new teacher support system during Year 2 to piloting, evaluating, and modifying resources comprising the support system. To accomplish this, they planned to complete the development and testing of three resources, aligned with the Georgia Framework, to ascertain their usefulness in supporting new teachers. The resources were: Cross Career Learning Communities (CCLCs), composed of new teachers, mentor teachers, student teachers, GSU faculty, and trained CCLC coaches in each of the pilot schools; a *Professional Growth Continuum*, (which later was named the *Professional Growth Plan)* to be developed as a self-assessment and observation tool for pre-service and beginning teachers to reflect on and document their goals, knowledge, and skills; and the BRIDGE, a peer-reviewed online resource and mentoring site for new teachers.

Training efforts in the GSU partner schools during Year 2 focused on

1. Training additional facilitators to lead learning communities called Cross Career Learning Communities (CCLCs) utilizing the Critical Friends Group protocols developed by the National School Reform Faculty (www.nsrfharmony.org)
2. Designing and field-testing a *Professional Growth Plan (PGP)* for teachers utilizing the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching, Modified*
3. Refining the online resource called the BRIDGE (Building Resources: Induction and Development for Georgia Educators) where both teaching resources and space for learning communities are offered.

In this, the third year of the project, additional facilitators were trained, *the Professional Growth Plan* was printed and distributed, and the online communities in the BRIDGE were utilized. For an electronic copy of the PGP call 404-413-8121.

Program Description:

The NCTAF/GSU Induction Project has been designed to provide support and guidance to GSU teacher candidates and new teachers in high needs schools. It provides trained learning team facilitators who organize small learning communities that provide reciprocal mentoring to its members. The teams are trained to use respectful communication techniques, an online teacher resource center and an instrument that enables teachers to self-assess, observe, and create professional growth plans. The project is sited in twelve schools in four partner school systems in

metropolitan Atlanta: Atlanta Public Schools, DeKalb County Schools, Fulton County Schools, and Gwinnett County Schools. Each system has one elementary school, one middle school and one high school in the project. These schools are referred to as treatment schools in this report. In addition to these treatment schools, several interested schools and a school system asked to join the project. They included three elementary schools from the Atlanta Public School System, one elementary, middle, and high school from the Fulton County School System and three elementary schools from the Clayton County School system. Data from these additional schools was incorporated where appropriate; e.g. CCLC minutes, agendas, and topics. Furthermore, personnel in Clayton County have expressed an interest in receiving training should funds become available.

There is a matching school for each treatment school that is termed a comparison school. All of the treatment schools are Professional Development Schools (PDS) and, as such, have a professional relationship with Georgia State University. Comparison schools were matched as closely as possible with the treatment schools on the basis of their mean statewide testing scores from the spring 2004 testing. The comparison schools have received no services from the Induction Project and are used to provide data for comparison purposes only. Thus, there are 12 treatment schools and 12 comparison schools. Matching schools for the volunteer schools are not available, so no comparative data is available.

Program Training:

During the third year, training efforts in the GSU partner schools have focused on
1. Training additional facilitators to lead learning communities called Cross Career Learning Communities (CCLCs) utilizing the Critical Friends Group protocols developed by the National School Reform Faculty (www.nsrfharmony.org),
2. Encouraging facilitators to become active by setting up requirements for stipend eligibility. See Appendix A for stipend criteria that depended on school visitations by the project manager and utilization of project components by the school CCLC.
3. Printing and distributing the *Professional Growth Plan* to all project schools. Facilitators completed the PGP in their training sessions and then many of the facilitators and their school CCLC members developed their PGP during the school year. See Appendix G for a blank copy of the *Professional Growth Plan.*
4. Funding a graduate assistant to support facilitators as they accessed the BRIDGE (Building Resources: Induction and Development for Georgia Educators) and set up CCLC online meetings.
5. Requiring the facilitators to participate in an online meeting using a Critical Friends Group protocol on the BRIDGE during the last training session.

Several activities were carried out during the 2007-08 school year.

- The fourth cohort (October, 2007) and fifth cohort (June, 2008) of Cross Career Learning Community (CCLC) facilitators were each trained during a week-long program. These training days were spent learning to use the Critical Friends Group (CFG) protocols (www.nsrfharmony.org) which were developed by the National School Reform Faculty. These protocols are well-researched and offer a documented approach to facilitating learning communities. In addition to the protocols, the cohorts also wrote a plan for their personal professional development using the *Professional Growth Plan,* and they also

explored the BRIDGE (www.teachersbridge.org) in an online laboratory. These trained facilitators were encouraged to then form learning communities (CCLCs) in their schools with GSU new teachers, GSU student teachers, GSU faculty liaisons, mentor teachers, and other experienced school staff members. It was suggested that the groups have no more than 8-10 members, that they meet at least once/month for at least 1.5 hours. The CCLCs provided both face-to-face and online support through reciprocal mentoring to all members of the community.

- Georgia State University Professors from the College of Education attended an October workshop designed to experience the project by demonstrating the use of Critical Friends Group protocols to solve problems, "polish" projects, and interpret test scores within learning communities.

- The final copy of the *Professional Growth Plan* was accepted and professionally printed. Five thousand copies were distributed to all trained facilitators, their CCLC members, national conference attendees, state-wide groups of educators, and metro area superintendents. The PGP offers a modified version of the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching, Modified* that provides six domains (Content/Curriculum, Knowledge of Students, Learning Environments, Assessment, Planning/Instruction, and Professionalism) and subsequent indicators that define the realm of quality teaching. The indicators are arranged in four proficiency levels (Basic, Advanced, Accomplished, and Exemplary) that describe where educators might be at any point across their careers, adding challenge and complexity at each level. It was developed by the Standards Subcommittee of the Georgia Committee on Quality Teaching. The Accomplished level was adopted by the Georgia Board of Regents, Georgia Department of Education, and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The PGP provides a tool for CCLC participants to reflect on their teaching practice as they consider their teaching strengths as well as areas where they would like to grow. Its contents are designed to encourage continuous self-reflection and professional improvement. Educators were excited to be able to develop their skills in their own areas of interest or "passion". They reported feeling a positive sense of control over their careers and their continuous personal development.

- During the third year of the grant, the BRIDGE continued to provide peer-reviewed resources for educators, but the project was now focused on how to encourage the CCLC members to schedule their meetings online. A graduate assistant from Georgia State University was hired to work with the facilitators in their schools to help them get started. Up until this time, members were reluctant to meet online when they could meet face-to-face since they were in the same building. A new idea developed. In order to encourage BRIDGE usage, one of the BRIDGE co-directors invited only the CCLC facilitators to attend an online meeting. A group of 12 met during the first scheduled meeting, and the value of the online meetings now made sense. Subsequent training was adjusted accordingly. It was felt that facilitators needed to be involved in a meeting during their training and not wait to set one up later on their own since they were reluctant to do so. Once they experienced the fun and ease that the resource offered, they were more inclined to participate. Facilitators also realized that CCLC meetings could be held in the evening if there weren't enough time to meet during the day, and the meetings could also

- Finally, a major effort was made to brand the project, so that it could be easily-recognized by Georgia school faculties, universities and other state education agencies. Georgia State University carried their school colors of royal blue and white as well as the CCLC logo (featured on the cover of this report) onto the *Professional Growth Plan,* as well as the CCLC pens, clips and padfolios, and distributed them to all users and audiences.

Program Evaluation:

The Induction Project has four major *long-term* objectives:

1. Create learning communities and improve teacher satisfaction in high-needs schools;
2. Increase retention rate of teachers in high-need schools, especially of new teachers;
3. Improve quality of teacher skills in high-need schools; and, ultimately,
4. Increase K-12 student achievement and school performance in high-needs schools.

The following sections include the findings from the data collected for each of the above objectives and an evaluation of the year's CCLC activities. Evaluation of the CCLC effectiveness is based on surveys of facilitators and participants, logs kept of meeting dates and attendees, teacher retention data from surveys of principals by Georgia State University liaisons, and data from the Georgia statewide testing program. In addition, evaluation data were gathered by collecting information from the PDS data and from the BRIDGE site coordinators. Appendix C indicates the data sources being used in the evaluation of the project.

The short survey (See Appendix B) developed in the second year with input from the project advisory board and facilitators from the first cohort was updated and administered to the treatment schools. The comparisons schools were not surveyed since the survey focuses on active participation in the project which, obviously, the comparison schools did not do. The survey examined knowledge of and attitudes towards the Critical Friends Group (CFG) protocols which set up the framework for the learning community's work, the online resource called the BRIDGE, and the *Professional Growth Plan* which is based on the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching, Modified.* Perceptions of school climate and attitudes towards the CCLCs were also examined. In addition, facilitators were given a notebook with forms for recording attendance, CFG protocols used, and the topics discussed in CCLC meetings. A slightly modified survey was distributed in the spring. Three questions regarding awareness of project-provided resources were omitted since it was impossible to be involved in the project and not be aware of the resources. All ratings or judgments were on 5 point scales with 5 the most positive rating and 1 the most negative. Surveys were received from 142 CCLC members in the fall and 106 CCLC members in the spring; these response rates were 85% and 63%, respectively. It is interesting to note that the response rate fell from fall to spring in both year two and in year three.

1A. Create learning communities

This objective is met through formation of Cross Career Learning Communities (CCLCs) composed of GSU student teachers, GSU new teachers, experienced teachers and GSU university faculty. CCLCs provide both face-to-face and online support with dialogue to help new teachers and their colleagues grow in knowledge and skills. The project is based on the hypothesis that CCLCs will improve teacher satisfaction due to improved support through learning communities and will increase teacher retention and effectiveness as a result. CCLCs use three paradigms in their work: Critical Friends Group Protocols, the *Professional Growth Plan* based on the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching, Modified,* and the BRIDGE. Each of these three components of the project is examined in this section. All ratings or judgments were on five point scales with five the most positive rating and 1 the most negative.

During the second year of the project, 39 CCLC facilitators were trained. Twenty five facilitated 17 CCLCs. There were 225 CCLC members including 57 new teachers of which 48 were Georgia State University graduates. Attendance at CCLC meetings ranged from 38% to 100% of the group members with mean attendance at 82%.

In the fall of the current (third) year, 32 CCLC facilitators were trained. An additional 31 facilitators were trained in the spring to coordinate CCLCs after the completion of the grant. During the school year there were 17 active CCLCs with 166 members including 29 new teachers of which 28 were Georgia State University graduates

Critical Friends Group Protocols

The CCLC training teaches facilitators how to conduct meetings using Critical Friends Group protocols. Facilitators select protocols appropriate for the discussion at hand. Appendix D lists the 34 protocols chosen and the frequency that these protocols were used in year three. The most popular protocol was 'Consultancy' followed by 'Text Rendering' and 'Microlab'. Using these protocols the CCLC members examined a wide variety of topics that are listed in Appendix E. Due to the sensitive nature of some discussions, topics were not required to be listed, so the list does not reflect all topics discussed.

Table 1 compares fall to spring data for the use of Critical Friends Group protocols. Use of the protocols rose from 57% to 76%. Mean rating of the protocols decreased from 4.33 to 4.28; however the one-tailed t-test of 0.283 (df = 77, p=.39) indicates no statistically significant change in the mean rating. (What's positive is that the usage went up so much from fall to spring. The one drop in rating doesn't appear significant)

Table 1			
Use of Critical Friends Group Protocols by CCLCs			
Time	Fall	Spring	Test
Use of Protocols (n)	57% (36)	76% (37)	
Rating (n)	4.33 (39)	4.28 (40)	t = 0.283
Total n	142	106	(df = 77, p = .39)

Many comments were sent to the project manager as evaluations were gathered. A PDS middle school CCLC member wrote, "CFG protocols allow all members to really analyze problems and explore solutions by keeping us focused on the issues before us. The protocols narrow the scope

of our discussions so there is a real possibility of achieving tangible results through a process where everyone is valued and allowed to contribute".

Professional Growth Plan

Comparison of the fall to spring survey data for the PGP is shown in Table 2. Use of the PGP rose from 51% to 64% of the CCLC members. Mean rating of the scale went from 3.4 to 3.73. The t-test of 1.45 (df=131, P < .149) indicates a non statistically significant change.

Table 2			
Use of the *Professional Growth Plan*			
Time	Fall	Spring	Test
Used	51% (138)	64% (106)	
Rating (n)	3.4 (67)	3.73 (66)	t=1.45
Total n	142	106	(df = 131, P < .149)

The survey provided for open-ended comments on the PGP. Fifty five of 142 respondents commented. Thirty-one of the thirty-three comments (93%) directed toward the PGP were positive. See Appendix F for the complete listing of the comments.

One-hundred-twenty PGPs were written during year three. Although individual plans sometimes focused on only one domain of the Framework, three domains were most often selected. In total the plans covered all the domains with Knowledge of Students, and Assessment chosen most frequently as the areas of concentration. Table 3 lists all the domain areas and the frequency of their selection by CCLC members.

Table 3		
Domains Selected in Professional Growth Plans		
Domain	**Frequency of Selection**	**% Selected**
Content and Curriculum	18	8%
Knowledge of Students	66	31%
Learning Environment	25	12%
Assessment	59	27%
Planning and Instruction	30	14%
Professionalism	17	8%
Total	215	100%

BRIDGE

Teachers continued to use the BRIDGE as a resource for teaching. Activity on the BRIDGE during the 2007-2008 school year expanded the use of online learning communities. It became evident during the year that most trained facilitators were still not choosing to utilize the online capabilities of the BRIDGE learning communities. In response, the University of Georgia trainers presented an opportunity for the trained facilitators to form an online community and begin trial meetings in the evening. The participants in the first online meeting found the process to be very helpful. Once they had this successful experience they planned subsequent meetings with their school staff. Rather than work in a computer lab and examine the BRIDGE piecemeal, it became clear that the training for the June institute should include an online meeting. Subsequent training was changed to include this experience.

The following can be stated for the use of the BRIDGE in 2007-2008 based on the data that the Bridge website collected:

- The GSU/NCTAF CCLCs Community has 221 members registered on the BRIDGE (an increase of 85 from the 136 in the previous year).
- These 221 CCLC members visited the BRIDGE 1226 times during the 2007-2008 school year.
- Members searched for 1559 resources during these visits.
- Twenty-nine CCLC groups have been created within the online community section of the BRIDGE.
- CCLC members participated in ten online meetings: five of these meetings were forum meetings that involved using a protocol over several days, and five were chat meetings that involved using a protocol within a one hour meeting. Most of these meetings occurred in the final half of the school year.
- The most frequently-used protocols in the chat format were Consultancy and Tuning; the most frequently-used protocols in the forum format were The Best Ever: A Constructivist Protocol and The Final Word.

Findings for the use of the BRIDGE from the CCLC survey are listed in Table 4. Use of the BRIDGE rose from 23% of the CCLC members in the fall to 51% in the spring. The use of BRIDGE teacher resources fell from 76% to 66%. (Note that the number using these resources rose but the percent fell due to an increased response rate.) Use of the Learning Communities on the BRIDGE rose from 68% to 77%.

Table 4		
BRIDGE Use in Fall and Spring		
	Fall	Spring
Used Bridge (n)	23% (32)	51%(52)
Used Teacher Resources (n)	76% (22)	66% (33)
Used Online Resource (n)	68%(19)	77%(40)

1B. Improve teacher satisfaction in high-needs schools.

Value of CCLC

CCLC members were asked whether involvement in a Cross Career Learning Community would contribute to a collegial and supportive environment in their school. Results are listed in Table 5. The proportion of the responses indicating 'yes' rose slightly from 94% in the fall to 97% in the spring.

Table 5			
CCLC Rating			
Time	Fall	Spring	Test
Percent Stating Yes	94% (126)	97% (95)	$z = 1.06$ ($p = .14$)
	134	98	

While the z test of 1.06 indicates that this is not a statistically significant increase, the rating is high at both the beginning and at the end of the school year, i.e. after a year of experience with CCLCs, respondents were positive about the CCLCs with over 90% stating in both fall and spring surveys that the CCLCs should contribute to a collegial and supportive environment. That the CCLCs remain in this highly positive view after a year of experience indicates that they are well accepted by participants.

One of the PDS schools lost 18 teachers at the end of year two. The principal decided to embrace the project and sent several school educators to the facilitator training in the spring and fall of 2007. During the third year of the project, they set up four CCLCs with eight trained facilitators for twenty new and beginning teachers. At the end of year three, only one teacher left the school. The CCLC coordinator told the evaluators that if she had had a CCLC when she was a beginning teacher, she would have had a much better experience. She said that the CCLCs create a culture of support that had never been available before.

Another trained facilitator who set up a CCLC of ten beginning teachers at her school that was not one of the originally identified PDS schools for the project wrote "I was exploring the option of leaving my school because I am feeling that I am not able to grow having a scripted reading program. The CCLC has helped to view my place here from a new perspective and look to reinventing myself….renew…take some risks".

School Climate

CCLC members were asked to rate the climate in their school on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 indicating hostile/unsupportive and 5 indicating friendly/supportive. Table 6 The mean rating fell slightly from 3.96 to 3.73, but the two-tailed t-test indicates that this change was not statistically significant; climate was still viewed positively.

Table 6			
School Climate Rating			
Time	Fall	Spring	Test
Rating (n)	3.96 (135)	3.73 (96)	$t = 1.71$
			($df = 229$, $P < .088$)

A band director from a PDS middle school wrote, "CCLC was a great way for teachers on all levels to meet and work together. It was a nice outlet for discussing issues. The meetings were well-organized (and) run in a timely manner. I would definitely consider being a part of this group again next year".

2. Increase retention rate of teachers in high-need schools, especially of new teachers.

In order to gain a perspective, Table 7 shows some historical retention data for treatment and comparison schools in two school systems. The data are for new teachers in the two years prior to the project. Table 6 shows that in System A, 87.5% of the new teachers in the 2003-04 school year were retained for a second year of teaching. In System B, 57.3% of the new teachers in the 2004-05 school year were retained for a second year of teaching. The combined rate of teacher retention for these two systems is 63% [(14+43) / (16+75) = .63].

Table 8 shows teacher retention data for the current year. These are teachers who have been retained after teaching one year.

For new teachers in CCLCs, Table 8 shows that 93% were retained for a second year of teaching. This 93% retention rate for new teachers in the CCLCs is significantly higher than the 63% rate for new teachers in Table 6 ($z = 3.078$, $P < .01$).

For all teachers in CCLCs, the 89% retention rate shown in Table 7 although higher is not directly comparable to the historical data in Table 6 because the Table 6 data include only new teachers.

In summary the retention rates in the current year of the project represent slight increases over the previous year of the project. For all teachers, the percent retained increased from 88% to 89%, while for new teachers, the percent retained increased from 86% to 93%.

A seventh grade math teacher summarized the feelings of many new teachers who are members of a CCLC. He wrote, "My first year as a teacher has been enriched and improved through the many interactions I have had with other members. I have learned new strategies for teaching and classroom management. I have been exposed to new points of view and have had my awareness expanded. And, maybe most importantly, I have made life-long friends. I have often said that I cannot imagine teaching without access to today's technology and, now, I cannot imagine teaching without the support of my (CCLC) friends.

Table 7				
New Teacher Retention in Two School Systems in Years Prior to Intervention				
School System	New teachers in 2003-04 cohort	New teachers retained in 2004-05	New teachers in 2004-05 cohort	New teachers retained in 2005-06
A	16	14 (87.5%)	--	--
B	--	--	75	43 (57.3%)

Table 8					
Teacher Retention for CCLCs for 2007-08 Year[*]					
School	Number of CCLCs	Number of Members**	Number of Members Retained[*]	Number of New Teachers	Number of New Teachers Retained
1	1	14	12	3	2
2	2	15	10	2	2
3	2	24	23[***]	0	0
4	1	8	8	1	1
5	3	31	25	4	4
6	4	64	61	0	0
7	1	7	5	1	1
8	1	9	6	0	0
9#	3	19	19	0	0
10#	2	6	6	3	3
Total	20	197	175(89%)	14	13(93%)

*Teachers who were moving to another school were counted as retained because they remained in the field of education.
   ** Includes new teachers, excludes student teachers.
*** Lost one teacher to retirement..
   # These CCLCs were formed in the central office of the school district.

3. Improve quality of teachers' skills in high-need schools.

Teacher skills are examined by looking at teacher portfolios. The work samples from the four districts were evaluated based on the *Georgia Framework for Accomplished Teaching*. Each of the four districts submitted artifacts exemplifying the six domains: Content and Curriculum, Knowledge of Students, Learning Environments, Assessment, Planning and Instruction, and Professionalism. The domains are meant to be considered as a whole and not in any particular sequence or order. Districts provided teacher artifacts with any corresponding student artifacts

that exemplified these domains. The reviewers were asked to analyze each artifact to demonstrate whether the work samples evidenced skill in each domain. The submissions for the current year (2007-08) far exceeded the baseline year in depth and in scope of those of 2006-07.

Reviewers indicated more differentiated samples were submitted this year, indicating an array of levels and subjects (i.e., cross cultural expectations, gifted instruction, advanced algebra/trigonometry, etc.). The student work samples reflected teachers' expectations of best practices and research-based strategies and interventions as required by Georgia. Performance Standards and No Child Left Behind. Teachers' instructional plans and materials exemplified data-driven monitoring practices and a variety of assessments to instruct, remediate, and enrich students. It appears that teachers in the PDS schools have refined and focused their teaching practices to reflect appropriate instructional strategies.

4. Increase K-12 student achievement and school performance in high-needs schools

Statewide testing results of students in each of the 12 treatment and 12 comparison schools are reported in Tables 9, 10 and 11 for elementary, middle and high schools respectively. Elementary and middle school results are reported by grade level and subject using the Georgia Criterion Referenced Tests. High school results are reported for the High School Graduation Tests and for End-of-Course Tests. High school tests are not reported by grade level since most subjects are taught in multiple grades.

Table 9 lists the passing rates for elementary comparison and treatment schools. Examining only the current year passing rates could conceal some progress made in the project. In the data for last year, the treatment elementary school pass rate was lower than the pass rate for the comparison schools in every subject in every grade. In this year's data, the treatment schools pass rate is higher than the comparison schools pass rate in five of the 21 tests: third grade Science, fourth grade Science, fourth grade Social Studies, fifth grade Math, and fifth grade Science. This difference, higher pass rates in 5 of the 21 tests listed as opposed to none of the 21 tests, is statistically significant ($z=2.38$, $p<.009$).

Table 10 shows that in middle schools, the passing rates for treatment schools were higher than the passing rates in comparison schools for 13 of the 13 tests reported. This continues the same pattern from the previous year.

Table 11 shows that in high schools, the passing rates were higher for treatment schools for two of the five graduation tests and were also higher in 2 of the 7 End-of-Course Tests. This contrasts with the previous year results where the treatment school passing rates were lower for each of the High School Graduation Tests and lower in seven out of eight End-of-Course Tests, however the increase for the current year is not statistically significant ($z = 1.508$, $p=.066$)

Summary

During the third year of NCTAF/GSU Induction Project, additional facilitators were trained, *the Professional Growth Plan* was printed and distributed, and the online communities in the BRIDGE were utilized. Training has included developing competence with the Critical Friends group protocols, using the online BRIDGE resources and community capabilities, and writing a *Professional Growth Plan.*

Major goals of the project and the evaluation of those goals are:

1. Create learning communities and improve teacher satisfaction in high-needs schools.

    Two cohorts with 63 total CCLC facilitators were trained. During the school year there were 17 active CCLCs with 166 members. The CCLC members included 29 new teachers of which 28 were Georgia State University graduates.

    When asked in surveys in the fall and spring whether involvement in a Cross Career Learning Community would contribute to a collegial and supportive environment in their school, responses that were already very positive rose slightly from 94% in the fall to 97% in the spring.

    Climate was viewed positively by the CCLC members in both the fall and spring. (The mean rating fell slightly from 3.96 to 3.73; however the change was not statistically significant.)

2. Increase retention rate of teachers in high-need schools, especially of new teachers.

    The retention rate of all teachers returning for the 2008-2009 school year is 89%. The retention rate for new teachers in CCLC groups is 93%, a statistically significant higher rate than the 63% found for two systems.

3. Improve quality of teacher skills in high-need schools.

    When teacher skills were examined, their portfolios showed increases in depth and in scope in each domain of the *Georgia Framework for Accomplished Teaching* in Content and Curriculum, Knowledge of Students, Learning Environments, Assessment, Planning and Instruction, and Professionalism. Teachers' instructional plans and materials exemplified data-driven monitoring practices. A variety of assessments to instruct, remediate, and enrich students through refined and focused teaching practices reflecting appropriate instructional strategies were also noted.

4. Increase K-12 student achievement and school performance in high-needs schools

Statewide testing results of students in each of the 12 treatment and 12 comparison schools are reported in Tables 9, 10 and 11 for elementary, middle and high schools respectively. Elementary and middle school results are reported by grade level and subject using the Georgia Criterion Referenced Tests. High school results are reported for the High School Graduation Tests and for End-of-Course Tests. High school tests are not reported by grade level since most subjects are taught in multiple grades.

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Table 8											
Elementary School Pass Rates for Treatment and Comparison Schools											
		Reading		English/Language Arts		Math		Science		Social Studies	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Grade											
5	T	556	84	556	75	61	59	61	59	61	75
	C	404	87	405	83	53	49	53	49	53	79
4	T	547	85	547	74	546	74	52	65	52	90
	C	398	86	399	77	404	81	47	43	47	68
3	T	558	84	558	74	557	73	63	79	472	76
	C	402	85	403	78	408	79	51	75	417	85
2	T	557	86	557	75	556	77				
	C	419	87	420	81	425	85				
1	T	576	85	576	74	566	77				
	C	396	87	397	78	402	82				

Table 9
Middle School Pass Rates for Treatment and Comparison Schools

		Reading		English/Language Arts		Math		Science		Social Studies	
		n	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	n	%
Grade											
8	T	1190	85	1222	85	1233	56	1226	44	1203	46
	C	925	83	924	82	926	49	922	35	919	34
7	T	1159	82	1189	87	1202	75	1198	67		
	C	924	79	924	83	925	62	922	56		
6	T	1300	87	1339	86	1350	66	1348	56		
	C	918	84	917	78	921	52	919	48		

Table 10
High Schools Pass Rates for Treatment and Comparison Schools
Graduation Tests

	English/Language Arts		Math		Science		Social Studies		All tests	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
T	1268	83	1274	85	1267	77	1267	80	1253	66
C	1001	80	1005	86	999	79	997	77	984	67

End of Course Tests

	Algebra		American Literature		Biology		Economics		Geometry		History		9th Year Literature	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
T	1248	29	920	73	1463	46	353	70	1317	39	904	43	1474	57
C	1082	36	1348	77	1745	49	643	68	1605	43	1263	49	1645	63

Discussion

This report shows that the CCLCs are perceived as useful and helpful in creating a positive environment for teachers. The Critical Friends Group protocols are widely used and have been well received by teachers. The *Professional Growth Plan* based on the *Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching, Modified,* is now accepted in a professionally printed format that has been used by many teachers in the PDS schools. The BRIDGE is becoming recognized not only as a source for teaching resources but also as a suitable space for CCLC meetings. CCLC members continue to feel that the CCLCs are contributing to a collegial and supportive environment.

Statewide testing data shows statistically significant improvement in elementary treatment schools contrasted with the comparison schools, a continued superior achievement in middle schools, and an increase in high schools that is not statistically significant. Gains in achievement have traditionally been harder to obtain in upper grades than in lower grades. Whether the gains at the high school level could be retained or extended to the point that they are statistically significant requires further effort and research.

Research often has unintended consequences. In the current study, an unintended consequence has been the creation of CCLC groups that were not foreseen in the project design. While the original design of the project featured CCLCs within school buildings to support beginning educators, there were several CCLCs formed with populations from outside individual schools. Examples are: one of the PDS principals invited several of her neighboring-principals to join her in a mutually-supporting CCLC; a trained CCLC facilitator in the central office of a PDS system formed a learning community with beginning teachers from several neighboring schools; and the BRIDGE co-director formed a CCLC by combining interested, trained facilitators from several metro central offices. It appears that when educators have access to the supportive environment of a CCLC, they join and are pleased with the help they receive. Such serendipitous results go beyond the hard data of retention counts and student achievement. Although retention and ultimately student achievement are the desired and intended outcomes of this project, it confirms these positive outcomes to have principals and teachers adopt the CCLC paradigm for their own work.

Many lessons were learned as each project component was refined during the course of the three-year grant. The first and most important step to develop these successful learning communities is to select motivated schools systems, schools and teachers. Experience has taught project staff members that it is very difficult to begin with motivated teachers whose principals are not actively supportive of the project. The best one can hope for under those conditions is that one or two CCLCs will form in that teacher's school, but the school, itself, will not embrace the program. It is better to begin with the motivated superintendent who involves motivated principals. Those principals can then encourage selected teachers who have the capacity to inspire growth and involvement in the program with other faculty members. Once those trained faculty members return to the school, those who were given an opportunity to work with the school staff during regularly-scheduled staff meetings created successful CCLCs. Meetings must also be embedded in the school day. There are many creative ways to schedule school days with embedded meetings given in the resource *Learn by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (2006) Bloomington, In:Solution Tree; DuFour,R., DuFour,B., Eaker,R.,. & Many,T.

While the BRIDGE offered teaching resources that were already utilized by Georgia teachers, the project hoped to encourage use of the online capabilities of the learning communities in addition to these resources. In the earlier training during year one (June, 2006), facilitators were told about the BRIDGE and given its web address. This, alone, did not encourage usage. During year two training, project staff offered a lecture from the BRIDGE co-director and an opportunity to listen to the lecture in a computer lab where they could experiment with the program components. As a result, few of the facilitators began to explore the BRIDGE, and only one of the high schools scheduled online meetings. At the beginning of the third year, a GRA was hired to support school facilitators as they worked with the BRIDGE. Only two elementary and two middle schools asked for this help. It wasn't until the end of the third year of the grant

when evening online meetings were considered and offered to the facilitators that success was realized. Twelve people participated in the first meeting, and after that, there seemed to be a flood of interest and activity among those facilitators who had experienced the actual meeting. They began to request additional opportunities to meet online with the trainers and with their school CCLC members. Immediately, project staff incorporated an evening online meeting as a requirement in the final CCLC institute (June, 2008), and several of those trainees participated in an online facilitator meeting that took place in June. Interviews with facilitators who were trained in June 2008 gave new insight into the recognized value of the online meetings. They indicated that they saw the value of online meetings for teachers who may be too shy to speak up in face-to-face meetings; that they felt an evening online meeting would be a viable option to school days already over-scheduled with meetings; and that they wanted to be able to use the BRIDGE to keep their CCLCs together over the summer when staff members were away from the school. It is important to note that the State of Georgia has funded the BRIDGE for the 2008-09 school year.

The *Professional Growth Plan* written by project staff has been warmly accepted by Georgia teachers, administrators as well as national audiences. Georgia State University has printed 5000 copies of the pamphlet for use in the PDS schools, and the electronic version has been distributed to university personnel and teachers from outside Georgia as a follow-up to national presentations. In the final training institute (June, 2008) the project trainers provided time for the trainees to write their own professional plan which was reported to be a helpful exercise since the teachers had many questions about the Framework and the requirements of the template. (In earlier trainings, the teachers were told about the PGP and were shown the various resources available in the pamphlet, but they were not given time to write one.) During year three, all the teachers in one of the PDS schools were required to write a PGP. They reported that there was value in writing their own plan because they liked being able to decide where and how they wished to develop their teaching skills, and they appreciated the opportunity to take their plans to their CCLC members for further input in skill development. They also reported that the act of writing down their goals inspired them to follow-through with their skill-development in order to accomplish their goals. Finally, several area superintendents from one county have ordered an additional 2000 copies of the PGP to distribute to neighboring schools not associated with the project because of requests from their principals. (These principals had an opportunity to review the PGP when one of the PDS principals distributed copies at an area administrative meeting.)

Finally, the project staff feels that it is important to stress to participants that these project components (the Cross Career Learning Community, the Critical Friends Group protocols, the BRIDGE, and the *Professional Growth Plan*) enhance and promote existing work of teachers rather than adding another layer.

Appendix A

Stipend Requirements For Facilitators

CCLC Facilitator Stipends

We are pleased to inform you that we will be able to support active CCLC facilitators with additional funds for this school year. We understand that your time and devotion to this initiative is deserving of even more than we can offer, but we will be able to reward those facilitators who are active with an unknown amount. After each CCLC meeting, simply send your agenda for that meeting and the list of those who participated to the project manager. It is expected that you will be able to have 7-9 meetings this year in order to receive the stipend. The stipends will be awarded in May, 2008, with payment during the summer. Take a look at the list below, and call the project manager if you have any questions.

Facilitator:

1. Attends all five days of the CCLC one-week training
2. Sets up an active CCLC in the school
3. Arranges for his/her CCLC to meet at least once/month for at least 1 and 1/2 hours and sends the attendance list and topic to Lin Black (linda.b.black.comcast.net) Yearly total should be 5-7 meetings. More would be wonderful.
4. Sets up at least one of these meetings on the BRIDGE
5. Demonstrates use of the PGP
6. Completes facilitator survey and arranges for CCLC members to complete their surveys and submits the surveys by October 31 and by May 30th.
7. Schedules a school visit with the project manager in order for them to join one of their CCLC meetings.

Appendix B
Cross Career Learning Communities Survey

Directions: *Please respond to the following questions regarding your knowledge and opinions of the Cross Career Learning Communities by checking the appropriate box or providing the requested information.*

1. Have you ever used the Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching?

     □ no (skip to question 2)
     □ yes

     If you have used it, how well did you like the Extended Georgia Framework for Teaching

Not at All				A Lot
1	2	3	4	5
□	□	□	□	□

2. Have you ever participated in a Critical Friends Group?

     □ no (skip to question 3)
     □ yes

     If you had participated, how well did you like the Critical Friends Group Method?

Not at All				A Lot
1	2	3	4	5
□	□	□	□	□

3. Have you ever used the BRIDGE?

     □ no (skip to question 4)
     □ yes

     If you have used it, how well did you like the BRIDGE?

Not at All				A Lot
1	2	3	4	5
□	□	□	□	□

4. Please list any other web resources you have used to help with teaching.

     1. _____

     2. _____

     3. _____

     4. _____

     5. _____

5. Please list any other cooperative groups or support groups where you have participated and discussed teaching issues.

     1. _____

     2. _____

     3. _____

     4. _____

     5. _____

6. Do you think Cross Career Learning Communities will contribute to a collegial and supportive environment?

     □ no
     □ yes

7. Please rate the climate in your school on the following scale.

Hostile/unsupportive   friendly/supportive

1	2	3	4	5
□	□	□	□	□

Appendix C

Data Sources

Data	| Data Source									
	CCLC Teacher Satisfaction Survey	Principal Interview	Teacher Interview	CCLC Attendance Form	Bridge	PDS Data	State-Wide Testing Data	PDS Portfolios	Extended Georgia Framework For Teaching Template	Teacher Candidate Portfolios (GSU)
Teacher Retention		X	X			X				
Awareness Of Project Resources	X									
Use Of Bridge, Quantity Of Interaction	X				X					
Use Of Bridge, Quality Of Interaction	X				X					
Teacher Satisfaction With CCLCs	X									
Adequate Yearly Progress							X			
Statewide Student Achievement Scores							X			
Participation Rate In CCLCs				X						
Number Of CCLC Meetings				X						
Use Of Extended Georgia Framework	X									
Satisfaction With Extended Georgia Framework	X								X	
Improved Work Products								X		X
Teacher Satisfaction With School Community	X		X							

Appendix D

Lists of Protocols used in CCLC Meetings

List by frequency of use	*List by name*
17 Consultancy	13 Levels Of Text
9 Text Rendering	3 Atlas
7 Microlab	1 Best Ever
6 Chalk Talk	2 BRIDGE
5 Tuning	6 Chalktalk
5 Text Based	1 Charrette
5 Connections	1 Check In Circle
4 World Café	1 Comfort Zone
4 Three Levels Of Text	5 Connections
3 Success Analysis	3 Constructivist
3 Future	17 Consultancy
3 Constructivist	1 Examining Assessments
3 Atlas	2 Final Word
2 Wagon Wheel	1 Fist-To-Five
2 Save The Last Word For Me	2 Four A's Text
2 Making Meaning	3 Future
2 Jumping Jack Flash	2 Jumping Jack Flash
2 Four A's Text	1 Keep It Up
2 Final Word	2 Making Meaning
2 BRIDGE	7 Microlab
1 Zones Of Discomfort, Risk, And Danger	1 Passion
1 Two Truths And One Lie	1 Reflections
1 Tea Party	2 Save The Last Word For Me
1 Stress Reliever	1 Stress Reliever
1 Reflections	3 Success Analysis
1 Passion	1 Tea Party
1 Keep It Up	5 Text Based
1 Fist-To-Five	9 Text Rendering
1 Examining Assessments	4 Three Levels Of Text
1 Comfort Zone	5 Tuning
1 Check In Circle	1 Two Truths And One Lie
1 Charrette	2 Wagon Wheel
1 Best Ever	4 World Café
3 Levels Of Text	1 Zones Of Discomfort, Risk, And Danger

See www.nsrfharmony.org for a complete list of available protocols.

Appendix E

Topics Discussed in CCLC Meetings

"one in four read no books…"
"one in four read no books…"
2 dilemmas
4A's
4A's
A framework for Understanding Poverty Chapter 9
A framework for Understanding Poverty Chapters 1-4
A framework for Understanding Poverty Chapters 5-8
Bridge (Members completed protocol via Teacher's Bridge)
Bridge/ 100 ways to say "Very Good"
Bridge/1000 ways to say very good
CCLC,National School Reform,CFG, Norms, BRIDGE
CCLC, National School Reform,CFG, Norms, BRIDGE
cfg procedures
cfg purpose and coach's role/parent dilemma - consultancy
connections and future
connections and future
Consultancy Protocol/Two Truths and a Lie
CRCT Results (Social Studies)
creation of collaboration norms
Curriculum Updates, Ways to reduce stress on the job
DIBELS data /Standing for Students, Standing for Change
engaging in discourse
establish norms, student work, q&a
Establishing norms/examining text
Extended Framework for Teaching
Extended Framework for Teaching & The Blueberry Story
facilitating learning, logistics, and longevity/choosing CFG tools/facilitation scenarios activity
facilitation (skills)/teachers being professionals
Finding Commonalities
four a'/consultancy
Georgia Performance Standards/Reading Block/ Fluency
If you were to write your autobiography, what would the title be and why?
Individual Writing/Paired Sharing/Full Group Discussion
liar's poker/CST had a dilemma
Looking at data
Looking at data
looking at student/work
Microlab and Consultancy Protocols
My destiny Contract use in school suspension classes

Appendix E (Continued)

My destiny Contract use with regular academic classes
Myths of Children of poverty
New Teacher Curriculum Updates/Feedback school
New Teacher Curriculum Updates/Feedback about curriculum, operations of the school
New Teacher Curriculum Updates/Feedback about curriculum, operations of the school
norm review/fire
norm review/plans for the group/don't just teach, facilitate
Norms
Norms
Norms Construction
Norms Construction
Norms Construction
Norms Construction
Norms, Group Experience: Change 5, Consultancy Protocol: dilemma
Norms, Group Experience: Our Flower, Success Analysis Protocol, Home Learning: register on the BRIDGE website
Norms, Group Experience: Our Flower, Success Analysis Protocol, Home Learning: register on the BRIDGE website
Norms, Group Experience: The Right Family, Consultancy Protocol: dilemma
Norms/ /Georgia Principals for Accomplished Teaching
Norms/Misconceptions
One in Four Read no Books
Parent involvement, Personal or Instructional, Classroom management, and Student Goalss
PGP
PGP
PGP follow-up
PGP/group norms
PGP/ideas: teachers want to subscribe
PGP/revisited group norms
Professional Growth Plan
Professional Growth Plan
Professional Growth Plan
Professional Growth Plan
Reading and Math Achievement/retention
School Successes
Standardized testing
Starter Norms/Microlab Protocol/Text Rendering: Willing to be disturbed
student behavior, parent interaction, home-school connection
student motivation
student motivation
teaching content with writing across the curriculum

Appendix E (Continued)

The Final Word
The most important data
The most important data
The Right Family
About Curriculum, Operations of Time Management
Two truths and one Lie
Understanding Poverty
Using Agendas, Effective Planning, Communicating with Parents
Willing to be disturbed

Appendix F

Professional Growth Plan Comments*

0 - Please Provide resources to assist us in becoming more effective teachers

+ - I was recently exposed to the Professional Growth Plan. It's a good tool because it allows you to set personal & Professional benchmarks.

0 - My professional growth plan is a work in progress; I change it annually

0 - I am always willing to learn things that will help me improve

+ - Excellent Dialog amongst Colleagues. Extremely Friendly Professional Development Session. I found it to be very productive.

+ - good

0 - Have not worked with the PGP offered by this project

0 - Collaborative Growth

+ - Essential to the collaborative endeavors needed at WMS

+ - Thanks for keeping it in our time frame, several good ideas presented.

0 - ?

0 - N/A

+ - It is good to assess teaching and making goals

+ - It would be great to have a session devoted to writing our individual professional growth plan

+ - Addresses several areas

0 - I am hoping new teachers will stay in the profession

+ - It was good to talk with other teachers and share strategies

+ - Gives me the motivation to meet & exceed personal & professional goals

+ - It give me the courage to want to better my ability as a teacher.

0 - It was an interesting project. I learned a lot.

0 - I have enjoyed helping new teachers.

0 - I have not done this yet.

+ - It is great to grow and collaborate within an educational setting.

0 - We have a facilitator come by the room the check on the teachers.

Appendix F (continued)

* + positive comment, - negative comment, 0 comment does not apply

- - vague expectations

+ - Professional growth plans are great if you have the opportunity to acually utilize and make changes to it which, in my opinion, you never really have time to do.

+ - A great way to self reflect

+ - Challenges you to improve your teaching

+ - It is always meaningful to reflect on your practice regardless of years experience.

+ - very valuable tool for self reflections and continuous professional improvement

+ - PGP help teachers to set goals, to work on these goals and eventually see if the goals are/were met. If the goals were not met, what the teacher could do the next time to meet the written goals.

+ - The professional growth plan enabled me to take a look at areas in which I can improve and create an action plan for each area.

- - The plan is still incomplete.

+ - very well outlined/organized

+ - Very Helpful. Could be used as a great resource.

0 - I enjoyed the group participation in the discussion of the Ruby Payne book.

0 - The collaborative studies & problem resolutions helped.

+ - I have used it to guide my teaching and professional growth.

+ - I really enjoyed doing that part because I gained input from my colleagues

+ - Gives you the opportunity to lay on paper your goals to become real.

0 - Discussing our Group Reading was very informative and interesting to discuss school issues.

0 - Enjoyed collaborating with teachers to tell about their experience in the classroom.

+ - It gave me a chance to gain insight into my goals/aspirations.

0 - Great Group

+ - Excellent protocols for student & adult work.

0 - Meetings with staff members

0 - I learned more about myself.

+ - Great to help me grow as a teacher and make me reach my goals.

Appendix F (continued)

0 - great resources

+ - it allows you to consider several ways to evaluate your teaching

0 - Please do not schedule meetings during student teacher role reversal or allow them NOT to attend.

+ - very helpful

+ - very interesting

+ - It would be helpful, but it should replace our CIP and strategic plans, not become a 3rd growth plan.

0 - The facilitators were great, very enthusiastic, and sincere about helping out. Thanks!

Appendix G

Professional Growth Plan for Cross Career Learning Community

Teacher _____**School**_____

Date _____ **Professor** _____

1: Select a **Domain**; explore the **Indicators** in that domain and discover which ones you and your professor wish for you to develop. This indicator or indicators will be an entry
        point or growing place for you. Last, identify the **Level** of your indicator(s).
Step 2: Identify the **Action Plan** you (and your students) will take to meet your goal(s). List what you plan to do first, second, third, etc.
Step 3: Record the **Evidence** (see pages 12-13) you will use to record your progress, and insert the date you plan to review your efforts.
Step 4: List the **Results of Your Action Plan**. What happened? What did you hope to achieve and did it occur? What intrigues, confuses, or concerns you about your results?
Step 5: In the **Next Steps** column, describe what you plan to do now (try again with different action steps; select a different goal because first goal was reached, etc).

Domain/Indicator/Level	Action Plan	Evidence (Teacher and/or Student)	Completion Timeline	Results of Your Action Plan	Next Steps
Domain: _____ _____ Indicator: _____ _____ _____ _____ Level: _____					
Domain: _____ _____ Indicator: _____ _____ _____ _____ Level: _____					
Domain: _____ _____ Indicator: _____ _____ _____ _____ Level: _____					