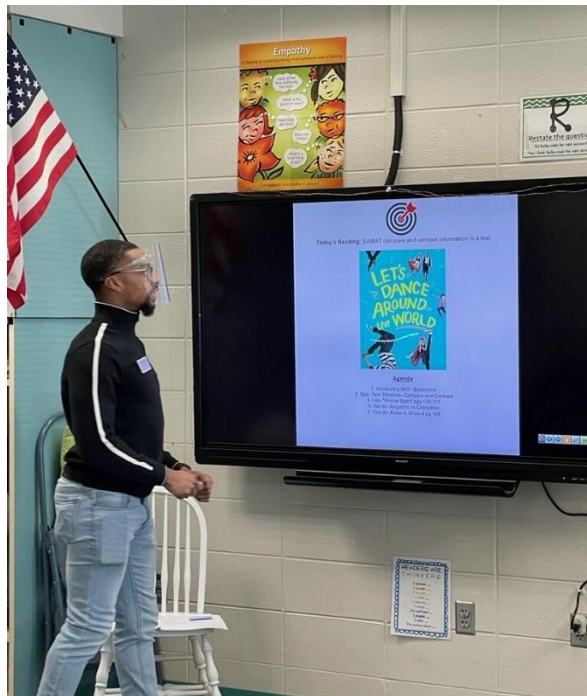


Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline in High-Need Districts Summer 2021

New teachers face a steep learning curve in their first year. Mastering a new curriculum, developing lesson plans, and getting to know students and families while also learning their school's systems, protocols, and expectations can be daunting. These challenges are no doubt factors in why new teachers leave the profession at high rates, particularly in high-need schools (Djonko-Moore, 2016), and the pandemic has driven an alarming increase in these trends (Hoang, 2020; Lachlan et al., 2020). New teachers in the 2020-21 school year faced additional challenges, as candidates missed opportunities to be in schools and classrooms in the spring and began the year teaching remotely, in-person, or in hybrid configurations, with students shifting from one mode to another (Kraft et al., 2020; Sokal et al., 2020). Evidence has pointed to the pandemic's disproportionate effects in high-need schools, and teacher retention in these schools, which has long been poor (García & Weiss, 2019), likely will be also disproportionately affected.

For these reasons, districts across the country are looking for better ways to help new teachers to be more effective and retain these effective teachers in high-need schools and classrooms.

A Solution: The Marian Promise Residency Program



*John Ramsey Jr.
Marian Promise Resident Teacher*

Supporting new teachers to be more effective early in their careers is at the heart of an innovative partnership making a difference in schools in the Indianapolis metro area. Supported by a federal Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant, the Marian Promise residency program is a collaborative effort among three high-need school districts (Perry Township Schools, MSD of Decatur Township, and Beech Grove City Schools), the Klipsch Educators College (KEC) at Marian University, and the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). Together, these partners are developing a residency and induction system for the recruitment, preparation, and continued development of highly effective new teachers that address critical needs in their district and state. Marian Promise is helping Indiana districts put in place a system of support for new teachers with the aim of increasing both their effectiveness and retention, thereby positively impacting the achievement of the students they serve.

A Strong One-Year Teacher Residency Program

The first half of Marian Promise is a teacher residency program. Modeled on medical residency, teacher residency programs provide a solution to addressing teacher shortages in high-need districts (Guha et al., 2016). Teacher residency programs tend to produce graduates who are more likely to teach in hard-to-staff subject areas and remain in the profession (e.g., Azar et al., 2020; Guha et al., 2016; Papay et al., 2012). A review of teacher residency programs funded by the federal Teacher Quality Partnership Grants Program found that residency program graduates also felt more prepared than other newly certified teachers on a number of aspects, including planning, instruction, classroom management, and assessment (Silva et al., 2014). Increasingly, state and district policymakers are investing in this approach. Features of teacher residency programs that research has shown to be associated with high teacher retention and positive student outcomes include 1) tightly integrated coursework and clinical practice, 2) a full year clinical practice with a high-performing mentor teacher, and 3) financial support in exchange for a three-to-five-year teaching commitment in the district (Guha et al., 2016).

“The Marian Promise program gives the mentor teacher an opportunity to coach and support teacher residents in their district. These teacher leaders share and model their teaching practices throughout the school year, which yields results that accelerate best practices for the residents.”

- Dr. Francita McMichel, Marian University Clinical Faculty

MARIAN PROMISE KEY COMPONENTS

Integrated Coursework and Clinical Practice: The Marian Promise residency program embeds teaching standards in use in the partnering districts into teacher candidate coursework and clinical practice. The use of research-based teaching standards helps to build a common language and shared understanding around instructional excellence, and facilitates the transition from teacher candidate to classroom teacher.



100% of education courses aligned to teacher observation rubric used in partner districts

Yearlong Clinical Practice With a High-Performing Mentor Teacher: The mentor teacher selection process includes a district recommendation, online application, and classroom observations and interviews conducted by Marian University and NIET representatives. During the residency year, KEC clinical faculty support residents to meet all of the professional expectations of the placement site, including observation and feedback cycles using the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric.



High-quality mentor teachers selected and trained to support residents

Financial Support in Exchange for a Three-Year Teaching Commitment: Marian Promise residents receive a living wage stipend for their work during the residency year. This alleviates potential financial hardship that may occur, given that the time commitments of the residency preclude a second job. As part of the agreement, residents make a commitment to teach for two additional years in a high-need school following the residency year, during which they are supported through the induction program.

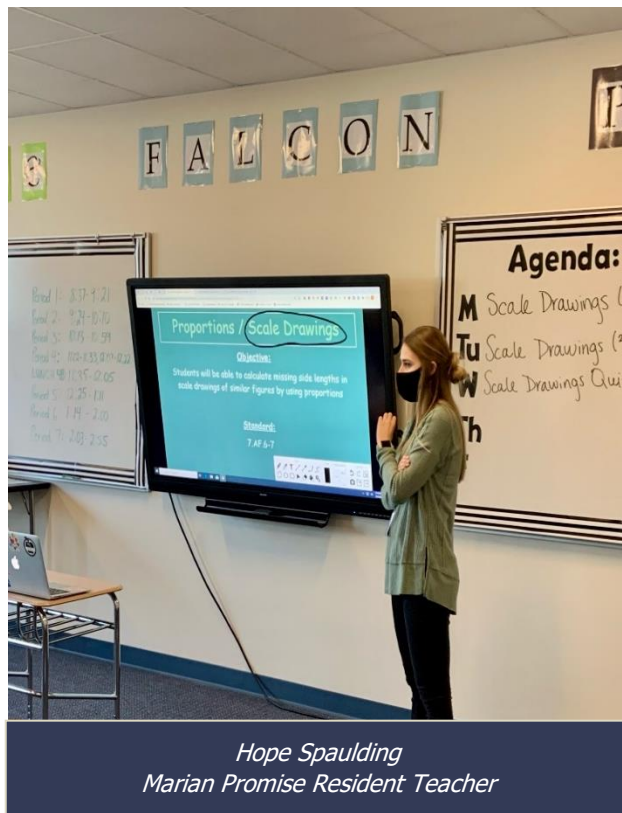


Residents receive a \$14,000 stipend and residency and induction support while teaching in a high-need school

The Marian Promise residency program places specifically recruited new teacher candidates in high-need schools for a one-year residency. Residents receive a stipend, work full-time in the classroom alongside a high-quality mentor teacher, and attend an education master's program at Marian University.

The first cohort of Marian Promise resident teachers officially joined the grant in summer 2020. These resident teachers are taking their master's courses in a hybrid fashion – online, at night, and on the weekends – while working full-time in a partner school district for the entire 2020-21 school year. With the support of KEC faculty, mentor teachers, school and district leaders, and NIET specialists, resident teachers are working the same hours and completing the same duties as full-time classroom teachers. Resident teachers also receive coaching and feedback grounded in the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric.

Current Marian University resident teacher Hope Spaulding reflected on this support: “I love that I get a full year under a mentor where I can truly get my bearings as a new teacher. One semester just isn't enough time!”



*Hope Spaulding
Marian Promise Resident Teacher*

A Two-Year Comprehensive Induction Program

The induction program is the second half of Marian Promise. Induction programs are comprehensive programs specifically designed to provide tools and support for teachers in the early stages of their careers. Research has shown that teacher induction programs can improve beginning teacher retention, teacher performance, and student achievement (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Schmidt et al., 2017; Schmidt, 2019). Induction programs are becoming more prevalent across the U.S. as they focus on increasing continuity between teacher preparation programs and districts by connecting clinical training to new teachers' first years in practice. Comprehensive induction programs typically include 1) multiple years of support, 2) a rigorous process for the selection of mentor teachers, 3) ongoing professional development opportunities for both new and mentor teachers, and 4) release time for induction activities (Potemski & Matlach, 2014). These components specifically have been associated with improving the performance and retention of new teachers (Podolsky et al., 2019).

The Marian Promise induction program includes these evidence-based supports. Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, upon completion of the residency program, graduates will participate in a two-year structured induction program with an experienced mentor teacher in their district to support their professional development and facilitate collaboration with the broader school faculty. As new teachers take on their own classroom, KEC faculty in collaboration with NIET and district leaders will provide coaching through ongoing competency-based feedback and support around planning, delivering, and assessing lessons throughout the induction years. Mentor teachers will receive a \$1,000 stipend per year and participate in high-quality training to strengthen their capacity to coach and support new teachers. New teachers and their mentors will receive release time for training and support.

Induction Program Planning: Supporting New Teachers

In 2020-21, the partnership surveyed new teachers twice during the school year to assess the quality of the work environment. The results suggest that new teachers in the partner district are satisfied with their jobs and working environments as well as the level of support they receive from administrators. However, consistent with a recent survey of over 5,000 U.S. teachers that found anxiety was by far the most frequently mentioned emotion (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020), the majority of new teachers who responded to the survey report experiencing stress.

Specifically, the top three sources of stress that responding teachers report at both midyear and end-of-year are the same:

- 1) being held responsible for students' achievement,
- 2) having too many lessons to prepare, and
- 3) maintaining classroom discipline.

The Marian Promise induction program is specifically targeting these identified stress areas. NIET, Marian faculty, and partner district mentor teachers met to discuss the needs of new teachers identified by the survey, and how districts could provide them with additional support in multiple areas including instructional planning and classroom management. Feedback from new teachers will also inform planning and preparation for the induction program that will start in 2021-22.

Conclusion

The Marian Promise program supported by the TQP grant is taking steps toward addressing critical issues in education through evidence-based supports for new teachers. This program looks to address the issues of teacher effectiveness and retention through a combined residency and induction program. Yearlong residencies connected to ongoing support during multiple years of induction offer a proven strategy for recruiting and retaining more effective new teachers. While the pandemic created obstacles to the partnership's work this year, it made clear the importance and value of a more intentional and structured system of support for new teachers to help them become more effective earlier in their careers and motivate them to stay in their schools and the profession.

Innovative programs like Marian Promise show how high-need districts are working to ensure that every student has an effective classroom teacher. Marian Promise resident teacher John Ramsey Jr. sums it up perfectly: "The TQP grant has given me the opportunity to fine-tune my craft. All of the advisers and mentor teachers are invested in seeing you become the best teacher you can be. I have learned that it is the preparation and collaboration with peers that make a great teacher. I'm thankful for this experience because it is going to make my first year of teaching less intimidating and will provide me with an overall blueprint to succeed."

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