

THE EFFECT OF A NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM ON NEW TEACHERS REPORTED TEACHER GOALS FOR EXCELLENCE, MOBILITY, AND RETENTION RATES*

Bonnie Perry
Karen Hayes

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Abstract

Over the past twenty years there has been a decline in the number of minority teachers entering and remaining in the teaching profession. While the overall teacher shortage is worrisome for educators and administrators, the shortage of minority teachers is one of grave concern. A lack of minority educators inside our buildings is just one consequence of minority teacher shortage. There is also the critical issue of few minority teachers as role models for minority students. Consequently, even fewer minority students are looking at teaching as a potential career (Shure, 2001). The purpose of this study was to analyze teacher participation in the Building an Excellent Start to Teaching teacher induction program and to add to the current research that exists regarding the induction experiences of beginning first year compared to ending third year experiences.

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2 Sumario en español

Ha habido durante los últimos veinte años un descenso en el número de maestros minoritarios que entran y quedan en el cuerpo docente. Mientras la escasez general de maestro es inquietante para educadores y administradores, la escasez de maestros minoritarios es uno de preocupación grave. Una falta de educadores minoritarios dentro de nuestros edificios es sólo un consecuencia de escasez minoritaria de maestro. Hay también el asunto crítico de pocos maestros minoritarios como modelos a imitar para estudiantes minoritarios. Por consiguiente, aún menos estudiantes minoritarios miran enseñar como una carrera potencial (Shure, 2001). El propósito de este estudio fue de analizar participación de maestro en el Edificio un Excelente Comienzo al programa Docente de la inducción del maestro y para añadir a la investigación actual que existe con respecto a las experiencias de inducción de empezar primero año comparado a terminar terceras experiencias de año.

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3 Introduction

Teacher induction defined by Huling-Austin (1990) is a planned program intended to provide some systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers, for at least one year which offers ethical, professional, and personal assistance.

A good teacher induction program has the potential to increase the retention rate of new teachers and improve the quality of the instruction they deliver (Huling-Austin, 1990; Lawson, 1992). However, many induction programs fail to address individual needs based upon race and gender, including their attempt to identify precisely the nature of the assistance needed to be most beneficial to first-year teachers, in particular minority first-year teachers (Graham 1987).

To address this growing teacher shortage, the research school district has explored new strategies to recruit and retain teachers, particularly in high need subject areas and teachers with minority backgrounds. Among strategies being employed are teacher induction programs.

4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze teacher participation in the *BEST* (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) teacher induction program. K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience served as the independent variables in this study to determine whether teachers who participate in the research school district's new teachers' induction program have significantly different induction experiences and unique or different induction needs from their ending 1st-year compared to their ending 5th-year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures. All newly hired K-6 teachers participated in the *BEST* (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) teacher induction program. The study dependent variables included nine survey items designed to measure the Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey. Teacher mobility and retention were also analyzed to determine whether the BEST program had an impact on mobility and retention based on minority vs. non-minority participating teachers. The study was a two-group comparative survey study design extended in time. For analyses of the mobility and retention of

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participants, teachers from the minority new hire teachers (MiNHT) group comprised a naturally formed sample of minority new hires, and the participants from the majority new hire teacher (MaNHT) group were randomly selected non-minority new hires to match the MiNHT participant total.

5 Importance of the Study

The question looms ahead of us: Are we succeeding at staffing our nation's schools with skilled teachers and if not, what are the major factors contributing to the dwindling supply of minority teachers? Several researchers attribute the limited presence of minority teachers to such factors as a declining number of minority students attending college due to the decreasing amount of financial aid available to teacher education students, low scores on competency tests, as well as a disproportionate failure to meet revised certification requirements and the ability to access better paying jobs (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Graham, 1987).

As good as our public schools may be there is much about them that need improving, and much of this improvement must begin with the people inside the walls of the school. Although considerable progress in desegregation has been made in public education, progressive school districts across our country are becoming aware that not enough is being done to change the remnants of segregation reflected in the employment of minority teachers. School districts today must look for ways to increase the number of minority teachers being employed, in hopes of more closely mirroring their student populations (Graham, 1987; King 1993). In the face of an increasingly diverse school population, schools and districts must struggle to maintain standards for teacher quality while continuously recruiting bright new teachers and seeking to retain their most effective existing teachers. The dual goals of recruiting and retaining effective teachers are often difficult to realize because of insufficient and sometimes dwindling resources (Guarino, Santibanez & Daley, 2006).

The number of minority teachers in the research Public Schools as well as across the nation is disproportionately low when compared to the number of minority students enrolled (Warikoo, 2004). Compounding the problem is the high turnover rate within the first five years of the teaching profession especially among minority teachers. Generally speaking schools across the nation must find a way to create an atmosphere whereby beginning teachers receive the support needed to increase their job satisfaction rate thereby increasing the numbers retained in our schools. The Building an Excellent Start to Teaching (B.E.S.T.), Program presents hope that these needs are within our reach (Omaha Public Schools Department of Human Resources, 1999).

The B.E.S.T., (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) program is a collaborative effort involving the school principal, mentor teacher, Assistant Superintendents, Office of Staff Development Services, Human Resources, Curriculum and Learning, Student and Community Services and the local teacher's union. The purpose of the program is to improve student academic achievement and to reduce new teacher attrition. The goal of this comprehensive induction program is to help beginning; lateral entry and experienced teachers new to the school district acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to experience a successful induction period. This is achieved as an induction team works with new teachers in the following areas, professional environment; classroom management; and understanding curriculum.

6 Theoretical Framework: Induction, Minority Teacher Induction and Other Factors Vital to the Success of First-Year Teachers

A major shortcoming in teacher preparation research is the lack of knowledge about how to prepare teachers for an increasingly diverse student population (Wilson, Floden, and Ferrini-Mundy, 2002). Novice teachers describe the first year of teaching as "climbing a mountain that is cloud-covered. You can't see very far ahead, and you don't know how high the mountain is" (Ganser, 2001, p.40). Increasing the retention rate of beginning teachers during their induction years is of particular interest to this study.

History has shown that those teachers who have had good teacher and building level support during their induction period have a better retention rate. One goal of any induction program should be to create situations in which teacher candidates come face to face with situations that more closely approximate the realities in schools.

Huling-Austin (1998) defines induction as a systematic organizational effort to help new teachers adjust readily and effectively to their new assignments, while realizing personal and professional fulfillment. In the Research School District, the rationale behind the New Teacher Induction Institute focuses on the positive impact the reduction of new teacher attrition has on student academic success. The program is designed to help beginning; lateral entry and experienced teachers new to the school district as they acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to experience a successful induction period. An induction team consisting of the school principal, a mentor teacher, an Assistant Superintendent, the offices of Staff Development Services, Human Resources, Curriculum and Learning, Student and Community Services, and the Omaha Education Association works with each of the new teachers in the areas of professional environment, classroom management, and understanding the curriculum. First-year teachers who experience professional and social isolation, are easily overwhelmed, give up by simply learning the tricks of trade to get by, and are thereby robbed of what could have been an enjoyable, exciting, and rewarding learning experience (Ryan et al. (1980) along with (Slaybaugh, Evans, & Byrd, 2004) & Smith (1996).

A study conducted by Huling-Austin (1990) cited five goals that are important to any new teacher induction program: improving teaching performance, increasing retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years, promoting personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers by improving teachers' attitudes toward themselves and the profession, satisfying mandated requirements related to induction and certification, and transmitting the culture of the system to beginning teachers. Of particular interest to this study is the goal to increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years.

The first three years mark a critical period in the life of a new teacher. Boss (2001) suggests that at least 30 percent of novice teachers leave the profession by the third year and up to half of those teaching in urban schools depart within five years.

More than 28 states, including Nebraska, have some form of mentor program for first-year teachers. These programs pair first-year teachers with veteran teachers. Mentoring programs aimed at minority teacher retention must stress the positive aspects of teaching, such as the opportunity to work with children and to strengthen the community. They must also work to negate the perceived problems with teaching that can act as barriers to keep minorities out of teaching. Haberman (1989) states that recruitment must, "start early, use peer contact, offer experiential programs, provide academic and psychological support, involve minority faculty members and use enthusiastic mentors" (p. 771). Although it is not described as a panacea, and may involve certain unwanted side effects, mentoring is best suited to helping new teachers "translate their academic knowledge into meaningful instruction" (NEA, 2001, *Improving Skills and Knowledge*).

The CADRE Project in Omaha, Nebraska, is both a graduate induction program for beginning teachers and a professional renewal program for experienced teachers. CADRE (Career Advancement and Development for Recruits and Experienced teachers) resulted from a strong collaborative relationship between the College of Education at the University of Nebraska/Omaha and area school districts organized under the Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium. School districts participating in the CADRE Project include Omaha, Millard, Papillion-LaVista and Westside.

The CADRE project offers newly certified teachers an opportunity to spend their first year of teaching totally supported by their university program and by carefully selected teachers who become their mentors, known as CADRE associates (Hayes, 2002). The new teachers begin graduate studies the summer before their teaching assignment and complete them the following summer, earning a Master of Science degree in education. Their tuition is paid, and they receive a \$10,000 stipend for their internship teaching.

The goal of the project is for the new teachers to have a good first year of teaching that includes a variety of professional learning experiences and speeds up their attainment of a level of professional skill and judgment that characterizes a well-qualified teacher (McGlamery, Fluckiger, & Edick, 2002). The CADRE teachers benefit in many ways from guidance by mentors, classroom visits, discussions with colleagues, and seminars that address the concerns of first-year teachers. Their graduate course work emphasizes the issues found in classroom practice rather than abstract theory.

Brendel, Kolbert, and Foster (2002) state that for a mentor program to be effective, "mentor teachers must be freed from at least 10 percent of their teaching duties" (p. 24). For this cause, each CADRE as-

sociate supervises two CADRE teachers (the CADRE group usually includes about 28 beginning teachers), an assignment that takes up about one-fourth of their time. Over the course of a one-year term, CADRE associates work with the CADRE teachers in a number of ways—conducting orientation, advising and observing, demonstrating teaching, and team teaching with the new teacher. Half of their time is spent at their district’s discretion working on special projects or with task forces such as the prevention of youth violence. The remaining one-fourth of their time belongs to the university. They may teach undergraduate courses, supervise student teachers, participate in university-sponsored research on the CADRE Project or provide in-service training for other teachers.

CADRE associates report that, for the first time since they began teaching, they have time to catch up on developments in teaching and renew their professional skills. Moreover, principals report that the CADRE associates have a beneficial effect on the total staff in their schools because of what they are learning and their contacts with the campus.

Most important, however, the CADRE teachers report that the mentoring and other opportunities offered by the program give them on-the-spot support and professional skills they would not have expected in their first year of teaching. Most of the CADRE teachers have been offered regular positions at the schools where they taught their first year.

The value of effective mentoring programs for all teachers is strongly supported by data from school districts serious in their attempts to create a more diverse teaching force, reinforcing the crucial role mentoring plays in the recruitment, nurturing, and support of minority teachers. Research demonstrates that mentoring is valuable to most successful individuals regardless of race, as mentors tend to choose those individuals who most reflect the mentor’s own major traits and characteristics (Blackburn, Chapman, & Cameron, 1981). Tonoli (2001) suggests that School District personnel encourage teachers of school-to-career programs in high schools with significant minority and bilingual student populations to identify 9th or 10th grade students who are potential future teachers as an additional approach to minority teacher recruitment.

Issues facing new teachers include knowing about, experiencing and being able to navigate systems of professional development to improve student learning and teacher performance (Fullan & Steigelbauer, 1991). If no change takes place in teacher education, we will continue to prepare teachers who are unversed in the reasons for or the means of gaining professional development.

Haberman (1991, 1995) emphasized teacher candidates whose recruitment was intended to address important shortcomings in the teacher workforce, specifically the lack of teacher diversity, should be chosen with appropriate backgrounds and dispositions. He also stressed the importance of offering training in real-world skills and settings, provided by teacher-trainers with successful teaching experience in those areas. As educators we have a clear challenge to find effective ways to serve the needs of our diverse student population. To do so, we are required to train our future teachers to rise to the challenge and embrace the invitation to teach.

Investigators have searched for components of successful programs that would recruit, train and employ minority teachers. The following research examples explore what should be in place for the pool of possible workers, what institutions must do to address the need and how teacher education curricula must be changed in order to prepare these teachers.

Villegas et al. (1998) found four major factors: commitment to multiculturalism; support services for participating students, financial incentives; and use of cohort groups. Curricula must incorporate increased meaningful experiences in urban schools, stemming from a collaborative relationship with the public schools and a teacher education curriculum that embodies instruction in attitudes; knowledge and skills teachers must have to work effectively with children in urban environments.

Urban special educators, therefore, must be prepared to broaden their expertise to address the needs of not only students with a variety of disabilities, but also those who are challenged by numerous other risk factors. In urban areas, this focus must translate into the creation of innovative linkages between homes, schools, and community agencies to ensure that these urban students have access to a quality education and a “future with promise” (Lawson, (1994: Warger & Repect, 1998; Winzer & Maurek, 1998).

Preservice teachers need to understand the multiple dimensions of their own classroom community and the impact or relationship that their students’ external community has on their teaching practices (Zeichner,

& Hoefft, 1996). Well-prepared teachers do make a difference in pupil achievement; hence teacher education is related to instructional effectiveness.

Research indicates that successful teachers of African American children (a) draw on African culture and history, (b) promote the location of self in a historical and cultural context, (c) help students create new knowledge based on life experiences and (d) treat knowledge as reciprocal (Kruger & Love, 2005).

For induction programs to be effective they need to address individual needs, however, many do not. Further research by Lawson (1992) showed that these induction programs tend to neglect the core idea that induction, like education itself, is not done to a person or group, but that individuals gain knowledge through the induction process.

7 Methodology

The purpose of this study is to analyze teacher participation in the *BEST* (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) teacher induction program. K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience served as the independent variables in this study to determine whether teachers who participated in the research school district's new teachers' induction program had significantly different induction experiences and unique or different induction needs from their ending first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures. All newly hired K-6 teachers participated in the *BEST* (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) teacher induction program.

The teachers from the MiNHT (Minority New Hire Teachers) and MaNHT (Majority New Hire Teachers) participating in the BEST (Building an Excellent Start to Teaching) NTIP (New Teacher Induction Program) with no previous teaching experience, who had just completed their university teacher candidate programs and who had received their initial Nebraska Teaching Certification in 1999, were selected to participate in the study. Teachers' names were omitted and coded for future identification so that their individual permission was not needed. Archival data from a previous survey including teacher's perceived goals for excellence, retention and mobility is retrospective with Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.

The study dependent variables included nine survey items designed to measure the Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey. Teacher mobility and retention were also analyzed to determine whether the BEST program had an impact on mobility and retention based on the race of participating teachers.

7.1 Participants

All newly hired minority teachers ($n = 22$) were selected for participation in this study. These minority teachers were hired in 1999. This naturally formed group was matched in number by randomly selected newly hired majority teachers ($n = 22$) selected from a group of teachers ($n = 282$) also hired in 1999 by the Research School District.

7.2 Research Design

Research design. The two-group comparative survey study, design extended in time, is displayed in the following notation:

Group 1 = $X_1 Y_1 O_1 O_2 O_3 O_4 O_5$

Group 2 = $X_1 Y_2 O_1 O_2 O_3 O_4 O_5$

Group 1 = study participants #1. Newly hired minority K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience who have just completed their university teacher candidate programs and have received their initial Nebraska Teaching Certification.

Group 2 = study participants #2. Newly hired majority K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience who have just completed their university teacher candidate programs and have received their initial Nebraska Teaching Certification.

X1 = Study constants. Non minority and minority new hire teachers participating in the BEST-NTIP

Y1 = Study independent variable, participant, condition #1. Minority New Hire Teachers (MiNHT) participating in the BEST-NTIP

Y2 = Study independent variable, participant, condition #2. Majority New Hire Teachers (MaNHT) participating in the BEST-NTIP

O1 = Study survey dependent measures. Following completion of the first year of service and completion of all BEST-NTIP program activities.

O2 = Study survey dependent measures. Following completion of the third year of service and completion of all BEST-NTIP program activities.

O3 = Study placement dependent measures. Year one (1999) school building placement of minority and majority teachers.

O4 = Study placement dependent measures. Year three (2003) school building placement of minority and majority teachers.

O5 = Study placement dependent measures. Year five (2005) school building placement of minority and majority teachers.

7.3 Independent Variable Descriptions

Arm one independent variable. Newly Hired Minority Teachers (MiNHT) participating in the BEST New Teacher Induction Program (BEST NTIP), served as one arm of the independent variable. The MiNHT program represented newly hired minority K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience who had just completed their university teacher candidate programs and had received their Initial Nebraska Teaching Certification.

Arm two independent variable. Newly Hired Majority Teachers (MaNHT) participating in the BEST New Teacher Induction Program (BEST NTIP), served as the second arm of the independent variable. The MaNHT teachers represented newly hired majority K-6 teachers with no previous teaching experience who had just completed their university teacher candidate programs and had received their initial Nebraska Teaching Certification.

7.4 Dependent Measures and Instrumentation

Three overarching dependent variables were evaluated for this study, 1) teacher knowledge of district educational processes and procedures, 2) teacher mobility, and 3) teacher retention. All teacher knowledge of district educational processes and procedures, mobility and retention were measured using a new hire teacher survey.

Teacher knowledge: The reported teacher experiences related to knowledge of educational processes and procedures; communicating and consulting with parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel; understanding basic classroom management models, methods, and techniques; the ability to maintain student records; the ability to monitor student academic and personal growth; the ability to understand standards based instruction and know the district and state standards; the ability to use research-based best practices for effective teaching and learning; the ability to use assessment results to improve instruction and increase student achievement; the ability to understand the definition, identification, legal requirements, and placement procedures for students with special needs; and the ability to understand local, state, and federal policies and procedures were used to analyze teacher participation in the Research School District's new teachers' induction program.

Teacher mobility: Reported survey responses to mobility records of minority and majority teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate employment by the Research School District in 2003 and 2005 and whether or not the mobility records of teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate significant 2005 minority compared to majority employment differences were used to determine teacher mobility.

Teacher retention: Reported survey responses to retention records of minority and majority teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate

same or different school placement by the Research School District in 2003 and 2005 and whether or not the retention records of minority teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate same or different school placement by the Research School District in 2003 and 2005 as well as whether or not retention records of teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate significant 2005 minority compared to majority retention in same or different schools were used to determine teacher retention.

7.5 Research Questions

Thirteen questions were addressed and answered as part of this study to analyze teacher participation in the research school district's new teachers' induction program:

7.6 Overarching end of first year compared to end of third year Teacher Knowledge Level

Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their ending of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey based on all survey items 1 through 9?

Research Question #1: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score for item number 1: I am able to communicate and consult with students, parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel?

Research Question #2: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score for item number 2: I understand basic classroom management models, methods, and techniques?

Research Question #3: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score for item number 3: I am able to maintain student records?

Research Question #4: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 4: I am able to monitor student academic and personal growth?

Research Question #5: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 5: I understand standards based instruction and know the district and state standards?

Research Question #6: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 6: I am able to use research-based practices for effective teaching and learning?

Research Question #7: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 7: I can use assessment results to improve instruction and increase student achievement?

Research Question #8: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 8: I understand the definition, identification, legal requirements, and placement procedures for students with special needs?

Research Question #9: Do minority and majority teachers who participate in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program lose, maintain, or improve their end of first year compared to their ending third year Knowledge of District Educational Processes and Procedures Survey score on item number 9: I understand local, state, and federal policies and procedures?

7.7 Overarching Overarching end of first year compared to end of second year and end of fifth year Teacher

Mobility Research Question #10: Do mobility records of minority and majority teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate employment by the research school district in 2003 and 2005?

Research Question #11: Do mobility records of teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate significant 2005 minority compared to majority employment differences?

Research Question #12: Do retention records of minority and majority teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate same or different school placement by the research school district in 2003 and 2005?

Research Question #13: Do retention records of teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the Research School District's New Teachers' Induction Program indicate significant 2005 minority compared to majority retention in same or different schools?

7.8 Assumptions

The assumption of this study is that the Research School District has made every effort to provide sufficient training to both groups, (BEST-MiNHT) and (BEST-MaNHt). It is assumed that the induction training provided by Curriculum and Instruction along with Staff Development has been the basis for instruction of the study participants prior to their first day of teaching and throughout their pre-tenure.

It is also assumed that all participants will continue their career with the research school district beyond their tenured years.

7.9 Limitations

The initial limitations of this study are those inherent in the use of the survey and focus groups.

An additional limitation is in the number of participants in this study. The samples were comprised of only the research district school's new minority and new majority teachers hired during the 1999 school year and may not be generalized to other new minority and new majority teachers hired during this same timeframe across the country. However, the Research District has a substantial investment in the BEST program. Other states considering such a program can learn from this data.

8 Results

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study of each of the research questions.

Research question #1: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to communicate and consult with students, parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel was not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. Kronowitz (1996) found that establishing positive relationships with students' parents ranked second only to discipline as a cause for anxiety. A majority of participants in this study indicated that they had positive experiences communicating with students, parents, teachers, and other school community personnel.

Research Question #2: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to understand basic classroom management models, methods, and techniques was not significantly statistically different when compared to end of first year teacher ability. Participants in this study, indicated having success dealing with student discipline. These results showed that after participating in ongoing professional

development teachers in the research district learned and practiced preventive strategies for managing behavior which included requiring students to raise their hands and wait to be recognized plus reminding students of classroom rules and procedures reportedly brought more positive results. This result is surprising due to the fact that in major studies by Kronowitz (1996) and Veeman (1984), where the results reported by fledgling teachers demonstrated that they tended to accentuate negative behavior focusing on one or two students who were making life difficult rather than recognizing that good student behavior of the majority when one or two students are making life difficult, frequently serves as an incentive for those creating problems to stop.

Research Question #3: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to maintain student records were not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. Again, the researcher believes this was due to the extensive training acquired during ongoing professional development

Research Question #4: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to monitor student academic and personal growth was not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. During ongoing professional development novice teachers are taught skills to help them learn to monitor student academic and personal growth to ensure continual growth.

Research Question #5: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to understand standards based instruction and know the district and state standards was not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. Teachers in the research district are introduced early to content standards and skills and knowledge statements along with best practice strategies that help them recognize student's abilities while working with them.

Research Question #6: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to use research-based best practices for effective teaching and learning was not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. Again this can be attributed to the ongoing professional development offered by the new teacher induction program.

Research Question #7: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher's ability to use assessment results to improve instruction and increase student achievement was significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher's ability. Although ongoing professional development was available for all teachers the reported data showed that it tended to take teachers until the third year to thoroughly understand testing routines and procedures.

Research Question #8: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher ability to understand the definition, identification, legal requirements, and placement procedures for students with special needs was not significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher ability. A majority of third year teachers responding to this study indicated having positive experiences with the special education process in their school.

Research Question #9: Overall, test results indicated that ending third year teacher ability to understand local, state, and federal policies and procedures was significantly statistically different when compared to ending first year teacher ability.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #10. Overall, test results indicated a significantly statistical difference between the inside district compared to out of district mobility results and that there was a significantly statistical difference between ending third year and ending first year results.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study for Research Question #11. Overall, test results indicate that there was no significantly statistical difference comparing the retention information of minority faculty hired in 1999 and whether they are still employed at the same school within the between retention information of minority faculty hired in 1999 and whether they are still employed at the same school within the District in 2003 and 2005. Research Question #12:

Overall, test results indicated that there was no significantly statistical difference comparing the retention information of minority faculty hired in 1999 and whether they are still employed at the same school within the between retention information of minority faculty hired in 1999 and whether they are still employed at the same school within the District in 2003 and 2005.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the study of each of the sub-questions for Research Question # 13: Overall, tests results indicated that there was no significantly statistical difference comparing retention records of teachers hired in 1999 who participated in the research school district's new teachers' induction program indicate significant statistical difference in 2005 minority compared to non-minority retention in same or different schools.

9 Discussion

The data suggests that a good teacher induction program as defined by Huling-Austin (1990) as a planned program intended to provide some systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers, for at least one year which offers ethical, professional, and personal assistance, has the potential to increase the retention rate of new teachers and improve the quality of the instruction they deliver (Huling-Austin, 1990; Lawson, 1992). Retention, as much as recruitment, must be central to any strategy to maintain a high standard of K-12 instructional practice (NEA Foundation, 2002).

Current estimates show that over 50% of new teachers will leave in their first 5 years of teaching (Hare & Heap, 2001). However, the research district has attempted to retain their new teachers and to increase the percentage of new teachers that remain in the profession. The induction program currently being used by the research school district provided systematic strategies that addressed majority and minority teacher's needs. The study found success by paying special attention to the needs of the news hires including attempts to identify the nature of the assistance needed to be most beneficial to first-year teachers; in particular minority first-year teachers as well as helping teachers adjust to a new school assignment (Graham 1987, NEA Foundation, 2002).

This study addresses and supports the need for qualified teachers in every classroom. Research indicates that teacher and teaching quality are the most powerful predictors of student success. Wong (2004) states that no greater factor, including class size and class composition, has as much effect on student achievement as teacher qualification. Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2001) found that the magnitude of the teacher effect is striking. The research school district's induction program provided sustained professional development which allows new teachers to observe others, to be observed by others, and to be part of networks and study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other's work, which will help to ensure that teachers hired today remain the teachers for the next generation (Wong, 2004).

This study supports the research that induction must be a comprehensive, multiyear process designed to train and acculturate new teachers in the academic standards and visions of the district (Wong, 2004). In this study, all teachers new to the research district or assigned to a new teaching position begin with a 4-or 5-day initial induction process before school starts as part of their contractual agreement. As suggested by Wong (2004) the research district also provides a continuum of professional development through systematic training over a period of 2 to 3 years; provides study groups in which new teachers can network and build support, commitment, and leadership in a learning community; incorporates a strong sense of administrative support, integrates a mentoring component into the induction process; presents a structure for modeling effective teaching during inservices and mentoring; and provides opportunities for inductees to visit demonstration classrooms. Each new inductee is assigned a specific mentor, a Curriculum Consultant, (CC) at the middle or high school level or an Elementary Curriculum Consultant (ECC) at the Elementary level. This consultant is not assigned to a classroom. While the mentor is an important piece in the puzzle, mentoring is only a piece of the induction process. In the research district, mentors are part of the induction process aligned to the district's vision, mission, and structure. Eight curriculum consultants serve at the middle and high school level while 10 consultants serve the elementary level teachers. Whether at the senior or elementary level, all consultants complete duties assigned by the building principal which include but are not limited to specifically working with teachers on intervention, presenting data from previous testing, as well as on-going professional development to help close the achievement gap. Two curriculum specialists from each of these groups is also assigned the specific task of preparing professional development for summer school programs and the district's opening curriculum day activities. In addition 64 instructional facilitators are assigned at the building level to perform professional development training at the principal's discretion and building's

needs. This type of collegiality provides an outlet for sharing the difficulties of being of working with new teacher (Griffin, 1985).

With a third of beginning teachers leaving the profession within the first three years, the challenge for any induction program is to give these newcomers the kind of support needed if they are not only to remain in the profession, but to develop into the kinds of educators able to teach to today's high standards (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Understanding the induction period and the particular problems encountered by beginning teachers will help in designing more effective teacher education and induction programs. Not doing so would mean missing the opportunity to improve life for a significant part of the population, students and teachers alike.

The research district is doing several things right through training and inducting beginning teachers into the teaching profession. This is evidenced by the number of teachers who were hired by the district in 1999 and who remained in the district by 2005.

Still many talented or potentially talented teachers leave the teaching profession too early. Many beginning teachers depart because they have found it too difficult to adjust (Huling-Austin, 1989, 1991, 1996). Properly implemented induction programs have the potential to increase the probability that new teachers will make long-term commitments to the teaching profession and become better teachers (Huling-Austin, 1989).

For most surveyed items in this study, the data indicates that in the research district, minority and majority teachers alike have similar perceptions of their induction experiences.

10 REFERENCES

[Click here to view References²](#)

²See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m37093/latest/References.pdf>>