

INTC Data Brief #3

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This Data Brief, the third of five short reports during FY 2010, is intended to provide a snapshot of data on the 66 induction and mentoring programs that received funding in fall 2009. It describes program evaluation and programs' reported plans for improvement for each standard.

The two remaining data briefs will be organized around the Teacher Induction Program Standards, and they will culminate with an end-of-year final report:

- June 15: Resources, mentor/novice interactions, and formative assessment: spring CDE data
Standards 3, 7, and 8
- July 30: Mentor, administrator, and novice trainings: spring CDE data
Standards 4, 6, and 7
- September 30: Final report
Summary of the preceding five data briefs; standard 9; self-ratings for each standard; program summary & impact; plus INTC commentary on: program progress to date and policy recommendations

OVERVIEW OF DATA AND ORGANIZATION OF DATA BRIEF

This Data Brief provides highlights of data obtained from the fall 2009 Common Data Elements (CDE) reporting form by the 66 programs that received grant funding in fall 2009. This Data Brief is organized into three sections:

- Standard 9, Program Evaluation: summary of tables 1.1 through 1.3 in the appendix
- Standards 1-9: Plans for improvement: summary of tables 2.1 through 2.10 in the appendix
- Discussion: observations and connections regarding the above data

An accompanying Appendix, which is available in a separate document, provides complete tables, charts, and analyses of quantitative and qualitative data.

The fall CDE included multiple-choice, short-response, and extended-response questions. The information in this brief is based on program self-reports only.

The Consortium for Educational Change-Marion encompasses two separate grants and Chicago New Teacher Center #299, Areas 3, 7, 13, 14, & 17 encompasses four separate grants. Each of these programs filled out a single CDE reporting form, so INTC received 62 total CDEs although ISBE provided 66¹ total grants. For this data brief, INTC is only reporting on the 62 CDEs it received; thus, Chicago New Teacher Center appears as a single program, not four.

The tables disaggregate the data in three ways: district-based programs vs. consortium-based programs; new programs (those initially funded in 2009) vs. continuing programs (those initially funded in 2006 or 2008); and larger programs (serving 75 or more first- and second-year teachers) vs. smaller programs.

¹ One previously-funded program declined to seek continuation funding in August 2009, so it did not complete the fall 2009 CDE.

STANDARD 9: PROGRAM EVALUATION

Programs were asked, on the fall 2009 CDE, to describe their plans for 2009-10 program evaluation.

Type of data to be collected. All responding programs planned to use some form of questionnaire—for mentors, novices, and administrators to fill out, after trainings or at the end of the semester—to evaluate program quality. The exact type varied by type of program; larger programs and older programs were more likely to plan for questionnaires that novice teachers could fill out after each professional development session, while district-based programs were more likely than consortium-based programs to plan for surveys at the end of each semester or academic year. Seventy-nine percent of programs planned to examine retention data. Also common were plans to examine contact logs (70% of programs), beginning teacher reflection documents (44% of programs), and pre/post surveys for beginning teachers (43% of programs). Focus groups or interviews were most common plans with continuing programs (50%, vs. 24% of new programs) and larger programs (57%, vs. 31% of smaller programs). Two other types of data—examination of student test scores, and examination of formal novice teacher evaluations—were more commonly planned among new programs (32% and 36%, respectively) than among continuing programs (11% and 8%, respectively). Just over a quarter of programs planned to use exit interviews, with a similar number planning for external evaluators. (Table 1.1)

Methods of data disaggregation. The most common plan for disaggregating the data, by first- vs. second-year teachers, was more common among continuing (86%) and large (81%) programs than among new (36%) and small (56%) programs. Eighty-five percent of consortia planned to disaggregate data by district, while district-based programs were more likely than consortia (43% vs. 23%) to propose disaggregating by school. Other plans for disaggregation include (in order of popularity) by grade level and content area of teachers; by mentor type; by teacher certification type; and by race/ethnicity of teachers. (Table 1.2)

Data analysis personnel. In 95% of programs, the induction program coordinator planned to analyze the data, along with other induction program leadership (59% of programs). District administrators were often scheduled to assist, more commonly in district-based programs (69%, vs. 23% of consortia). District-based programs were also more likely than consortia to plan for assistance from building administrators (29% of districts vs. 15% of consortia) and union leadership (26% vs. 4%). Only 15% of programs planned to have a consultant or external evaluator work on data analysis. (Table 1.3)

STANDARDS 1-9: PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Programs were asked open-ended questions which asked them to describe their plans for improvement for each of the nine Illinois Induction Program Standards. This section lists all plans that were described by at least five programs. This section only disaggregates by type of program (district vs. consortium; new vs. continuing; large vs. small) when the differences for any response item are at least 15 percentage points, or when one type of program did not produce any responses for that item.

Programs seemed to have the most difficulty understanding the first three standards (Program Leadership; Program Goals and Design; Resources), often describing improvements that fit under other standards. They were also somewhat likely to fail to describe any planned improvements for standards 1, 2, and 3 (48%, 37%, and 31%, respectively, did not make any comments, anywhere in the CDE, that could reasonably fit under these standards). Conversely, only 8% of programs did not describe any plans for improving Mentor Professional Development (Standard 6). Programs were also unlikely to skip other standards that dealt with concrete activities, such as Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities (Standard 4) and Program

Evaluation (Standard 9). Programs produced—by far—the most amount of text when describing planned improvements for Standard 9.

Standard 1: Induction Program Leadership, Administration, and Support

- Program leadership will increase communication with stakeholders (57% of large programs vs. 26% of small; 44% of continuing programs vs. 23% of new).
- Program leadership will attend professional development events (11% of programs).
- Program leadership will collaborate more with stakeholders (11% of programs, all district-based).
- The program will institute a new or expanded oversight/leadership committee (19% of new programs vs. 3% of continuing).

Standard 2: Program Goals and Design

- The program will develop more structure or accountability for beginning teachers (35% of new programs vs. 11% of continuing).
- The program will make improvements to mentor/novice interactions (13% of programs).
- The program design will become solidified, often based on a particular model (13% of small programs and 14% of districts vs. zero consortia or small programs).
- The program will become differentiated for first- and second-year teachers (14% of continuing programs vs. zero new programs).

Standard 3: Resources

- The program will budget for substitutes or other release time for mentors and/or beginning teachers (35% of new programs vs. 14% of continuing).
- The program will provide additional materials to mentors or beginning teachers (8% of all programs).
- The program will better allocate money (19% of large programs vs. 3% of small).

Standard 4: Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

- The program plans to train more administrators or offer more administrator academies (70% of consortium-based programs vs. 49% of district-based programs; 71% of large programs vs. 51% of small programs).
- The program would like administrators to be more involved in administering the program, monitoring compliance, or working directly with novice teachers (11% of programs).
- The program plans to improve administrator training (10% of programs).
- The program wants administrators to attend professional development sessions for mentors or beginning teachers (14% of districts vs. zero consortia).

Standard 5: Mentor Selection and Assignment

- The program will improve its mentor application/selection process (11% of programs).
- The program will make mentor selection a more formal process, or will encourage component districts to do so (8% of programs).
- The program will continue training mentors to increase the available mentor pool (8% of programs).

Standard 6: Mentor Professional Development

- The program will improve, expand, or streamline mentor training and professional development (51% of districts vs. 22% of consortia; 54% of new programs vs. 28% of continuing).
- The program will provide (typically unstructured) opportunities for mentors to network and reflect (37% of programs).
- The program will provide (more) ongoing training for mentors who have already had initial training (33% of large programs vs. 13% of small programs).
- The program will introduce a self-assessment or formative-assessment component for mentors (13% of programs).
- The program will differentiate trainings for first-year and second-year mentors (8% of programs).

Standard 7: Development of Beginning Teacher Practice

- The program will offer more novice teacher professional development sessions, or more sessions on particular topics (57% of large programs vs. 31% of smaller programs).
- The program will provide beginning teachers with more (or improved) social networking and support, from peers and mentors (11% of programs).
- The program will provide differentiated professional development for first- and second-year teachers (14% of continuing programs vs. zero new programs).

Standard 8: Formative Assessment

- The program will make the formative assessment process more formal, structured, and intentional (24% of programs).
- The formative assessment process will include more emphasis on the analysis of data (e.g. student work; observation data) (24% of programs).
- The program will offer new/more/improved mentor training in the formative assessment process (24% of programs).
- The program will require better documentation or accountability of the formative assessment process (26% of consortium-based programs vs. 11% of districts).
- The program will use the Illinois Continuum of Teacher Development in formative assessment (19% of continuing programs vs. zero new programs).
- The program will offer training for beginning teachers in the formative assessment process (8% of programs).

Standard 9: Program Evaluation

- The program will share more data with stakeholders (e.g. administrators; mentors; participating districts) (31% of district-based programs vs. 15% of consortia).
- Program leadership will look for new ways to use data to improve the program (19% of programs).
- The program is re-thinking its data collection and analysis (no specifics) (35% of new programs vs. 8% of continuing programs).
- The program will provide more structure for mentors, and/or more mentor accountability (16% of programs).
- The program will institute new or improved surveys (15% of programs).
- The program wants to improve data collection tools and/or collect more data (13% of programs).
- The program will gather new types of data (e.g. mentor contact logs; teacher evaluations) (14% of continuing programs vs. zero new programs).
- The program is planning to work with a new external evaluator or university partner (14% of district-based programs vs. zero consortia).

DISCUSSION

This section describes the observations and connections INTC made from the data described above.

Differences between new and continuing programs. One would expect that programs with several years of funding should be more sophisticated, in some ways, than newly-funded programs. Of course, a program initially funded in 2009 could have been in existence for five or ten years, whereas a program initially funded in 2008 or 2006 could have been brand-new at that point. However, the additional resources programs received with funding—the grant money, visits from Statewide Co-coordinators, attendance at PLaN meetings and workshops, networking with other programs, and being in the state spotlight—should have accelerated program development.

A glance through the programs' Plans for Improvement does validate this expectation. New programs are disproportionately more likely to be making plans for certain activities that older programs should be expected to already have done. These include:

- setting up leadership committees
- providing novice teachers with more structure
- solidifying the program design, often based on a particular model (e.g. Danielson's Framework)
- beginning to budget for substitutes or other release time or mentors and novices
- increasing the mentor pool
- improving or expanding mentor trainings
- conducting surveys and evaluations for the first time

Meanwhile, continuing programs were disproportionately more likely to be fine-tuning their programs via:

- increasing communication with shareholders
- sending program leadership to conferences
- differentiating the program for first- and second-year teachers
- encouraging administrators to be more involved in the program
- using the Illinois Continuum of Teacher Development in the formative assessment process
- gathering new types of data (e.g. teacher evaluations; mentor contact logs)

Differences between larger (at least 75 novice teachers) and smaller programs. Although one might expect large programs and consortium-based programs to have significant overlap, 38% of large programs are not consortium-based, and only half of consortium-based programs are classified as large. Thus, large programs can be considered a separate category from consortia, and could be expected to have their own strengths and challenges.

Compared to smaller programs, large programs are disproportionately likely to make the following plans for improvement. These suggest that large programs have more resources—both financial and personnel—at their disposal, but that they experience challenges in managing their large programs:

- sending leadership to professional development opportunities
- increasing communication with stakeholders (while smaller programs were more interested in collaboration with stakeholders)
- better allocating money, or making allocations more organized
- becoming more efficient in managing resources
- training more administrators or offering more administrator academies
- providing ongoing training for mentors who already received initial training
- offering more professional development for novice teachers
- planning for more systemic data collection
- buying software to use in monitoring mentor/novice interactions

Meanwhile, smaller programs are disproportionately likely to make the following plans for improvement, which show that program leadership has fewer resources but is able to maintain tighter relationships with or more control over program participants.

- increasing collaboration with stakeholders (while large programs were more interested in communication with stakeholders)
- making improvements to mentor/novice interactions (such as providing more structure)
- providing beginning teachers with more (or improved) social networking and support
- making the formative assessment process more formal, structured, and intentional
- emphasizing data analysis (e.g. of student work or observation data) in the formative assessment process

Differences between district-based and consortium-based programs. These two types of programs have many structural differences; for example, district-based programs are more likely to have relationships with teacher unions and with building principals, and consortia are often unlikely to be able to mandate novice teacher attendance. These differences manifested themselves in how programs evaluate themselves and in what improvements they plan for the future.

In program evaluation, district-based programs were more likely to survey participants at the end of a semester or year, while consortia were more likely to give out questionnaires after each training session. District-based programs were also more likely to certain other sources of data—such as focus groups, contact logs, student test scores, and teacher evaluations—which might be too time-consuming for a consortium to try to collect. Meanwhile, consortia were more likely to enlist the assistance of an external evaluator. Consortia then were likely to disaggregate the data by district, while district-based programs were more likely to disaggregate by building. Districts were also more likely to enlist the help of teacher unions and district and building administrators in analyzing the data.

In planning for improvement, district-based programs were disproportionately likely to plan for the following, which suggest that they are able to plan for a more collaborative role with multiple stakeholders, and that they work more closely with trainings—or they have closer ties with the trainees.

- collaborating more with stakeholders
- asking administrators to attend professional development sessions for mentors or beginning teachers
- training more administrators
- improving administrator training
- improving its mentor recruitment efforts, its mentor/novice matching process, and its mentor application/selection process
- improving mentor training
- sharing more program-evaluation data with stakeholders
- requiring more data analysis (e.g. of student work) in the formative assessment process

Meanwhile, consortium-based programs were more likely to plan for the following, revealing that their role is often one step removed from direct contact with program participants:

- offering training to administrators to assist in mentor selection/assignment
- requiring better documentation or accountability of the formative assessment process
- helping component districts become ISBE-approved
- providing ongoing training for mentors, beyond initial training