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This Data Brief, the third short report from FY 2011, is intended to provide a snapshot of data on the 41 ISBE-funded induction and mentoring programs which completed the Common Data Elements (CDE) survey in spring 2011. Five programs did not complete the Spring 2011 CDE, so their data do not appear in this report.

Tables of raw data appear in the Appendix, which is in a separate document. References to individual tables are provided in parenthesis in the text below.

OVERVIEW OF DATA AND ORGANIZATION OF DATA BRIEF

This Data Brief is organized into the following sections:
- Program self-assessment on the *Continuum*;
- Program goals and progress;
- Program budgets; and
- Summary.

PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT ON THE *CONTINUUM*

For each criterion on the *Illinois Induction Program Continuum*, programs were asked to assess themselves on a 4-point scale from "establishing" to "systematizing." In order to display the programs' responses numerically in the charts below, these descriptors were each assigned a number, from 1 ("establishing") to 4 ("systematizing"). In 2011, these questions were mandatory, and all 41 programs which completed the CDE responded to almost every item. In 2010, these questions were voluntary, and 19 programs—which may not be representative of programs as a whole—responded to them. Thus, comparisons between the years are unreliable.

The nine standards on the *Continuum* are:
Standard 1: Induction Program Leadership, Administration, and Support
Standard 2: Program Goals and Design
Standard 3: Resources
Standard 4: Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities
Standard 5: Mentor Selection and Assignment
Standard 6: Mentor Professional Development
Standard 7: Development of Beginning Teacher Practice
Standard 8: Formative Assessment
Standard 9: Program Evaluation

Trends in self-assessments. According to Chart 1, the two highest-rated standards in 2011 both describe professional development: Standard 6, Mentor Professional Development, and Standard 7, Development of Beginning Teacher Practice. The lowest-rated standards are 4, Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities, and 9, Program Evaluation. Numbers from 2010 are included on this chart simply to show that similar trends in highest- and lowest-ranked standards occurred in both years. (Appendix Table 1.10)

Chart 1: Program self-assessments on the *Continuum*
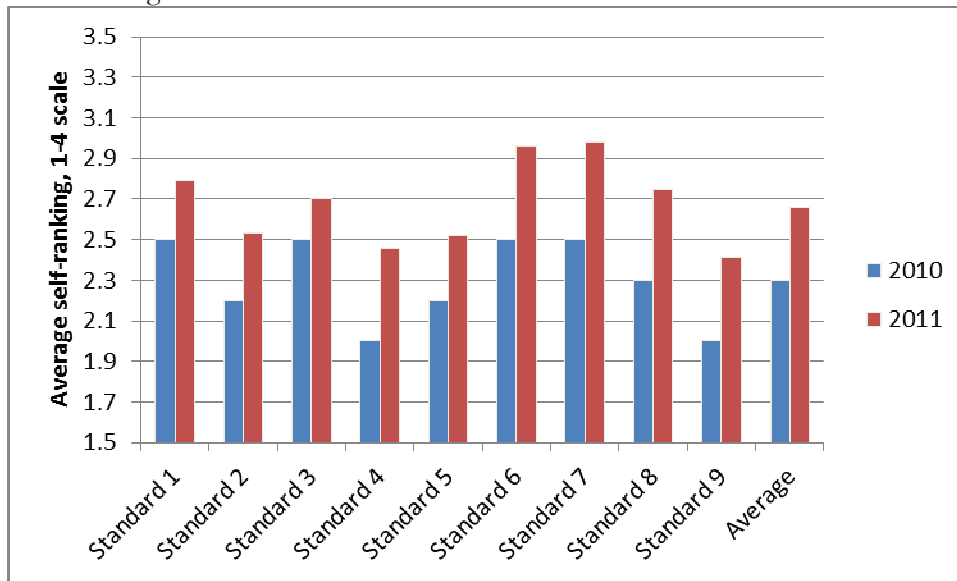
Differences between program types. As Chart 2 shows, the self-assessments were consistently higher for programs initially funded in 2006 or 2008 than for those initially funded in 2009. The older programs have had more time to become established and to share and develop best practices. Also, the older programs had the benefit of being funded initially when budgets were more generous. (Appendix Table 1.10)

Chart 2: *Continuum* self-rankings, differences between programs
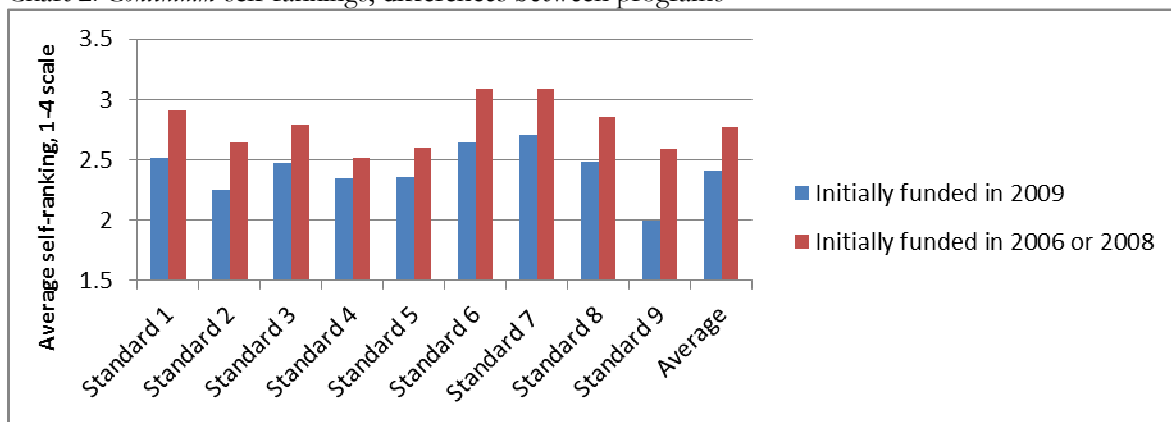
As Chart 3 shows, large programs typically assessed themselves higher than did small programs, except in Standard 3, Resources, and Standard 4, Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities. The larger programs have similar problems with budgets as do smaller programs and have more trouble coordinating with site administrators. According to Chart 4, district-based programs and consortium-based programs gave themselves nearly average ratings overall, but districts rated themselves higher for Standards 3 and 7, while consortia rated themselves higher for Standards 2 and 8.

Charts 3 and 4: *Continuum* self-rankings, differences between programs
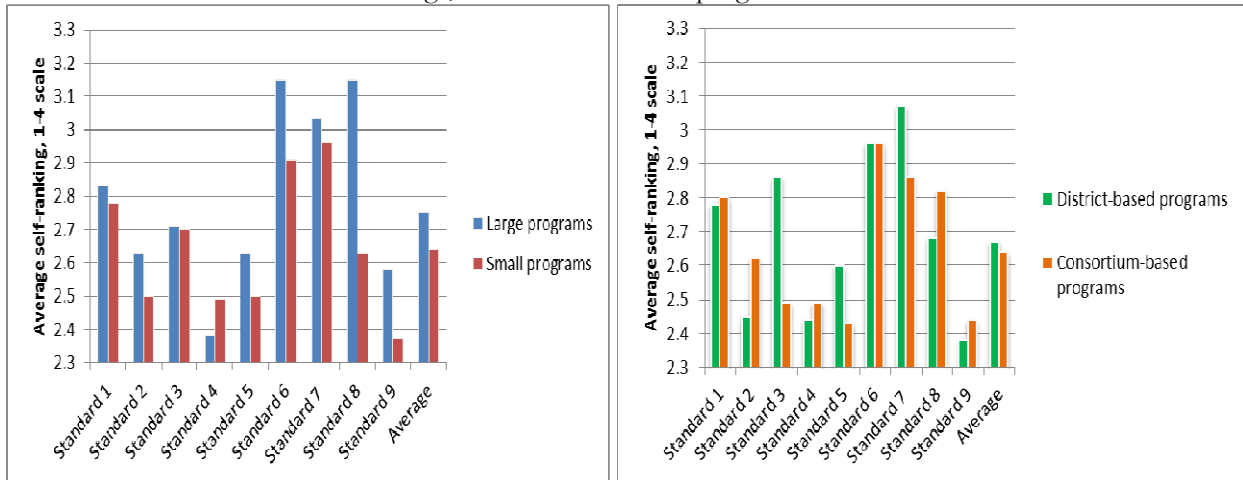
Lowest- and highest-ranking items. In 2011, the five lowest-rated individual criteria—those with overall scores below 2.4—all concerned program evaluation and use of data, stakeholder communication, or the involvement of site administrators. Programs rated themselves highest, with scores of at least 2.95, on criteria concerning: quality of mentor and novice teacher professional development; program leadership; and confidentiality of formative assessment. (Appendix Tables 1.1 – 1.9)
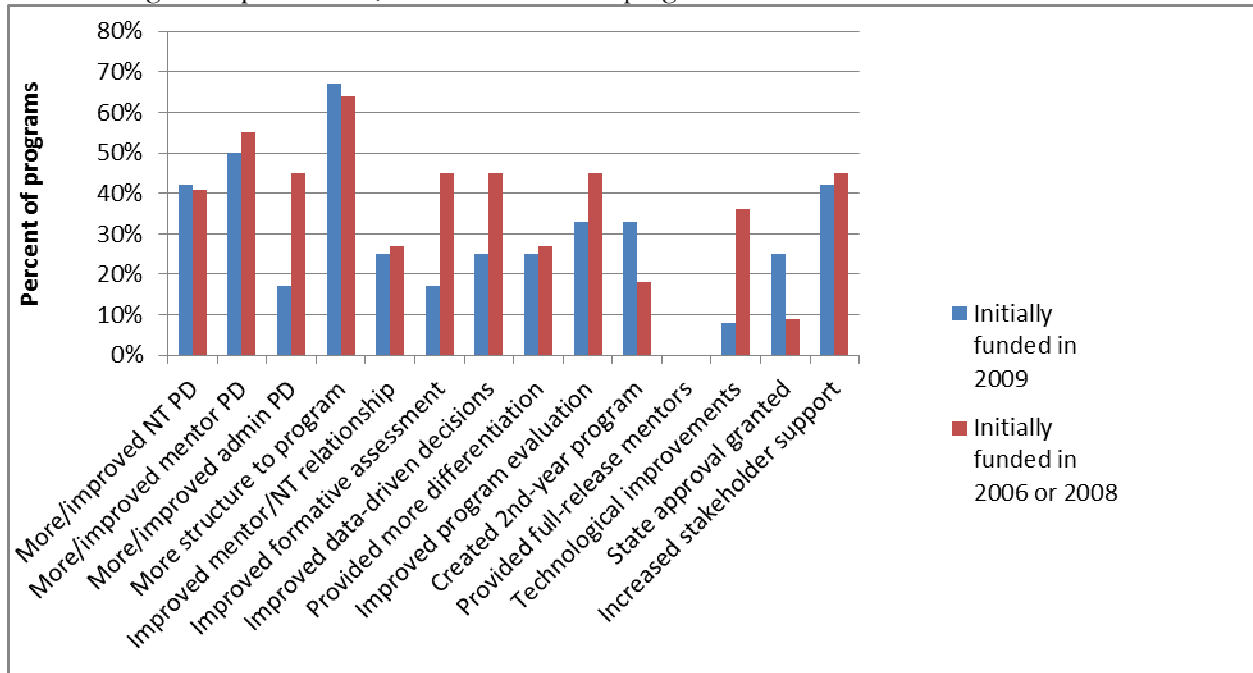
PROGRAM GOALS AND PROGRESS

Program improvements. As shown in Chart 5, in 2011, programs were provided with a list of improvements (e.g. "We offered more or improved new teacher trainings") and were asked to check whatever they had accomplished. Given budget cuts, it is perhaps unsurprising that programs were more likely to make less costly changes (e.g. increasing structure; increasing stakeholder support) rather than, for example, providing full-release mentors. (Appendix Table 2.1)

Chart 5: Program improvements during 2010-11
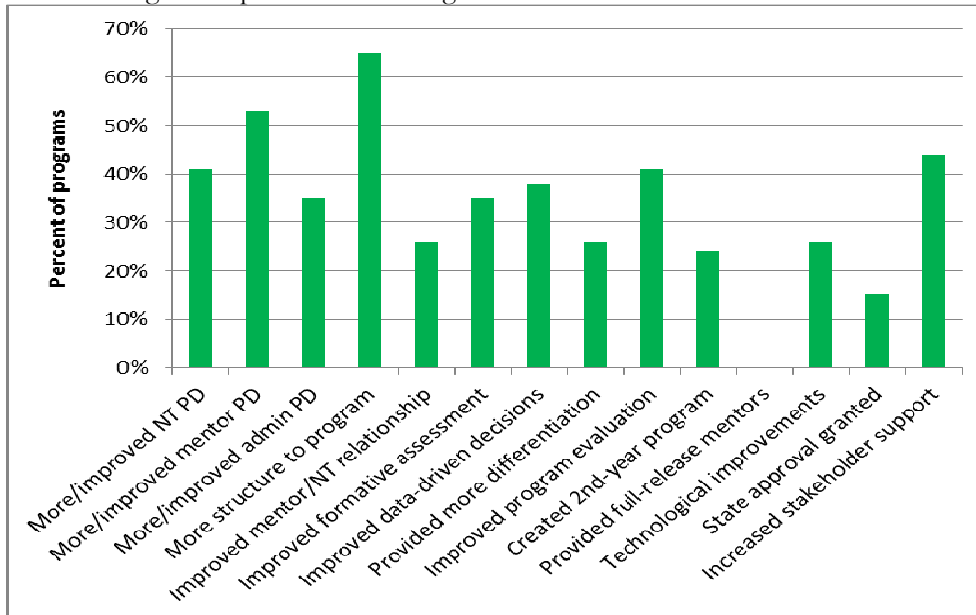
As shown in Chart 6, programs initially funded in 2009 were more likely to make improvements that older programs had already accomplished, such as providing more structure to the program and creating a second-year program. Programs initially funded in 2006 or 2008 reported making more improvements overall than did the newer programs—perhaps because FY11 budget cuts impacted newer programs to a greater extent. (Appendix Table 2.1)

Chart 6: Program improvements, differences between programs

Program goals. Programs were asked to select two standards to focus on for the coming year. As shown in Chart 7, the most commonly-selected standards were 2 (Program Goals and Design), 4 (Site Administrator Roles and Responsibilities), and 9 (Program Evaluation). Programs initially funded in 2009 were more likely than older programs to focus on mentor training and program evaluation and less likely to work on mentor selection and beginning teacher training. (Appendix Table 2.2)

Chart 7: Program goals, differences between programs
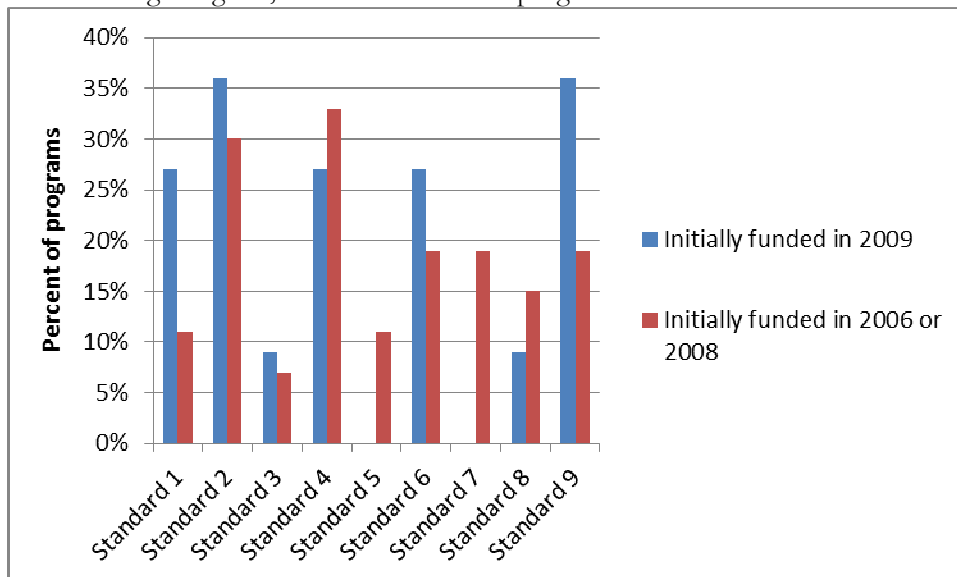
Program concerns. In an open-ended question, programs were asked to identify their main concerns with their program or the program's greatest weaknesses. The programs' dominant concerns fall into four categories: funding (e.g. funding cuts; lateness of payments); grant restrictions and requirements (e.g. 60-hour rule; $1,200 stipend for mentors); schools, districts, and administrators (e.g. lack of support; communication problems); and internal program concerns (e.g. a specific program component was poorly received or poorly attended). Many programs listed more than one concern. As shown in Chart 8, funding was the most dominant concern, although it was mentioned by more consortia and older programs than by single districts and programs initially funded in 2009. Also, large programs (more than 75 participants) were more likely than smaller programs to mention concerns regarding grant requirements. (Appendix Table 2.3)

Chart 8: Programs' greatest concerns, differences between programs
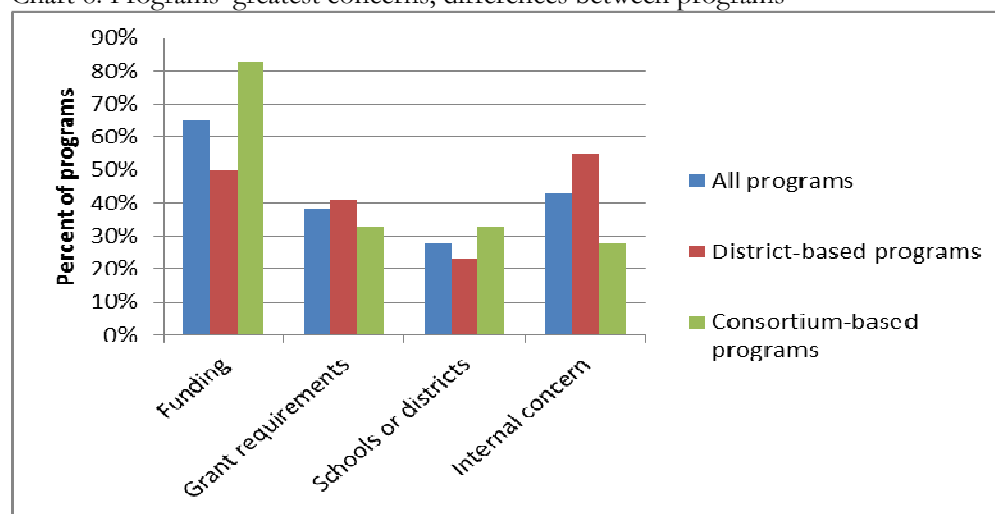

Chart 9 shows data from the same question as the previous chart but in more specific categories. These data are from open-ended questions, so programs were free to provide any concerns. Some may have only responded with their greatest concerns, even if other items were also problematic. Thus, the number in the "% of programs" column would likely be higher if these same items were presented in a list and programs were asked to check all concerns relevant to their program. (Appendix Table 2.4)

Chart 9: Programs' greatest concerns, specifics

| Program concern	% of programs
Funding/budget cuts necessitated cuts to mentor training and support.	20%
Funding/budget cuts necessitated cuts to coordinator/leadership time and support.	18%
Funding/budget cuts necessitated cuts in substitutes and release time.	13%
Funding/budget cuts necessitated cuts to novice teacher professional development.	13%
Funding/budget cuts meant that not all new teachers could be served.	8%
Other funding/budget problems.	35%
The ISBE 60-hours rule (for mentor/mentee contact) created hardships.	25%
The ISBE rule to pay $1,200 per mentor from grant funds created hardships.	18%
Administrators were unsupportive or there were communication problems.	13%
The late payment of grant funds caused difficulties.	13%
ROEs experienced specific problems (e.g. related to working with multiple districts).	10%
Other	50%

PROGRAM BUDGETS

ISBE funding levels. Programs were asked to list the total amount of money they received from ISBE for the academic year which roughly coincided with FY11. For each program, INTC divided the total ISBE funds by the total number of grant-funded new teachers. Chart 10 shows average per-teacher program funding and disaggregates the programs in several ways.

Programs initially funded in 2006 or 2008 received, on average, $730 more per beginning teacher than did newer programs, and smaller programs received $394 more per beginning teacher than did larger programs. These discrepancies were, however, smaller than in FY10, when those average differences were $822 and $1,198 respectively. One reason why the funding levels were more balanced in FY11 is likely because of new administrative rules which required programs to pay $1,200 to each mentor from grant funds. (Appendix Table 3.1)

Chart 10: Average ISBE funding per beginning teacher
In this chart, FY10 funds are graphed in a lighter shade while FY11 funds are in a darker shade. This chart is intended to showcase the different funding levels for disaggregated pairs of programs, so each pair is in a different color. The pink/red bars show expenses for districts vs. consortia, the green bars show expenses for new programs vs. older programs, and the purple bars show expenses for larger programs vs. smaller programs.
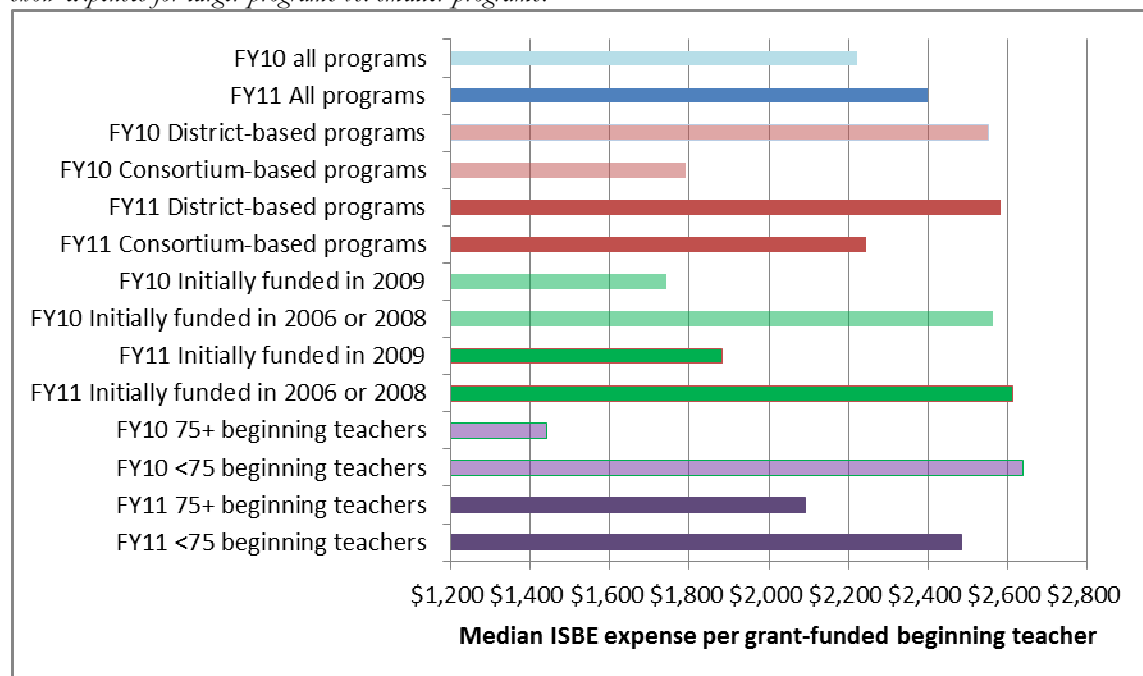

Total expenses. Programs often supplemented ISBE funds with district or other grant funding. Similarly, they often served more beginning teachers than those covered under the ISBE grant. The additional teachers may have been ones who did not qualify for services under ISBE rules (e.g. teachers who were new to the district but not new to the profession), or the grant may not have been enough to cover all new teachers in the district.

Twenty-nine programs provided sufficiently detailed expense data. Of those, 13 reported serving more beginning teachers than those covered under the ISBE grant. Nine of the 13 provided additional funds, and all but one of the nine provided enough extra that the total expense per beginning teacher was higher than the

ISBE expense per beginning teacher. Chart 11 shows combined data for all 29 programs which provided information. (Appendix Table 3.2)

Chart 11: Median total expenses (per new teacher) compared with median ISBE expenses (per grant-funded new teacher)
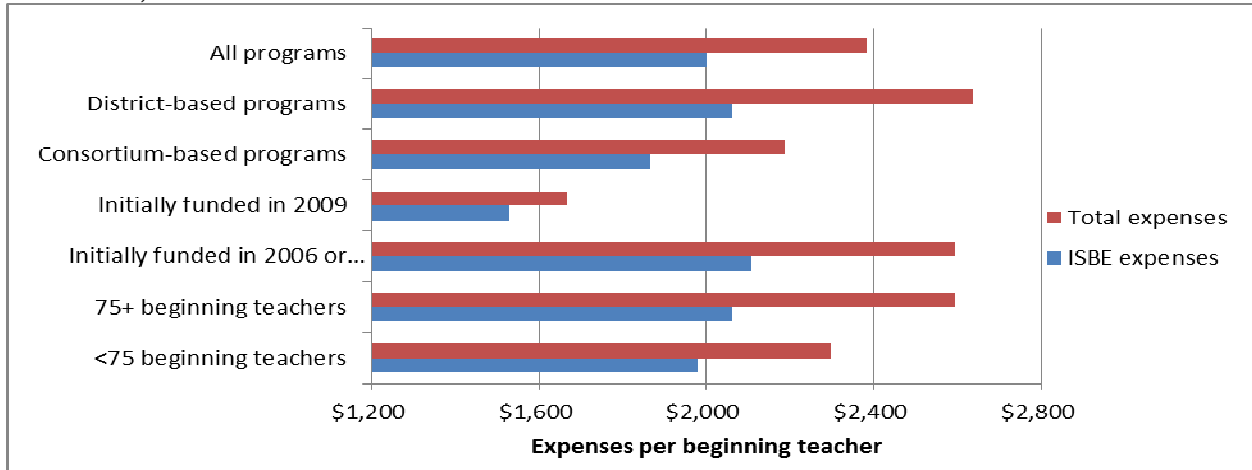
ISBE program costs, by category. Programs were provided with a list of expense categories and were asked what percent of their total ISBE grant expenses could be applied to each category. Chart 12 compares median program expenses for 2011 and 2010. The medians were calculated only using programs which indicated a non-zero response for each item; otherwise, many of the medians would be zero. Other categories—meals, clerical, mileage, evaluation, space rental, and other—were each under 5% of total program expenses, for both 2010 and 2011, and so are not included in this chart. (Appendix Table 3.4)

The biggest change between the two years is the dramatic increase in spending on mentor salary and benefits, likely due to a change in ISBE administrative rules that required all programs to pay each mentor $1,200 per year out of grant funds. Previously, mentor compensation was determined locally and mentor stipends could be paid using other funding sources.

Chart 12: Program expense categories for ISBE funds
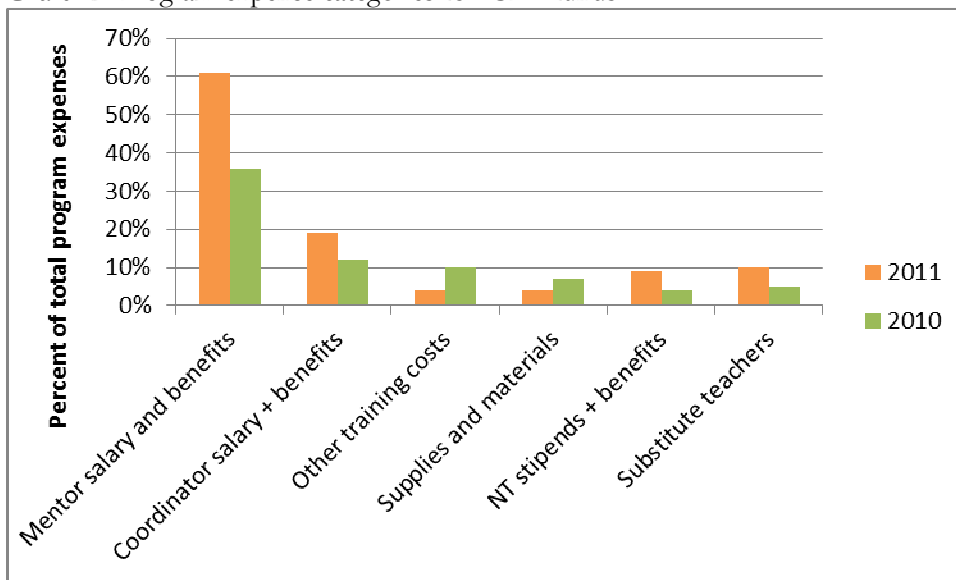
SUMMARY

Developing quality programs takes time—and money. Older programs—which were funded at a time of more generous budgets—consistently rate themselves higher than do newer programs.

Different programs have different challenges. For example, larger programs do have the benefits of economies of scale and potentially more resources (financial and otherwise) to work with, but they have more trouble organizing those resources and coordinating with site administrators.

Programs most need assistance with evaluation, stakeholder communication, and administrator involvement—and are working to improve in these areas. These areas continue to be the lowest-rated items on the *Continuum* self-assessments, and the areas in which programs are most likely to set goals for future improvement.

In lean economic times, programs continue to improve, but make only inexpensive changes. In 2010-11, programs reported providing more structure to participants and working to increase stakeholder support. None reported making costly improvements like providing full-release mentors.

Older, more established programs continue to innovate and improve. Older programs do not report falling into a rut; in fact, programs initially funded in 2006 or 2008 reported making more improvements than did programs initially funded in 2009.

Funding issues, grant administrative rules, and local relationships top the programs' list of concerns. Programs felt they were hampered by funding cuts and late payments as well as grant restrictions and requirements. Many also mentioned problems in achieving support and communication with schools, districts, and administrators. Programs also described internal program weaknesses that they were trying to improve, such as specific induction components which were poorly received.

Funding disparities continued in FY11, but they were smaller than in FY10. Certain types of programs—particularly those serving more than 75 new teachers, and those initially funded in 2009—received less funding per new teacher than did other programs. However, these disparities are smaller than they were a year earlier.

Programs supplemented ISBE grant funds with other sources of funding. With new administrative rules, the average program reported that mentor salaries took up a much higher percentage of its grant funds. To pay for other induction activities—and to provide mentoring services for new teachers who would not qualify for ISBE funding—programs spent district monies and other grant funds.