



A Union of Professionals

Dear INTC Conference Participants,

As President of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, I am pleased to support “Moving Toward High Quality Induction and Mentoring”, a conference planned by the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) and its partner organizations.

The IFT has long advocated quality induction/mentoring programs for Illinois educators that are collaboratively developed by union leaders and district administrators. The work of induction and mentoring is essential to Illinois public schools. The Illinois Education Research Council noted in a 2003 policy brief that “between 32 and 44 percent of Illinois’ public school teachers leave the profession within the first five years.” However, several decades of research on the experiences of new teachers indicates that 95 percent of new teachers who are provided induction and mentoring support are likely to remain in the profession. Quality induction/mentoring programs provide that essential support needed to keep effective teachers in the classroom.

The mission statement of the Illinois State Board of Education includes the following goal; *Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.* This conference is an essential component of the work of stakeholders throughout Illinois to help ISBE reach this key goal.

I wish your conference every success, and I pledge the continued support of the IFT to work with the INTC and other statewide educational organizations to advocate for resources, including statewide funding, to support the development of high quality induction and mentoring programs.

Sincerely,

Ed Geppert Jr., President
Illinois Federation of Teachers

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