BEGINNING TEACHER INDUCTION PILOT PROGRAMS: A DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST YEAR OF PILOT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

ILLINOIS NEW TEACHER COLLABORATIVE
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois General Assembly appropriated two million dollars in funding for mentoring and induction pilot programs during the 2006 legislative session. Following a competitive application and review process through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), ten sites were funded, and the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) became the administrative home for the pilots. During May and June 2007, a team of evaluators from INTC conducted interviews at each site, in addition to reviewing program documents, initial proposals, mid term reports, and notes from meetings among the pilot leaders, in order to determine the successes and challenges of first year implementation. The report summarizes conclusions in three categories: funding, program implementation, and program evaluation. These conclusions are necessarily limited to data based on less than one year of program implementation and should be viewed as a foundation from which to improve induction and mentoring programs over time. Also, at this point, induction and mentoring programs for new teachers are not directly linked conceptually or technically with initial teacher preparation. This creates an unfortunate situation that increases the perceived division between district goals for new teachers and the services provided by institutions of higher education.

FUNDING

State funding makes a positive difference, enabling districts, regional offices, and their partners to plan for more comprehensive and systemic programs than in previous years, when state funding was unavailable.

The timing of funding decisions matters; programs need to know they have funds prior to the beginning of the school year.

The current level of funding for pilot programs is far from sufficient to serve the needs in the state of Illinois.

> **RECOMMENDATION 1:** The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to continue, refine, and expand the current programs in which the original pilots are situated.
>
> **RECOMMENDATION 2:** The Illinois General Assembly and ISBE should develop timely, dependable, and multiyear funding procedures that enable mentoring and induction programs to continue from year to year without gaps in funding streams.
>
> **RECOMMENDATION 3:** The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to thoughtfully fund, support, and evaluate a multi-year, statewide scale up that will add programs in additional sites which approximate the geographic and demographic contexts in which the original pilots are situated.

Illinois New Teacher Collaborative

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Building level administrators should be more involved with induction and mentoring than they were this year.

Support from central administration is important for program success.

Participation by all stakeholders (teacher organizations, new and experienced teachers, administrators, etc.) is enhanced by communication structures that provide continuous, timely, and relevant information.

Mentor selection, support, and accountability are important to new teacher and program success.

Networking and sharing (within and across programs) are important to continuously improving both individual and collective efforts.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Programs should provide initial orientation, ongoing networking, and professional development sessions that clearly define roles for partners, new teachers, mentors and their administrators prior to the beginning of and also during each school year.

RECOMMENDATION 5: ISBE and INTC should provide continuing outreach to inform all stakeholders, including superintendents and school boards, of the importance of quality induction and mentoring programs and the impact that high quality programs can have on their districts.

RECOMMENDATION 6: INTC, ISBE, and the programs should develop communication protocols and procedures that provide timely and relevant information to all stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION 7: ISBE should hold programs accountable for a recognized procedure for recruiting, selecting, training, assigning, and evaluating mentors that meets specified criteria developed by all stakeholders served by the program.

RECOMMENDATION 8: INTC and the programs should increase their efforts to promote collaboration and sharing within and across the pilots and, when possible, to serve as a resource for programs throughout the state.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Requirements for program evaluation promote accountability and provide, at a minimum, strong signals that documenting both process and impact are important.

Current evaluation goals, resources, and procedures are not sufficient to capture information on cost effectiveness, retention (in building, district, or state), quality and impact of mentoring, quality and impact of professional development, and overall program impact on teaching practice and student learning.

RECOMMENDATION 9: ISBE should continue to hold all programs that receive state funds targeted for mentoring and induction accountable for a yearly evaluation report.

RECOMMENDATION 10: ISBE, INTC, and the Illinois Induction Policy Team should work together to create and fund a long-range, multiple measures, research and evaluation design that will identify the factors that promote continuous program improvement, as well as the links among the mentoring and induction program, teaching practice, and student learning.

BACKGROUND ON INDUCTION AND MENTORING EFFORTS IN ILLINOIS

In June 2006 the Illinois General Assembly approved $2,000,000 for the Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Programs. This funding was the result, in part, of efforts by numerous individuals and groups, all concerned with providing new teachers with professional resources as they entered classrooms for the first time. Following a competitive process, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) funded ten programs, and the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative became the administrative home of these pilot programs. One of the Collaborative's responsibilities was to provide a progress report on key features of the programs and the successes and challenges they encountered during the first year of implementation.

THE ILLINOIS CONTEXT

In 1996, the report *Framework for Restructuring the Recruitment, Preparation, Licensure and Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* was released by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). In the same year, Illinois established a formal partnership with the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), a non-partisan, non-profit group dedicated to improving the quality of teaching across the United States. In 1997 the Illinois General Assembly created a three-tiered licensing system based on the recommendations from the ISBE report. The options for meeting the requirements for obtaining a Standard Certificate included participating in a two – year,

- *Initial Certificate* – valid for the first four years of teaching
- *Standard Certificate* – issued to teachers after completing four years of teaching and also completing one of the approved professional development options for beginning teachers and renewable every five years based on participation in continuing professional development
- *National Board Certificate* – issued to teachers who successfully pass the assessments conducted by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

state-approved program induction program. (Appendix 1) In 2000, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) presented a recommendation proposing state-funded induction and mentoring programs for all Illinois school districts. Since that time, a number of reports, from the business, policy, and academic communities, called for a greater emphasis on supporting teachers who were new to the profession.

In 2003, legislation was passed requiring mentoring and induction for all new teachers and funding was allocated, but never released.

2001- *Illinois Policy Inventory on Teaching and Learning* (Illinois Governor's Council on Educator Quality) recommended an extended graduate-level teacher preparation program, the funding of mentoring and induction programs for beginning teachers, and the improvement of the quality of professional development programs.

2003 – *Teacher Induction in Illinois: Evidence from the Illinois Teacher Study* (Illinois Educational Research Council) recommended that schools and districts provide mentoring and induction programs that could provide a wide range of activities for meeting the needs of new teachers.

2004 -- *What are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?* (Smith & Ingersoll) documented the positive impacts of strong induction and mentoring programs and collaborative school contexts on teacher retention nationwide.

2004 – *Improving Results: Transforming the Teaching Profession in Illinois* (Task Force on Teacher Preparation and Initial Professional Development, Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago) recommended funding for a comprehensive system of support for new teachers.

In the academic year 2004-2005, two groups were formed, each with the goal of moving the mentoring and induction agenda forward for new teachers. Based in part on the University of Illinois *P-16 Initiative* and with funding from the State Farm Companies Foundation, a group of educators, business community members, and state agencies agreed to create the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC), to be based, initially, at the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. With funding from the Joyce Foundation and assistance from the New Teacher Center (NTC), based at the University of California at Santa Cruz, a group of educators, business community members, state agencies, and policy makers met to consider a policy brief, prepared by NTC staff, on the status of support for new teachers in Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The result of that meeting was the formation of the Illinois Induction Policy Team (IIPT). The IIPT and the INTC agreed to work together, with the Policy Team taking the lead role in charting a strategy that would lead to a requirement for funding and implementing statewide mentoring and induction programs for new teachers based on effective practices and programs, the ISBE strategic plan, and the Illinois context. The first action item in that strategy was to request funds for demonstration, or pilot programs to showcase a variety of programs within the diverse contexts of schools and districts in Illinois.

When the Illinois General Assembly allocated funds for pilot programs in 2006, the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative, working closely with the Illinois State Board of Education, was selected to be the administrative home for the pilots. The Illinois Induction Policy Team continued to meet and provide guidance on the implementation and study of the pilots. The Joyce Foundation funded SRI International, working with the Illinois Education Research Council (IERC), to survey all new teachers in the pilot programs and to conduct case studies of selected pilots, and the resulting report will be available in late 2007. The following sections of this report, prepared by INTC staff, describe the progress of the pilot programs during the first year of implementation, focusing on the successes and the challenges they experienced. Recommendations are made for funding, supporting, and evaluating additional induction and mentoring programs throughout the state.

PROCESS OF SELECTING PILOT SITES

Based in part on input from the Illinois Induction Policy Team, on June 28, 2006, ISBE issued a request for proposals to be submitted by July 31, 2006. Eligible applicants included school districts, public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, charter schools, and area vocational centers. A partnership made up of any combination of the entities described above or a partnership made up of one or more such entities and one or more institutions of higher education, professional associations, Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), or not-for-profit providers of educational services could also apply.

Proposals for implementing pilot programs were requested in one of two categories: programs meeting the basic requirements for state-approved mentoring and induction programs (ranging from $1,200 to $2,500 per new teacher to be served by the program) and more intensive programs (ranging from $2,500 to $5,000 per new teacher to be served by the program), depending upon the level of resources needed and exclusive of a local match of funds. Each pilot was required to provide funds or other resources for a portion of its project as a local match based on the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Thirty-eight proposals were submitted and INTC, working with ISBE staff, coordinated the proposal review process. Proposal reviewers were recruited through the ISBE website, the *State Superintendent's Weekly Message*, the INTC website, and the INTC and IIPT listservs. Twenty-one readers were selected based on their familiarity with induction and mentoring initiatives and to ensure diversity in terms of location, role/group, race, and ethnicity.

The reviewers appreciated the range and the content of the proposals. They recommended funding to as many as possible, knowing that there would not be enough money to fund every eligible proposal. By the end of the review process, the group came to consensus on which of the strongest proposals represented different program models, served diverse areas of the state, and benefited schools and districts that served at risk populations. ISBE staff determined those proposals that would be funded and at what level. Because of the low level of available funding, the initial ranges indicated in the RFP were not necessarily used when the funding was awarded.

The ten, funded, pilot programs represented districts of all sizes throughout the state. By design, the sites were chosen to represent a wide variation in size, type of program, geographic location, and populations served, while still attempting to direct funds to areas with greater need. All of the funded pilots served, at least in part, schools not meeting Annual Yearly Progress as defined by No Child Left Behind or schools on the state's Academic Watch List or Early Warning List.

ILLINOIS PILOTS

- Rockford
- Carpentersville
- Chicago
- Lee/Ogle (Dixon)
- Plainfield
- ROE Schoolworks Rantoul
- Champaign
- Quincy
- Springfield
- St. Clair
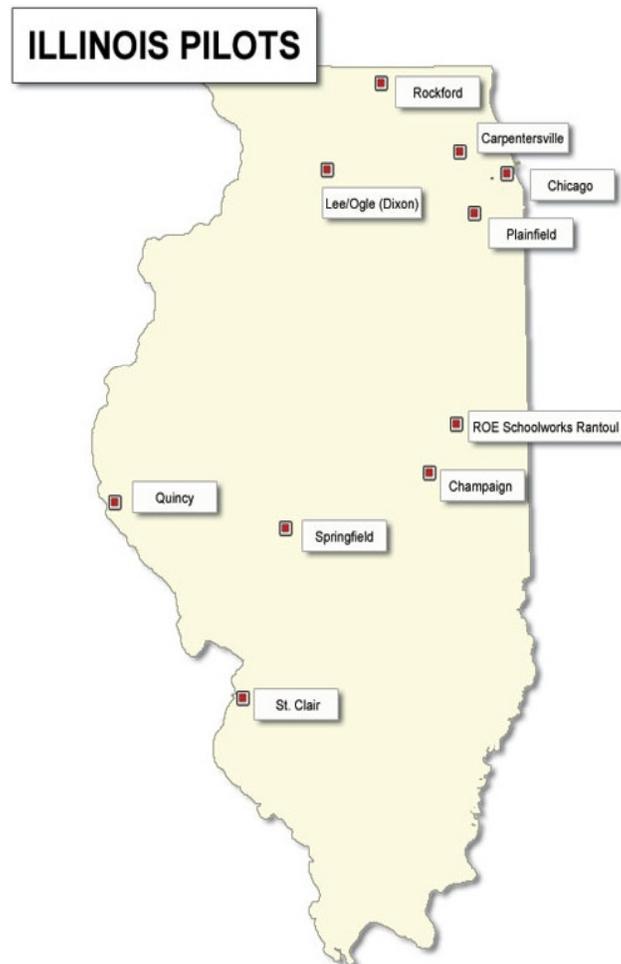
As one can see from the map, five of the sites are north of I-80 and five are south of I-80. More specifically, one site is in the East St. Louis area; three sites are located in central Illinois; one site is located in western Illinois; two sites are located in northern Illinois; and three sites are located in northeastern Illinois. In terms of the scale of each pilot program, three are partnerships based at regional offices of education, which serve urban, suburban, and rural districts; seven are single-district programs. Of the seven programs that are single district/single area[1]; three of the sites are large urban districts; one of the sites is a suburban school district; and three sites are small urban districts serving a diverse student population. From this point, throughout this report the pilot programs will not be referred to by name, in order to protect confidentiality.

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[1] Hereafter referred to as district-based programs, for the sake of brevity.

SIZE AND SCALE

The funding directly provided support for approximately 40 school districts, 765 teachers (495 new teachers and 270 mentors) and approximately 18,000 students. The number of schools served by the ten pilots ranged from five to 60 (11 to 47 in district based programs). Two district-based programs were in areas experiencing rapid growth, resulting in new buildings and large increases in new hires; two district-based programs served schools that traditionally have been difficult to staff. At the other extreme, one program served a district with decreasing student enrollments resulting in possible staff reductions and difficult district-wide decisions which could impact beginning teachers.

The three programs based at regional offices of education (ROEs) served both small and large districts with a broad range of student socioeconomic status (SES). One ROE consortium experienced mid-year staff changes at the ROE and was able to serve only three districts, as compared to the 14 or more districts served by the other two ROE's. Table 1 presents a brief description of each pilot, the grade levels of teachers it serves, as well as its mentor to teacher ratio, its primary partnerships, and where the program administration is situated.

Table 1. Descriptive information on the ten pilot programs   R=Released

Mentor Type	Serving	Approximate Ratio Mentor: Teacher	Primary Partner	Administrative Organization
Classroom Teachers	P-12	1:1	Teacher Assoc/Union	Human Resources collaborating with Principals
Full time R	K-8	1:14 1:9	Prof Develop Entity	Prof Develop Entity collaborating with Superintendent & Human Resources
Retirees	P-12	1:7	Teacher Assoc/Union Prof Develop Entity	Professional Development & Curriculum & Instruction
Classroom Teachers	P-12	1:1	School districts	Superintendent's Office collaborating with School Districts
Classroom Teachers	P-12	1:1	Prof Develop Entity	Probationary Teacher Committee
Classroom Teachers	P-12	1:2	Teacher Assoc/Union	Assistant Superintendent office collaborating with Human Resources & Professional Development
Classroom Teachers, Retirees, Part time R	P-12	1:15 1:7 1:4	Teacher Assoc/Union Prof Develop Entity	Central Administration (Grants) collaborating with Human Resources & Curriculum & Instruction
Classroom Teachers	9-12	1:1	School Districts & ROE's	Professional Development Office collaborating with other ROE's & Superintendents
Classroom Teachers, Part time R	P-12	1:25 1:1	Teacher Assoc/Union Prof Develop Entity	Human Resources
Classroom Teachers	P-12	1:1 1:7	School Districts Teacher Assoc/Union	Assistant Superintendent's Office collaborating with Superintendents, Principals & schools' Professional Development

In September 2006, in consultation with the IIPT, INTC hired a full-time staff member to create a network among the pilots, to assist with pilot program implementation, including preparation of their evaluation reports, and to coordinate the INTC cross-pilot evaluation process. Throughout the 2006-07 academic year, the statewide coordinator maintained weekly contact with the pilots through e-mail and telephone calls, made site visits, and conducted four cross-pilot group meetings, one of which was held at the INTC annual winter conference.

SAMPLE DISCUSSION TOPICS
- Program Evaluation (formative assessment, data collection, report preparation)
- Personnel Issues (hiring practices, formative evaluation)
- Implementation Concerns (partner issues, general information interpreting rules and regulations)
- Conference Logistics (planning presentations, brainstorming)
- Public Relations (board presentations, preparing for interviews with media)

In addition, the INTC technology assistants redesigned the INTC website (intc.ed.uiuc.edu) to provide information about the pilots and to provide an electronic communication network among the pilots. Using software, provided by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and housed on the server based at the College of Education, (intcmoodle.ed.uiuc.edu), a "Key Contacts" community was created to provide the pilots' coordinators and partners with a private, online space to obtain important documents, to share information, and to continue conversations which began during quarterly, face-to-face pilot meetings. The pilots' statewide coordinator used this site to post announcements and important forms to be used by coordinators for reporting progress throughout the year. In addition, coordinators used the "Public Practice" discussion forum for sharing resources and ideas with one another. Each site had the opportunity to create a site-specific section on the website. Volunteers from each site have been trained in using Moodle. One of the sites has initiated training at each of their schools to encourage use. Two of the 10 sites are actively using their local Moodle websites on a consistent basis and another is gearing up for use. To increase site use even more, INTC staff facilitated a meeting, in conjunction with the June meeting of the pilots, to obtain feedback. Based on this feedback INTC continues to improve site utility.

In addition to pilot-specific activities, INTC staff continued to work collaboratively with the IIPT to make resources available for the pilots and for all other groups interested in promoting quality in induction and mentoring across the state. Specifically, two products have been the focus of IIPT subcommittee work during FY 2007. The first was a document now called *Moving Toward/Developing Beyond* (Appendix 2), developed to identify the necessary key elements that should be addressed in a quality beginning teacher induction program. This document was shared with the pilots as a guide from which to compare or benchmark their programs. In addition, ISBE sent this resource to every school district, regional office of education, college and university, and professional organization in the state for guidance in applying for any new mentoring and induction program funding, should additional dollars become available.

The second product, still being developed, is the *Illinois Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. It is intended to set forth a clear framework for developing programs that meet local needs and are responsive to local contexts. This document is intended to help educators reflect on best practices and effective structures for designing and implementing high quality, effective induction programs regardless of program model. The standards are in draft form now; when completed they will undergo ISBE review and approval processes.

At this point it is important to recognize that no single pilot will exhibit all of the characteristics suggested by these documents, particularly at this stage of development and implementation. The INTC staff, in conjunction with the network of pilot programs, drew from these recommendations as a basis for reflecting on progress during the first year of the program and for planning to improve programs during the second year.

To prepare this report, INTC staff, in consultation with IERC, ISBE, SRI International, and the IIPT, formulated fourteen program evaluation questions (Appendix 3), which were shared with the pilots at two group meetings. The pilot programs were aware that they would be asked to address these questions, as well as to participate in the SRI new teacher surveys.

DATA SOURCES

Data sources included the pilots' original proposals, their mid-term reports, conference presentations, and the pilots' final reports. To supplement the pilots' self reports, INTC staff visited each of the pilots during May and June to interview participants. On each site visit at least one (or whenever possible two) INTC staff members talked with the pilot administrator (also called the key contact) and a central or regional office administrator. The staff conducted separate focus group interviews with new teachers, site administrators, and mentors. When applicable, staff members from the pilots' partner organizations were also interviewed. Notes from all of the interviews and relevant data from the pilots' self reports were summarized in a template (Appendix 4) for each pilot, and the templates were returned to the pilot key contacts in June 2007 for review and elaboration. The key contacts were able to draw from information provided by the templates, and they were able to draw on the SRI survey summaries for their individual sites in order to prepare their own first year reports to ISBE. By the end of August 2007, all final reports from the pilots (Appendix 5) and all revised templates arrived at INTC and the staff began preparing this report.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCESSES

Data were first organized by the original evaluation questions. Staff members grouped the data for each question into similar responses within each category. In doing so, they both discovered redundancies in the data and aggregated data across the pilots. When data were not available, staff members reported the missing data. The data were then grouped into the following categories:

- Historical information (preparation and related events that occurred prior to receiving the ISBE funding)
- Ability to fully implement proposed pilot program activities
- Successes experienced across the pilots
- Challenges experienced across the pilots
- Retention of new teachers in pilot programs
- Information on the quality of those retained and the reasons for new teachers leaving or remaining in a pilot school/district
- Any cost savings attributed to the induction program

Similarities and differences within each of the categories were identified and these formed the base for this report.

DATA QUALITY

The key contacts and the participants who were interviewed were diligent in providing INTC candid information about their ability to make progress in Year One. Each of the sites had made a good faith attempt to collect and analyze their own data and reported that they valued having data from which to

refine their programs. Two sample quotes from pilot key contacts that are characteristic of many others regarding the evaluation are:

> *"I'm pleased about the evaluation process: The levels, the depth, the thoughtfulness; attention paid to this key piece."*
>
> *"We need to think deeply about the assessment data we collect to paint a complete picture."*

The pilot sites provided information from a variety of sources, but mainly they relied on self-reported data from the new teachers and the mentors. While there is some consistency across the projects that were based on similar models and were facilitated by one, common partner, most of the sites did not consistently provide data on topics such as the percentages of new teachers who were satisfied with their mentors, or who felt that their teaching had improved and in what ways. It is important to note that, in the absence of a common data collection and reporting guide, the pilots' data were sometimes inconsistent across sources and time periods. This difficulty was anticipated and has provided formative feedback so that the evaluation plan for the second year can be more coherent. In addition, more information from SRI surveys of new teachers, aggregated across pilots, will be available once the SRI analysis is complete.

LIMITATIONS

It is important to note that, in general, determining the impact of pilot funding was confounded by a number of factors. First, the pilot programs have only been in place for less than one academic year, making it difficult to determine if progress or lack of progress is related to timing, to district differences, or to excitement about the new program. Also the data collected did not include information about other professional development occurring within the schools, about school working conditions, about district or building evaluation processes, or about other informal professional support that the new teachers may have received in addition to the formal induction program components. In addition, all ten pilots supplemented the ISBE funding with money from other internal and external sources. As a result, it is not possible to separate the impact of a single source of funding.

Finally, the descriptive data that inform this report are limited in at least three ways. All data are based on self-reports from pilot program participants. While it is noted that they were candid in discussing their successes and challenges, there is likely to be some bias in what they reported. Second, the focus group participants were selected by program administrators and, therefore, do not constitute a representative sample across each pilot. In an attempt to guard against this bias, trends are reported across the pilots and conclusions are based on information that captures issues that are common to all of the pilots. The third limitation is that much of the data were collected and analyzed by INTC staff, people who work with the pilot programs on a regular basis. To guard against staff members' biases, only those conclusions and recommendations that represented consensus across three or more staff members, one of whom has not worked directly with the pilot programs, are included. Also, several people who are not working directly with program implementation vetted this report.

All of the sites met the spirit of what was in their initial proposal, but were frustrated by receiving funding after their school year had begun. Two of the 10 sites immediately modified their expectations because of the late start. One of the sites did not begin until second semester. With that said, all ten sites selected mentors, trained mentors, assigned mentors to beginning teachers, required mentors to meet with their beginning teachers, and expected observations of mentors or other veteran teachers by new teachers, as well as observations of new teachers by mentors or other veteran teachers.

PREVIOUS INDUCTION AND MENTORING EFFORTS AT THE PILOT SITES

The sites varied in the degree to which their efforts were built on programs created prior to being selected as a pilot program. All ten pilots provided specific details of how their programs were an improvement compared to what was provided in previous years. Half of the pilot programs indicated that no formal district or regional program existed prior to funding and that if there were any sort of induction or mentoring occurring previously, it was in the form of informal teaching "buddies" taking place at the individual building level. Three of the funded pilots reported having "mentoring only" programs, which included some initial mentor training prior to the 2006-2007 school year. The remaining two pilots reported experience using the *Pathwise* program, including both mentoring and professional development activities in prior years.

Eight of the ten pilots were approved to offer induction and mentoring by ISBE before applying to be a pilot program. Two pilot programs were unaware that their previous program had been approved by ISBE. Four pilots reported that they developed programs that met state criteria and three reported developing enhanced programs. The other three did not report on this topic. In addition, several programs felt that being a pilot provided them with opportunities to learn and work with others in similar districts.

NETWORKING

The pilot key contacts also indicated that the ability to network across districts was an added benefit of receiving funding for the pilot programs. This networking benefit was indicated with respect to the INTC sponsored meetings and the annual conference. Key contacts were grateful for the opportunity to learn from each other, ask questions of the group, and gain valuable insight into the way others were approaching barriers to implementation. They also appreciated the opportunity to share strategies, tools, and approaches to program implementation. The following sample statements were taken from three different 'end of session' evaluations by participants:

> *"I'M PLEASED…..*
> *that the professionals involved in this project will be an invaluable resource!*
> *that I have the opportunity to network with others who are creating/sustaining mentor programs.*
> *that we were in a small group that could interact with each other.*
> *I like the smaller group setting. I was able to establish relationships and made contacts."*
> *"I BELIEVE…..*
> *the conversations we shared in Room 26 around induction/mentoring programs shaping district cultures and the ways mentors are being trained and supported was powerful. I wish we could have captured that for the legislature.*
> *I AGREE…..*
> *that we need to keep networking and pushing our learning as directors.*
> *with the value of sharing.*
> *we need another meeting date – with more time for sharing out what is working.*
> *I LEARNED…..*
> *a lot from others already."*

In addition, three of the ten pilot programs utilized the same consulting organization for mentor training. These professional development sessions often occurred simultaneously for these three districts, and mentors were able to share information across districts and schools. Participants in these trainings valued the benefit of being able to network with other participating districts.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

The funded programs represent a variety of delivery models. Four of the pilots are based, in part, on the model developed by the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz[2]; Three are based, in part, on the model developed by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) for ISBE, *Induction for the 21st Century Educator (ICE 21)*[3], two are based, in part on models developed by the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT)[4]. Even though some programs are based on similar models, it would not be accurate to assume that these programs are exactly like one another. There is considerable variation in the staffing and implementation of similar models; there is considerable variation in the amount of supplemental funding each pilot receives in addition to funding provided by the grant; and there is considerable variation in the history of involvement with mentoring and induction prior to receiving state funding. Indeed, many of the models are blended. For example, one of the sites using the New Teacher Center Model also infused materials and training from Charlotte Danielson (1996). One of the sites using the ICE 21 materials supplemented with other training. In summary, it is important to note that significant local adaptations were made in all cases.

> **SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS THAT CROSS PILOTS INCLUDE:**
>
> - Multi year (at least 2 years) programs with the second (and subsequent years) focusing on data which improves classroom practice
>
> - Documentation and evidence of teacher progress through the use of regularly scheduled, protected time with new teachers and their mentors
>
> - An established recruitment, selection, and professional development process that focuses on finding excellent veteran teachers who are able to provide the needed emotional and logistical support, as well as give new teachers the concrete suggestions for moving the their practice forward, which ultimately improves student engagement and achievement
>
> - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for administrators coupled with meaningful professional development to ensure a supportive culture with ongoing communication and collaboration with all other stakeholders

Many, if not all, of these components align with documents mentioned earlier: *Moving Toward/Developing Beyond* and *Illinois Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*.

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[2] http://www.newteachercenter.org/ti_induction_model.php
[3] http://21stcenturyinduction.org/program/program.html
[4] http://www.ift-aft.org/forms/index3.aspx?TID=top123&PID=16

SERVICES AND SUPPORT OFFERED THROUGH THE PROGRAM MODELS

The original RFP required thorough outreach and communication regarding the availability of positions for mentors and clear criteria for the skills and experience sought. Each of the sites took a different approach to identifying mentors and each had selection processes that were as diverse as the sites themselves. Five of the sites required letters of recommendation as a part of their selection process from colleagues, administrators, or both. Five of the pilots indicated that there was a quality threshold requiring "excellent" or "exemplary" ratings of some type. Two other sites required that mentors have completed district sanctioned mentor training programs. Six pilots reported that there was a review and/or selection committee or team for selecting mentors, and that selection process was collaborative. There was also some variation in making the final selection decision. Six pilots also reported that mentors were selected by the principal or building administrator.

Eight of the sites had an in-building, one-to-one mentor-to-new-teacher model. However, at three of the sites a new role of lead, coordinating, or coaching mentors was created. These mentors supplemented the work of the one to one building/content area/grade level mentors by providing support for the building mentors, working closely with the building administrators, and organizing training and monitoring paperwork/documentation. By having the two distinct levels of support many of the perceived barriers such as time, resources, personnel matching, which other sites found difficult, seemed to have been lesser issues. Two programs also recruited retired teachers, as well as teachers within buildings, to serve as individual mentors, so that the released teachers could serve small groups of beginning teachers while, at the same time, the building mentors were able to provide individualized attention. Eight of the sites offered release time or partial released time for at least a part of the mentors' responsibilities. Another site provided a stipend for the extra time mentors spent working with new teachers. One of the districts providing partial release split the mentor's time between program coordination and providing services to a school that was identified as especially difficult to staff. Three sites reported multiple ratios for their sites. The first reported a 4:1 ratio for their full time classroom released mentors and a second 15:1 ratio for their retired mentors. (Table 1).

All of the sites offered some training for their mentors; four provided training at the beginning of the programs, while all ten provided training or networking support throughout the program. The amount of training ranged from 1-12 days, with an average of 6.5 days of training per site. The three consortia, based at regional offices of education, all provided mentor training but they differed considerably as to how and when the training occurred. Mentors reported that it was important to receive orientation prior to the beginning of the school year as well as ongoing professional development for themselves and teachers. Common topics presented in successful programs included:

- Dealing with the first day of school
- Adult learning vs. student learning
- Time management
- Improving student achievement
- Classroom management
- Communicating with parents and community
- Finding internal resources
- Coaching vs. evaluation
- Effective questioning techniques
- Formative assessment as it pertains to students, teaching practices, and mentoring processes
- Recordkeeping, including keeping journals/logs
- Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and relevant content area standards
- Using technology to facilitate the mentoring process

Table 2. Mentor Training					
	Twelve days	Six days	Four days; Two evenings	Four evenings	One to Two Days
Consortium-based training for mentors	0	1	1	1	0
District-based training for mentors	4	0	0	0	3

All of the sites provided some form of initial new teacher training (although not all at the beginning of the school year), ongoing professional development and ongoing support. The initial teacher training ranged from five days to one day, with an average of 2.65 days of training. The characteristics and qualities of this initial teacher induction and ongoing support was unique to each site, tailored to local contexts and needs. Each of the district-based sites provided three or more days of initial new teacher training and orientation and additional ongoing teacher professional development. Two of the consortia sites provided one day of initial training and induction for teachers, while the third provided a day and a half of initial training and induction. These consortia then offered additional training; one site offered five additional days of teacher training; one offered four evenings of training; one offered two evenings of additional training. In addition, each of the district-based sites required new teachers to create Individual Learning Plans (ILP's), as did one of the consortium sites.

All of the sites required that mentors observe the new teachers, ranging from one to five observations per year. Two of the consortia sites required three observations; one required one observation. Five district-based sites required that mentors conduct three formal observations of the new teachers; one of the others required fewer than three, and one had a range of three to five. Eight of the sites required new teachers to observe veteran teachers in their classrooms, but the nature of these observations was less well defined than the formal observations between the teachers and their mentors. A ninth site suggested these observations, but did not require them. Each observation of a new teacher was supposed to include a pre- and post-observation conference between the teacher and the mentor. Interviews with the mentors indicated that it was not always possible to use this formal observation model due to scheduling conflicts and other obstacles, such as new teachers' extra-curricular or family responsibilities. Many of the sites permitted or encouraged additional, less formal observations of the teachers by the mentors.

All of the sites required that teachers keep a written reflection, a log or journal—to which mentors were expected to respond in writing as well, although they differed as to how often they required entries and responses by the teachers and mentors. In most cases program administrators did not monitor the frequency and quality of these logs in order to provide a safe method for honest, critical, formative assessment, and reflection between mentor and new teacher.

Six of the ten pilots reported the new implementation of or increased use of various technological tools as important components of their pilot programs. These tools ranged from using an internet-based tool to disseminate information, to using online discussion forums for mentors and beginning teachers, to electronic observation tools for use by mentors, to electronic portfolios to document new teacher growth. Two of the district-based sites also provided online teacher and or mentor support.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The pilots also differed as to their administrative structure, process, and location. Three of the pilots were directly managed by teachers or administrators who had retired and were rehired part-time to facilitate the project. Three pilots funded a teacher full-time, releasing him/her from all classroom responsibilities to manage the pilot and to perform mentoring duties (mentoring, coordinating other mentoring projects, and other professional development responsibilities). Three sites had a full-time administrator assume the responsibility for this project in addition to other responsibilities. One site had a full time administrator assigned to this project and other programs to support new teachers.

It is important to note that the pilot programs varied in the degree to which induction and mentoring was supported at the highest levels of the administrative structure. Within the district based sites, one site was housed in the grants department with human resource and curriculum/instruction involvement. One site was placed within a separate structure with communication to human resources and the area administrative branch. One site was housed in a curriculum, instruction, and professional development office with ongoing communication and collaboration with human resources. One was placed within human resources with minimal communication with curriculum and instruction. Among the other programs, one was placed with the professional development department with minimal communication with curriculum and instruction and only initial communication with human resources. One was placed within professional development with ongoing communication among curriculum and instruction and human resources. One was placed with a coordinator under curriculum and instruction with minimal communication with human resources. Three of the sites were discussed at school board meetings and kept their superintendents informed of their progress. Five of the sites had ongoing participation and continuous communication with their collective bargaining units. (Table1)

Of the three pilots based at regional offices of education, one was the responsibility of the regional superintendent, one reported to an assistant superintendent, and one reported to a professional development consultant.

These differences in administrative structure were noted by mentors, key contacts, and local administrators as significant. The following quotes are illustrative of the kinds of influences noted by program stakeholders:

> *"The program is represented in the district strategic plan, and we have been invited to attend the senior staff retreat."*
>
> *"We are working closely across the departments to keep the conversation going."*
>
> *"Close communication among our leadership team members, the association representative, and the induction and mentoring program staff has contributed to our success."*

The major success, reported across all of the pilots, is that they were able to get a program started and to follow through on most of what they proposed, even though they did not receive funding prior to the start of the school year. As a result, all ten pilots reported an increase in their ability to provide a more structured, more coherent program of support for mentors and new teachers. Structure and coherency came in many forms, but typically included consistency in mentor training and shared expectations for mentors across buildings.

> One mentor reported, *"I was unsure of what I had to offer to a new teacher. However, I soon learned that not only did I have something to offer, but my new teacher had something to offer in return."*

All ten of the sites reported that they were able to provide some professional development for their mentors, and eight of the ten provided initial and ongoing trainings. All ten provided ongoing support for mentors. Professional development for mentors and for new teachers was a key component contributing to the success that pilots experienced the first year. In addition, mentors reported that their experience included learning from the new teachers. In general there was a perception that relationships were enhanced, common expectations were set, a quality teaching/learning focus was stressed, and professional learning communities were begun. For example, three pilots indicated that between 80 and 90% of their new teachers attributed their teaching success to help from their mentors.

SUCCESS AT THE BUILDING LEVEL

Administrators in both regional and district-based programs reported positive impacts of the program including better understanding of the importance of mentoring and their perception that retention of more highly skilled new teachers had improved. They noted that in some buildings there was more collegiality and team building. An external partner with one regional office program noted that 70% of

> One building administrator reported that those new teachers who had worked with a formal mentor this year are returning to the same building again next year. The extra support offered to the new teachers helps to maintain the building-wide focus.

the principals in their program reported that they now had a clear understanding of their role in supporting mentors, new teachers, and the entire program. Eight of the sites reported successes at the building level, which they attributed to the pilot programs. In one district, a survey of all site administrators reported that 70% of those surveyed felt that the mentoring and induction program contributed to their knowledge of how to create successful learning communities. The box below synthesizes comments from across the sites.

> **PERCEIVED BUILDING-LEVEL IMPACT AS A RESULT OF THE PILOT PROGRAM**
> Improvements in structure and coherence in induction and mentoring activities
> - Clearer expectations for administrators, mentors, and new teachers
> - A better understanding of the difficulties and challenges of a new teacher
> - Improved documentation process of mentor/novice teacher interactions
> - Consistent new teacher development and induction into the school culture
> - More support and appreciation for the responsibilities of the mentor
> - More responsibility for and attention to the mentoring relationship
>
> Improvements beyond induction and mentoring activities
> - Higher continuity of staff
> - Collaboration and cooperation as well as collegiality are positively affected.
> - Positive influence on veteran staff members with the energetic, enthusiastic use of best practices by new teachers.
> - More qualified new staff retained

SUCCESS WITH TEACHERS

Seven of the ten pilots reported that, of the schools participating in the pilot, 100% of new teachers were involved. Of the three not serving all of the new teachers in participating buildings:

- one program served only those new teachers who were hired after the beginning of the school year and who could not participate in the district's other mentoring and induction program
- one asked for volunteers for the pilot
- one focused on teachers in buildings that were not participating in a different mentoring and induction program in the district.

One of the programs not serving 100% of the new teachers was a consortium of districts where one district had a funded program for some of its buildings, but not for others. Five additional programs indicated that they were able to serve mid-year hires. Of these five, two programs provided support for all new teachers. The three other programs indicated the ability to provide either optional support for mid-year hires or a smaller proportion of services than that offered through the full program.

One ROE reported that according to the SRI survey data, 92% of new teachers felt they had the necessary knowledge and skills to teach effectively due to the induction program of support. Three other sites related anecdotal information and cited improved classroom management and improved teaching strategies as observed by mentors and as reflected upon by new teachers. The following quotes, reported by three different pilots, represent three examples of new teachers' perceptions of program impact:

> "I think this mentoring program has made me a stronger teacher. Focusing on the Illinois Teaching Standards has been extremely insightful."
>
> "[The program] gave me opportunities to encourage my new teacher to reflect upon her teaching practices and share her successes as well as her struggles."
>
> "Students struggle less and everyone's practice improves."

The programs also reported success with helping new teachers. Five sites provided anecdotal information on observed changes in the pedagogy of new teachers during the school year, which they felt was related to improved student learning. Only one site specifically addressed the issue of academic achievement of students by comparing student test scores in participating schools with scores in similar, non-participating schools.

SUCCESS SPECIFIC TO REGION-BASED PROGRAMS

The programs offered through the ROEs reported playing a much stronger role in serving small, rural districts than in prior years. By working as a consortium, they reported that they were able to offer services that small districts were not able to offer on their own. Many of the districts served through ROEs do not have the resources to develop their own mentoring programs. The pilot project was not only able to provide induction and mentoring activities, but was also able to provide a model for these districts to use in the future. For districts that only had a few new teachers, the pilot project provided a network of peer support.

Project administrators at two regional offices indicated that more districts in their regions were applying for approved status as a result of the pilot program, and at least one district decided to create its own program, based on the assistance from its ROE. One ROE reported that after participating in the pilot program, the

Area RESPRO program[5] decided to adopt this project's model for its program in the coming school year, as it represented an increase in the depth and quality of services provided by its previous model.

SUCCESS SPECIFIC TO DISTRICT-BASED PROGRAMS

Three of the seven programs based in individual school districts reported that human resources, curriculum and instruction, and professional development administrators were planning together and communicating more frequently, both among the district administrators and between the district and the building administrators. Four of the districts (including the three above) now have cross-departmental teams, which regularly meet to discuss mentoring and induction. They reported that there was beginning to be

> A key contact noted, "*Within this one year we have begun to create a professional learning community around mentoring in our school district. There is awareness from the administration, building leaders, mentors and new teachers that this program is designed to move beginning teachers' practice forward in a collegial way.*"

more shared responsibility for new teachers' success. All ten sites reported a strong working relationship and involvement of their local teacher associations/unions. As a result of the working relationships, one of the sites was able to persuade the school board to create new positions for full-time release mentors and one of the districts will be moving forward with more intensive professional development.

Three out of seven of the pilots indicated that the ability to provide details about structured induction and mentoring efforts positively impacted their recruitment and hiring process. One district reported that they used their display and handouts, which were created for the poster session at the INTC winter conference, at recruitment fairs. Prospective teachers seemed to take great interest in these materials.

In summary, ISBE funding for the pilots enabled these programs to train and support mentors, which led to an increased awareness of the importance of support for new teachers in the buildings and across the district. Participation in the first year of the pilot program led program administrators to think about a more coherent, systematic view of mentoring and induction and to think about how the programs impacted the new teachers' classroom practices, as well as the district as a whole.

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[5] RESPRO (Regional Service Provider) a system of support for districts on the early watch or early warning list as determined by adequate yearly progress

As might be expected, the pilots reported numerous challenges they faced in the first year of implementation. Identifying the challenges was important to the pilots, and they reported that they would improve the second-year program as a result of their internal analyses.

PROGRAM-LEVEL CHALLENGES

The two most obvious challenges the pilots experienced were (and continues to be) the uncertainty and untimeliness of funding. Every pilot site mentioned this concern throughout the year, including upon notification of funding, at mid term, during all four meetings, in their final reports, and during onsite interviews. The timelines imposed by the Illinois General Assembly funding cycle and the proposal review process ensured that no program would be implemented in time to train mentors or to offer thoughtful orientation programs prior to the start of school. A closely related challenge was the insufficient availability of local resources within regions and districts to serve *all* new teachers, including those who were new to their districts and buildings, but not new to the profession. All sites noted this concern.

> A key contact noted, *"...in Year 1 we did not have consistency in support and training for the teachers who were new to our district but not new to teaching. It felt like there was a "disconnect" in the support and training of the two groups."*

In addition to the problem of late funding, all ten programs expressed the need for better ways with which they could document program impact. They wanted assistance with assessment instruments, data collection and analysis strategies, and standards or metrics against which to measure. There was some confusion for the sites in differentiating among ISBE, INTC, and SRI when it came to knowing which entity had responsibility for which aspect of the pilot reporting and evaluation. The pilots were told that participation was voluntary with SRI and INTC data requests and all agreed to participate. SRI was surveying new teachers in each of the pilots and sending that information directly to the pilot sites so that they could use the information as part of their final reports. INTC needed that information for its final report, but due to confidentiality issues, the data could not be shared. ISBE required a final report from the sites to comply with the funding requirements and also needed a proposal for year 2 funding from those who were interested in continuing. As one can see, the requests for data were similar, but not identical, and this caused some angst in addition to the confusion.

Participation challenges: The three consortia commented that it was difficult to get all districts to participate. Some of the reasons for this difficulty were:
- some of the larger districts had their own program and, therefore, chose not to participate in the regional program
- some districts were fearful of the uncertainty of continued funding
- some small districts had difficulty prioritizing the need for mentors with the low number of new teachers entering buildings.

In addition, one ROE reported that having a low number of participants made it difficult to examine any evidence of impact.

Communication challenges: All ten sites were concerned about the nature and structure of interdepartmental communication systems. Many times there was overlap, and, in some instances, gaps in information and services such as record keeping, procedures, expectations, and assessment/evaluation. All ten also spoke of the burden of documentation and record keeping. For example, one district reported that, while the mentoring program kept its own extensive database on all teachers, including biographical information, tracking of professional development (including mentoring), retention and movement information, the majority of this documentation is not currently shared with the district. The program would like to explore ways to better share the critical data that helps inform induction programming.

CHALLENGES FOR ADMINISTRATORS

All ten sites also were particularly concerned about improving communication with building-level administrators. They found it challenging to persuade administrators to be actively involved with induction and mentoring in their buildings or to promote the program. Despite the fact that 80% of the pilots indicated they held sessions for administrators that provided information about the pilot program specifically and about induction and mentoring in general, the sites reported that there were mixed results. For example, one program indicated poor attendance at the training, and participants from this same program voiced frustration over mentors having to be the ones to inform new teachers and administrators about the program's expectations. At another site, the administrators (central and site) rated a required midyear professional development session on mentoring and induction very positively. Although they also commented that it would have been more beneficial earlier in the year, they unanimously requested a spring follow up session to continue the discussion on mentoring in general, and on their pilot program, specifically.

> One district administrator noted, *"Attention to operational issues (budget, building and facilities, office staffing), as well as community issues (parent and community relationships in these traditionally failing schools) may sometimes be at the forefront of new principal's worries."*

Turnover: One factor that compounded the challenge of outreach to administrators was administrative turnover. Most of the pilot program administrators were aware of this factor, but had not yet developed a plan to work with new principals and assistant principals. Indeed, the pilot programs reported that they had considerable difficulties working even with experienced administrators. The box below summarizes challenges reported by mentors and by pilot program administrators across both region-based and district-based programs.

CHALLENGES IN WORKING WITH BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS

- Ending the policy of assigning new teachers to the most difficult teaching situations
- Moving beyond previous, autonomous practice to a consistent district plan for mentoring and induction
- Clarifying the difference between mentors' observations of new teachers and principals' observations of new teachers
- Incorporating mentoring and induction into the school improvement plan
- Involving the entire staff in welcoming and supporting new teachers
- Allowing mentors to maintain confidentiality and not expecting them to report on new teacher performance
- Creating opportunities for mentors and new teachers to observe one another and to meet together during the school day

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One regional office administrator provided an explanation of why the challenges in working with building administrators proved to be so difficult in the first year of the pilot programs. Comments like the following were common to almost all of the pilots:

> "Principals were provided only minimal information at the beginning of the year. They willingly identified new teachers and mentors for the program, but did not really understand the program's requirements or their role in the process. This was further complicated because the Administrators Academy on induction and mentoring was not available until spring."

Often, the result of this lack of communication across the different program stakeholders was confusion on the part of all members as to their roles, responsibilities, and the expectations of the program. For some new teachers in districts that were operating one or more programs simultaneously, there was considerable

confusion. They were uncertain about which program schedule to follow and the type of assistance they were supposed to receive. They were further confused and even alarmed when they felt that their mentor had shared information about their teaching with the building administrator. At the same time, mentors reported some pressures from building administrators to evaluate the new teachers. In one of the focus groups the mentors also reported that new teachers who were participating in the pilot program were being held to a higher standard when principals evaluated them, as compared to other new teachers who were not involved in the pilot program.

> One new teacher reported, *"I am not sure why, but my mentor and principal talked about my teaching. I thought this was supposed to be confidential. Things were in my evaluation that didn't happen when the principal did my observation."*

Interviews with building administrators found that they, too, were aware that relationships between building administrators and the pilot program were sometimes less than optimal. They occasionally felt that they were not well-informed by pilot program administrators and that they had no voice in developing the program. The box below summarizes comments from building administrators about the challenges that they felt hindered their efforts to promote and support the program.

CHALLENGES REPORTED BY BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS

District Level Issues

- Gaining support from the superintendent
- Aligning mentoring and induction content with expectations from curriculum administrators
- Promoting awareness and support from the school board
- Promoting awareness and support from parents

School-based Issues

- Creating time for mentors and new teachers to meet
- Creating time for the principal to meet with new teachers and with mentors
- Working with mentors who have negative attitudes
- Finding mentors for all new teachers
- Ensuring all mentors are trained
- Encouraging new teachers to participate, even when the program is voluntary
- Providing professional development to new teachers on content, assessment, and report preparation

Funding Issues

- Ensuring that all aspects of the project continue once the grant funding is diminished or eliminated
- Knowing that outstanding teachers will be compelled to take jobs outside the building or the district because they cannot be assured they have jobs, although it is probable that, in late August, there will be vacancies
- Understanding that teachers in "one year only" positions may be supported by administrators, mentors, coaches and colleagues for a year, and then are rehired at another building or in another district.

All ten of the pilots reported that information sharing and workshops for administrators needed to be timely and more frequent. Six of the pilots reported their intentions to strengthen their plans for working with building administrators early in the second year of the program and to address expectations through earlier, more frequent, and more targeted professional development.

CHALLENGES FOR MENTORS

Mentors reported challenges that sorted into the following categories: 1) identification/recruitment of mentors; 2) paperwork/documentation required by the program; 3) time for observations and conferences; 4) communication with new teachers, administrators, and 5) program administrators, program funding, and ongoing training.

Identification and recruitment. The late start in funding meant that it was not possible to identify, recruit, train and meet with new teachers prior to the beginning of the school year. Finding excellent teachers (whether retired, full time teachers, or those released in part or full time) who also have a talent for mentoring was a challenge for all of the pilots, whether rural, mid-size, or urban. Encouraging people to leave their classrooms after the start of school is very difficult. Both teachers and principals in full-time release models reported that abandoning students once school started was a highly undesirable option. Indeed, one district-based program changed the staffing proposal from full time classroom released mentor positions to a combination of partial classroom release coordinating mentors working in collaboration with building-based classroom teachers serving as mentors.

Paperwork: The documentation required by the pilot programs was simultaneously both an asset and a challenge. While mentors reported that they appreciated the tools that helped them structure observations, monitor new teacher progress, and stimulate professional conversations, some felt that that the associated paperwork required too much time. In programs that encouraged mentors to choose from among several tools in order to meet the needs of the particular situation, some mentors reported feeling overwhelmed, though others reported that they really appreciated the ability to adapt as needed. Program administrators were aware of the frustrations, but noted that quality would be diminished if mentoring were only an informal activity.

Time: In sites where mentors were based in buildings and still teaching, some mentors reported concerns with leaving their classrooms to attend training despite finding the training to be important and beneficial. They had the same concern when leaving to observe the new teachers, even though they regarded classroom observations as critical to helping new teachers improve. Finding substitutes, preparing for substitutes, leaving their students, giving up planning time, staying after school, coming in early, and meeting during lunch were all cited as concerns and sometimes as possible solutions. Both mentors who were not teaching, either because they were released full-time or because they were retired teachers, and mentors who were teaching full-time reported that time was an issue. This was exacerbated by the late start because there was no time to meet with the new teachers before the program to discuss and clarify expectations and responsibilities of mentors and new teachers. In addition, finding time to attend training was also mentioned by three sites. The box on the following page summarizes the concerns expressed by mentors.

District or School Level Issues
- Providing consistent, timely communication to mentors spread out over several buildings and several districts. As the program grows, increased demands on the time of mentors could be an issue, particularly given their retirement status
- Matching by content area
- Continuing efforts already underway to carefully select and pair mentors with a growing number of new teachers and size of the district
- Addressing the scheduling challenge of providing mentors for both second year teachers and a new cohort of first year teachers
- Balancing time for mentor training and assistance for the new teacher with demands to the typical teaching load. Mentors are often the only facilitators of collaboration between new teachers and others involved in their assignments
- Maintaining confidentiality of interaction while at the same time improving site communication
- Continuing to improve skills related to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) through the program model

New Teacher Needs/Mentor Challenges
- Assisting new teachers in finding a healthy balance between the time demands of staying prepared for the classroom and personal pursuits like exercise and social activities
- Assisting new teachers in adjusting to the responsibilities of independent living and the loneliness of being separated from family and friends

Funding Issues
- Continuing the training for experienced mentors, particularly as it relates to the needs of the second year teaching and advancement of the first year training program
- Dealing with uncertainty of the future given funding limitations
- Including a second year of mentoring and providing for a new cohort of first year teachers
- Funding for mentoring and induction for teachers who are not just new to teaching but simply new to a district or building

Perhaps one of the most unanticipated challenges was that of the mentors' loyalty to their district versus their loyalty to the new teacher, an issue discussed by mentors at three sites. This issue surfaced most often in districts where new teachers were uncertain about their job status for the following year. Some mentors wanted to encourage the new teacher to wait and see if enrollment would be sufficient to keep them in the district; others agonized over whether they should encourage the new teacher to seek employment elsewhere so there would be a guarantee of continued employment rather than wait and risk the consequences. Without adequate and timely funding, mentors reported that this issue will continue to be one of the most difficult to overcome, especially given the importance of bonding and the high level of trust which are paramount to a successful mentoring relationship.

CHALLENGES FOR NEW TEACHERS

In all ten of the pilots it was acknowledged that working conditions in the schools were, and will continue to be, a major challenge facing new teachers. Some mentors were more successful than others at brokering the new teachers' introduction to the school context, from telling the teachers what materials and supplies ought to be in the classroom to giving advice on the social context. Although the role of the mentor is crucial in addressing those challenges, some issues are systemic and out of the control of both the mentors and the new teachers. Figure 6 summarizes new teachers' reports of challenges in teaching conditions.

Although the sites showed considerable progress in providing mentoring and induction to a first cohort of new teachers, the continuation of a second year of mentoring will present new scheduling challenges, particularly if they hope to introduce a second cohort of first year teachers. This problem sits in the context of two state regulations. The first regulation is that any teacher who receives an Initial Teaching Certificate

after September 1, 2007 and chooses the mentoring option as a means of getting a Standard Teaching Certificate will be required to participate in two years of mentoring. The second regulation is from the Illinois State Board of Education's Requirements for Induction and Mentoring (Section 25.910-Amended at 29 IL Reg. 1212, effective January 4, 2005), which says that "teachers and mentors shall participate in formative assessment which includes observation of teaching performance and written analysis of teaching practices of the new teacher. In addition, each teacher must provide at least one written reflection on his or her teaching practice quarterly during the school year which is based in part on issues identified in the feedback received from mentors, the ITPS (23 IL Adm. Code 24), and the content area standards that apply to their assignments and areas of certification." The reasoning behind this requirement is that "just in time," job-embedded professional development will have more of an impact on teacher practice and student achievement than periodic workshops with content and strategies which may have no relevance or meaning to actual classroom instruction. Given this, one site provided an especially candid assessment of their program's ability to meet new teachers' needs, as illustrated in the quotation to the right. The box below summarizes the environmental challenges new teachers face.

> *"While most of those mentored found it to be a positive experience, not all new teachers participated in the program. This occurred because of two reasons: 1) There were not enough building mentors for all new teachers. Or 2) Some chose not to participate. Eventually, we would like to see districts mandate the induction and mentoring programs for all first and second year teachers. Additionally, we feel the need to compensate the new teachers in some way other than using induction and mentoring to move to their Standard Certificate after four years. We have begun to find that new teachers are already beginning work on a Master's degree because this will move them over on the pay scale. We feel this would be better suited for them around their third year of teaching when they have had more experience from which to draw. That would also allow them to better concentrate on improving their classroom practice with full attention and support from a trained mentor."* (Teachers' organizations and district administrators could work together to accomplish these two goals.)

CHALLENGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT
- Sufficient materials and supplies
- Textbooks and other resources that are age and skill-level appropriate
- Access to technology
- Discipline/Classroom management
- Class size
- Time management
- Paperwork
- Absence of collegial support

New teachers reported that mentors helped them "a little" to "none" on the following areas related to student learning:
- Using technology to enhance classroom instruction
- How to teach and engage with respect to a culturally diverse group of students
- Using a culturally relevant curriculum

To summarize the challenges, while funding from ISBE certainly made a difference, the resources were insufficient to serve all new teachers–especially those teachers who were new to the district, but not to the profession. Program administrators were concerned that they were not able to help everyone because of the restricted definition of "new." Also, it was not always possible to match new teachers with people who had similar content area responsibilities or, in some cases, similar out-of-class responsibilities. In addition, both mentors and new teachers agreed that finding time for conferences and for ongoing professional development was difficult, especially when new teachers had extra-curricular responsibilities or family responsibilities. For all groups, ongoing communication was often difficult, particularly building administrators, who were not necessarily part of the planning process.

The Illinois General Assembly is interested in knowing about retention, teacher quality, and cost benefits as documented by JCAR {Joint Committee on Administrative Rules} in Section 25.910 (Amended at 29 Ill. Reg. 1212, effective January 4, 2005). Specifically, Section g. states:

"g) Each plan for an induction and mentoring program shall include a specific method for collecting and maintaining information that will permit evaluation of the program and will contribute to an overall assessment of the effectiveness of induction and mentoring. For each program, at least the following information shall be collected and supplied to the State Board of Education upon request:

1) the length of time during which recipients of the program remain employed as teachers (if known) or remain employed as teachers in the district where mentoring and induction were received;

2) the percentage of recipient teachers who received ratings of "satisfactory" or "excellent" each year since completing the program;

3) any savings realized in the cost of recruiting new teachers due to increased retention; and

4) any decrease in the number or percentage of teachers teaching outside their respective fields"

In the first year of the pilot programs each program was asked to address issues 1, 3, & 4 in their final reports to ISBE.

RETENTION OF NEW TEACHERS

Only eight of the ten pilot programs provided retention data for this evaluation report. They did not have a standard format for reporting retention data, nor did they have readily available historical data on teacher retention in the district, region or area. Therefore, inferences on retention patterns across the pilot programs are difficult. Two pilots reported retention and attrition statistics as compared to previous years; one pilot provided statistics related to building level retention; two provided "left-the-profession" data, and one provided attrition data of mid-year leavers. Some pilots reported percentages, some reported ratios, and some reported total numbers.

Retention rates ranged from 83% to 100%, but the program reporting 100% served only seven new teachers. The programs in districts that have traditionally been difficult to staff, reported retention rates of 83% and 85%, but in one of the districts, 12% of the new teachers' status for 2007-2008 was not determined at the time they wrote their final report.

Four of the pilot sites had teachers leave because they were leaving the profession. Seven pilot sites had teachers who were not rehired because of performance related reasons. Five of the pilot sites had teachers who left because they were relocating out of the district. In two of these five pilot sites there were teachers who left for "personal, family, or social reasons." In one case these were the reasons for relocating, whereas in the other case, relocation was listed as a separate reason for leaving, yet the decision to relocate is typically make for personal, family, or social reasons, so it is unclear if these are really separate in practice. One pilot site listed a set of reasons for leaving that relate to the nature of the school

> It is worth noting that one site that reported teachers' leaving for other positions indicated that this was to avoid the uncertainty of year to year contracts. "End of a year-only contract" was reported as a separate category from teachers leaving to take other teaching positions by some sites, but not by all. It is unclear how much movement of teachers to new positions is because of the desire to avoid year-only contracts.

environment, which included lack of administrative support, lack of collegiality at the site and the difficulty of assignment.

Of the nine sites that collected information on why teachers remained in the district, four had teachers who listed the availability of support, or a feeling of being supported, as a reason for staying. Two of the sites listed opportunity for collaboration as a reason for staying. Two of the sites listed relationships with co-workers, students, and parents as a reason for staying. One site listed three additional reasons for staying, including family ties in the region, feeling adequately prepared and/or confident in their assignment, and having a positive evaluation experience. Other information about retention from the sites final reports included:

- Out of the 62 new teachers in the program, none of them were released because of low performance and only one left the teaching field
- 95% (55 of 58) of the teachers were rehired. Two did not return because they took other non-teaching, but service related, positions and only one teacher was not rehired by the district (no reason given).
- All but one (25 of 26, or 96%) of the teachers from the high poverty districts were rehired
- August data confirmed that 77% of the first-year teachers will remain with one large district but retention was unreported in another large district. Actual data will not be available until October 1 in two districts.

To establish a better understanding of the relationship among the pilot programs and teacher retention, the districts will need more assistance with strategies for data collection and analysis, and INTC will need to provide clear and concise directions for reporting this information.

COST SAVINGS

Although the dollar value of the cost of a program is relatively easy to identify, the associated value of benefit to a district is often very difficult to calculate. In Spring 2007 the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) released a report on the costs of recruiting, hiring, processing, and training teachers at both the school and district levels. Their findings indicate that the cost of turnover is largely dependent upon the size of the district and the types of induction programs the district implements -- but in all cases, the cost of teacher turnover is substantial (Barnes et al., 2007). The report included reference to a recently developed Teacher Turnover Cost Calculator, which INTC shared (http://www.nctaf.org/resources/teacher_cost_calculator/teacher_turnover.htm), but not all of the pilots were able to take full advantage of the resource.

Two sites offered an estimated cost of turnover to the district and indicated that they were working with various organizations in their districts to obtain a cost-benefit figure. A third site indicated it was working on calculating a value, but did not provide the estimated cost of losing a teacher. Two of the eight sites made a statement about their perceived value of the program, but it was not in a statement about the cost-benefit of the program. No estimate of the cost of losing a teacher was provided, nor was any value assigned to retaining teachers. The two sites that did not provide an estimate of the cost of teacher turnover both reported very high retention rates (100% and 93%).

INTC and ISBE will need to work more closely with the sites to provide a common method for collecting retention data and determining any cost savings that can be attributed to the programs. Larger districts will, logically, have more new hires than smaller districts, and will therefore show greater total cost benefits. This can be addressed in the future by dividing this value out by the number of new hires to determine a dollar amount per teacher, which could be used as a common metric across sites in a similar cost bracket. A solution will need to be found to correct for the variation in cost-benefit due to regional differences in operating costs, salaries, benefits, professional development, and recruitment. Similarly, differences in the

rate of turnover from year to year will also affect this calculation. A pilot may have an abnormally high or low rate of turnover one year that could easily skew these data. Reporting of historical teacher retention and loss trends, as well as district growth or decline, would help contextualize the cost-benefit value calculated.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Finding direct evidence linking the pilot programs with student learning is the most difficult challenge posed by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR). The sites were quite frustrated as they contemplated the lack of data linking the pilot program to any form of student learning.

Several mentors provided anecdotal evidence suggesting that as new teachers began to exhibit greater skills with classroom management their students became more able to focus on instruction. Other mentors noted that the new teachers learned to establish better relationships with their students, that they no longer saw them as the "enemy." In addition to establishing better relationships with students, some mentors noted that the new teachers had access to more age-appropriate and content-appropriate materials. One high school mentor noted that he compared lessons and students' responses to lessons with his protégé, but this comment was not typical of most mentors' responses. The new teachers also reported that their students benefited because of the resources provided by the mentor, but they added that their mentors assisted with planning and implementing instruction and that they provided helpful feedback. One new teacher also reported that her students also worked with her to improve her instruction.

> A mentor reported, *"Kids have ended up with someone who is actually a teacher, someone who ended up not struggling."*

Other than anecdotal information, sites had few resources to help them identify ways in which the program had an impact on students. One site compared end-of-year test scores of students whose teachers were involved in the pilot program with those who were not. While this was a valiant attempt to document impact, there are a number of intervening variables that confound any impact statements.

> A new teacher noted, *"My students probably always knew when I'd met with my mentor because I'd try new things. The students would also give me feedback about the things I tried because they knew I was going through this learning process, also."*

If ISBE wants practical and helpful information on relationships among mentoring and induction programs and student achievement, the state will need to devote considerable time and thought to this issue. One issue identified by the sites concerns data availability and data ownership. As one regional office staff member noted:

> "This issue begs the question, 'Who owns the data?' It is unlikely that this information will ever be available to this multi-district program because all new teachers in the participating districts have a mentor. There would be significant confidentiality and contractual issues to overcome in order to have access to achievement data that is connected to teachers."

A problem the sites identified concerned the absence of an infrastructure for data collection and analysis. At present, there are no readily accessible databases that enable districts or the state to track teachers' abilities to impact student learning over time. And, although value-added methodology may be able to identify teachers whose students consistently score well on academic achievement tests, this methodology requires large numbers of teacher and student data sets. The current number of participants in pilot programs may not be sufficient. Also, the method does not account for variation in teaching context, which in Illinois varies widely from district to district and even building to building within districts.

> An administrator reported, "It is difficult to capture student achievement data linked to individual teachers."

The conclusions that can be drawn concerning pilot program implementation are necessarily limited to what we know after less then one year. They should be viewed, therefore, as a base from which to build future reports and, also, as a base for improving induction and mentoring programs over time. The conclusions and recommendations are grouped into three categories: funding; program implementation; and program evaluation.

FUNDING

The first conclusion is that state funding makes a positive difference, enabling districts, regional offices, and their partners to plan for more comprehensive and systemic programs than in previous years, when state funding was unavailable. All of the programs provided information about changes as a result of state funding, including better mentor preparation, better coordination across roles, and greater awareness of the importance of providing a quality mentoring and induction program. And, although one year is not a sufficient timeframe for drawing strong conclusions, several programs believed that funding enabled them to think more deeply about impact in terms of cost savings, retention, teaching practice, and enhanced learning conditions for students. All of the sites expressed concern about continuing a robust program without the state funding, feeling that without these funds they would not be able to continue the same degree of implementation.

> **RECOMMENDATION 1**: The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to continue to refine and expand the current programs in which the original pilots are situated.

The second conclusion is that the timing of funding decisions matters. The timeframe imposed by the Illinois General Assembly funding cycle and the proposal review process ensured that no first year program would be implemented in time to train mentors or to offer thoughtful orientation programs prior to the start of school. All of the programs expressed concerns that they were not able to provide training or support for administrators, mentors, or new teachers prior to the beginning of classroom instruction. And, although the INTC staff, working with ISBE staff, obtained a no cost extension for pilots to use any unexpended funds through August 31, which enabled each site to train mentors and begin orientation prior to the start of the 2007-08 academic year, there was still no guarantee that the pilots would receive continued funds as of October 2007.

To provide timely, quality professional development to new teachers, mentors and their administrators, districts must have access to a dependable funding stream that flows from year to year and is not negatively impacted by the legislative or state fiscal year issues. The initial orientation and training for mentors should occur before the start of the school year so that mentors are well prepared to assist and guide their new teachers, especially in those first days in the classroom.

> **RECOMMENDATION 2:** The Illinois General Assembly and ISBE should develop timely, dependable and multiyear funding procedures that enable mentoring and induction programs to continue from year to year without gaps in funding streams.

This support is critical to ensuring that mentors have the necessary skills to communicate with and guide their new teachers. It is important to orient mentors to the myriad issues facing their new teachers, not just

the issues they themselves faced as new teachers. Once mentors have been selected, trained and assigned, prior to the start of the school year, then professional development for new teachers should occur. This gives teachers and mentors the opportunity to properly prepare so the students begin learning upon entering the classroom.

The third conclusion is that the current level of funding for pilot programs is far from sufficient to serve the needs of the state of Illinois. Although the current pilots represent the diversity of schools and districts along several dimensions and a variety of program models, these pilots are essentially, one-of-a-kind programs. Based on the number of original proposals ISBE received and on inquiries regarding new funding, it is evident that there are numerous areas throughout the state that would like the opportunity to establish induction and mentoring programs.

> **RECOMMENDATION 3**: The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to thoughtfully fund, support, and evaluate a multi-year, statewide scale up that will add programs in additional sites which approximate the geographic and demographic contexts in which the original pilots are situated.

Increased funding would not only enable new programs, but could also lead to program replication using similar program models across the state in districts with similar characteristics. With a sufficient number of sites it would be possible to gather important information about the efficacy of differing models and about the elements of the local context that influence successful implementation and institutionalization of programs.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The fourth conclusion is that building level administrators should be more involved with induction and mentoring than they were this year. All sites noted the critical role of the building or site administrator and many sites documented the problems that ensued when administrators were not prepared to support the mentoring and induction program. They felt principals and site administrators would benefit from professional development that distinguishes mentor support from administrator evaluation. All of the sites indicated a need for improved focus on this for the second year. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for administrators, coupled with professional development targeted to supporting new teachers and mentors, will likely increase districts' capacity to ensure a supportive culture.

> **RECOMMENDATION 4**: Programs should provide initial orientation, ongoing networking, and professional development sessions that clearly define roles for partners, new teachers, mentors, and their administrators prior to the beginning of and also during each school year.

The fifth conclusion is that central administration support is important for program success. The ten sites demonstrated different levels of central office institutional commitment to the pilot program, which affected the extent to which the pilots could achieve systemic change in the schools, districts, and regions. All sites indicated that successful, ongoing dialogue and support throughout the district or region is very important for successful implementation, citing indicators of institutional commitment such as the provision of supplementary funding, the creation of cabinet level positions to oversee mentoring and induction, and the showcasing of programs at school board meetings.

RECOMMENDATION 5: ISBE and INTC should provide continuing outreach to inform all stakeholders, including superintendents and school boards, of the importance of quality induction and mentoring programs and the impact that high quality programs can have on their districts.

The sixth conclusion is that participation by all stakeholders (teacher organizations, new and experienced teachers, administrators, etc.) is enhanced by communication structures that provide continuous, timely, and relevant information. The programs' abilities to integrate hiring practices, provide training for all stakeholders, and conduct program evaluations are improved when all responsible parties understand their roles and, also, help shape the program's evolution. The programs cited instances in which poor communication across the different stakeholders resulted in confusion, particularly in terms of participants' roles and responsibilities. Poor communication also resulted in conflicting messages concerning program operations and expectations. Additionally, the sites reported that ongoing and clear communication with their external partners, the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative, and the Illinois State Board of Education was also critical to the success of their implementation and the internal evaluations.

RECOMMENDATION 6: INTC, ISBE, and the programs should develop communication protocols and procedures that provide timely and relevant information to all stakeholders.

The seventh conclusion is that mentor selection, support, and accountability are important to new teacher and program success. The RFP required a comprehensive strategy for recruiting experienced teachers who are suited to the role of mentor, which includes involvement of stakeholders, thorough outreach and communication, and clear criteria for selection. The backgrounds, experiences, and qualities of the mentors are critical whether the mentors are teaching full or part time in the classroom; are full or part time released from teaching to be mentors; are retired educators; or are a composite of all three. Programs should work to eliminate procedures that assign mentors who have not agreed to serve as mentors or processes that do not screen volunteers to ensure that they meet the specified criteria. Principal (or site administrator) involvement, as well as teacher professional organization involvement, in the recruitment and selection process promotes stronger commitment at the building level and minimizes miscommunication between and among the buildings and the mentoring and induction program.

RECOMMENDATION 7: ISBE should hold programs accountable for a recognized procedure for recruiting, selecting, training, assigning, and evaluating mentors that meets specified criteria developed by all stakeholders served by the program.

The eighth conclusion is that networking and sharing (within and across programs), is important to continuous improvement of both individual and collective efforts. The pilot key contacts indicated that the ability to network across districts was an added benefit of funding because they were able to share concerns, as well as triumphs, with people in similar roles. In addition, all of the pilots were able to share activities and resources with one another through the four INTC facilitated pilot meetings.

RECOMMENDATION 8: INTC and the programs should increase their efforts to promote collaboration and sharing within and across the pilots and, when possible, to serve as a resource for programs throughout the state.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The ninth conclusion is that the requirements for program evaluation promote accountability and provide, at a minimum, a strong signal that documenting both process and impact are important. Sites were very diligent in their record keeping and in their collection of data. They took this responsibility very seriously, even though it was not required as a condition of funding. Each of the sites made a good faith attempt to collect and analyze their own data and reported that they valued having data from which to refine their programs. All ten of the sites have indicated that they are eager to continue collaborating to collect and provide relevant data concerning the second year of the pilots. Moreover, on one of the most difficult questions to answer, that of the cost-benefit value of the pilot program, two sites provided constructive responses. Considering these two sites as exemplars provides a useful foundation for responding to this question across all of the pilots in their second year. Assuming that there is continued funding for current pilot programs and that there may be additional pilot programs, it will be important to continue and improve documentation of the use and impact of state funds.

> **RECOMMENDATION 9:** ISBE should continue to hold all programs that receive state funds targeted for mentoring and induction accountable for a yearly evaluation report.

The tenth and final conclusion is that current evaluation goals, resources, and procedures are not sufficient to capture information on cost effectiveness, retention (in building, district, or state), quality and impact of mentoring, quality and impact of professional development, and overall program impact on teaching practice and student learning. Because the request for proposals did not specify a commitment to statewide data collection, and because there was no uniform list of data or reporting requirements, the pilots were left on their own to provide program relevant data. In spite of that, each of the ten sites, to the best of their ability, responded to requests for data from INTC throughout the first year of the pilots. Data collection varied across the sites, which was a natural and appropriate reflection of the desired diversity of program design and level of readiness for implementation of the different programs.

> **RECOMMENDATION 10:** ISBE, INTC, and the Illinois Induction Policy Team should work together to create and fund a long-range, multiple measures, research and evaluation design that will identify the factors that promote continuous program improvement, as well as the links among the mentoring and induction program, teaching practice, and student learning.

A long range plan might include creating data bases that would permit within-site and cross-site aggregation, identifying key measures and developing instruments that could be used across sites; training sites in the use of the measures; aggregating data; determining the multiple impacts of an induction and mentoring program; and disseminating the results for an effective and efficient scale up. These steps will lead to more consistent reporting and will streamline the documentation and reporting process, while still capturing and respecting the unique features and the diversity among the mentoring and induction programs.

This report concludes with a final reflection on an additional gap in current knowledge, based on the ten pilot programs. None of the pilot programs represented a strong partnership with a university-based preservice teacher preparation program; no pilot was directly linked with an alternate route preservice program; and, although there was some interaction between university-based people and the pilot work, no pilot was seeking to build directly on higher education connections. At this point, therefore, induction and mentoring programs for new teachers are not directly linked conceptually or technically with initial teacher preparation. This creates an unfortunate situation that increases the perceived division between district goals for new teachers and the services provided by institutions of higher education. It will be important to address this issue in the next round of funding and move closer toward creating a continuum of teacher preparation within the P-20 context.

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Induction and Mentoring Programs

The induction and mentoring program must be approved by the Illinois State Board of Education in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board and include three components: observation of the new teacher's classroom practice by an experienced teacher, review and analysis of written documentation prepared by the new teacher, and reflection by the new teacher on his or her teaching practices in relation to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

Only two-year induction and mentoring programs that meet the requirements for approval may be used for eligibility for the Standard teaching certificate. There is an exception for teachers who were issued Initial teaching certificates prior to September 1, 2007. Those teachers may use a one-year induction and mentoring program. Teachers can transfer between approved programs.

Time teachers spent in induction and mentoring programs prior to the program's approval may be creditable if the requirements listed below are met.

To see a list of approved programs, click on "Professional Development Providers" from www.isbe.net and on the next page, "Professional Development Provider System" and then "Enter as a Guest."

Initial Certificate Holders--Induction and Mentoring Program

The Initial certificate holder must ensure that the program has been approved before submitting the Statement of Assurance. Only participation in approved programs is creditable for this purpose.

New teachers who participate in an approved induction and mentoring program will receive
- formal mentoring from an experienced teacher;
- three observations with prior preparation;
- a response from the mentor with feedback, suggestions, and techniques for each observation;
- opportunities for contact so that the new teachers have professional and social support in the school environment;
- orientation to the school improvement and professional development plans that apply;
- help in understanding their employer's expectations regarding the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and the relevant content-area standards;
- at least one opportunity each semester to observe experienced teachers and discuss aspects of teaching practice with these teachers or to participate in workshops, conferences or similar events or trainings to increase the teacher's skills relative to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards or their area of certification or assignment;
- a review from the mentor with written feedback on at least one of their written reflections on their teaching practice for each quarter of a school year.

Evidence of Completion for Induction and Mentoring Program

The approved provider is responsible for issuing the evidence of completion form from the provider website. The form must be signed by an administrator of the program.

Requirements for Applicants Seeking Approval of an Induction and Mentoring Program

A single district or two or more school districts or other organizations or entities may jointly offer a program. Applicants seeking approval must submit an online application through the Professional Development Provider System at www.isbe.net. The application must demonstrates that the requirements listed below will be met. To get to the provider application, click on "Professional Development Providers" from our main page www.isbe.net . On the next page, click on "Professional Development Provider System." If you are already an approved provider for workshops or conferences for CPDUs or one of the approved courses, you may use your existing login and password. Otherwise, you must create a login and password and a provider account.

The mentors and their assigned teachers must have contact so that the new teachers have professional and social support in the school environment. The program must orient teachers to the school improvement and professional development plans that apply and help them understand their employer's expectations with regard to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and relevant content-area standards.

New teachers must have at least one opportunity each semester to participate in professional development activities that involve
- observing experienced teachers and discussing with them aspects of their teaching practices; and
- participating in workshops, conferences, symposia, seminars or other similar training events designed to increase their knowledge and skills with respect to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards or the content-area standards relevant to their areas of certification or teaching assignment.

The program must collect and maintain information for evaluation and that will contribute to an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the induction and mentoring including
- the length of time the new teachers remain employed as teachers (if known) or remain employed as teachers in the district in which they were mentored;
- the percentage of new teachers who were rated "satisfactory" or "excellent" each year since completing the program;
- any savings realized in the cost of recruiting new teachers due to increased retention; and
- any decrease in the number or percentage of teachers teaching outside their respective fields.

Mentors

Mentor teachers must hold or have retired while holding a Standard or Master certificate that should, to the extent possible, be the same type of certificate held by the new teachers to whom they are assigned. Mentors cannot be assigned to more than five new teachers during any given school year and must complete a training program that addresses
- content knowledge and pedagogy,
- adult learning theory,
- verbal and non-verbal communication skills,
- attributes and styles of positive critiques,
- classroom observation skills related to assessment of performance,
- strategies for providing constructive feedback and social support,
- problem-solving skills, and
- formative assessment and self-assessment.

Mentor Responsibilities

The mentor teacher must set up a sequence of sessions with no fewer than three observations, all of which may be conducted electronically through videoconferencing or videotaping. The mentor must
- prepare the new teacher prior to the classroom observation;
- observe the new teacher's teaching practice;
- provide feedback, suggestions, and techniques after the observations.

The mentor must provide in writing
- feedback after observing the new teacher's performance, and
- an analysis of the teacher's written reflections on his or her teaching practices focusing on relevant Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and the content-area standards that apply to their assignments and areas of certification and to issues identified in the feedback from the mentor teacher for each quarter of a school year.

High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices

*A resource for Illinois educators seeking to develop and/or improve their current induction programs
with research-based practices that support teacher retention, teacher development, and improved student learning*

MOVING TOWARD...

RIGOROUS MENTOR SELECTION BASED ON QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR Qualities may include: evidence of outstanding teaching practice, strong intra- and inter-personal skills, experience with adult learners, respect of peers, current knowledge of professional development.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR MENTORS Effective teachers don't always know what it is about their teaching that is effective. Many mentors are also surprised to find that translating knowledge to students is not the same as translating knowledge to adults. High quality and ongoing training, as well as a professional learning community, are needed to help mentors develop the skills to identify and translate the elements of effective teaching to beginning teachers.

SANCTIONED TIME FOR MENTOR-TEACHER INTERACTIONS Mentors need sanctioned time to focus on beginning teacher development. Research suggests mentors and beginning teacher should have 1.25-2.5 hours per week to allow for the most rigorous mentoring activities. That time should be protected by teachers and administrators.

INTENSIVE AND SPECIFIC GUIDANCE MOVING TEACHING PRACTICE FORWARD, WHILE ALSO PROVIDING ELEMENTS OF EMOTIONAL/LOGISTICAL SUPPORT Focusing on the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) and the appropriate content area standards allows for instructional growth to help teachers know concretely how to improve. Example: "Let's look at your assessment data and talk about what strategies will help you address the concern you had about reaching your struggling English Language Learner students."

DOCUMENTATION AND EVIDENCE OF TEACHER PROGRESS Just like student learning, beginning teacher learning should be data-driven. To be effective, feedback to beginning teachers must be grounded in evidence about their practice, including evidence gathered through classroom observations. Tools to collect data about various components of their classroom practice, and documentation of mentoring conversations, ensures a structure for focusing on continuous instructional growth.

DEVELOPING BEYOND...

CHOOSING MENTORS WITHOUT CRITERIA OR AN EXPLICIT PROCESS Without administrator and teacher leader engagement in choosing mentors, there is a risk that mentors may be chosen based more on availability rather than their qualifications to engage in meaningful interactions with beginning teachers.

INSUFFICIENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR MENTORS Without initial, and ongoing, high quality training to support their development, mentors miss out on the guidance and professional community they need regarding the complex practice of developing beginning teachers and strategizing for the challenges they face.

MEETINGS HAPPEN OCCASIONALLY OR 'WHENEVER THE MENTOR AND TEACHER ARE AVAILABLE' Often both parties are so busy that meeting time gets relegated down the list of priorities. The short fragments of time that may be found are typically insufficient for fostering real relationships and growth.

NON-SPECIFIC, EMOTIONAL/LOGISTICAL SUPPORT ALONE Emotional support is important, but alone is not sufficient to improve teacher practice. Without specific instructional feedback, mentoring can not impact student learning. Example: "You're doing a great job teaching your ELL students, Jane. Keep it up!"

INFORMAL/NON-EVIDENCED BASED FEEDBACK The rigor of the program may be compromised when interactions are too often based on informal conversation. Without structure and evidence of beginning teacher practice, interactions may not result in improved teaching practice.

Illinois New Teacher Collaborative

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High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices

*A resource for Illinois educators seeking to develop and/or improve their current induction programs
with research-based practices that support teacher retention, teacher development, and improved student learning*

MOVING TOWARD...

MULTI-YEAR MENTORING Mentoring should be intensive and ongoing (for at least two years) in order to move teacher practice forward in ways that help all students thrive. Research suggests that most deep learning about instruction through mentoring happens in teachers' second and third years in the classroom.

ONGOING BEGINNING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Beginning teachers benefit from a professional learning community that is guided by the IPTS and the appropriate content area standards and focused on teacher development, problem solving and mutual support. Opportunities such as regularly scheduled seminars and online learning communities provide a context for rich networking, professional dialogue and reflection, as well as combating isolation.

CLEAR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS Administrators play a critical role in setting the stage for beginning teacher and mentor success, creating time for induction, and establishing a positive culture for teacher development in their buildings and in the system. Professional development for administrators and ongoing communication with them about the nature of the program ensures that they understand their role in fully supporting induction.

COLLABORATION WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS Strong communication and collaboration among stakeholders, including administration, school boards, union/association leadership, and professional partners, creates a culture of commitment and ensures success.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STANDARDS-BASED INDUCTION - A commitment to using the Illinois Induction Standards (under development), the IPTS and the IL Learning Standards creates programs that have high standards for accountability. A commitment to being data-driven will inform program development and improvement, and can also inform policy.

DEVELOPING BEYOND...

MENTORING FOR ONE YEAR ONLY One year mentoring programs can provide support first year teachers need to survive, but they are not sufficient in helping teachers reach their optimal level of effectiveness in their practice and do not recognize the continuum of teacher development.

TOO LITTLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS Novices are in a unique developmental phase that can not be addressed by "one size fits all" workshops or trainings; professional development disconnected from teacher needs can feel irrelevant, at best, and in many situations, only serves to overwhelm beginning teachers.

LACK OF TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND/OR LACK OF FORMAL COMMUNICATION WITH ADMINISTRATORS Without clearly articulated strategies to support beginning teachers, and protect induction activity time, principals may inadvertently undermine the prospects of beginning teacher success (e.g., assigning beginning teachers the most challenging classes, assigning additional responsibilities, or not anticipating their needs for basic resources).

ISOLATED PROGRAMMING AND LACK OF ALIGNMENT Without strong partnerships and collaboration, program quality is compromised and beginning teachers are not adequately served.

LOW ACCOUNTABILITY AND DISCONNECTED FROM STANDARDS Without integrating appropriate program, professional, and content standards, programs lack quality and accountability and risk having little impact on beginning teacher and student performance.

Illinois New Teacher Collaborative

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1. What measures will be used to determine success of the project? (e.g.,
   a. retention rate,
   b. student test scores,
   c. mentor's rating of improvement in new teacher,
   d. %/# attendance in pilot components,
   e. %/# of new teacher satisfaction with mentor;
   f. %# of new teachers indicating program significantly improved their teaching).
2. What baseline and/or historical information is there that gives an indication of each pilot's status (on the measures identified above) prior to receiving the ISBE funding, ongoing program, expansion or new, etc?
   a. How has funding impacted the status quo?
   b. What else is going on in the school, district, region that may have also positively impacted the measures?
3. Did each pilot follow through on everything proposed? _____Yes   _____No
   (based on what evidence)
4. If they were, to what degree were they able to implement the key components of their proposal?
   a. What successes did they experience?
   b. What were the challenges?
   c. What was critical to the successful implementation of the project?
5. If they were not, why not? What were the challenges (both external and internal)?
6. What evidence, from the pilots' internal evaluation reports, supports 1, 2, and 3?
7. What are the successes and challenges and on what data are they based?
8. How has the program impacted the:
   a. school,
   b. district, and/or
   c. region?
9. What is the attrition rate (from a school, the district, and/or teaching) for first year teachers throughout the pilot year? What is the anticipated retention rate for 2007-08?
10. What other data are available concerning the quality of those retained and those not retained?
11. What data are available about the mentors, e.g.,
    a. background of mentors,
    b. selection process for mentors,
    c. teaching status (currently teaching, full or part time;, retirees, released to be mentors;
    d. number of years in the profession, etc.).
12. What information is available about the mentoring implementation, e.g.,
    a. types/models of implementation,
    b. levels of interaction (duration and intensity),
13. Why did new teachers leave? Why did they stay?
14. What cost savings can be attributed to the induction program?

The information in this summary was derived from documents, interviews, and evaluation reports from the pilot program. In many cases, not every cell is completed – either because the information was not readily available or because the INTC Central evaluation team or the pilot internal evaluators did not collect the information. We left these cells as placeholders for future evaluations.

Please read through the template very carefully and make corrections or additions as needed. If there is something that you would like to discuss prior to modifying a cell, please contact Linda Kolbusz-Kosan (lkolbusz@uiuc.edu) or Renee Clift (rtclift@uiuc.edu).

Demographics (06-07)							
Total student population							
Student population by grade	EC	Elem	MS	HS	Support Spec	art/music	Other
Student racial/ethnic distribution	Latina/o	Black	Asian	Native American		White	Other
% free & reduced lunch							
District's student racial/ethnic distribution mirrored within individual schools							
District's free & reduced lunch % mirrored within individual schools							
# 1st yr teachers							
# 1st yr teachers by grade	EC	Elem	MS	HS	Support Spec	art/music	Other
New teacher racial/ethnic distribution	Latina/o	Black	Asian	Native American	White	Other	
Were mid-yr hires able to participate in pilot. (If yes, how?)							
# mentors	In pilot				other program(s)		
# pilot mentors by grade	EC	Elem	MS	HS	Support Spec	art/music	Other
# other mentors by grade	EC	Elem	MS	HS	Support Spec	art/music	Other
Pilot mentor racial/ethnic distribution	Latina/o	Black	Asian	Native American	White	Other	

Other mentor racial/ethnic distribution	Latina/o	Black	Asian	Native American	White	Other
# new teachers hired mid-year						
Other important demographic info						
Pilot Context						
District(s) in pilot program						
Schools in district(s)on early warning list (# and names)						
How long mentoring/induction in district(s)						
Date pilot program was approved by state						
Pilot replaced previous program(s) (y/n)						
Are multiple I/M programs running simultaneously in district(s)(y/n)						
Differences between pilot and other I/M program(s)						
Links among central admin (HR, C&I, and PD) and pilot						
How background/context in district(s) might affect next year's I/M program						
Other important history/background						
Pilot Administration						
Individual(s) responsible for pilot day-to-day management						
Reasoning for above decision						
Dept/Division overseeing pilot						
Reasoning for above decision						
Process for pilot updates to central admin						
Process for pilot updates to BOE						
Role of teachers' association						
Support provided by central admin						
Is this level of support typical with other grant initiatives?						
Plans for bldg capacity to sustain beyond funding cycle						
Is planning for sustaining typical in terms of other grant initiatives?						
Site Leadership						

Link between central admin and site admin regarding pilot initiative	
Is this typical of other PD initiatives?	
Site admin involvement in pilot	
Training for site admin provided (y/n)	
If no, why not. If yes, details about training	
Site admin involvement in mentor selection	
Types of professional interactions site admin has with new teachers	
Types of professional interactions site admin has with mentors	
Plans for site admin involvement next yr	
Link between pilot and school improvement plan(s)	
How is the mentoring and induction program linked to the overall professional development plan of the site and the district?	
How, if at all, has the induction/mentoring program had an impact on new teachers' evaluations?	
Is there a relationship between having student teachers in the building and the mentoring and induction pilot program? If so what is that relationship?	
Pilot Program in General	
Is this a basic or an enhanced program (as per the RFP guidelines)?	
What were the original, overall goals of the program?	
Have these goals changed? If so, how?	
Funding Sources	
Are other sources of funding used for mentoring and induction services?	
How much money is being received by the pilot through the ISBE pilot program?	

x

Overall, how much money (in addition to the ISBE pilot grant) is being allocated and spent to support mentoring and induction this year? Is any of this money being used to supplement the pilot program? Is any of this money being used for additional teachers and programming?	
How do you plan to supplement state funding next year?	
Partnerships / Subcontracts	
List any partners for this pilot	
How was the decision made to have a partner?	
What is the role of the partner?	
Program developed for Year Two teachers? Brief description	
Mentors	
What is the process for selecting new mentors? Who is involved in the process?	
What are the selection criteria?	
Have any of the mentors had careers outside of education?	
What roles have the mentors had in education? (Classroom teacher, cooperating teacher, department, team, or grade level chair, administrator, etc)	
How many years (range and average) have the mentors worked in education? How are you gathering this information?	
Current teaching status (Retired, released full time, released part time, currently teaching part time, etc.)	
Number of new teachers assigned per mentor	
How are the mentors trained? Describe the number of sessions, their length, and general content.	
Who conducts the training?	
How is the training evaluated?	
How often, when, and for how long do mentors meet?	

Describe any ongoing professional development for mentors.	
What materials are used and can they be shared with others (or are they proprietary?)	
How many classroom observations of new teachers do mentors make during a semester? Is this consistent across mentors and across sites?	
What are the forms of communication between mentors and new teachers?	
Describe any ways in which technology is used in mentoring.	
What other assignments do mentors have?	
How are mentors evaluated?	
Strengths of the mentors and the mentoring program	
Challenges posed by the mentoring program	
Evaluation of mentors and the mentoring program	
# of mentors retained after this year and reasons why any were not retained	
# of new mentors needed for next year	
Plans for mentoring 2nd year teachers	
New Teachers	
# of the new teachers in the pilot program who had another careers prior to teaching	
New teachers educational background(s)	
Are they all first year teachers, new to the profession?	
If not, what are their former roles in the field of education?	
What is the grade level and content area distribution of the new teachers (early childhood, special ed, middle school math, senior high English, etc.)	

Approximately how many new teachers are assigned to teach at least part of their load out of the field of certification?	
Are there any other people assigned to the support new teacher in addition to the mentor?	
What is the process for selection of new teachers? Who is involved in the process? What are the selection criteria?	
Is the mentor assigned of the same grade level and content area?	
How many classroom observations of new teachers do mentors make during a semester? Is this consistent across mentors and across sites?	
What professional development do the new teachers receive? Describe the number of sessions, their length, and general content.	
Who conducts the professional development?	
How is the professional development evaluated?	
What materials are used and can they be shared with others (or are they proprietary?)	
How are new teachers assessed and by whom?	
How many new teachers in the pilot will be retained beyond year 1? What can you tell us about why they decided to stay in the district? In the same building?	
How many will not be retained and what can you tell us about why they were not retained?	
What other assignments (other than teaching) do new teachers have at your pilot site?	
What strengths do the new teachers bring to the building/district? How is this being measured?	

What additional challenges (other than teaching) do your new teachers face?	
What is the impact of your mentoring and induction program on new teachers and how is that being measured?	
Internal Program Evaluation/Assessment	
What information is collected on mentor quality and retention?	
What information is collected on new teacher quality and retention?	
What information is collected on administrators' roles on both mentor and new teacher quality and retention?	
What are the advantages and disadvantages of the above – and what changes are anticipated for next year?	
What is the cost of recruiting new teachers to the district? What cost savings can be attributed to the induction and mentoring program (if any)?	
What information is collected on student achievement and the relationship between achievement and teaching practice?	
Is the mentoring and induction program linked in any way to student learning and success?	
What changes to evaluation are anticipated for next year?	

Title of Pilot Program
District(s) Involved
Key Contact for Pilot
Persons Contributing to the Report

1. Brief Description of Pilot Program (100-200 words)

2. Brief History of Involvement in Mentoring and Induction Prior to the Pilot Program (100-200 words)

3. District(s) Demographic Information Relevant to the Pilot Program

4. Pilot Administrative Structure

> 4.1 District Level Administration

> 4.2 Site Level Administration

> 4.3 Funding Sources for Pilot program in addition to ISBE funds
> 4.4 Involvement of District and Site Level Administration in Prof Dev related to mentoring/induction

5. Pilot Program Features

> 5.1 Mentors
> > 5.1.1 Number of mentors
> > 5.1.2 Mentor/new teacher ratio
> > 5.1.3 Mentor demographics
> > 5.1.4 Mentor selection criteria and process
> > 5.1.5 Mentor training
> > > Description
> > > How assessed/evaluated?
> > > Year One accomplishments
> > > Anticipated changes for Cohort I, Year2 teachers
> > > Anticipated changes for Cohort II, Year 1 teachers
> > 5.1.6 Mentor interactions with new teachers (formal and informal meetings, classroom observations, co-participation in professional development)
> > > Description
> > > How assessed/evaluated?
> > > Year One accomplishments
> > > Anticipated changes for Cohort I, Year 2 teachers
> > > Anticipated changes for Cohort II, Year i teachers
> > 5.1.7 Professional Development for mentors
> > > Description
> > > How assessed/evaluated?
> > > Year One accomplishments
> > > Anticipated changes for Cohort I, Year 2 teachers