

THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA

Report by LIZ HEALY – 2008 Churchill Fellow

To explore approaches to the support
and retention of beginning teachers – USA, Canada

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1 INTRODUCTION

Newspaper headlines provide an indication of the problem: 'New study shows half of young chalkies want out' and 'Graduate teachers bale out.' (*The West Australian* March 2007). A range of studies tell the same story. New teachers are leaving. In 2007 more than 22% left the Western Australian Department of Education and Training after just one year in a public school. A study by the Australian Education Union in the same year revealed further depressing figures. Across the country a quarter of the 1299 surveyed beginning teachers did not expect to be in teaching within five years.

At a time of teacher surplus, these statistics might be concerning enough but when teacher shortages loom with the expected retirement of baby boomers, the potential loss of so many will have a critical effect on the staffing of schools.

In February of 2007, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training released *Top of the Class*, its report on the enquiry into teacher education. Its comprehensive overview of teacher education revealed shortcomings in the quality of the preparation of teacher candidates.

The attrition rate of beginning teachers also suggests that there are inadequacies in either the quality of initial teacher preparation or in the level of support provided to beginning teachers in the induction period.

It cites also:

a failure of policies involving teacher education to reflect that teacher education does not finish at graduation from an initial teacher education course but continues through induction into the profession as a beginning teacher through to established, advanced and leadership stages.

The report makes a strong case for effective induction which allows new teachers to experience a positive start to their careers. It describes the sort of support that is most beneficial, specifically mentoring, ongoing and relevant professional learning and a reduced teaching load, together with stable employment until they have achieved full registration. All of these, it is suggested, will lead to enhanced retention.

In the United States, *The High Cost of Teacher Turnover* describes the issue as more fundamental to the business of schooling. Not only is the attrition rate costly, in terms of the need to replace and recruit the exiting teachers, it places additional pressures on already disadvantaged schools which have higher concentrations of inexperienced teachers. These schools struggle with the constant turnover of teachers who become disheartened by the challenges and leave before they have had the chance to reach a level of accomplishment that meets the needs of their students. For students in these schools, learning programs are disrupted. School improvement efforts never gain traction.

And for the teacher, there is both personal and professional loss.

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In 2005, following my appointment to the Department of Education and Training of Western Australia's Professional Learning Institute, I was charged with the responsibility of developing a professional learning program for teachers entering public schools.

I researched the needs of beginning teachers, investigated the literature, attended an Induction Institute delivered by University of California New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz and drew on long experience in developing professional learning for teachers. I developed the Graduate Teacher Professional Learning Program, a series of four two-day modules, each aligned to the dimensions of the Department's *Competency Framework for Teachers*. Implementation began in 2006 and teachers attended during the first two years of their teaching careers.

The program aimed to ease the transition from university to initial appointment as a teacher, reducing the sense of isolation and helping to establish professional networks. The focus was on enhancing teaching skills, so that teachers might experience success along with their students, so that they developed confidence in their practice, and satisfaction with their chosen career. All with the expectation that that they would stay in the profession.

Feedback was very positive.

However, with time I recognised that two days of interaction, learning and reflection each semester were not sufficient to support beginning teachers to deal with specific challenges. A second element was added: the In-Class Coaching Program, providing an experienced teacher, trained in mentoring and coaching skills, to work one-to-one on a regular basis with the new teacher.

My professional reading focused on overseas practice in teacher induction that was achieving success in the United States and Canada. Claims of retention rates of around 90% after five years were made for programs.

The Churchill Fellowship provided the opportunity to investigate some of these successful programs.

My early plans were amended when it became evident that programs which had achieved outstanding retention rates, while demonstrating successful practice, were not useful because they did not deal with comparable numbers. Flowing Wells, Arizona, and Lafourche Parish Public Schools in Louisiana have well-documented results, but their intake in each school year is around 40 to 50.

In 2008, the Department appointed 1132 beginning teachers.

I needed to direct my attention to systems of similar size. I investigated further, and developed an itinerary that provided me with a comprehensive view of induction programs in the United States and Canada.

The opportunity afforded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust allowed me to investigate aspects which were not features of our approach, but which seemed to hold promise for improvement to the Western Australian model.

I planned to focus particularly on:

- the ways in which beginning teachers were assessed
- the role the principal played in effective induction
- links between teacher preparation programs and induction.

I learnt much more.

The Churchill Trust made it possible for me to follow an interest and a passion to improve the support provided to new teachers in the public school system in Western Australia. I am sincerely grateful and honoured to have received the award.

My employer, the Department of Education and Training made it possible for me to undertake the fellowship. Margery Evans, Deputy Director General, supported my application for the fellowship.

The following people have played a significant part in my professional achievements, and I thank them sincerely for their encouragement:

Jayne Johnston, previous Director of the Professional Learning Institute, my children, Richard and Claire, Steve, work colleagues at the Professional Learning Institute, and the beginning teachers whose enthusiasm and commitment are my inspiration.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Fellowship travel was undertaken between May 4 and July 3, 2009. The aim of the fellowship was to research approaches to the support and retention of beginning teachers. I visited school districts, many in California, where induction programs for new teachers have been in place for decades, and had the opportunity to talk with mentors and new teachers. I learnt, in particular about the ways in which legislation had brought in reforms that have resulted in high levels of accountability to ensure teacher quality, which when accompanied by support through the provision of highly trained exemplary mentors, has the capacity to lift the practice of new teachers, accelerating their professional growth and encouraging their retention as capable, effective teachers.

I learnt that when the focus is on teacher quality, there is a stronger likelihood that teachers will remain in the profession.

Highlights:

- Time spent with Cynthia Balthaser, Program Director, Santa Cruz New Teacher Program, to learn about the program that is now synonymous with effective teacher induction, and where I gained an overview of California's formative assessment system and its associated resources
- Work-shadowing of Valerie Leal, Support Provider in the Santa Cruz New Teacher project, observing her work with new teachers and her coaching partner
- Information about the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program and the legislation that introduced it, provided by LaRie Colosimo, Regional Director
- Dr Marvin Hoffman's explanation of the background to the development of the Urban Teacher Education Program in Chicago
- Kavita Kapadia Matsko's sharing of the findings of her research into new teacher induction
- Christine Sullivan's account of the ways in which Connecticut had addressed teacher quality through various reforms
- Jim Strachan's sharing of the review of the New Teacher Induction Program in Ontario, and the ways in which job-embedded learning is supporting new teachers in Toronto
- Participation in a Mentor Academy, Yakima, Washington state

Conclusions

The programs that I encountered, while providing assistance to teachers at the start of their careers, went far beyond the provision of emotional support or orientation activities. Assessment of the teacher was also integral, importantly as a means of fulfilling licensure requirements, but also in order to develop in novice educators the skills, abilities and habits of mind of successful teachers. In much the same way that effective assessment has a place in contributing to student learning, new teachers benefit in demonstrating their professional growth in key areas, if the assessment is accompanied by support from a trained mentor with direction on how to improve. In the most successful models, a series of assessment 'tools' framed an induction curriculum for teachers.

Support needed to be multi-layered, and to begin at the school, with the principal taking responsibility for an orientation to the school, its community and its policies and programs. Professional learning helped to build on the knowledge gained at university, and was most valued when it was job-embedded, where new teachers chose to participate, and when their mentors accompanied them, to support their transfer of new learning into the classroom.

These elements resulted in competent teachers who found their classroom experience enjoyable, and who remained committed to their chosen profession.

My recommendations call for the development of policy which will provide a guarantee to new teachers that their specific needs as new educators will be recognised.

3 FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

7 – 8 May	Leadership Institute Trainers Academy	Burlingame, CA
11 – 15 May	Dr Laurie Stapleton Teachers for a New Era	Stanford University Silicon Valley, California
Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz, CA	Patti Gregory Director, New Teacher Program	Campbell Unified School District
	Liz Froemming, Nancy Freschi, Anna Lucas Support Providers	
	Karen Stoneham Principal	
	Liz Jorgens, Dave Geller Beginning teachers	Leigh High School
	Cynthia Balthaser Program Director, Santa Cruz New Teacher Program	Santa Cruz Unified School District
	Mary Jane Hills Participating Teacher Professional Development Coordinator	
	Work-shadowing Valerie Leal, Support Provider Kristie Livingood, second year teacher	Bradley Elementary School
Work-shadowing Star Simon, Support Provider, William Poore, second-year teacher	Linscott Elementary School	
	Leadership Institute module – <i>Culture and Vision</i>	Santa Clara Unified School District
19 – 22 May	<i>Coaching Leaders to Attain Student Success</i> – New Teacher Center	Burlingame, CA, USA
Burlingame, CA		
26 – 29 May	Pat Kishi Program Director, Long Beach New Teacher Project	Long Beach Unified School District
Long Beach, CA, USA	Lori Grace Program Specialist , Professional Development	Long Beach Unified School District
	LaRie Colisimo Regional Director, Cluster 4	Claremont Unified School District
	Beginning Teachers Colloquium	Walnut Creek, California
1 – 5 June	Mary Weck Director of Best Practice	Consortium for Educational Change
Chicago, IL	Dr Marvin Hoffman Associate Director	Urban Teacher Education Program
	Tim Knowles Lewis-Sebring Director of the Urban Education Institute University of Chicago	Urban Education Institute
	Kavita Kapadia Matsko Director	Urban Teacher Education Program

8 – 11 June Hartford, Connecticut	Christine Sullivan Project leader Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program	State Department of Education
	Kim Wachtelhausen Teacher-in-residence Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program	State Department of Education
11 – 13 June	<i>Charlotte Danielson*</i> <i>Danielson Group</i> <i>Princeton, New Jersey</i>	<i>Princeton, NJ</i>
15 – 19 June	Timmy Anand Policy Analyst	Ontario Ministry of Education
Toronto, Ontario, Canada	Nicole De Korte Education Officer, Teaching Policy and Standards Branch	Ontario Ministry of Education
	Carson Allard Program Officer, Standards of Practice and Education Unit	Ontario College of Teachers
	Joanne Robinson President	Ontario Principals Council
	Kathy Broad Director of the Elementary Program Teacher Education	Ontario Institute of Studies in Education University of Toronto
	Mark Evans Associate Dean, Teacher Education	
	Jim Strachan Program Coordinator, Beginning Teachers New Teacher Induction Program	Toronto District Schools Board
22 – 25 June Yakima, WA, USA	Mindy Meyer Project Director CSTP New Teacher Alliance	Mentor Academy, Yakima

* Visit with Charlotte Danielson did not go ahead due to a family bereavement.

4 KEY FINDINGS

The Churchill Fellowship allowed observation of a number of induction programs in the United States and Canada that had been promoted as having decreased teacher attrition. They ranged in length from one to five years, and highlighted the value of ongoing professional learning, focused on high-quality teaching, at a critical time of the teachers' development. Specific elements of the programs, when related to the Australian context, were note-worthy.

4.1 Legislation and funding

- **Induction programs were a legislated requirement and state-funded.**

Throughout the USA and Canada, the recognition of the need for a strong start to a teaching career, and the benefit gained in retaining teachers who are committed and know their craft, has resulted (or is the result) of state legislation that mandates, and provides the resources for:

- an induction program which requires the support of a mentor
- ongoing professional learning as a pathway to a clear teaching credential.

These requirements were generally part of larger initiatives focused on educational reform through enhancing the quality of the teaching profession.

My first visits were with people who were involved in the BTSA Program in California. The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program is the state-required induction program that grew out of research from the California New Teacher Project. This study indicated that formative assessment and support increased the retention rate of new teachers along with their development as qualified and capable teachers.

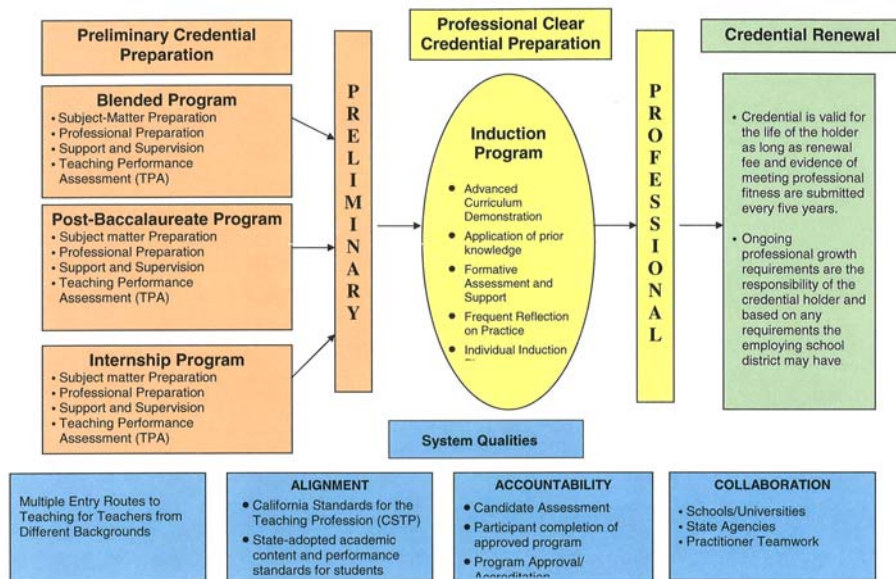
Specifically, findings from the 1992 project were that:

- 90% of beginning teachers who received ongoing support remained in the profession
- their teaching practices improved as a result of the support
- they were better able to meet the needs of their diverse student populations
- the veteran teachers who supported them also noticed improvements in their own teaching practices.

The passage of legislation (AB 1266, 1997) made the provision of a support program a requirement for all school districts.

In 1998 there were further key reforms when the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing sponsored legislation to restructure requirements for a clear credential. The passage of Senate Bill 2042 changed the requirements for gaining a clear credential (teaching licence). Formerly, when teachers completed their university programs they received a preliminary credential, and had to complete further university units in order to gain a clear credential. Amongst other initiatives aimed at enhancing teacher quality, there was a new requirement that mandated completion of the two-year induction program of support and formative assessment as the route to a Level II teaching credential.

California's Learning to Teach System



California's Learning to Teach Continuum, SB 2042, 1998

Now no longer just a source of support, more was required of BTSA programs, and of the support providers (mentors) who in effect, took responsibility for providing the induction that ensured teachers met high standards. Out of this rose the need for clearer learning goals for new teachers and assessment tools to support their progress.

As at June 2009, funding of \$3250 per teacher was provided by the state, with an additional \$2500 funded by the school district.

In Connecticut, I was informed about the steps taken to ensure that teachers are adequately skilled, going back to the 1980s where sweeping reforms had an enormous effect on the quality and number of candidates for teaching positions in Connecticut. Teacher tests were instituted, to ensure that teachers' personal literacy and numeracy met the demands of a teaching role. The Connecticut Competency Examination for Prospective Teachers CCONNCEPT, developed by National Evaluation Systems in Massachusetts, assessed candidates' ability in Mathematics at around the 10th grade level and in reading and writing. In addition, every candidate for a principal's or superintendent's position had to take, and be successful at the same test.

With all teachers belonging to one of two Teachers' Federations, opposition was strong, but the legislature tied the reforms to significant salary increases, and the requirements were enacted through the Education Enhancement Act of 1985, which also introduced the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program.

BEST was designed as a support for new teachers, through the provision of mentoring in the first year, but at the same time it brought in a system for assessing teachers' classroom competence in the second year, linking this to certification requirements. Only through completing the program, which involved the development and submission of a highly structured portfolio, and gaining a satisfactory evaluation, could new teachers gain licensure and remain in the profession.

The reforms have been credited with across-the-board improvement. Student achievement in Connecticut ranks in the top five states.

In Ontario, the Education Act has been amended to focus on teacher quality, with teacher professional growth plans, teacher appraisal and the New Teacher Induction Program all legislated requirements.

At a time of fiscal uncertainty and restraint, where budget cuts were severe, induction programs were generally being quarantined from funding cuts.

4.2 Program standards

- **Induction programs were designed to defined program standards.**

With induction as the pathway to a teaching credential, program rigour and relevance are paramount. To maintain quality in California, program standards were developed that all state-approved BTSA induction programs must adhere to as they design and implement their programs.

They fall into two categories – standards that inform the design of the program, its articulation with teacher preparation courses and the work of the support provider (mentor) in guiding the new teacher through a formative assessment system – and standards that ensure that programs provide opportunities for participants to demonstrate effective teaching. These are discussed in further detail later.

In Washington state, the state education authority, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, a non-profit organisation that supports research and promotes policies and practices to ensure that all students in Washington are taught by highly skilled teachers, together developed and released a set of standards for beginning teacher induction.

These focus attention on the need to address key elements:

- **Hiring**
Students, schools and districts are well served by hiring policies and practices that honor the unique needs and powerful potential of beginning teachers.
- **Orientation**
New teachers benefit from participation in an orientation to the school and district beliefs and practices – before their teaching responsibilities begin and continuing throughout the year.
- **Mentoring**
A strong relationship with a highly qualified mentor is essential to facilitating maximum growth in new teachers.
- **Professional development**
New teachers benefit from engagement in purposeful, ongoing, formal and informal job-embedded learning opportunities that promote reflection, collaboration and professional growth.
- **Assessment for teacher growth**
New teachers benefit when districts have a carefully developed collaborative assessment system focused on improving teaching practice and enhancing student achievement.

The associated ‘elements of quality practice’ provide clear guidelines to districts, schools and the system on how to provide layers of support for the professional needs of beginning teachers.

Program standards are used to design programs in California, and to monitor their performance. The article that follows sparked my interest in the program in operation in Long Beach, California.

Long Beach is the port city south of Los Angeles which has a population where students speak dozens of different languages and where there are large groups of Cambodians, Latinos and African Americans. It is an inner city neighborhood where incomes are low, and racial tension and violence occasionally high. (It was the scene of the Rodney King riots). Nevertheless Long Beach has managed to notch some impressive gains in awards for urban education.

The third largest school district in California, it educates nearly 90,000 students in 93 public schools in the cities of Long Beach, Lakewood, Signal Hill, and Avalon on Catalina Island. Long Beach has

participated in the state new teacher support program since 1988 and advertises the fact that it was the first California urban school district to provide support to every beginning teacher.

Teacher Training Earns High Marks

5/04/07

The Long Beach Unified School District Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program recently earned a rave review by the state.

The LBUSD new teacher induction program met performance standards in 83 of 85 categories, a remarkably high level of performance on the standard review conducted every five years for each BTSA program in the state.

"The results of this review speak for themselves," said Cathy Hicks, BTSA director in the San Dieguito Union High School District and leader of the team reviewing LBUSD's program. "You have an exceptional program here. You have set the bar very high for other districts to follow."

Reviewers were impressed with the thoroughness of the program and the high rate of retention of new teachers here. More than 90 percent of teachers who progress through BTSA here remain in the profession five years after beginning teaching, compared to a nationwide rate of approximately 50 percent.

LBUSD provides beginning teachers and other teachers new to the district with comprehensive support during their first years in local classrooms. Support includes a site coordinator at each school. Implementation includes:

- A coach who provides one-on-one mentoring and support to each new teacher on a regular basis,*
- Help with classroom management, lesson planning, and assessment and instructional strategies,*
- Release time for new teachers to observe exemplary teachers with their coaches,*
- Assessment for professional growth, with opportunities for professional development, and*
- Seminars to assist with professional clear credential requirements.*

LBUSD also was praised for the personal touch and responsiveness of support efforts coordinated by BTSA director Pat Kishi.

"New teachers here love their coaches, and the overwhelming majority of the matches are going well," Hicks said. "When the matches don't go well, they are immediately taken care of and new coaches are assigned. That's highly unusual in a district of this size."

Hicks noted district-wide understanding and support of the BTSA program among administrators, teachers and classified staff, also unusual in a large district.

"When the reviewers would talk among themselves, they would say, 'I wish I had been a new teacher in this program,'" Hicks said.

Hicks emphasized that approximately 20 of the 85 areas reviewed are typically difficult for most districts of any size to meet. LBUSD met all of them.

"Long Beach just sailed through those items," Hicks said. "I'm going to be talking to you to get more details about how you did that."

4.3 Mentor selection, roles and training

- **They involved the support of a mentor, trained in the skills of consulting, collaborating and coaching, or ‘learning-focused conversations’.**

All programs called for support from a mentor, but the more effective programs made clear the fact that the role entailed more than the provision of emotional support and information. This was a learning-focused relationship with the mentor playing the role of teacher educator, with the goal of improving the practice of the new teacher in order to have a positive impact on student achievement. It was not about inducting new teachers into the status quo, but about creating new norms of professionalism.

With such aspirations, the intensive induction model favoured in California placed enormous emphasis on ensuring high levels of skill and expertise on the part of mentors, for whom the role is a full-time position. There is a highly competitive application and selection process guided by the state program standards. Successful candidates have approximately 8 to 10 days training in mentoring skills and subsequently participate in support meetings where they receive additional training and networking opportunities to improve their practice. They are assigned a coach partner and receive data-based feedback on their performance. Their skills are assessed regularly and only those who fulfil the roles and responsibilities are encouraged to continue.

In this model new teachers are assigned a mentor within 30 days of the start of the school year, and from then, spend one to two hours weekly with the new teachers, over the course of the entire school year, and continuing through to the end of the second year. The case-load for such support providers was around 15 to 20 new teachers.

These people enjoy high status as teacher leaders and generally move into school and district roles where they play a strong part in school and system improvement efforts.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work-shadow Valerie Leal who works as a support provider in the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project. I observed as she worked at Bradley Elementary School with Christie Livingood, a second-year kindergarten teacher whose contract was not going to be renewed for the following year due to budget cuts. In the face of this, she was remarkably focused on her teaching and happy to share the successes achieved with her students. She was clear about, and produced evidence of the progress they had made in early writing, which had been the focus of her inquiry action.

I observed as Valerie worked through a typical meeting, using the Collaborative Log to identify what was working, and where she might need support (in this case in the provision of resources for an upcoming theme).

We then drove to Linscott Elementary School, to meet with Star Simon, mentor for second-year 4th grade teacher William Poore. As Star’s coaching partner, Valerie’s role on this occasion was to observe Star as she supported William in the development of his Inquiry Action Plan reflection, and to provide documented feedback on her questioning. The pairing of coaches is one of the ways in which the focus on quality is maintained and is a feature of the intensive induction model.



Star Simon with second-year teacher William Poore at Linscott Elementary School. Valerie Leal observes as coach partner.

Other programs (Washington, Connecticut, Toronto) adopted a school-based model where mentors were identified by the principal to take on the role and were rewarded with a stipend which ranged from \$500 to \$2000 per teacher.

While all programs specified mentoring, this might not mean a one-to-one relationship. In the Toronto District School Board, research was undertaken to improve the program. The original vision of providing one-to-one school-based mentoring in place, did not work for all. 80% found it meaningful, 20% did not. Open-ended comments suggested three 'disconnects':

1. Mentors were 'volun-told' – Mentor teachers were already over-loaded and had little time to provide effective mentoring.
2. The mentor was stuck in a consultative stance that didn't make the new teacher feel good about their own practice.
3. The complex dynamics of human interaction meant some simply didn't get along.

Advice is now given about various mentoring models which might be used:

- The broker model, where the mentor is the first point of contact, the 'go-to' person
- Group mentoring, sometimes a team or committee, with varying areas of expertise
- Informal or peer mentoring that occurs through location or friendship
- Online mentoring which provides a vibrant conferencing system and access to a variety of resources and perspectives beyond the school site

If mentoring is the key to effective induction, the training of mentors was critical.

Kavita Kapadia Matsko, at the Urban Teacher Education Program in Chicago, had been recommended to me as one of the foremost researchers on new teacher induction. She expanded on her research in our discussion, emphasizing that although Chicago Public Schools promotes the fact that every new hire gets a mentor, it is not good enough just to assign a mentor. Strong induction programs had layers of support, with a range of development activities and opportunities for substantive professional discussions.

As a result of their sessions with effective mentors new teachers were able to describe and justify their practice, which increased their confidence and their sense of efficacy as a teacher. As a consequence they viewed the mentor as being useful and having done a good job.

According to Kavita, it is the quality of the mentoring, which is linked to the training that mentors receive, that makes the difference. Mentors, whether school-based or full-release, were trained for the role, some attending initial training during their summer holidays, then participating in ongoing meetings and workshops to build their skills.

Mentors were trained in:

- state teaching standards
- how to facilitate learning-focused conversations
- the use of mentor tools for formative assessment
- professional certification requirements

as well as revising content on key areas such as classroom management and student assessment and code of conduct.

In Santa Cruz, support providers attend a four-day institute run by the New Teacher Center on Foundations of Mentoring, and then meet for three-hourly Friday Forums where they become familiar with the formative assessment tools. In addition, with their coaching partner they engage in an activity called Problem Pose: Problem Solve where they each use cognitive coaching skills, to support their partner to reflect on challenges of the mentoring role.

In Washington State, where mentors are chosen by schools (and possibly, districts) according to specific criteria which are published as part of the standards, the state education authority – the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction – provides support through a range of activities to enhance the skills of mentors.

- Mentor Academy I – four-day initial training
- Mentor Academy II – two-day follow-up
- Mentor Tune Up
- Mentor Roundtables
- Mentor Symposium held each November which brings together education professionals interested in supporting new teachers

I attended sessions of a Mentor Academy at Yakima, Washington held during the summer vacation. Such events are heavily subsidized by OSPI which covers accommodation costs, with schools paying a nominal \$150 for teachers to attend. These teachers commit four days of their own to gain skills in mentoring, and in additional areas to be covered with their mentees (The Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Responsibility; Classroom-based Assessment; Classroom Management; Mentoring for Cultural Competency).



Mentor Academy, Yakima, Washington state

The ways in which mentors were selected and trained appeared to have a large impact on the integrity of the induction program and its capacity to develop resilient, successful teachers.

4.4 Professional learning for new teachers

- **Programs set an expectation of engagement in professional learning throughout a teaching career.**

Professional learning was promoted throughout all programs as a career-long process. Each incorporated further learning as a continuation of the pre-service program. As well as the development that occurred through the mentoring relationship, there were opportunities to participate in workshops, seminars and forums with other beginning teachers as well as observation of the teaching of veteran colleagues.

In Santa Cruz, professional learning was tailored to the needs of the teachers. They were surveyed to find out what it was they needed, when and where. As a result, Collaborative Learning Cohorts were formed, based on content area and grade-alike (K-3; 4-6, then Maths, Science, the Language Arts or on specific areas such as differentiation, lesson-planning, and classroom management).

All teachers are required to attend six sessions, four with their learning cohort, and another two of their own choice. Part of each agenda focuses on developing in the teachers, an enhanced capacity to collaborate and facilitate, developing teacher-leaders of the future.

Discussion about one's practice was a feature of professional learning for new teachers and many opportunities were provided for them to reflect and share.

This approach was evident in the Beginning Teachers' Colloquium I attended in Walnut Creek, California, where second-year teachers celebrated the completion of their second year of teaching and of the BTSA Program, and where, in facilitated discussion they shared an aspect of their teaching practice.



Beginning Teacher Colloquium, Walnut Valley, California

Long Beach Unified School District runs a mandatory New Teacher Institute for all new hires to district and new teachers, held in the week before appointment commences, including Learning Area specific content to be taught.

From then, teachers come back six to eight times per year for full days of professional learning – on how to teach for example, the Civil War.

In Long Beach in previous years, the district had run a training program on pedagogy – Essential Elements of Effective Instruction (EEEE) – which included Bloom’s Taxonomy, Madeline Hunter’s Lesson Design, Differentiated Instruction and Cooperative Learning. Principals had been trained and were familiar with the concepts. Now with their acceptance of increased responsibility for their new hires, they saw value in using the program. Its subsequent revival allowed conversations with all stakeholders. Support providers and new teachers were each trained in EEEI and emails were sent to principals advising them of what the new teachers were learning with the view that principals would know what they should be looking for in classrooms when doing observations as part of teacher evaluation.

As well, this provision of a common language to talk about teaching and learning resulted in increased levels of comfort and confidence in principals as instructional leaders.

The Ontario Ministry of Education provides a ‘Compilation of Professional Development Core Content to Support the New Teacher Induction Program’ for those involved in the support of new teachers. New teachers had been surveyed in order to identify the areas that they needed particular support in. They nominated classroom management, planning, assessment and evaluation and communication with parents as the areas they felt needed to be addressed through the professional learning component. With boards (districts) responsible for provision, core content and workshop aims have been specified for each, together with conversation starters for discussions between principals and new teachers, as a way of embedding further the understandings gained from the workshops:

In what way is your classroom environment safe, inclusive and learning-focused?
(Classroom management)

Talk to me about how you involve the parents of the students in your classroom... (Communication with parents)

In the Toronto District School Board, the decision was made to take a more hands-on approach as part of a suite of professional learning aimed at new teachers. As well as demonstration classrooms, summer institutes, online sharing and support and coaching support from retired educators, Jim Strachan, Program Director, NTIP conceived the Job-Embedded Learning Initiative, (JELI) which provided four days in the first and second years for new teachers to observe the practice of an exemplary teacher, accompanied by their mentor, with a pre-and post-meeting to determine how the visit would have an impact on the new teacher’s practice.

Research undertaken six months after such visits, confirmed the view that improvements were being successfully transferred into practice, and led to extension of the initiative with the addition of JAM (Job-assisted Mentoring), offering teachers up to their fifth year, two days to observe veteran colleagues, to learn in ways that are tailored to their needs.

It was Jim’s view that it takes five years for a teacher to decide what sort of teacher he or she will be, and that ongoing support provides them with clear models of effective teaching, enhancing the likelihood of their development as strong, successful teachers with high standards for themselves and their students.

The success of both JELI and JAM relies on the five hundred teachers who have their details recorded on an online database indicating their willingness to open their practice to newer colleagues.

When beginning teachers were surveyed in 2009 to determine how meaningful each of the supports were in terms of their *overall impact on the learning of students in your classroom*, high ratings (percentage who rated the support as meaningful or very meaningful) were obtained for JELI (95%), JAM (93%) demonstration classrooms (100%) with mentoring at school receiving 82%, coaching by a retired veteran teacher 48% and the Fall Orientation 35%.

What is impressive is that there are so many ways in which the needs of new educators are being addressed.

4.5 Assessment of the new teacher's development

➤ Programs involved (formative) assessment of the new teacher's development.

Although my plan was to focus on the *formative* assessment of new teachers, I found that it was necessary to understand the other ways in which teachers were assessed in the United States and Canada, and how these aspects were regarded as critical aspects of enhancing teacher quality, introduced through the legislative reforms mentioned earlier.

The first of these conforms with the view expressed in the policy brief developed for the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future: *hire well-prepared teachers*.

(a) Before they can be appointed to a school, teacher candidates must demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and abilities to be a successful teacher. Legislation which became effective in July 2008 required all teacher candidates to pass a series of tests to determine whether their teacher preparation course has equipped them to teach effectively, based on their subject matter knowledge and pedagogical competence. In California this Teacher Performance Assessment requirement is embedded within each teacher preparation program.

Other tests in use determine standards of personal literacy and numeracy, in

- Mathematics (at about year 10 level)
- Reading
- Writing.

Another requirement being introduced in Connecticut (July, 2009) is a test of all elementary teachers, to determine capacity to *teach* reading.

These requirements are in line with recommendations made in Australia in the 2005 Report on the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy, (Department of Education, Science and Training) and with moves elsewhere in Australia to ensure that those who are charged with the responsibility of educating young people are equipped for the task. They emphasise the importance of teaching candidates having sound personal literacy and numeracy, and of university education courses taking more responsibility for developing primary teachers who can teach all of their students to read and write.

The requirements have the effect of setting high expectations for teachers and making explicit the standards by which they will be judged.

(b) Once employed, teachers undergo an evaluation process, or teacher appraisal, which they must pass in order to retain a teaching position. This is conducted by the principal and is explained in detail later in this report.

(c) Formative assessment was the aspect that I was most interested in investigating, and on which hinges the capacity of the program to enhance teacher quality. Unlike summative assessment or evaluation which is intended to result in a decision or judgment, this assessment aims to enhance skill – in this case, the professional practice of the teacher. It involves collaboration, observation, and feedback.

The New Teacher Center (University of California, Santa Cruz) describes its view of formative assessment:

The performance of a learner collected over time and compared to set criteria for the purpose of enhancing learning. It is ongoing, non-evaluative, evidence-driven, a collaborative process, focused on growth over time.

As part of teacher induction, formative assessment includes three elements – the use of teaching standards, which provide a common framework and language; a series of formative assessment ‘tools’ which help to frame the discussions; and evidence derived from the teacher’s practice. When used together, these elements provide new teachers with a means of reflecting on their practice, developing a realistic view of their strengths while recognising where to focus effort in order to improve.

Around the country, the assessment took different forms, but all were developed with the view that requirements were integrated with the teacher’s daily work of identifying student needs and implementing strategies to support their learning. When supported through a collaborative relationship with a mentor they were highly successful in developing the habits of mind of effective teachers.

California’s Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program has, since its inception in 1992, included an inquiry-based model of formative assessment, along with provision of support.

Here, the beginning teacher’s investigation is the result of a collaborative effort with the support provider or mentor who can engage in a reflective conversation with the new teacher, interpreting data from classroom observation and drawing attention to specific aspects, guiding, advising, and providing a focus and resources.

The action enquiry relates to the two standards that have been developed for beginning teachers, which are in addition to those for all California teachers. These form the basis for their area of classroom research: in the first year, *pedagogy* is the focus, and in the second *universal access: equity for all students* (the capacity of the teacher to differentiate for all students, particularly those who are English Language Learners).

This is the model developed by the New Teacher Center, and now used in many jurisdictions around the country.

In Long Beach, California the model is also inquiry-based, embedded in practice and allows demonstration that the teacher is attending to and meeting the teaching standards. Teachers select a focus based on assessed needs, say classroom management, in one of the induction standards. There is support to develop an inquiry which reflects district priorities. In Long Beach, there has been a sustained focus on pedagogy, with their Essential Elements of Effective Instruction framing improvement efforts. The goal is to establish goals and to achieve success. The key element is reflection and the documentation.

Formative assessment takes place through mentoring, with a range of tools that document the processes that a teacher must complete in order to be credentialed. For the first time in 2009, teachers were required to submit evidence of their having met requirements, in this case by completing an inquiry action plan on an area related to their particular context.

The use of mentor tools – also termed formative assessment tools – was a key feature. A series of frameworks was used as the basis for learning-focused conversations – and enabled documentation of the discussions, and of the teacher’s growth.

An appendix provides a list of those used in the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, but the critical one, according to Cynthia Balthaser, Program Director (‘elegant, simple’) is the *Collaborative Assessment Log*, which she believed created resilience and prevented burnout. Mentors and teachers work together to complete the sections, through a routine that always commences with ‘What’s working?’

There is a range of these support tools but the use of them is to guide, not prescribe. Not everything is required to be submitted. Teachers can choose which ones to submit, but critical ones are required. For example, all must complete a class profile and an analysis of student work.

The tools, in effect, frame a 'curriculum' for new teachers to continue to learn the skills of effective teachers through their first and second years. They force early consideration of the aspects that teachers *might* think about eventually, as they become effective in their practice over time. They encourage the habits of mind and the practices that enhance the learning of their students. They are led to think about, for example, through the *Class Profile*, the composition of their class, the diversity of the learners and the special needs and interests that need to be addressed. In the *Analysis of student work*, and the subsequent awareness of the different levels of ability, they are led to discover the necessity of differentiating instruction. Key skills such as these are uncovered in practice, and approaches are developed with the support of the mentor.

In the Campbell Unified School District, in the heart of Silicon Valley I travelled with mentors Liz Froemming and Anna Lucas to Leigh High School to meet with two of their new teachers and gain their impressions from their involvement in the program.

Dave Geller is a second-year Physics teacher. A former engineer, he trained at San Jose State University, but felt his training was too theoretical, particularly lacking a focus on English Language Learners.

Liz Jorgens, a second-year English teacher claimed to have gained more from BTSA than her teacher-preparation program. It has influenced the way she planned, her use of rubrics, her use of technology. She felt that her mentor had 'shielded her from BTSA' – that it was 'seamless.'

Dave was of the view that the professional learning should continue beyond the second year and that every teacher would benefit by participating in the professional learning and from being observed and provided with feedback. Accountability requirements had been accomplished with one-on-one help from their mentor, who acted as a buffer, and prevented them from being overwhelmed.

It was clear that for both of them, the provision of support, coupled with professional learning which helped them to enhance their teaching, had made it easy for them to complete their BTSA requirements. They were articulate and confident, and enjoying their teaching.

I was reminded of the mission of the New Teacher Center: *The NTC works to accelerate teacher effectiveness in order to improve student achievement.*

In the BEST Program in Washington State, this element takes the form of a Professional Growth Plan, written collaboratively between mentor and new teacher, focused on a goal selected by the new teacher, and used to guide the mentee-mentor partnership, providing a focus for observation of classroom practice. While it may change over time, it is a real goal related to the teaching appointment, written from their current situation and based on their own data.

Some programs have required more of the beginning teacher. In the case of Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support and Training Program, the key assessment element has been through the submission of a teaching portfolio (a written document and video of a unit of classroom instruction) which was designed to assess the elements of the *Common Core of Teaching* – the foundational skills and competencies, as well as content-specific teaching standards, and the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

Up until 2009, the following documentation was required:

- daily lesson plans for a five to eight hour unit of instruction with one class
- examples of student work
- reflective commentaries on teaching and learning that took place.

Successful completion enabled achievement of the second tier of the State Teaching Certificate.

I spent time at the State Department of Education in Hartford, as the portfolios were being scored, a task which takes on average around five hours for each of the more than two thousand portfolios which are submitted annually.

This task is completed by trained scorers whose own knowledge of effective practice is enhanced through their involvement in the scoring and the discussions that take place between scorers. Some scorers have been university faculty members, whose involvement has helped to strengthen links and develop shared understandings between the two organizations.

Portfolios could be awarded one of four ratings, 1 – conditional, 2 – competent, 3 – proficient and 4 – exemplary. In 2007 around 11% received a conditional score, with the teachers subsequently receiving a commentary, using the language from the scoring rubric, about the areas of weakness to be addressed. These teachers would make a further submission, and if necessary, one more. Very few people failed on a third attempt, but Christine Sullivan made the point that subsequent portfolios had benefited from the learning that took place and that teachers made wiser choices which were indicative of more effective teaching. In her view, it was not sensible to expect, or want all teachers to be successful, and that there are some who don't meet expected high standards. Their departure from the profession meant that groups of students would not be subjected to inadequate teaching.

While the portfolio development was seen to be helpful in teachers developing understanding of the standards of the Common Core of Teaching, the compilation of evidence took time and was seen to be overly onerous. Beginning teachers had found that it created a heavy workload. The report of the Legislative Programs Review and Investigations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly on the BEST Program, released in December 2007, found that the State Department of Education (SDE) had emphasised the assessment element to the detriment of overseeing the support component, to the extent that for many teachers BEST was synonymous with 'the portfolio' rather than with a comprehensive induction program.

With the program requiring mentor support in the first year, but optional in the second, at the time when the new teacher is required to compile and submit the portfolio, it seemed that an opportunity had been missed for the two elements to work together. In Connecticut, unlike California there was not systematic formative-based support for teachers which was unlinked, separate and distinct from teacher evaluation.

Further, the level of mentoring support was seen to be inadequate even for the majority of first year teachers, and that while some new teachers might have derived emotional support from their more experienced colleagues, there was little evidence that their involvement affected their teaching quality or their performance on the portfolio assessment.

From July 2009, the assessment element will move to an inquiry-based model more like the one adopted by California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program.

4.6 A focus on teaching standards

➤ Programs were aligned to, and focused upon the achievement of teaching standards.

Effective induction programs highlighted the need for a common set of standards which communicated the skills, understandings and behaviours expected of teachers as they progress through their careers. They provide a reference and focus for discussions, and facilitated conversations between mentors, teachers and principals.

All programs I saw were framed around state standards. The California Standards for the Teaching Profession comprise six standards, each with 'key elements' and prompts for questions to encourage teachers to consider their progress in achieving the standards.

In addition, 2000 saw the introduction of 'induction standards' specifically for beginning teachers, with the expectation that they would focus, in their first year, on pedagogy, and in their second year, on catering for diverse populations.

Illinois Professional Teaching Standards have eleven standards, with further elaboration broken into Knowledge and Performance Indicators of the work of the 'competent teacher'.

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (1999) presents a 'comprehensive view of an accomplished teacher' with Foundational Skills and Competencies around which all school districts were required to develop teacher evaluation plans and professional development plans.

The standards are used in teacher appraisal and increasingly, to frame pre-service education courses.

The Danielson Framework for Teaching was being used also, even where there were state standards, as a highly accessible tool which described performance in a series of levels of accomplishment. Charlotte Danielson's work for the Educational Testing Service involved the development of a tool that could be used to make decisions for teacher licensing. She saw that it could be used more widely in conversations aimed at enhancing teacher practice.

According to Kavita Kapadia Matsko, it is used in Chicago by universities to measure student interns' growth, and by induction staff who provide in-class coaching to graduates. Trained observers use the tool to collecting ratings of beginning teachers in the fall of the first year, then again in the spring. The expectation is that graduates will not be at the 'distinguished' level but will aspire to it. The tool is used also to select the supervisory teachers in whose classroom the interns are placed in pre-service.

Although it was not intended to be an evaluative tool, it is used for this purpose, helping to clarify the next steps, and to develop an action plan for growth, and with the view that teachers will continue to do this as they develop.

The Illinois Professional Teaching Standards do not lend themselves to the same use. They are not differentiated in a way that would allow a new teacher to see themselves in them. The Danielson Framework *'provides a more explicit road map. If I am at 'basic' level, what would my practice need in order to move to the next level?'*

The Framework is used extensively across the country and has prompted Kapadia Matsko to investigate whether it is reasonable to expect that its use can lead to shifts in practice, and how soon, and to look at the relationship between 'effectiveness' as determined by the framework, and shifts in student learning.

She is keen to know more about the effect of school culture. Are there conditions that need to be in place or can the tool itself catalyse conversations? She believes so.

Mary Weck, from the Consortium of Educational Change (Chicago) and Dr Hoffman (Urban Teacher Education Program) both alluded to the fact that principals need to be trained in the use of standards. Otherwise they will make inaccurate judgments about teacher practice. Effectiveness depended upon accurate and common understanding of the standards, and their purpose.

4.7 Active participation of the principal

➤ Programs required the active participation of the principal.

A further focus of my work was on the role of the principal in the development and support of new teachers. While a program of professional learning provides the chance to learn new skills and much-needed reflection time with others in a similar situation, and a mentor provides further support and encouragement to build effectiveness, the school is where the teacher turns up each working day, and where the working conditions contribute to – or hinder their development and success as a teacher.

The conditions under which teachers work have a great impact on their satisfaction and desire to remain in the profession – and the principal is a key factor in establishing these conditions.

For this reason, I was interested to learn more about the programs that have been developed by the New Teacher Center to support new principals as they make the transition into leadership roles. Based on the successful model of the New Teacher Program, a suite of programs – comprising a series of Leadership modules focusing on key elements of the principal's role – and a coaching program that provides confidential coaching by a trained veteran principal, has been developed. Now in its eleventh year, the latter – *Coaching Leaders to Attain Student Success* – is credited by participants as equipping them to remain in the role.

I attended a Leadership Institute Trainers' Academy run by the New Teacher Center in Burlingame, California and became familiar with the content of this ten-module course, provided for aspiring and newly-appointed school leaders. I particularly noted that the skills developed within the program almost exclusively focused on relationship-building and the management of people, rather than dealing with the operational or managerial aspects of school leadership.

- Module 1 – Culture and Climate
- Module 2 – Time Management and Delegation
- Module 3 – Meeting Facilitation
- Module 4 – Decision-making
- Module 5 – Supervision: Formative Assessment
- Module 6 – Evaluation: Summative Assessment
- Module 7 – Using Data
- Module 8 – Professional Learning Communities
- Module 9 – Recruitment, Staffing and Working with New Teachers
- Module 10 – Vision and Leadership Style

In view of research that suggested that poor leadership is a factor in new teachers' decisions to move schools or abandon teaching altogether, and recognition that it is the principal who establishes the working conditions of a school, there is an increased focus on the need for the principal to address the specific needs of new teachers.

The influence and responsibilities of the principal were key factors in successful induction. All programs made explicit the roles and responsibilities of site administrators, and provided training that supported them to be aware of their obligations to new teachers. Such training helped to overcome views such as, 'My new teacher is fabulous. She doesn't need this program'. School leaders needed to be aware of the content of programs, and what new teachers had been working on, so that they could more effectively discuss their progress. Some were even provided with conversation starters on instructional practice. These activities were seen to sit well with, and allow development of the critical role of instructional leader.

Principals' responsibilities included a school orientation which provided a welcome to the school community and an introduction to policies and programs.

It also involved consideration of the teaching assignment, the workload implications of preparation for a range of year groups, class size, room location and the curtailing of additional responsibilities for new teachers. It was expected that the most challenging students would be placed with the most capable teachers, rather than with those starting out as teachers.

A further critical role performed by principals in all of the systems I encountered was the Teacher Performance Appraisal.

The process in Ontario is illustrative: in accordance with the Education Act, new teachers complete the New Teacher Induction Program when they receive two satisfactory ratings in performance in the first twelve months after they begin teaching. This involves the principal conducting two formal observations of the teacher in the first year. These consist of a pre-observation conference, an observation and a post-observation conference. The teacher collects and provides evidence of practice with examples of student work and assessment tasks, evidence of parent communication and involvement in professional development, together with reflection on their progress.

The appraisal process is designed to strengthen schools as learning communities in which new teachers are provided with plentiful opportunities to engage in professional exchange and collective enquiry that lead to continuous growth and development. It provides a framework to encourage improvement efforts aimed at ensuring student success. Essential in this process is the engagement of new teachers in professional dialogue that deepens their understanding of what it means to be a teacher as described in the Ontario College of Teachers' Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession.

*New Teacher Induction Program
Manual for Performance Appraisal of New Teachers,
Ontario Ministry of Education 2008.*

On the basis of the first performance appraisal, the principal determines one of two performance ratings for the new teacher:

- *Satisfactory*
- *Development needed*

Following the second appraisal, possible ratings are:

- *Satisfactory*
- *Unsatisfactory*

Two satisfactory ratings result in notification of successful completion of the New Teacher Induction Program, with details submitted to the Ontario College of Teachers.

For those who received a *Development needed*, or *Unsatisfactory* rating, the process would continue through the second year, up to a fourth appraisal, which, if failing to gain a satisfactory rating would result in a recommendation for termination of the teacher's employment, with the Ontario College of Teachers notified after termination.

While the requirement may create anxiety for the teacher, it is designed to promote excellence in teaching and learning, and when conducted as support for the teachers and for school improvement goals, can help to develop a positive school culture.

Kavita Kapadia Matsko's research at the Urban Teacher Education Program in Chicago suggested that school culture and leadership was as strong in effect as having a strong mentor. And that the effects of mentoring are more profound in a positive school culture.

In systems which had long-standing programs for new teachers in place, principals were fully supportive and engaged, many of them having been through the program as they commenced their careers.

4.8 University links

➤ Alignment between teacher preparation and induction

In most of the places I visited, I found that our discussions would inevitably raise issues which were common to each of our contexts. These included the divergent view of new teachers attending professional learning. ‘We did all of this at uni’, and ‘We did none of this at uni’, which are as prevalent in the US as in Western Australia, and give an indication of the variety of experiences provided by teacher preparation courses.

I was interested to learn more about the ways in which induction programs articulated with teacher preparation programs and found that early attempts to align the two had proven problematic in some cases.

Long Beach's need to develop understanding in new teachers about its Essential Elements of Effective Instruction led to the view that new teachers were not completing their university qualifications with the skills required to be successful in Long Beach schools and prompted the need for better alignment between university teacher preparation programs and induction.

Lori Grace outlined efforts to bridge the gap between the two sectors, which had commenced in the mid 90s when then-Director, Carl Cohn, charged Christine Dominguez with the brief to develop a large-scale professional development program to raise the quality of teaching, drawing upon isolated pockets of excellence through the system. The aim was to coordinate reform efforts through a strategic approach that brought the universities to the table, to consider the view that their courses were founded on expectations that did not serve the schools of Long Beach. Mention was made of the fact that the local university, California State at Long Beach prepared teachers for the more affluent neighbouring Orange County, and the few that did gain appointments in Long Beach were not prepared for the challenges of urban schools.

Universities were presented with the district's issue – that the system had to do so much work with new teachers once they were qualified in order for them to be effective. At first, this led to a blame mentality. Universities protested that there was no capacity to cover the requirements in only a year. But there was a realisation that they could do better, and that teacher candidates who weren't suitable should not be allowed to graduate. Improvements were instigated, with earlier field experience and placements in schools with diverse students. Universities stepped up. District staff started teaching in their classes and designing their curriculum, which led to a change in the type of faculty members that universities were hiring, using more adjunct staff with current experience. Now a collaborative relationship has developed.

Part of that collaboration was spent on the development of professional standards, a two-year enterprise that was curtailed when the state developed its own set, made non-negotiable, to guide teacher preparation as well as induction. Nevertheless, the time spent in negotiating a set of standards for teaching was fruitful in developing shared understandings about what the university courses should focus upon.

I was interested to learn of the initiatives that heightened the likelihood of teachers having a realistic, rather than idealistic view of current teaching. Before they can participate in their credential programs elementary teachers have to complete 140 voluntary hours as college-aides, assisting with small group instruction in classrooms. With many more hours of exposure, they have more of a basis to decide if teaching is for them.

The other key factor to universities changing their approach was the need to move quickly in response to Long Beach hiring emergency permit teachers, the result of legislation that reduced class sizes. They had to ramp up programs that met needs. This forced faculty to be in urban classrooms and to move away from a theoretical model, to what was needed on a teacher's first day, week and month. Alternative certification changed the way they did business.

Now, a collaborative relationship exists, with opportunities being explored for further partnership, such as granting credit for BTSA induction towards a Masters.

In Chicago, Dr Marvin Hoffman spoke about the creation of the Urban Teacher Education Program as an alternative teacher preparation program. The program started six years ago, built on the back of the New Teacher Network, from the realisation that there were first year certified teachers, many with Masters who were failing terribly in urban school environments.

Investigation into their situation led to a view about what was missing from the programs preparing teachers for the elementary setting. These teachers were poorly prepared in four areas:

- the teaching of reading
- the teaching of mathematics
- classroom management
- issues of race, class and culture.

The latter was particularly pertinent because the majority of graduates were young white women in schools that were mostly Hispanic and African-American, where only about 9% of the school population was white.

These four aspects became a feature of the two-year program that offered an alternative route to certification for self-selected teacher candidates who had a sense of how difficult it was to teach in urban schools, and who wanted to be well-prepared for the challenges.

The program is modelled after the teaching hospital method of internship and combines academic components with fieldwork at schools such as North Kenwood Oakland Charter School.

In the first year, as well as completing foundation courses which develop a theoretical framework to education, students gain firsthand field experience at a charter school, beginning with after-school tutoring, then moving to small-group literacy teaching. During this year, they engage in the 'soul strand' of the program which investigates why teaching is important and why people choose teaching as a career while focusing on race and crossing cultural boundaries.

The second year is a full internship year in carefully selected classrooms, with full classroom responsibilities, but under the guidance of suitable mentor teachers. There are two semester-long placements, in different schools, for four days a week, with the fifth day given over to seminars on pedagogy, curriculum and content-knowledge, reflecting on, and processing their experience.

Graduates then move into their two-year induction program.

Numbers are small but growing, with 20 students currently involved, preparing to be elementary teachers. Next year (2009-2010) a secondary cohort will commence, of Mathematics and Biology, in cohorts of around 20 to 25. Eventually program numbers will be around 75-100.

UTEP has tried to build relationships with some urban schools where leadership is strong, where principals are trying to put into place instruction that students are trained in. Some schools have heavy intakes of interns, but there are still too many where there are isolated placements, where interns are not part of a professional learning community.

The program is founded on what Dr Hoffman terms an 'heroic notion'– 'Train them well enough and they will succeed anywhere'. But this has not been found to be the case. The program is attracting very bright applicants through promoting the view that teaching is intellectual work. However, if they find themselves in an environment that is not stimulating, they walk. Placing them in a dysfunctional school is a waste of resources, but Marvin stressed that low-performing and dysfunctional aren't the same.

I met also with Tim Knowles, Executive Director of the Center for School Improvement, at the University of Chicago, who oversees the UTEP.

He outlined the work he had been involved in prior to taking up the position in Chicago. He had helped to initiate the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) for aspiring teachers serving in districts with high needs, aiming to:

- create a better 'pipeline' so that teachers stay longer
- (more controversially) to create a competitive threat to higher education, forcing education faculties to consider their approach which generally involved turning out teachers then depositing them at schools.

The aim was to train one third of incoming teachers (around 125) through a residency model that would deliver ongoing support for three years, and lead to a Masters of Education. The idea was that other universities would take notice. The program now turns out a third of teachers, and is being evaluated by Harvard to determine its effect on student learning outcomes.

In its sixth year, the retention rate (of original graduates) is above 90%. Importantly for Boston, the teachers include a broad diversity of race, as well as an interesting mixture of young and mature career-changers.

In Chicago early results for the Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) are similar. The program taps into the growing number of Chicago students who are interested in teaching careers and aims to develop 50 new teachers a year, in a model that it is hoped other universities will adopt. It is intended to place them in cohorts to have greater impact, concentrated in schools that need a great deal of help.

Selection is intensive and takes time, in contrast to the usual practice in most universities where courses are regarded as cash cows and all candidates are admitted without interview. Candidates are selected for UTEP on the basis of:

- dedication and commitment to urban schooling (which might be demonstrated by volunteer or community work)
- academic background
- a face-to-face interview involving case study scenarios, in individual and group situations where assessors look for evidence of analytical thinking.

Critically too, students in the program are excluded if they don't measure up, or fail to respond to advice on how to improve. 10 – 12% of students are exited.

Principals now seek out these teachers, but UTEP is now more discerning about placements, which will be in high needs schools but not with 'idiotic' principals who don't consider their teachers.

When Tim came to Chicago, the New Teacher Network was in place. Building on this, a program was implemented with 80 new teachers in 30 schools where conditions were supportive. It focused not only on induction, but on working conditions for teachers, where schools are interesting places for teachers as well as students.

The program included an online community and every couple of weeks 20 or 30 new teachers would meet with inspiring 10 year veterans. In addition there was on-the-ground mentoring.

Retention rates are high and student achievement promising.

Principals met monthly, in two-hour meetings. There were fulltime external mentors, but they wanted to develop teacher-leaders as well in all the schools also.

The meetings centred on questions which prompted principals to think about instructional leadership:

- *What is good instruction?*
- *What is a walk-through?*
- *How can data be used to drive conversations?*

Arne Duncan, when head of Chicago Public Schools (before taking up the position of Secretary for Education in the Obama administration) had been promoting the need for principals to be instructional leaders, but no support was provided for them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge.

Tim talked about looking for progress in five year increments. Now, in UTEP, after five years there is a cadre of teacher-leaders who in five years' time will form a cadre of principals. His view is that if induction is conducted effectively, in 5 or 10 years, a reinforcing system will have developed. It is hard and complicated work but it is work that can be done by training people.

In a former role Tim had helped to start the Teach for America program, which is akin to the Peace Corps. Started nineteen years ago, it created an appetite for teaching. It takes elite candidates – college graduates, with a sense of altruism – and provides them with a six-week summer course. Candidates sign on for two years, after which most go on to other careers such as banking and law. It has prestige – 14% of the Yale graduating class applied, and 12% from the University of Chicago.

But Tim talked about UTEP as 'un-Teach for America'. Rather than providing young teachers with limited training, the objective is to create an environment for success, with teachers trained intensively and supported really well, to prepare them for the complex challenges of working in public urban schools.

Legislation is now in place for the systematic adoption of teacher residencies, nation-wide, with a one-year internship, supplemented by course work. There is the understanding that teacher preparation must be linked to induction.

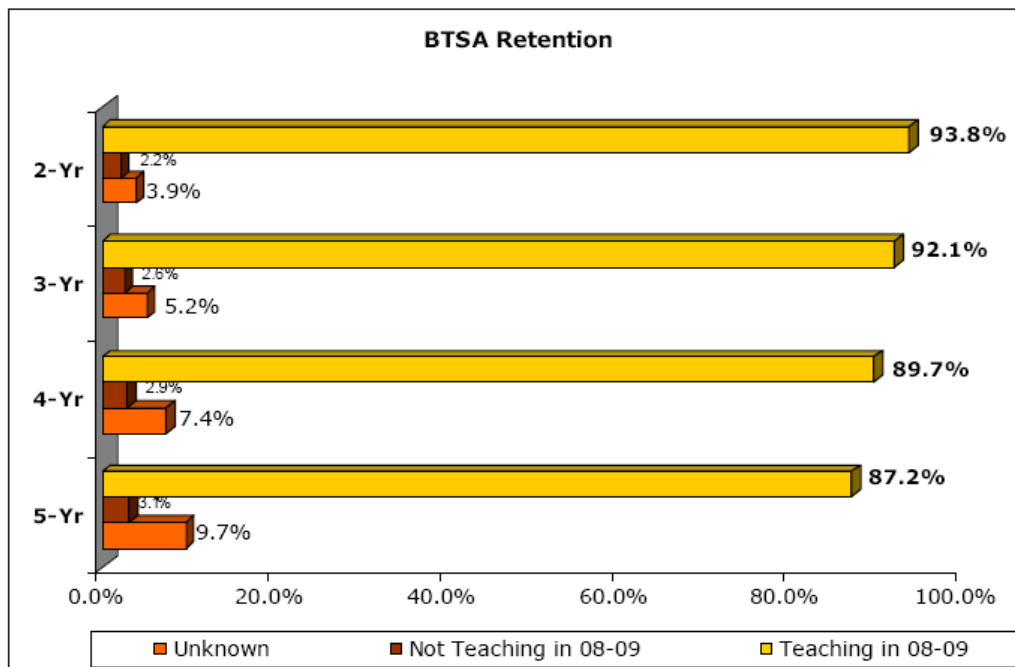
4.9 New teacher retention

➤ Programs had data that provided evidence of high retention rates.

Figures for the retention of teachers beyond five years were quoted as being around 50% for the nation. If that is accurate, then the provision of an effective induction program makes a large impact, because, across the board, the programs I observed cited retention rates around 90%.

Researchers at the University of Santa Cruz collected data from teachers who had been involved in the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project six years earlier, and found that 94% of them remained in education with 88% still in the classroom, compared with a national average of 56%. A larger study four years later produced similar results.

For the state of California, the following 2009 data suggests that involvement in a state BTSA Program produced equally positive results.



Note: PTs in leadership positions are included with "Teaching" and PTs on educational leave are included with "Not Teaching"

In Toronto data collected late in 2008 showed retention figures after the first year of 99.05%, 96.89% at the end of the second year, and 94.42 at the end of the third year.

Conclusions

The programs that I encountered, while providing assistance to teachers at the start of their careers, went far beyond the provision of emotional support or orientation activities. Assessment of the teacher was also integral, importantly as a means of fulfilling licensure requirements, but also in order to develop in novice educators the skills, abilities and habits of mind of successful teachers. In much the same way that effective assessment has a place in contributing to student learning, new teachers benefit in demonstrating their professional growth in key areas, if the assessment is accompanied by support from a trained mentor with direction on how to improve. In the most successful models, a series of assessment 'tools' framed an induction curriculum for teachers.

Support needed to be multi-layered, and to begin at the school, with the principal taking responsibility for an orientation to the school, its community and its policies and programs. Professional learning helped to build on the knowledge gained at university, and was most valued when it was job-embedded, where new teachers chose to participate, and when their mentors accompanied them, to support their transfer of new learning into the classroom.

These elements resulted in competent teachers who found their classroom experience enjoyable, and who remained committed to their chosen profession.

My recommendations call for the development of policy which will provide a guarantee to new teachers that their specific needs as new educators will be recognised.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- That advocacy for support programs for beginning teachers be provided at the highest level.
- That mentoring programs for graduate teachers include formative assessment that develops capacity to meet defined teaching standards.
- That the coaching of new teachers be conducted by highly skilled teachers who have been selected and have undergone extended training for the role.
- That additional opportunities for professional learning be provided through job-embedded, voluntary activities coordinated through the Professional Learning Institute.
- That the capacity of school leaders to participate actively be enhanced through the provision of principal forums and workshops.
- That all schools which have a new teacher, have an identified staff member to provide a welcome and orientation to the school, its policies and its community.
- That approval be sought from the Western Australian College of Teaching that completion of the Graduate Teacher Professional Learning Program together with involvement in the In-Class Coaching Program completes the process to gain full registration as a teacher.
- That support of new teachers be formalised in policy.

6 DISSEMINATION

Already, improvements have been incorporated into the revision of modules of the Graduate Teacher Professional Learning Program.

The training of In-Class Coaches will be amended to include a focus on teacher standards and the use of formative assessment tools.

Copies of this report will be provided to members of Senior Executive within the Department of Education and Training, to the Director General of Education, Ms Sharyn O'Neill with a request to have it made available to the Minister for Education, the Honourable Dr Elizabeth Constable.

Presentations on key findings will be made available to interested and relevant parties (already the Graduate Teacher Reference Group, the Western Australian Government Schools' Leadership Centre and members involved in an Australian Research Council group investigating resilience in beginning teachers), Western Australian College of Teaching, State School Teachers' Union and The Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association, The Western Australian Primary Principals' Association, Western Australian Institute for Educational Research, and members of the education faculties at universities in Western Australia.

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New Teacher Center

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California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program

http://www.lbschools.net/Main_Offices/Curriculum/Professional_Development/more_about_btsa.cfm

Long Beach Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program

<http://utep.uchicago.edu/>

Urban Teacher Education Program

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Connecticut State Department of Education, Beginning Educator Support and Training

<http://www.danielsongroup.org/>

Charlotte Danielson and the Framework for Teaching

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/induction.html>

New Teacher Induction Program, Ministry of Education, Ontario, Canada

APPENDIX

Formative Assessment System

Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project, BTSA Induction Program

- Collaborative Assessment Log
- School, Family and Community Resources
- Class Profile
- Instructional Groups
- Family Communication
- Self-Assessment Summary
- Individual Learning Plan/District Goals
- Mid-Year Review
- Professional Growth Reflections
- Analysis of Student Work
- Analysis of Case Study Student Work
- Analysis of Student Work Pre-Assessment
- Analysis of Student Work – Special Education
- Lesson Plan - Backwards Design
- Differentiating Instruction
- Focus: Language Learners and Equity
- Focus: Using Technology to Support Students' Learning
- Selective Scripting
- Seating Chart: Movement Patterns, Interaction Patterns, Behaviour Patterns
- Content, Strategies and Alignment
- Effective Environment
- Conditions That Support Students With Learning Disabilities
- Best Practices that Support Students With Language Needs
- Conditions for Equity
- Veteran Teacher Observation
- Inquiry Action Plan