



Developing New Teachers: Teacher Bridge Programs

Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management

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Strategy/Accountability

- Provide a 4-week summer bridge for new teachers, paraprofessionals, & afterschool stakeholders (Summer 2021).

Description

- Instructional support personnel receive targeted professional development on curriculum, science of reading, RTI, & instructional strategies to engage all learning styles.

Key Recommendations

- DO use experienced teachers who apply, interview, & provide recommendations to become mentors^{6,11}.
- DO hold sessions frequently & in-person if possible, otherwise, online or by phone^{6,10}.
- DO pair mentors with mentees that teach at the same school; when intra-school pairing is not possible, keep mentor-mentee ratio low^{6,9}.
- DO individualize mentoring – differentiated by need, as well as subject- & grade-based^{6,12}.
- DO focus on mentee's mental & emotional health. Provide mentors with the capacity to look beyond professional goals and address a mentee's need for emotional support. Offer quarterly retreats for rest, reflection, & networking with other teachers in similar situations, reducing feelings of isolation & loneliness⁶.
- DO provide PD for mentors—a mentor-the-mentor component^{6,11}. Mentors can receive Cognitive Coaching training, have experienced coaches serve as their mentors, & obtain PD on learning how to collect evidence, provide actionable feedback & guide themselves & their mentees through self-reflection.
- DO provide administrative/principal support for PD^{7,9,12}. Principals can show support by arranging school schedules so that expert teachers can teach model lessons or meet with new teachers one-on-one or in small groups. They can also help teachers prioritize professional goals & identify & recommend PD opportunities.
- DO support the principals who are implementing the program⁶.
- DO include a research, evaluation, & tracking system to document mentoring outcomes^{6,7}.
- DO include observations of mentees teaching class live or via video^{6,9,11}.
- DON'T tie mentorship sessions to teacher evaluations and allow mentors & beginning teachers to work openly, without fear of consequences. "They need to learn how to be a teacher in a nonthreatening environment."⁶



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Comprehensive teacher induction reduces teacher attrition.

- Having a quality mentor from the same field and collaboration or common planning time with other teachers in the same subject reduced teacher turnover by 30% and 43%, respectively^{8,14}.
- One district's PD strategies led to a reduction in the annual attrition rate from 31% from 2000–2003 to 9% from 2013–2016. The district also saw a reduction in new teachers' third-year attrition rates from 70% to 26%¹¹.

Comprehensive teacher induction improves student outcomes.

- Comprehensive induction consists of mentoring (matching new teachers with one or more experienced & trained teacher), common planning time & collaboration ongoing PD, peer networking opportunities, standards-based evaluation².
- Inducted teachers develop better teaching practices that meet students' learning needs & improve achievement². A district reform in Philadelphia yielded about a 17-point increase in the percentage of elementary students proficient in Math and Reading between 1996 and 2000^{13,16}.
- Among the findings from the 1998 to 1992 pilot study of the California New Teacher Project (CNTP) were that compared to other new teachers, beginning teachers in the pilot project more consistently motivated diverse students to engage in productive learning activities & they gave the same complex, challenging assignments to classes of diverse students as they did to classes that were more ethnically & culturally homogeneous^{2,4}.
- Participation in a high intensity teacher induction program (orientation, same-subject mentor, PD, program evaluation, & follow-up) explained 74% of the variance in minority students' reading achievement¹⁵.

Mentors need specific skills to help new teachers focus on issues of diversity & equity in teaching.

- Pedagogical knowledge for equity—knowledge of ways to teach diverse youth & knowledge of ways to teach or guide teachers during mentoring sessions to promote equitable learning—92%¹.
- Knowledge of contexts relevant to teaching diverse youth—strategies/resources to help teachers learn local culture, community & about negotiating the professional world & Broader social & structural issues related to diversity & inequities in society & schooling—43.2%¹.
- Knowledge of what diverse learners bring to class—help new teachers learn about assets diverse learners bring to class; “help novices move beyond viewing culturally & linguistically diverse youth as ‘problems’”; move past “‘othering’ of students as different from themselves, to a closer knowing of individuals”—27%¹.
- Mentor's knowledge of self related to diversity & equity—mentors need to have engaged in self-reflection on their attitudes toward educational inequities; know his or her own beliefs, values, & practices related to “diverse youth & the challenge of closing the achievement gap”—27%¹.



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