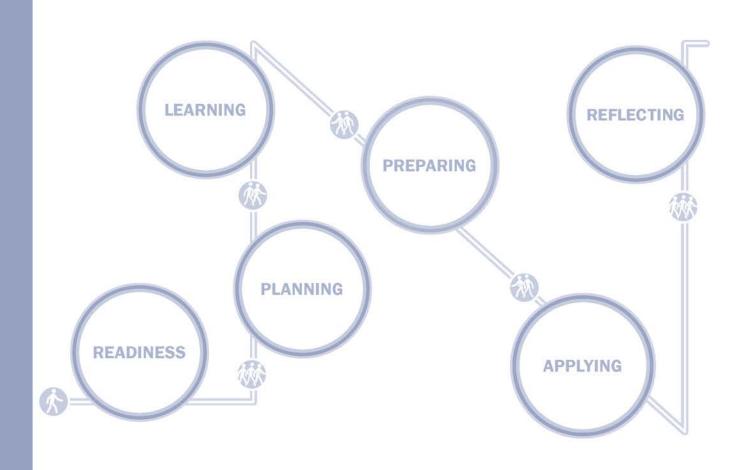




PROMOTING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Conditions for Success in Teacher Induction



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Introduction

A teacher induction program can have a positive impact on beginning teacher performance. Teacher induction programs help new and beginning teachers become competent and effective professionals in the classroom. For an education program to implement an induction program successfully, that education program must be able to support participating staff and provide a supportive context for these staff.

Teacher Induction: What Does It Mean?

Teacher induction is a professional development program that incorporates mentoring and is designed to offer support, guidance, and orientation for beginning teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs. These programs help beginning teachers through their first year of teaching by supporting ongoing dialogue and collaboration among teachers, which accelerates the beginning teachers' effectiveness and increases student achievement.

The definition of this and other terms relevant to teacher induction can be found in the *Teacher Effectiveness* glossary.

Specific "conditions for success" can help education programs more successfully implement teacher induction programs:

- 1. A strong and supportive instructional leader
- 2. Evidence-based instruction that is aligned with the vision and goals of the program
- 3. Positive instructional community climate and culture
- 4. Instructional staff who are committed to continuously improving their instruction and student outcomes
- 5. A high degree of professional collaboration among teachers focused around sharing and improving instructional practices
- 6. An expectation to participate in professional learning
- 7. Use of data and evidence for program improvement and instruction
- 8. The presence of experienced teachers who are interested in serving as mentors
- 9. Release time and other incentives for teachers for professional learning, planning, mentoring, conferencing, and classroom observation
- 10. Leadership at the organizational level that provides a systemic and comprehensive support structure for ongoing professional learning for teachers

These conditions for success will facilitate a program's ability to make a change or move toward implementing a successful teacher induction process.^{2,3} The work of the New Teacher Center

(NTC) highlights the importance of the conditions for success in its Program Theory of Action model. The NTC model shows that the advancement of practice among beginning teachers is mediated by conditions for success and suggests that these conditions must be part of a comprehensive and systemic approach to teacher induction.⁴

Findings in this brief informed the development of the <u>Adult Education Teacher Induction Toolkit</u>, a set of resources used to prepare beginning teachers for their roles as adult educators. Appendix A identifies the tools in the Toolkit and where they can be accessed. In 2013–2014, eight programs field-tested these materials to learn the impact of induction and mentoring on adult education teachers beginning their careers. The quotations cited within this brief illustrate the experiences and reflections of those mentors and beginning teachers working together.

Very little has been written about teacher induction or related conditions for success in adult education. However, education research specific to kindergarten through 12th grade can be adapted for use in the field of adult education. The conditions identified in this brief are informed by such research, current practices in adult education, and lessons learned from a national field test conducted in 2013-14 as part of the Promoting Teacher Effectiveness in Adult Education project. According to the results of the field test, teacher induction is easier to implement when these conditions exist. Although the absence of one or some of these conditions does not prohibit programs from successfully implementing the processes, attention to the conditions increases success.

You will have the advantage of knowing the conditions for success and reflecting on how to address any possible gaps in these conditions by using the Conditions for Success Self-Evaluation Worksheet, which is included on p. 8 of this brief. This worksheet will help you to evaluate your program's readiness to effectively implement the <u>Teacher Induction Pathway</u> presented in the <u>Adult Education Teacher Induction Toolkit</u>.

Conditions for Success

1. A strong and supportive instructional leader. Leadership is a key component of teacher induction. The Teacher Induction Pathway presented in the Adult Education Teacher *Induction Toolkit* is led by a program's designated instructional leader. This may be the head administrator for the program or someone the program appoints to lead the process who has sufficient authority to have an impact on the process. Instructional leadership support of and involvement in beginning teacher induction programs are critical to effective induction. 5,6 Research affirms that the key to program improvement and student learning is school leaders who focus on curriculum and instruction, use assessment data to guide program improvement, and ensure the professional development of teachers. Strong administrative participation and support are important components of successful induction programs. 8 One of the key functions of the instructional leader is ensuring that barriers and obstacles are removed and implementation is smooth. Among the many roles of an instructional leader, "paying attention to implementation, dealing with obstacles, and ensuring consistency with other district policies" strengthen the implementation of beginning teacher support efforts. ⁹ This can include ensuring that beginning teachers have work schedules and conditions that easily allow for participation in teacher

induction programs.¹⁰ Because the various work environments, locations, and schedules in adult education can provide barriers to induction, the instructional leader must have sufficient authority to remove barriers that may have a negative impact on induction. Strong program leaders use teacher induction to leverage change, build capacity, and strengthen the entire system of human capital development.¹¹

Thoughts From the Field Test

"The Instructional Leader . . . participates in projects focused on strengthening teaching and learning, including teacher induction."

—Elgin Community College

"Strong leadership kept the process focused and moving along."

—Canton City Schools Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE)

2. Evidence-based instruction that is aligned with the vision and goals of the program. The vision must start at the top and be shared and valued throughout the program to effectively acculturate beginning teachers and strengthen their effectiveness. The central purpose of an induction program is to promote the highest quality of instruction that supports improved student outcomes. Program vision is an essential component for quality induction and demands leaders to ask, "What is our vision for teachers and students, and how will this program help realize this vision?" The teacher mentor must support this vision. Setting a vision for teacher induction provides the opportunity to drive reform efforts by identifying issues facing the state or organization and developing an approach to address them. Making teacher development the centerpiece of the education reform effort within the organization shows the institutional commitment to accelerating teacher effectiveness. Aligning induction with existing program goals and individual goals helps to facilitate the pathway for teacher mentors or beginning teachers.

Thoughts From the Field Test

"The program goals and individual teacher goals aligned."

—Elgin Community College

"The big question when we first started the process was how to decide on a program goal. . . . We decided to go with two overarching goals . . . [so we could] concentrate on their needs and goals."

—Heartland Community College

3. *Positive climate and culture.* At the core of the program elements that provide a supportive context for induction is the climate and culture. According to the National School Climate Center, climate includes "safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the environment as well as larger organizational patterns . . . and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures." Culture is based on the underlying combination of assumptions, values, beliefs, norms, feelings, rituals, ceremonies, symbols, and stories of a school or program held by teachers and administrators. 16,17 The climate, culture, and working conditions (described in Condition 9, below) of the program encourage teachers to work together to meet program goals. Creating a climate and a culture that are positive and supportive of

beginning teachers allows participants to feel that they are part of the school community¹⁸ and fosters teacher socialization.¹⁹ Positive climate and culture are those that foster respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community, no matter the setting.²⁰ Collaboration is encouraged; decision making is shared; people are engaged and respected; and they work together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared vision. Educators need supportive environments in which they are valued, trusted, and empowered to collaborate for the purpose of improving instruction.²¹ This type of environment creates a climate of shared accountability for student learning. An environment in which teachers work together to improve instruction has a positive impact on student achievement.²²

Thoughts From the Field Test

"We all care about the success of the program. We all care about students. We know that about us."

—Lewis and Clark Community College

- 4. *Instructional staff who are committed to continuously improving their instruction and student outcomes.* According to Learning Forward, a two fundamental prerequisites are necessary for effective professional learning: educators' commitment to students and having educators who are ready to learn. The induction are engaged stakeholders as a necessary condition for success in teacher induction. Committed teacher mentors and beginning educators who are open to building new skills and expanding their knowledge base are best positioned to successfully partake in a teacher induction initiative. It is important to note that a beginning teacher may also be a teacher who is going to be teaching subject matter that is new to him or her.
- 5. A high degree of professional collaboration among teachers focused around sharing and improving instructional practices. Professional collaboration provides the ability to positively build on teachers' disparate experiences and increases the level of trust and respect among colleagues. Some teachers may have been recently trained in teacher preparation programs and be familiar with the current standards-based reform efforts, while others may have become teachers through alternative formats that may or may not have included formal teacher preparation programs. This is often the case in adult education. The literature maintains that beginning teachers should have many opportunities to engage in scheduled, interactive collaboration within their school community. Professional collaboration allows teachers to continuously learn and improve their practice. Providing beginning teachers the opportunity to collaborate with others helps both to improve communities of learning within a school and to reduce feelings of isolation for beginning teachers.

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^a Learning Forward identifies itself as "the only association devoted exclusively to advancing professional learning for student success" (http://learningforward.org/who-we-are#.VZrcp0ZQSAo).

Thoughts From the Field Test

"The mentor teacher shares resources, and communication is open."

—Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative

"A collegial, collaborative environment was already established; it was strengthened as a result of the project, resulting in additional opportunities and structures for collaboration."

—Elgin Community College

6. *An expectation to participate in professional learning.* The instructional leader, teacher mentor, and beginning teacher must all have an expectation and commitment to participate in professional learning. The instructional leader has a demonstrated expectation and commitment to ongoing, regular, job-embedded collaborative professional learning opportunities for all program staff, as evidenced by the use of substitutes and staff development days, to enhance the effectiveness of teacher induction activities. The beginning teacher and mentor regularly attend trainings and in-services and work with peers for ongoing instructional improvement. Induction recognizes that effective teaching requires ongoing professional development. This is often a condition that programs have to work toward continually. The expectations set by the instructional leader for professional learning align closely with the vision and goals of the program and the commitment and expectations set by the mentor and the beginning teacher.

Thoughts From the Field Test

"Upon being hired, teachers understand that there is an expectation/obligation to participate in professional learning."

—Tempe Adult Education Program

7. Use of data and evidence for program improvement and instruction. The ongoing and regular use of data and evidence to make decisions about program improvement best supports quality induction. Ideally, the data being used are directly tied to the targeted evidence-based instructional reform effort. Moir³² developed a checklist on the core elements of a quality induction program that included training in data collection and analysis, specifically emphasizing that mentors and beginning teachers should be trained to collect classroom data, analyze data, and use the results to guide instruction. Professional learning communities (PLCs) are one way this occurs.³³ PLCs can help mentor and beginning teachers receive continuous support in using data, developing the curriculum, and working on program improvement by expanding their repertoires of best teaching practices.³⁴ In the strongest of programs, instructors are equipped with the skills to analyze and evaluate data. In reality, this is often an area in which instructors will improve with practice. To know what changes to make to continuously improve, teachers need to understand the baseline data and how these data relate to individual goals for student outcomes. Teachers without knowledge of how to examine evidence may feel overwhelmed by data and, as a result, they will not use it and/or struggle with knowing what changes to make in their instruction.³⁵ The instructional leader can support the use of data by providing opportunities for teachers to learn how to use data to guide instruction and by having a clear vision and clear program goals, as shown in Condition 2.

- 8. The presence of experienced teachers who are interested in serving as mentors. Successful induction requires the program to have highly qualified and experienced teachers to serve as mentors to beginning teachers. A high-quality mentor is not only a successful experienced teacher but also one who can articulate and model the art of teaching adults. Hence the mentors must have expertise in evidence-based instructional practices and be willing to develop and share this expertise. The Leadership Guide for Teacher Induction details the attributes and qualifications that mentors should possess, and supports instructional leaders in selecting mentors. The goal of the mentor is to help beginning teachers effectively incorporate evidence-based instructional practices and reforms into their classrooms—such as evidence-based reading instruction, standards-based educational reform, or college and career readiness standards.
- 9. Release time and other incentives for teachers for professional learning, planning, mentoring, conferencing, and classroom observation. Successful induction programs are not add-ons. Instead, they are integrated into the professional practices of the organization and depend on additional resources, including release time for new and experienced teachers³⁷ and dedicated and structured professional development time and resources. Release time for mentors and beginning teachers is important to ensure that opportunities exist to engage in classroom observations, discuss data, and take part in other mentoring activities. Protected release time makes it more likely that classroom observations will take place, mentors and beginning teachers will meet, and beginning teachers will participate in training. Release time can be used by beginning teachers to attend seminars, work with mentors, or observe other teachers. Often, this is challenging for adult education programs, but it should be a goal. Incentives can be provided for teachers to participate in induction activities and can include compensation (e.g., a fixed honorarium or hourly rate payment), career advancement, job security, certification or credential renewal credit, or reduced workload.

Thoughts From the Field Test

"Time is dedicated for professional learning in the forms of release time and conference attendance. The instructional leader provides substitute teachers on a regular basis to free up time for . . . participants to meet and collaborate."

—Huntington Beach Adult School

"The instructional leaders invested in the teachers by paying them for professional development and getting them [substitutes] when needed."

—Ventura Adult and Community Education

10. Leadership at the organizational level that provides a systemic and comprehensive support structure for ongoing professional learning for teachers. Leadership support and involvement in induction programs at the organizational level are critical to effective induction. All stakeholders must value teacher induction and support its implementation. Having a strong sense of institutional commitment as a component of effective induction practices is an important condition for success. Organizations are asked to make teacher learning a priority. Ideally, a system exists that focuses on and promotes continuous improvement in student learning through ongoing professional

learning for teachers. The professional development of beginning teachers is best when the induction process is systemic and sustained. 46

Conclusion

This brief highlighted 10 conditions that affect the likelihood of successfully implementing the induction pathway that is presented in the *Adult Education Teacher Induction Toolkit*. Operational success and induction effectiveness rest largely on these 10 conditions for success. The responsibility for success lies with the entire induction team—the instructional leader, the mentor, and the beginning teacher. Everyone on this team plays a role in the 10 conditions. Programs should use increased awareness of the conditions to assess organizational readiness and to strategize for improvement where needed. As you consider these conditions, use the self-evaluation worksheet below to determine your readiness to successfully implement the induction pathway. And remember, not all conditions are required for successful teacher induction. So, no matter where your program falls in its level of readiness, the entire induction team should discuss the implications of this analysis and plan together for how best to improve the conditions to successfully implement teacher induction.

Program Conditions for Success Self-Evaluation Worksheet

Is your program ready? Please use the following worksheet to assess your program's readiness and strategies to improve conditions to implement the *Teacher Induction Pathway*. This worksheet serves as a tool to help you examine and inventory current practices and policies. It will help you to recognize the various capacities of your program and to explore ways to strategize and move toward readiness, as needed. Rate your program readiness using the following 3-point scale: 3 (condition is in place), 2 (approaching condition implementation), and 1 (condition is not in place). If you find that you have conditions at Levels 1 or 2, use this worksheet to discuss and identify steps to move toward program readiness.

	Conditions	3	2	1	How is the condition seen or experienced?	What steps can be taken to improve readiness?
1.	Is there a strong and supportive instructional leader for the program?					
2.	Is there evidence-based instruction that aligns with the vision and goals of the program?					
3.	Are the climate and culture supportive and nurturing?					
4.	Do you have instructional staff who are committed and eager to continuously improve their instruction and student outcomes?					
5.	Is there a high degree of professional collaboration among existing teachers, focused around sharing and improving instructional practices?					

	Conditions	3	2	1	How is the condition seen or experienced?	What steps can be taken to improve readiness?
6.	Is there an expectation for teachers to participate in professional learning?					
7.	Are data and evidence used for ongoing program improvement and instruction?					
8.	Are experienced teachers interested in and capable of serving as mentors?					
9.	Are release time and other incentives in place for teachers for professional learning, planning, mentoring, conferencing, and classroom observation?					
10	Is a systemic and comprehensive support structure in place for ongoing professional learning for teachers?					

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Appendix A. Tools in the Adult Education Teacher Induction Toolkit

Name of Tool	Main Intended User	Description of Tool	Tool Location
Teacher Induction and a Toolkit for Adult Educators (Information Brief)	All team members	This brief provides an introduction to and overview of what induction is and what the process involves. It explains the roles and responsibilities of instructional leaders, mentors, and beginning teachers throughout the induction process.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/toolkit.pdf
Conditions for Success in Teacher Induction (Information Brief)	Instructional leaders	This brief identifies the conditions needed within a program for an induction process to have a positive impact on the performance of beginning teachers. It includes a local program self-evaluation worksheet that instructional leaders can use to determine which conditions are present in their program before deciding whether to start the induction process.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/conditions.pdf
Teacher Induction and Mentoring Brief (Information Brief)	All team members	This brief defines a mentor, describes the impact that a mentor can have, and identifies characteristics of an effective mentor.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/mentoring.pdf
Evidence-Based Instruction and Teacher Induction (Information Brief)	All team members	This brief introduces evidence-based instruction.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/ebi.pdf
Leadership Guide for Teacher Induction	Instructional leaders	This guide offers specific directions and resources to help instructional leaders better understand their roles in the induction process. It details what instructional leaders can do to lead and support the efforts of mentors and beginning teachers as they work through the induction process.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/leadguide.doc
Mentoring Guide for Teacher Induction	Mentors and beginning teachers	This guide provides direction and support for the mentoring of beginning teachers in adult education. It provides specific guidance and resources to help beginning teachers, with support from mentors, to plan, document, and evaluate professional growth. It also describes effective mentoring strategies, provides tools to guide mentoring activities, and	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/mentorguide.doc

Name of Tool	Main Intended User	Description of Tool	Tool Location
Mentoring Guide for Teacher Induction (continued)		supports the collaboration between mentors and beginning teachers in planning, pursuing, documenting, and evaluating professional growth. It guides beginning teachers and mentors in using the Adult Education Teacher Effectiveness Toolkit.	
Teacher Effectiveness Glossary	All team members	This glossary defines terms found throughout the <i>Adult Education Teacher Effectiveness Toolkit</i> .	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/glossary.pdf
Teacher Effectiveness Annotated Bibliography	All team members	This annotated bibliography provides a detailed view of some key pieces of literature on subjects related to teacher effectiveness, teacher induction, teacher competency, and adult learning.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/annotatedbib.pdf
Introduction to Teacher Effectiveness and Induction (Online Course)	All team members	This self-directed, online course introduces the <i>Adult Education Teacher Effectiveness Toolkit</i> to all team members.	http://lincs.ed.gov/progra ms/ teachereffectiveness/onlin e-courses
Principles of Learning for Instructional Design (Online Course)	Mentors and beginning teachers	This self-directed, online course supports teachers' understanding of the key principles behind instructional design that promote the learning and of strategies for applying those principles in their teaching.	http://lincs.ed.gov/progra ms/ teachereffectiveness/onlin e-courses
Motivating Adult Learners to Persist (Online Course)	Mentors and beginning teachers	This self-directed, online course supports teachers' understanding of strategies that motivate adult learners to persist. It also guides teachers in making focused observations of how these strategies are implemented.	http://lincs.ed.gov/progra ms/ teachereffectiveness/onlin e-courses
Adult Education Teacher Competencies	Mentors and beginning teachers	These competencies identify the knowledge and skills expected of any adult education teacher.	http://lincs.ed.gov/publicat ions/te/competencies.pdf
Adult Education Teacher Competencies Self-Assessment	Mentors and beginning teachers	This self-assessment offers a structured approach to determining the knowledge and skills that adult education teachers still need to develop and to identify the professional development priorities that will help them to acquire such knowledge and skills.	http://lincs.ed.gov/progra ms/teachereffectiveness/se lf-assessment