Teacher Induction: Improving State Systems for Supporting New Teachers
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Effective teaching is the number one factor that influences student achievement after accounting for student characteristics. New teachers typically take from three and five years to teach at a level that maximizes student growth and achievement. Despite these widely accepted findings, many new teachers entering the field do not receive the necessary support or feedback they need to develop into effective teachers. New teachers face a host of unique challenges associated with entering the profession beyond instruction in the classroom, such as translating theory from teacher preparation programs into practice, developing classroom management skills, and often accomplishing these tasks in relative isolation. Unfortunately, one consequence of this lack of support for novice teachers is their high attrition rate—between 40 and 50 percent leave the field within the first five years of service. With a growing proportion of teachers drawing closer to retirement age—and with so many of today’s teachers having just a year or two of teaching experience—inadequately supporting new teachers and losing such a large proportion of these educators in their first five years is unsustainable for a quality teaching workforce.

To address these challenges, states and districts are increasingly using induction programs to help new teachers transition into a school and provide the critical support these teachers need to begin an effective teaching career. Comprehensive, high-quality teacher induction can accelerate professional growth and teacher effectiveness, reduce teacher turnover, and improve student learning. However, teacher induction involves much more than just assigning a mentor to a teacher as an informal “buddy” to help orient them to a new school. Effective teacher induction provides systemic support to new teachers over at least two years, including opportunities for collaboration with peers, regular formative and evaluative assessment of progress based on state teaching standards, and professional development that is tailored to the challenges faced by new teachers.

This discussion guide examines the role teacher induction programs can have on developing effective teachers and reducing teacher turnover and explores how state boards of education can help develop and foster these critical programs. In this guide readers will find:

- Research on the major issues facing the teaching workforce and teacher induction programs;
- Elements of effective teacher induction programs;
- Positive results demonstrated by quality induction programs;
- State-level actions to address issues in teacher induction; and
- Policy frameworks and exercises state boards of education can use to discuss teacher induction in a structured and meaningful way.

Three Key Facets of Today’s Teaching Workforce: High Turnover, Baby-Boomer Bulge, and Lower Average Years of Experience

Our current teaching workforce, especially considering the ranks of those in the early stages of their careers, is in an extreme state of flux because of persistent turnover. Many new teachers cite lack of support from school administration, school discipline problems, and limited faculty input in school decision-making as some of the reasons for leaving the teaching field. As a result, 14 percent of new teachers leave in the first year, 33 percent leave within the first three years, and almost 50 percent of new teachers leave within the first five years, numbers that have long supported the notion that teaching is a profession that “eats its young.”
Compounding this turnover problem is the well-documented consequence of the Baby Boomer “bulge” in the workforce: many teachers are close to or of retirement age. Fig. 1 charts the most recent data on the distribution of teachers by age, which shows a pronounced cluster of teachers who are in the later stages of their careers. Researchers expect that teacher retirements will peak in the next few years, with an estimated 1.5 million veteran teachers expected to retire in the next eight years. As these teachers retire, schools lose vital institutional and instructional knowledge on effective practice. Of course, little can be done to slow this wave of generational retirement. Still, researchers estimate that less than one-third of total teacher turnover is the result of retirement. The vast majority of turnover is due to teachers leaving the field long before retirement age, giving policymakers and school officials an opportunity to do something about it.

The lack of consistent support for new teachers and the continuing retirements of Baby Boom teachers have had—and will continue to have—a significant impact on the experience level of the average teacher. Over the last two decades, the years of experience for the typical teacher has plummeted. In 1988, the modal teacher had 15 years of teaching experience. By 2008, the modal teacher had one year or less of teaching experience. Additionally, almost 25 percent of the teaching workforce has 4 or fewer years of teaching experience, and the imminent retirement of many more Baby Boomers will certainly lower the average years of experience even further. Fig. 2 shows the distribution of teachers by years of teaching experience in 2007-2008.

As with many professions, researchers find it can take up to five years for a teacher to become fully proficient and able to maximize student achievement, and educators face a steeper learning curve than many when they first step into the classroom. Given the current rate of turnover, only a small fraction of incoming teachers will ever reach this “full” level of proficiency. As a result, the quality of teaching available to students, especially in the most challenging teaching environments, will continue to erode. This pattern of outcomes for the teaching workforce is not sustainable if the nation is going to even come close to meeting its goal of ensuring that all students leave high school college and career ready.
Defining Teacher Induction

Teacher induction has come to mean a variety of things in supporting new teachers. From a stand-alone mentor who meets with a new teacher a few times a year to comprehensive support services for new teachers, teacher induction can vary in focus, implementation, and scope. For example, teacher induction and mentoring are two terms that are sometimes used interchangeably given that mentoring has become the dominant form of induction support over the last twenty years. But while mentoring is an important component of an induction program, comprehensive induction is much more than pairing a new teacher with a veteran one for a specified period of time. This discussion guide uses the term “comprehensive induction” to include the following:

- multi-year support for new teachers for at least two years;
- high-quality mentoring utilizing carefully selected and well-prepared mentors;
- regularly scheduled common planning time with other teachers;
- ongoing professional development; and
- standards-based evaluation of new teachers throughout the process.

However, researchers estimate that less than one percent of new teachers receive supports that could be classified as comprehensive induction under this definition.

As will be seen in the sections that follow, these additional supports that go beyond mentoring are important components of efforts to create effective teachers and reduce turnover. State boards of education can play a significant role in developing and overseeing these efforts.

Impact of Teacher Induction

While many view induction as a remedy for turnover problems in a school or district, the overarching goal of a comprehensive induction program should be developing and supporting new teachers so they are more effective and make a smooth transition into the teaching profession. If states and districts are able to achieve this goal, related outcomes such as improved student achievement and reduced teacher turnover rates will follow. This section explores the positive effects teacher induction programs can have on teaching practice, student achievement, and teacher turnover.

Improved Teaching Practice

Induction can improve teaching practice. As teachers become better at managing the challenges of being new to the field, their focus can then be turned to how to improve instruction. Induction expedites this process. Richard Ingersoll and Michael Strong, prominent researchers in teacher induction, found that

[beginning teachers who participated in some kind of induction performed better at various aspects of teaching, such as keeping students on task, developing workable lesson plans, using effective student questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet students’ interests, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating successful classroom management.]

Experienced teachers also benefit from their participation in comprehensive induction. Educators who served as mentors refine their own teaching practices
and build leadership skills through reflection on their own practices. Participation by new teachers and experienced teachers alike helps contribute to, develop, and sustain communities of collaboration within a school.15

**Higher Student Achievement**

Improved student achievement is a universal goal for education reforms and initiatives. Given how induction positively influences teaching practice and creates more effective teachers, it is not surprising that induction also has a positive impact on student achievement. Effective teaching practices are the foundation for what makes effective teachers, and effective teachers have the ability to increase student achievement by up to 10 percentile points when compared to less effective teachers.16 Analysis of a randomized controlled study of teacher induction programs found student achievement gains in math and reading were significantly greater when a teacher received two years of comprehensive induction support when compared to teachers who received less-intensive supports.17 In addition, teachers who participated in high-quality induction services were more likely to incorporate instructional methods that promoted student growth and as a result had increased achievement.18

**Lower Teacher Turnover**

Given the positive role induction programs play in helping new teachers, comprehensive programs are able to have a positive impact on teacher turnover rates. Comprehensive induction programs are able to reduce these turnover rates by more than half for first-year teachers. In one analysis of results from the *Schools and Staffing Survey*, a nationally representative data source on educator staffing, researchers found that teachers who received comprehensive induction supports had a turnover rate of only 18 percent compared to 40 percent for new teachers who received no induction supports. Additionally, after controlling for school and teacher characteristics, certain types of induction activities and support decreased turnover more than others. For example, teachers who received induction services such as common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and being part of an external support network of teachers were less likely to leave the field than teachers who participated in induction programs that did not provide these services.19 Given these findings, it is vital to shift induction for new teachers away from stand-alone mentoring and toward a vision of comprehensive teacher induction. Without these supports, it is unlikely districts and schools will experience reduced turnover and increased student achievement.

While most new teachers now participate in some form of induction program, the support schools provide to new teachers varies immensely. Therefore, it is vital for state boards to have a clear vision of what comprehensive induction entails, especially given the impact it can have on teacher quality, teacher turnover, and student achievement. The next section examines the elements of comprehensive induction.

**Elements of Comprehensive Induction**

Researchers estimate that almost 80 percent of new teachers participate in some form of induction, ranging from stand-alone mentoring to a comprehensive induction program.20 This represents almost double the participation rates in these services since the early 1990s.21 In addition, 27 states now require new teachers to participate in some form of induction support, with 11 requiring two or more years of support.22 However, while participation rates are increasing, providing quality, comprehensive induction supports for new teachers still challenges most states and districts across the country. As implementation of induction programs continues to vary, so do the outcomes states are experiencing in their teaching workforce. This section examines the vital elements of a comprehensive induction program. As state boards consider action in teacher induction, articulating these elements into policy will help ensure all new teachers receive the support they need to develop into high-quality educators.

**Multi-year support for new teachers lasting at least two years**

Comprehensive induction programs provide services to new teachers for at least two years. Research suggests that effective learning about instruction occurs
during the second and third year of teaching. Additionally, when the randomized controlled study on teacher induction cited previously looked at induction’s impact on student achievement, researchers found no statistically significant difference between teachers receiving only one-year of comprehensive induction versus teachers who received no induction support. As a result, induction services that end prior to this window fail to capitalize on the opportunity to support and guide new teachers as they strive to become more effective educators. Intensive, on-going support through the second year of teaching not only gives new teachers the support they need to survive the first year, but also assists them as they work to improve their instruction over the long haul. In addition, multi-year support provides structure and continuity for new teachers at a critical juncture in their careers. Once this structural element is in place, the substantive elements below provide the interactions and support new teachers need to develop into effective instructors.

**High-quality mentoring using carefully selected and well-prepared mentors**

Mentoring is an important element of a comprehensive induction program. While mentoring alone cannot provide all the support new teachers need, it does provide the face-to-face interaction with an experienced veteran that is important for new teachers’ development. Ideally, mentors provide insight on teaching practice through classroom observations, routinely conduct formative assessments on the progress of new teachers, give feedback on these assessments, and provide support on challenges a new teacher is facing. However, the qualities of a good mentor go well beyond simply being a veteran teacher who has a firm grasp of effective instructional practices. Mentors need to develop specific skills to be successful in their role of supporting new teachers. Therefore, rigorous selection of mentors, appropriate training, and ongoing professional development and support of these mentors is an essential part of any comprehensive induction program.

Rigorous mentor selection criteria used by high-quality induction programs include:

- Effective instructional practice of three or more years;
- Integration of reflection into the mentor’s own teaching practices;
- Content knowledge and subject-based pedagogy;
- Commitment to ongoing professional growth for new teachers and mentors; and
- Empathy toward and understanding of the needs of new teachers.

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**Stand-Alone Mentoring Yields the Same Outcomes as No Induction Supports**

Mentoring is the predominant form of support provided to new teachers in the United States. One study found that over 75 percent of new teachers received a mentor upon entering teaching. However, while it may be the dominant form of teacher induction, there is evidence that, by itself, mentoring has relatively little impact on teacher retention. Research indicates that teachers who receive no induction services are just as likely to leave the field within the first year as teachers who receive basic induction supports, defined as having a mentor and supportive communication with their principal or department chair. Teachers who received no induction supports had a turnover rate of approximately 40 percent while teachers who received basic induction supports had one of 39 percent. This difference was not statistically significant.

Therefore, as state boards discuss induction for new teachers, it is important to consider supports beyond just providing a mentor to ensure better teacher quality and lower turnover.

Once selected, mentors need training in specific strategies and skills to help new teachers progress. Researchers find that the best mentor preparation occurs prior to meeting new teachers assigned to them and continues through the entire induction program. Some important features of effective mentor preparation include training in:

- Developing strategies for building relationships with new teachers;
- Providing an understanding of effective observation in the classroom;
- Using formative assessment to improve teaching;
- Collecting and analyzing evidence of student achievement and effective teaching practices;
- Using student data to focus instruction and learning; and
- Collecting and analyzing evidence of student learning and effective teaching based on standards.

The relationship a new teacher builds with a mentor is a foundational component of a comprehensive induction program. New teachers and mentors need protected, regularly scheduled times to meet so this relationship develops with purpose instead of being used on an as-needed informal basis or when there are emergencies. Coupled with other induction supports, mentoring can give new teachers the ability to both troubleshoot with and learn from an experienced veteran in the field.

Regularly scheduled common planning time with other teachers

International best-practices in teaching routinely use active collaboration among educators as a method for improving instructional effectiveness. Providing new teachers the opportunity to collaborate with others helps both improve communities of learning within a school and reduce feelings of isolation for a new teacher. However, less than half of new teachers receive this kind of induction support. New teachers need this collaborative time and benefit the most when there are teachers from a variety of experience levels and the meetings are structured around sharing instructional practices. Effective collaboration also includes development of and feedback on lesson plans and using student data for improvement. As state boards consider this component of comprehensive induction, it is not only important to set aside time for collaboration, but also to help schools set goals for these interactions, including what teachers should be getting out of such sessions.

Ongoing professional development

Professional development for new teachers needs to be more than lecture-based single workshops. While nearly all teachers report participating in some form of conference or workshop for professional development, less than a third of all teachers participated in activities such as being able to observe instruction in other schools or enrolling in university courses to expand content knowledge in their subject. Additionally, a majority of all teachers reported participating in fewer than 16 hours of professional development over the previous 12 months. While these are statistics regarding the entire teaching population, it is unlikely that lectures alone and fewer than 16 hours a year will effectively provide the professional development any teacher, let alone a new one, needs to continue to refine and hone his or her instruction. Research finds that effective professional development for new teachers is built around the following practices:

- Expanding content knowledge;
- Focusing on the challenges of practices that are part of a teacher’s day-to-day work;
- Scheduling sessions on a regular basis with appropriation duration multiple times over the course of the year to allow progressive advances in knowledge and skill;
- Encouraging collaboration; and
- Providing opportunities for new teachers to pose questions, engage in finding answers, and reflect on these findings.

Professional development for new teachers gives states, districts, and schools the opportunity to address many of the challenges of being a new teacher in a collaborative and supportive environment. However, a brand new teacher trying to learn classroom management skills will have different challenges than a second-year teacher trying to integrate technology into the classroom in meaningful ways. Therefore, it is essential that professional development opportunities for new teachers reflect these differences. As state boards consider professional development as an element of a comprehensive induction program, it will
be important to integrate these practices to ensure new teachers receive the kinds of support they need when they need them in their career arc.

**Standards-based evaluation of new teachers throughout the process**

Quality evaluation of new teachers is an important component of comprehensive induction. Ideally, these evaluations provide schools and teachers with the information they need to identify areas that need improvement as well as improve overall instruction. These evaluations should be based on a state’s teaching standards and conducted at multiple intervals throughout the induction process. These evaluations should complement the ongoing, formative feedback new teachers receive from a mentor. Both kinds of assessments have the same goal of improving new teacher instruction and they can support and inform each other in the process. Mentors can use results from the standards-based evaluations to identify the supports needed for a new teacher, and school decisionmakers can use the formative evaluations from mentors to chart progress and growth on state teaching standards. By developing this mutually supportive system, teachers will be familiar with the expectations for teaching from the beginning, be given opportunities to demonstrate competency and growth, and receive the appropriate supports needed if there are areas of improvement identified. Some states, such as Connecticut, use these evaluations as an indication of completing the induction process. Others use the evaluations as a vehicle for teachers to develop a portfolio of work that demonstrates competency for relicensure. Regardless of the goals of these evaluations, teachers, mentors, and schools alike benefit from having a better understanding of a new teacher’s development through time.

The elements of comprehensive induction provide the supports new teachers need to address the challenges they face and develop the skills they need to improve instruction. Through this process, new teachers receive a structured, methodical way to develop teaching skills, network with colleagues, and receive the guidance they need. At the same time, schools that embrace comprehensive induction programs develop communities of learning with a strong school culture based on student achievement. Without comprehensive induction supports, states,

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**Cost-Benefit Analysis Finds High-Quality Induction Programs Well Worth the Investment**

A rigorous cost-benefit analysis by the New Teacher Center of an induction program in a medium-sized California district found that “every $1.00 invested in a comprehensive induction program produces a return of $1.66 after five years, adjusted for inflation.” All major and minor expenses were used to determine the costs, including personnel, facilities and other indirect costs, substitute teachers, and teachers’ personal time. The district paid 35 percent of the cost, with the state picking up 56 percent.

Benefits included savings to districts due to increased teacher retention, increased new teacher effectiveness, and time savings for principals due to decreased need to monitor new teachers. Perhaps the most significant benefit, however, was the increase in student achievement attributed to new teacher effectiveness. “Gains in student achievement for new teachers who had been mentored versus veteran teachers who had not previously been in a comprehensive induction program demonstrated that new teachers [who had been mentored] were, on average, as effective as fourth-year teachers” who had not been mentored.

Attaching dollar amounts to the benefits, the researchers found that districts realized savings amounting to nearly twice their investment after just five years, and even the state recouped 98 cents of every dollar spent.

State Policy Criteria for Induction

As state boards consider teacher induction policies, one recommended resource is the New Teacher Center’s (NTC) set of 10 criteria to examine state-level policy supports for developing effective induction programs. NTC is a nonprofit organization that works to deliver effective induction supports to new teachers and scale these practices by partnering with schools, districts, and policymakers.

By developing these policies, state boards will ensure that new teachers have a better opportunity to participate in comprehensive, effective induction programs. In addition, the NTC inventoried each state’s policies on teacher induction and aligned them to these 10 criteria. These state policy reviews provide valuable information regarding where each state stands on the 10 policy criteria.

1. **Teachers Served:** State policy should require that all teachers receive induction support during their first two years in the profession.

2. **Administrators Served:** State policy should require that all school administrators receive induction support during their first two years in the profession.

3. **Program Standards:** The state should have formal program standards that govern the design and operation of local teacher induction programs.

4. **Mentor Selection:** State policy should require a rigorous mentor selection process.

5. **Mentor Training:** State policy should require foundational training and ongoing professional development for mentors.

6. **Mentor Assignment and Caseload:** State policy should address how mentors are assigned to beginning teachers, allow for manageable mentor caseloads, and encourage programs to provide release time for mentors.

7. **Program Delivery:** State policy should identify key induction program elements, including a minimum amount of mentor-new teacher contact time, formative assessment of teaching practice, and classroom observation.

8. **Funding:** The state should provide dedicated funding to support local educator induction programs.

9. **Educator Accountability:** The state should require participation in and/or completion of an induction program to advance from an initial to professional teaching license.

10. **Program Accountability:** The state should assess or monitor program quality through accreditation, program evaluation, surveys, site visits, self-reports, and other relevant tools and strategies.

To download a copy of any state’s policy review, visit www.newteachercenter.org/policy/policy-map. Analysis of these policy scans can also be found on the NTC website in the report titled *Review of State Policies on Teacher Induction*, published February 2010.

districts, and schools will continue to have difficulty developing effective teachers who stay in the field. The next section provides some examples of state actions in developing quality, comprehensive induction programs through policy.

**State Examples of Action**

Developing effective teacher induction statewide is a complex task. While most states still struggle with addressing teacher induction in a comprehensive manner, many states have taken some important actions to better support new teachers. This section examines three of the key areas that many state boards have authority over in teacher induction—state program standards, ensuring mentor quality, and induction program evaluation—and provides state-level examples of action for each. As state board members consider efforts to improve support for novice teachers, these examples can provide insights into ways boards can address teacher induction using state policy levers.

**State Program Standards and Regulations**

State standards and regulations are some of the most powerful tools available to a state board. Standards provide a framework and vision for induction programs across a state, and they set the expectations for development and improvement of each program. In addition, many states use regulations to direct induction programs. The New Teacher Center (NTC) differentiates standards from regulations by defining standards as statements that “inform and govern the design of local induction programs across a state as a matter of practice in a way that strengthens the quality provision of new educator support,” while regulations are more compliance-based mechanisms. However, both standards and regulations play a necessary role in providing much-needed guidance for statewide induction programs. NTC identifies the following three groups of standards that make for a strong, comprehensive set of program standards for teacher induction programs:

**Foundational:** these standards provide guidance on program vision, administration, and evaluation;

**Structural:** these standards provide guidance on mentor roles, mentor selection and training, new teacher evaluation and assessment, and new teacher professional development similar to the elements of comprehensive induction; and

**Instructional:** these standards provide guidance on what is important in teaching practice for new teachers.

**North Carolina** has developed and implemented state standards that provide the framework for teacher induction programs. In 2010, the North Carolina State Board of Education adopted these standards to provide “the highest quality support for all of the state’s newest educators.” These comprehensive standards include the following elements:

- Every beginning teacher develops a Professional Development Plan in collaboration with the principal and mentor based on the state’s Professional Teaching Standards;
- Mentors conduct formative assessment conferences throughout the school year to chart a new teacher’s progress on the Development Plan;
- Working conditions for new teachers should include early assignment of a mentor, limited non-instructional duties, and an orientation that includes state, district, and school expectations;
- New teachers are observed at least three times annually by a school administrator, at least once annually by a teacher, and evaluated at least once with a summative assessment; and
- All induction programs must provide a comprehensive plan for supporting new teachers and are evaluated through annual reporting, annual peer review, and a formal review every five years.

**Maryland** uses regulations to set expectations for teacher induction programs. In addition to being one of the few states that requires all teachers to participate in induction programs for three years, in 2010 the Maryland State Board of Education adopted comprehensive program regulations regarding teacher induction. These regulations provide guidance to local school systems in “establish[ing] a high-quality program that addresses critical professional learning needs of new teachers.” All local school systems are required to align induction programs to the Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards and include the following elements:

- Standards for effective mentoring that emphasize focused and ongoing support for the needs of new teachers;
- Ongoing support from a mentor, including regular meetings during non-instructional time;
Most states use a mix of teaching experience, communication skills, and instructional performance as qualifications needed to become a mentor. Almost 60 percent of states use teaching experience or holding a teaching license as a requirement to become a mentor. Many states require at least three years of teaching experience. In addition to these base-level requirements, a number of states have more rigorous criteria for selecting mentors. In New Jersey, the minimum criteria for mentors include:

- At least three years of experience in the district;
- Teacher commitment to the goals set out in the local mentor plan;
- Confidentiality in the relationship between mentor and new teacher;
- Demonstrated excellence of content area knowledge and pedagogy;
- Certification in the subject area of the new teacher;
- Knowledge of a school’s culture;
- Knowledge of resources and opportunities for new teachers within the district;
- Letters of recommendation; and
- Completion of comprehensive mentor training.

While 31 states require some form of mentor training, only 12 states have policies that discuss content or delivery of this training on issues such as recognizing knowledge of state teaching standards, using formative assessments, or understanding effective classroom observation.57 Illinois, for instance, includes mentor training standards that require mentors to participate in foundational training, an ongoing professional learning community that uses reflective observation and practice, and a self-assessment process to improve their own instructional and mentoring practices.58 Rhode Island requires at least 10 hours of initial mentor training that includes topics such as adult learning theory, reflective questioning, the role of the mentor in supporting new teachers, and setting expectations with a new teacher. Ongoing professional training of mentors covers areas such as crafting effective individual professional development plans with new teachers and employing performance assessments with new teachers.59

Ensuring Mentor Quality

Given the importance of effective mentoring in comprehensive induction, states need robust policies regarding mentor selection and training/professional development. These policies can help ensure that mentors receive the training and resources they need to effectively support new teachers.
poseful and methodical in their selection and development of mentors to ensure all new teachers receive an effective and well-prepared mentor who can address any challenges a new teacher might have.

**Induction Program Evaluation**

Effective teachers require regular feedback on their performance and areas in need of improvement. Teacher induction programs need the same feedback on their performance to ensure continuous progress and growth. At the very least, districts and schools need to know how effective their induction programs are and how they can make them better. From the state perspective, evaluation of induction programs ensures feedback on implementation of standards, laws, and policies, creates linkages between policy and practice, and places a focus on program improvement.60

At least 22 states undertake some form of evaluation of induction programs. Evaluation of induction programs in these states can include the following: assessing mentor activities with new teachers, conducting site visits of programs, providing evaluation results to accreditation entities, and ensuring programs effectively integrate state program standards.61 For example, California’s Beginning Teacher and Support Assessment induction programs are evaluated as a part of the state’s accreditation system. The system has ongoing data collection, a seven-year cycle of evaluation activities, at least one site visit, and program assessment.

West Virginia incorporated induction program evaluation into its state education accreditation system. The Office of Education Performance Audits specifically looks at internship program implementation within its audits of individual schools and districts. Delaware collaborates with its higher education institutions to complete an annual evaluation of induction services.62

Teacher induction will continue to be important as states work to improve their teaching work force. These examples of state-level policy actions can provide boards with models of what other states are doing as members address these issues. The next section provides state boards with tools to use as they discuss induction policies.

**About the Discussion Worksheets**

The following worksheets are intended to guide discussions around the major policy areas that many state boards have authority over in teacher induction. Included in each worksheet is a process for examining and inventorying current policies and a set of questions for boards to consider.

Prior to beginning these exercises, gathering the following information will help the state board use the worksheets more effectively:

- A brief inventory and general understanding of current policies related to teacher induction in the state, including standards, evaluations, and outcomes;
- Challenges the state faces in teaching as it relates to induction; and
- An assessment of the strengths and limitations of the current policies around teacher induction.

Teacher induction is a complex process that requires coordinated work at all levels of the system and buy-in from both administrators and teachers. However, the impact effective teacher induction programs can have on new teachers and student achievement is immense. Through effective induction programs, state boards of education have the opportunity to provide support structures for teachers at a critical time in their careers. The following worksheets will help state boards consider these tough and sometimes volatile issues in a structured and productive manner.

Finally, it should be noted that because states are at various points in developing ways to effectively support teachers in their first years of service, the worksheets provided are not intended to give a comprehensive list of issues that any one state board should be considering in teacher induction. Rather, they are to help boards explore the role the state and specifically state policy has in addressing issues in teacher induction.
Worksheet 1: Setting a Vision for Teacher Induction

Given the importance of comprehensive support for new teachers, state boards have an opportunity to drive reform efforts in teacher induction through identifying issues facing the state and developing an approach to address these challenges. Therefore, it is important from the beginning that state boards develop a vision and strategy for induction programs. This worksheet provides some initial questions state boards should consider asking and the information they need to gather to have a complete picture of teacher induction issues. This should be completed prior to trying to address these issues through the various policy levers available to the state board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting a Vision for Teacher Induction</th>
<th>Questions to Ask When Considering Policy Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What challenges exist for new teachers in the state? Does the state have information from new teacher or teaching conditions surveys that helps answer this question?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What challenges does the state currently face when trying to effectively support new teachers and address the issues they face?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Has the board interacted with and received input from the legislature, school districts, unions, teachers, and administrators to provide additional perspectives on the challenges surrounding teacher induction issues?</td>
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<td>• Does the state require any induction or mentoring support for new teachers?</td>
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<td>• If there is not a state requirement, does the state collect information about what local districts and schools are doing to address issues facing new teachers. How can the state support these local efforts?</td>
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<td>• What supports beyond mentoring are available to new teachers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How are teacher preparation, professional development, evaluation, and licensure systems aligned with teacher induction programs so that new teachers experience a seamless transition as they progress through the system?</td>
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Standards are an important tool available to state boards. While almost all states have professional teaching standards, only 15 states have teacher induction standards. Moving forward, state boards need to provide districts and schools with goals and expectations for induction programs so that all new teachers receive the support they need to develop effectively. This policy worksheet provides some of the key considerations when crafting teacher induction program standards.

### Worksheet 2: Teacher Induction Program Standards

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Who Has Authority Over This Part of the System?</th>
<th>Questions to Ask When Considering Policy Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Induction Program Standards</td>
<td>• What challenges in new teacher support and induction does the board want to address through program standards?</td>
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<td>• Are there specific statewide supports that teachers need to be successful in the first few years of teaching?</td>
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<td>• What foundational, structural, and instructional standards should the board consider in induction program standards?</td>
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<td>• How do state induction standards emphasize the importance of state teaching standards and the role of comprehensive support for new teachers?</td>
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<td>• Is there non-instructional time set aside for new teachers to interact with mentors?</td>
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<td>• What is the role of school leadership in induction programs and how can induction programs involve school leadership to achieve the goals of induction standards?</td>
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<td>• What role, if any, does teacher induction play in state licensure and relicensure? If there is no role, how could effective completion of a teacher induction program help a new teacher demonstrate competency and growth for teaching licensure?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How might the standards be used to communicate a statewide vision for induction, identify research-based program elements, and hold programs accountable for implementing these elements?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mentors are at the heart of a quality induction program. Given the importance of the mentor-new teacher relationship, mentor quality is a vital component of a comprehensive induction program. As such, mentor selection and mentor training and professional development are key elements of ensuring that all teachers receive a quality mentor.

### Worksheet 3: Ensuring Mentor Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Has Authority Over This Part of the System?</th>
<th>Questions to Ask When Considering Policy Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor Selection</strong></td>
<td>• What challenges do districts and schools face when trying to provide quality mentors to new teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What skills do mentors need to support new teachers in the state, and do schools try to identify these skills prior to selecting mentors?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What are the requirements or qualifications for a teacher to become a mentor?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Do the requirements needed to become a mentor effectively identify quality mentors in a consistent and reliable manner?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What requirements could be added to provide districts and schools additional information or perspective when selecting teachers to be mentors?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What kinds of compensation and recognition exist for mentors to ensure that enough quality candidates apply to become a mentor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor Training and Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>• What training do mentors receive prior to meeting with new teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What support and professional development do mentors receive during the induction process?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What tools are available to mentors to assess new teacher progress in the various areas of state teacher standards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How do mentors integrate the work they do into their own learning and professional development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The overarching goals of induction program evaluations should be to both assess the quality of teacher induction programs and to inform discussions on improving the teacher induction system across the state. No induction program is perfect and no induction program is without merit. An effective evaluation system for these programs ensures that programs at both ends of the quality spectrum can identify strengths and areas of improvement and have direction on how to continuously improve their practice.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction Program Evaluation</td>
<td>• What should the state role be in evaluation of teacher induction programs (e.g., defining major elements to include in the assessment; disseminating information about what districts are doing to assess programs)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How does the state define completion of an induction program by beginning teachers? How are state teaching standards integrated into induction program evaluations to ensure all new teachers demonstrate competency in these standards?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does the state collect outcome data such as teacher retention, teacher transfers, or teacher evaluations and link this information back to the induction and professional development programs teachers participated in during their first years on the job?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How do induction program evaluations inform and/or impact school-wide improvement and reform efforts?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How do induction program evaluations account for school culture?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What supports and follow-up are in place for induction programs that receive unsatisfactory evaluations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is the role for program standards in evaluating program implementation and outcomes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Endnotes


7 Ingersoll, Is There Really a Teacher Shortage? (2003), 14.


10 Ingersoll and Merrill, Who’s Teaching Our Children? (2010), 14-20.

11 Ibid.

12 Claycomb and Hawley, Recruiting and Retaining Effective Teachers (2000), 7.


17 Steven Glazerman, Eric Isenberg, Sarah Dolfin, Martha Bleeker, Amy Johnson, Mary Grider, and Matthew Jacobus, Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Final Results from a Randomized Controlled Study (Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, June 2010), viii.


19 Ingersoll and Smith, “Do Teacher Induction and Mentoring Matter?” (March 2004), 34-35.


21 Ingersoll and Smith, “Do Teacher Induction and Mentoring Matter?” (March 2004), 35.

22 Liam Goldrick, David Osta, Dara Barlin, and Jennifer Burn, Review of State Policies on Teacher Induction (Santa Cruz, CA: New Teacher Center, 2012), iv.


24 Glazerman, et al., Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction (2010), xxv.


32 College Board Advocacy and Policy Center, *Teachers are the Center of Education: Mentoring, Teaching and Improving Student Learning* (Washington, DC: author, 2010), 5.


34 Wood and Stanulis, “Quality Teacher Induction” (2009), 7-8.


37 Ingersoll and Smith, “Do Teacher Induction and Mentoring Matter?” (March 2004), 36.


39 Ibid., 15-16.


41 Ibid., 20.


43 Wood and Stanulis, “Quality Teacher Induction” (2009), 9-10.


46 Wood and Stanulis, “Quality Teacher Induction” (2009), 7.


57 Ibid., 11.

58 Ibid., 14.

59 Ibid., 14.

60 Ibid., 29.

61 Ibid., 30.

62 Ibid., 30-31.

63 Ibid., 7.
New Teacher Center focuses on improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers. NTC partners with states, school districts, and policymakers to design and implement systems that create sustainable, high-quality mentoring and professional development; build leadership capacity; work to enhance teaching conditions; improve retention; and transform schools into vibrant learning communities where all students succeed.