

INDUCTION PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES

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General Overview: The UW's Induction Program and Activities are designed to support novice teachers who are in their initial years of teaching. Activities fit most closely to TNE Principle C: *Teaching as an Academically Taught Clinical Practice Profession* and cover both the Induction and Professional Development Phases in the Teaching Continuum. Although our primary target audience is the set of novice teachers who graduate from the College of Education's Teacher Education Program, current induction activities also impact novice teachers in the Ackerley Partnership, regardless of where they received their teacher certification. In addition, our induction activities work towards building the capacity of teacher leaders who take on mentoring or coaching roles to guide the professional growth of novice teachers. Some of our activities occur face to face and others happen via an online environment. In creating the UW's induction program we have been very intentional to connect activities to the TEP renewal effort as well as pay attention to the existing school, district, and state structures that support novice teachers.

Specific Interventions for TEP Graduates

Our primary induction goals for the UW TEP graduates are to increase their general sense of efficacy in teaching and retain them in the field of education.

Reconnect and Recharge (R&R) Seminars: The R&R Seminars bring together novice teacher graduates once a quarter during the academic year and focus on dilemmas of classroom practice using Critical Friends Group protocols. The novice teachers identify a pressing issue they face and bring examples of lesson and assessment plans along with student work to exemplify the dilemma. During the R&R Seminar the teachers are placed in small groups of about five people by grade and/or discipline. Each person first conferences with a UW Teacher Assistant/group facilitator to clarify the issue. After this the novice teacher presents his or her dilemma then receives insights and feedback from their group. Each group also has an observer to record notes and observations so that an analysis can be done of all the groups' discussions to identify common issues and identify levels of complexity. The data is used to inform preservice program renewal.

R&R Seminar teachers are able to receive Clock Hour Credit for participating and may apply this work towards Professional Certification requirements in the future.

These seminars allow our TEP graduates to be in a non-threatening environment that encourages intellectual exchange without being tied to evaluation. The seminars also provide a supportive community in which novices appreciate that many of their issues are shared by others.

UWeb Teacher Support Network: This online environment provides different kinds of supports for novice teachers. The **On Demand Resources** are a set of web-based materials, documents, and videos that were put together based on what novice teachers indicated they needed most. These resources are organized into four categories: Curriculum; Instructional; Employment and Professional Development Resources; and Parent, Families, and School Community. Mentees are encouraged to seek resources on the site that will support their teaching and mentors are asked to proactively identify those resources that address needs of their mentees.

To encourage synchronous and asynchronous, facilitated discussions among novice teachers and mentors, we are currently using the **Tapped In** platform. Tapped In was designed for online professional development of teachers through funding from the National Science Foundation a number of years ago. Novice teachers are put into small cohort groups and presented with online dilemmas that grow out of those identified during the Reconnect and Recharge Seminars. A prompt is provided and individuals write responses over a two week period, with mentors/facilitators providing probing questions and encouraging the participants to support one another and identify themes and connections that evolve through the threaded conversations. In the third week, the facilitator writes a summary of the key issue prompt that was used, the responses, and provides suggested resources and strategies that could further address the issue. Examples of online dilemmas include such things as engaging parents and family, classroom management, assessment, or dealing with struggling students. Our TEP graduates will be able to participate in a series of 3-4 online dilemmas each year.

This year we are also coordinating a statewide effort with participants utilizing an online mentoring program for secondary science teachers called **eMentoring for Student Success**. This is a national project developed in collaboration with the National Science Teachers Association, the New Teacher Center in California, and Montana State University. Experienced secondary science teachers mentor 1-2 secondary science teachers in their first or second year. Mentors are provided training and the program uses online dilemmas as well as inquiry units to deepen the knowledge and skills of mentees. Lessons learned from our participation in this program will inform the design of our UWeb Teacher Support Network.

Pathway to Professional Certification: The UW Extension Outreach currently offers a Professional Certification program for Seattle Public School teachers as well as for others in the Puget Sound area. All novice teachers in the state of Washington get an initial license and are expected to start fulfilling Professional Certification requirements in their second or third year and generally finish by their fifth year of teaching. This certification helps teachers demonstrate that they have a positive impact on student learning. It is an individualized,

classroom-based process that focuses on increased skills to impact student learning rather than credits.

It is our intent to create a program that fits our TEP graduates more specifically and builds off of their preservice experiences, allowing them to complete Professional Certification requirements or move into the National Board Certification process without feeling like they are duplicating work.

Teachers use a set of criteria to first assess their areas of strength and necessary improvement then identify experiences that will address the latter. A culminating seminar gives teachers the opportunity to present final evidence verifying the knowledge, skill, and performance necessary for a Professional Certificate.

Focus groups will be set up later this year to get a sense from our TEP graduates as to the viability of this pathway as a self-sustaining program.

Building Capacity for Quality Mentoring – the Master in Instructional Leadership

We recognize that our TEP graduates may have a variety of induction supports available to them within their school or district level. Over the last few years it has become more widely known that mentoring and coaching novice teachers can positively improve their sense of efficacy and assist in retaining them as classroom teachers. But professional development opportunities for mentors and coaches are limited throughout the region. To increase the capacity of teacher leaders to provide quality guidance in promoting the professional growth of novices, the UW COE collaborated with Arts and Science faculty and leaders from the Seattle Public Schools to design an initial framework for the new Master in Instructional Leadership (MIL) that will begin in the summer of 2007. COE faculty in both the Curriculum and Instruction as well as Educational Leadership areas jointly fleshed out the program and will administer it.

Given the research base that indicates that mentors and coaches with deep content knowledge are better able to provide appropriate guidance to novices and other colleagues, the MIL requires participants to identify a focus area (i.e. mathematics, science, literacy, English Language Learners, or social studies) and take some courses in that area. Their additional courses overall will cover the following core competencies:

- Organizing and leading in schools for equitable teaching and learning
- Providing content-specific teacher support
- Guiding the continuous growth of teachers
- Implementing action research and reflective group discussions

This will be a self-sustaining program with a cohort base of about 25-30 experienced teachers. It is expected that participating educators will complete the program in two years while teaching full time.

Interventions for Novice Teachers in the Ackerley Partnership

Survive & Thrive Inquiry Program: This program is designed to improve building-based learning communities that support novice teachers. Experienced teachers in a school are matched with early career teachers in their first 3 years to examine the extant school structures that do or do not support novices through journaling and formal meetings using a set of induction standards that include a focus on:

- Hiring practices
- Orientation of new teachers
- Mentoring
- Professional learning available to new teachers
- Formative assessment that is differentiated with new teachers in mind
- Supportive school climate

Mentors and mentees meet at least twice a month. Ideally, the mentors and mentees have similar grades and subject matter assignments. Mentors are provided with professional development experiences through quarterly meetings and the opportunity to attend the New Teacher Center's national conference on mentoring and induction. They also have access to additional funds to use for other conferences or resource materials. Both mentors and mentees receive a small stipend for participating in the program.

Ongoing informal meetings are encouraged to address emergent issues for novices. In addition, there are funds set aside to allow novice teachers alongside of their mentor to observe an experienced teacher with particular expertise in an area that the novice teacher has identified as being problematic.

In the spring, mentor/mentee school teams develop a set of recommendations and an Action Plan to improve their building culture to better support novices in the upcoming school year based on the priorities identified from assessing their school's induction program against the induction standards. This is shared with the principal and other staff members. In the second year, the school teams monitor their progress in meeting their goals and continue the informal mentoring.