

Educators' Perceptions of the Support Needed for New Teachers

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Abstract

One of the principals' roles is to help new teachers become successful veteran teachers. Unfortunately, new teachers have been exiting the teaching profession by increasing numbers. The purpose of the present study was to determine what teachers and principals perceive to be the components needed in an induction program for new teachers. The findings indicated that in the domain of orientation, the major needs included knowledge of school/district procedures and policies followed by classroom behavior management. In the domain of mentoring, the major needs were instructional coaching, routines, and classroom behavior management. In the domain of professional development, the major needs were observation and feedback, one-on-one training, and workshops. There were no significant differences among the three groups (all educators, administrators, and new teachers), although their order of importance sometimes differed. The preferred environments expressed were collaborative and respectful, and the preferred structures were common planning time and professional learning communities. The conclusions were that the administration should concentrate on three areas to provide guidance and support for new teachers: (1) classroom behavior management; (2) common planning time; and (3) professional learning communities.

Keywords: Induction, instructional leadership, new teacher attrition

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Introduction

New teachers have been leaving the profession at high rates, by as much as one-third within three years and almost half within five years (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014). This high rate of attrition has a negative impact on the school and on student achievement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammer, 2019). Numerous studies explored the reasons for new teacher attrition with lack of administrative support, extracurricular assignments, student behavior, lack of parental support, inadequate preparation, poor working conditions, and salary among the top reasons (Bolich, 2001; Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammer, 2017; Darling-Hammer, 2003; Fredricks, 2001; Podolsky et al, 2016). Other research has determined that strong induction programs were successful in retaining new teachers (California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, 2016; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Martin, 2012; Podolsky et al, 2016). The most frequently mentioned necessary components of induction were orientation, mentoring, and professional development. The purpose of this study was to determine what teachers and principals perceive to be the needed support to help new teachers become successful. A survey was administered to teachers and principals in one school district in Louisiana regarding their perceptions of what should be included in a new teacher induction program in the domains of orientation, mentoring, and professional development.

Conclusions

Findings indicated that in the domain of orientation, the most frequently cited needs were school/district procedures and policies followed by classroom behavior management. In the domain of mentoring, the most frequently cited needs were instructional coaching, routines, and classroom behavior management. In the domain of professional development, the most frequently cited needs were observation/feedback, one-on-one training, and workshops, closely followed by classroom behavior management. There were no significant differences among the three groups (all educators, administrators, and new teachers), although their order of importance sometimes differed. The most preferred environment was collaborative, and the preferred structures were common planning time and professional learning communities. From these results, the conclusions were that the administration should provide new teacher support in three areas: classroom behavior management, common planning time, and professional learning communities.

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