

## New Teacher Excellence: The Impact of State Policy on Induction Program Implementation

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### Introduction

In recent years, the field of education has seen a rapid expansion of policies and resources devoted to teacher induction—comprehensive systems of support and training for beginning educators. Such growth may be explained by the growing awareness of new teachers' unique needs for comprehensive support and training as well as research that illustrates the precipitous decline in the years of experience among the nation's teachers (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2010). America's schools have a historic number of first-year teachers and policymakers have responded by enacting policies and providing resources to address their needs (Carroll & Foster, 2010; Goldrick, 2011).

Today, more than 30 states require new teachers to participate in some form of induction or mentoring (Goldrick, 2011) and, as a result, more new teachers receive mentoring or induction support than ever before (Wei, Darling-Hammond & Adamson, 2010). While the comprehensiveness and funding of these policies vary widely, most state induction policies are based on an assumption that a mandate will have a positive influence on the provision of induction and mentoring support and thereby have positive effects on teaching quality and student learning. Yet little research has explored the intersection of state induction policy and local induction program implementation. While scholars have argued and research demonstrates that intensive induction support can increase teacher effectiveness, satisfaction and retention (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Fletcher, Strong & Villar, 2008; Glazerman et. al., 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), there is little consensus around which specific policy levers have an influence on quality mentoring and induction programs and even less research to explain the growth and development of induction programs that have little or no state policy support.

This paper explores the intersection between state induction policy and local induction program implementation and examines the question: *How does state policy impact the development and quality of local induction programs?* While comprehensive state policies may increase the likelihood that intensive induction programs will take root in schools and districts, there is little evidence to demonstrate this definitively. This paper investigates the interplay between state policy, funding, and program infrastructure and local induction program design, quality and comprehensiveness.

We focus specifically on state policy because of its broad influence on the systematic implementation of comprehensive teacher induction. In a recent policy review of beginning teacher mentoring, Hirsch, et. al. (2009) suggest that state policy can ensure that all new teachers get the support they need to become effective teachers. Beyond equity, state policy also has the potential to provide school districts guidance in and support for the implementation of a comprehensive and coherent program of high-quality induction.

The term 'policy' can mean different things to different people. Here all aspects of state efforts to legislate and implement teacher induction are referred to as 'policy'. This definition includes formal policies (statutes, regulations, program standards), funding streams, and the infrastructure (including mentor training and program accountability) designed to support the statewide policy and the local implementation of these programs. This definition developed through the recognition that the non-legislative elements supporting induction are often more critical than the specific legislation itself. The definition also includes additional policy elements such as guidance that has been offered through memos to program leaders and administrators, compliance reports required of districts to secure future funding, and networks that support program leaders through professional development and technical assistance. These policy elements have differing strengths with regard to their resulting effects on district programs.

Three states are the focus of this examination: California, Illinois, and Hawaii. Each has a unique policy context that bears on the existing induction programs within their borders. [For a brief outline of each state's unique policies, please see Table 1 on page 2. For a rationale for state selection, see the discussion of 'Sample Selection' on page 3.] Below is a brief synopsis of each state's current policy with regard to induction.

- **California's** Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program, the nation's most comprehensive induction program, ties new teacher support to state credentialing and has historically provided the most generous level of state funding per beginning teacher in the nation. The statewide system supports local programs through an induction program network and regular meetings for program directors, funds regional induction centers to support local programs, provides state induction program standards, utilizes state-level governance involving two state agencies, and recently added induction programs (along with pre-service programs) to a statewide accreditation system.

- **Illinois** has a growing state program which funds more than 60 participating district or consortia induction programs and offers guidance, program standards, a network of support, and technical assistance to all districts. The Illinois New Teacher Collaborative, designated by the Illinois State Board of Education to administer the program, provides district support and technical assistance to local programs. In collaboration with the New Teacher Center, it also informs a state-level induction policy advisory team to provide state policymakers with critical analysis about teacher induction policy and programming. Districts that do not participate in the state program are not required to provide new teacher induction, but some do have state-certified programs that assist teachers in earning their credential.
- **Hawaii** offers no state mandate or state funding for teacher induction, but offers guidance and support to its Complex Areas (similar to most states' school districts). Unique in design, the Hawaii Department of Education is both the State Education Agency (SEA) and a Local Education Agency (LEA). As such, the SEA offers guidance to the 15 Complex Areas throughout the state. (Hawaii's Complex Areas mirror school districts in other states in terms of the diversity of their induction programs. For the purposes of this study, we treat them and refer to them as districts. For example, "district

program leader" refers to program coordinators in districts in Illinois and California as well as complex area program coordinators in Hawaii.) In all states, the SEA was the main focus for state policy. In Hawaii, allocated funding from Title II, Part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act is used to support local induction programs. Despite the lack of formal policies, the state has developed guidelines for the development of induction programs, has trained state and school-area resource teachers in induction and mentoring, provides a network of support and on-line survey for program leaders that examines principal, mentor and mentee experience, and is developing more formal induction program standards. Through Hawaii's successful Race to the Top application, new teacher induction will receive a significant amount of additional attention as noted below.

This paper details differences in induction program implementation in districts across the three states and explores the reasons for these differences. The paper ends with conclusions about the impact of state policy on local program design, implementation, and overall quality; and identifies local factors, including leadership support, budget constraints, and contextual challenges that influence the growth and sustainability of local teacher support programs.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF STATE POLICY

State	State Requirements and Mandates	Tied to Certification/Licensure	State Administration of Induction and Mentoring	State Funding	Networks for Mentors and Program Directors	Induction Program Standards	Induction Program Guidelines	State-Funded Induction Positions
<b>California</b>	For mentoring, induction, and formative assessment	Yes, induction is tied to teacher credentialing	Joint administration by the California Department of Education and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing	State contribution of \$4,069 per beginning teacher (2008-09 school year)	Regular meetings held in regions and at state level	<i>Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs</i>	Induction program guidelines are offered	California has multiple state positions focused specifically on induction as well as 6 Cluster Region directors
<b>Illinois</b>	Unfunded mandate (2003); funded pilot program began in 2006; requires administrator participation	No tie to credential	Illinois State Board of Education	For the 60+ state-funded programs	Annual conference; Networks and meetings for programs are available for accepted and non-accepted programs	<i>Illinois Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs; and Illinois Induction Program Continuum</i>	Guidelines for accepted programs can be used by any district	The Illinois New Teacher Collaborative is funded by the state to support both funded and non-funded programs
<b>Hawaii</b>	None	No tie to credential	Hawaii Department of Education	None	One statewide symposium; Network currently includes half of complex areas with open invitation to others	In development	Induction program guidelines were offered through communication from the state office	Limited to trained state resource teachers

## Study Design

Through state policy analysis and interviews with state and local program leaders, this study examines the relationship between state policy on teacher induction and local induction programs. This analysis focuses on the impact of state policy on local program design, implementation, and overall quality. It leads to discussions of the following for each state: (1) unique aspects of the policy-practice relationship, (2) induction program improvement, and (3) recommendations, or next steps. Additional factors that influence the growth and sustainability of teacher support programs at the local level are also identified and discussed, including leadership support, budget constraints, and contextual challenges.

### SAMPLE SELECTION

California, Illinois and Hawaii were chosen for their varied state policy contexts as well as the developed policy and research base on induction in each state. California was an obvious choice given its status as a “best practice” model, having the most robust state policy, funding and infrastructure for teacher induction in the nation (Mitchell et al., 2007). Illinois induction policy offers a unique perspective on how a state can build induction program capacity over time; though an initial state mandate went dormant because of a lack of funding, the state has rallied to produce a pilot program approach. In less than five years, the model has grown into a multi-million dollar induction network that aims to grow into a robust statewide model. Multiple studies have examined Illinois induction policy due to its unique characteristics (Bartlett & Johnson, 2009; Humphrey, Wechsler, Bosetti, 2009; Humphrey et al., 2008). Hawaii induction policy is less substantial and formal relative to most states, yet the state has pockets of robust comprehensive induction programs and is developing induction program standards, networks and other emerging policy levers (Johnson, 2008). These differing policies and the unique research base available from each state led to the rich case studies presented here.

### METHODS

This study began with a review of research and policy documents related to each state’s current induction offerings. Interview protocols and district surveys were developed through this review, and subsequent interviews were conducted with district and state program leaders in each of the three states. Four or more district program leaders were interviewed in each state and two or more state leaders were interviewed in each state for a total of 21 interviews. Interviews were transcribed and case study summaries and matrices for constant comparative methods were developed based on the research methods of Hancock and Algozzine (2006) and Bogdan and Bilken (1998). This report was developed based on the findings of this analysis and a review of the literature. Efforts have been made to protect the anonymity of district and state leaders.

#### *District Program Surveys*

District programs were recruited to participate based on the literature review, data from earlier studies of induction programs in each state, and conversations with state induction leaders. Program leaders were asked to complete a survey on program comprehensiveness. This survey

assured that a variety of programs throughout each state were assessed. The survey was developed from a literature scan of prominent policy and research papers that included detailed descriptions of induction program components (Moir et. al., 2009; New Teacher Center, 2007; NCTAF, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; National Commission on Professional Support and Development for Novice Teachers, 2000; Wong, 2004; Britton, 2003). Programs with varying degrees of comprehensiveness were selected from each state. Each state sample included two highly comprehensive programs and two programs that were not fully comprehensive. [See Appendix A for a full list of induction program components assessed by the survey.]

#### *District Program Leader Interviews*

As noted above, district program leaders were selected from both comprehensive programs and less comprehensive or developing programs. District program leaders were typically professional development directors for their district or induction program leaders. Sixty-minute interviews focused on the relationship between induction policy and program implementation, the types and quality of induction programs offered in the state or district, the contextual factors that impeded or supported induction program development, the communication and articulation of induction policy in each state, and the pathways that exemplary and struggling districts followed. To provide a unique perspective in Illinois, additional sites were added to examine state-funded pilot sites and non-funded induction programs as well as initial pilot program grantees that left the state program for a variety of reasons.

#### *State Program Leader Interviews*

As with district programs, multiple perspectives from state leaders were sought. In all states individuals selected had a strong knowledge and background in state induction policy and implementation. In all states, state education agency (SEA) staff was interviewed along with individuals who worked closely with SEA staff through collaborating agencies, partner organizations and stakeholder groups that focus on induction programming and/or policy. State interview protocols focused on the details of the state policy, current trends in education reform that affect induction policy, the quality of relationship between the state and districts in implementing induction programs, the alignment between policy and programs, and the development and future vision of induction policy in the state.

### Case Studies

The following sections detail the case studies of induction policy and practice in the three states. The sections begin with a detailed description of each state’s induction policy. Specific contextual pieces are noted throughout to describe influences on induction policy in each state. Each section continues with information about the unique aspects of the policy-practice relationship in each state, suggestions for induction program improvement, and next steps for each state. Following this section are a set of detailed findings and recommendations for all stakeholders.

## California

In 1992 the California Legislature passed Senate Bill 1422, which required the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) to review the stipulations for earning and renewing teacher credentials. Out of this legislation was born the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program (EC §44279), co-administered by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the CCTC. The unique link between these two state agencies has led to state induction policy that is both focused on new teacher growth and support and tied to the teacher credentialing process. Initially, BTSA included 29 distinct induction programs across the state.

BTSA's first iteration utilized induction program standards focused primarily on establishing a mentor-mentee relationship between veteran teachers and beginning teachers. The mentors were to advance the professional learning of mentees in six areas: (1) engaging and supporting all students in learning, (2) creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning, (3) understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning, (4) planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students, (5) assessing student learning, and (6) developing as a professional educator.

In 1998 the state Legislature passed Senate Bill 2042 (EC §44259), which revised the teacher-preparation and credentialing processes; this naturally led to a revision of BTSA. It established a new two-tier credentialing system for California teachers, under which they earn the first "level" through their initial preparation programs and can only attain the second "level" after having participated in an approved induction program. Specifically, the legislation included the mandate that teachers successfully complete an induction program of support and assessment in order to earn a California Professional Clear Credential.

The new generation of BTSA induction programs replaced the original programs, as teachers could no longer graduate from preparation programs with the Professional Clear Credential. In addition to the BTSA program changes, the induction program standards were revised in 2008 and streamlined into six standards. These newer standards address program rationale and design, communication and collaboration, support providers, formative assessment, pedagogy and universal access/equity (including teaching English language learners and special populations).

Currently, there are 169 BTSA programs across the state, organized into six regional "clusters." In the 2008–09 school year, state funding for these programs amounted to more than \$4,000 per new teacher. Since 2005–06, California has funded BTSA programs through the Teacher Credentialing Block Grant based on the number of new teachers served per program. Due to current budgetary constraints, the state has devolved numerous categorical programs—including BTSA—to 'Flexibility Tier III,' allowing school districts to redirect the funds toward other educational purposes. In some cases, districts have transferred funds away from BTSA programs. At the same time, the requirement that teachers must complete an approved induction program to earn a Professional Clear Credential has not been altered.

Those interviewed described the budget shortfalls as having little significant effect on BTSA programs (as of early 2010), as numbers

of new teachers have dropped in most districts. (The number of new teachers in California declined from 30,000 in the 2008–09 school year to fewer than 20,000 in 2009–10.) Nonetheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that some districts have redirected their BTSA appropriation to other programs. In other districts, induction program director positions once funded at 100 percent time are now funded at half-time or less, while program needs—despite lower numbers of new teachers—remain the same overall. One respondent stated, "We're fortunate to have a program. There are some programs across the state that basically don't exist right now. We are down from 3,000 new teachers to 1,700 new teachers, but we have learned a lot on how to do more with less and not compromise some of the key components of the program." In the coming years, budgets will continue to tighten and BTSA is scheduled to maintain its 'Tier III' status through the 2012–13 school year. As a result, district and state officials are concerned that the quality of induction programs may falter. "This is not a one-year aberration. The problems in [the] budget will continue for three or four years.... How will we be able to maintain it at places in which people are being asked to do more? And how long can we continue to expect them to continue to do more before we start seeing some slide in programming?...That's our biggest concern."

### UNIQUE ASPECTS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUCTION PRACTICE AND POLICY IN CALIFORNIA

From the perspective of district program leaders, the funding and support provided from the state has been instrumental in helping them develop comprehensive programs. All of the California induction programs represented in this study began either as BTSA pilots or were created during the period before induction became a state mandate. Most district-level responses were similar to this respondent's view: "It would be years before districts in this region would have gotten to the level that they're at this point without state policy and without state funding." Simply put, the funding has made many induction programs possible. Many smaller districts would not have been able to provide the resources to new teachers and support providers without the state and regional approach to induction.

The link to the Professional Clear Credential was also instrumental as it provided the push many school districts needed to prioritize induction. District program leaders noted how important the formal link between induction and credentialing is to the success of their program: "The fact that on each teacher's credential it clearly states that induction is a requirement helps to make it a very objective, it's not something that's done to a person. It's not their individual district that is saying...we are requiring you to do this. We are assisting you because the state, which is the credentialing agency, has created a protocol and we're here to help you to meet that protocol." The induction program standards, too, were consistently seen as an important component of the state policy. "Because of the standards-based system, there is a high level of detail matched with local implementation and control. So you are addressing the standards but you're addressing them at a local level. To me, that provides maximum flexibility."

Beyond these policy levers, California also has conducted regular induction program site visits—a three-day-long program review evaluating adherence to state program standards—conducted by a

team of state-trained reviewers. These site visits have helped programs improve and informed state efforts to reconsider policy steps and refine its tools and practices. Those interviewed noted that lessons learned during implementation have had an influence on state policy: “Our [district induction] program has definitely contributed to state policy and state changes...[I’d like to note] the importance of the [state’s site visits], going into individual induction programs and looking at their uniqueness, [they can see] why are they effective within that unique setting.” Program leaders see how these site visits play a crucial role in developing and refining state policies to be both flexible when needed to meet contextual priorities (such as the case of urban districts examined here which focus induction on meeting the needs of ELL students, the achievement gap, and issues of diversity) and directive when programs need to be brought up to standard. Furthermore, program leaders were pleased with how the state streamlined standards in recent years. “[The state and its standards have] been a positive influence as far as I can see. They’re always listening and making improvements,” one said.

Despite these accolades, California’s induction policy has not enabled all districts to achieve successful program implementation. Some large urban districts in California run on a “service economy model,” in which school leaders have autonomy over their budgets, calendars, and staffing, and have the opportunity to “purchase” goods and services from the district. Schools decide what services they get from the central office and often do not recognize the need to comply with the state mandate for new teacher induction. Induction programs in these districts are caught between a state requirement and school-based governance. As one urban district program leader said, “We’re being yanked by the policy string constantly... We’re mandatory for new teachers and the new teacher has to [complete an induction program] to get their credential and the district wants the teachers to be credentialed, but the schools [don’t comply]. We have to beg the schools to do what’s good on behalf of the new teachers. So it’s been a challenge to try to design it in a way that supports the new teachers and their mentors in the face of a lack of overall support from the district and from their school sites.” With BTSA devolved to Tier III funding, teachers in these schools are even less likely to be supported through an induction program to meet their Professional Clear Credential because these schools are likely to “sweep the money and use it however they want.”

Many urban districts face ills that induction alone cannot remedy. In the urban district quoted above, induction program leaders stated that the annual new teacher turnover rate was 80 percent district-wide. Schools within the district that had strong induction programs exhibited annual new teacher turnover rates closer to 60 percent suggesting that induction programs can affect turnover, but other factors need to be addressed as well. Like urban districts nationwide, high attrition rates stem from a variety of challenges. From deplorable working conditions to lack of professional recognition to an absence of trust and respect, many beginning teachers find the job too challenging and isolating. While solutions beyond induction are needed in these urban centers, the state may want to consider additional support for induction programs and/or flexible induction options for these urban centers that serve, in some cases, over 300 new teachers.

Another challenge worth mentioning, is that created by different candidate entry points into the teaching profession. District program leaders we interviewed voiced concerns that their new teachers were bombarded with duplicative and discordant instructional guidance. Some new teachers entering the teaching profession through alternative routes, for example, receive support from internship coordinators, BTSA mentors, site-based mentors, and subject-area coaches. One district leader expressed concern over the growing number of alternative route candidates and the need to coordinate support.

#### INDUCTION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA

In 2009 BTSA induction programs moved into the state’s more comprehensive and rigorous accreditation system that also examines the state’s institutions of higher education. This new accountability system is designed around a seven-year assessment cycle. Every two years, each approved program is required to submit a report focusing on candidate competence and program effectiveness. These categories are open-ended, so that leaders of each program can speak to the particular activities and tools that they feature. In the fourth year of the accreditation cycle, the state engages in a program assessment, which examines program alignment to standards. Finally, in the sixth year, the state conducts site visits, where a team of trained professionals observes and evaluates each approved induction program. Prior to this system, district programs used formative reviews conducted by the state for improvement: “We have been able to utilize some of the feedback from a formal review to help us reflect and grow and provide a stronger program.”

Many BTSA induction programs use additional assessment methods that run parallel to the state’s accreditation system. These include a range of data-collection and evaluation tools (such as evaluations of mentor forums; online surveys of new teachers, mentors and administrators; and focus groups of new teachers and mentors). Here’s one example of a program leader discussing how her program evaluation has developed:

“We have an ongoing internal data collection/data analysis process. We gather data from participants in the form of quantitative data surveys, some qualitative feedback in their reflections. We’ve done focus groups. We look at teacher portfolios and do an analysis of those. We have various inputs from our administrators in our region, our advisory board. Our county coordinators provide feedback and data and we meet regularly to talk about program improvement. We do a midyear survey, and a state end-of-year survey. We also do an analysis of the services provided by the support provider to the beginning teacher. We’ve quantified our portfolio review process and we are collecting data regarding the success of those portfolios and [we are examining] how many teachers are able to complete the portfolios at a certain level. We track retention data. We also review the analysis of student work that is directly linked to our formative assessment process.”

In conversations with these program leaders, it became apparent that the state's induction program infrastructure has afforded BTSA programs the time, personnel, and structure to develop more robust evaluation systems that have informed more refined induction support systems for mentors, program leaders, teachers, and administrators.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR CALIFORNIA INDUCTION POLICY

State budget constraints will be a primary challenge to California's teacher induction programs in the coming years. As one respondent noted, "Tier III has the potential of being very damaging." The Tier III status of BTSA funding is scheduled to continue through the 2012–13 school year when it will be revisited by the Legislature. Further, the local in-kind match of \$2,000 per beginning teacher is no longer required by the state. In many cases, the local match was used to provide additional services to the beginning teacher and their support provider. Without local support, it is unclear how programs will continue to provide new teachers with the intensive levels of support that were previously offered.

How the state moves ahead also is unclear. Some participants suggest that waiving the requirement for induction should be on the table, "I think that if a district [chooses not to participate in induction because it is now in Tier III] it would be helpful if the state then waived [the credentialing] requirement because it was the state that told the district you could use the money for another educational purpose because of the economic crisis." At the same time, offering this kind of flexibility and choice may not be in the best interest of California's new teachers. Having the option to waive induction might cause some districts, like the one described below, to abandon it altogether.

This challenge is especially poignant in some of California's struggling urban school districts where the commitment to induction already was shaky. A program director of a struggling induction program reported that many school administrators believe induction to be an unnecessary expense. In her district, schools use site-based management and the survival of the induction program is in the hands of individual principals. Too often, new teachers enter specific schools and soon realize that they are not providing its new teachers the opportunity to meet the state induction requirement. The BTSA coordinator of this particular district reported that, in her view, this is a disservice to the new teachers who are willing to serve hard-to-staff schools. She also expressed hope that the state will pay more attention to these struggling programs and find ways to ensure that these new teachers are supported.

To sustain and further improve the BTSA program in the face of massive budget shortfalls, the state should strengthen its focus on outcome data (student, teacher and program outcomes) to make a solid case for the effectiveness and value of induction programs. Otherwise, California runs the risk of induction becoming a flagging priority and an unaffordable expenditure. In places where induction programs are strong, state and district leaders recognize the importance of "buckling down" to find the most efficient means to offer induction programs

to new teachers. This may mean finding ways to share resources among neighboring districts or utilizing online and virtual mentoring strategies. In urban centers with struggling induction programs, the state should consider more intensive interventions, build the capacity and awareness of school administrators, and provide stronger program improvement assistance to ensure that all new teachers are receiving at least a minimal level of support.

Constrained state resources brought about by the economic downturn have recharged the belief of program leaders that research is vital to the interests of induction programs. As one respondent noted, "I really think that statewide there needs to be more research taking place." Given California's unique position as a national induction leader, the state could serve as a hotbed of induction research that informs the rest of the country. Lessons are being learned daily by induction programs about "how to do more with less and not compromise some of the key components of the program." These lessons could be instrumental to those states that are just beginning to consider induction as part of the solution but have limited funding to build robust programs like the ones discussed in this study. Furthermore, for the urban districts that are struggling to prioritize induction, lessons like these could make or break the future of induction for their new teachers. Making the most of such opportunities may be the best step for induction policy, especially while the economic crisis continues.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR CALIFORNIA INDUCTION

- Provide program improvement support and initiate more intensive interventions in districts with underperforming induction programs.
- Use outcome data to demonstrate the impact of induction, especially in the face of severe budgetary constraints.
- Streamline the delivery of induction programs in each region (e.g. share services, on-line/virtual mentoring, etc.)

## Illinois

In 2002, the state of Illinois approved new requirements governing the move from an initial to a standard teaching certificate under its three-tiered certification system. These requirements identified completion of a state-approved, two-year induction program as one professional development option for beginning teachers to achieve a standard certificate. By 2003, induction would have become mandatory if state funding had been made available; instead induction became a dormant, unfunded mandate.

Other initiatives were underway to strengthen teacher induction policy in Illinois. A major impetus came from a three-state conference in May 2005, hosted by the New Teacher Center with support from the Joyce Foundation, to impact state induction policy and programs in Illinois. The Illinois Induction Policy Team was established at this meeting and began working to develop policy proposals and tools to strengthen policies and programs. In addition, the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) was established in 2004 to coordinate a network of services and resources focused on the needs of beginning educators. In 2006, the INTC began holding an annual conference for induction program leaders across the state.

The first policy change as a result of these various efforts occurred in 2006. The Illinois General Assembly voted to fund the Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Program, created to invest in the development of high quality induction programs in the state. Initially, the Program offered funding to 10 new-teacher induction pilots. After just two years of implementation, the General Assembly voted to expand the initiative, administered by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), adding 30 additional sites. Now formally called the Beginning Teacher Induction Grant Program, it has expanded to include more than sixty programs that serve 1538 school buildings, spread across 323 Illinois school districts. In total, state-funded induction programs serve 4,197 beginning teachers and 2,761 mentors.

Initially, the state developed Induction Program Guidelines, which served to align all induction programs with the state's guidance on quality mentoring and induction. These guidelines provided a natural segue for the development of the *Illinois Standards for Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*. Approved in December 2008 by the State Teacher Certification Board, these standards "set forth a clear framework to assist in the development of research-based programs that meet local needs and are responsive to local contexts." Further, the Illinois Induction Program Continuum was released in February 2010 at the annual INTC conference. The Continuum is a self-assessment tool that allows induction programs to measure the strength of implementation of key induction program components against the aforementioned state standards. It has led to the development of trainings and tools to assist programs in engaging in a Continuous Program Improvement Cycle outlined in the document itself.

ISBE also established specific policies governing the state-funded induction program. These include a mentoring requirement: "Each program must be designed to ensure that each new teacher spends

no less than *one and a half hours per week* in contact with the mentor assigned to him or her, either on a one-on-one basis or in another configuration." Recently, this policy was amended to allow more flexibility. Now, rather than being required to meet every week, the mentors and mentees must convene *no less than 60 hours a year*. A related policy involves paying a *\$1,200 stipend* to each mentor who provides 60 hours of face-to-face contact time to a new teacher.

While the number of state-funded induction programs has continued to grow, Illinois has experienced severe budget cuts. Facing a massive budget shortfall, ISBE cut induction program funding by 30 percent in 2009 and another 40 percent in 2010 (ISBE Meeting, June 23–24, 2010). While damaging, the cuts to teacher induction have been smaller than those that other teacher programs have endured during the budget crisis, including some that have been zeroed out. Nonetheless, induction program cuts have left many programs "stretched thin" or led by only part-time program leaders. Other funded programs have responded by reducing the number of trainings offered to new teachers, eliminating mentor stipends, increasing mentor-new teacher ratios, and reducing time for observation and feedback. Despite these cuts, one state official optimistically explained that in such challenging economic times, the fact that induction programs were cut less than other initiatives speaks well of the commitment the state has made to induction and the policy set forth by ISBE.

### UNIQUE ASPECTS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUCTION PRACTICE AND POLICY IN ILLINOIS

In Illinois, district program leaders gave state policy a mixed review. In this paper, we refer to those districts that were involved with the ISBE pilot and received state funding ("ISBE") and those who have developed and implemented a program without state support ("non-ISBE" or "former ISBE"). Many ISBE programs consistently involved in the pilot program felt well supported by state program networks, guidelines, and funding, while other former-ISBE programs were involved in the initial phases of the pilot and dropped out because they felt the program was too prescriptive. Some districts with large numbers of new teachers had an induction program in place prior to joining the pilot model. With some exceptions, these districts generally felt that they "simply [didn't] get the support from the state" that they needed to develop a comprehensive induction program. They complained that while the training offered was very comprehensive, it was not necessarily suited for their programmatic context. The training left these districts wondering, "Why are we re-creating this?" For program leaders of smaller former ISBE districts, the state pilot model was too much work. "For our size, and with the amount of meetings we had to go to compared to what we [could manage on our own], it wasn't worth the hoops," one said. Even state-level leaders commented that some restrictions were unnecessary, most notably that pilot programs could serve no more than 75 new teachers each. That criterion forced large districts that wished to apply to submit multiple grants in order to cover all of their new teachers, and left some non-ISBE programs "frustrated" and unwilling to submit multiple grant applications to receive sufficient funding to serve their larger populations of new teachers.

When asked to reflect on the impetus behind their induction programs, the responses of program leaders in Illinois differed significantly between ISBE and non- or former ISBE sites. Of the ISBE districts studied, all interviewees reported that the process of writing their grant to secure that funding was what originally solidified their motivation and program design. Simple explanations such as, “The opportunity for the [state] grant sparked us,” and “[I]t wasn’t until we wrote the grant proposal that [our program] solidified and really began to move forward” were common. Non-ISBE programs represented in this study linked the beginning of their induction programs to identified needs within the district.

The ISBE districts consistently involved in the pilot program felt that state policy was fairly flexible and open-ended. This flexibility for participating districts includes the freedom to develop and tailor programs specific to district and school needs. One district leader explained, “[The state policy] allows us the freedom and flexibility to meet the needs of all the teachers.” Participants from ISBE programs and former ISBE programs had some reservations about the level of flexibility, and pointed out that the lack of program design guidelines puts the onus for quality and successful implementation on the districts themselves. In the words of one ISBE program leader, “[The state policy] could be more rigorous... There is no attention to ensuring that there’s any quality. If you want to do a mediocre job, it allows you to do a mediocre job.” Furthermore, lack of consistency among districts was mentioned as a concern. One former-ISBE program director noted that there isn’t much communication or networking among districts with regard to induction programs, because there is nothing to mandate that type of interaction and sharing. She said, “[The state policy] allows us latitude to develop our program in the best way... yet that same latitude means that there aren’t necessarily commonalities among districts.” The lack of consistency can lead to a host of limitations, from terminology differences (mentor vs. coach vs. support provider) to more serious concerns over scaling-up less effective rather than the most effective programs.

For those programs that have consistently participated in the ISBE model, the training and network provided by the INTC and other organizations has been instrumental in their success. These collaborative experiences have helped district leaders develop their expertise and share it with others. These programs also cited the important role that the INTC plays with regard to communication between programs and the Legislature. While data collection was sometimes referred to as “tedious,” most participants agreed that the “need to convince people” of the benefits of induction made this effort critical.

#### INDUCTION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT IN ILLINOIS

For teacher induction programs in Illinois, there are differing evaluation requirements. For state-funded programs, reports are due to the INTC twice a year. Districts not funded by the state are not required to evaluate their induction programs or report any findings to the INTC or the state. The districts examined for this study showcased a range of evaluation models and initiatives, to varying levels of specificity and rigor. While one district reported contracting with an outside service provider to conduct an evaluation, other districts rely on their own human resources departments to track teacher retention and teacher and mentor satisfaction, and use these data to improve their programs. Several interviewees mentioned a plan to use the newly developed program standards as a tool for self-assessment. One commonality to nearly all of the districts, however, was agreement about the necessity of evaluating the mentoring component of induction programs. Perhaps this is a result of greater access to pre-existing tools (such as interview protocols or surveys) that can easily capture a mentee’s experiences with his or her mentor. Rarely do districts focus on other aspects of induction programs as critical components (orientation, collaboration with grade-level teams, observation of other teachers, reduced teaching loads for beginning teachers). This focus on mentoring was not uncommon in our findings in Illinois and may be a result of the state focus on mentoring within rules, regulations, and funding. It is important to note that the narrow focus on mentoring rather than broader induction contradicts research findings that suggest that mentoring is not necessarily the most critical component of induction or efficacious in isolation (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Johnson & Kardos, 2002).

#### NEXT STEPS FOR ILLINOIS INDUCTION POLICY

Several next steps emerged from state and district level data. Funded programs indicated that guidance from the state and opportunities for networking are valued and appreciated. The induction program standards have the potential to have a broader impact than the state program alone. Limits to state policy were reported by respondents in terms of a lack of consistent language between programs, rushed data collection, and unnecessary restrictions to program implementation. Furthermore, districts that already have an induction program may see little need to join the trainings and other networking opportunities provided by the state unless they see some value in it. These districts often have programs that are tailored to the specific needs of the new teachers in their districts and report feeling like the state policy devalues the context-specific elements that make their programs successful. According to state leaders, since there is little information about districts that have not applied for state funding, an investigation into the reasons for their disinterest may prove beneficial.

Referencing articulated limitations to the state’s induction program evaluation requirements, the state might consider strengthening evaluation rules and standardizing data collection to help it make informed decisions about which districts need support for program improvement and which districts can serve as exemplars.

Amidst a serious financial crisis, the state of Illinois has experienced a great deal of teacher layoffs, cuts in program funding, and general fiscal instability. Because of budgetary uncertainty (often a challenge present even in better economic times), districts often begin each school year unsure about when and whether induction funding will materialize. Budget delays have played a role in the reduction or demise of programs and some may continue to feel the ramifications of recent budget reductions. As a result of this instability, some districts have laid out contingency plans for their induction programs. Program leaders reported that such plans left schools and teachers “extremely upset” due to the potential retraction of time for mentoring, cancellation of scheduled classroom observations of new teachers, and the elimination of data collection and research. District leaders suggested that earlier notification about state program funding would prevent such steps. State officials share this concern and are searching for strategies to minimize funding uncertainty and maximize the impact of state induction policies.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR ILLINOIS INDUCTION POLICY

- Use state induction program standards to offer more consistent alignment of local programs.
- Eliminate unnecessary state program restrictions (e.g., the number of new teachers a single program can serve).
- Require more rigorous evaluation to assess program quality, inform program improvement, and establish accountability metrics.
- Examine the needs of non-funded districts to enable and encourage their participation in the state program.
- Develop statewide program requirements and a program infrastructure to serve all local induction programs, including those not currently funded by the state.
- Minimize the impact of delayed state budgets and mid-year program cuts that threaten induction program quality, sustainability and service delivery.

#### Hawaii

In 2005 the Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 159, requiring the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) to establish a statewide beginning teacher induction program. The state never allocated funding for the design and implementation of induction programs and, as a result, induction never took root in most complex areas (“districts”). In 2008 the State Superintendent renewed induction efforts by offering the Foundation Elements for Hawaii DOE Induction Programs to serve as a tool for district to develop, strengthen or align their induction efforts. These guidelines include four components: mentoring, orientation, professional development and professional learning communities. Though the specifics of program implementation are left to the discretion of each school or district, they must be at least two years in duration and include an evaluation process. In addition, the HIDOE held a Hawaii Induction Symposium in May 2008 that brought together key stakeholders including superintendents, principals, induction program leaders, local philanthropic organizations, and non-profits focused on induction issues. It offered stakeholders a chance to learn about high-performing induction programs and consider next steps for the development of their own programs.

Despite the lack of funding and the departure of the State Superintendent, the Hawaii Department of Education more recently has worked with the Teacher Standards Board, institutions of higher education, Hawaii State Teachers Association, and school leaders to develop the Hawaii Teacher Induction Standards. These standards will serve as a self-assessment tool for districts to examine and further develop their induction programs and include the following strands: program, orientation, mentee, mentor, professional development, professional learning communities, and program documentation and evaluation. The Standards have yet to be approved by the Hawaii State Board of Education.

In addition to its policymaking role, the state also offers districts the opportunity to join the New Educators’ Support Team (NEST), a network of induction program leaders. These leaders meet monthly to share program updates, develop induction evaluations, and examine emerging state policy documents. The state offers a model survey to any programs seeking a formative evaluation of this induction program. The NEST committee works to develop and improve the survey annually.

Despite this momentum, the financial crisis has had serious ramifications for public education in Hawaii. In October 2009, the HIDOE initiated a series of unpaid furlough days for many public workers, including public school teachers. This included a cut in the number of instructional days. Currently, there is no state funding to support the development of local induction programs, and it is unlikely to materialize in the current fiscal climate. The only public resources that districts can draw upon to fund teacher induction are federal Title II dollars. In fact, the HIDOE, in its unique role as both a SEA and a LEA, allocated \$3 million in Title II, Part A dollars—\$200,000 per complex area—for teacher induction during both the 2008–09 and 2009–10 school years. [See pages 2–3 for further discussion of Hawaii’s unique educational governance structure.]

Despite these challenges, there is reason for optimism that induction will continue to grow and improve throughout the state. Induction policy continues to advance with the planned 2011 implementation of state program standards, the continued growth of the NEST networking team, and the state's successful Race to the Top application that will provide critical funding to expand high-quality teacher induction programs. Specifically, Hawaii's Race to the Top plan will overhaul its existing teacher induction programs to create a comprehensive, high-quality induction and professional development management system. Its chief goals include helping more beginning teachers become successful, ensuring that only "effective" teachers are granted tenure, and improving teacher retention. All programs must be standards-based and include the following components:

- (1) A three-year pathway of support for new teachers and a one-year pathway for every veteran teacher new to Hawaii;
- (2) An experienced mentor for each beginning teacher at a maximum 1:15 ratio;
- (3) Multiple opportunities for co-teaching and observation; and
- (4) At least four formative reviews per year of each inductee and a formal, comprehensive annual performance review.

HIDOE will train all state administrators, Complex Area superintendents and key induction personnel in the new system. It will support and monitor the consistency and quality of implementation and track and report on the effectiveness of new teachers. And it will contract for the training of approximately 100 mentors needed to support the three-year induction program (Goldrick, Osta & Maddock, 2010). These new developments may place Hawaii in a position to lead the country in developing robust induction systems that align with the new measures of teacher effectiveness that also play a significant role in its Race to the Top application.

#### UNIQUE ASPECTS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUCTION PRACTICE AND POLICY IN HAWAII

Local program leaders in Hawaii expressed agreement with the steps the state has taken to develop induction policy in recent years. Those interviewed identified both the state policy focus on induction and the commitment of district-level leadership as instrumental in the development of their induction programs. The move toward program standards and dedicated funding through federal Title II dollars has helped induction find prominence as a program and has set most school administrators on a path toward learning and leading with induction in mind. Program leaders praised the state policy for being open-ended enough to allow for tailored design of program elements, which is particularly important given the diversity of the Hawaii student population and the frequent hiring of teachers from the mainland who have little exposure to Hawaiian culture. One program leader said, "The flexibility [of the state induction policy] has allowed for districts to target the particular needs of their respective teachers, such as those who teach ELL populations, and those who need an introduction to Hawaiian culture." The state's Race to the Top plan has continued in this vein by focusing induction not only on teachers new to the profession, but also on teachers new to the Hawaiian culture.

The state guidelines and networks have had mixed effects for districts that had long-standing programs. While need for guidance was considered vital, flexibility was considered a must. Furthermore, the benefits of that flexibility are contextual, as one district program leader explained: "With 41 schools district-wide, getting everyone on the same page was hard. Because schools had things in place already, telling them that we were going to do something new was hard, because they didn't want to change. Allowing for differentiation is important; when we went real big we lost some of the specifics...We needed more discussion to find the common elements and honor the programs that schools have in place already."

According to most program leaders, program quality and consistency are the primary challenges for state policy. While the policy flexibility allowed some districts to excel on their own, it was seen as a detriment for those districts that may need more guidance. "For some districts," reported one participant, "the lack of specific components or descriptors about the components can cause inconsistencies in the quality the new teachers get." In districts with many schools, for example, program directors reported finding it a struggle to implement shared language and common goals among all the sites. In general, everyone agreed that there are some districts that have excellent programs, while others need more detailed scaffolding. Where district leaders showed a historic commitment to induction and have built robust induction programs, little guidance was needed from the state. For struggling induction programs, district leaders were often less committed and are still grappling with the components the state has offered. While the state hopes that programs will use the state standards to self-assess program quality, there is evidence that limited capacity and lukewarm leadership will serve as roadblocks to stronger programs. One state leader suggested that more support is needed to train school and district leaders on the vision and benefits of induction for the school community. Another suggested that tying induction to credentialing might be the best step toward giving it meaning in these districts.

#### INDUCTION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT IN HAWAII

Similar to state-funded program requirements in Illinois, Hawaii required districts to file a biannual report that addresses how its induction program is aligned to the HIDOE's Foundation Elements. Each complex area was afforded the option of completing a survey on the state of their induction programs; as a result, program evaluation varies greatly between complex areas. In the end, most decisions on evaluation are left up to the complex area superintendent. One benefit to this approach is that evaluation can be contextualized and targeted to each specific program. With a strong understanding of the contextual nature of induction, superintendents may be more likely to differentiate forms of evaluation for individual induction programs at the school level. In the words of one interviewee: "The [superintendent] has the ultimate say—they determine how much [flexibility to include in their induction program]. If they know their new teachers are taken care of, then they are more likely to relax on things... They enforce the goals of the programs, but on the little things, they will be flexible." The shortcoming to this approach is a lack of consistent and standardized program data from across the state.

Some superintendents have used their authority to design rigorous evaluation systems. The superintendent of one district represented in this study, felt that the state's evaluation requirements were too loose and that the biannual report provided insufficient accountability. As a result, the superintendent created and implemented a comprehensive evaluation system that included a survey on teacher efficacy and the collection of mentor/mentee contact logs. But most other superintendents, according to state and district level officials, are less involved in teacher induction. In these cases, program evaluations are little more than a briefly annotated checklist of induction program elements.

To strengthen the focus on program quality and improvement, the HIDOE has worked with key stakeholders (including complex areas and the Hawaii State Board of Education) to develop standards that can serve as a self-assessment tool for programs. The standards will also be used to develop a common language about and understanding of induction across the 15 complex areas. At the district-level, induction initiatives may continue to vary programmatically, but the program standards should provide a uniform level of guidance and rigor.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR HAWAII INDUCTION POLICY

Program leaders and state leaders offered many ideas about how induction policy in Hawaii could be improved. First, the state should offer more support and capacity building to emerging programs to remedy the lack of program alignment and to strengthen the rigor of such programs. State leaders agreed that a more robust statewide induction program infrastructure could strengthen program quality while creating a more stable vision of induction for the state. To date, little of that exists. State program infrastructure could include foundational training for school leaders that focuses on the relevance of induction programs and their capacity to meet the challenges district leaders face. Along with such trainings, more rigorous evaluation systems aligned to the program standards could move programs to recognize evaluation not as a checklist but as a tool for improving program quality and addressing teacher retention, teacher performance and student learning. Indeed, the state's Race to the Top work plan will implement these very suggestions.

All respondents agreed that district leadership is critical to induction program success. Without it, programs stand little chance to develop into the rigorous programs that the state strives to produce. State budgets are and will likely continue to be an issue for the state, but the opportunity to build leadership commitment through professional development programs for school administrators is one way to weather this crisis. In the absence of a mandate or a direct link to teacher licensure, the state needs to find an avenue to influence the minds and agendas of school leaders by acknowledging the potential for induction to improve teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

Though rarely discussed by state or program leaders, another potential next step is to consider expanding the NEST network so that developing programs may benefit from the best practices and unique offerings that the more developed programs can offer. This network has the potential to help all districts consider how induction can assist new teachers better serve unique student populations. Noting the

unique diversity and challenging economic and linguistic barriers that so many students face in Hawaii, the NEST network can be a place for leaders to share best practices and strategies that work for the unique contexts of Hawaii. The network could play a significant role in helping programs grow to meet the needs of their new teachers to address these unique benefits and challenges.

The state could use induction program standards as a vehicle to strengthen the structures and streamline the evaluations of induction programs across Hawaii. Further, data collection and analysis could inform program improvement and assist the state in making informed decisions about which districts need support and which districts can serve as exemplars.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR HAWAII INDUCTION POLICY

- Fully implement the Race to the Top work plan to create a comprehensive, high-quality induction and professional development management system.
- As planned for 2011, implement induction programs standards to raise the level of program rigor, identify key programmatic components, and create a common induction framework for all schools.
- Provide greater state support and capacity building for emerging programs, including more training and support for district leaders to strengthen their understanding of and commitment to induction and expansion of the NEST network.
- Require more rigorous evaluation to inform program improvement and strengthen state policy.
- Link teacher induction to licensure.

## Findings and Considerations

### STATE POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON LOCAL INDUCTION PROGRAMS

State and district program leaders agree that the presence of state induction policy heightens the likelihood that schools and districts will provide support to new teachers. Mandating induction, providing funding, implementing program standards, and requiring some level of program accountability appear to increase the prevalence of comprehensive programs. In California, the comprehensiveness of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program has led to the provision of teacher induction in nearly every corner of the state. All local induction programs in California take on a similar form due to the structure and design of state policy and the adopted induction standards. BTSA's inclusion in the recently revised statewide accreditation system may help the state to better identify and assist struggling induction programs and further ensure that every program meets at least a baseline level of quality. However, the state's crumbling commitment to fund the BTSA program has created major challenges to program quality and sustainability in numerous districts.

Few other states have evidenced California's historic commitment to teacher induction, certainly not the two others investigated for this paper. While Illinois has recently adopted and Hawaii is close to finalizing induction program standards, leaders in neither state have detailed data on the existence or nature of local induction programs. Anecdotally, they recognize that such support varies widely in their states and may be largely absent in certain schools and districts. In Illinois and Hawaii, a small number of programs have flourished without significant state guidance or financial support. In Illinois, the absence of overarching state policy and universal funding has not prevented comprehensive programs from developing outside of the cluster of over 60 state-funded programs. Likewise, receipt of state funding has not guaranteed high-quality approaches to teacher induction. In Hawaii, the comparative lack of state mandates and funding around induction has not prevented robust comprehensive programs from emerging, but the weak policy context has resulted in comprehensive induction being the exception rather than the rule.

Our analysis suggests that there is not a one-to-one relationship between state policy and the presence or quality of teacher induction programs. Comprehensive induction programs, however, are more often the result of formal and systemic state policies that prioritize the needs of new teachers through dedicated funding and a well-developed program infrastructure. In certain cases, local leadership and commitment can overcome the absence of state support to grow and sustain robust induction programs. California's example makes clear that a well-envisioned teacher induction policy, along with a robust level of funding and state program support, can ensure that new teacher induction is provided at a baseline level of quality and is almost universally available to new teachers.

### CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF STATE POLICY

Some critical state policy levers emerged from our analysis. California respondents often cited the *linkage between teacher induction and teacher licensure* as key to ensure that induction is offered to new teachers. State officials in Hawaii and Illinois stated that they hope for such a future link between induction and licensure to bolster state policy. California

program leaders believe that the *state program infrastructure* will secure induction's role as an important aspect of teacher professional development despite the state fiscal crisis. In Illinois, many program leaders explained that their programs emerged when the funding and program infrastructure coalesced to provide the support and structure needed to envision and implement a comprehensive program. Illinois state leaders cited administrator participation in the funded programs as a key leverage point for maintaining stakeholder commitment, even in the face of budget cuts. In Hawaii, programs are being incubated through the emerging vision of state leaders to make induction a statewide expectation. In all states, program standards and networks aim to provide a common language, shared experiences, and opportunities to learn from exemplary teacher induction programs and practices.

### CRITICAL STATE POLICY LEVERS

- A link between teacher induction and teacher licensure can assure that all new teachers are offered induction to earn certification.
- Dedicated state funding can initiate local program development and sustain programs over time.
- State program infrastructure supports the state policy vision, focuses on program quality and improvement, and secures induction as an important element of human capital development.
- Induction program standards and program networks provide a common language, shared experiences and opportunities to learn from other programs and practices.

### DISTRICT LEADERSHIP SUPPORT IS A CRITICAL LEVER

Support from district and school leaders is critical to the successful implementation, sustainability, and success of a teacher induction program. State policy alone is insufficient to ensure that new teachers receive needed professional support. Leadership support, broad stakeholder commitment and engagement, and a collective vision of high-quality, instructionally-focused new teacher induction at the local level is critical to the development and shielding of programs from myriad threats—including the departure of individual champions and reductions in funding. In California, a state hit hard by the current economic downturn, such leadership commitment as well as the institutionalization of induction programs into local district culture has helped to prevent many BTSA programs from wholesale collapse in the face of “flexible” state funding. The stability of local induction program leadership also appears to have a significant impact on the long-term prospects for sustainable and quality new teacher support.

As previously noted, the presence of such supportive local leadership can overcome a dearth of state policy support. In Hawaii, several robust induction programs have blossomed in the absence of strong state policy, funding, or program infrastructure. These local programs have been shepherded and supported by educational leaders, who have utilized federal Title II funds to support induction efforts.

Comprehensive, high-quality induction programs are not in service of the status quo; they seek to accelerate individual teacher practice and strengthen collaborative approaches to professional development within schools and districts. Hal Portner defines induction as the reciprocal relationship between its components and proposes a framework for the successful integration of induction into a school culture. He offers three key principles to achieve this: (1) systems-thinking, (2) collaborative-doing, and (3) committed-leading. Fully envisioned and implemented induction programs help to shape professional learning communities, thereby challenging prevailing autonomous teaching cultures which generally do not promote collaborative learning or shared responsibility for teaching and student outcomes. Strong leadership is an important element that holds these critical pieces together during the most formative and challenging periods. Without such strong leadership, programs fall prey to budget cuts and other changing contexts as our analysis illustrates. States would do well to recognize this critical lever and develop outreach and communication plans with school administrators and the organizations that represent them, embed induction into existing school leadership preparation and training, and extend induction support to new principals as well as new teachers to further build and sustain district leadership support for these programs.

#### CRITICAL DISTRICT LEVERS

- Trained and supported superintendents, principals, school boards and induction program leaders are critical to induction program success in stable and instable times.
- Broad stakeholder commitment ensures stability when turnover and crisis challenge the foundation of induction in a district.
- A collective vision of high-quality, instructionally-focused new teacher induction can institutionalize induction programs within local school and district cultures.

#### USING PROGRAM EVALUATION AS A CRITICAL LEVER

Each of the states we examined requires some form of evaluation from participating induction programs. From biannual reports to site visits to accreditation, participants were required to share data with the state to demonstrate appropriate expenditure of monies, guarantee continued funding, and/or demonstrate impact. In all states, data was used to assure program quality and, in the case of California, consistency of implementation and adherence to program standards. Beyond meeting state requirements for evaluation, most established local programs had developed: teacher, mentor, and administrator induction surveys; evaluation of trainings; collected new teacher retention rates; and, in some cases, other teacher outcomes (e.g. teacher efficacy). In all cases, these data were used for program improvement.

California has taken a unique step among the fifty states in developing a more comprehensive approach to evaluating induction programs through inclusion in its accreditation system. While California leads the three states we studied in evaluation practices—and its new system

is a step forward—it still does not require programs to demonstrate impact on specific measures of teacher effectiveness or student learning. Each approved program is required to submit a Biennial Report focusing on candidate competence and program effectiveness, but these categories are open-ended, do not require specific data, and not standardized to enable program comparisons. One California state leader noted that under the current system it would be difficult for the state to identify the most effective induction programs or even to identify exemplars. To enhance its national leadership in teacher induction, California should consider requiring programs to report standardized data for program improvement, program comparison, and accountability purposes. All states would do well to implement a similar form of evaluation.

Currently, none of the three states utilizes data to make informed decisions about which induction programs need intensive assistance or to identify programs with consistently high percentages of less effective (or not ‘highly qualified’) new teachers. Nor do these states use quantitative data to identify specific local program needs, such as inadequate mentor selection protocols and insufficient foundational training. California, however, does look at some of these program issues through its overall approach to program assessment. Surveys, self-assessments and site visits are necessary but insufficient elements in a program evaluation system. To use evaluation to its fullest potential, more data must be collected and strategically used to specify and prioritize induction program goals, hold programs accountable for meeting them, and providing support to strengthen programs that aren’t achieving success. Such an approach would give state induction program standards greater teeth in so far as the comprehensiveness and quality of induction programs is related to desired outcomes. Furthermore, as research suggests that mentoring is not necessarily the most critical component of induction (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Johnson & Kardos, 2002), evaluations must address all aspects of induction and not solely the mentoring component.

#### CRITICAL PROGRAM EVALUATION LEVERS

- Evaluations can track program data over time and demonstrate program impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning.
- Data from evaluations can be used to make informed decisions about which programs need remedial assistance or to identify programs with consistently high percentages of ineffective new teachers.
- Quantitative data can be used to identify specific local program needs, such as inadequate mentor selection protocols or insufficient foundational training.
- Evaluations can help identify the most effective induction programs.
- State evaluations can broaden the program focus from narrow attention to mentoring to wider implementation of the multiple components of induction.

## Conclusion

While this analysis is limited in scope to the three states examined, it provides detailed information to combat a presumption that the mere existence of state induction policy is a guarantor of universal, high-quality teacher induction programs. This assessment suggests that traditional policy elements (induction mandate, funding, program standards) are critical, but insufficient, to ensure that the developmental and instructional needs of new teachers are fully met. In addition to these components, states need to attend to broader program infrastructures that communicate program vision, model effective program design, evaluate the efficacy of local models, and support program improvement particularly for struggling programs and during periods of scale up.

This examination aims to assist policymakers and program leaders in making informed decisions as they advocate for and design state induction policies and local induction programs. It suggests that state induction policies strongly influence local induction programs, especially where dedicated funding and a well-developed state program infrastructure exists. To be effective, these policies must be strategically designed and continuously assessed to meet the needs of new teachers, mentors, induction program leaders, and school districts. Restrictive policies can inhibit the growth of programs while flexibility with strong policy levers (i.e. funding, rigorous evaluations, program standards, technical assistance, and network support) can move districts in the right direction.

As state budget crises abound, it is vital for stakeholders to have ready examples of quality programs and promising research findings to demonstrate the influence of induction policies and practices on teacher and student outcomes. While research focused narrowly on student achievement can only shed light on a small aspect of teaching and learning, it is an important outcome that should not be underestimated within the current policy context. Research and evaluation that encompasses additional teacher and student outcomes is also warranted. Such detailed evaluations of local programs and contextualized research that demonstrate positive induction program impact will bolster the chances of policies and programs withstanding the financial crises and competing policy priorities of the coming years.

Noting the progression of state induction mandates and the expansion of local induction programs over the last decade, it is hoped that this analysis will convince states to strengthen policies that lead to the establishment of high-quality, comprehensive programs for new teachers. But the enactment of basic state policies and the mere existence of induction programs cannot be the final goal. Policymakers and program leaders alike must commit to building and sustaining carefully crafted state policies and program infrastructures that will shape the kind of comprehensive induction programs that make a difference for new teachers. It is only through such a commitment that induction systems can and will accelerate the effectiveness of new teachers and contribute to better outcomes for students.

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## Appendix A

The following list of components were examined in the district program survey:

1. Partnerships with the state, unions, teacher preparation programs, community members or other organizations.
2. Program evaluations.
3. Support for new teachers in the first 2 or 3 years.
4. Program alignment with professional standards and standards-based teaching.
5. Orientations specifically for new teachers.
6. Mentor training and support.
7. Regular communication between the new teacher and school administrators.
8. Common planning time with colleagues.
9. Classroom observations of and feedback to new teachers.
10. Opportunities for the assessment of practice through mentoring, coaching or collaboration.
11. Formative assessments of new teachers.
12. Summative assessments that could lead ineffective teachers out of the profession.
13. Seminars or study groups for new teachers.
14. Incentives (stipends, gift certificates, bonuses, professional development credits) for teacher participation.
15. A network of teachers.
16. Study groups.
17. A reduced number of preps for new teachers/reduced work load for new teachers.
18. A coach or support provider beyond a mentor.
19. General professional development.
20. Clearly articulated expectations for new teachers and their mentors.
21. Written criteria for mentor selection.
22. Extensive, continuous training for mentors.
23. Release time for mentoring or a reduced workload for mentoring.
24. Teacher or mentor incentives (stipends, professional credits, advancement) for participation.

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#### ABOUT THE NEW TEACHER CENTER

The New Teacher Center is a national organization dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. NTC strengthens school communities through proven mentoring and professional development programs, online learning environments, policy advocacy, and research. Since 1998, the NTC has served over 49,000 teachers and 5,000 mentors, touching millions of students across America.

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