

The Southeast Center
for Teaching Quality

Barnett Berry, Executive Director

The University of North Carolina
Office of the President
PO Box 2688
Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

Phone: 919-843-9519

Fax: 919-843-7616

Email: ContactUs@teachingquality.org

Web: www.teachingquality.org

Retention

✓

Induction and Teacher Turnover

New items asking teachers about various forms of induction as part of the federal Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a national survey of teachers administered every few years by the National Center for Education Statistics, allow researchers to make statistical predictions about the relationship between support in the first year and teachers' moving between schools and leaving the occupation.

Key Findings

- Testing for induction effects on leaving found that a helpful mentor (as reported by the teachers) significantly reduced the chances of quitting in the first year. Common planning time and collaboration with other teachers were also strong predictors of staying in the school and profession.
- Although new teachers who had more induction support were more likely to remain in teaching, fewer than 1% had the most comprehensive support package (e.g., a mentor in the same field, seminars, common planning time with peers, teacher networks, and administrative support).
- Induction has become more common over the years, with 41% of first-year teachers in 1990-91 saying they participated in such a program, 51% in 1993-94, and at least 61% by 1999-2000.
- In 1999-2000, 66% of all teachers surveyed had a mentor (48% in the same field), and 87% of those found the mentoring helpful. Sixty-one percent participated in an induction program, and 62% reported having beginning teacher seminars. Supportive communication was enjoyed by 81% of first-year teachers, although only 17% had a teacher network. Only 11% had reduced schedules or preparations; public non-charter school teachers were even less likely (8-10%) to have this benefit.
- In 1999-2000, first-year teachers changed schools after one year at the rate of 15%, and another 14% left teaching completely. Private school teachers were less likely than public school peers to change schools (10% vs. 16%), but twice as likely to leave teaching (26% vs. 11%).

Methods, Issues, and Implications

- Preliminary statistical analysis of the 1999-2000 SASS with the linked 2000-2001 Teacher Follow-up Survey shows direct relationships between teacher reports of induction experiences and whether they taught in the same school or at all the following year.
- This study is an important step toward understanding the effects of induction on retention of new teachers, and it shows that there is much more yet to know about how various components, such as mentoring, impact teachers and their students.
- Very few U.S. teachers have access to comprehensive induction supports (e.g., reduced teaching schedule and load) commonly found in other nations. (See the Center's Induction brief.)

Smith, T. M. and Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). *Reducing teacher turnover: Do induction and mentoring programs help?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Educational Research. Chicago, IL, April 21-25. To request a copy of this document, contact the authors at tom.smith@vanderbilt.edu or rmi@gse.upenn.edu.

Massachusetts Bonus Babies a Bust

The Massachusetts Signing Bonus Program for New Teachers was begun in 1998 to raise both the quantity and quality of new teachers for public schools by recruiting non-traditional applicants and training them in a seven-week summer program, the Massachusetts Institute for New Teachers (MINT). The \$20,000 bonuses (paid over a teacher's first four years) have not yet proven successful. Although the program was recently redesigned to work with traditional teacher education programs, rather than relying on the summer training, this study reports on data from the previous design.

Key Findings

- Although the program was set up to serve 13 high-need districts, recruits did not usually teach in those districts. Over three cohorts, the proportion of bonus teachers in high-need districts declined as that in other districts increased. In 1999, 71% of recruits taught in high-need areas; by 2002, that number had dropped to 41%. In contrast, more than half taught in the state's top ten high-scoring districts.
- Attrition of the bonus recipients has been higher than national averages. The first cohort turned over at the rate of 20% (12 of 59 left teaching); 31% of those in the high-needs schools quit, compared to a first-year national average of 9%. By the third year of teaching, 46% overall and 55% of those in the high-need districts had left, compared to the three-year national turnover average of 20%.
- The state spent \$921,250 on attracting and training the 74 recruits who are no longer serving public schools.
- The program has not been successful at recruiting minorities. Only 9% of MINT participants in 2002 were minorities, compared to 10% of the state's new hires in 1999.

continued on page 2...

continued from page 1.

- There is not enough evidence to determine the quality of bonus teachers. Program statements draw only from principal satisfaction surveys about bonus recipients in general, without regard to teacher background before MINT.
- Recruitment in up to seven non-Northeast states has resulted in only seven teachers for Massachusetts schools, three of whom are no longer teaching. Eighteen teachers volunteered from non-Northeast states where the program *did not recruit*. The states they recruited in often had higher teacher salaries than Massachusetts, as well as their own teacher shortages. A state teacher test (as opposed to the national Praxis) also detracted from out-of-state recruitment.

Methods, Issues, and Implications

- Several recruits who have stayed in teaching reported that they had prior education coursework or experience before they entered MINT, which raises issues regarding how effective fast track programs are in recruiting and preparing those with *no* previous education experience.
- The federal government is promoting fast-track routes to teaching, so lessons from MINT are critical as other states attempt to scale up alternative preparation and licensure programs.
- The article reviews previous evaluation reports and reanalyzes the program's own data.

Fowler, R.C. (2003, April 22). The Massachusetts Signing Bonus Program for New Teachers: A model of teacher preparation worth copying? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 11(13). Available: <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v11n13/>

Preliminary Findings on the Hiring of New Teachers

This paper reports on hiring from the perspective of new teachers in California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan, as part of ongoing research at the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard University. (See RM Issue 3 for related research by Susan Kardos.)

Key Findings

- Across the four states, 33% of new teachers were hired after the school year started, and 62% (78% in Florida) were hired within 30 days of the teaching year.
- On a statistical composite of new teachers' level of "fit" with their schools, Michigan teachers scored significantly higher. This corresponds to a similar finding that Michigan teachers felt they had a better sense of their new school through the hiring process, as measured on another composite. Michigan teachers were also much more likely to have been a student teacher in the same school (27% vs. 10% across the four states).
- Hiring in the four states tended to be decentralized, as 46% of new teachers applied directly to and were hired by their schools. Another 31% were screened by district officials and then interviewed and hired by schools, while 23% were hired by districts.
- Almost all (91%) teachers reported interviews as part of the hiring process. Eighty percent said they interviewed with the principal. The number interviewing with others was much lower—only 46% interviewed with teachers at the school and 33% with other school administrators. Michigan teachers were more likely to interview with teachers, school administrators, or department chairs.
- Most teachers (99%) submitted resumes, transcripts and references for application, and 41% submitted teaching portfolios. Few were required to provide standardized test scores (28%), writing samples (24%), lesson plans (20%), or videotaped lessons (0.4%).
- Only 7.5% of teachers across states (with a high of 20% in Massachusetts) were observed teaching a lesson before being hired. Overall, only 35% of teachers observed classes in session themselves, although this ranged from 9% in Michigan to 37% in California. Few (13%) observed faculty meetings.

Methods, Issues, and Implications

- While schools are often in the position of filling last-minute vacancies and schedule complications can make comprehensive application processes difficult, the author suggests that new teachers might be retained more easily if their initial hiring experience provides them with an accurate idea of what the school and position will be like.
- A survey was conducted with 486 first- and second-year teachers across the four states, representing 65% response from 751 teachers identified. The sample was drawn from a representative pool of 186 schools (of 258 contacted) across the four states. Schools were chosen to balance school levels and charter/non-charter schools. All new teachers in the responding schools were then invited to participate.
- This is one of the first comprehensive studies of teacher selection and hiring in over 15 years.¹

Liu, E. (2003). *New teachers' experience of hiring: Preliminary findings from a four-state study*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, IL, April 21-25. Available: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/Liu%20Hiring%20AERA2003.pdf>

¹Wise, A., Darling-Hammond, L., and Berry, B. (1987). *Effective teacher selection. from recruitment to retention*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

The purpose of RESEARCH MATTERS is to summarize and evaluate the most recent research for our partners who are working to improve teaching policy in their states and school districts. To surface the most significant new information from educational researchers, we review studies reported in peer-review journals, conference papers, government reports, commissioned reports or books, and public opinion polls. • In education, as in many other scientifically based disciplines, no one study or method of inquiry can capture the whole truth; therefore, we review a wide range of studies employing a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. We would argue that while no one study can answer all questions, we can recommend policy action by piecing together evidence from an array of studies, all with particular strengths and weaknesses. • To subscribe, send email to ResearchMatters-on@teachingquality.org. To unsubscribe, send email to ResearchMatters-off@teachingquality.org. Alternatively, you can join or leave the list at www.milepost1.com/archives/researchmatters.html. Archives of RESEARCH MATTERS can be found at www.milepost1.com/archives/researchmatters.html. • If you have any questions, comments, or problems, send email to Contact_ResearchMatters@teachingquality.org or visit the Center's website at www.teachingquality.org. • RESEARCH MATTERS is a publication of the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality. •