

2015

# Induction of the Novice Teacher in Urban Schools

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*Walden University*

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Janice Ridley

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Walden University  
2015

Abstract

Induction of the Novice Teacher in Urban Schools

by

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MA, Marygrove College, 2009

BS, Oakland University, 1980

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

May 2015

## Abstract

New teachers entering the urban pre-K-12 school setting require an induction program to perform their teaching duties. Despite modifications to improve an existing induction program, novice teachers in a Midwestern urban school district were underperforming in the classroom, leaving administrators to address new teacher turnover and a disrupted learning process for students. Drawing from Knowles's adult learning theory and state guidelines to fulfill federal legislation mandates for proper induction, this qualitative case study was designed to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of the modifications in the district's induction program. A sample of 8 novice teachers was recruited to participate in open-ended, semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis and hierarchical coding were used to build themes and capture recurring patterns. Participants' responses suggested that the district's induction program is in accordance with state guidelines; however, the participants voiced that additional program modifications are needed to improve novice teachers' performance in the classroom. Participants requested more classroom management strategies; an understanding of the urban community norms, policies, procedures, building logistics, and the student population; and strategies to communicate effectively with parents. A 4 ½-day professional development workshop was developed to offer skills and strategies specific to the urban experience and school environment to improve novice teachers' performance. This endeavor may contribute to positive social change by increasing the performance of beginning teachers, thus, reducing teacher turnover and increasing student academic performance.

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## Dedication

This study is dedicated to all the novice teachers that enter the profession with expectations of making a difference in the lives of students, specifically in urban school districts. Also, to the mentors and veteran teachers that reach out to give assistance and support to the novice; hopefully to prevent a beginning teacher from leaving the profession and instead becoming a quality teacher.

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I must thank my committee Chair, Dr. Susan Adragna. During a time that produced discouragement, she gave me what I needed to complete one of the most challenging tasks of my life. Most of all, I thank God for giving me the strength and wisdom to know I can do all things through Christ, my Lord and Savior.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
Section 1: The Problem.....	6
Introduction .....	6
Definition of the Problem.....	10
Rationale .....	17
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level .....	19
Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature .....	24
Purpose of Study.....	25
Definitions.....	26
Significance .....	27
Review of the Literature .....	30
Implications .....	43
Section 2: The Methodology.....	47
Introduction .....	47
Research Design.....	47
Participants.....	49
Data Collection.....	51
Data Analysis.....	56
Protection of Participants.....	57



Limitations.....	59
Results of Final Study.....	61
Data Collection.....	61
Data Tracking.....	62
Findings.....	63
Themes Across Participant Summaries.....	74
Discrepant Cases and Nonconforming Data.....	76
Evidence of Quality.....	76
Summary.....	77
Section 3: The Project.....	79
Introduction.....	79
Description and Goals.....	79
Rationale.....	82
Review of the Literature.....	84
Implementation.....	96
Project Evaluation.....	114
Project Implication.....	117
Summary.....	119
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	120
Introduction.....	120
Project Strengths.....	120

Project Limitations.....	121
Recommendations.....	121
Scholarship .....	124
Project Development and Evaluation .....	125
Leadership and Change.....	126
Analysis of Self as a Scholar.....	127
Analysis of Self as a Practitioner.....	128
Analysis of Self as a Project Developer.....	129
Reflection.....	129
The Project’s Potential Impact on Social Change .....	130
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research .....	131
Summary.....	134
References.....	136
Appendix A: The Project.....	155
Appendix B: Individual Interview Protocol.....	202
Appendix C: Sample Transcript.....	204

## List of Tables

Table 1. Participants' Demographics.....	62
Table 2. Themes After Coding BT's Perceptions of Modified Induction Program.....	64
Table 3. Participants' Comments on PD.....	66
Table 4. Participants Comments on Hindering Factors.....	69
Table 5. Participants Comments for Improvement .....	74

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Strength of communication (BTs with mentors, staff, administration) .....	68
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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

A challenging issue facing America's preK-12 schools is consistent and comprehensive induction for new teachers in urban school districts—whether a single event or a variety of targeted activities (Darling-Hammod, 2010; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Papay & Johnson, 2011; Schmidt, 2008). . As a result of weak induction, novice teachers have been unable to perform their teaching responsibilities (Boutte, 2012; Gardner, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Milanowski, Longwell-Grice, Saffold, Jones, Schomisch, & Odden, 2009). Hiring practices, student behavior, financial constraints, and the unavailability of experienced teachers within urban schools are the related operational problems (Gardner, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Milanowski et al., 2009). While teachers with limited experience or less than perfect credentials are not preferred, the pool from which human resource personnel must draw as emergency or last-minute hires is the novice teacher within their first year of teaching. This is a characteristic of urban schools. Emergency hiring leaves little time for implementing a consistent and comprehensive induction program (Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Milanowski et al., 2009). When teacher shortages are a factor, administrators are reluctant to release their best teachers from the classroom and other assigned duties to help with the induction of new teachers. In the absence of a consistent and comprehensive induction program, new teachers are left to function without adequate

knowledge of procedures and practices (Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, Milanowski et al., 2009)

Offering a consistent and comprehensive induction program in urban schools is crucial due to the nature of problems in urban schools (Boutte, 2012; Buendia, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Milanowski et al., 2009; Milner, 2011). Tardiness, apathy, lack of preparation, and gang violence are serious problems in all schools, but each is substantially more common in urban schools (NCES, 2010). The origin of these problems lies in a lack of economic resources in the urban school district and a majority of the student population living under economic hardships (Boutte, 2012; Buendia, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Milanowski et al., 2009; Milner, 2011). Due to the critical issues faced by novice teachers in their classrooms, consistent support by way of induction is needed.

Urban schools not only have problems with hiring practices and teacher support, student behavior, and lack of economic resources, but they experience inequity with school funding. Communities within urban school districts have an eroding tax base due to low property values, high unemployment, and the abandonment of businesses; this creates inequities in school funding. As a result, urban schools must struggle with limited resources (Buendia, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Milanowski et al., 2009). The majority of funding received by urban schools is from Title I (a federally funded program for schools serving a high percentage of low-income families), which creates others issues such as inadequate supplies, reduced extra-curricular programs, the termination of

support services, overcrowded classrooms, underperformance by students, and inappropriate classroom behavior (Buendia, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Milanowski et al., 2009). Without additional monies that would be derived from property taxes and those employed in the community, Title I funding has not always been sufficient to meet the financial needs of the urban school district. If the resources are not available, novice teachers might be unable to successfully execute their teaching responsibilities (Eckert, 2012; Merseth, Sommer & Dickstein, 2008; Shimi, 2008). A lack of resources compounds the problem of supporting novice teachers .

Novice teachers need to understand the number of students living in poverty in urban settings (38% compared to 17% in suburban areas, U. S. Census, 2010). Many students living in poverty are from single-parent families, homeless families, foster families, and families where parents did not go to school or in some cases, did not graduate from high school (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Gardner, 2010). Students from such unstable living environments, most often do not have a parent at home to help with homework or encourage them academically (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Gardner, 2010). Students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds have fewer opportunities to make connections with adults outside of school. These connections are “social capital,” the informal networks between people that help a community monitor its children, provide role models for them, and support those who struggle academically (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Erratic home environments and limited social assistance exacerbate

the problems faced by novice teachers. (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Gardner, 2010).

Students who suffer economic hardships have low motivation and their parents may not be involved at school; both may hinder a new teacher in helping students make progress (Boutte, 2012; Levin, 2009; Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011; Tamer, 2008).

These issues are compounded if teachers perceive the urban school to be an unpleasant work environment due to the lack of educational resources, minimal time for collegial support, and increased student and parent apathy (NCES, 2010). These conditions may leave the novice teacher uninspired in the classroom and professionally unsupported (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011; Levin, 2009; Menon, 2012; Schmidt, 2010).

Teacher education programs are designed to prepare new teachers for diverse populations of students living in various communities. Conversely, these programs do not focus on (a) high rates of poverty, (b) school populations where the majority are students of color, and (c) students with limited proficiency in basic reading and math skills, as these are issues predominantly found in urban schools (Levin, 2009; Menon, 2012; Schmidt, 2010). Consequently, when novice teachers are hired at urban schools they need a consistent and comprehensive induction program that will guide them at the assigned site. Induction programs vary in duration and intensity depending on the district (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Strong 2009; Tillman 2005).



Consistent and comprehensive induction programs in urban schools may reduce new teacher turnover, continue the teacher learning process (lesson planning and instructional strategies, classroom management and organization, student assessment, and communication with parents) beyond teacher programs, and impact the novice's overall job performance (Buendia, 2011; Eckert, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2011).

### **Definition of the Problem**

New teachers are entering the urban classroom after graduating from teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities that do not provide a significant number of learning experiences that resemble real-life urban teaching assignments (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Eckert, 2012; Schmidt, 2008). A comprehensive, high-quality induction program might provide a supplement to the limited repertoire of strategies, routines, and practices received in teacher education programs, and strengthen novice teachers' ability to perform the duties of teaching and learning (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009, Eckert, 2012; Schmidt, 2008). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2010) documents that less than 1% of beginning teachers have participated in sustained, comprehensive induction programs, while at least 80% have participated in mentoring programs in the form of professional guidance from a seasoned veteran teacher (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Schmidt, 2008; Wagaman, 2009). Urban schools utilizing mentor/mentee training as the only form of induction usually do

so due to budget constraints, and such training is most likely unable to affect teacher learning in substantive ways (Menon, 2012; Wang, Odell & Schwille, 2008).

Mentoring programs are either humanistic or technical in nature (Menon, 2012; Wang et al., 2008). Humanistic mentoring programs involve a veteran teacher with good interpersonal skills, who is a good listener, is encouraging, and provides short-term emotional intervention to the novice (Menon, 2012; Wang et al., 2008). Technical mentoring programs consist of receiving advice, suggestions, solutions to problems, and an explanation of school policies and procedures (Menon, 2012; Wang et al., 2008). Irrespective of the type of mentoring used, or even a mixture of both, the induction program provided to the novice teacher in urban school settings are infrequently recognized for enhancing teacher skills or providing long-term strategies for the problems causing distress for new teachers (Menon, 2012; Wang et al., 2008). The lack of a consistent and comprehensive induction program has a corresponding impact on the retention of new teachers (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Eckert, 2012; Wagaman, 2009; Wang et al., 2008). Using statistical information from National Center for Education Statistics, researchers found that urban school districts investing in comprehensive, high-quality teacher induction programs indicated a reduction in the cycle of recruiting, losing, and replacing teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb & Wycoff, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Gardner, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Opfer, 2011)

“Although the problem (of retention) is acute in both urban and nonurban schools, urban areas or high-need areas (those serving poor children in particular) have the highest attrition, with 50% of new teachers leaving within 5 years” (Ingersoll & May, 2012; Opfer, 2011; Ronfeldt, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2013; Yonezawa, Jones & Singer, 2011, p. 914). There are many reasons for the alarming attrition rates in urban settings. The most common argument is the placement of newcomers in the most challenging and difficult urban classrooms, with a “trial by fire” induction (Eckert, 2012; Ingersoll & Perda, 2010; Sass, Seal & Martin, 2011). Moreover, beginning teachers leave urban schools that are still fixated on the practice of solo teaching in self-contained classrooms, with no collegial interaction or a comprehensive, high-quality induction program that is needed to succeed (Menon, 2012; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). The attention has shifted from why new teachers leave urban schools, to how can teachers be retained for sustained periods to recognize improvement in student achievement (Boyd et al., 2011; Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Therefore, ascertaining how best to train and retain teachers after recruiting is essential to understanding the needs of the novice teachers working in urban classrooms (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Gruenhagen, 2012; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Ronfeldt, 2012).

Further analysis of the Schools and Staffing Surveys and Teacher Follow-up Surveys by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) attributes teacher turnover for novice urban educators as increased numbers of student misconduct, not enough time, low levels of intrinsic motivation, insufficient planning,

interruptions during daily lessons, and no administrative or collegial support (NCTAF, 2010). Consequently, many teachers have concluded that achievement of personal and professional competencies cannot be supported while working in urban classrooms (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Boyd et al, 2011; Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Sass et al.,2011). Consistent and comprehensive induction should encompass both mentoring and professional development meetings to support personal and professional competencies, thereby increasing the novice teachers' ability to perform the responsibilities within the practice of teaching.

When schools are organized and prepared to support beginning teachers in becoming proficient in both personal and professional areas of teaching, beginning teachers are more likely to report job satisfaction and an increased desire to remain on the job (Boyd et al., 2011, Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The support begins by building comprehensive systems of teacher induction in urban schools that will prevent the continuous, counterproductive process of rehiring a new cohort of beginning teachers each school year (Achinstein et al., 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In its 2010 report, *Who Will Teach? Experience Matters*, NCTAF (2010) found that hiring and developing well-prepared teachers can reduce first-year attrition for the 850 urban school districts in the United States.

### **Highly-Qualified Teachers and Induction Legislation in the State of Michigan**

The local problem at the Midwestern urban school district in this study was that novice teachers associated their inability to effectively perform their teaching duties with

the deficiencies in previous induction processes (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012). Based on a review of Exit Interview Summaries (2010-2012) and federal legislation under No Child Left Behind (2001), which mandated the yearly reporting of highly qualified teachers, modifications to the induction program were made for the 2013-2014 school year. In Michigan, a highly qualified teacher must pass the Michigan Teach for Teacher Certification for each content area listed on their teaching certificate, followed by participation in a comprehensive induction program and a program of professional development (Michigan Department of Education, 2009). Legislation enacted in the state of Michigan in 2003 specified the following:

For the first 3 years of his or her employment in classroom teaching, a teacher shall be assigned by the school in which he or she teaches to 1 or more master teachers, or college professors or retired master teachers, who shall act as a mentor or mentors to the teacher. During the 3-year period, the teacher shall also receive intensive professional development induction into teaching, based on a professional development plan that is consistent with the requirements of Section 3a of article II of Act No. 4 of the Public Acts of the Extra Session of 1937, being Section 38.83a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, including classroom management and instructional delivery. During the 3 year period, the intensive professional development induction into teaching shall consist of at least 15 days of professional development, the experiencing of effective practices in university-

linked professional development schools, and regional seminars conducted by master teachers and other mentors (Michigan Legislature, 2003, Section 1526.)

Based on Michigan the law regarding induction for beginning teachers, the Michigan Board of Education (2003) selected a Professional Standards Commission to establish guidelines and benchmarks as a model for new teacher induction programs (these guidelines are included in the conceptual framework within this proposal).

### **Justification for Modifications Made to the Current Induction Program**

Until the 2013-2014 school year, there was no formal induction program at the project study site that aligned with the model set forth by the state. In years prior, the district paired a new teacher with a veteran teacher with the goals of overseeing, guiding, supporting, and providing interventions to ease the novice's transition to the classroom (S. W. Gordon, personal communication, April 25, 2012). Using mentoring for induction did not engage the principles set forth in the state standards for induction and was limited to offering the mentee the support of one individual rather than a series of learning activities. Furthermore, when using veteran teachers for induction, limited time was allocated for joint work between mentor and mentee (S. W. Gordon, personal communication, April 25, 2012). Without adequate time allocated to mentoring, the novice experienced temporary or inconsistent interventions (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). Exit interview records also substantiated the ineffectiveness of veteran mentoring as an induction program at the research site (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012). Additionally, novice teachers leaving the district disclosed feelings of being

unprepared for a 100% African-American population living in impoverished conditions (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012). Lastly, when exiting teachers were asked if their experiences working in this school district had a positive or negative effect on their teaching practices and career goals, 87% said they had an adverse effect (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012).

In a larger-urban community context, Rinke (2011) conducted a longitudinal study to obtain the perspectives of incoming teachers on what they wanted out of a teaching career. Rinke (2011) found that teachers value their ability to make a difference and to help generate social change for their students; they view teaching as a way of increasing knowledge for themselves and their students. Beginning teachers would opt for a school where they could pursue these goals (Rinke, 2011); therefore, schools offering consistent comprehensive induction programs may be able to produce sustainable, long-term results that align with new teachers' aspirations (Eckert, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong; Opfer, 2011). Likewise, an examination of the data in the Exit Interview Summary (2010-2012) by school administrators disclosed and established a need to compare veteran-mentoring programs to comprehensive induction programs (S. W. Gordon, personal communication, April 25, 2012). Induction programs that do not support the career aspirations and learning needs of the novice teacher are problematic symptoms of the poorly funded induction programs implemented in most urban districts (Gardner, 2010; Papay & Johnson, 2011; Shockley, Watlington, & Felsher 2013; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). In response to meeting the needs of beginning teachers, this

Midwestern urban district developed ways to improve the novice's induction process, and afford the novice the opportunity to develop skills to create effective learning environments, as outlined in the Michigan state guidelines. The degree of success of the modifications made to the current induction program has yet to be determined.

### **Rationale**

In response to the problem of novice teachers' ability to perform their teaching responsibilities, the district in this study made modifications to its new teacher induction program. Modifications were based on guidelines as set forth by Michigan law and an analysis of the feedback provided in exit interviews (2010-2012) from new teachers no longer employed in the district.

The goals of the modifications, as established by the Chief Administrative Officer of the district (2012), were to

1. Ensure that each new teacher has an active and competent mentor.
2. Provide adequate time for new teachers and mentors to reflect and observe their teaching practices together.
3. Regularly schedule orientation meetings (headed by mentors, administration, and other staff members) offering topics to nurture the professional growth of new teachers.
4. Participate in planned, ongoing, and intensive professional development workshops designed for the school district and with the purpose of improving student learning and new teacher's classroom needs.



5. Provide learning experiences to prepare beginning teachers for urban classroom assignments.

To meet the goals of the modifications, all mentors were selected because they had 3 or more years in the district and demonstrated outstanding performance as noted on their yearly evaluations. Mentors had to participate in mentor orientation provided by each building administrative team to understand the purpose of a mentor, and they had to agree to be a mentor for at least a year. To ensure adequate time for observations, meetings, and reflection, each mentor was given responsibility for one but no more than three, mentees.. All mentors followed a calendar outline of when mentoring activities occurred. Mentor and mentee maintained mentoring activity logs and verified the topics they discussed, such as

- school culture and community norms and customs
- district policies and procedures
- classroom management
- time management
- parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships
- curriculum, texts, and support materials
- technological resources
- lesson planning and academic expectations
- progress reports and grading
- standardized test procedures if applicable

Other teachers were invited to attend these topic-specific meetings to establish an environment of collaboration for new and veteran teachers. All discussions between mentor and mentee, or mentee and administration, were also recorded in a log book.

The district made mentoring new teachers a priority for the 2013-2014 school year and sought to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of recent modifications, modifications that could facilitate permanent revisions of the program for upcoming school years.

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

This small Midwest school district, with an enrollment of 685 students, had been noncompliant with state law, which required that it offer a comprehensive induction program for new teachers in the 2013-2014 school year. Thus the teaching abilities of the novice teacher were affected. This noncompliance became evident when the school failed to reach its academic goals or make annual yearly progress (AYP) of 10% school-wide (School Improvement Report, 2010-2012).

When a school fails to make AYP 3 years in a row, the state presumes there is a problem with the abilities of the teaching staff to perform their duties and requires that 30% of the teaching staff be replaced in the next school year (Michigan Department of Education, 2009). To ensure the new teachers are given support to teach a state monitor is assigned to oversee the hiring of highly qualified teachers, their induction, as well as the professional development training of new and veteran teachers. The state monitor's other

tasks included training teachers for standardized test implementation, and the use of student data for academic growth (Michigan Department of Education, 2009).

This district reached the 3-year mark of no academic improvement in the 2012-2013 school year. Therefore, many of the new teachers hired for the previous school year were novices transitioning from teachers' education programs to the classroom, alternative route teachers, or veteran teachers new to the district (Human Resources Hiring & Statistical Report, 2012-2013), all of whom were in need of a consistent and comprehensive induction program that could help them perform their responsibilities. Even though researchers have not yet documented a direct link between high-quality induction programs and student learning, the goal of new teacher induction is to improve the abilities and retention of new teachers, which could improve students growth and learning (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Strong, Gargani, & Hacifazlioglu, 2011; Wang et al., 2008).

This small school district also documented evidence from past novice teachers that the induction process of veteran teachers mentoring did not fully support their learning needs or abilities as a new teacher, consequently inhibiting growth of teacher competencies (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012). Concerns of isolation and lack of communication and collegiality with other teachers by former novice teachers was highlighted; other issues noted were the availability of the mentor as well as school administrators, and the low frequency of regular contact with the mentor (Exit Interview Summary, 2010-2012; E. L. Beaks, personal communication, June 6, 2012). These

previously unaddressed issues indicate that the three major components of effective mentoring, communication, availability and frequency (Michigan Department of Education, 2009) were not present in earlier induction/mentoring programs.

Equally important to the problem of novice teachers' inability to perform their responsibilities within the practice of teaching are an unfamiliarity with the demographics of the community and of the students they teach. This urban school district is located in an impoverished city with no real tax base as the average per capita income is \$11,756 with five to seven people living within each household (U. S. Census Bureau, 2011). Yearly school surveys given to families indicate that over 75% of parents do not hold a high school diploma (Parent Surveys, 2011). Also, only 11.4% of the student population is proficient in math and reading (School Improvement Report, 2011-2012). The typical novices (75%) hired for this district were White females from suburban communities; many of whom have limited experience in LSES and culturally varied classrooms (Human Resource Hiring & Statistical Report (2010-2012). Novice teachers inexperienced with the context of the urban classroom need induction that will prepare them for situations they are unaccustomed to (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Eckert 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The average suburban White female, new teacher, hired in this district, may not be versed with a 100% African-American student population living in poverty. Studies indicate that students living in poverty are encumbered with the possibilities of being involved with street gangs, not completing high school, teen pregnancy, and receiving failing scores on yearly standardized assessments (Gregory,

Skiba & Noguera, 2010; Olsen & Anderson, 2007). These factors are widespread in this urban school district and familiarizing novice teachers with these issues has been addressed with modifications to the current induction program.

Another matter that required modification was the average number of contact hours between mentee and mentor, and a procedure for accurately logging in time spent, initialed by both for verification; the state recommendation is 8–10 hours per month (Michigan Department of Education, 2012). Maintaining a regimen of contact hours between mentor and mentee was difficult due to a shortage of staff to provide classroom relief for both the mentee and mentor. The district is now committed to using a pool of experienced substitute teachers for additional help when there are scheduled meetings for mentors and mentees, or professional development for mentees (S. W. Gordon, personal communication, April 25, 2012). The high number of teachers replaced during a given school year with novice teachers was also a limitation for mentor-mentee mentoring. To illustrate how veteran mentor and mentee time was reduced, at one K-8 school 10 teachers were replaced with a 60-day period, 3-6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, 1-5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, one 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher, four middle school teachers, and one special education teacher (Human Resource Hiring & Statistical Report, 2010-2011). When a considerable number of novice teachers are hired at one time, there was a veteran mentor to mentee ratio problem, and the need to stabilize each classroom superseded the need to ensure that all new teachers received mentoring on a regular basis (S. W. Gordon, personal communication, April 25, 2012). Also, due to the lack of veteran teachers in the school

district, there was often a mismatch of mentor and mentee. For instance, a second grade veteran teacher, not certified in secondary education assigned as mentor for an eighth grade teacher; having little inclination for the best way to support the novice teacher (E. L. Beaks, personal communication, June 6, 2012).

The result of not having adequate time or a sufficient number of veteran mentors was that each mentee was provided little assistance to settle them into their new role, reducing novice teachers' ability to perform the responsibilities within the practice of teaching. One area of incapability noted by novice teachers was classroom management. One 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher expressed her dismay with the continuous display of disrespect and disruptive behavior. She felt helpless as the principal's expectation for classroom management was for a teacher to handle all minor infractions, basically anything that was not a fight (W. B. Novak, personal communication May 15, 2011). Students enjoyed watching a powerless teacher struggle each day. One student even remarked, "You are the fourth teacher this year and we can make you quit too!" After speaking with the principal about needing more support to meet the challenges of working with low-achieving students, she felt ill-prepared, and resigned two weeks later, (W. B. Novak, personal communication, May 15, 2011). Research indicates that students living in poverty are more likely to have social conduct problems and emotional instability (Payne, 2009). Situations where beginning teachers feel they are lacking in abilities make it increasingly difficult for a new teacher to have a sense of confidence in performing the job duties of teaching and learning (Frankenberg et al., 2009).

Given that 80-90% of teachers hired in the district each school year are novices, (Human Resource Hiring & Statistical Reports, 2009-2012) realization of a consistent and comprehensive induction program was crucial to overall school improvement. The goals set forth for the induction program and the modifications made to the program will enhance the abilities of the novice. Exploring beginning teacher's perceptions of modifications to the induction program may support the induction process going forward in this Midwestern urban district.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

Multiple levels of support in the form of consistent and comprehensive induction are needed for new teachers who complete university based teacher education programs, and student teach in an area similar to where they went to school or live. Once done, these new teachers often select unfamiliar settings to provide quality instruction (Capizzi, Wehby, & Sandmel, 2010; Michigan Department of Education, 2012). This situation is substantiated by the statistics of new teacher candidates entering the teaching profession in the United States: "75% of new teachers are female, approximately 79% are White, and the vast majority of them are monolingual and raised in middle-class areas" (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Frankenberg, Taylor, & Merseth, 2009, p. 319; National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). Ideally, teachers working in urban schools should embrace pedagogy and methods culturally suited to the student population (Frankenberg et al., 2009; Strong et al., 2011); however, these skills are not always acquired in teacher education programs.

New teachers entering the classroom without the proper skills or guidance is a contributing factor to high levels of attrition among newcomers in the teaching profession (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Ingersoll & Perda, 2010, Achinstein et al.,2010). To address high attrition rates and to improve teachers' abilities, urban schools need an induction program that links teaching and student engagement as well as teaching and interpersonal relationships to the learning community, (Stanulis & Floden, 2009). Trying to teach students with social conduct problems and economic hardships without the assistance of proper induction can make a novice teacher question her or his career choice (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Freedman & Applebaum, 2009; Yonezawa et al, 2011).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore beginning teacher's perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban school district. Conducting this study may provide evidence to validate the need for consistent and comprehensive induction, which will support the needs of the novice teacher working in an urban school district.



## Definitions

*Alternative Route Teacher.* To address teacher shortages, many states offer a “fast track” program for teacher licensure; attracting a varied pool of teaching applicants. Alternative Route programs remove any courses that may be redundant and offer opportunities for additional training while on the job (Smith & Evans, 2008).

*Mentor.* A teacher is deemed highly qualified with 5 or more years of classroom experience. Mentors will maintain a collegial relationship with the novice to develop and enhance knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for learning and teaching. The mentor serves as an analytical trainer and a third party observer of the new teacher’s performance. The mentor will also make provisions to provide practical information or strategies for improvement (Hobson et al., 2009). At the research site in this study mentors are not always highly qualified and can be selected based on classroom experience of 3 years or more.

*Mentoring.* Highly qualified or veteran teachers are selected to provide personal guidance to novice teachers while on the job. Currently, educator mentoring programs are a primary means of teacher induction. At the research site in this study, mentoring is the only form of induction. The terminologies mentoring and induction are compatible for new teacher training (Hobson et al., 2009).

*Novice.* Within the first three years of classroom experience, a beginning teacher is considered inexperienced (Knight & Moore, 2012). The research site uses this guideline to distinguish a novice from an experienced teacher.

*Personal competencies.* How teachers view teaching as a rewarding career, their decision to remain in the teaching profession, and most importantly, their sense of self-efficacy as an educator (Buendia, 2011; Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ronfeldt, 2012).

*Professional competencies.* The educator's teaching methods, classroom organization, and policy making techniques, relationships with students, parents, staff, administrators, and participation in professional development activities (Buendia, 2011; Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ronfeldt, 2012).

*Teacher Induction.* Professional development meetings, group collaboration, administrative visits and reviews, assistive efforts provided in the classroom, and mentoring, are all activities created to help new teachers (Strong, 2009). At the research site in this study teacher induction was currently defined by mentoring only.

*Teacher Retention.* School districts or individual schools are sometimes unable to maintain qualified teachers. A low retention rate will have a corresponding high teacher attrition rate (Rinke, 2011).

*Veterans.* As used in this study, a veteran teacher is one who has taught in a public school for at least 5 years (Knight & Moore, 2012).

### **Significance**

Exploring beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications made to the current induction program was intended to help identify what additional enhancements to the induction program might work best for this district. Exploring beginning teachers'

perceptions also created a process for continued review and monitoring of induction. In view of the considerable evidence suggesting that newcomers to the teaching profession are entering without the benefit of proper induction (Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010), this district recognized the need to provide support to facilitate the transition from teacher education programs and student teaching, to the daily responsibilities of operating an urban classroom. Equally important is the opportunity for the school district to help new teachers understand the context of the school culture, school population, and unique organizational practices in relation to their schools. Consistent and comprehensive induction may help improve the abilities of beginning teachers by providing guidance with an array of classroom instructional practices and student behavior (McCray, 2012, Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). This district, like other districts across the country, were concerned about the supply of new teachers and their attributes. The abilities of new teachers may improve after they participate in consistent and comprehensive induction (Clotfelter et al., 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). This study also helped assess the strengths and weakness of program in order to help develop new teachers' abilities and improve retention.

Identifying which modifications were most valuable in improving the ability of novice teachers to perform their jobs (a) provided the basis for recommendations to make further adjustments in the induction program, for teacher effectiveness and student achievement; (b) provided a template for restructuring induction programs for this district

and other urban districts. The identification of the most valuable modifications was expected to ensure that induction programs continued to be worthwhile endeavors for urban schools that are staffing classrooms with novice teachers. The complexities of teaching cannot be addressed solely in teacher preparation programs; proper induction functions as a bridge from student teacher to teacher of students (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Rinke, 2011).

### **Guiding Question**

The question guiding this study was as follows: *What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the modifications made to the induction program in a Midwestern urban school district?* The responsibilities of the urban classroom are overwhelming for the novice, and the problems they encounter do not always have textbook solutions. In addition to the school improvement goal—all teachers helping their students achieve academic gains—the modified induction program covers other responsibilities, such as classroom management, instructional strategies, school culture, and understanding the student population. The novice needs guidance, support, and instruction with all of these for continued development and growth. The implication is that the novice needs high-quality, consistent, and comprehensive induction. Proper induction can also help with (a) high teacher turnover and its associated costs; (b) accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind. This mandate holds schools responsible for maintaining a highly qualified teaching staff.

### **Review of the Literature**

The urban school district in this study is challenged with meeting the demands of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 for hiring highly-qualified teachers and ensuring that all students make adequate yearly progress (AYP). When school administrators and teachers in this district collaborated to find strategies to improve AYP in accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 within their respective schools, the vital and strongest predictor of student performance was the percentage of qualified teachers on staff (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2010). For many school districts and the district in this study, maintaining a well-qualified staff is an overwhelming task when newly hired teachers are novices who may leave within the first year or two. A new teacher typically needs 3-5 years on the job before being considered proficient in the craft of teaching (Gardner, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The number of new teachers leaving the urban school system before they can develop fully is a crucial problem (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Moscovici, 2009; Rinke, 2011).

The No Child Left Behind Act also encompasses teacher proficiency by providing legislation that allows each state to govern and set guidelines for defining a “highly qualified teacher,” and the induction of the novice, for the purpose of the novice reaching and maintaining competency of teaching abilities at the highly qualified level. To maintain compliance with the No Child Left Behind legislation and increase new teacher abilities in performing the responsibilities in the profession of teaching, this urban school district has made modifications to their existing induction program. It is anticipated that

the modifications will reduce teacher attrition in this district; teacher attrition has been the conflicting obstacle to providing consistent and comprehensive induction to novice teachers. The number of novice teachers hired each year due to teacher shortages, which need proper induction, and the number of beginning teachers who quit months after being hired, causes a continuous process of recruiting, hiring, and training for the district in this study. Projected teacher shortages and high percentages of teacher attrition are problems in other urban school districts across the United States (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES, 2010]). There are many factors contributing to teacher attrition in urban schools including but not limited to career changes, a maturing faculty, early retirement, an unsafe work environment, inadequate compensation, frequent misbehavior by students, very little to no help from other colleagues and administration, and inadequate teacher induction programs (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Levin, 2009; Scherff, 2008; Tillman, 2005).

To resolve the problem of novice teachers' ability to perform their responsibilities, the district initiated a modified induction program for the 2013-2014 school year to help manage their most important education resource: teachers. State guidelines on new teacher induction and how adults learn are examined in this literature review.

The following databases were used to identify the literature for this study: Education Research Complete, ERIC, ProQuest Central, and Sage Premier. The websites of state educational agencies and three national groups were also important: the American

Educational Research Association (AERA), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the NEA Foundation, and many books. The following key words were used: *beginning, teachers, new, induction, programs, mentor, retention, novice, urban, and schools.*

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was based on (a) the adult learning theory of Malcolm Knowles and (b) the development and consistency of induction based on state law as outlined by Michigan Department of Education, 2012.

**State guideline 1: Mentoring new teachers.** Successful mentoring includes a mentor and mentee of similar grade and subject area, support and effective modeling, guidance as requested, meetings (weekly or as needed) to facilitate the socialization of beginning teachers throughout their induction period (Michigan Department of Education, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Hallam et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2008). Successful mentoring programs begin with good relationships between mentor and mentee (Hallam et al., 2012) that includes sensitivity to mentees concerns, tolerance and patience from the mentor, and common courtesy from both (Shim, 2008). Mentoring relationships that flourish will help empower both mentors and novice teachers as the partnerships they establish will ultimately benefit the schools they work for (Hallam et al., 2012). Three key areas can be improved in urban school districts with the implementation of properly developed mentoring programs in urban school districts: reduce the rate of teacher attrition (Cherubina, 2007; Schmidt, 2010); reduce

the financial burden of continuous recruiting, training and replacing of teachers (Milner, 2011; Smith, 2011) and reduce the number of students not making annual yearly progress (Hallam et al., 2012; Stanulis & Floden, 2009).

Studies showed that urban school districts that hire the novice teacher expect them to perform at the same level of experienced teachers (Anhorn, 2008; Boutte, 2012; Ronfeldt, 2012; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). However, when beginning teachers do not receive proper induction with mentoring, it will take additional years (beyond the required three years of novice status) to make a difference with student achievement (Anhorn, 2008; Ronfeldt, 2012). Mentoring is one type of support that would benefit new teachers, improve teacher retention, increase career satisfaction, maintain high teacher standards, and advance student performance, however just 1% of novice teachers are involved in continuous, comprehensive mentoring programs (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). Another crucial reason for mentoring programs is that with the current teacher shortage, many states have instituted alternative certification routes into the field of teaching, resulting in inconsistent levels of pedagogical knowledge; these inconsistent levels of pedagogical knowledge can often negatively affect student achievement (Anhorn, 2008; Ronfeldt, 2012; Stanulis & Floden, 2009).

When mentoring programs are executed at the beginning of the novice teacher's career, the benefits reach far beyond the teacher; student achievement increases and retention increases (Capizzi et al., 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Mentoring for all beginning teachers (irrespective to how they entered the teaching field) is supported by



many educational researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Oliver, McConney, & Maor, 2009; Capizzi et al., 2010; Smith & Evans, 2008). On a national level the data indicates schools with mentoring programs have a more capable staff, a motivated staff, a more productive staff, and teachers with an improved sense of self-confidence and self-esteem (Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2007; Papay & Johnson, 2011). Mentoring is necessary if urban school districts want to provide new teachers with the proper structure and support during their transition from student teacher to classroom teacher (Capizzi et al., 2010; Schmidt, 2008; Smith & Evans, 2008).

**State guideline 2: Supportive dialogue from school administrators.**

Supportive dialogue must be at the forefront of a school administrator's responsibilities when inducting new teachers, given the focus on teacher retention, state mandated standards, and required state testing (Michigan Department of Education, 2012; Cherubina, 2007; Smith, 2011; Hallam, Chou, Hite, & Hite, 2012; Schmidt, 2008). Research documents (Knight & Moore, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Menon 2012) the importance of the support given to beginning teachers by the leadership in the school. Principals affect daily school performance when they interact and encourage both teachers and students, communicate the school mission and vision, maintain high standards for student achievement, provide the necessary classroom resources, and ensure an adequate framework is available to assist teaching and learning (Crafton & Kaiser, 2011; Knight & Moore, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). The most fundamental aspect of the school leader's position is to develop people who will affect student learning and

teacher retention rates (Achinstein, 2006; 2010; Dillion, 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Marzano, 2012).

**State guideline 3: Common preparation periods to increase collaboration with teachers in the same grade or discipline.** Researchers suggest that mentoring cannot stand alone without other support systems in place, strongly suggesting teacher collaboration between the novice and veteran teacher as the first line of defense (Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Menon, 2012; Michigan Department of Education, 2012). To develop new models of teacher collaboration, urban school districts must expand teacher collegial activities based on current studies for continuous improvement (Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Smith, 2011). The Obama Administration outlined guidelines for school districts to expand mentoring programs that pair experienced teachers with the novice, allowing for professional collaboration and implementation of best practices (Weinstein, 2009). Providing adequate time for supportive work will prepare new recruits to be skillful, knowledgeable teachers, meeting the demands of the students they serve (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009).

Several studies investigated the issues novice teachers face once in the teaching and learning environment, citing a lack of support by veteran or head teachers as the main problem (Achinstein, 2006; Menon, 2012; New Teacher Center, 2010). Head teachers (also known as lead teachers) must take on the responsibilities of supporting teachers and initiating collaboration with other teachers in same grade or discipline (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; NTC, 2010). Beginning teachers need support in and beyond the

classroom by colleagues aware of the wider organizational and social context (Achinstein, 2006; Menon, 2012). Respondents in the studies seeking to find if adequate support is given to beginning teachers identified the following issues: conforming to the school environment; struggles related to classroom management, and an absence of assistive efforts from other teachers (Menon, 2012; Milner, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

**State guideline 4: Workload reduction or assistive efforts provided.** The literature is clear about the many obstacles new teachers face (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Menon, 2012) and when supports are not in place to socialize them into the existing culture, it may be difficult for that teacher to become acclimated to the school culture and remain as a valuable member of the district. A reduction in workload or assistive efforts of a teacher's aid will support beginning teachers with expected professional competencies which include the teacher's instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, interpersonal relationships with students, parents, staff, administrators, and participation in professional development activities (Michigan Department of Education, 2012; Buendia, 2011; Gajda & Koliba, 2008; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ronfeldt, 2012). Classroom management procedures that work are vital skills for all teachers to have, however; the need is increased in urban schools. Novice teachers are often faced with many obstacles due to misbehavior of students living in impoverished communities (Waddell, 2010). New teacher surveys from teachers working in urban school districts indicate no functional relationship between training received in

teacher education programs, and a teacher's ability to adequately maximize structure and discipline in the classroom, once on the job (Simonsen, Myers, & DeLuca, 2010). To sufficiently take on this responsibility, a reduction in workload with a gradual increase in accountability of tasks is highly recommended to ensure the likelihood of success as a new teacher working in a high-poverty, urban school district (Frankenburg et al., 2010; Freedman & Applebaum, 2009; Halversen et al., 2009).

When new teachers begin working in an undesirable school setting, without the benefit of assistive efforts or a reduction in their workload, their feelings about their career choices could change. Also, there is a risk of not developing in the area of personal competencies. Personal competencies entail issues of how teachers view teaching as a rewarding career, their decision to remain in the teaching profession, and most importantly, their sense of self-efficacy as an educator (Gajda & Koliba., 2008).

**State guideline 5: Support from other educators inside/outside the school with participation in professional development and professional networks of educators.** Given the very high demands placed on new teachers, it is imperative that they receive training via professional development sessions, teacher collaboration, and from professional teacher organizations (Michigan Department of Education, 2012; Boutte, 2012; Schmidt, 2008; Yonezawa et al., 2011). Participation in professional development will help with new teacher adjustment and the mindsets they hold with regards to becoming a successful teacher, including the development of positive student-

teacher rapport, and their decision to continue in their current teaching position (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Ingersoll, 2007).

Professional development for new teachers is a transformative process allowing for the accumulation of information in the areas of technology usage, understanding students' needs and interests, how to write differentiated lesson plans to accommodate individual learning styles and abilities, that creates an engaging and productive classroom atmosphere for all learners (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sass et al., 2011). Professional development for all new teachers is especially crucial for building on prior experience, participating in active learning experiences, and cultivating a climate of respect with colleagues (Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sass et al., 2011). Moreover, professional development will enhance a teacher's content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sass et al., 2011).

To further the learning process of a new teacher and keep them up to date in their respective content areas, participation and networking in professional organizations is beneficial for continuous improvement of the craft of teaching, and gaining more insight about the culture they work in (Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Sass et al., 2011). In a study conducted to determine teachers' attitudes about teaching in urban and low-income schools it was determined not all teachers have the belief that all children are capable of learning; these teachers eventually leave the teaching profession (Menon, 2012; Halvorsen, Lee, & Andrade, 2009). Conversely, there are other teachers who find teaching in low-income, urban areas rewarding and take responsibility to help their

students succeed. These teachers actively seek out professional development training to overcome obstacles, and make continuous improvement in their practice (Gawlik, Kearney, Addonizio, & LaPlante-Sosnowsky, 2012; Goldhaber, Gross & Player, 2010; Halvorsen et al., 2009).

Overall, when beginning teachers are involved with other educators and participate in various professional development sessions, they are provided additional learning experiences and strategies for their individual repertoires; giving each new teacher a multitude of options and knowledge. They specifically gain access to a group of educators for collaboration and support of any struggles they may encounter (Michigan Department of Education, 2012; Boutte, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, Levin, 2009; Sass et al., 2011; Schmidt, 2008).

### **The Novice Teacher as the Adult Learner**

In conjunction with the purpose of this study: to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications to the current induction program used in this Midwestern District, incorporating the adult learning theory of Malcolm Knowles helped the district in this study focus on beginning teachers as the "learner." Knowles, (2011) explains that adult learners are responsive to growth and learning when there are external motivators present; in this instance, the need for improved capabilities in performing their responsibilities within the practice of teaching.

The adult learning model or andragogical model was beneficial when exploring beginning teacher's perceptions of modifications to the induction program and in

analyzing the data of such. The andragogical model is based on six assumptions, which are all applicable to this study.

1. “Adult learners have a need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it” (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011, p. 63).  
Beginning teachers will discover for themselves a gap between where they are as a novice teacher, and where they would like to be as a teacher performing effectively in the classroom (Knowles et al., 2011).
2. “Adult learners have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives” (Knowles et al., 2011, p. 63). Exploring and seeking out new teacher’s perceptions of modifications to the induction program may remove the feeling that all changes have been imposed and that they are capable of having input with the learning process.
3. Adult learners enter an activity with different quantities and qualities of experiences; this experience develops each learner’s self-identity (Knowles et al., 2011). The novice teachers in this study have participated in a variety of teacher education programs and none of their experiences were rejected or devalued as not important.
4. Adult learners have a readiness to learn when such learning will provide practical strategies for surviving authentic situations they may encounter (Knowles et al., 2011). Researchers conducting evaluations of induction programs have noted beginning teachers want induction programs that help

them learn (Achinstein et al., 2010; Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Freedman & Applebaum, 2009; Quartz, Thomas, Anderson, Masyn, Lyons, & Olsen, 2008). Based on exit interview summaries in this district, (2009-2012) new teachers are willing and ready to learn policies and procedures, routines, student behavior, classroom management, and how to improve communication with staff and other individuals in the learning community.

5. Adult learners have an orientation for learning...”Adults are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems they confront in their everyday life situations” (Knowles et al., 2011, p. 66). One of the modifications to the current induction program is offering professional development that will increase learning and performance in areas novice teachers at the research site believe they need help in. For instance, many new teachers working in this district have never witnessed the successful academic achievement of low-income students and students of color, primarily African-American; an educator that has not witnessed successful academic achievement of low-income students may have difficulty in the role of facilitator of their development without proper induction (Eckert, 2012; Frankenberg et al., 2009). For this reason, providing proper induction to the novice as an adult learner, in this Midwestern district, may present for the novice understanding and skills in the context of problems dealt with on a daily basis.



6. Adult learners are motivated to keep growing and developing (Knowles et al., 2011). Induction programs that offer layers of context (mentoring, observations, reflections, collaboration with others and administration, and additional professional development) will have intrinsic value with a personal payoff to each individual novice teacher (Boutte, 2012; Halversen et al., 2009; Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Menon, 2012; Sass et al., 2011).

Adult learning can be characterized by adults seeking information and competence (Knowles et al., 2011). A beginning teacher's beliefs in his/her own capabilities affect how much effort he/she will put towards making an improvement and aspiring to learn in deficient areas. According to Bandura, "people are motivated both to reduce the gap between perceived and desired performance and to set themselves challenging goals, which they then work hard to accomplish" (Bandura, 1977, p. 77). New teachers mentally keep track of experiences of mastery, or failures, with a particular task. "Mastery experiences, or individual past successes and failures with a task, will have strong effects on feelings of self-efficacy for accomplishing similar future tasks" (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008, p. 505). New teachers are under continuous scrutiny and when their own self-evaluation is not positive, there is an indirect influence on student learning (Boutte, 2012; Menon, 2012; Scherff, 2008). The lack of proper induction intensifies the incidents of failure and low confidence levels as a new teacher (Menon, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Responding to this issue is imperative to prevent the

district from a continuing trend of losing disproportionate numbers of new teachers each year; and then filling those positions with novices having less experience than the teachers they are replacing (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Eckert, 2012, Sass et al., 2011).

### **Implications**

Based on the results of this exploratory case study, a comprehensive report was produced that highlights perceptions of beginning teachers on high quality induction programs that are aligned with the guidelines of No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and specific to the state guidelines. As induction programs surfaced after the ground-breaking legislation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) 2001 recommendations by national experts were used for schools to implement these programs (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009). What is missing is regular interviewing of new teachers for an in-depth exploration of design, delivery and support services needed based on practices specific to the school context (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009). Another concern is that without conducting inquiries with new teachers for the purpose of possible induction program modifications, induction programs may remain under conceptualized, resting on narrow views of what it takes to support new teachers and help them develop teaching skills (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Carver & Feiman-Namser, 2009). It was expected that the new teachers who were involved with both the school's mentoring sessions and this study, would provide insight into how and what new teachers want to learn to improve their teaching abilities.

The data presented from the case study may also help the district design an induction program that is sensitive to the needs of the novice working in the district, and aligned with the policy criteria set forth in accordance with Michigan law. Furthermore, the study also provided the necessary data to validate why this school district should broaden the current mentoring program to comprehensive induction, with multiple supports that recognize the needs of the novice on a permanent basis (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Comprehensive induction with multiple supports has the most influence on stabilizing and developing novices into veteran teachers within urban school districts (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Rinke, 2011; Yonezawa et al., 2011).

Even though the topic of proper induction of novice teachers did not receive attention until 30 years ago, analyzing the strengths and weakness of induction programs specific to No Child Left Behind Act (2001) continues to be a vital step toward improving the U. S. teaching force and reducing attrition rates of beginning teachers (Foote, Brantlinger, Haydar, Smith & Gonzalez, 2011; Henry, Bastian, & Fortner, 2011). Urban school districts are working to perfect induction programs in an effort to prepare beginning teachers for the responsibilities of teaching by applying theory from teacher education programs into practice in the classroom (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Hallam et al., 2012). The current expectation for beginning teachers is to not only be grounded in academic content; but to be a teacher who also has tenacity, motivation, and the ability to communicate subject matter to diverse students in engaging and developmentally appropriate ways (Achinstein, 2010; Anhorn, 2008; Boyd et al., 2011; Boutte, 2012;

Cherubini, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gardner, 2010; Milanowski et al., 2009). To meet the demands of today's student and state testing requirements, adequate supports must be in place to help with the problem of novice teachers' ability to perform their responsibilities (Achinstein, 2010; Anhorn, 2008; Boyd et al., 2011; Boutte, 2012; Cherubini, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gardner, 2010; Milanowski et al., 2009).

Research on the topic of new teacher induction exposed very few initiatives that support new teacher learning consistent with the No Child Left Behind legislation and guidelines specific to state standards (Boutte, 2012; Brill & McCartney, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Milner, 2011; NTC, 2010, 2012; Sass et al., 2011). Most studies provided details on the ideology, justification, and consideration that should be given to induction. Still others examined teachers' experiences with induction or the conditions that initiate mentoring programs (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). There has been little attempt to offer analytical reporting of empirical studies outlining the outcome of induction in different settings (Strong, 2009). To date, the New Teacher Center (2012) has documented that only 22 states meet the criterion of induction program accountability, however, what still needs improvement is providing an induction program that offers a series of learning skills throughout the three year time period a beginning teacher is considered a novice. Placement of the novice teacher is common in today's urban school and provisions must be made through proper induction (NCES, 2010). This exploratory case study was vital to the novice as they transition from student teacher, to

the real-life responsibilities of teacher of students (Bill & McCartney, 2008; Wang et al., 2008).

### **Summary**

In this section, I provided a description of the local problem that facilitated this research, a rationale for the problem choice, significance of the study, a review of literature, implications for possible project directions and the research question in relation to the problem. Section 2 entails (a) an explanation of the research design, (b) reasons for choosing such a design, (c) an explanation of how data will be collected and analyzed, and (d) results of the findings. Section 3 will include an overview, rationale, literature review and discussion of the project and Section 4 will present reflections and conclusions to the completed study.

## Section 2: The Methodology

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban school district. Section 2 covers the following topics: the research design, selection of participants, protection of participants, an explanation of the data collection and data analysis processes, limitations of the study, findings with sample quotations from the transcript, and common themes across interviews.

### **Research Design**

To better understand the induction process at the target school site and how it linked to the problem of novice teachers' ability to perform their responsibilities, a qualitative case study was selected. A case study focuses on a single unit, in this case teachers, and their scope of knowledge, to contribute to understanding the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2012). Here, the phenomenon was the recent modifications to the induction program at an urban school. A case study offers complex units of multiple realities for the researcher to obtain from participants (Hancock & Algonzzine, 2011). Furthermore, a case study provides a plethora of information and a comprehensive report of the phenomenon from the participants' perspective (Merriam, 2009). The case study offers insights, illuminates meanings, dictates tentative hypotheses, and has proven useful for educational settings (Merriam, 2009).

There are four other common types of qualitative research, but they are less appropriate for this study. Ethnography explores the shared experiences of a culture by understanding what people, do, say and believe (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). But this study had no questions about the participants' cultural complexity. Phenomenological research requires extensive amounts of data over time; it uses multiple participant interviews to concentrate on individual experiences (Lodico et al., 2010). This study, on the other hand, used various data collection techniques (over a short period of time) and the focus was on a bounded system (Lodico et al., 2010). Another common qualitative research approach is grounded theory. It differs from the case study because its findings can be generalized in the field studied as well as in other similar settings (Lodico et al., 2010). Conversely, case study research is not interested in generalizing findings beyond setting of study. It endeavors to discover meaning, investigate processes, or gain insight into a specific individual, group or situation (Lodico et al., 2010). Moreover, the case study approach is the best fit with problem-based research (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2008). Here, the case study allowed a closer look into the activities of new teachers and the areas of teaching and learning in which they were trying to improve.. The guiding question in this research was as follows: *What are beginning teachers' perceptions of the modifications made to the induction program in this Midwestern school district?* Selecting a qualitative approach with case study provided an opportunity to record individual participant's real-life experiences, which resulted in a rich and holistic account of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). The case study approach was

justified for this problem because I examined a particular group, providing the opportunity to obtain richly detailed descriptions of the situation, to capture the full complexity and uniqueness of the case information, and to obtain answers to the research question (Lodico et al., 2010).

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were regular education novice teachers working in three locations in a district that serves a K-8 population only. Participants were selected from both elementary locations and the one middle school location. A purposeful sample of 10 new teachers, three from each of the two elementary sites, and four from the only middle school site within the district (6 elementary teachers and 4 middle school teachers for a total of 10 teachers) were selected for this study. A purposeful sampling was chosen for this study because the informants would provide information-rich cases and knowledge about the issue of central importance (Patton, 2002; Glesne, 2011). This sampling frame afforded me optimum information to understand the problem from the viewpoint of the novice, in relation to the research question (Creswell, 2012). Using purposeful sampling also allowed for capturing multiple realities that are not quantifiable (Hancock & Alogozzine, 2011). The small sample for this project was based on the theory that most research situations are too vast to interview everyone or observe everything (Glesne, 2011) and qualitative researchers rarely work with populations large enough to produce generalizations (Merriam, 2009).



The criteria for participants in this study, was novice teachers within the district who have remained beyond the probationary period of 90 days. It was anticipated that teachers with a minimum of 90 days in a teaching position will have enough experience to provide ample facts about the modified induction program offered by the district. These teachers were a sample that could provide significant information about the phenomenon being studied (Merriam, 2009).

There was no data collection before Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the methods described in the study to ensure ethical considerations have been addressed and sufficient details of the actions to be taken by me, the researcher, are provided (Lodico et al., 2010). Once this approval was acquired, to gain access to the participants, I obtained permission from the district's chief administrative officer (CAO). Upon receipt of authorization from the district's CAO, invitations with a 1-week time limit were sent out to qualified candidates requesting that they participate in study by e-mail. A follow-up e-mail, with the identical information was sent out after 1 week, extending the time frame an additional three days to ensure all potential participants were aware of study. The assistance of human resources was solicited to provide names of the novice teachers at each location if the desired sample of 10 participants was not achieved. This was unanticipated given 80-90% of teachers hired in district each school year are novices (Human Resource Hiring & Statistical Reports, 2009-2012). The e-mail stated the purpose of the research study, the research process, procedures, expectations of participants, the voluntary nature of the study, the ability to withdraw from the study at

any time, and that there was no recompense or penalty associated with their involvement. Upon receiving responses from interested novice teachers, 10 participants were selected by choosing the first three respondents from each elementary school and the first four from the middle school group. Once the names were selected, an e-mail was sent to the selected novice teachers along with an informed consent form and my contact information, in case there were any questions or concerns that need to be addressed. Participants were asked to e-mail informed consent form back to me within three days of receiving. Receipt of all informed consent forms is compulsory from each selected participants before they can participate in a study (Creswell, 2012).

In qualitative research, researchers develop relationships with research participants which are generally asymmetrical, with power disproportionately located on the side of the researcher (Glesne, 2011). Therefore, establishing a researcher-participant relationship of trust and credibility are crucial to the study (Glesne, 2011). I exhibited and utilized sensitivity, honesty, and non-judgmental interactions, all crucial characteristics of a good researcher and successful field relations (Lodico et al., 2010). Good field relations provide more assurance that the situation under investigation was understood from the participant's perspective, the goal of qualitative research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011).

### **Data Collection**

The data gathering process was interactive and constructed to richly describe, explain, and assess or evaluate the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Individual interviews,

and focus groups, using the same sample were the naturalistic methods of data collection used (Lodico et al., 2010); each of these was discussed in detail throughout this section.

From the data collection methods noted above, the primary method of data collection was the focus group interviews with the novice teachers. The reason for choosing a focus group was to promote interaction and discussion among the beginning teachers about their experiences with the modified induction procedures. The modified procedures were disseminated to all new teachers in the form of an induction handbook created by the district. The handbook consists of the program goals, expectations of mentee, mentor, administration, and an activity log to record the date and time of all interactions with mentor. It was expected that the focus groups would meet for one 2-hour session, during the study, and the group would consist of the sample of 10 novice teachers. It is recognized that time and resources are limited; therefore, the schedule put in place for data collection based on the preparation periods or other available times designated by each participant, was strictly followed. As I spend time with those being studied, I understand the goal is to be aware of the situation under investigation primarily from the participant's perspective (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). I recognize to achieve understanding and make connections to the guiding question, total absorption was required (Glesne, 2011).

The focus group interviews allowed me an opportunity to examine and record the group dynamics of the novice teacher that may unfold during open discussion, and was

used to collect data from multiple participants. Patton (2002) explained the importance of the focus group data collection procedure as follows:

Unlike a series of one-on-one interviews, in a focus group participants get to hear each other's responses and to make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say. However, participants need not agree with each other or reach any kind of consensus. Nor is it necessary for people to disagree. The object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the view of others. (p. 386)

The topics identified for the session were semi structured and open-ended questions that were presented to initiate discussion (Lodico et al., 2010). The topics specifically addressed the induction program modifications which includes a multi-layered induction process. The focus group interview protocol can be viewed in Appendix B. All gatherings were tape-recorded, the same as individual interviews, and additional questions were introduced to encourage participants to expand on their answers or to more fully explore differences in the responses by different teachers (Lodico et al., 2010). Each participant received a copy of the transcribed notes to review and was encouraged to make deletions or additions as necessary to ensure his/her perspective was documented exactly as expressed. I will review all transcripts for word repetitions or text that are similar or different, to capture any identifiable issues or themes that need further discussion. Data obtained from a focus group is socially constructed

within the interaction of the group of people who have knowledge of the topic (Merriam, 2009).

To ascertain individual perspectives on the modifications of the current induction program, one-on-one interviews were conducted. This one-on-one setting will allow participants to speak freely, in their words (Lodico et al., 2010). It is expected that the individual interviews will allow participants to explore their individual experiences, providing in-depth individual understanding to each topic (Lodico et al., 2010). These additional data will aid in the review process of making recommendations for which modifications work best for beginning teachers. These perspectives and a more comprehensive understanding of what the novice is seeking in induction were obtained by open-ended interview questions, using a semi-structured format. The teacher interview protocol can be viewed in Appendix B. The semi-structured interview allows for questions that can be easily adjusted during the interview, or there may be a combination of both structured (well-framed) and semi-structured (modifiable) questions (Merriam, 2009). An opportunity to probe beyond the protocol may be necessary to allow for further exploration of topics (Merriam, 2009). I conducted three to four one-on-one interviews each week for a total of three weeks. Each participant was interviewed once for 45-60 minutes. Interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed to categorize information into a coding scheme (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). The interviews were planned on days and times determined by the participants outside of their normal classroom schedule.

My role as the researcher was to accurately portray the participant's perspectives; developing an "insider's" point of view and fostering a close rapport with participants (Lodico et al., 2010). As a former mentor, I have also experienced firsthand some of the problems and concerns the novice has encountered with the prior induction program, but have not mentored new teachers under the existing plan of implementation. Therefore, I was able to get a true sense of their experience with the current induction, as I am already a part of the culture being investigated. To control for bias I recognized and avoided asking biased or leading questions, and also remained cognizant of voice inflections, body movement, and overall demeanor while conducting interviews (Lodico et al., 2010). Lastly, I also recorded and maintained reflective field notes for critical self-reflection of the interview experience after each interview session (Lodico et al., 2010). A research log was also used to keep documented records of how much time was spent in the field at each research site, and the recording of analytic thoughts as they occurred (Lodico et al., 2010). Furthermore, due to the difficulty of eliminating biases or "subjectivities" when conducting qualitative research, these methods help identify and monitor them in regards to interpretation of data (Merriam, 2009). I will review the reflective notes or journals maintained during the research later for judgments or biases that were overlooked (Creswell, 2012). During this time of reflection and examination, I will guard against individual subjectivity that may have occurred during the study (Glesne, 2011). All reflective and field notes used rich, thick descriptions that allow the reader to interact or enter the research content (Creswell, 2012).

## **Data Analysis**

Much of the data analysis with a qualitative program evaluation is done at the same time data are collected (Yin, 2008). Glesne (2011) stated, “Data analysis done simultaneously with data collection enables you to focus and shape the study as it proceeds” (p. 188). Further analysis of data collected began by transcribing all audio-taped recordings, and organizing the data from individual interviews (Creswell, 2012). The data was reviewed, read, marked by hand, and divided into parts, for the purpose of capturing important aspects of the data before coding (Lodico et al., 2010). Detailed information was divided into segments of data that describe related phenomena (Lodico et al., 2010) to begin the coding process. The most common qualitative analytic technique of thematic analysis was used (Lodico et al., 2010). Building themes will help combine several codes, allowing for examination of data and forming connections to the question guiding the research (Lodico et al., 2010). The process of constructing categories or themes that capture some recurring pattern that is intertwined throughout the data is crucial to the study (Merriam, 2009). According to Glasser and Strauss (1967), these categories have a life of their own apart from the data from which they came (Merriam, 2009). For instance, specific categories highlighting such areas as events, activities, consequences, behaviors, relationships, conditions, restrictions, or relationships may make it easier to understand and explain the phenomena in evaluation (Merriam, 2009). The transcriptions of all individual interviews and focus groups was coded by placing boxes around key words and word repetitions that can be used as codes, and drawing

brackets around sentences that fit together to describe one idea (Creswell, 2012); major and minor themes will emerge. Constant comparison of data to previously coded passages in the data was done to maintain consistency (Creswell, 2012). The strategy of hierarchical coding and thematic analysis was employed allowing for an interconnection of themes from a broad to narrow perspective (Creswell, 2012).

Member checks was used for all data collected (Lodico et al., 2010). “To ensure that the researcher’s own biases do not influence how the perspectives are portrayed, many researchers use member checks” (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 274). Member checks will help with validating findings (Creswell, 2012). Member checks were conducted at the conclusion of the study to increase validity or credibility (Glesne, 2011).

I recognize that this type of research study will require a considerable amount of time to be spent with participants, and that I am the primary instrument for data collection (Merriam, 2009), therefore, preventing researcher bias is crucial. To control for researcher bias, I will take and review descriptive and reflective field notes. The goal was to collect data that provides an accurate story (Creswell, 2012) by beginning teachers, for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the current induction program. Using both a research log and a reflective journal will provide evidence of credibility (Lodico et al., 2010).

### **Protection of Participants**

As a researcher there are many ethical responsibilities to the participants and to the profession that must be guarded. The design of qualitative research using data



collection techniques of interviewing and observation can present their own ethical dilemmas (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative researcher roles vary by study and participants; however conventional research relationships are generally asymmetrical, with power disproportionately located on the side of the researcher (Glesne, 2011). Therefore, the protection of participants was in accordance with the requirements established by the Walden University Review board.

At the same time selected participants are notified by e-mail of their participation, an informed consent form was forwarded requesting signature. The informed consent form will outline the data that was collected in the study (Lodico et al., 2010).

Participants will also be guaranteed that the goal of this study is information gathering on new teachers' perceptions and experiences of the modified induction process. I will not use any methods of a coercive nature, will inform participants of their rights to withdraw at any time, and remind them that there is no recompense or penalty associated with their involvement (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). Furthermore, I will protect each participant's privacy and confidentiality during interviews and focus groups. Coded tags was used to preserve the identities of participants during data collection and analysis (Lodico et al., 2010).

Due to the emergent nature of qualitative research, (Merriam, 2009) I will take extra care in how the dynamics of the study may change during the process, and will give assurance to the participants that the study's findings will not be used to the detriment of their involvement (Merriam, 2009). While there is no physical harm to the participants

during this study, participants may experience emotional distress during interviews and focus group sessions (Lodico et al., 2010). Emotional distress could be attributed to the topic of discussion (Rinke, 2011). From the onset of the study, selected participants were given my contact information and at any time may ask questions about procedures, the process, any risks involved, impact or benefits, and opt to withdraw (Creswell, 2012). Participants were assured that all data collected for this study (including the informed consent, interview transcripts, and audio tapes) were stored in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home for a minimum of 5 years (Lodico et al., 2010). For security of electronic data, all electronic data was kept on my personal password-protected computer. After 5 years all paper records will be shredded. Data stored electronically on tape storage devices were erased.

### **Limitations**

The most critical limitation of this qualitative case study was the loss of participants (Creswell, 2012). While there is no set rule on an exact number of participants, rigor and trustworthiness of data collection is the researcher's main focus (Creswell, 2012). One participant chose to resign from the district and another participant lost interest and withdrew from the study. These issues did not affect data collection and analysis of the program in evaluation. Scholarly researchers have also noted the influence of the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies as a limitation to qualitative research designs (Creswell, 2012). To address this I maintained a reflective

log that was reviewed later after data collection, to detect judgments or biases previously overlooked (Creswell, 2012).

The data collection for this study was administered using integrity and all the parameters for collecting data face-to-face (Creswell, 2012). The strength of this study was spending prolonged time in the field to gather rich, thick descriptions (Lodico et al., 2010) of the participant's experiences with the modified teacher induction program. Using a case study approach will allow for exploration of the perceptions from those whom the program serves. This study did not focus on validating induction programs but instead searching for what works, what does not work, and what participants think about the modifications to the existing induction program, for the purpose of maintaining modifications or making further adjustments to the induction program already in existence. It is expected that the changes to the induction process will improve the professional competencies of beginning teachers, enabling them to be effective and confident in the classroom; having a positive effect on student learning. The data to be collected in the study through interviews and focus groups is critical to the success of future induction programs. The voice of the novice may begin to influence policies within the district regarding induction of new teachers, and reinforces the link between district-wide program induction strategies and induction outcomes advocated by the state. The "information rich" sampling (Creswell, 2012) of participants will provide the district valuable information as a framework for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the modified induction program, as perceived by beginning teachers.

## **Results of Final Study**

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban school district. Interviews with the eight novice teachers provided insight into what modifications were helpful and suggestions for additional modifications to improve their ability to perform their duties. Below are descriptions of the data collection and analysis procedures, as well as the findings from the analysis, including recurring themes that emerged from the data analysis.

### **Data Collection**

Prior to collecting the data for data analysis, I submitted all essential paperwork to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The study was approved by the IRB (approval no. 08-07-14-0268607) provided that the focus group questions were removed to avoid the risk of breach of confidentiality. The same questions were posed as part of the individual interviews since they did not seek a collective response.

Prior to all interviews, I obtained informed consent from each participant via e-mail. Each participant who agreed to participate replied to an e-mail with the words "I consent." In an email message to all participants, I instructed them to print and copy the form and save it for their files. Each participant was assigned a code, BT1 through BT8, (beginning teacher) to protect her or his identity and to identify direct quotes from interviews. Their demographics are displayed in Table 1: gender ethnicity, age, and years in the classroom.

Table 1

*Participants' Demographics*

Participant codes	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	Years in classroom
Teacher 1 (BT1)	Female	White	23	First
Teacher 2 (BT2)	Female	White	26	First
Teacher 3 (BT3)	Female	Black	25	Second
Teacher 4 (BT4)	Male	White	32	Second
Teacher 5 (BT5)	Female	White	45	First
Teacher 6 (BT6)	Female	White	24	First
Teacher 7 (BT7)	Female	White	28	First
Teacher 8 (BT8)	Male	Black	30	Second

The interviews took place at a designated location off-site. To prepare the participants for the interview, I sent each of them a copy of the interview questions beforehand. Each participant was asked to answer eight open-ended questions (see Appendix B). I conducted two or three one-on-one interviews each week for 3 weeks. Each participant was interviewed once for 45-60 minutes. We explored their experiences with the modified induction program to understand which modifications helped improve professional competencies and which needed further revision to improve the induction program. I asked clarifying and probing questions during each interview to ensure clarity and depth. Each interview was recorded using a digital voice recorder and transcribed within a day. The interviews and transcriptions took 7 weeks.

### **Data Tracking**

As soon as the first interview was completed I began recording notes of my reactions to participant responses that were audio recorded, as accurately as possible into

a reflective journal. The journal provided a visual means of recording my thoughts, biases, and a critical self-reflection of each interview experience. The journal notes were dated and recorded by the alphanumeric code to identify each participant.

After I transcribed each interview, I reviewed, and re-read each transcription marking notations of reoccurring words in the margins. I identified text segments of similar words and underscored them, and I assigned an identifying tag or phrase to begin the coding process. The data were marked by hand with various highlighters searching for repeated words, surprising information, different and similar information, or anything a participant stated as explicitly important to them. I reduced the large volume of data by looking for similar codes to combine into a major idea and going back to the data to find examples that supported commonalities. I used colored sticky notes to mark recurring themed categories that emerged after coding. I also summarized the responses of each participant to organize information and to gain insight into each theme that described BTs perceptions of modifications to the current induction program.

Throughout the data collection process, I used my personal, password-protected computer to store all electronic data. Any study-related documents such as my reflective journal, or participant consent forms were stored in a locked file cabinet in a storage room in my home.

### **Findings**

The major findings from detailed information provided by participants formed six themes. The themes that emerged through the initial analysis of coding were useful

training (received in modified induction program), supportive factors in program, hindering factors in program, help provided for student learning, value of training to the novice, and suggestions for improvement to the modified induction program. Displayed below are the identifying key words that were reduced to six major themes.

Table 2

*Themes After Coding BTs' Perceptions of Modified Induction Program*

<b>Useful training</b>	Mentor/mentee sessions Professional Development Monthly group meetings
<b>Supportive factors in program</b>	Helpful mentor Reflections/observations with mentor Help from other teachers Assistance from paraprofessionals
<b>Hindering factors in program</b>	Timing of training....rushed/overwhelmed No school related "basic stuff" Too many sessions on test taking/scores
<b>Skills provided for student learning</b>	All reading programs Differentiated instruction Technology in the classroom Classroom management strategies
<b>Value of training to novice</b>	Feel more confident Prepared and knowledgeable Learn a variety of teaching strategies Help from non-judgmental mentor
<b>Suggestions for improvement to the modified induction program</b>	<b>More classroom management strategies</b> <b>Urban community norms</b> <b>Policies, procedures, building logistics</b> <b>Understanding the student population</b> <b>Communicating with parents</b>

**Theme 1: Useful Training Received In the Modified Induction Program**

The three elements or layers of useful training were mentor/mentee sessions, professional development and monthly group meetings with other novice teachers,

mentors and veteran teachers. The mentor/mentee sessions, scheduled weekly, gave BTs an opportunity to observe and reflect with their mentor, discuss their day and ask questions. Within the layer of professional development, it was acknowledged by many participants that there were several topics offered (differentiated instruction, content area reading, data into information, Inspiration/Kidspiration individualized reading strategies, conflict resolution, managing challenging behaviors, multiple intelligences unpacking the standards, assessment tools and student portfolios); however, there was heavy emphasis placed on curriculum and improving test scores. Table 3 highlights the reoccurring BT comments about the professional development offered. BTs felt the monthly meetings were beneficial as all teachers were present and current issues or teacher responsibilities were discussed (curriculum and assessment alignment, daily assessment practices, how to create and use classroom data, record keeping, completing progress reports, best practices of teaching, examining and evaluating student classwork/homework, the effective use of rubrics, using cooperative learning for students not on task, whole group and small group focus understanding state standards etc.) BTs commented that the collaboration and interaction between novice and veteran teachers provided new perspectives on classroom responsibilities. Additionally, BTs enjoyed the interaction and collaboration that was a part of the monthly group meetings. Novice teachers returning for a second year commented on the organization and useful content of the modified induction program, however; timing of training was a concern.



Table 3

*Reoccurring BT Comments About Professional Development Offered*

Participant Codes	Comments
Teacher 1 (BT1)	No “new teacher” sessions...
Teacher 2 (BT2)	Most related to curriculum and student achievement...
Teacher 3 (BT3)	Back to back right before school...
Teacher 4 (BT4)	It would help if PDs were not all at the start of school...
Teacher 5 (BT5)	Data driven training to increase test scores...
Teacher 6 (BT6)	Most training is about test taking and test scores...
Teacher 7 (BT7)	Instructional strategies related to standardized testing...
Teacher 8 (BT8)	Curriculum based PDs...

**Theme 2: Supportive Factors in the Modified Induction Program**

Some of the supportive factors described by BTs included a helpful mentor, time provided for reflections and observations with mentor, assistance from paraprofessionals and other staff. BTs were able to express that mentors met their expectations on both availability and communication. BTs recognized the importance of a positive mentor/mentee relationship. The beginning of the school year was the only time BTs spoke of mentor unavailability due to the task of preparing for the first days of school. BT5 stated, “I would not have made it some days without my mentor.” BT6 stated, “I feel that my mentor teacher and I have a very good relationship. We communicate before and after school about the day and tomorrow’s agenda.” Overall, the mentors have established good rapport with beginning teachers. Additionally, when time is scheduled for mentee/mentor observations and reflection BTs commented on the learning that takes place. BT7 stated, “Watching my mentor makes teaching seem easy. She has suggested

that I take notes when I have the chance to observe.” Other support in the form of assistance from paraprofessionals has been helpful, but not consistent. BTs do not feel they can depend on this support as paraprofessionals are often called away for other school duties. Help from other teachers is not always a common occurrence as well. While BT1 has observed other teachers offering to help BTs, BT4 noticed teachers who isolate themselves, caused BT to feel alone and isolated. When speaking of supportive factors in the induction program, BTs would like more support from administration and other staff in the way of communication. BT2 mentioned never having a visit from the principal. Figure 1 highlights the level of communication BTs had with mentors, administration and others in the school.

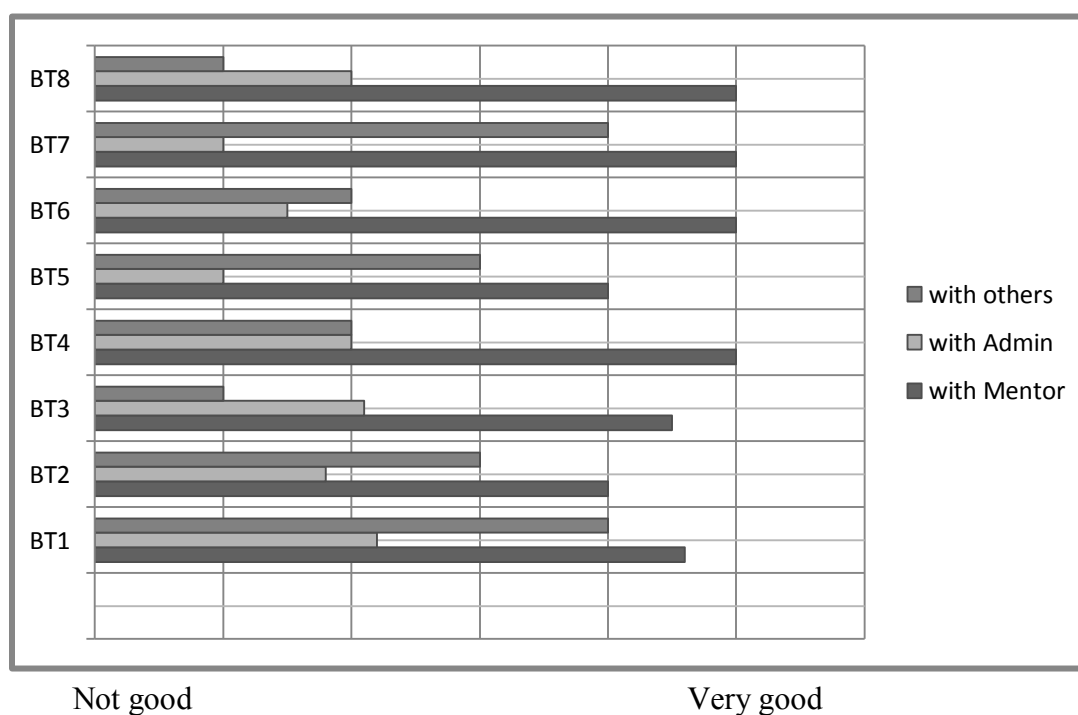


Figure 1: BTs communication with mentors, administrators and others.

### **Theme 3: Hindering Factors Impacting the Success of the Modified Induction**

#### **Program**

Timing of the training was repeated by several BTs as a hindering factor to the modified induction program. Implementation of the induction program was scheduled one week before the start of school, at the same time of the mandated PDs required by the state. BTs were seeking new teacher orientation that would offer school specific information pertaining to policies and procedures. There was no time allocated for room preparation, organization of needed resources, and planning. BTs spent time in their classrooms after work and the weekend to prepare for the first day of school. Another hindering factor impacting the success of the modified induction program was no training specific to what a new teacher may experience while working with a 100% African-American student population living in poverty. Studies indicate that students living in poverty are more likely to have social conduct problems, emotional instability, low test scores on standardized test, high drop-out rates and plagued with gang violence (Gregory et al., 2010; Olson & Anderson, 2007; Payne, 2009). Table 4 lists comments mentioned by participants that may have interfered with the quality of induction received as well.

Table 4

*Reoccurring BT Comments About Hindering Factors to the Induction Program*

Participant Codes	Comments
Teacher 1 (BT1)	Timing...the first week was crazy with room prep, records, etc...
Teacher 2 (BT2)	No “basic stuff” offered...scrambling for schedules, supplies, etc.
Teacher 3 (BT3)	Timing was a problem...couldn’t focus thinking about room!
Teacher 4 (BT4)	Less test taking strategies...
Teacher 5 (BT5)	Need a smoother transition first week of school...felt rushed...
Teacher 6 (BT6)	Nothing about our school was discussed...
Teacher 7 (BT7)	Felt a little unorganized...too much at once in a hurried fashion
Teacher 8 (BT8)	Logistics of the work environment...felt lost first week of school..

The hindering factors described by BTs were counterproductive to the modified induction program as the intent of the program was to improve novice teachers’ abilities to perform their responsibilities within the practice of teaching. The hindering factors contributed to BTs feeling unprepared for the responsibilities of the classroom once students began to arrive the first week of school. Some BTs described themselves as feeling overwhelmed due to timing of training, and no dissemination of “basic” school specific knowledge. Participants were provided ample tools for student academics, but no instruction for daily policies and procedures. BT7 described the first week of school as a nightmare as everyone was busy trying to get organized, locate daily schedules, and establish routines. BTs not having a clear understanding of daily operations was a hindrance to teacher performance, and had an effect on classroom management.

**Theme 4: Specific Skills Provided for Student Learning**

Participants did express acquiring skills in the areas of differentiated instruction,

technology usage, classroom management and reading strategies as helpful factors to student learning. Novice teachers returning for a second school year were knowledgeable of the reading deficits of the students they teach. All BTs remarked of the value of the reading workshops and training instructing them on how to use computer based reading programs in the classroom. Many of the computer based reading programs were designed for self-paced learning. BT8 stated, “The Kidspiration/Inspiration reading segment gave me ways to set my room up for independent student reading and learning using the computer...it works as an incentive also.” Differentiated instruction was noted as helpful due to the different levels of academic performance within one grade. Teachers were provided curriculum tools for individualizing class assignments. Technology was discussed as a way to increase student engagement during lessons. Learning how to use the new Smart Board equipment and integrate technology into daily lessons was very helpful for BTs. Classroom management was discussed as a necessity to teaching and learning so that classroom lessons can run smoothly without disruptive behaviors. BT1 stated, “Some days I am not sure how much learning takes place in my room due to the sidebar conversations, bullying, and insubordination.” BT6 stated, “The Managing Challenging Behaviors was a right on time PD, but it did not cover some of the off the wall things kids do (name calling, stealing, cursing etc.)” BTs would like classroom management training that would help them redirect inappropriate student behaviors that interferes with learning. BTs were in agreement of receiving sufficient help to teach test taking strategies (for example, multiple choice questions and constructed response

questions) and using previous student data to determine weaknesses to help increase test scores. However, increasing test scores was still a concern as BTs felt pressure to make improvements in an already failing area.

### **Theme 5: Value of Training to the Novice**

There were four elements of the training that participants recognized as valuable to them as a novice; having more confidence, feeling prepared and knowledgeable, learning a variety of teaching strategies and receiving help from a non-judgmental mentor. There was a consensus among BTs with no experience other than student teaching, that the training did build confidence and provided adequate information about the expectations of teaching and learning. BTs noted that the PDs provided a variety of teaching strategies. BT5 stated, “For me, all the classroom information has been the best and I keep trying different strategies all the time”. Most participants were grateful to gain any additional skills or strategies not learned in teacher education programs; just needed more time to absorb it all. The mentor emerged as the most value to the novice in settling into their assigned positions or new role of classroom teacher. The mentor has been emphasized as the pivotal position in the induction program. BTs expressed how just having someone to talk to helped them during difficult times in the classroom. BT5 stated, “I would not have made it some days without my mentor.” The mentor is the one person BTs can depend on when reflecting on their day or seeking solutions to problems that may occur during the course of a day. Overall, BTs are pleased to be working in a district that does provide new teacher induction. BT2 stated, “I definitely know more now

than I did walking in the door of my classroom.” This statement was the overall sentiment of most participants.

### **Theme 6: Suggestions for Improvement of the Modified Induction Program**

Suggestions for improving the modified induction program were more classroom management strategies, awareness of urban community norms, dissemination of policies, procedures and building logistics, understanding the student population and learning how to communicate with the parents of students. BTs want classroom management skills they can use to keep students on task, organized, engaged and academically involved with the learning process. BTs expressed a desire of becoming a teacher with strong classroom management skills to avoid a disorderly classroom. Some BTs have never worked in an urban environment and would like to become knowledgeable about the community they work in. There were some stories shared about students arriving to school unclean, hungry, or too emotional to function. BT5 stated, “There is not a day that goes by that a student doesn’t come in with some horrifying story I have to listen to – then I wonder how I’m supposed to turn around and teach...whatever skill that is...we need it!” BTs want to understand the student population (their home environment, socioeconomic status etc.) BT1 stated, “Bottom line I guess, is that kids are kids no matter where you are, but I think not having an urban education background will slow me down without some help...and soon.” Several participants mentioned how many of their students do not live with parents and are unsure how to interact and involve guardians or other relatives (serving as temporary guardians) in the learning process. Two other

participants presented another scenario of parents that seem to have a “don’t care or don’t want to be bothered” attitude. BTs would like assistance in communicating with parents or guardians and encouraging parental involvement. This is a skill the modified induction program had not addressed. With all the professional development that BTs were involved in there was no session to discuss routine school policies and procedures (arrival and departure procedures, attendance recording, tardy and absenteeism records, lunch procedures, lavatory schedules, obtaining copies and other classroom supplies, school suspensions etc.) Becoming knowledgeable of routine school policies and procedures is important to BTs feeling confident with their daily responsibilities. BT3, stated, “I feel like some of my students know more than me about how the school functions.” Participants were eager to offer suggestions for improvement to the modified induction program. Some of the reoccurring comments by participants about improving the modified induction program are listed in table 5.

Table 5

*Reoccurring BT Comments for Improvement to the Modified Induction Program*

Participant Codes	Comments
Teacher 1 (BT1)	More time for reflection to achieve correction...
Teacher 2 (BT2)	Diversity training to understand students/parents...
Teacher 3 (BT3)	Provide community background...
Teacher 4 (BT4)	Need help understanding the urban community...
Teacher 5 (BT5)	Never worked with students like this....need help understanding
Teacher 6 (BT6)	Give us the necessary routines, policies, procedures, etc....
Teacher 7 (BT7)	Get to know my students better....and they understand me as well
Teacher 8 (BT8)	Communicating with the parents of my students...



### **Themes Across Participant Summaries**

According to Knowles (2011) adult learners are responsive to growth and learning when there are external motivators present; in this instance, the need for improved capabilities in performing their responsibilities within the practice of teaching. This coincides with the state mandate of providing a quality induction program that is invaluable to the long term success of the novice and the school district (MDE, 2012). In all eight interviews, discussion of the multilayered program indicated that BTs were learning and gaining knowledge. Conversely, the layers of the program, mentoring, professional development, and teacher collaboration during monthly meetings, were not entirely successful in meeting all the needs of the novice teacher. While each level was beneficial, BTs noted areas for improvement. Six of the eight participants (or 75%) noted availability of their mentor for various types of support when needed; however, BTs would like increased availability of their mentors during the beginning of the school year. This substantiates the requirement that each new teacher have an active and competent mentor available for orientation, reflection, and observation (MDE, 2012). Even though the monthly meetings and collaboration provided consistent learning and interaction with other teachers, BTs would like daily communication with all teachers and administrators as additional supportive factors. Professional development experiences focused heavily on aspects of academic achievement and test scores (curriculum guidelines, data, evaluation and pre-test implementation), as opposed to a focus on developing teachers able to understand and provide learning for the urban student. Five out of eight

participants (or 63%) expressed the need for skills to understand students, parents, and the community. BTs expected some basic training related specifically to school context; norms, policies and procedures. Seven out of eight (or 88%) of participants, would like professional development on classroom management strategies specific to the population they serve; a 100% African-American student population living in poverty. This need links to the theme of suggested improvements to offer training that will provide insights on the community and students served. The timing of the training was a concern for four of the eight BTs (or 50%) of the sample. The new teacher induction was one week prior to the start of school, at the same time general PDs are implemented. BTs felt this not only diminished the focus on the needs of the novice teacher, but also affected BTs feelings of being overwhelmed with too much information at the beginning of the school year.

### **Discrepant Cases and Nonconforming Data**

The themes that emerged from the study were consistent with the majority of the data that were collected. There were no discrepant cases in the study; however, BT8 and BT3 were the only two participants who did not feel that their mentor was available for observation, reflection and assistance with the responsibilities of teaching. According to BT3 she had no mentor upon initial assignment to the classroom. BT8 noted that not having a mentor available impacted his feelings about competency to perform the responsibilities of teaching.

### **Evidence of Quality**

In this section, I presented the findings of novice teachers' experience with the modified induction program currently used in an urban Midwestern school district. I followed the data collection and analysis procedures that align with the research method and approach used. I conducted a thorough analysis of the data and data segments to ensure themes were concisely identified. An interview protocol was used to guide each interview. Also, all interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in their entirety. Because transcription is an interpretative activity (Lodico et al., 2010) I performed a transcript review of all interviews to ensure the audio-taped spoken words were transcribed correctly into written text. Following the transcript review of each interview, the participants were provided copies of their respective transcriptions to complete member checking.

Member checking allowed me to ensure my portrayal of the participant's experiences was accurate. After reading the verbatim transcriptions of the study, none of the participants noted any errors or requested any changes. Participants acknowledged and verified the accuracy of the data collected via their transcribed interviews.

I used my personal, password-protected computer to store all electronic data in password-protected documents and hard copies were kept in a locked file cabinet to which I maintain sole access. In my field relations, I was sensitive, honest, and non-judgmental; all crucial characteristics of good researchers and successful field relations

(Lodico et al., 2010). I followed explicitly the research procedures approved by the IRB at Walden University.

### **Summary**

In this section, I provided a description of the research design and how it was derived logically from the problem and overarching research question, criteria for participants, the data collection process to be followed, and procedures for data analysis. I concluded this section with how and when data were analyzed with evidence of credibility and a presentation of study findings with identification of themes after completion of coding BTs responses.

This study was guided by the central research question and aligned to open-ended interview questions.. I identified six themes in the data collected from the participants' interview responses. Based on the identified themes (useful training received, supportive factors in induction program, hindering factors in induction program, specific skills to help with student learning, value of training to the novice, and suggestions for improvement) a pre-orientation professional development project focusing on novice teachers' concerns was presented to the district.

Section 3 will include an overview, rationale for using a professional development format, a literature review [of what?] and a discussion of the professional development project for novice teachers.

## Section 3: The Project

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban school district. Section 3 provides a brief description of the project, project goals, a rationale, and a review of the literature addressing the project. The section concludes with an evaluation of the project and the implications of the project.

### **Description and Goals**

A four and one-half day pre-orientation for novice teachers (PONT) was the project for novice teachers working in this Midwestern school district. PONT is an appropriate outcome of the project study because the data revealed that, while current modifications were beneficial, preparing novices while they are teaching full-time does not provide enough time to transition from a student teacher to an educator responsible for the education of students. Project PONT will provide a distinctive opportunity for new teachers to learn additional skills and become familiar with the school environment. Gaining an in-depth understanding of practices specific to the school context is crucial for a beginning teacher (Cuddapah & Clayton, 2011; Kardos & Johnson, 2010). Project PONT will make it possible to address the concerns of novice teachers, for example, students and parents, understanding the community, feeling defeated, uninformed (about school specific information), and overwhelmed with classroom responsibilities. Additionally, this program will afford mentees extra time with their mentor prior to the

start of the school year. The beginning of school was the one time BTs spoke of mentors' unavailability, because everyone was working to prepare classrooms and lessons for the first day of class.

- The findings of the study led me to develop a pre-orientation consisting of professional development sessions that offered additional skills not currently incorporated in the modified induction program. The PONT project was delivered using mentoring sessions (mentor/mentee), collegial sharing (consulting teachers, mentors, mentees) and presentations by various speakers (administrators/school stakeholders). Each of the four and one-half days will have a different focus to provide an additional layer of new teacher preparation specific to their new environment. The goals of PONT were as follows: Introduce and develop interpersonal relationships between BTs and school administrators, BTs and mentors, and BTs and other novice teachers.
- Equip BTs with all the necessary supplies, policies, procedures and routines of their specific school.
- Develop an understanding of community, students, and how to communicate with parents or guardians of students in the local setting.
- Create culturally responsive teachers by advancing classroom management skills specific to the 100% African-American student body in

this urban school district. Skills were provided to maximize learning and reduce misbehavior.

- Provide assistance with record keeping, technology usage, and best practices of instructional strategies.
- Offer additional training before the start of the school year to prevent feelings of being overwhelmed.

Not all themes from the findings are covered in PONT goals as not all themes relate to the project. Michigan Department of Education recommendations of assessment practices and familiarity of school curriculum have been excluded from project as they are already a part of the modified induction program. All PowerPoint presentations for PONT are original and created by the project coordinator. The main points or agenda topics of other presentations without PowerPoints have been developed by me. All speakers selected have the experience and expertise to present during PONT using outlines and not reading information verbatim (to prevent losing the interest of participants). The only exception to materials not created by me is the information mandated by the Michigan Department of Education and presented by the MDE appointed education specialist (Responsibilities in Induction Programs and the Novice Checklist). These materials will supplement the handouts provided to PONT participants. The MDE has appointed an education specialist to oversee all improvements or training that may ultimately improve the district's annual yearly progress. PONT has been

designed with quality delivery methods that best fits the needs of a professional development program with multiple layers of learning.

The literature supports a professional development experience that brings new teachers together to learn and augment the experience of new teacher induction (Cuddapah & Clayton, 2011; Marker, Mitchall & Lassiter, Jr., 2013). Although the concept of professional development is not new, it is addressing an additional layer of skills to help BTs adapt to the school environment.

### **Rationale**

This project emerged out of the findings presented in Section 2. The project addressed the problem of BTs inability to perform in the classroom, and will remove the deficiencies in the current induction program. The project of professional development is also an appropriate genre for ensuring the goals of the modified induction program are met. The PONT project was in a small setting for the purpose of providing the gap in practice needed for teachers to be successful. Additionally, the small setting was conducive for offering encouragement and support to BTs. Research supports the need for new teachers to undergo multiple layers of learning (mentoring, professional development, collegial sharing etc.) to improve performance within the practice of teaching. (Kumi-Yeboah & James, 2012; Marshall, Karvonen, Yell, Lowrey, Drasgow & Seaman, 2013). The addition of another layer (pre-orientation) may help BTs feel more confident and involved in the school community while performing the responsibilities of teaching.



Addressing the issue of new teacher induction with the novice as the “learner” is based on the adult learning theory of Knowles. Knowles (2011) explained that adult learners are responsive to growth and learning when there are external motivators present. In this instance, improving teacher induction to meet the needs of teachers working in an urban school district, may improve the capabilities of beginning teachers. All sessions were led by experienced educators within the district (administrators, consulting teachers, mentors and the Educational Specialist). The Educational Specialist is a state of Michigan appointee provided to assist and oversee projects that will improve teaching, learning, and teacher retention. This appointment was made due to the failing status of the school district as it pertains to state of Michigan’s rankings from standardized testing. These sessions will complement the current induction program, and additional professional development that occurs during the school year. The pre-orientation will increase the number of professional development sessions for BTs outside the state mandate of five sessions per year.

The data from the project study indicates multiple needs of the novice teacher prior to taking on the full responsibilities within the practice of teaching; thus I reviewed the literature to ascertain the most appropriate way to format professional development to enhance modifications to the current induction program. The literature indicates that professional development supported by colleagues, immersed in reflective inquiry of the practice of teaching, is an effective way to build the expertise of the novice (Hammerness & Matsko, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Yonezawa et al., 2011).

## **Review of the Literature**

The local problem of providing comprehensive and consistent induction to beginning teachers was previously addressed by modifying the current program. After exploring beginning teachers' perceptions of these modifications, Project PONT, a four and one-half day specialized professional development was the appropriate genre. According to the research, induction programs that have a balance between acquiring pedagogical skills and subject-matter content work best (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Marker et al., 2013; Schultz & Ravitch, 2012). The current modified induction program emphasizes subject-matter content focusing on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and providing data to assist teachers in the planning and development of learning activities. PONT has been designed to offer pedagogical skills (classroom organization, arrangement of student desks and classroom objects, classroom management, improved student-teacher interactions and communication) to support productive and effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

The findings revealed teachers feel unprepared to assume their new role in the classroom, due to a lack of information about school policies and procedures, building logistics, community norms, the student population, communicating with parents and strategies for classroom management. PONT has been designed to complement the existing induction program by adding an additional layer of training in these specific areas. PONT training will take place prior to the beginning of the school year, preventing BTs from feeling overwhelmed and unprepared for the responsibilities of teaching and

learning. An unprepared teacher may affect the quality of education received by the students they teach. Many studies have been conducted that validate the importance of a well-prepared teacher for improved student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013; Grierson, 2010; Margolin, 2011; Wood & Borg, 2010). The primary focus of PONT is to provide relevant professional development that will help shape the educational growth of the novice into a quality educator. The additional skills offered in PONT will help stabilize and complement the existing induction program for beginning teachers in this Midwestern urban district.

The development of the project is guided by Malcolm Knowles (2011) theory of adult learning. One of the fundamental prerequisites of the Knowles learning theory is that “Adults have a deep need to be self-directing; therefore, the role of the teacher is to engage them in a process of mutual inquiry...” (Knowles, 2011, p. 39). To fulfill this requirement PONT will offer group sessions and collaboration among participants. Collaboration and group sessions will provide opportunities for resource sharing and problem solving. Several data sources were used to gather literature related to the topic of this project: Education Research Complete, ProQuest Central, ERIC, Sage Premier, American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the NEA Foundation, state educational agencies, peer reviewed journals, scholarly works, and books.

The key terms used were: *policies, reform, mentoring, professional, development, teacher, induction, education, and novice*. The literature review will address

professional development as an appropriate delivery format for PONT, professional development in response to Michigan's induction mandate, quality induction with veteran teachers as mentors and consulting teachers, professional development that addresses culturally responsive teaching, professional development that improves professional resiliency, professional development that enhances classroom management and professional development that simultaneously maximizes classroom management and student achievement.

### **Professional Development as an Appropriate Delivery Format for PONT**

The format of professional development has become an integral platform for the successful dissemination of information to educators (Bell, Wilson, Higgins, & McCoach, 2010; Koellner & Jacobs, 2014 & Marrongelle, Sztajn & Smith, 2013). Professional development is for supporting and developing educators in a professional role, and focuses on what can be controlled; the quality of teaching (Marrongelle et al., 2013). Participants of PONT will learn strategies for developing into the role of quality teachers, working in an urban school district. Professional development is designed to emphasize teaching teachers, using what they already know and building on that expertise to improve their teaching (Koellner & Jacobs, 2014). Participants of PONT will learn additional skills for teaching and learning specific to what may work best for their community of students. When teachers have an opportunity to become fully prepared for the responsibilities of their classroom, student learning may also improve (Marrongelle et al., 2013).

Professional development (PD) format assembly can be general (experience for participants is in response to a current goal or school circumstance), or the assembly can be specific (activities designed to ensure a particular, predetermined experience will occur). The professional development activities created for PONT are specific for new teacher learning. The professional development will address new teacher concerns as discussed in the study and was aligned with the Michigan Department of Education state standards for induction.

A description of what constitutes successful professional development aimed at bringing educators together for support and learning include: planned active learning, discussing best practices, reflecting together, planning and executing lesson plans, having a protocol for collaboration among teachers, and a structure that is aligned with the school district's goals and state standards (Bell et al., 2010 & Marrongelle et al., 2013). Participants attending PONT will have an opportunity to discuss and learn by partaking in activities with the aforementioned characteristics.

### **Professional Development in Response to Michigan's Induction Mandate**

The modifications to the current induction program in this district were based on Michigan Legislature Section 1526. The Michigan Department of Education (2012) indicated that districts meeting the standards of inducting their new teachers into the profession are also exceeding expectations of the 1526 mandate by offering additional training. This district is in compliance with the requirement of five days of professional development each year a teacher is a novice. The PONT project will exceed this

requirement by offering an additional five days of professional development prior to the beginning of the school year. Activities that qualify for beginning teacher professional development under the 1526 mandate include mentoring, group study, workshops to support new teachers' classroom needs, instructional training of technology to enhance strategies for student learning, and school orientation and protocols. The goals of the PONT project are aligned in response to Michigan's induction mandate.

### **Quality Induction With Veteran Teachers as Mentors and Consulting Teachers**

When identifying ways to improve support for beginning teachers, mentors play a substantial role in what the novice teacher will learn (Desimone, Hochberg, Porter, Polikoff, Schwartz & Johnson, 2014; Gargani & Strong, 2014; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Papay & Johnson, 2011). The mentors were assigned by the principal or district based on critical aspects such as discipline, grade-level, or familiarity with the same population of students (Desimone et al., 2012; Johnson & Birkeland, 2013; Loughran, 2011; Stanulis et al., 2012). This district's current mentors were used for the additional four and one-half days of training. Furthermore, two additional veteran teachers designated as consulting teachers in the district, will provide mentoring and support during the project. Consulting teachers have reduced classroom assignments to meet the responsibilities of mentoring and assessment on a consistent basis throughout the school year. Both mentors and consulting teachers will conduct mentoring duties for PONT's additional layer of training as outlined by the state of Michigan (assist in overall professional development of BTs, participate in group activities, share information about school climate, policies and

procedures, help BTs establish reflective routines to reflect on his/her practice and offer encouragement and support). Providing an additional layer of assistance may help to support novice teachers in the responsibilities of teaching (Goodwin, Smith, Souto-Manning, Cheruvu, Tan, Red & Taveras, 2014; Papay & Johnson, 2011). The project will provide an extra opportunity for BTs to be with assigned mentor for learning and assistance prior to the start of school. Additionally, BTs will have the opportunity to learn from all veteran teachers, not just their assigned mentor. Even though the assigned mentors will meet most of the concerns of assigned mentees during the course of the project, beginning teachers will have a need to ask questions of others who are not their mentor. Novice interactions with veteran teachers other than their mentor, (during PONT, during other PDs, or any time during the school day) can be considered informal mentoring valuable to the learning process (Desimone et al., 2014; Louhran, 2011). All collegial exchanges that can improve teachers' work lives are critical to beginning teachers improving in the responsibilities of teaching (Desimone et al., 2014; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Stanulis, Little & Wibbens, 2012).

### **Professional Development that Addresses Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Research indicates that teachers in today's classrooms have different racial backgrounds and contrasting dialects than their students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). This is the case within the district in this study. The 70% White teaching staff does not represent the demographics of the district's 100% African-American population. Teacher interviews revealed acknowledgement of the racial and cultural

differences, and that the current induction was deficient in instructing BTs how to address the needs of urban children (emotional, social ethnic, and cognitive). Seven of the eight beginning teachers (6 White, 1 Black) interviewed admitted to having no direct contact with African-American children in a classroom setting. Educators who have no authentic experience with African-American students are easily coached into believing negative stereotypes and have an imperfect perspective of African Americans; these educators would benefit from induction that addresses culturally responsive teaching (Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Papay, West, Fullerton & Kane, 2012; Pollack, 2012). Culturally responsive teaching will impart to students that the teacher is aware of their emotional, social ethnic and cognitive needs (Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Papay et al., 2012; Pollack, 2012). The PONT project will explicitly address teachers' specific questions and help BTs become culturally responsive to the population they are serving. Programs that offer "content-specific" information related to demographics, experiences, and practices of the community and student body support an easier transition into the role of urban teacher (Bogges, 2010; Hammerness & Matsko, 2013). Culturally responsive induction is a means of preventing adverse conditions related to race ethnicity, language, or negative philosophies, approaches, and attitudes towards teaching and learning (Hammerness & Matsko, 2013). Participants want help understanding and skills necessary to address disruptive and inappropriate behavior, insubordination, the home environment, emotional hardships, socioeconomic status etc. PONT will not only provide information and concepts around culturally relevant teaching, the program will also



address interpersonal relationships between student and teacher. African-American urban students most often respond to teachers able to establish a community and family type classroom environment (Bogges, 2010; Pollack, 2013). Culturally responsive training may help BTs manage student behavior for leaning and have students agree to cooperate in the leaning process (Bogges, 2010; Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Pollack, 2013; Quartz et al, 2008; Solomon, 2009). The district's Dean of Students will share statistical information on incidents of uncooperative student behavior, and veteran teachers will offer strategies for maintaining a community and family type classroom environment.

### **Professional Development that Improves Professional Resiliency**

The findings of the study revealed that participants often felt defeated, tired, or exhibited pessimistic feelings due to days of non-productivity, incomplete lesson plans, and multiple interruptions due to disruptive behavior. Also noted, were inconsistencies with assistive efforts (in the form of a teacher's aide or preparation time) causing teacher disappointment and delays in executing planned activities. These adverse conditions may be minimized by increasing professional resilience. The connection between teacher resiliency and the classroom environment has become increasingly evident as the literature highlights the importance of student-teacher relationships and student academic gains (Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013; Grierson, 2010; Liberman & Mace, 2008; Yonezawa et al., 2011). Those who study resilient teachers list some of the characteristics needed to be resilient teachers as insightful, creative, persistent, determined, optimistic, humorous and most of all flexible (Christman & McClellan, 2008; Kardos & Johnson, 2010; Liberman

& Mace, 2008; Yonezawa et al., 2011). Participants attending the PONT project were encouraged to network and assist each other in developing characteristics of a resilient teacher; turning an arduous day into a manageable day. There is also evidence that professional resilience in teachers is noticed as they surround themselves with supportive educators who provide assistance as needed, model best practices on a daily basis, and genuinely care about their development as quality teachers (Goldhaber, Gross & Player, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Liberman & Mace, 2008 & Yonezawa et al., 2011). Participation in PONT is a proactive step to begin developing teacher resiliency as mentors, mentees, and consulting teachers engage in activities and communication to inspire each other. Also, BTs attending PONT will have a resource of new teachers, mentors and consulting teachers for daily support. Beginning teachers need support for sharing daily experiences, classroom problems, problem solving, nurturing student success, reviewing student data, resource sharing, and ongoing affirmation for effective classroom management (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Crafton & Kaiser, 2011; Cuddapah & Clayton, 2011; Grierson, 2010). Veteran teachers will represent the standard for BTs to witness and model for building teacher resiliency.

### **Professional Development that Enhances Classroom Management Skills**

Teachers play an enormous role in how students behave in the classroom. When there is a disconnection between teacher and student, conflict will arise in the classroom (Milner & Tenore, 2010). There is a disconnect between teacher and student at the research site due to teachers' unfamiliarity about students' home lives and cultural

values. A disconnection between teacher and student will often result in insubordination by students who feel that their teacher is not concerned about their performance or success (Milner & Tenroe, 2010; Siy & Cheryan, 2013). Information from the PONT project will stress that teachers often have to undertake varied roles that urban students may lack in their homes; a mother figure, father figure etc. or someone to talk to. If students sense teachers are disrespectful and do not care, subconsciously students misbehave as a way of distancing themselves from teachers they feel do not like them; this cycle continues until the teacher loses all control (Milner & Tenroe, 2010; Siy & Cheryan, 2013). Participants of PONT will learn the multiple family roles teachers may need to exhibit in a culturally responsive classroom and introduce beginning teachers to activities outside the classroom where such roles can develop. For instance, a student who has one or both parents in prison may benefit from a non-academic social club after school, led by their teacher. To further prevent student teacher disconnections, teachers should refrain from disciplinary actions that are punitive or embarrassing (Milner & Tenroe, 2010; Mundschenk, Miner & Nastally, 2011). A common embarrassing disciplinary approach used by beginning teachers is to remove a misbehaving student from the classroom. This resembles removing non-law-abiding adults from the community. Students in urban classrooms with incarcerated parents will develop a disconnect with the teacher when “prison-like” consequences are used (Milner & Tenroe, 2010). New teachers attending PONT will receive assistance with strategies for instructing students to use self-monitoring techniques (Mundschenk et al., 2011) allowing

students to track inappropriate behaviors that need self-correction. Veteran teachers assisting with the PONT project will help BTs create a disciplinary plan for their classrooms.

### **Professional Development that Simultaneously Maximizes Classroom Management and Student Achievement**

To maximize classroom management and student achievement BTs will need assistance in the area of classroom organization; classroom layout, the symbolic environment (objects and decorations), and how to create a welcoming and structured learning environment. To help the novice teacher with effectiveness from the first day of school, veteran teachers working in the PONT program will assist beginning teachers with proper classroom layout and design. The physical environment of the classroom influences student achievement and can determine the frequency of disruptive and off-task behavior (Cheryan, Ziegler, Plaut, & Meltzoff, 2014; Siy & Cheryan, 2013; Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). Furniture arrangement of student desks is a crucial element of classroom layout. For optimum learning BTs will want to be cognizant of the amount of student interaction a chosen layout may cause. Changeable layouts will help teachers accomplish various objectives; clustered arrangements for example, are an excellent choice for group work, but; can create more disorderly conduct than desks in rows (Cheryan et al., 2014). Additionally, consideration must be given for tasks that demand students view the board or computer screen.

Objects and decorations displayed in the classroom contribute to the symbolic environment. The symbolic environment is symbols students see in the classroom that may influence performance and shape aspirations (Cheryan et al., 2014). Veteran teachers will help beginning teachers use symbols that celebrate minorities in positive images. For example, having a wall of notable African-Americans who have made a positive contribution to society may help reduce racial achievement gaps that exist between various ethnic groups (Cheryan et al., 2014; Tanner, 2008). Symbols can influence academic outcomes by encouraging students to advance above stereotypical career roles of athletes or entertainers, to professions as doctors, scientists, or engineers. When students view objects that validate their societal existence, student achievement improves (Cheryan et al., 2014; Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008).

It is also imperative that the visual appearance of the classroom communicate to students, a non-verbal statement that their teacher has a welcoming and structured learning environment (Cheryan et al., 2014; Tanner, 2008; Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). From the first day of class, students are aware of cues that indicate whether they are valued, and encouraged by the teacher. Students notice if there is a welcome sign, artwork or colorful decorations, a class pet, carpeting, a comfortable sitting area, and a clean classroom. The visual atmosphere of a welcoming classroom reduces student-teacher disconnects and may remove the demographic divide associated with race ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). If a disconnect between teacher and student occurs due to the visual appearance of the classroom, a

student may misbehave as a sign of protest against the teacher. To maintain structure, BTs will want to be prepared with classroom rules, procedures, and consequences that are visually posted; otherwise students may exhibit less than appropriate behavior and become non-engaged during lessons. To maximize learning for all students, research recommends a classroom appearance that visually signals to students that they are valued, have adequate space to learn, see objects that value and represent their ethnicity, and are provided constant visual reminders for acceptable classroom behavior (Cheryan et al., 2014; Siy & Cheryan, 2013; Tanner, 2008; Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). Maximizing both classroom management and student achievement can be accomplished with attention given to classroom layout, classroom symbols, and a welcoming and structured environment. The PONT project will provide adequate time for this essential task to ensure optimal functioning and prevent overwhelmed feelings for BTs.

## **Implementation**

### **Resources, Supports, and Potential Barriers**

**Needed resources.** First, I will act as coordinator for the PONT project to ensure proper implementation. Next, I will prepared and organized training binders that were provided for each participant with the necessary program inserts (not previously used in the modified induction program) that have been developed for PONT: (unless otherwise noted these handouts are outlined within the Project, Appendix A)

- PONT goals
- PONT program overview

- Responsibilities within the Induction Program
- Novice Teacher Information Checklist (for first days of school)
- School History/Mission/Goals (presented by school CAO)
- Scenarios for Enhanced Classroom Management Skills
- Lesson Plan Template
- Novice Teacher Induction Program Checklist (classroom environment)
- Induction Program Calendar/Log
- Daily Think-Pair-Share Activity
- Evaluation

Additional pages were inserted in binder for participants to take their own notes during each presentation. A daily sign-in sheet and writing utensils were placed on each table as well. Other needed resources that I will assume responsibility for include: requisition approval for purchase of reflective journals and books used and distributed at the end of program as supplemental. I will secure the computer room for training on usage of classroom technology as each room has been equipped with Smart boards and laptops. With these resources available for participants, I can anticipate an organized and effective pre-orientation of novice teachers.

**Existing supports.** There are various existing supports in place to help the district implement PONT, thereby broadening the existing induction program. The State of Michigan has assigned an educational specialist to the district for instructional and academic support based on the low test scores during the past three years. This specialist

will contribute valuable information to PONT participants regarding state expectations for induction processes. The education specialist will explain this information to BTs as the district is in the bottom tier for schools in Michigan not meeting annual yearly progress (AYP). All programs for teacher or student improvement must adhere to MDE guidelines and have the assistance and guidance of the MDE appointed education specialist. Another area of support for the project are the veteran teachers who have proven to perform at a “highly qualified” educator status according to state of Michigan educator effectiveness ratings for annual evaluations. These teachers were able to share first hand experiences and proven strategies for teaching and learning. Most importantly, there are no budget constraints as the district has received state aid (Title I) to fund a variety of enrichment programs for both teachers and students. PONT will qualify for funding from these monies and a budget request was submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer once project is approved.

**Potential barriers.** The greatest potential barrier I anticipated was a reluctance from mentors, novice teachers and consulting teachers to commit to a four and one-half day professional development workshop. Teachers’ time is valuable as they have already had to adjust to an extended school year. Many teachers have had to cancel vacation plans due to the longer school term of four additional weeks that began the 2013-2014 school year. Also, when sending out notifications of PONT, I will explain how such a program can be invaluable to the district in maintaining well trained, quality teachers. Mentees benefited from receiving relevant information to assist them in the



responsibilities of teaching. To overcome any participant reluctance, all staff involved with presentations for the PONT project, as well as BTs will receive remuneration for their participation. Additionally, the mentors and consulting teachers selected to participate in PONT are veteran teachers who quite often are involved with a variety of projects before or after school, therefore, I am expecting a favorable response to this request. Veteran teachers are often willing to take on more responsibility due to their passion about teaching, enthusiasm for coaching, and overall commitment to the profession. (Gargani & Strong, 2014; Papay & Johnson, 2011).

Another potential barrier was making sure the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) specialist is available prior to the start of school as she is a participant of the PONT project. Also, it is important that the educational specialist oversees all improvements made by the district for teaching and learning. I will send an email out that outlines the program goals and how her assistance is needed. The specialist assigned to this district has always asked to be apprised of any special meetings or professional development and often remains after school for teacher meetings. Compensation that pertains to any of her duties is made by the State of Michigan. It is my belief that she will confirm participation in this vital project.

### Proposal for Budget, Implementation and Timeline

A request for funding to support this project was made based on the following budget:

#### Budget Related to Project PONT

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Salaries and Wages.....	\$20,670.26
(workshop pay @ \$24.68 per hour x 32 hours for 26 participants)	
Meals (1 full breakfast, continental breakfast-4 days, lunch-3 days) .....	2, 255.25
Supplies (binders, journals, books) .....	806.00
Teacher Store .....	2, 200.00
(objects for creating a positive physical environment)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,931.51</b>

I am proposing a four and one-half day professional development training session as pre-orientation for novice teachers. The sessions will consist of a variety of activities including PowerPoint presentations, group planning, speakers, mentor/mentee meetings, question and answer segments, think-pair-share, and ending with a final program evaluation. The project content is based on the findings and the recommendation from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) that novice teachers with less than 3 years of experience need adequate training in the areas of: building orientation and building protocols, community organization, record keeping, technology usage, instructional strategies and best practices of teaching, assessment practices, school curriculum,

knowledge of school and district resources, and encouragement and support. There will also be time for classroom layout that correlates to Best Practices for classroom management. The PONT project began two weeks prior to the beginning of the new school year. The duration of the first four day's sessions was seven hours (8:30am - 3:30pm) with scheduled breaks and lunch. The last day was from 8:30 am – 12:00 pm. Each day will help new teachers increase their knowledge base and provide additional tools and strategies to perform the responsibilities of teaching and learning. The goals of PONT are aligned with the components of effective new teacher induction as outlined by the Michigan Department of Education.

**Training Day 1: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm - Planning and Preparation “The Basics” and Learning About the District in which YOU Work**

This first day of training will start at 8:30 am with registration and a meet and greet breakfast. This informal setting will allow beginning teachers to become acquainted with administration, mentors, and consulting teachers prior to the start of the school year. As each participant signs in, they will receive a PONT training binder (as described in needed resources). The chief administrative officer will open PONT training with a welcome followed by an explanation of the school vision, mission, and belief statement. As project coordinator, I will provide an overview of PONT goals. The MDE specialist will review induction responsibilities of all involved with the induction process. There was a tour of the facility, room assignments, disbursement of class rosters, record keeping assistance, and an allocation of classroom supplies. There was a segment on

understanding your community, outlining community demographics, education, income, crime, historical overview, and present economic conditions. The day will conclude with a Think-Pair-Share activity between mentees. Mentees will work in groups to discuss a specific topic. Each mentee will answer a question pertaining to the topic individually. Next, two mentees will merge ideas together and present one final thought about topic to the entire group of participants. The sharing of ideas allows the adult learner to take ownership of their learning and can also increase learner confidence (Knowles, 2011).

### **Day 1 Schedule:**

- 40 minutes Meet and greet breakfast with all participants, registration.
- 10 minutes Welcome by district's chief administrative officer.
- 10 minutes Overview of PONT and PONT goals presented by program coordinator Janice Ridley.
- 20 minutes Presentation of induction responsibilities as outlined by the Michigan Department of Education, presented by the State of Michigan appointed Educational Specialist.
- 40 minutes School district overview presented by the chief administrative officer and school principals.
- 15 minutes Break
- 30 minutes Tour of facility, room assignments and disbursement of class rosters and student records (including procedures for maintaining records) - conducted by mentors.

- 1 hour Lunch
- 45 minutes Mentor/mentee classroom session: review of things to think about to be organized in the first days of school. Learn teacher responsibilities for building protocols, arrival, dismissal, emergencies etc. as outlined in school handbook.
- 60 minutes Understanding the school community (part I) – consulting teachers will present a PowerPoint to highlight information pertaining to community demographics, education, income etc.
- 15 minutes Break
- 45 minutes End of the day activity: Think-Pair-Share activity among mentees based on the topic: How important is it for you to understand the school district's community? Mentees will work together and share ideas. Each group of mentees will present their conclusion to all participants on the importance of understanding the community.

**Training Day 2: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm – Professional Responsibilities Beginning Day 1**

Learning how to understand the student population and becoming familiar with the community was the focus of PONT training day two. Strategies were provided for enlisting students' families in the educational process by the PTA president and three other parents from the school improvement team. Mentees will also learn a variety of ways to communicate with families and keep them informed. Parents have indicated a weakness with parent-teacher communication during PTA meetings and parent surveys.

The importance of involvement with school projects and activities (science fair, debate club, chess club, athletic activities, PTA functions etc.) outside the classroom were explained by veteran teachers (with an opportunity to sign up) as a way for new teachers to build new teacher confidence in interacting with the student body. Participation in activities outside the classroom is the beginning of understanding the student population.

Environmental factors in the classroom were discussed by veteran teachers for optimal learning and classroom management. Suggestions and rationalization for classroom layout and design were highlighted in a PowerPoint presentation by mentors and consulting teachers. Beginning teachers will receive assistance with placement of desks, tables, computers, learning centers, and so forth. Also, the type of symbolic room objects and where they should be posted or positioned was presented as a powerful teaching tool, and a way to inspire students. Time was allocated for this collaborative activity during the PONT project. The overall goal of proper room layout is to improve classroom management. Students will recognize how important they are, and that the teacher values their learning experiences. The teacher will benefit from a well-designed classroom; students tend to be more engaged and generally adhere to classroom rules. The day concluded with a Think-Pair-Share activity between mentees. Mentees worked in groups to discuss a specific topic. Each mentee answered a question pertaining to the topic individually. Next, two mentees merged ideas together and presented one final thought about topic to the entire group of participants. Think-Pair-Share was an

exploratory peer-helping technique that focuses on learners' experiences, providing a prolific resource of learning (Knowles, 2011).

**Day 2 Schedule:**

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 15 minutes   | Continental breakfast  |
| 60 minutes   | It's A Family Affair...Show You Care! PowerPoint presentation by consulting teachers. This segment will help BTs understand their students and provide strategies for getting to know students better.   |
| 45 minutes   | Increasing parental involvement-presented by the PTA president and other parents involved with school improvement. BTs will learn what parents expect of them, when to make parental contact and how to make the best use of parent volunteers.  |
| 15 minutes   | Break  |
| 60 minutes   | Formal presentation for Classroom Layout and Design<br>(for improved classroom management)<br><br>Presentation conducted by mentors to give mentees tips on arranging the classroom environment for optimal functioning, setting the right tone, reducing student conflict, and showing students that the teacher cares. |
| 1 hour       | Lunch  |
| 1 hr./45 min | Hands-on Classroom Layout and Design (following formal presentation)<br><br>Mentors helped mentees with room design based on best  |

practices to maximize student learning and classroom management.

Placement of desks, tables, computers, creating learning centers, and so forth. There was a total of four hours dedicated hands-on classroom layout and design during PONT with mentor helping the mentee. The MDE encourages mentor/mentee time prior to the start of school to begin establishing rapport in this vital relationship.

15 minutes Break

45 minutes End of the day activity: Think-Pair-Share activity among mentees based on the topic of the urban classroom. Mentees worked together and shared ideas. Each group of mentees presented their conclusion to all participants of how they will create a culturally responsive classroom.

**Training Day 3: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm – Teacher Managed Skills (Assistive Efforts Teacher to Teacher) and Teacher Store**

An important teacher managed skill was to learn how to support self and others with various assistive co-teaching methods. Mentors will share techniques BTs can use among each other when no other assistance is available. Various methods of teaching: station teaching (dividing the instruction of certain subjects), one teach/one observe, and alternative teaching (creating teaching groups based on student learning needs), was discussed as assistive efforts. Each of these methods have been used by the mentors and are excellent co-teaching strategies for mentees to learn. These strategies will also address the issue of no scheduled support.



The second half of this day is an off-site visit to a teacher store. This is a mentor-mentee activity and considered professional development as novice teachers must learn how to purchase appropriate items for classroom design in accordance with presentation for maximizing classroom management and student achievement (a teacher responsibility). Mentors will accompany their mentee to the teacher store. This activity is for mentor and mentees to select items to complete classroom design based on presentation from day two of proper classroom layout and design to maximize classroom management and student achievement. This is a supplemental activity to PONT, and in alignment with Michigan Department of Education standards to afford novice teachers the opportunities to learn from mentors how to spend monies allocated for instructional needs and classroom design. The \$2,000.00 approved budget for this activity is from Title I and novice teachers will also need assistance understanding restrictions when making purchases from this funding source. The teacher store activity is another way for establishing rapport from mentor to mentee. Time was allotted for continuation of room design and layout for optimal learning and classroom management. The day will conclude with a Think-Pair-Share activity between mentees. Mentees will work in groups to discuss a specific topic. Each mentee will answer a question pertaining to the topic individually. Next, two mentees will merge ideas together and present one final thought about topic to the entire group of participants. The sharing of ideas allows the adult learner to take ownership of their learning and can also increase learner confidence (Knowles, 2011).

**Day 3 Schedule:**

- 15 minutes Continental breakfast
- 45 minutes Assistive efforts: A presentation was made outlining assistive efforts (co-teaching methods) teachers have control of and can use when there is no other assistance or support provided (as outlined in Appendix A, day 3).
- 60 minutes Technology PowerPoint and demonstration of equipment available in each classroom: smart board, computer cart, desk tops, lap top, and student classroom performance systems. The school computer technician, based on her expertise in this area, will conduct all demonstrations. I have also researched several interactive websites for BTs to use with the classroom smart boards. A list of such and a demonstration of how to use websites for expanding or re-teaching lessons was made by mentors.
- 3 hours Lunch/Teacher Store: This activity is for mentor and mentees to select items to complete classroom design, based on presentation of proper classroom layout and design, (maximizing classroom management and student achievement). This activity is also aligned with Michigan Department of Education suggested considerations for establishing support from mentor to mentee (travel time of 40 minutes has been included). Complimentary lunch was provided by the teacher store. This is a service offered to school districts when groups exceeding

ten teachers make arrangements for purchases on account.

- 75 minutes Room preparation continues with mentor and mentee...based on formal presentation of maximizing classroom management and student achievement through room design.
- 15 minutes Break
- 45 minutes End of the day activity: Think-Pair-Share activity among mentees based on the topic of assistive efforts. Mentees worked together and share ideas about which assistive efforts might work best for their classroom. Each group of mentees presented their conclusion to all participants.

**Training Day 4: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm - Classroom Management Skills and Lesson Planning with Instructional Strategies**

The main purpose of this day is to strengthen the management skills of beginning teachers. BTs will learn how to establish rules, enforce rules, and gain the respect of students. The benefit to beginning teachers is having a classroom with a strong culture for learning, and keeping students engaged. This session will help teachers communicate to students that they have high expectations of students' academic abilities. The segment was facilitated by the Dean of Students outlining the most common student infractions and the frequency of each. Simulated scenarios will guide BTs in the establishment of rules and consequences for students in their classrooms. All scenarios (created by the project coordinator) will also be used as a learning guide to strengthen BTs disciplinarian skills for improved classroom management. Through the use of common scenarios, the

Dean of Students can present and discuss situations with BTs for which they have no prior context. Such situations may perplex a BT; sending misbehaving students to the office prematurely. This segment will generate group discussion among BTs where a variety of beliefs and ideas can be shared. Too often novice teachers send misbehaving students to the office for discipline before exhausting the established classroom consequences. Ultimately, the goal is for BTs to recognize the responsibility of managing daily student infractions in the classroom.

Additionally, mentors worked with mentees to help them construct a lesson plan for the first week of school, using a simplified template (created by the project coordinator). There was assistance provided for integrating the state grade level standards to each lesson, establishing lesson objectives and re-teaching methods to ensure student understanding. This mentor-mentee lesson planning session is a supplemental activity for PONT, and is crucial for BTs to understand grade level expectations as mandated by the state of Michigan. The lesson planning session was complimented with a presentation of research based instructional strategies that work during lesson delivery. Consulting teachers will provide supplemental approaches that they have used with success in the classroom. The day will conclude with a Think-Pair-Share activity between mentees. Mentees worked in groups to discuss a specific topic. Each mentee answered a question pertaining to the topic individually. Next, two mentees merged ideas together and presented one final thought about topic to the entire group of participants. The sharing of

ideas allows the adult learner to take ownership of their learning and can also increase learner confidence (Knowles, 2011).

**Day 4 Schedule:**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 15 minutes | Continental breakfast  |
| 2 hours    | <p>Classroom management (Handling disruptive behaviors)</p> <p>The Dean of Students will review the district’s disciplinary policy.</p> <p>This segment will use common scenarios of student misbehavior (no identifying details visible) to allow BTs to brainstorm for possible solutions if such an incident were to occur in their classroom. BTs were exposed to student misconduct for which they may have no prior context.</p> <p>Strategies were presented by the Dean of Students using a PowerPoint presentation.</p> |
| 15 minutes | Break  |
| 60 minutes | <p>Lesson Planning (a supplemental activity to PONT) PowerPoint presentation and Mentors will work with BTs with lesson planning using state of Michigan grade level expectations to help BTs develop lessons for the first week of school.</p>  |
| 1 hour     | Lunch  |
| 45 minutes | <p>Instructional Strategies Best Practices (part II of Lesson Planning PowerPoint: presented by the consulting teachers. Consulting teachers will</p>  |

review educational approaches used with success during lesson delivery for student engagement.

- 75 minutes Final day of room layout and design based on formal presentation and best practices for maximizing classroom management and student achievement (day 2). To ensure BTs are ready for the first day of class, mentors will review classroom environment checklist with mentees as recommended by the MDE.
- 15 minutes Break
- 45 minutes End of the day activity: Think-Pair-Share activity among mentees based on the topic of managing inappropriate classroom behaviors. Mentees worked together and shared ideas about establishing classroom rules that are in accordance with the district's discipline policy. Each group of mentees presented their conclusion to all participants.

**Training Day 5 (one-half day): 8:30 am – 12:00 pm - The Reflective Practitioner, Affirmation Walk, and Wrap-up**

The art of reflection PowerPoint was presented by the MDE specialist as a way for beginning teachers to observe the teaching acts of their own, and others' teaching styles. In accordance with the responsibilities of the novice as specified by the Michigan Department of Education, it is expected that BTs practice the art of reflection. Reflection is a crucial component of successful teaching and a necessary prerequisite to any potential gains in student achievement; allowing teachers to construct a reality about their

individual teaching experience while prompting self-discovery (Boggess, 2010).

Reflection may be an additional concern to BTs that have already expressed feeling overwhelmed; however, the purpose was to have them proactively take control of their classrooms. When teachers reflect they may become empowered decision makers, critical thinkers, and be able to gauge the impact of their teaching on their students (Boggess, 2010; Mundschenk et al., 2011).

To continue the process of induction and new teacher learning, the project coordinator will discuss using the induction calendar/log specifically created for use by PONT participants. The log will advance the induction process based on responsibilities of the novice to participate in professional development, evaluate induction processes, and meet, collaborate, conference with mentor, and other teachers. Proper documentation to the log will ensure time has been provided for mentoring, informal mentoring, cohort meetings, observations, and any additional professional development. The log was a record of new teacher learning and evidence of continued training. The log will also reveal any deficiencies in a beginning teacher's induction process. The PONT project will conclude with an affirmative walk by school principals. The principals will visit the classrooms of each BT to give praise, encouragement, and support. This affirmative walk around by principals will address novice teacher's concerns that administrators have never entered their classroom, and is aligned to the Michigan Department of Education's guidelines of providing encouragement and support to the novice teacher. Participants will complete an evaluation to assess if the PONT project met the goals as stated in the

program. The Chief Administrative Officer will offer closing remarks about the training and the project coordinator will disburse project gifts. Participants will receive a journal for reflection, a book of encouragement written by an urban educator, and another book for guidance and support written by an expert in the field of education.

**Day 5 Schedule (one-half day):**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 15 minutes | Continental Breakfast  |
| 60 minutes | The Art of Reflection: presented by the MDE specialist. BTs will receive information for understanding how reflection is a crucial component to successful teaching and a necessary prerequisite to any potential gains in student achievement.                    |
| 30 minutes | Moving Forward in the Induction Process: presented by the project Coordinator. The importance of recording all activities associated with new teacher learning was discussed. A log has been created for this purpose by the project coordinator.                  |
| 15 minutes | Break  |
| 45 minutes | Affirmative Walk Around conducted by school principals to provide additional encouragement and support to BTs. School principals will take time to view each classroom layout and design that the mentors have helped the mentees produce during the PONT project. |
| 45 minutes | Wrap-up - PONT evaluation and closing remarks by the district's Chief Administrative Officer   |



## **Project Evaluation**

### **Evaluation of the Project**

The four and one-half day pre-orientation for novice teachers (PONT) was evaluated through a summative evaluation. The summative evaluation was completed and given to participants on the last day of training (see Appendix A). The questions have been designed to determine what impact each component of PONT had on its recipients using a Likert scale format. Beginning teachers will indicate what portion(s) of PONT provided helpful information for their teaching practice, as a novice in this school district. Each presentation, mentoring session, discussion, group activity, or independent work has been listed on the evaluation with a positive to negative rating to be selected by participants. All activities are in alignment with the goals of PONT that were developed from the study findings. Each component was evaluated by BTs to determine the effectiveness of each activity. An overall rating of the PONT program in its entirety was included in the evaluation. Also, there was an inquiry made in the comment section to determine what may need to be improved or changed for the benefit of all future novice teachers.

### **Justification of the Project Evaluation Methodology**

There are many reasons why a summative evaluation was chosen for this project. First I determined that a summative evaluation should be conducted for the purpose of documenting results of the program. Next, a summative evaluation would justify if teachers learned a sufficient amount of information over and above the modified

induction program. Several of the participants are returning as a second year novices and were able to compare information gained in PONT to the modified induction program. Also, once it was determined from the findings that some enhancements were needed to the modified induction program, it was imperative to have an instrument that validates if PONT addressed such augmentations.

### **Goals of the Evaluation**

The goal of this summative evaluation of the four and one-half day pre-orientation is two-fold. First, I will identify if program goals were met. The results will determine if the components of PONT improved the teaching performance of novice teachers to effectively perform the duties within the practice of teaching. Moreover, another goal of the evaluation may be to use outcomes as a needs assessment. This information could substantiate if changes should be made in the program for subsequent planning, or the introduction of new programs and interventions.

### **Project Implications**

#### **Implications for Social Change**

Development of PONT, a four and one-half day pre-orientation will create a positive social change in the individuals who participate, and the students they teach. Participants will leave the program with an increased awareness of the demographics, experiences, and practices of the student body and community in which they work. Understanding the value system of the student population and community served will help teachers create culturally responsive classrooms that may improve student

performance (Boyd et al., 2011; Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Improved student performance is typically measured by standardized test scores. Empirical studies conducted over the past three decades indicate “that students of beginning teachers who participated in induction had higher scores or gains on achievement tests” (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p. 201). Higher performing students may become productive citizens in the communities in which they reside. Accordingly, providing consistent and comprehensive teacher induction that is also content-specific to the school environment may benefit the society by creating more qualified teachers willing and able to work in an urban school district (Boyd et al., 2011; Donaldson, 2013; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Beginning teachers will gain confidence in their teaching performance and students will have their social ethnic, cultural, academic, and emotional needs met (Donaldson, 2013; Hammerness & Matsko, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

### **Importance of Project to Stakeholders**

This project addresses the benefits of novice teachers participating in an induction program specific to the school context. The project is important to stakeholders as comprehensive induction with multiple supports and school specific content has the most influence on stabilizing and developing novices into veteran teachers within urban school districts (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Rinke, 2011; Yonezawa et al., 2011). Research has found that teacher induction that offers “bundles or packages” of support are most effective in retaining beginning teachers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Marker et al., 2013). The bundle of training sessions offered by PONT include: mentoring, professional

development workshops, group collaboration, cohort meetings, observation, and reflection. Successful implementation of this project would create a school district that no longer struggles with staffing problems due to ineffective and inconsistent induction. Improved teacher commitment, retention, and classroom instructional practices are outcomes of consistent quality induction (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Quality induction will produce quality teachers; a crucial element for improving student academics, and a priority for decision-makers and stakeholders throughout the United States (OECD, 2012). PONT provides valuable content-specific information beginning teachers need before barriers are encountered when performing the functions within the practice of teaching. Induction programs that meet the needs of beginning teachers accelerate new teachers' professional growth, making them more effective sooner (NTC, 2012). The acceleration in new teacher learning is beneficial to students, the novice, and stakeholders.

### **Far-Reaching Implications**

This project is important beyond the local level as state policy makers struggle to construct policies for high-quality comprehensive new teacher induction across the U. S. (NTC, 2012). PONT could provide a template for new teacher induction program restructuring for other urban school districts. When schools in all communities are staffed with well qualified teachers, there are fewer issues of novice teachers misunderstanding the local culture (Burton & Johnson, 2010; Goodwin et al., 2014; Goodwin, 2010; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Community relationships, teacher-student, and teacher-parent

relationships may improve. Further, when schools are organized and prepared to support beginning teachers in becoming proficient in both personal and professional areas of teaching they are more likely to report job satisfaction. There may be an increased desire to remain on the job as a result of the novice attending induction that supports their needs in performing the responsibilities of teaching (Boyd et al., 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Well trained qualified teachers correlate to higher student achievement (Burton & Johnson, 2010; Goodwin et al., 2014; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). If children attending schools in urban school districts improve academically, there is a higher percentage of students entering college; ultimately making a positive contribution to society. College graduates can contribute to society by becoming tax payers, obtaining higher paying jobs with health insurance, staying away from criminal behavior, volunteering to help others become successful, and making monetary donations within their community (Brand & Xie, 2010).

### **Summary**

In this section, I provided a description of the project, goals of the project, the rationale, and a review of the literature that pertains to developing quality induction for the novice teacher. I also discussed implementation, potential resources and existing support within the district. I continued by exploring potential barriers as well as the implementation and timeline of the project. I explained the roles and responsibilities of mentors, consulting teachers and myself, possible project evaluation, and implications for

social change. I concluded this section by discussion the far-reaching impact of the project. Included in Section 4 are my reflections, conclusions, and recommendations.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore beginning teachers' perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban school district. Section 4 covers the following topics: (a) strengths of the project, (b) recommendations, (c) what was learned about scholarship, project development, leadership, and change, (d) what was learned about me, as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. The discussion also includes personal reflections about the importance of the work, and what ramifications the project may have on social change; locally and widespread (governmentally or nationally). I conclude by writing about the implications and directions of this project to education and on the direction for future research.

### **Project Strengths**

The project's strength lies in the development of an induction program that offers training activities not offered in the modified induction program. The project offered induction specific to the school and the norms of an urban community. BTs were given information for understanding the student population, communicating with parents, learning about school policies and protocols, ways to offer help to each other, a better understanding of addressing inappropriate student behaviors, and classroom management by way of room layout and design. Additionally, funding will not be a problem as the district has been awarded additional state aid (Title I). This fund is available to assist failing schools fund a variety of enrichment programs for both teachers and students.

### **Project Limitations**

Although this project was carefully prepared, there is one limitation that may affect its execution and usage within the local school district for which it was intended. This project was designed for implementation at the beginning of the school year when most new teachers are hired. There are no provisions to ensure that teachers hired throughout the year will receive the benefit of the PONT (four and one-half day pre-orientation). While the mentoring portion of induction along with monthly meetings and general professional development sessions will follow automatically, the professional development specifically for novice teachers would not take place until the following school year. This delay in the pre-orientation activities may affect the performance of beginning teachers, or result in a new teacher resigning prematurely. Provisions would need to be made whereby veteran teachers and mentors meet with new teachers hired throughout the year to ensure they receive the same information as disseminated during the PONT program. The additional training for new teachers hired mid-year could possibly be accomplished by conducting training for five Saturdays when school begins.

### **Recommendations**

There are a few recommendations from the Michigan Department of Education for alternative ways to address the problem of proper induction of the novice teacher working in urban schools. First, this district could collaborate with other nearby districts to share resources and to ensure an adequate number of veteran teachers to mentor each novice. Time that is contractually set aside for weekly staff meetings, grade level



meetings, or planning meetings could be used for mentoring within nearby districts. Beginning teachers could rotate between districts for workshops; receiving skills specific to working in the urban community by experienced veteran teachers. When districts join forces, beginning teachers will have greater opportunities to work with a multitude of experienced educators for proper induction. A schedule of topics that pertain to the needs of the novice could be addressed weekly at each mentoring session. Also, since providing proper induction is an unfunded mandate, school districts may be successful receiving additional money to offset costs by joining together and forming a consortium (MDE, 2012). Once the consortium is formed, a joint application can be submitted to the state of Michigan (by all districts involved) for funding of a project that is essential for school improvement (staff and students). A two million dollar grant is in place to support failing schools, or at-risk school districts for a variety of enrichment programs. Secondly, when hiring novice teachers schools can seek out candidates that have participated in urban teacher education programs. Many institutions around the country are committed to preparing the novice to arrive better prepared for the urban classroom experience; with an understanding of their students, families and communities they are working in.

Next, the school district could enroll beginning teachers in online training with government sponsored agencies funded through Title I (from the U. S. Department of Education) to supplement educational goals of school districts. The monies are allocated to schools serving students at-risk of failure and living at or near poverty level. One such agency would be training through the Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

There is no cost for at-risk urban schools failing in annual yearly progress. There are an abundance of training modules and topics; however, these modules would not include information specific to the school context, and there would be a loss of collaborative opportunities among teachers. Studies have found that new teachers learn best when collegial relationships are established, and there are joint efforts to support each other in the responsibilities of teaching and learning (Gardner, 2010; Smith, 2011).

Another option for training is using the strategies and information provided by well-known expertise in the field of induction. Materials such as expert books and videos, and so forth can be obtained and is a cost effective way for the district to not pay for specialists to actually conduct the training. Beginning teachers can be encouraged to use these materials independently at a time convenient for them as well as during mentor-mentee interactions. Specific sections of a book could be pre-assigned by the school principal for novice teachers to read, and later reviewed at weekly mentor-mentee meetings along with any videos. This activity would be documented in the induction log as a new teacher training activity. Finally, there should be training for administrators allowing them to understand the importance of their role in new teacher induction. The lack of administrator visibility limits the frequency of face-to-face communication with mentees; and was a common finding among participants in this study. Principals and administrators set the tone for the importance of good mentor-mentee relationships and novice training and learning. When administrators model assistive efforts for mentors to

observe, beginning teachers benefit from the alignment of information and support (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Crafton & Kaiser, 2011).

### **Scholarship**

I began this research process as an educator striving to improve my practice and have gained the knowledge to examine issues, write in a scholarly manner about the issues, conduct research, analyze the data, and make recommendations for change. “Armed with research results, teachers and other educators become more effective professions” (Creswell, 2012, p. 4). I am more effective in my profession as I have learned to present findings of an issue based on a valid investigation. Through this project study, I have learned the many facets of research from start to finish:

1. Identifying a research problem
2. Reviewing the literature
3. Specifying a purpose for the research
4. Collecting the data
5. Analyzing and interpreting the data
6. Reporting and evaluating research (Creswell, 2012, p. 7).

By conducting this study, I learned the knowledge required to conduct research in the field of education, with researcher responsibilities of preparing an interview protocol, conducting interviews, collecting the data, analyzing the data, and drawing conclusions based upon the responses and perspectives of the participants. Additionally, by conducting this study, I learned the scholarship of discovery, application and integration.

I discovered new facts, knowledge and information in the field of education as it pertains to induction of the novice working in an urban school district. I was further able to interpret facts and apply new insights to existing knowledge for project development.

After collecting and analyzing the data, I developed a project that I hope will help the novice teacher in performing the responsibilities within the practice of teaching. I learned from participants that the needs of the novice teacher are greater than what has been supported in past and present induction programs. Also, while conducting this research study, I learned the importance of engaging with participants as a scholar, by conducting proper interview techniques and collecting data in an organized way.

Following the research process will ensure proper retrieval of data to support the research question (Creswell, 2012).

Overall, my role as a scholar has improved and I have developed a sense of personal and professional growth. The research experience helped me apply skills of recognizing a problem to identifying an educational solution with implications for social change. My involvement in this study represents scholarship and learning at a higher level. I used critical thinking, the process of inquiry, and pursuing answers to the research question.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

By conducting this study, and analyzing the data, a project was developed as a solution to a problem. I learned that the project must be constructed from the participant's experiences and the meanings they attached to them (Creswell, 2012). The meanings

associated to the participant's thoughts and feelings will help accomplish the goal of accurately analyzing data for a solution or theory of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2012). Next, before designing the project I learned to use credible resources to support ideas from themes that emerged during data analysis. Using research based practices helped to shape project development. The project was determined based on the findings for a project approach/strategy that would provide a beneficial program. The project content and outcomes corroborated with the literature pertaining to promising and proven strategies for supporting BTs in an urban school district. Finally, after developing the project, I also learned to create a summative project evaluation that aligns with the project's goals. Each component of the project was evaluated for effectiveness. Most importantly, I learned that project development is not reconstructing what is already in existence, but offering new experiences that will promote a transfer of learning. Integrating new knowledge with what is already known provided multiple ramifications for project development, and acquiring knowledge in the field of education.

### **Leadership and Change**

Throughout the process of conducting the study and project development, what I found to be crucial was essentially good management. Good management included staying focused on the project, timely planning, and clear communication with those individuals involved. As a mature woman who has worked in both the corporate sector (in management) and the public school system (as a team lead, mentor, and program coordinator), I have consistently demonstrated a variety of leadership skills (sharing a

vision, being organized, staying motivated, inspiring others to see vision, and seeing goals to completion) to accomplish a variety of tasks. I have not learned anything new about leadership; rather this project has provided an opportunity to sharpen these skills.

Prior to project implementation, and after dissertation approval, I will take on the leadership role of establishing the need for change to leaders and stakeholders of the district. I hope to prevail in my efforts of demonstrating a need for change by presenting the data in relationship to the project goals, to leaders and stakeholders in the district with a PowerPoint presentation, during a school board meeting. Overall, I have learned that a project cannot be successful if effective leadership is not sustained throughout the duration of the project by the researcher. I learned one person with the right leadership skills can affect change that benefits others.

### **Analysis of Self as a Scholar**

From the onset of beginning the course work for this doctoral process, I learned to think of myself as a scholar, when speaking with other educators during discussions. As the process continued, I also learned to partake in the multiplex and time-consuming techniques of data analysis by reviewing, segmenting, coding, and highlighting recurring themes. I discovered how thinking at a higher level about the needs of educators (specifically novice teachers) has provided me an opportunity to offer important information about proper induction. The data analysis used to determine the genre of my project confirmed the importance of not just quality induction, but training that will shorten the demographic divide between teacher and student in the urban community.

### **Analysis of Self as a Practitioner**

Conducting research for this project has given me the expertise to market myself as a specialist in the area of new teacher induction. I learned that I have much to offer to other urban school districts that are struggling with teacher retention due to poor induction practices. I am truly inspired to pursue becoming a consultant after completion of this doctoral program. I am enthusiastic about improving the quality of induction programs for the novice teacher in urban areas and would like to continue this work.

As an educator, I will always seek ways to become a better practitioner. During the study I had a dual identity of practitioner and researcher. In this process I learned to push myself and raise my standards as a scholar, a writer, and a researcher, to find a solution to the problem. I learned that constant observation, continued education, and ratification of various theories are essential to the increasingly competitive development of new ideas in the field of education.

On a broader level, I have developed into an effective practitioner able to collaborate with other educators who have the same goals, or conducting corresponding research at other locations. An effective practitioner translates into better learning for students (Creswell, 2012) which is the overreaching goal for any school district.

### **Analysis of Self as a Project Developer**

Developing this project required that I conduct research on the most appropriate way to format professional development sessions for new teacher induction, specifically for the novice working in urban school districts. Even though the role of project

developer on a scholarly level was a new experience for me, I used my prior knowledge of the subject to research and analyze new information. I was able to recognize a need for a project, identify the rationale for the project, review the literature that addressed the project, consider the limitations, obtain resources and outline a plan for implementation.

I also learned about project management, project planning, organizing, and leading to accomplish the goals of the project. I learned that a project is a temporary endeavor that has a defined beginning and end. During the development of this project I learned to plan carefully to meet the goals and objectives of the project. I was able to organize a manageable and understandable project while dealing with such constraints as scope, time, quality, and budget. Learning to work as a scholar (identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing information), and as a practitioner (staying focused on the facts and removing personal feelings) assisted in my development as a project developer.

### **Reflection**

The purpose of this study was to explore beginning teacher's perceptions of modifications to the induction program used in a Midwestern urban district. The findings validated the need to implement and maintain consistent and comprehensive induction to support the needs of the novice teacher working in an urban school district. This project study supports the definition of positive social change: A positive social change is

defined as a transformation resulting in positive outcomes, which may affect individuals, family systems, organizations, and communities, both nationally and globally (Ed.D. Project Guide, 2010).



### **The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change**

My project's goal for social change is to provide sufficient support to beginning teachers. The support provided will result in beginning teachers gaining knowledge to perform the responsibilities of teaching in an urban school district. The project may give beginning teachers the desire to remain in the profession. Consistent and comprehensive induction programs in urban schools may reduce new teacher turnover, and impact overall job performance in the classroom (Buendia, 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2011). Moreover, the project may help the novice turn academic setbacks to academic successes for the students they teach. Offering induction that supports beginning teachers to become culturally responsive will prepare them for understanding the academic setbacks of students (high rates of poverty, student and parent apathy, and limited proficiency in basic reading and math skills) found in urban schools (Menon, 2012; Schmidt, 2010). The project will help motivate and inspire new teachers to support and encourage student academic success despite student hardships.

When beginning teachers are afforded the opportunity, by way of induction, to understand the expectations and responsibilities attached to their position in an urban school district, this understanding may promote teacher satisfaction and at the same time improve student achievement. Even though researchers have not yet documented a direct link to student learning and high-quality induction programs, the overall goal of new teacher induction is to improve beginning teacher's knowledge and confidence levels. The residual value of the novice attending high-quality induction could result in

improved growth and learning of students (Ingersoll & Strong; Wang et al., 2008). More specifically, the project could help the district move from being one of the lowest performing school districts in the Midwest to a school district with high achieving students advancing to higher education. When students seek higher education the monetary benefits of a lucrative career will improve a person's living conditions (affordable housing and health care). Additionally, higher education exposes students to people from different backgrounds, improves communication skills, and develops individuals into successful members of society.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

This study highlighted aspects of a modified induction program that were beneficial to beginning teachers as well as areas of the program that need improvement. The literature furnished a vast amount of important information concerning the daunting challenge of retaining novice teachers through proper induction (Achinstein et al., 2010; Eckert, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; NCTAF 2010; Ronfeldt, 2012). This research reflects firsthand the experiences and perspectives of beginning teachers and what they need to feel supported in performing the responsibilities of teaching and learning. The study addressed the needs of beginning teachers based on federal and state guidelines. The results could be generalized to other districts and states with similar induction mandates. The results pointed to the need for additional types of training in an induction program that is already multi-layered. The additional knowledge or competencies that were offered to beginning teachers include induction specific to the school context,

understanding the student population, communicating with parents, gaining knowledge of school policies and protocols, ways to offer assistive efforts to each other, a better understanding of addressing inappropriate student behaviors, and the importance of classroom layout and design to support classroom management.

Based upon comments from participants, I offer the following recommendations for future research:

1. Participants want to move from novice teacher to a highly effective teacher and embrace any additional training offered to accomplish that goal. The concern or question raised was the length of time required to make the transition from novice teacher to a high quality effective teacher, attending professional development sessions (typically three years). Future research could be done on providing an on-the-job induction and development program as opposed to new teacher induction training prior to the start of school. Beginning teachers would have a reduced teaching load to allow time for observation and team teach with several veteran teachers, teaching the same grade and subjects. Veteran teachers would be able to coach beginning teachers on ways to improve instruction, share successful techniques and discuss classroom management as situations arise with student behavior, time management, or communicating with parents. Any questions that address understanding the student population or community could be responded to immediately. The purpose of this research (a qualitative case study using a

small purposeful sample) was to determine if the effectiveness of novice teachers could be improved more quickly. Another outcome of this research would be the benefits of intensive collaboration between BTs and veteran teachers; as opposed to a one-on-one mentor/mentee relationship.

Collaborative learning opportunities best support BTs when there is a group of veteran teachers that share in the responsibilities of new teacher induction (Cuddapah & Clayton, 2011). The novice teacher would always have an available mentor once a learning community of veteran teachers is established.

2. Participants had like concerns about the content of new teacher induction as it pertains to their particular teaching practice, based on grade level and discipline. The middle school teachers were more interested in engaging students for higher order thinking and critical inquiry. Conversely, elementary teachers had distress helping students take control of their social and behavioral development. Lower grade teachers felt sitting through workshops for improving test scores was not beneficial as their students did not take standardized test. Most teachers recognized a need to be caring teachers, and learn how to be sensitive to student diversity. The majority of current studies on new teacher induction are atheoretical; they explore what can be successful, without the underlying causes for progress or failure (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Research could be done by discipline and grade level to assess

the percentage of induction needed for acquiring pedagogical skills for instruction and test taking, or pedagogical skills needed for daily classroom student-teacher interactions. Both skill sets are important, and an exploratory case study (using K-12 teachers) could be done whereby participants respond to questions asking what components of induction are more useful based on their discipline and grade level. The purpose was to determine if consistent and comprehensive induction offered at the middle school level and above, should be different from what is offered to elementary teachers. Also, should induction content be altered for teachers based on their formal preparation or teacher education program? When planning induction activities, how often does each activity need to occur throughout the process? For instance, should elementary teachers receive more time learning classroom management skills versus test taking competencies? Future research could illuminate these issues pertaining to induction content.

### **Summary**

As I reflected in this section, discussing the various aspects of the project, I am proud and confident to be a scholar/practitioner that is able to make a contribution in the field of education, relating to a positive social change. Developing the project, Induction of the Novice Teacher in Urban Schools is important to social change as every child deserves a well-qualified teacher. Proper induction will create a culture of teachers prepared and willing to address the needs of the students they serve. Proper induction will

also promote collaboration and leadership among teachers, helping them develop into talented teachers that may choose to stay in the profession. Proper induction will eventually transform the disproportionately number of inexperienced teachers in urban schools to well-qualified teachers.

Induction of the Novice Teacher in Urban Schools promotes retention of well-qualified teachers through proper induction, which may ultimately impact student learning. If children attending schools in urban school districts improve academically, there are higher percentages of students entering college; ultimately making a positive contribution to the community in which they live.

This final discussion included the project's possible outcomes on social change; locally, governmentally, or nationally. I concluded by reflecting on the importance of what I have learned and the project's implications for future research.

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## Appendix A: The Project

### **Pre-Orientation of Novice Teachers (PONT)**

PONT is a four and one-half day pre-orientation for novice teachers consisting of professional development, collegial group sessions, and time for room layout and design. This pre-orientation is designed exclusively for novice teachers and began two weeks prior to the beginning of the school year. In addition to the novice teachers, administrators, consulting teachers, and mentors were in attendance. Each of the four and one-half days have a different focus for the purpose of providing an additional layer of new teacher preparation specific to the environment where beginning teachers are working.

The goals of PONT are as follows:

- Introduce and develop interpersonal relationships between BTs and school administrators, BTs and mentors, and BTs and other novice teachers.
- Equip BTs with all the necessary supplies, policies, procedures and routines of their specific school.
- Develop an understanding of community, students, and how to communicate with parents or guardians of students in local setting.
- Create culturally responsive teachers by advancing classroom management skills specific to the 100% African-American student body in this urban school district. Skills were provided to maximize student learning and reduce student misbehavior.

- Provide assistance with record keeping, technology usage and best practices of instructional strategies.

All PowerPoint presentations or directions provided to presenters have been created by the project coordinator unless otherwise noted. All funding for materials, meals, salaries for participants, and teacher store visit was covered by Title I monies. The district has been awarded grant monies to fund enrichment programs for both teachers and students. PONT would qualify for funding from this state aid and a request was submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer.

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**Day 1: 8:30AM – 3:30PM – Information Gathering “*the Basics*” and Learning about the Community**

- 40 minutes Meet and greet breakfast with novices, consulting teachers, mentors and school administrators. Participant registration.
- 10 minutes Welcome by district’s CAO
- 10 minutes PONT goals and program overview (based on content for first and second year teachers in an induction program by MDE, 2012). Presented by Project Coordinator (J. Ridley)
- 20 minutes **Presentation of Induction Responsibilities** of all.... as outlined by Michigan Department of Education (2012) for effective induction of the novice teacher (handout below).  
This presentation was conducted by the Education

Specialist appointed by the state of Michigan to explain how all stakeholders are accountable for the success of the induction program (a supplemental presentation to PONT).

Dissemination of induction responsibilities to Novice teachers is necessary and essential to the overall success of PONT. This information will act as a reference point for any questions the novice may have about the induction process. Also, being apprised of everyone's responsibilities in induction will clarify expectations of persons involved in the training process. Most importantly, there should be no ambiguity with the novice teachers' responsibilities for participation in induction. Novice responsibilities were reviewed again on day four in the "Reflective Practitioner" segment. Responsibilities in induction is not related to PONT goals; however, based on the district's failure to make AYP, recommendations from the Michigan Department of Education (overseen by an appointed education specialist) have been included. Adherence to MDE recommendations is necessary for the school district to continue to receive funding and remain a functioning school district. The education specialist will follow the outline below for this presentation.

## RESPONSIBILITIES IN INDUCTION PROGRAMS

<b>THE SCHOOL BOARD</b>	<b>ADMIN &amp; CONSULTING TEACHERS</b>	<b>MENTORS</b>	<b>NOVICE TEACHERS</b>	<b>OTHER FACULTY</b>
<p>Establish policy to make mentoring of new teachers one of the district's priorities.</p> <p>Ensure resources for induction program.</p> <p>Establish planning group.</p> <p>Support a mentor coordinator position or consulting teacher position for the district.</p> <p>Review and evaluation of induction program.</p>	<p>Supervise and evaluate new teachers.</p> <p>Facilitate faculty and community awareness.</p> <p>Participate in orientation and training sessions.</p> <p>Develop schedules for release time, common time, observation and conferencing.</p> <p>Meet with mentors and new teachers at least twice per month.</p> <p>Arrange and participate in program evaluation.</p> <p>Facilitate revision of</p>	<p>Orient new teachers to school, district, and community.</p> <p>Link new teachers to resources.</p> <p>Provide systematic support to new teachers.</p> <p>Help new teachers to analyze the practice of teaching.</p> <p>Assist in professional development of new teachers.</p> <p>Attend all mentor training programs.</p>	<p>Participate in professional development activities.</p> <p>Help evaluate induction program.</p> <p>Assist in revision of program, if needed, each year.</p> <p>Meet and conference with mentor on a regular basis.</p> <p>Reflect on practice and the practice of others.</p> <p>Visit/observe mentor and other teachers in their classroom.</p>	<p>Assist new teachers as requested by mentors.</p> <p>Help evaluate induction program.</p> <p>Encourage collegiality.</p> <p>Volunteer to assist with planning of induction activities as needed.</p>

Evaluate long-term effectiveness of teacher selection program.	program, if needed, each year.  Establish collaborative relationships with colleges and universities.	Model continuing professional development and assist new teachers in designing their own professional development plan.  Help evaluate induction program.  Assist in the development of program revisions, if needed, each year.	Develop a personal professional development plan for the year.  Plan, teach, facilitate and evaluate progress of students in their own classrooms.  Participate in data/needs assessment workshop.	
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Michigan Department of Education (2012). Retrieved from [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde)

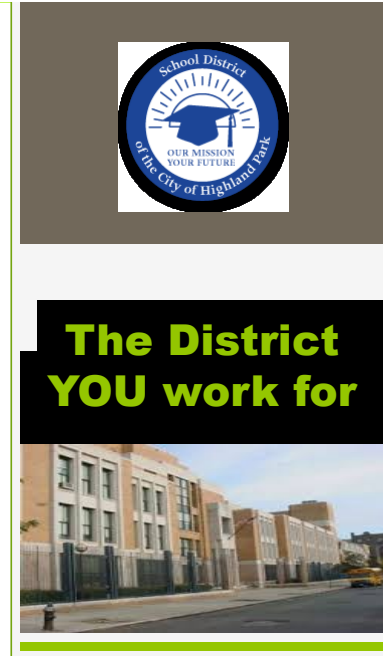
Reference manual (New Teacher Induction/Teacher Mentoring Guidelines at a Glance)

- 40 minutes **School District Overview**/Power Point presentation

“The District You Work For” (see below)

The Chief Administrative Officer will provide an overview of the district’s history, vision, mission, belief statement and goals as outlined in the School Improvement Plan. This overview will help BTs understand their role in accomplishment of school goals.

**Welcome...  
We are happy  
To have you  
on our team!**



*(Click on image for PowerPoint presentation)*

- 15 minutes **Break**
- 30 minutes **Tour facility/Building orientation**  
(see PowerPoint presentation below)

Mentors will conduct a tour of facility with mentees to ensure no problems with logistics once school is in session, provide room assignments, disbursement of class rosters, and student records. Mentors have experience performing in this capacity and knowledge to conduct tour of building.



*(Click image above for Building Tour presentation)*

- 1 hour      **Lunch** 11:45 – 12:45 PM
- 45 minutes      **Mentor/Mentee session:**  
Review of building protocols for arrival, attendance,  
dismissal, emergencies etc. (see presentation below)

Mentors have knowledge of such procedures from past years' experience within the school district.



## Building Protocols & Procedures



***(Click image above for Building Protocols & Procedures presentation)***

Mentors will also review with novice teacher “Things to think about to be organized in the beginning first days of school. This is a recommended induction procedure by the MDE and a checklist has been provided below for this purpose. The information on the checklist is essential for ensuring effective classroom management and the safety of all students.

## ***NOVICE INFORMATION CHECKLIST***

***Things to think about to be organized in the beginning first days of school***

- Do you have keys to your classroom or other rooms to which you may need access?
- What are the school rules and policies that you will need to present to students?
- Do you have the necessary furniture in your room?
- Are aides available and, if so, on what schedule?
- What are the procedures for obtaining classroom books and for checking them out to the students/
- What are the procedures for obtaining expendable supplies?
- What are the procedures for classroom accidents?
- Who is the building tech for problems with classroom technology?
- Are there any first day of school procedures?
- What are attendance procedures?
- How do I determine if any of my students are resources students?
- What is the schedule for special subjects?
- What are the arrival and dismissal procedures?
- What are the procedures for inappropriate student behavior?
- What are duplication/copying procedures?
- How do you get assistance from the office for emergencies?

- Are you familiar with all parts of the building to which you may send students?
- Do you need help with lesson plans for the first few days of school?
- Have you prepared time fillers to use if needed?
- Do you have a school calendar?

Modified from Michigan Department of Education (2012). Retrieved from [www.Michigan.gov/mde](http://www.Michigan.gov/mde) Office of School Improvement, MI Map 3:5 Mentoring New Teachers

- 60 minutes **Understanding Your School Community Part I**

School Principals will present a PowerPoint to highlight information pertaining to community demographics, education, income etc. (see below)

**The district YOU work in.....**



**Services a community that is located on 2.98 square feet of land**

**Understanding  
the community  
YOU  
work in**

*(Click on image above to view PowerPoint)*

- **Understanding Your School Community Part II**

(presented by project coordinator, J. Ridley)

Agenda:

- “Straight Talk” - an open discussion for BTs to ask questions or express any concerns after viewing PowerPoint presentation.
  - Demographics of community and student body (population, education, housing, labor force, individuals per household).
- 15 minutes **Break**
  - 45 minutes **Reflection** (**Think-Pair-Share** activity between mentees)  
Conducted by consulting teachers using the following directions below.

**DAILY THINK-PAIR-SHARE DIRECTIONS for Consulting Teachers:**

1. Consulting teachers will explain to mentees that this is an activity they will complete with a partner based on the day's activities.
2. The Topic of the Day will be provided each day.
3. Mentees will be directed to think about the question independently for 5-7 minutes.
4. Next the consulting teachers will direct mentees to turn to a partner (someone close to them) to discuss the topic of the day. Again, the mentees will be told that they have 5-7 minutes to discuss question, and this time come to a joint consensus.
5. Consulting teachers will call upon partnered groups of mentees to share findings with the larger group of BTs.

**Topic of the Day: Days 1-4**

Day 1: How important is it for you to understand the community of this school district?

Day 2: How will you create a culturally responsive classroom?

Day 3: Which of the 3 co-teaching methods will help support you with your daily routine of instructing in the classroom?

Day 4: What classroom rules may help reduce student misbehavior?

(Think-Pair-Share handout for participants is included in Appendix A.)

Think-Pair-Share is a sharing of ideas that will allow the adult learner to take ownership of their learning, and can increase learner confidence (Knowles (2011)). This activity was directed by the consulting teachers.

- During this Think-Pair-Share activity, mentees will work in groups of two. First, each mentee will think about the topic of the day and write a response based on a question. Next, they will converse with partner to share their perspectives of topic. Then together they will complete a combined response to topic and question, to present to the group of BTs. In this Think-Pair-Share activity, the groups of mentees may also generate another significant question of their own based on the topic of the day.

***Topic of the Day:** Understanding the community of this school district. How has today's activities helped you to understand the community of this school district? Explain in detail.*

**Dismissal** 3:30 PM

**Day 2: 8:30AM - 3:30PM – Professional Responsibilities Beginning Day One**

- 15 minutes Continental Breakfast
- 60 minutes **It's A Family Affair...Show You Care! (PowerPoint presentation below)**
  - This segment was presented by consulting teachers to help BTs understand their students and provide strategies for getting to know students better, establishing relationships, connecting by caring, and discussion of the many roles urban classroom teachers must take on to maintain a culturally responsive classroom

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR...  
SHOW YOU **CARE**



Understanding  
**YOUR**  
students

*(Click on image above for PowerPoint)*

- 45 minutes     **Parental Involvement** (PTA president speaker and 3 parents from School Improvement Team presented). The purpose of this segment is to discuss ways to increase parental involvement and build teacher-parent partnerships. Initiatives to improve communications between teachers and parents/guardians, is an ongoing effort for the school PTA. The information disseminated was based on data collected from previous PTA meetings and parent concerns expressed at school board meetings. Topics of discussion were provided to the PTA president as outlined by project coordinator below:
  - What parents expect of their child's teacher:
    - ✓ Class syllabi with information on how to contact the teacher with any concerns.
    - ✓ An open invitation for classroom observations.
    - ✓ A weekly or monthly newsletter.
    - ✓ Notification of a drop, or change in student's grades before report cards are sent home.
    - ✓ Ask for help with projects when needed.



- Parental calls/contact...not just related to bad behavior
- Parent volunteers (how to maximize their time in your classroom)

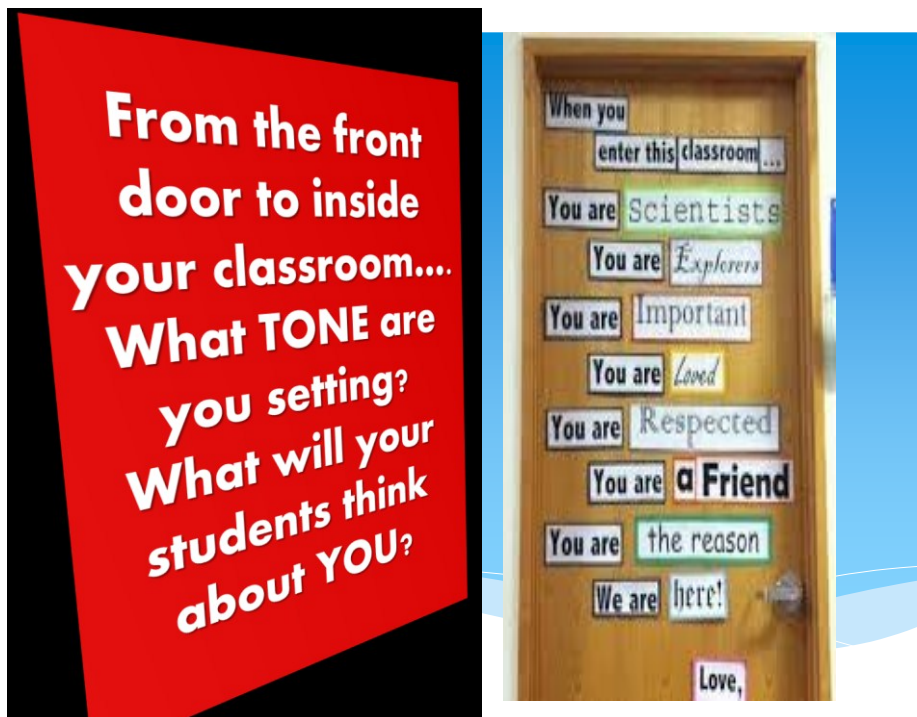
- 15 minutes

***Break***

- 60 minutes

**Classroom Management - Room Layout and Design**

- A look at how room layout is important to Classroom Management. A PowerPoint presentation (see below) was conducted by mentors to give mentees tips to arranging classroom environment for optimal functioning, setting the right tone, reducing student conflict, and showing that the teacher cares.



*(Click on image above for classroom layout presentation)*

- **1 hour**                      **Lunch** 11:45 – 12: 45 PM
- 1 hour/45 min              **Begin Room Preparation/Room Design** based on concepts discussed in PowerPoint presentation pertaining to Classroom Environment. Mentor will work with mentee in their individual classrooms to help with layout of desks, books, computers, learning centers etc. Creating the right environment with classroom layout and design is a part of classroom management. During this 4-1/2 day professional development, 4 hours have been devoted to designing the physical and symbolic environment of BTs classrooms. Scientific research shows how the classroom environment influences student achievement, student engagement, and student behavior (Cheryan et al., 2010)
- 15 minutes                      **Break**
- 45 minutes                      **Reflection** (**Think-Pair-Share** activity between mentees)  
Handout is included in Appendix A.  
Think-Pair-Share is a sharing of ideas that will allow the adult learner to take ownership of their learning, and can increase learner

confidence (Knowles (2011). This activity was directed by the consulting teachers. (Please see day 1 for directions)

- During this Think-Pair-Share activity, mentees will work in groups of two. First, each mentee will think about the topic of the day and write a response based on a question. Next, they will converse with partner to share their perspectives of topic. Then together they will complete a combined response to topic and question, to present to the group of BTs. In this Think-Pair-Share activity, the groups of mentees may also generate another significant question of their own based on the topic of the day.

*Topic of the Day: The Urban Classroom*

*How will you create a culturally responsive classroom?*

- Dismissal 3:30 PM

**Day 3: 8:30 AM – 3: 30 PM- Teacher Managed Skills for Classroom**

**Management (Assistive Efforts Teacher to Teacher, and also, the Teacher Store**

**Experience**

- 15 minutes Continental Breakfast
- 45 minutes **Classroom Management – Assistive Efforts**
  - Mentors share how working together and using co-teaching can create assistive efforts that are consistent.

Beginning teachers will learn the importance of implementing self-assistive efforts when scheduled assistive efforts from the school are canceled for the day. The co-teaching assistive efforts presented have been used and approved by school administrators. Mentors will discuss, based on their experiences, 3 different co-teaching methods using the descriptions below, as outlined by the project coordinator. What works best and why each is helpful to the daily routine of teaching. Each of these teaching methods represent assistive efforts teachers can be in control of when such help is necessary.

- **STATION TEACHING**

- Two or three teachers will work together and split certain subjects for instruction. This will allow for more time as teachers now only need to prepare for 2 subjects instead of 4. Teachers are able to select subjects they feel more comfortable with.

- **ONE TEACH, ONE OBSERVE**

- During certain content, students learning may improve if there was more supervision. The advantage here is that more detailed

observation of students can take place; to see who is engaged and who is struggling. The responsibility of teaching can be alternated between teachers. This is an excellent way to better understand students. Afterward, teachers can analyze information together to help make changes prior to next lesson.

- **ALTERNATIVE TEACHING**

- In most classes there are several students needing specialized attention. One teacher can work with the students needing more attention and the other teacher takes responsibility for the larger group. In this situation it is also recommended to give students that are high achievers the opportunity to work independently.

60 minutes    **Technology** demonstration and integration strategies –



***(Click on image for Technology Presentation)***

Each classroom is equipped with a Smart board and laptop, student laptops, and a classroom performance system. There is also a Elmo cart that circulates for each grade level that BTs need to become familiar with. A demonstration by the school tech will assist BTs with daily instruction when using technology. The school technology technician helped to select and install classroom equipment. She is well versed in the operation of such and is the most appropriate individual to conduct a demonstration.

Based on prior knowledge and experience, a veteran teacher will demonstrate how to use the websites provided in PowerPoint presentation by project coordinator.

3 hours      **Lunch/Teacher Store: A Supplemental Title I funded activity and recommended by MDE for building rapport between mentor and mentee** (travel time included).

Federal law mandates that Title I funds are spent for instructional purposes, instructional supplies, and academic improvement including professional development or parental workshops. Beginning teachers need guidance allocating monies budgeted for their classrooms as outlined by the school improvement plan and Title I funding.

The visit to the teacher store has been planned based on instruction from day 2 for proper classroom layout and design. A teacher store visit that includes mentor and mentee selecting appropriate classroom objects is also a consideration recommended by MDE as another way of establishing support and encouragement from mentor to mentee. Teachers will have lunch and be allowed to spend \$100.00 for room design objects to enhance the symbolic environment of their classrooms. The monies for shopping are included in the budget for this project. Lunch is complimentary by the teacher store as the district has an account as a regular customer.

- 75 minutes      ***Room preparation continues...based on formal presentation of Maximizing Classroom Management & Student Achievement through Room Design (mentor and mentee work jointly).***

- 45 minutes **Reflection** (**Think-Pair-Share** activity between mentees)

Handout is included in Appendix A.

Think-Pair-Share is a sharing of ideas that will allow the adult learner to take ownership of their learning, and can increase learner confidence (Knowles (2011)). This activity was directed by the consulting teachers (please see day 1 for directions).

- During this Think-Pair-Share activity, mentees will work in groups of two. First, each mentee will think about the topic of the day and write a response based on a question. Next, they will converse with partner to share their perspectives of topic. Then together they will complete a combined response to topic and question, to present to the group of BTs. In this Think-Pair-Share activity, the groups of mentees may also generate another significant question of their own based on the topic of the day.

***Topic of the Day:*** *Assistive Efforts*

*Which of the 3 co-teaching methods will help support you with your daily routine?*

- **Dismissal** 3:30 PM

**Day 4: 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM – Classroom Management Skills**

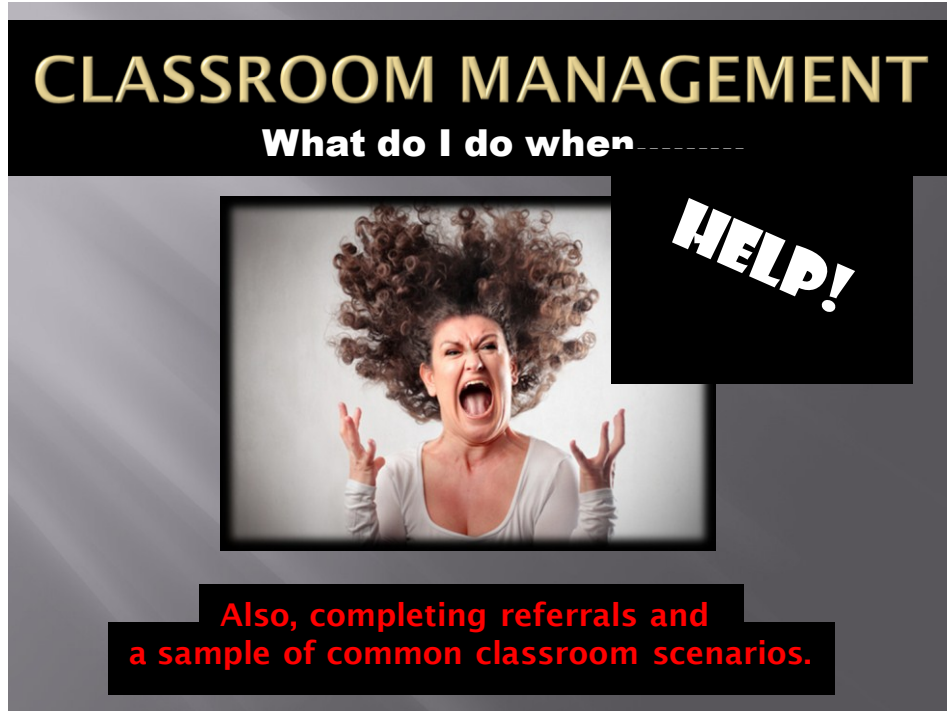
**(Disruptive Behaviors)**



- 15 minutes Continental Breakfast
- 2 hours **Classroom Management**

See below for PowerPoint of classroom management presentation with scenarios of student misconduct and referral process created by the project coordinator.

The Dean of Students will lead this segment discussing things to think about for improving classroom management, the referral process for student misconduct, and situations that warrant immediate removal from the classroom. Scenarios using student misconduct that BTs may encounter in the classroom were provided in a *What Would You do?* format. The purpose of using these scenarios is to familiarize BTs with the type of infractions encountered in this school environment. Mentees will work in groups to discuss solutions for each scenario of student misconduct.

A PowerPoint slide with a black background. At the top, the text "CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below it, "What do I do when-----" is written in white. In the center, there is a photograph of a woman with her mouth wide open in a scream, her hands raised, and her hair flying out in a large, curly cloud. To the right of the photo is a black speech bubble with the word "HELP!" in white, slanted letters. Below the photo, a black box contains the text "Also, completing referrals and a sample of common classroom scenarios." in red. A small black dot is located to the left of the slide's bottom edge.

**CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**  
What do I do when-----

**HELP!**

**Also, completing referrals and a sample of common classroom scenarios.**

*(Click image for Classroom Management PowerPoint)*

There will also be time to review how to handle *daily reoccurring disruptive behaviors* such as:

Arriving late daily

Cell phone issues

Sleeping in class

Continuous bathroom breaks

Making noises or shaking desks and tables

Insubordinate behaviors (not answering or talking over teacher)

Side discussions/constant talking

- 15 minutes ***Break***
- 1 hour **Lesson Planning Submission for State Standards Driven Instruction (A Supplemental MDE recommended activity).**  
**See below for PowerPoint presentation**  
(Mentors and mentees work together)

Lesson planning in accordance with state standards ensures that teachers are on the path toward improved student learning.

Also, in accordance with school goals (as outlined in the school improvement plan) to improve annual yearly progress (AYP), proper lesson planning provides an outline for all teachers to follow for improving. All lesson plans were aligned to the state standard for each grade level and discipline.

- This session will help BTs with lesson planning and provide a lesson for the first week of school to relieve some of the stress of “what to do next”. Mentors will conduct this session based on years of experience submitting quality lesson plans.



*(Click image for Lesson Planning presentation including Instructional Strategies that Work)*

- Break-out sessions (*based on discipline and grade level if possible*) to prepare plans for first week of school. A simplified lesson plan template created by the project coordinator was used for training.

Teachers may develop their own format as the school district does not require a mandated format.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Period from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Sequence of Instruction*

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>Lesson Title:</b>	<b>Lesson Title:</b>	<b>Lesson Title:</b>	<b>Lesson Title:</b>	<b>Lesson Title:</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>
<b>State grate level expectation/GLCE:</b>	<b>State grate level expectation/GLCE:</b>	<b>State grate level expectation/GLCE:</b>	<b>State grate level expectation/GLCE:</b>	<b>State grate level expectation/GLCE:</b>
<b>Objective(s):</b>	<b>Objective(s):</b>	<b>Objective(s):</b>	<b>Objective(s):</b>	<b>Objective(s):</b>
<b>Materials:</b>	<b>Materials:</b>	<b>Materials:</b>	<b>Materials:</b>	<b>Materials:</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Time:</b>

<b>Procedures:</b>	<b>Procedures:</b>	<b>Procedures:</b>	<b>Procedures:</b>	<b>Procedures:</b>
<b>Instructional Strategy:</b>	<b>Instructional Strategy:</b>	<b>Instructional Strategy:</b>	<b>Instructional Strategy:</b>	<b>Instructional Strategy:</b>
<b><i>Essential Question(s):</i></b>	<b><i>Essential Question(s):</i></b>	<b><i>Essential Question(s):</i></b>	<b><i>Essential Question(s):</i></b>	<b><i>Essential Question(s):</i></b>
<b><i>Accommodations:</i></b>	<b><i>Accommodations:</i></b>	<b><i>Accommodations:</i></b>	<b><i>Accommodations:</i></b>	<b><i>Accommodations:</i></b>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
<b>Homework:</b>	<b>Homework:</b>	<b>Homework:</b>	<b>Homework:</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
<b><u>ACCOMMODATIONS</u></b> <i>Give extended time to students. Give oral one step directions clear and simple. Make eye contact with students to trigger focus. Read text as a class or as partners. Allow students to work with a partner.</i>	<b><u>ACCOMMODATIONS</u></b> <i>Give extended time to students. Give oral one step directions clear and simple. Make eye contact with students to trigger focus. Read text as a class or as partners. Allow students to work with a partner.</i>	<b><u>ACCOMMODATIONS</u></b> <i>Give extended time to students. Give oral one step directions clear and simple. Make eye contact with students to trigger focus. Read text as a class or as partners. Allow students to work with a partner.</i>	<b><u>ACCOMMODATIONS</u></b> <i>Give extended time to students. Give oral one step directions clear and simple. Make eye contact with students to trigger focus. Read text as a class or as partners. Allow students to work with a partner.</i>	<b><u>ACCOMMODATIONS</u></b> <i>Give extended time to students. Give oral one step directions clear and simple. Make eye contact with students to trigger focus. Read text as a class or as partners. Allow students to work with a partner.</i>

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- 1 hour      **Lunch** 11:45 – 12:45 PM
- 45 minutes      **Lesson Planning continues with Instructional Strategies**

Veteran teachers will also speak on a few of the instructional strategies that have worked for them during classroom instruction. Veteran teachers will use part II of the PowerPoint for this presentation (Lesson Planning PowerPoint part II above).

While this presentation is not a complete list of instructional strategies, what is presented here by veteran teachers are basic instructional strategies that work in a classroom with a variation of learning levels.

- 60 minutes      Final day of classroom design and layout, jointly mentor and mentee...in conjunction with presentation **for Maximizing Classroom Management & Student Achievement through Room Design**
- 40 minutes      **Reflection (Think-Pair-Share** activity between mentees)  
Handout is included in Appendix A.  
Think-Pair-Share is a sharing of ideas that will allow the adult learner to take ownership of their learning, and can increase learner confidence (Knowles (2011). This activity was directed by the consulting teachers (please see day 1 for directions).

- During this Think-Pair-Share activity, mentees will work in groups of two. First, each mentee will think about the topic of the day and write a response based on a question. Next, they will converse with partner to share their perspectives of topic. Then together they will complete a combined response to topic and question, to present to the group of BTs. In this Think-Pair-Share activity, the groups of mentees may also generate another significant question of their own based on the topic of the day.

***Topic of the Day:*** *Managing inappropriate classroom behavior*

*What classroom rules may help reduce student misbehavior?*

- **Dismissal**                      3:30 PM

**Day 5 WRAP UP: 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM – The Reflective Practitioner**

- 15 minutes                      Continental Breakfast

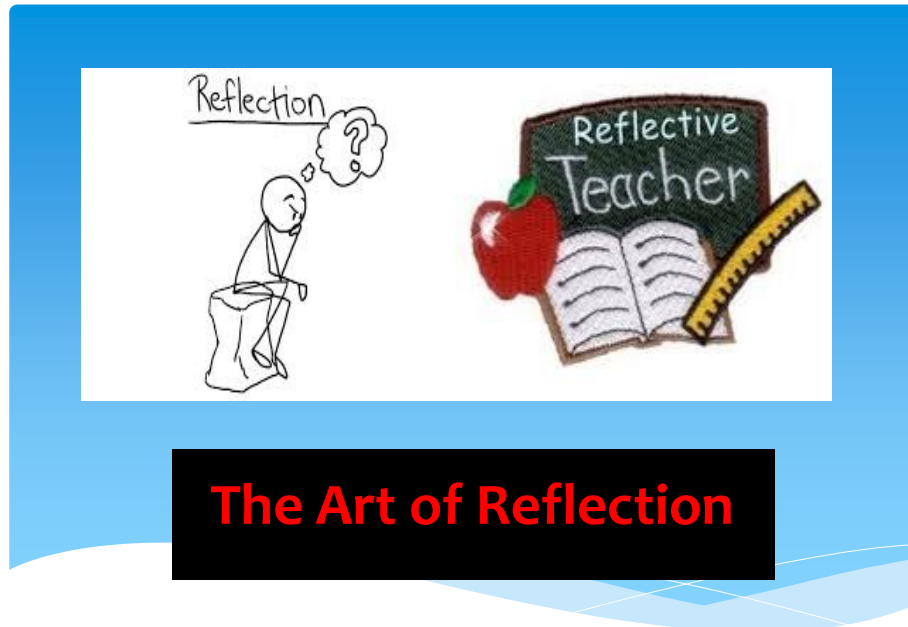
- 60 minutes                      **The Reflective Practitioner**

The MDE specialist will present this segment as a way for beginning teachers to understand the benefits of reflecting on the practice of others as well as their own.

This is also presented as a novice teacher responsibility.

(PowerPoint presentation below)





*(Click image to view The Art of Reflection PowerPoint)*

Mastering the art of reflection may help novice teachers become empowered decision makers, critical thinkers, and be able to gauge the impact of their teaching on their student's learning (Mundschenk et al., 2011).

- 30 minutes **Moving Forward to the Start of the School and in the Induction Process**

A checklist for items that should be in place at the start of school has been compiled by mentors. This checklist was reviewed with beginning teachers in a mentor-mentee

format, in each classroom to ensure BTs are prepared for the first day of school.

## **NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT CHECKLIST**

### **Start of School Checklist (for Mentor/Mentee discussion)**

- Classroom routines and procedures have been developed for use from the first day of school
- Rules and consequences are posted – (You want to use no more than three to five rules...reinforce the behaviors you want/expect).
- Heading sample for work submitted is displayed.
- Professional diploma/s etc., are displayed (optional)
- Designated homework/assignment board (post in the same place every day). Also, have a designated place to put homework.  
Hint: A time saver is to have a student check in each day.
- Student schedule is posted (large enough to be seen from all seats).
- “Signal”....establish a signal to quiet class (make sure to teach and use from day one).
- “Do Now”, warm ups or bell work board (should be in the same place on a daily basis).

- Classroom is arranged to maximize classroom management and student achievement.
- Classroom environment conveys the message that learning is important (it should be clearly evident that you have invested time and energy to create a positive learning environment.... Colleagues are available to give their opinion and assistance).
- Create student portfolios for the purpose of student assessment.
- Create a “sunshine” file to keep track of positive calls and/or notes sent home to parents (remember parent involvement helps you and the student. Also, catch students being/doing good...Don't just call when student is out of order!)

Modified from Michigan Department of Education (2012). Retrieved from [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde)  
Office of School Improvement MI Map 3:5 Mentoring New Teachers

- 15 minutes      The Project coordinator will Review the **Induction Calendar/Log** for beginning teachers. It was explained to novice teachers that one of their responsibilities is to participate, evaluate and keep track of all training.  
  
A more extensive log has been created by the program coordinator to ensure time is allotted for mentoring, informal mentoring, cohort meetings, and special topics.

Proper documentation will ensure that induction is consistent and ongoing after the conclusion of PONT.

## INDUCTION PROGRAM CALENDER/LOG

**Mentor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Novice Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Enter date and initial when completed*

### **AUGUST**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Meet to establish a regular meeting time.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Meet to answer any remaining questions from PONT....**

**discuss/review classroom management, classroom scheduling, time management, texts, support materials, and technological resources.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

Topics discussed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SEPTEMBER**

\_\_\_\_\_ Discuss weekly lesson planning and academic expectations.

\_\_\_\_\_ First observation of mentor classroom by the novice teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discussion of observation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discuss assessments, evaluation tools and record keeping.

\_\_\_\_\_ Cohort meetings/topics: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Informal mentoring with other school staff:

Topics discussed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Formal Professional Development (if any):

Topics discussed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**OCTOBER**

\_\_\_\_\_ Second observation of mentor classroom by the novice teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discussion of observation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Review classroom management techniques.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Discuss tips for generating quality (quarterly) progress reports.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Discuss techniques for successful parent conferences.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NOVEMBER**

\_\_\_\_\_ **First observation of novice teacher by mentor/consulting teacher.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Discussion of observation.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Review weekly lesson planning.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Discuss results of parent conferences.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DECEMBER**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Review exam setting and grading procedures.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Discuss procedures for MEAP tests (for applicable grades)**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**JANUARY**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Mentor and novice teacher meets with principal.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Revisit curriculum and differentiated instruction.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Discuss year-long goals for students with mentor/consulting teacher.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FEBRUARY**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Second observation of novice teacher by mentor.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Discussion of observation.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**  
**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MARCH**



\_\_\_\_\_ **Review standardized test procedures.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**APRIL**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Revisit exam setting and final grade reporting procedures**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**MAY**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Second meeting with mentor and principal together for the purpose of conducting an evaluation of year-long induction program.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**JUNE**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Assist novice teacher with end of year reporting and close out procedures.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cohort meetings/topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Informal mentoring with other school staff:**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Formal Professional Development (if any):**

**Topics discussed:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 30 minutes      **AFFIRMATIVE WALK AROUND:** *This last activity is imperative for support and encouragement to beginning teachers. Support and encouragement is recommended by the Michigan Department of Education as a constant, ongoing function of new teacher induction. Consulting teachers, mentors, MDE specialist, and principals will walk room to room giving praise of room layout/room design etc., to BTs.*
  
- 45 minutes      **Final PONT evaluation (included in Appendix A)**  
**Distribution of gifts:** Journals/Books
  - Journals presented for the purpose of encouraging novice teachers to be a Reflective Practitioner as presented....explaining that:  
 Reflective educators are continually learning about themselves as educators and will determine how they can build and maintain a reflective practice.  
 When the novice teacher uses a journal, it will give time for thoughtful consideration to how they engage in professional work, goal attainment, and

possible resources for making a credible difference in the practice of teaching.

- **Book distributed for encouragement:** *I Choose to Stay: A Black Teacher Refuses to Desert the Inner City* (Salome Thomas-EL)
- **Book distributed for support:** *How to Be an Effective Teacher: The First Days of School* (**Dr. Harry Wong**).

<b>PONT – Pre-Orientation for Novice Teachers Participant Evaluation Form</b>					
<b><i>Directions:</i></b> <i>Select, by placing a check mark, to the extent each program activity has provided helpful information for your teaching practice as a novice teacher in this school district.</i>	<b>To a Great Extent</b>	<b>To Some Extent</b>	<b>To a Small Extent</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>N/A – Did not participate</b>
20 minute talk on the responsibilities of all individuals involved with the induction process.					
60 minute session of the School Overview: The district You Work For					
45 group session with mentor to tour building, review school protocols and procedures and “Things to think about to be organized the first day of school.					
60 minutes administrative presentation on Understanding the Community that you Work In: Demographics, education, income etc.					
45 minute talk on Parental Involvement: how to increase parental involvement and how to build parental relationships.					
60 minute discussion on understanding your students “Show You Care, It’s a Family Affair”					
60 minute segment on Classroom Management-Part I: Classroom Layout & Design					
60 minutes Classroom Management Part II: Teacher Managed Skills (Scheduling and Assistive Efforts, Teacher to Teacher)					

Classroom Management Part III: Handling disruptive behaviors/reoccurring and repetitive					
45 minutes Technology Demonstration: Usage and integrating into daily lessons					
1 hour/45 minutes Group Lesson Planning using basic template. Completing lesson plan for first week of school and a review of instructional strategies that work in implementing lessons in a diverse classroom					
45 minutes, The “Reflective Practitioner” understanding the benefits of reflection					
Think-Pair-Share Activities Specific daily topics about the activities of each day – working with a partner.					
Handouts: Induction Program Calendar/log and start of school checklist					
Time provided for Room Preparation based on Classroom Management for Maximizing Classroom Environment					
Affirmative Walk through by all participants....offering encouragement and support.					

**1) What is your overall assessment of PONT? (From 1 = insufficient - 5 = excellent)**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**2) Comment on the timing of the PONT project. (From 1 = insufficient to 5=excellent)**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**3) Comment on the overall organization of PONT (from 1 = insufficient to 5=excellent)**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**4) Comments and suggestions (including activities or initiatives you think would be useful, for the future).**

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**Further comments or suggestions:**

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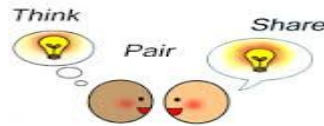
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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME IN COMPLETING THIS EVALUATION!**

Think, Pair, Share Activity

# THINK, PAIR, SHARE

## PONT



Think about the Question for today's activities. What do you think?

What does your partner think?

What will you share?

You also have the option of generating your own significant question based on today's activities.



### Appendix B: Individual Interview Protocol

Good Morning/Afternoon and thank you for consenting to participate in this study about your experiences with the modifications made to the current induction program used in your school district. The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes. Please let me know at any time if you wish to stop.

1. How has participation in the modified, multi-layered induction program helped you as a novice teacher? Please give an example.
2. How has the availability of your mentor for reflection and observation helped with the responsibilities of teaching?
3. What sessions or topics of the new teacher induction program have helped you with the job/teacher responsibilities of:
  - a. providing curriculum based instruction to your students? Please give an example.
  - b. communicating with the parents of students? Please give an example.
  - c. collaborating with the staff for the benefit of achieving academic goals of the district? Please give an example.
  - d. understanding the norms and customs of the urban community in which you work? Please give an example.
4. Describe your communication with your mentor, and collegiality with others in the school.

5. What assistive efforts or workload reductions were provided to support you with the professional competencies of classroom management?
6. Explain a situation in your classroom that the induction program has been most valuable to you as a new teacher.
7. What skills were advanced in the induction program that has been least helpful to you?
8. What additional skills or strategies might be included for future sessions in the induction program?

Thank you for your participation and sharing your experiences with the modified new teacher induction program. I appreciate your time and will be emailing a copy of interview transcript to you for review.

## Appendix C: Sample Transcript

Me: Hi, and thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about your experiences with the modifications made to the current induction program used in your school district. The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes. Please let me know at any time if you wish to stop.

BT: No problem, I've never done anything like this before so I hope I don't do anything wrong.

Me: You'll be fine. Let's get started. You do remember that I will be tape recording the session?

BT3: Yes, I read everything. I also made a few notes.

Me: Ok, that's no problem. We'll start with question one. How has participation in the modified, multi-layered induction program helped you as a novice teacher?

BT3: Not sure I feel like our training is multi-layered, but, I can say I believe I have become better at interacting with my peers, instead of just focusing on my own classroom.

Me: How important is this to you in relation to your teaching responsibilities?

BT3: I'm learning the importance of collaboration for the purpose of getting things done, or when I need help.

Me: Can you indicate why the multi-layered program was not helpful to you?

BT3: Don't know why but when I first started I didn't have a regular mentor assigned to me. Things were a little unorganized around here for my first month. I wouldn't

want my worst enemy to start like I did....guess that's the layer I missed. I always felt behind a step.

Me: How has the availability of your mentor for reflection and observation helped with the responsibilities of teaching?

BT3: My mentor teacher now has for the most part been available to help me consider different methods and find things I'm doing correct and those things I can improve.

Me: Anything in particular stand out?

BT3: Well I was so busy wanting to finish my lessons I would keep going even though students were talking. My mentor showed me how to take back control and try to maintain an engaged classroom.

Me: What sessions or topics of the new teacher induction program have helped you with a) the job/teacher responsibilities of providing curriculum based instruction to your students, b) communicating with parents of students, c) collaborating with the staff for the benefit of achieving academic goals of the district, and d) understanding the norms and customs of the urban community in which you work? Please give examples if possible.

BT3: This is one question I had to really think about and make notes. First, I don't believe any of the PD I've attended has helped with parent communication. For curriculum based instruction, reading seems to be a big push for this school and

training received for using the computer based reading programs we can use in our classrooms was one of my favorite sessions.

Me: Anything else that has helped with curriculum?

BT3: I know I am somewhat stuck on implementing the lessons I worked so hard to design – so differentiated instruction has made me become more flexible and made adjustments for certain students. There has been no specific PD for collaborating with the staff, but the number of PD's alone has allowed me to meet more of the staff and understand the different backgrounds we are all coming from. I think that's important when talking about collaboration.

Me: Ok, one more.....has there been any sessions for understanding the norms and customs of the urban community in which you work?

BT3: There has been nothing provided to help me with the norms of the community. It has been very challenging.

Me: Even as an African-American yourself working in a 100% African-American population...what did you find challenging?

BT3: Well I was raised in a middle class black community and one norm was education. I have a hard time trying to motivate or shape my student's minds towards the benefit of education when you can see they come from a home where this isn't the case. But worse than that are the stress these babies have and the things they've seen. Basically, I need help in trying to understand the needs of these students while working in such a community.

Me: Ok, please describe your communication with your mentor, and collegiality with others in the school.

BT3: Good, no problems.

Me: What about your mentor?

BT3: My mentor teacher is extremely helpful even though she seems really busy. I would say I feel comfortable asking questions or asking for help....and I usually get a positive response.

Me: What about other staff:

BT3: I have gotten along very well with the other staff and a few do seem to reach out, but again there is always something out of the ordinary going on so when people are “stand-offish” I figure they are having one of those crazy days.

Me: Like what do you mean by “crazy?”

BT3: Kids off the hook, kids fighting, or parents calling all day long. If you can make a suggestion our classroom phones should be turned off during instructional time!

Me: Well all the data I collect will be in my final report....Let’s talk about the assistive efforts or workload reductions you received.

BT3: Giving us access and training on how to use Curriculum Crafter has helped me become more efficient in the classroom. Curriculum Crafter helps me manage and save time with lesson plans....it does all the work for you.

Me: Any other help you can think of?

- BT3: I have a couple classes that are very large and paraprofessionals come in to help keep students focused. When they aren't available it's almost impossible to keep everyone engaged.
- Me: How many students are in your large classrooms?
- BT3: In one class there are 33 students and in another 36. I heard during the parent orientation that this school maintained small classroom sizes from 20 or less or a maximum of 25. This is definitely not the case!
- Me: Please explain a situation in your classroom that the induction program has been most valuable to you as a new teacher.
- BT3: I need to go back to my large class with 36 kids. Behavior problems....you name it, it has happened! Things have been so out of my control when I first started that I couldn't manage the class. My mentor would sit in and the kids would behave then as soon as she left – all hell broke loose. Talking about these situations in the mentoring meeting really helped me get a backbone and suggestions from others.
- Me: Can you think of any one specific solution or strategy you used from the induction program?
- BT3: Routines....kids need routines and when I set my classroom up differently, for example, putting a "Do Now" on the board daily; students were more settled by the time my lesson started. I guess I would say organizational skills in general.

- Me: What skills were advanced in the induction program that has been least helpful to you?
- BT3: I think everything has been beneficial. I just think that the timing has been a problem for most....like have PD sessions back to back before the start of school and no time to work in our room.
- Me: What additional skills or strategies might be included for future sessions in the induction program?
- BT3: I have a few suggestions: First, a more thorough walk through of the building. It's hard working and don't know where anything is. Next, the disciplinary process....when to send kids and what administrative action will be taken....maybe more help with disciplining students. Some team building skills so we all are on the same page, not just mentor and mentee.
- Me: Anything else?
- BT3: This might sound peculiar, but what I thought about was some overview of the community and how it may be different from the communities where we all live.
- Me: Well, BT3 we have come to the conclusion of our interview. Thank you for your participation and sharing your experiences with the modified new teacher induction program. I appreciate your time and will be emailing a copy of interview transcript to you for review.
- BT3: Thank you....hope I've helped.