**It’s the Little Things that Count:**

**High Impact, Low Cost Induction Strategies that make a Difference**

There are actions that require little effort or cost, but can pay big dividends in promoting positive school climate and collegiality. Although many are targeted for the beginning of the school year, it is never too late to be gracious and thoughtful of co-workers.

**If you are a building or district administrator…**

1. Be intentional about recruiting and selecting high quality mentors.
2. Be thoughtful about matching mentors and their new teachers.
3. Include mentors in part of your new teacher orientation—have them for lunch or for at least part of the day.
4. When you introduce your new teachers at the first faculty meeting, make sure you also introduce their mentors.
5. For new teacher orientation organize a panel of teachers who have successfully completed 1 or 2 years to discuss their experiences and what they would do differently.
6. Pay attention to schedules for each new teacher/ mentor pair. Can you adjust them to facilitate contact time during the school day?
7. Is your scheduling giving your new teachers the best opportunity to succeed, or have you set them up to fail by giving them the worst kids and the worst schedule in the least desirable classrooms?
8. Make sure the new teacher has a quiet, dedicated space to work and that his/her classroom is clean and ready to use or share.
9. Use an icebreaker at the first faculty meeting that allows new teachers to mingle and returning staff to catch up.
10. Meet with your mentors and your new teachers together to explain and sign a “Confidentiality Agreement.”
11. Require new teacher attendance at induction meetings and excuse them from other responsibilities that conflict.
12. Have a “Dates to Remember” list for new teachers (veterans love this too) to add to their calendars—events like Back-to-School Night, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Holidays, etc.
13. Set dates for new teacher meetings, and make them a priority. No cancellations. Remember that even though they are afraid of you, new teachers still crave your attention.
14. Also be thoughtful about over-scheduling meetings with new teachers. Remember that most are feeling overwhelmed during the first semester.
15. Coordinate your efforts with the Induction Program Director so that you are complementing, not duplicating efforts.
16. Make sure you express appreciation to your mentors and your Program Director as often as possible.

**If you are a Program Director…**

1. If at all possible, have all mentors and new teachers matched and given their partner’s contact information by August 1st.
2. Have a clear expectation that mentors will meet with their new teacher before the first in-service day.
3. Assemble a “Welcome Bag” of donated items (extra supplies, gift certificates, spirit ware, etc.) from the school district, veteran staff members, and/or the community.
4. Assemble a “Welcome Folder” of information about the community—recreation, restaurant menus, sightseeing, etc.
5. Orient new administrators to key components and expectations of your program.
6. Make sure that all mentors and new teachers understand who you are and your responsibilities to the program, including handling mentor/new teacher matches that are not made in heaven.
7. Review accountability expectations with mentors and new teachers. If there are stipends, how and when are they paid, what paperwork is required, and what are the deadlines for completion.
8. Review confidentiality with mentors and the new teachers—together if possible.
9. Coordinate your efforts with district and building administrators so that you are complementing, not duplicating their efforts.
10. Schedule periodic, but not too frequent, meetings—mentors by themselves, new teachers by themselves, and jointly. Keep them short and relevant to the initiatives and issues that are appropriate for your district. If funds permit, provide snacks or treats.

**If you are a mentor…**

1. Meet with your new teacher before the school year begins.
2. Think about specific ways that you can build a relationship based on trust.
3. Early on review your district’s induction program expectations for you and for the new teacher.
4. Discuss your commitment to confidentiality.
5. Work with your new teacher to set up a regular time and place to meet.
6. If your school is not air-conditioned, discuss ways to cope with teaching in hot weather and how to be prepared for possible early release days.
7. Make sure your new teacher understands how the school schedule works, especially the first few days when it often varies.
8. Before school starts make sure your new teacher has a plan for classroom management and teaching.
9. Introduce your new teacher to key people he/she will be working with in your building.
10. Review your district evaluation instrument. If it is new to the district, then treat it as something you and your new teacher can learn together.
11. Make sure you or someone else invites your new teacher to faculty socials—parties after games, TGIF meetings, etc.
12. Facilitate catch-up sessions on programs and initiatives that may be unique to your school or new for the teacher.
13. Arrange for your new teacher to observe you at least once.
14. Once you sense that your new teacher is beyond the survival stage, begin to have conversations about actual teaching practice.