

**BEGINNING TEACHER INDUCTION PILOT PROGRAMS:  
A DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST YEAR OF PILOT  
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**ILLINOIS NEW TEACHER COLLABORATIVE  
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**Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Programs**  
**A Description of the First Year of Pilot Program Implementation**

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The Illinois General Assembly appropriated two million dollars in funding for mentoring and induction pilot programs during the 2006 legislative session. Following a competitive application and review process through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), ten sites were funded, and the Illinois New Teacher Collaborative (INTC) became the administrative home for the pilots. During May and June 2007, a team of evaluators from INTC conducted interviews at each site, in addition to reviewing program documents, initial proposals, mid term reports, and notes from meetings among the pilot leaders, in order to determine the successes and challenges of first year implementation. The report summarizes conclusions in three categories: funding, program implementation, and program evaluation. These conclusions are necessarily limited to data based on less than one year of program implementation and should be viewed as a foundation from which to improve induction and mentoring programs over time. Also, at this point, induction and mentoring programs for new teachers are not directly linked conceptually or technically with initial teacher preparation. This creates an unfortunate situation that increases the perceived division between district goals for new teachers and the services provided by institutions of higher education.

**FUNDING**

State funding makes a positive difference, enabling districts, regional offices, and their partners to plan for more comprehensive and systemic programs than in previous years, when state funding was unavailable.

The timing of funding decisions matters; programs need to know they have funds prior to the beginning of the school year.

The current level of funding for pilot programs is far from sufficient to serve the needs in the state of Illinois.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to continue, refine, and expand the current programs in which the original pilots are situated.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** The Illinois General Assembly and ISBE should develop timely, dependable, and multiyear funding procedures that enable mentoring and induction programs to continue from year to year without gaps in funding streams.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** The Illinois General Assembly and the Illinois State Board of Education should provide resources to thoughtfully fund, support, and evaluate a multi-year, statewide scale up that will add programs in additional sites which approximate the geographic and demographic contexts in which the original pilots are situated.

## PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Building level administrators should be more involved with induction and mentoring than they were this year.

Support from central administration is important for program success.

Participation by all stakeholders (teacher organizations, new and experienced teachers, administrators, etc.) is enhanced by communication structures that provide continuous, timely, and relevant information.

Mentor selection, support, and accountability are important to new teacher and program success.

Networking and sharing (within and across programs) are important to continuously improving both individual and collective efforts.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Programs should provide initial orientation, ongoing networking, and professional development sessions that clearly define roles for partners, new teachers, mentors and their administrators prior to the beginning of and also during each school year.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** ISBE and INTC should provide continuing outreach to inform all stakeholders, including superintendents and school boards, of the importance of quality induction and mentoring programs and the impact that high quality programs can have on their districts.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** INTC, ISBE, and the programs should develop communication protocols and procedures that provide timely and relevant information to all stakeholders.

**RECOMMENDATION 7:** ISBE should hold programs accountable for a recognized procedure for recruiting, selecting, training, assigning, and evaluating mentors that meets specified criteria developed by all stakeholders served by the program.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:** INTC and the programs should increase their efforts to promote collaboration and sharing within and across the pilots and, when possible, to serve as a resource for programs throughout the state.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

Requirements for program evaluation promote accountability and provide, at a minimum, strong signals that documenting both process and impact are important.

Current evaluation goals, resources, and procedures are not sufficient to capture information on cost effectiveness, retention (in building, district, or state), quality and impact of mentoring, quality and impact of professional development, and overall program impact on teaching practice and student learning.

**RECOMMENDATION 9:** ISBE should continue to hold all programs that receive state funds targeted for mentoring and induction accountable for a yearly evaluation report.

**RECOMMENDATION 10:** ISBE, INTC, and the Illinois Induction Policy Team should work together to create and fund a long-range, multiple measures, research and evaluation design that will identify the factors that promote continuous program improvement, as well as the links among the mentoring and induction program, teaching practice, and student learning.

## LOCATION OF FUNDED PILOT PROGRAMS

The ten, funded, pilot programs represented districts of all sizes throughout the state. By design, the sites were chosen to represent a wide variation in size, type of program, geographic location, and populations served, while still attempting to direct funds to areas with greater need. All of the funded pilots served, at least in part, schools not meeting Annual Yearly Progress as defined by No Child Left Behind or schools on the state's Academic Watch List or Early Warning List.



As one can see from the map, five of the sites are north of I-80 and five are south of I-80. More specifically, one site is in the East St. Louis area, three sites are located in central Illinois, one site is located in western Illinois, two sites are located in northern Illinois, and three sites are located in northeastern Illinois. In terms of the scale of each pilot program, three are partnerships based at regional offices of education, which serve urban, suburban, and rural districts; seven are single-district programs. Of the seven programs that are single district/single area, three of the sites are large urban districts, one of the sites is a suburban school district, and three sites are small urban districts serving a diverse student population.