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Understanding beginning teacher induction: A contextualized examination of best practice

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Abstract: The problems that teachers face early in their careers are a major factor in growing rates of attrition among neophyte teachers. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, high rates of attrition, coupled with and aging teacher population in many countries in the developed world, may cause a teacher shortage crisis in coming years. Beginning teacher induction is an imperative process in acculturating teachers to their new careers and helping them overcome the hardships of teaching and the accreditation process. While induction practices have become more common in recent years, there are still no mandated structures for inducting teachers into the profession throughout Australia. This article reviews a number of international induction programs, which have been successful in supporting beginning teachers and curbing attrition rates, to emphasize why many programs are inadequate at meeting the needs of beginning teachers. The review proposes a definition for induction to better understand common misconceptions and highlights best practice induction as a way to retain quality teachers in the profession and help ameliorate conditions for beginning teachers. Finally, recommendations are made, specifically in the Australian context, which could help to improve induction practices to better acculturate neophyte teachers to their profession.

Subjects: Continuing Professional Development, Education, Education Policy, Education Policy & Politics

Keywords: induction, beginning teachers, teacher attrition, Australia

1. Introduction

This article presents a critical review of international and Australia-based induction programs to ascertain those elements of beginning teacher induction that are deemed most effective in the acculturation of neophytes to the profession and in helping retain teachers. While there is an excess of



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This paper provides a contextualized examination of best practice induction in light of the professionalization of the teaching profession over the past 10 years. Furthermore, it examines why the need for proper, structured induction processes has never been greater and how induction can help support teachers through the most difficult phase of their careers. Finally, this paper makes recommendations about improving induction processes to better support teachers, specifically in Australia, but also relevant in the international context, to remain in the profession and become the expert teachers that are desperately needed.

literature with regard to beginning teachers; the problems they face; and the ways in which these problems can be ameliorated, including induction and mentoring, there is a dearth of literature with specific regard to Australian beginning teacher induction and best practice induction throughout the country.

The literature aptly reveals that there is widespread belief that effective induction programs are successful at alleviating the pressures that beginning teachers face (Wojnowski, Bellamy, & Cooke, 2003), arresting beginning teacher attrition rates (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004), and facilitating the transition from pre-service university training to the teaching profession (Serpell, 2000). However, despite these overwhelming findings, there seems to be little consensus on what effective induction looks like and what is actually occurring in Australian schools. While the Australian Commonwealth Government and the various state governments have inferred their own understandings of induction and have sought to implement those understandings by various means, there is an apparent gap between the literature, policy recommendations, and implementation at the school level.

The purpose of this article is to highlight what constitutes effective induction programs and recommend ways to improve induction practices, specifically in Australia where the implementation of such programs has been a slow process. The article will first provide a brief introduction and background into the importance of beginning teacher induction; secondly, it examines the course of development of the idea of induction in the context of education and proposes a definition of induction; thirdly, it canvases elements of effective induction and best practice programs in both national and international contexts to discover those components of induction that are most likely to produce effective programs; and finally, it recommends ways to standardize induction processes and policies in Australia, which may also be useful in the international context in areas that do not have standardized, compulsory induction.

2. Background

There are various facets of starting a new career that can be disconcerting for even the most prepared neophyte. While many new recruits are nervous and possibly underprepared for the challenges they will face in their early careers, very few professions place as much pressure on their newest recruits than teaching. Halford (1998) articulates this sentiment by noting that education is “the profession that eats its young” (p. 33). Neophytes entering the teaching profession face distinctive challenges: they are typically given the most difficult classes, more classes to teach, and have more out-of-class duties imposed on them than their more experienced colleagues (Danielson, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Elias, Fisher, & Simon, 1980; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gold, 1996; Killeavy, 2006).

Seminal work on the study of induction programs for beginning teachers by McDonald (1982) found:

[O]n the problem of beginning teachers the results are uniform and almost identical irrespective of the empirical method used to ascertain them, the quality of the design and analysis in particular studies, the decade when the study was done, and even the country where the study was done. This near universal agreement is either a close estimate of the true state of affairs or a widespread delusion. (p. 10)

While the advocacy for and the research behind induction programs have increased significantly since the time McDonald made this observation, the reality is that three decades later, the same holds true about the state of affairs for beginning teachers.

As far back as the early 1960s, teachers were reporting problems with “discipline”, “classroom methods” and “motivation” (Dropkin & Taylor, 1963). Two decades later, in his extensive review of the problems that beginning teachers face, Veenman found 68 distinct problems that beginning

teachers perceived, which included “classroom discipline” and “motivating students” (1984, p. 154). A decade later, in Australia, Dinham (1992) found that the problems of classroom discipline and workloads were most prominent among beginning teachers. Hargreaves (1994, 2000) added isolation to the hardships faced by teachers early in their careers, which when added to workload and classroom discipline mentioned by Dinham (1992) reiterates the problems cited by Dropkin and Taylor in the 1960s and Veenman in the 1980s. In the past decade, new teachers have cited inadequate mentoring and supervision, lack of support in behavior management, excessive responsibilities, and failure to recognize and reward professional growth in their early years as common concerns (Hudson, 2012; McCormack, 2005; Ramsey, 2000). The evidence suggests that despite decades of research and recommendations from Australia, the US, and internationally, the needs of beginning teachers are not being met. With regard to Australia in particular, Ramsey articulates that this is not uncommon, specifically with regard to education:

Teaching is the most reviewed profession in Australia ... since 1980 there have been 20 significant national and state reviews of teacher education. The most common characteristic of these reviews has been the lack of action on their recommendations. This situation contrasts markedly with other professions. (2000, p. 116)

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has been conducting the national New Educators Survey since 2005. The results from the 2008 survey included 1,545 teachers with between one and three years of classroom experience, and found that the top four concerns were: workload (68%), behavior management (66.1%), pay (62.9%), and class size (62.6%) (AEU, 2009); interestingly, these were the same top four concerns from previous years (AEU, 2005, 2006, 2008). In two more recent Australian studies, both found that teachers are experiencing “stress” and “burnout” in their early years of teaching. In the first, Sharplin, O’Neill, and Chapman (2011) reported self-efficacy, pupil behavior, and in-school support as problems that affected teachers’ abilities to cope with the demands of their new profession, while Pearce and Morrison (2011) found that isolation in teaching could lead teachers to change careers within their first year of teaching.

Despite the three decades that have passed since McDonald’s study (1982), the literature is still adamant that the problems that beginning teachers face in the classroom are not only universal, but may debilitate the teaching profession in coming years (AEU, n.d.; Department of Education Science and Training (DEST), 2002; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Moon, 2007; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD, 2005, 2011]. Although the troubles of beginning teachers are universally recognized, little has been accomplished, internationally, and more specifically in the Australian context, to rectify the problems.

3. Induction

The literature on induction into the teaching profession has its roots in the 1950s and 1960s in the US, where mandatory schooling and the professional standards of teachers were being questioned in the post-war period (Serpell, 2000; Tisher, 1979). While this period first noted a focus on professional standards for teachers, there were references to, and the necessity of, new teacher induction as early as 1943 (see Tate, 1943). Support for induction in Australia was prevalent throughout the 1990s (Dinham, 1992; Ramsey, 2000), implemented informally in the late 1990s and more formally in the 2000s (DEST, 2002; Khamis, 2000; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). Despite the support for beginning teacher induction for more than 20 years, there has been, and continues to be confusion as to what induction is and what it entails in the context of education.

International research on educational induction has been quite specific with regard to what induction entails; however, there is ambiguity with regard to the term and its specific definition (Feiman-Nemser, 2010; Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Martinez, 1994; Wong, 2004). Conclusions from the literature with regard to educational induction suggest that there is not a common understanding as to what induction is, and it is difficult to articulate a conceptualization that will satisfy the vast array of formal and informal practices currently undertaken in various educational settings.

Therefore, it seems prudent to propose a definition by which induction programs can easily be classified, so that there is a shared understanding by stakeholders as to what designates beginning teacher induction.

3.1. Defining induction

While induction has, and still is at times defined by the characteristics of the program for which it is designed (Killeavy, 2006), the recognition of induction, in recent years, as a necessary component of teacher acculturation into the profession has generated a number of definitions that are prudent to consider. Richard Ingersoll, a leading expert on the impacts of induction in the US with specific regard to retention, provides a definition of induction in research undertaken with colleagues; they report that induction denotes a collective of programs involving orientation, support, and guidance for beginning teachers (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Wong (2004) offers a more detailed definition of induction in the US, which also entails its impact on retention and quality teaching:

A system-wide, coherent comprehensive training and support process that continues for two to three years and then seamlessly becomes part of the lifelong professional development program of the district to keep new teachers teaching and improving toward increasing their effectiveness. (p. 42)

More importantly, in these two definitions, the authors note that effective induction programs produce teachers who are dedicated to continuing learning, and quality teaching and learning (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Wong, 2004), which has further implications for the effectiveness of a teacher who is nurtured in a successful beginning teacher induction program, culminating in acceptance into a professional community of practice.

In Australia, two separate reports conducted by the DEST in 2002 and 2003 expressed that the term induction refers to “support programmes for beginning teachers” as a “critical phase within a continuum of professional learning” (DEST, 2002, p. 11). The DEST report also notes that induction programs happen in three stages: orientation, establishment, and development, and that inductees can expect: “orientation to the profession and/or the organization; personal and professional support; and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes essential for effective teaching,” (2002, p. 11). In their 2003 report, *Australia’s Teachers: Australia’s Future*, the DEST reports the provision of well-designed induction, to provide support and guidance in the transition from novice to professional as a key to beginner teacher success in the early years. Additionally, they report the importance of the development of learning communities (DEST, 2003), which is a common component of quality induction programs in the US and internationally (Carroll, 2005; Fulton et al., 2005; OECD, 2005; O’Malley, 2010; Wood & Stanulis, 2009).

Based on these definitions from the US and Australia, and a comprehensive understanding of the international literature with regard to induction for neophyte teachers, beginning teacher induction is defined here as: the primary phase in a continuum of professional development leading to the teacher’s full integration into a professional community of practice and continuing professional learning throughout their career (Kearney, 2013).

3.2. Induction in education

Beginning teacher induction is regarded as one of the most useful practices to facilitate the transition of neophytes into their new careers and prevent problems faced by early career teachers (Gujarati, 2012; Kang & Berliner, 2012; Serpell, 2000; Wojnowski et al., 2003). Many beginning teachers assume the same responsibilities as their more experienced colleagues, which, among other factors, have led to beginning teachers exhibiting higher attrition rates than comparable professions (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Stephens & Moskowitz, 1997). The nature of induction in the process of acculturating beginning teachers to their profession has received considerable international recognition in past decades as one of the foremost means of facilitating the transition from student to

teacher (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gilles, Wilson, & Elias, 2010; Howe, 2006; Ramsey, 2000; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008; Wong, Britton, & Ganser, 2005), arresting teacher attrition (AEU, 2008; DEST, 2002; Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), and alleviating the hurdles that many beginning teachers face in their first years of teaching (Hudson, 2012; Jensen, 2010; Serpell, 2000; Wojnowski et al., 2003).

Domestic and international literature advocates induction and mentoring as vital to the success and development of beginning teachers (Fletcher & Barrett, 2004; Fulton et al., 2005; Wong, 2004). As a result of the Ramsey Report (2000) and the DEST (2002), a number of recommendations were made with regard to induction and improving induction in Australia. School systems have realized the necessity to support beginning teachers and help them make a successful transition into teaching (DEST, 2002; Howe, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; OECD, 2005; Wong et al., 2005). There have been improvements in the acknowledgment of induction, including the provision of a mentor, and probation processes for beginning teachers in every state in Australia (DEST, 2002). However, the acknowledgment and recognition of the importance of these practices has not culminated into widespread, systematic policy and practices (Kearney, 2013).

The New Educator's Survey, conducted by the AEU, regarding the experiences of beginning teachers in Australia, found that more than half of beginning teachers had not participated in formal mentoring in 2006 (AEU, 2006). In 2008, the results released from the 2007 survey were no more optimistic. The report found that in 2007, 55.3% of beginning teachers had not been involved in an ongoing induction process (AEU, 2008). Although these surveys are no longer conducted annually, recent research has found similar results with regard to beginning teachers not receiving ongoing induction (Kearney, 2013). While the Commonwealth recommends that adequate, "funding and staffing of schools to strengthen induction are essential if increasing expectations are to be met" (DEST, 2003, p. 151), schools have authority as to how they spend their allocated funding (Stephens & Moskowitz, 1997). This means that the quality and appropriateness of induction programs at the school level are not monitored or overseen to ensure that recommended practices are occurring.

In Pacific Rim countries, including Australia, Stephens and Moskowitz (1997) report that attrition rates (among teachers in their first three years of teaching) are five times higher than those of more experienced teachers. In 2002, the DEST in Australia found that 25% of teachers leave the profession in the first five years. More recently, Riley and Gallant (2010) found that the percentage of teachers leaving was close to 50% in the first five years, which is similar to recent findings by Ingersoll and Perda (cited in Ingersoll, 2012) in the US. The literature has shown that effective induction programs for beginning teachers can assist new teachers to remain in the profession after the first year by up to 20% (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). The factors that affect attrition are multifarious; research has conceptualized early career attrition as a failure of either: teacher education, individual traits, salary, working conditions, burnout, or personal suitability (Riley & Gallant, 2010). Although these are all noteworthy concerns, attempts to address these issues have not changed the trend of attrition over the past decade, suggesting that other significant factors are still yet to be realized (Riley & Gallant, 2010).

While high attrition rates are not uncommon among beginning professionals, in the case of beginning teachers, these high rates of attrition combined with an aging teacher population could lead to a teacher shortage crisis in coming years (AEU, 2010; OECD, 2005, 2011). According to Riley, almost half of the 25,155 university students who began teacher training courses in 2006 were needed to fill positions vacated by teachers with less than five years' experience (cited in Milburn, 2011). Riley's figures indicate a serious concern for educators. If we are losing teachers at the rate suggested, this has serious financial implications and ever more serious repercussions for students' continuum of learning (Kearney, *in press*).

The need for induction programs for teachers has never been greater and there has, in recent history, never been as much attention given to the necessity of induction for beginning teachers.

In Australia, the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (n.d.), the Board of Education, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) (New South Wales Institute of Teachers [NSWIT], 2005), the Teachers Federation (n.d.), and the Independent Education Union (IEU, 2005) all advocate for induction for beginning teachers; the problem that remains is the means by which the various schooling sectors offer or mandate induction and the methods by which they define and implement the process.

3.3. Characteristics of effective induction (Table 1)

The varying perceptions of induction make the design of universal programs difficult. Smith and Ingersoll (2004), similar to the DEST (2002), indicate that the different purposes of induction have a direct correlation to the types of programs being implemented. It is also clear that the contextual needs of individual teachers influence the structure of induction programs for beginning teachers, especially when implemented at the school level; therefore, the elements of induction that are deemed effective and those components of programs that are considered best practice by the literature need careful consideration.

Ten papers were reviewed to identify the characteristics of effective induction, based on a number of interrelated factors. A broad range of literature was chosen by leaders in the field of induction and mentoring that ranged from international reports (Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Fulton et al., 2005; Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997; OECD, 2005), Australian national reports (DEST, 2002, 2003), an international review of induction programs (Howe, 2006), a review of induction in the US (Serpell, 2000), two empirical studies (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wood & Stanulis, 2009), and a report of state-level induction practices in New South Wales (New South Wales Department of Education and Training [NSW DET], 2004). Those papers chosen were those that were able to clearly delineate the programs and identify the elements of those programs that made it effective. Success in the each program was measured by reported retention rates and the levels of support offered to participants. The review identified eight characteristics of effective induction: provision of a mentor; opportunities for collaboration; implementation of structured observations; reduced teaching and/or time release for the beginning teacher; teacher evaluation; opportunities for professional discussions and/or communication; professional support and/or professional networking; and continuing professional development.

3.4. International best practice induction programs (Table 2)

To identify the best practice induction, nine international programs were identified as successful and effective induction programs based on their levels of support and/or retention figures. Eight countries were chosen to identify the best practice: Japan (Fulton et al., 2005; Howe, 2006; Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997; Pain & Schwille, 2010; Wong et al., 2005), Germany (Howe, 2006; Pain & Schwille, 2010), New Zealand (Howe, 2006; Langdon, 2011; Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997; Pain & Schwille, 2010; Wong et al., 2005), Switzerland (Fulton et al., 2005; Howe, 2006; Pain & Schwille, 2010; Wong et al., 2005), China (Fulton et al., 2005; Pain & Schwille, 2010; Wong et al., 2005), France (Fulton et al., 2005; Pain & Schwille, 2010; Wong et al., 2005), Canada (Cherubini, 2007; Ministry of Education (Ontario), 2008; Pain & Schwille, 2010), and two programs in the US: California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) in California (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Fulton et al., 2005; Howe, 2006; Pultorak & Lange, 2010; Strong, 2005) and the Beginning Educator Support and Training Program (BEST) in Connecticut (Carver & Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Fulton et al., 2005; Howe, 2006; Wong, 2004).

Those components identified from the international research as exemplars of the best practice were:

- the one- to two-year mandated program that focused on teacher learning and evaluation;
- the provision of a mentor;
- the opportunity for collaboration;
- structured observations;

Table 1. Characteristics of effective induction

Components of effective induction	International		US					Asia-Pacific	Australia	
	OECD (2005)	Howe (2006)	Serpell (2000)	Fulton et al. (2005)	Smith and Ingersoll (2004)	Wood and Stanulis (2009)	Darling-Hammond et al. (2009)	Moskowitz and Stephens (1997)	DEST (2002, 2003)	NSW DET (2004)
Orientation	X		X						X	X
• To the profession										
• To the school			X						X	
Provision of a mentor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Mentor training		X							X	
• Time release/reduced teaching for mentor		X	X			X			X	
Collaboration	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
• With beginning teachers		X								
• With more experienced colleagues		X					X			
• Team teaching								X		X
Structured observations	X		X	X		X		X	X	X
Reduced teaching load and/or release time	X	X	X		X		X		X	
Interaction with university	X								X	
Intense workplace learning		X						X	X	
Socialization process			X						X	
Focus on reflection	X	X				X			X	X
Provides resources/information								X		X
Beginning teacher seminars/meetings		X			X		X	X	X	
Promotes lifelong learning		X		X					X	
Formally evaluates the teacher	X	X	X	X		X			X	
Formally evaluates the program			X			X			X	
Professional discussions/communication	X			X	X	X	X		X	X
Professional support/networking	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Part of a formal professional development program	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X

Table 2. International best practice induction programs

Components of best practice	Japan	Germany	New Zealand	Switzerland	China (Shanghai)	France	Canada (Ontario)	US California (BTSa)	US Connecticut (BEST)
Mandated program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Length of program	1 year	2 years	2 years	1-2 years	1 year	1 year	1-2 years	2 years	2 years
Responsibility	Multiple/District		Multiple—School/University/	Shared—University/School/Professional development centers	District/School	University/District/School	Province/School	Local Partnerships	State /Local
Components of the program									
<i>Provision of a mentor</i>	2 days/week	X	No one mentor—help provided by all teachers	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Mentor training				X				X	X
• Mentor remuneration	X			X	High status	X		X	X
• Mentor time release/reduced teaching	X			X			X	X	X
<i>Collaboration</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
• With beginning teachers			X	X		X			X
• With more experienced colleagues	X		X	X			X		X
• Team teaching			X						
Structured observations	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Reduced teaching load and/or release time	X (75% FT)	X	X (20% reduction)		X (1/2 day/wk)	X (33%)	X	X	X
Interaction with university		X		X	X	X			
Intense workplace learning	X			X	X	X		X	X
Socialization process	X								
Focus on reflection	X	X		X		X			X
Beginning teacher seminars/meetings	X	X	X	X		X			X

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Components of best practice	Japan	Germany	New Zealand	Switzerland	China (Shanghai)	France	Canada (Ontario)	US California (BTSa)	US Connecticut (BEST)
Promotes lifelong learning	X		X			X	X		X
Professional discussions/communication		X				X			
Formal assessment and evaluation of the teacher	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Formal assessment and evaluation of the program			X				X	X	
Professional support/networking			X			X	X	X	X
Part of a formal professional development program	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Cost/funding	US\$20 million in 1995 US\$12000 per new teacher						\$20000 base per year, then supplemented per teacher	\$104.6 million \$3200 per new teacher provided by the state \$2100 local	\$3.4 million budget \$1000 per new teacher in 1986 (reduced to \$200 in 1990s) District \$900-\$2800
Funding derivation	Federal and Provincial	N/A	Federal		N/A		Provincial/School	Provincial/District	State/District
Overall goals	Improving teaching		Knowledge and skill development	Lifelong learning, seamless transition from university	Ethics, theory, practical skills	Focused discipline	Evaluation/integration	Teacher effectiveness retention satisfaction	

- reduced teaching and/or release time;
- intensive workplace learning;
- beginning teacher seminars and/or meetings;
- professional support and/or professional networking; and
- part of a program of professional development.

Common components of these international beginning teacher induction programs were noted; however, each program has specific elements that allow it to stand out internationally as an exemplar of teacher induction practices. Japan's program is unique in that it invests over US\$12000 per beginning teacher per year for beginning teachers, which equates to approximately US\$220 million per year. Another defining characteristic of Japan's program is the action research projects that beginning teachers undertake as part of their induction, culminating in a 30–40 page report on a topic of their choosing. This project promotes teaching in Japan as a 'high status profession' (Fulton et al., 2005). Induction in Switzerland begins in pre-service education and continues throughout teachers' careers. Their program is characterized by the teams of teachers formed in pre-service education and continues in schools when their formal training finishes. The teams work together and offer support and encouragement culminating in *standortbestimmung* or self-evaluation of the first year of teaching (Fulton et al., 2005; Howe, 2006). The programs, offered by both Germany and France, are based on an apprentice-style system, whereby the beginning teachers are phased into the profession by teaching and studying at the same time (Howe, 2006; Wong et al., 2005).

The two US programs (the BTSA and the BEST) are both heavily subsidized by the state and/or local municipalities and have been very successful in improving retention rates among teachers who participate. The BTSA, which operates for approximately 20,000 beginning teachers annually, has achieved a retention rate of 84% (Fulton et al., 2005). The BEST, which over 60% of educators in the state of Connecticut are involved with in some way, achieves an estimated 94.3% retention rate annually (Fulton et al., 2005). These numbers far exceed any empirical generalizations that have been made with regard to the impact of induction on attrition rates. The reported rate of attrition in the US is estimated at 39% (Ingersoll, 2001). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that effective induction programs have the ability to increase retention by up to 50%; the figures reported with regard to the BTSA and the BEST far surpass these estimates. New Zealand's program includes a 20% reduction in teaching for new teachers (Wong et al., 2005); and, in China (Shanghai), beginning teachers receive a half-day of training per week and classrooms are open to observations by any teacher at any time (Fulton et al., 2005; Wong et al., 2005). Finally, induction practices in Ontario, Canada are based on a system of appraisal for the purpose of improving teacher potential to increase the level of student performance.

In those countries listed as having effective induction programs, it is the preparation, support, and evaluation of their teachers that are essential to program success to properly acculturate their teachers into the profession. There is also institutional commitment through funding, resourcing, and partnerships that help to ensure program success. With regard to those programs in Japan, Germany, New Zealand, and both programs from the US, Howe (2006) states, "Taken collectively ... these exemplary practices include comprehensive in-service training, extended internship programs, mentoring and reduced teaching assignments for beginning teachers" (p. 295). Many of the same elements that are necessary for successful induction programs are reported in both the literature on effective characteristics and the review of best practice programs. Interestingly, in the programs reviewed, it is their mandatory nature, the cost of the programs, and their reported retention rates ability success, specifically with regard to teacher retention, that are most prominent.

4. Discussion

With regard to the implementation of induction in Australia, it has been shown that despite recommendations from state governments and the Commonwealth, many teachers do not receive the support they need in the early years of their career (AEU, 2006, 2008; DEST, 2002; Kearney, 2013). The DEST (2002) study reported that while induction programs are

on the rise, structured induction programs have not been a common practice in education in Australia; 10 years later, this still seems to be the case (Kearney, 2013), despite the fact that beginning teacher induction is regarded as one of the most useful practices to facilitate the transition of teachers into their new careers and prevent problems faced early in their careers including high attrition rates, lack of discipline, and burnout (Goddard, O'Brien, & Goddard, 2006; Serpell, 2000; Wojnowski et al., 2003).

The recommendations made by the Commonwealth DEST (2002) state that all beginning teachers should undergo an induction process that includes mentoring and ongoing support. While these recommendations have not resulted in mandating any such programs or requirements, there is now a national system of accreditation, which certifies every new teacher entering the profession by evaluating their work against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Although each state has different means by which their teachers demonstrate proficiency of the standards, all are expected to receive adequate induction and mentoring. In New South Wales, the BOSTES supports teachers in becoming accredited to teach and they advocate for structured induction for all beginning teachers; they do not, however, mandate or oversee these practices, which results in inconsistencies in the implementation of induction (Kearney, 2013).

This article has not only shown an inconsistency in understanding induction, but more definitively that there is no agreed upon design nor mode of implementation for induction programs in Australia. Despite overwhelming evidence that successful induction programs aid in alleviating the pressures of early career teachers, systematic mandated induction has not taken hold in Australian schools (AEU, 2008; Kearney, 2013).

An understanding that comprehensive induction is a process that needs careful consideration so that it does not simply become orientation to the workplace is needed to ensure the program's value (Kearney, 2013). Successful acculturation involves a comprehensive program of professional development, in which induction is only the initial stage (Kearney, 2013). An effective induction program requires a commitment of time and resources from the school and dedication toward helping the teacher develop into an accomplished professional within a community of practice. Therefore, the nature of the implementation of successful induction and how that translates into support and guidance for the teacher is a complex undertaking that requires a thoughtful approach by the organization. The inconsistencies in induction programs and the ongoing problems faced by teachers in the early years of their career demonstrate a major lapse between what the literature advocates, the government recommends, and what schools practice (Kearney, 2013).

5. Recommendations

Induction practices lay the foundation for the careers of neophyte teachers. While these practices have, in recent years, been recommended throughout Australia, the manifestation of the intent of those recommendations has not been realized. What is needed is a systematic policy that mandates structured, effective induction for all beginning teachers, not only in Australia but also in any jurisdiction where recruiting and retaining quality teachers is a priority. The OECD (2011) recommends common policy priorities for attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers, which include recognizing development within the profession as a process and in aiding the development of learning communities within schools. These priorities correlate with effective induction program, which seek to help new teachers develop into effective educators that stay in the profession long enough to have a positive impact on student learning. In Australia, the need for strong policy has never been stronger. In 2002, the DEST found variation and inconsistency in the management and implementation of induction nationwide and a decade later, that same inconsistency applies (Kearney, 2013).

In line with international recommendations put forth by the OECD (2011), schools need to implement policy that promotes formal, structured induction processes that meet the needs of beginning teachers. Induction programs should be conceptualized as a learning process that provides professional support in the form of:

- orientation to the school to help socialize beginning teachers to their new workplace and the profession;
- mentoring as part of a situated learning process, culminating in initiation into a professional Community of Practice;
- focused collaboration with colleagues working in similar situations for additional professional support;
- structured observations of beginning teachers by their mentor;
- structured time release for beginning teachers to:
 - meet with their mentors for professional support and to discuss outcomes of observations;
 - work on collecting evidence and supporting documentation in line with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers; and
 - reflect on their practice.
- training and either structured time release, remuneration or both for mentors; and
- be part of a larger formal program of continuing professional learning that is sustained throughout the beginning teacher's career.

Schools need to implement induction programs that are dictated by policy and are formal, structured, and overseen by the appropriate accreditation body. In Australia that could be either the national body, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, and/or their state counterparts. Only when these programs are policy directed, compulsory, and conceptualized as part of a larger framework of learning, can the professionalization and standardization of the teaching professional be upheld. The professionalization of the teaching workforce has more widespread implications than the simple support and retention of teachers; it could help attract a higher quality of candidates to the profession.

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