

Full-Time Mentors:
A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions

by
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Abstract

This study examines the perceptions of new teachers regarding the benefits of full-time mentorship based on one particular new teacher induction program. Six new teachers and three mentors were interviewed in this study. Data indicated that full-time mentors could effectively introduce new teachers into the teaching profession if certain conditions were present. New teachers perceived the following benefits from effective full-time mentorship: increased confidence in their abilities, opportunities for non-evaluative observation and feedback, practice teaching of lessons prior to administrative evaluations, support with resources and materials specific to their situation, and the opportunity to ask critical questions in complete confidence. However, these benefits were not perceived when an unmanageable mentor-to-teacher ratio was present. One finding not prevalent in the literature was the characteristic of disassociation whereby teachers new to the profession had difficulties disassociating their professional work lives from their personal lives. The suggestion is made that further study is warranted to determine if the characteristic of disassociation could be used as a predictor of new-teachers at risk of leaving the profession. This study concludes by making eight recommendations for improving full-time mentor support and new teacher induction.

Keywords: full-time mentors, new teachers, induction, mentoring

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Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions

Chapter One: Introduction

Teachers recently graduated from university or college preparation programs are full of theoretical information and eager to take on a classroom full of energetic children. These beginning teachers are excited but nervous about going into their first classroom in their first school. Most believe there will be lots of supports and colleagues eager to share their knowledge of the way things work in the school culture and community (Panesar, 2010). Unfortunately, the theoretical teachings of teacher preparation programmes often fail to translate effectively into the school classroom (Canadian Teachers' Federation [CTF], 2004; Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; Karsenti, Collin, Villeneuve, Dumouchel, & Roy, 2008; Kent, Feldman, & Hayes, 2010; Melnick & Meister, 2008; Panesar, 2010; Stoel & Thant, 2002), and new teachers find that there are many responsibilities that become overwhelming; student work to be graded, parents to be called, behaviour problems to be dealt with, assignments to be prepared and organized, tests to be constructed and marked, and the list goes on (Karsenti et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Panesar, 2010). In addition to the classroom expectations there are school and administrative expectations for a new teacher: recess duties, extracurricular clubs, field trips, teacher coverage, assemblies, bulletin boards, newsletters and other tasks that get added to the long list of teacher obligations. All of these responsibilities can translate into a daunting work load for the new teacher. In fact, the adequate preparation (or lack thereof) that new teachers receive prior to their introduction to the "real world" of teaching is one of the most cited reasons for new teachers leaving the profession (CTF, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF], 2002; Stoel & Thant, 2002).

Howe (2006) states that “nearly every teacher can relate to the difficulties encountered by beginning teachers and the excessive burden placed on first-year teachers” (p. 289). Many teachers enter their first classroom with an idealistic sense of reality and a subsequent feeling that their university preparation classes have left them woefully unprepared for the true reality of the classroom (Howe, 2006; Russell, McPherson, & Martin, 2001; Panesar, 2010; Veenman, 1984). Howe calls this the traditional “rite of passage” (p. 289) and Veenman as “reality shock” (p. 143). Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) described the first few years of teaching as the “occupation that ‘cannibalizes its young’ and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to a ‘sink or swim’, ‘trial-by-fire’, or ‘boot camp’ experience” (p. 682). New teachers often find that they are assigned to the more demanding classrooms (Borman & Dowling, as cited in Karsenti et al., 2008; Kapadia, Coca, & Easton, 2007), given the hardest course loads, given numerous additional responsibilities, and asked to teach unfamiliar subjects (Ingersoll, 2002; Johnson, & Birkeland, as cited in Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2005; Mukamurera, as cited in Tardiff, 2001; National Education Association [NEA], 2003; Ontario College of Teachers [OCT], 2006; Weiss & Weiss, 1999). The Manitoba Teachers’ Society [MTS] (2002) went so far as to suggest that for the longest time Manitoba school divisions were not “overly concerned with attracting candidates to the teaching profession nor [had] they had to make special efforts to retain the teachers they [had] hired” (p. 23). If a new teacher departed after the first year, he/she was simply replaced with another. There was no consideration for the effort and expense of hiring and recruiting teachers because it wasn’t necessary; there existed an oversupply of teachers eager to fill employment positions (MTS, 2002, p.23).

In the nineteen eighties and nineties that all changed. No longer were there an abundant number of prospective teachers waiting to be hired. As Ingersoll & Kralik (2004) indicate of the U.S. experience, school divisions began to experience teacher shortages, fuelled by the large number of retirements and a staggering attrition rate for new teachers. With the shortage of teachers came a new philosophy of teacher recruitment and the expenditure of money to make it happen. As school divisions throughout Canada and the United States began to spend money on the recruitment of teachers, they also began to think seriously about protecting their “investments”. The concept of teacher retention was recognized. Divisions began to view induction and mentoring programs as strategies to enable the retention of new teachers (Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, & Yusko, 1999; NEA, 2003).

Significance of the Study

A NCTAF (2002) study cited four primary reasons that new teachers left the profession during their first five years: salary, working conditions, teacher preparation (pre-service), and (lack of) mentoring. A study of Canadian “drop-out” teachers by Karsenti et al. (2008) determined that new teacher drop-outs in Canada identified very similar reasons for attrition; surprisingly salary was still identified although not as prominently as in our neighbours to the south. While school divisions are constrained by collective agreements as far as being limited in what they can offer as salaries and teacher preparation (pre-service) exists outside their purview, working conditions, quality induction including a mentoring component, and professional development for new teachers (to bridge the gap between pre-service programs and teaching) are certainly within a school division’s control.

With the Canadian attrition rate of new teachers as high as thirty percent in some specific subjects (Canadian Teachers Federation, 2004; Ewart, 2009; Phillips, 2002) in the first five years, it makes sense for divisions to look for ways to improve retention. In a study by Guin (as cited in Earley & Ross, 2006), teacher attrition was shown to result in negative school climates, contribute to low levels of trust and collaboration between colleagues, and require schools to rethink instructional goals each year resulting in a less comprehensive and unified instructional program.

Teachers are more likely to stay in the teaching profession long-term when they feel valued and respected (Certo & Engelbright, 2002; Rhodes, Nevill & Allan, 2004). Induction programs foster the development of feeling valued and respected. In addition, well crafted induction programs have been shown “to have positive effects on recruiting new teachers; teacher quality; student achievement; K–12 curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and professional development of veteran teachers” (Earley & Ross, 2006, p. 23). Induction programs can also “improve teaching quality, positively impact on teacher retention, and decrease the overall cost of recruiting, preparing, and developing teachers” (Earley & Ross, 2006, p.7).

This study examined a unique type of induction program based in an urban western Canadian school division. It used a qualitative, naturalistic inquiry methodology to explore the perceptions of new teachers and mentors participating in the induction program. The program incorporates mentor teachers hired by the division who work out of divisional offices. These mentor teachers are assigned a group of new teachers based upon grade level and language of instruction. The mentors work in a full time capacity; they have no student course load and do not answer to any particular school administration. This induction

program has taken the unique step of removing the mentorship component of induction from the local control of individual schools (although components of the induction program still involve the use of in-school buddy teachers).

In order to examine the effectiveness of this program, the primary research question that guided this study was, “Does the availability of a full time mentor teacher facilitate the successful introduction of a new teacher into the teaching profession?” To begin to answer that question, “successful introduction” needs to be defined. Glassford and Salinitri (2007) stated that a “successful teacher induction program will ultimately boost student performance” (p. 27). Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) suggested that successful induction and mentoring programs be designed “so that they are explicitly seen as instruments of school reculturing” (p. 54). Moir and Gless seem to take the middle ground when they indicate that successful induction “can both re-orient the teaching profession and help future students be more successful” (as cited in Glassford & Salinitri, 2007, p. 12). Leithwood (2006), however, describes successful induction from the new teachers’ perspective when he suggests that schools require retention strategies that enable new teachers to feel comfortable, to develop their professional capacities, and subsequently to feel satisfied. For the purpose of this study a successful introduction into the teaching profession will be one in which new teachers perceive increased confidence in their abilities, increased sense of value by the school communities in which they work, and a high degree of satisfaction with the skills and supports received from their mentors with the long term goal of helping students be more successful. In order to answer the primary research question, four additional research questions form the basis of this study:

1. What are the challenges that new teachers face for which they need support?
2. Benefits and Challenges of Mentoring

- a. For New Teachers: What (if any) benefits do new teachers perceive from having access to a formal mentor? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: What (if any) benefits exist for mentors who work to support new teachers? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
3. Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure
- a. For New Teachers: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
4. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and/or mentors?

Information was collected through semi-structured interviews of six new teachers who are participating, or have participated, in the mentoring program, two full-time mentors who coordinate the program and a former mentor coordinator. The resulting data was analyzed in an attempt to understand the perceptions of beginning teachers and mentors regarding the mentorship component of the induction program. The trustworthiness of data was achieved through triangulation of data sources that include interview data, member checks for dependability, the collection of internal documents related to the induction program and a comprehensive literature review. Cohen and Crabtree (2006) paraphrase

Lincoln and Guba (1985) when they suggest that by, “describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people” (§ 1). Transferability was achieved through the provision of rich/thick descriptions from the research participants.

Mentoring and Induction

There is no definitive strategy for creating effective mentoring programs. Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) stated that “mentoring programs can vary from a single meeting between mentor and mentee at the beginning of a school year, to a highly structured program involving frequent meetings over a couple of years between mentors and mentees who are provided with release time from their normal teaching schedules” (p. 4). Anderson and Shanno (as cited in Gillis, 2004) defined mentoring as “a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter’s professional development” (p. 4).

Throughout the literature, the terms “mentoring” and “induction” have often been used interchangeably (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005). As Wong (2004) stresses, “a mentor is a single person, whose basic function is to help a new teacher. Mentoring is not induction; it is a component of the induction process” (p. 42). Induction goes beyond mentoring to provide an extensive framework of support, professional development and standards-based assessments and evaluations. Wong (2001) suggests:

Induction is the process of systematically training and supporting new teachers, beginning before the first day of school and continuing through the first two or three years of teaching. Its purposes include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) easing

the transition into teaching, (2) improving teacher effectiveness through training in classroom management and effective teaching techniques, (3) promoting the district's culture—its philosophies, missions, policies, procedures, and goals, and (4) increasing the retention rate for highly qualified teachers. (§ 11)

Many early induction programs consisted primarily of pairing up new teachers with veteran teachers (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; New Teacher Center [NTC], 2007). Veteran teachers would socialize their mentees into the school culture and community and answer any questions the new teachers might have throughout the year. Early induction programs (and their mentoring components) were rarely formalized or consistent across schools. Today, decades later, little has changed (Futrell, 2001; Wong, Britton, & Ganser, 2005).

While most teachers are informally socialized into the teaching profession (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kapadia et al., 2007), more school divisions are instituting or advocating for formal and informal induction programs. Very few divisions, however, have made the effort or expenditures necessary to implement comprehensive formalized induction programs for all new teachers (Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). As induction and mentoring become more prevalent, it is prudent to understand that the quality and effectiveness of individual programs varies greatly (Kent, et al., 2010; NTC, 2007; NCTAF, 2003). For the purposes of this study and to provide an understanding of the different type and quality of induction programs, I have chosen to use the following categorization of induction types: (a) formal; (b) informal; (c) limited; and (d) comprehensive (Britton, Paine, Pimm, & Raizen, 2003).

Formal induction programs are division mandated programs for all new teachers (some also include provisions for experienced teachers who are new to the division). These programs involve varying degrees of divisional support, both financial and resource based, for the implementation of the program. They ensure that divisions provide the same level of supports to new teachers in all schools within a region. These supports may include orientation sessions, professional development specific to the needs of new teachers, the assignment of a mentor and/or buddy teacher, as well as other supports deemed important by the particular school division. A formal induction program has consistent expectations for the induction of new teachers and at least partial financial support to cover expenses.

Informal induction programs are those implemented on a school to school basis. They are often different from each other and provide a wide range of financial and resource supports for new teachers. These types of programs can range from the ‘Welcome to the school, let me show you where the photocopier is’ to the assigning of a teacher mentor (sometimes referred to as a “buddy teacher”) in the same area of expertise (or grade level) as the new teacher (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; OCT, 2003). Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) indicated that nearly 83 percent of teachers receive some measure of informal induction into the new school community they have joined. Kapadia et al. (2007, p. 33) determined that new teachers “receive supports and mentorship regardless of participation in induction” and concluded that new teachers were welcomed and mentored informally by supportive colleagues or that supports similar to those provided by induction programs were possible through school wide professional development initiatives.

Informal induction programs have traditionally been the norm in the school setting and range in effectiveness and value depending on the emphasis placed on the program by

the school's administration (Brock & Grady, 1998), or by the effectiveness of the school's leadership (Kapadia et al., 2007). Kapadia et al. declared that "school leaders have an essential part in acclimating new teachers by providing ongoing assistance and encouragement and facilitating welcoming and supportive school climates" and "the capacity to create opportunities for grade-or subject-level collaboration or facilitate novices' participation in a network of new teachers" (p.38). The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission (as cited in Wong, 2004) cautions however, that "giving a teacher a mentor only is a convenient and unconsciously foolish way for an administrator to divorce himself or herself from the leadership required to bring a beginning teacher up to professional-maturity level" (pp. 43-44). While individual administrators may understand the value of quality induction for the retention of their new teachers, few schools can provide the resources of a formal division-wide teacher induction program.

Comprehensive induction programs meet most if not all of the following criteria: (a) they support and promote learning across a teacher's career (professional development); (b) they are mandated with substantial paid time; (c) they include reduced course loads and responsibilities for the new teacher; (d) they are underpinned by strong administrative support and communication between all levels of the system; (e) they include mentoring by an experienced and trained colleague; (f) they last for more than one year; and (g) they provide a range of induction activities (Britton et al., 2003; Fulton et al., 2005; Wayne, Youngs, & Fleishman, 2005). In contrast, limited induction programs tend to be restricted to guidance from one person; treat induction as an isolated phase; fail to provide sufficient resources; are for a short period of time (one year or less); fail to provide training and

support for mentors; and, offer a limited range of induction activities. Appendix A contains a complete list of the criteria laid out by Britton et al. (2003).

The school division in which this research is conducted has a formal induction program which it refers to as a mentorship program. The mentor program is comprised of nine components, the primary component of classroom participation surrounded by the eight secondary components: divisional orientation, reflection, instructional and professional support, goal setting and planning, in-school peer support system, teacher networking, professional dialogue sessions, and professional development opportunities. Each of these elements will be described more fully in Chapter Two.

The program employs one and a half full time mentors as coordinators (recent cut-backs have reduced the number of full time mentors from three to one and a half). New teachers on permanent contract (full or part time) are supported by one of the two mentors based upon several factors including their language of instruction (French or English) and their level of instruction (elementary or secondary). The mentor's role includes spending time in the beginning teachers' classrooms and providing meaningful support, feedback, and suggestions based upon their observations. The mentor coordinators also facilitate the remaining eight components of the mentorship program by organizing professional development opportunities, connecting new teachers to experienced teachers of the same subject around the division for reflection and networking possibilities, providing divisional orientation information, being accessible for goal setting, planning, and personal support, and coordinating the in-school peer support system with school administrators. In addition, the mentors provide recognition, remuneration, and support of the in-school peers –

“buddies” – by maintaining and publishing a mentor newsletter, and organizing receptions to honour the in-school peers for their work.

Limitations of the Study

Qualitative studies have inherent limitations. Small sample sizes, an inability to generalize results to the larger population, and the absence of empirical data all lead to a generally lower reliability than its quantitative counterpart (Bamberger, 2000; Bamberger, Rugh & Mabry, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Marshall and Rossman conclude, “no proposed research project is without limitations; there is no such thing as a perfectly designed study” and that “a discussion of the study’s limitations demonstrates that the researcher understands this reality – that [he] will make no overweening claims about generalizability or conclusiveness relative to what [he] has learned” (p. 42).

The nature of the sample selection method limited participant selection in three ways:

1. Sample participants were available from only those who were in their first year or remained teaching in the school division after their first year. This limitation of the research resulted in the exclusion of any teachers who may have left the teaching profession during or after their first year of teaching and those who may have changed school divisions.

2. The study was limited to six new teachers and three mentor participants in one school division in Manitoba, Canada. Teachers and mentors voluntarily participated in this study. This may have restricted the type of sample that was available. Because of the sample size and natural settings subject to change, results may not be generalizable to other regions of Canada.

3. Participants were recruited on a voluntary basis, this may have excluded access to teachers who were struggling and/or unwilling to participate for reasons such as workload and stress and may have been able to contribute valuable insights for this study.

Also inherent in qualitative studies is the bias with which a researcher initiates his/her study. Bogdan and Biklen (2005, p. 34) concede that, “all researchers are affected by observers’ bias” but “qualitative researchers try to acknowledge and take into account their own biases as a method of dealing with them”. In my case there were certain assumptions and prior knowledge that led me to study this particular program. In a previous unpublished study of teacher attrition rates and teacher retention strategies I became aware of this particular mentor program (Armstrong, 2006). One of the developers of the program, the division’s former human resource coordinator, claimed that the introduction of this program had significantly reduced the division’s attrition rates. In addition, my review of the literature (prior to the initiation of the study) included certain information and knowledge about how successful mentor and induction programs were constructed; not the least of which included the knowledge that many highly successful mentor programs had utilized full time mentors. Bogdan and Biklen (2005) assure us, however, that “the data that are collected provide a much more detailed rendering of events than even the most creatively prejudiced mind might have imagined prior to the study” (p. 33).

Two additional limitations need to be acknowledged. As an outside researcher, I was less familiar with the culture and climate of this particular school division. Secondly, the methodology of this study (interview rather than observation) may have limited my ability to understand what, if any, outside forces (e.g. culture and climate) were impacting or influencing the perceptions of new teachers. This could, however, be considered a strength

of the research. As Bogdan and Biklen (2005) caution, “people who are intimately involved in a setting find it difficult to distance themselves both from personal concerns and from their common-sense understandings of what is going on. For them, more often than not, their opinions are more than ‘definitions of the situation’; they are the truth” (p. 52).

The choice of interviewing participants rather than observing them is more attributable to the amount of time available to me to conduct the research than to any other reason. An in-depth observation of the culture of a school division and its effects and influence upon the perceptions of new teachers regarding their induction into the teaching profession may be worthy of future research.

Delimitations of the Study

A number of delimitations relate to the study parameters:

1. The study examines the perceived benefits of one example of a mentorship program housed in an urban school division in Manitoba, Canada.
2. The study has been limited to six interviews with new teachers in their first five years of teaching representing two each from elementary, middle and secondary schools, and three interviews with the divisional mentors (two current and one former) who currently coordinate or coordinated the mentor program.
3. All data for the study was collected between September and December, 2009.
4. The research participants included first year teachers in the current year of the mentor program and second, third, and fifth year teachers who had participated in previous years of the mentor program.

Overview of the Study

This paper is composed of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the reader to the problems associated with teacher attrition and new teacher mentoring and induction as specific strategies to improve teacher retention. In chapter two a review of the literature surrounding mentorship and induction is presented, along with a description of the program under review in this study. Chapter three presents the methodology and methods of the study. Chapter four analyses the responses and findings of the study participants based on their experiences in the mentorship program. The final chapter discusses the results, summarizes the findings, and provides suggestions and recommendations for practice, research and theory.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review begins by examining the nature of teacher attrition and some of the causes of it. The review then focuses on possible solutions to attrition developed by educational organizations around the world, and subsequently narrows to focus on the value of effective induction programs and mentorship as a strategy to develop teacher capacity, limit teacher attrition, and subsequently increase teacher retention. The review concludes with a description of the state of induction programs within Manitoba and the local mentorship program that is the focus of this study.

Teacher Attrition

In the world of today's public schools, the teaching profession continues to change dramatically and quickly. With the advent of computers and ever more complex technology, greater stress on differentiated learning styles, and increased expectations for the roles of schools, teachers have experienced increased job responsibilities and performance expectations. New teachers, especially, are ill-prepared to meet the demanding requirements of the classroom (Berry, 2004; Karsenti et al., 2008; Panesar, 2010; Tardiff, 2001; Veenman, De Laat, & Staring, 1998).

Teacher attrition studies reflect that as many as one-third of new teachers in Canada (Phillips, 2002; Ewart, 2009) and nearly one-half of new teachers in the United States (Fulton et al., 2005; Harris et al., 2003; Liu & Ramsey, 2008; NEA, 2003) leave the profession during their first five years. As the existing teacher population continues to grow older, and teacher retirements and responsibilities continue to increase, the problem becomes exacerbated. Attrition can be defined as the "premature departure from the teaching profession (before 7 years), whether voluntary or not" (Karsenti et al., 2008, p. 10). It is

important to note that some attrition is short-term, meaning the departing teacher has left the profession temporarily but expects to return, while other forms of attrition are permanent. Teacher attrition can occur in many formats including “people transferring from one school to another, migrating to a different school district or state, moving from teaching into an administrative job, or leaving teaching entirely” (Earley & Ross, 2006, p. 7). An Alberta Teachers’ Association (2008) study indicated various reasons that new teachers might choose to leave; these included to travel, have a child, take educational leave, pursue another career, or leave the profession. Karsenti et al. (2008) also point out that a small percentage of attrition from the profession “...might be necessary. The teaching field should benefit if teachers who realize that they lack what it takes to work with students turn to other careers” (p. 11). Regardless of the reasons for a teacher leaving, the cost to replace a teacher and the cost in terms of student achievement is extremely high. As Fulton et al. (2005) state:

Districts lose the momentum of reform initiatives when their teachers leave. Schools lose the continuity and consistency that are essential to the fabric of their communities.

Students are forced to adapt to a passing parade of teachers severing the emotional bonds formed with some of the most important adults in their daily lives. (p. 9)

Teacher attrition and retirements create a perception that there exists a shortage of qualified teachers here in Canada (Canadian Teachers Federation, 2000; Phillips, 2002) and in the United States (NCTAF, 2002), but as the NCTAF report indicates, teacher shortage is not a *problem* facing schools today, but instead a *symptom*. The real problem in public schools is the high attrition rate of teachers. High attrition rates for new teachers occur because of many factors including poor salaries, working conditions, teacher preparation,

and a lack of mentoring (Karsenti et al., 2008; Kent et al., 2010; Leithwood, 2006, NCTAF, 2002).

University preparation courses continue to produce an adequate number of education graduates (Levin, 2008; NCTAF, 2003) but “despite decades of reform movements, teacher-education programs continue to be criticized for ignoring the voices and needs of teacher candidates, providing and promoting an unrealistic view of teaching, and perpetuating the transmission model of teaching as telling” (Russell, et al., 2001, p. 39). This is unfortunate since research indicates that “high quality teacher preparation is a strong predictor of both teacher retention and good teaching practice” (NCTAF, 2003, p. 17). Despite the number of education graduates, conditions in the school environment, as mentioned by Leithwood (2006) and the NCTAF (2002), continue to result in high attrition rates. The result is an abundant workforce that is unwilling to remain in the teaching profession.

Unfortunately, schools have done little to remedy the problem and instead often focus their attention on the symptoms. Despite several decades’ worth of research and attention to the problem, it is clear from the literature that teacher attrition rates have changed very little in the past two decades. Levin (2009) indicates that the situation is better here in Canada. He states:

Canada has avoided some of these problems compared to a number of other countries, notably the U.S. Canadian teachers are well educated. There are very few uncertified teachers in the system. Entry to university teacher education programs remains competitive all across the country, with applicants greatly outnumbering the spaces available. (p. 223)

As Phillips (2002) outlines in her study, there is no shortage of teachers, but in fact an abundance of qualified personnel. She states:

The problem is not so much a teacher shortage as it is distribution (i.e., matching the teacher to the job). Nationally there is a sufficient supply of teachers. Shortages appear in terms of specific subject areas like Science and Math, and in terms of geographic areas such as northern Manitoba. (p. 27)

The problem lies not in a shortage of teachers but instead in the fact that teachers leave the profession more quickly than they can be replaced. As Mukamurera (as cited in Tardiff, 2001) states:

The initial phase of a teacher's career is a period of often traumatic "survival" during which the new teacher overcomes the shock of reality. Unfortunately, beginning teachers seldom enjoy proper working conditions, often being recruited at the last minute for a temporary position and being assigned the worst tasks in the school, the difficult classes and sometimes even a subject they are not prepared to teach. (p. 9)

Tardiff elaborates by saying "pre-service training does not prepare teachers for such situations and all these problems have negative consequences on professional development and career prospects for beginning teachers. Indeed, some are even led to question their choice of career or even to abandon teaching" (p. 9).

From my own experience, I entered my classroom on the very first day of school, on my very first day of teaching, without any support at all. No one checked in on me and there was no teacher or administrator and certainly no mentor there to help me during that all important first contact with the students. No one had asked to see or enquired about my lesson plans, or if I had any concerns or questions. I was left completely to my own devices.

I was abandoned to either sink or swim in a sea of middle-years students. Looking back on that time, I feel that I did a little of both. I believe that I did my students a great disservice. They went through a lot of rote learning and regurgitating of the facts and information that was available from their textbooks. The students in my first years of teaching had to put up with projects that were poorly thought out, tests that were simply factual questions with very little opportunity to indicate and assess deeper levels of understanding, and of course a teacher who was clearly stressed out and just barely staying one step ahead of the class.

As I talked to other teachers I was amazed, and somewhat relieved, to discover that their experiences were much the same as mine. In some cases their experiences were much worse than mine. Teacher after teacher recounted their experiences in their first classroom as a horror or a nightmare that they have put behind them. Of course these teachers are still teaching; imagine the experiences of the ones who left the profession! In another respect I guess I learned to “swim with the sharks” that first year because I am still here ten years later. I have beaten the teacher attrition odds! However, not every new teacher has experiences similar to mine, and ultimately this does not need to ever be the experience of new teachers.

Each time a beginning teacher leaves the profession the cycle begins anew; school divisions spend valuable resources finding new teachers, hiring them, often placing them in the same difficult situation just vacated by the last one, and hoping that they survive so the division does not have to start the whole process over again. A NCTAF (2006) policy brief calculated the annual cost of teacher attrition in the USA to be a staggering \$7.34 Billion. In Ontario alone, the OCT (2003) determined that teacher attrition costs the province \$44 million per year. It is little wonder that researchers such as Darling-Hammond (1994; 1998;

2000a), Tardiff (2001), and Van Hover and Yeager (2004) continue to lament the conditions and experiences of first year teachers.

Around the World: Teacher Attrition as a Global Problem

Countries in many parts of the world have experienced and continue to experience teacher shortages. Grimmer and Echols (2001) detailed the projected teacher shortages in Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Kenya and other African countries, New Zealand, and Canada. One of the findings of their research indicated that while teacher attrition and specifically the aging teacher workforce (leading to record retirements) were playing a large part in teacher shortage problems, the practice of “poaching” teachers from other countries was exacerbating the problem for those who became “poached”. The easiest solution for teacher vacancies has been for school districts to recruit qualified teachers from other countries. This in turn fuels a teacher shortage within the poached countries who then recruit from another country and the cycle continues. Despite recruitment of qualified teachers from abroad, Grimmer and Echols point out that “Canada will face a serious teacher supply and demand problem in 2015” (p. 4) and that various provinces will experience similar problems within a shorter timeframe.

Teacher shortages (real or perceived) are important in the context of teacher attrition for several reasons. One of the first responses of a school board/district which is experiencing teacher shortages or is projecting teacher shortages is to recruit from outside sources. These tend to be short-term solutions as 90 percent of the foreign recruited teachers spend a couple of years in the system and then return home (Pandor, 2005). The second solution is to increase recruitment of new teachers by hiring teachers trained in alternative teacher education programs. Darling-Hammond & Youngs (2002) admonish that alternative

teacher education programs that “skirt the core features of teacher preparation produce recruits who consider themselves underprepared, are viewed as less competent by principals, are less effective with students, and have high rates of teacher attrition” (p. 23). Thirdly, divisions move teachers trained and qualified in areas not experiencing shortages into classrooms and specialties where shortages are occurring. Each of these solutions is a short-term “knee-jerk” reaction which continues to fuel teacher attrition statistics. The teachers recruited from other countries feel no long term commitment to the host country; teachers with fewer qualifications are unable to handle the demands of the profession and ultimately contribute to lower student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000b; Grimmer & Echols, 2001; Halford, as cited in Lombardi, 2006; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002; Strong, 2006); and teachers placed in specialties for which they were not prepared become stressed and burn out. The end result is a never-ending cycle of teacher recruitment and teacher attrition.

The solution is not in replacing teachers but instead in retaining teachers. In order for schools to retain teachers, teachers need to feel prepared and competent in the skills and knowledge required of them. Schools require retention strategies that enable new teachers to feel comfortable, to develop their professional capacities, and subsequently to feel satisfied (Leithwood, 2006). Whisnant, Elliott, & Pyncheon’s (2005) review of new teacher induction literature concluded that induction programs impact upon five areas. The first two areas are concerned with teacher attrition, by reducing the number of teachers leaving the profession, and reducing the costs of attrition. The remaining three areas are concerned with teacher retention, by providing increased teacher satisfaction, enhanced professional growth, and the development of a tiered professional career model. The research concludes that teacher induction programs are effective measures to increase new teacher retention (Berry, 2004;

Curran & Goldrick, 2002; Fulton et al., 2005; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Karsenti et al., 2008; Panesar, 2010).

Teacher Retention Strategies: The Development of Teacher Induction Programs

In order to slow the “revolving door syndrome” of teacher attrition, school boards around the world have started to focus their energies on retaining the quality teachers on whom they have invested time and money on recruiting. In an earlier pilot study conducted for a graduate course on qualitative research methods (Armstrong, 2006), I investigated the types of strategies that schools in my local area were using to retain teachers. While the study was certainly not conclusive, it provided me with many insights. Local school divisions reflected the same type of focus on teacher retention strategies that many schools throughout North America and other countries were also using. Strategies within these local schools focussed primarily on providing new teachers with some form of a limited induction program, with or without a formal mentoring component. The elements of these induction programs varied widely. In many cases the induction programs were composed of buddy systems with an experienced teacher who taught in close classroom proximity or in a similar subject area. Some induction programs were carried out by the administration, some by an appointed teacher, and others simply by teacher volunteers. Only one induction program included the formal use of specially selected and trained mentor teachers. This data supports the literature which suggests that while the use of new teacher induction programs has been on the rise in the last two decades (Fulton et al., 2005; Hanson & Moir, 2008; NEA, 2003; Veenman et al., 1998) the quality of induction programs encompasses tremendous range (Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, as cited in NEA, 2003, Weiss & Weiss, 1999). The literature indicates that less than fifty percent of all new teachers receive even limited

induction and only one percent received comprehensive induction programs (Fulton et al., 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wayne et al., 2005; Whisnant et al., 2005), and “are proportionately less common in Canada” (Glassford & Salinitri, 2007, p. 17). In its 2003 report the OCT determined that only 20 percent of Ontario’s new teachers were participating in an induction program, by 2006, following the introduction of province-wide induction programs, that number had risen to just 52 percent (OCT, 2006). Crocker and Dibbon (2008), in their study of recent education graduates across Canada, determined that the number of new teachers participating in some form of induction program nationwide was just 37 percent (p.101).

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) defined comprehensive induction as having a reduced number of course preparations, a helpful mentor in the same field, professional development tailored to the needs of beginning teachers, strong communication with administrations, and time for planning and collaboration with other teachers. Britton et al. (2003) went even further in suggesting that comprehensive induction programs must also pay attention to working conditions, and provide good conditions and training for mentors (see Appendix A for a complete list of components). Fulton et al.’s (2005) report concluded “that the nation needs strategies that will ensure not just greater rates of teacher retention, but also retention of great teachers” (p. 2). To ensure this occurs they have suggested a comprehensive induction program for the 21st century learning community (Appendix B).

Britton et al.’s (2003) definition of comprehensive induction bears many similarities to the model proposed by Fulton et al. (2005). The goals of both programs are the greater retention of quality teachers leading to improved teaching quality. Each model stresses reduced workloads for new teachers, an extended time period for induction greater than one

year, the integration of various agencies and communities working together, and extensive training for mentors. There are, however, several differences in the models. The Britton et al. (2003, p. 2) model requires “adequate resources to meet programme goals” whereas the Fulton et al. (2005, p. 5) model mentions “state and district support school initiatives”, and “partnerships between unions, districts, and teacher preparation programs” but fails to indicate precisely who is responsible for the funding of said programs. The Britton et al., (2003, p. 2) model makes vague mention of the quality of conditions for the mentor, “provides substantial paid time”, and “provides good conditions...for providers”. The Fulton et al. (2005, p. 5) model directly advocates for reduced workload, continuous training, and structured time and incentives for mentors while also expecting “clear expectations and accountability”. The Fulton et al. (2005) model also has clear requisites for the selection of mentors such as skill in content, pedagogy, and ability to coach not found in the Britton et al. (2003) model.

It is important to note that while many studies advocate for induction programs as means for increasing teacher retention, few have provided empirical evidence of their effectiveness (Klug & Salzman, 1990). Lopez, Lash, Schaffner, Shields, and Wagner (as cited in Whisnant et al., 2005), and Johnson et al. (2005) argue that it is impossible to conclude that induction programs lead to increased teacher retention because of the lack of empirical research available. Conversely, Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) reviewed ten studies on the relationship between teacher retention and induction programs (and specifically mentorship components) that had included empirical data. They concluded that “collectively the studies do provide empirical support for the claim that assistance for new teachers and, in particular, mentoring programs, have a positive impact on teachers and their

retention” (p. 2). Ingersoll and Kralik indicate the effect that different qualities of induction programs can have on the retention of new teachers. Their research shows that while basic induction has only a minimal effect on retention rates, the addition of various supports such as collaboration, teacher networks, and additional resources can significantly improve new teacher retention. Other researchers concur, in part, with Ingersoll and Kralik by conceding that mentoring and induction are positive contributors to teacher retention but argue that these limited induction programs do not focus on the long term growth of the teaching profession but are instead short term solutions (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Marshak & Klotz, 2002; Moir & Gless, 2001).

Mentoring as an Induction Strategy

A large percentage of the research on retention strategies indicates that mentoring as part of an induction program, or as a standalone component, has been the dominant retention strategy for the past two decades (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; Fulton et al., 2005; Weiss & Weiss, 1999). In many studies, mentoring is mentioned as an integral component of a successful induction program (Andrews & Quinn, 2005; Earley & Ross, 2006; Fulton et al., 2005; Glassford & Salinitri, 2007; Gratch, 1998; Karsenti et al., 2008; Marshak & Klotz, 2002; Moir & Gless, 2001; Serpell & Bozeman, 1999; Veenman et al., 1998; Whisnant et al., 2005). An OCT (2003) report stated “the involvement of a mentor is the most powerful and cost-effective intervention in an induction program” (p. 10).

In a review of the literature surrounding mentorship, one concept that continues to elude researchers is an agreement upon an accepted definition of mentoring. The term mentor first originated with Homer’s Odysseus (Veenman et al., 1998; Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). In Homer’s story the central character, Odysseus, entrusts the education of his son to

his trusted friend and advisor named Mentor. The term “mentor” has subsequently been defined as a “wise, experienced, and faithful adviser” (Winston Canadian Dictionary, 2003). Many studies (e.g., Cameron, 2007) have cited Harry K. Wong (2001; 2004; 2008), a prolific author on new teacher mentoring and induction, for a definition of mentoring. Wong (2008) defines mentoring as a “formal coaching relationship in which an experienced teacher gives guidance, support, and feedback to a new teacher” (p. 1).

It is common to find the term mentor used loosely to refer to any teacher who provides advice and support to a new teacher over a course of time. The use of the term mentor without first defining the role and responsibilities of said mentor makes a comparison across studies more difficult. Mentoring takes place in a variety of forms, but usually involves some element of an experienced teacher providing support to one or more new teachers.

Mentor Qualifications

A NEA (2001) report suggested a number of qualities that effective mentors need to possess (Figure 1). Depending on the structure of the induction program, mentors may be hired by a selection committee or individuals specifically looking for evidence of the suggested qualities. The NEA report recommends that effective mentors have qualities that encompass four categories: attitude and character; professional competence and experience; communication skills; and interpersonal skills. The four categories have been summarized in the following sections.

Attitude and Character Willing to be a role model for other teachers Exhibits strong commitment to the teaching profession Believes mentoring improves instructional practice Willing to advocate on behalf of colleagues Willing to receive training to improve mentoring skills Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning Is reflective and able to learn from mistakes Is eager to share information and ideas with colleagues Is resilient, flexible, persistent, and open-minded Exhibits good humor and resourcefulness Enjoys new challenges and solving problems	Professional Competence and Experience Is regarded by colleagues as an outstanding teacher Has excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter Has confidence in his/her own instructional skills Demonstrates excellent classroom-management skills Feels comfortable being observed by other teachers Maintains a network of professional contacts Understands the policies and procedures of the school, district, and teachers' association Is a meticulous observer of classroom practice Collaborates well with other teachers and administrators Is willing to learn new teaching strategies from protégés
Communication Skills Is able to articulate effective instructional strategies Listens attentively Asks questions that prompt reflection and understanding Offers critiques in positive and productive ways Uses email effectively Is efficient with the use of time Conveys enthusiasm, passion for teaching Is discreet and maintains confidentiality .	Interpersonal Skills Is able to maintain a trusting professional relationship Knows how to express care for a protégé's emotional and professional needs Is attentive to sensitive political issues Works well with individuals from different cultures Is approachable; easily establishes rapport with others Is patient

Figure 1. *Qualities of Effective Mentors (NEA, 2001, p. 8)*

Attitude and character. Mentors need to be willing participants in the process. A strong commitment to the teaching profession and to continual lifelong learning is necessary for effective practice. The mentors must show a desire to not only share information and ideas but must also do so in a resilient, flexible, persistent, and open-minded way. The mentor needs to approach the process with good humour, and enjoy the challenges that mentoring can have. In addition, mentors must demonstrate a willingness to receive training in the skills of mentorship and be reflective of their experiences and able to learn from their mistakes.

Professional competence and experience. In order to be considered as a mentor candidate, teachers must first have demonstrated competence and experience in several areas. Mentors need to be considered by colleagues as outstanding teachers with the knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter and the confidence to share their abilities with observers. They need to thoroughly understand policies and procedures of the school, its division, and relevant teachers' associations. Furthermore, the mentor requires a strong network of professional contacts and the ability to collaborate with and between the various levels of school administrations.

Communication skills. Effective mentors are able to articulate effective instructional strategies. They need to listen attentively, ask questions that enable the mentee to reflect and understand, and offer critiques in positive but productive ways, all while conveying enthusiasm and passion for the teaching profession. In addition mentors need to demonstrate effective use of technology and the ability to maintain discrete confidentiality.

Interpersonal skills. As the new teacher struggles through the tough first years of teaching, mentors need to build and maintain a professional relationship. They need to

understand and care for a mentee's emotional and professional needs. Patience is a necessary quality, as is the ability to build rapport with others and being sensitive to political issues and cultural differences.

James Rowley (1999), in his experience designing and implementing entry-year mentor programs, provides some additional qualities of effective mentors not mentioned in the later NEA (2001) report. Rowley (1999) states that mentors "believe that mentoring is a challenging endeavour requiring significant investments of time and energy" (p. 20), and need to be accepting of new teachers' beliefs and values, and their occasional mistakes. Rowley (1999) also contends that mentors need to understand stage and age theories of adult development, and be good role models in their own teaching practice. He stresses, however, that mentors can't be expected to have excellent skills in all these qualities without the support and recognition that indicates the value the mentorship process has to the school division. Rowley (1999) suggests that mentor training is a necessary and vital component to ensure that enough quality mentors exist to adequately induct new teachers into the teaching profession.

Mentor Training

Are mentors more successful if they have received some form of mentorship training? The research leaves little doubt that trained mentors are more successful (Veenman et al., 1998; Weiss & Weiss, 1999; Whisnant et al., 2005); however some studies suggest that the quality of mentor training is not always equal (e.g., Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Andrews and Quinn (2005) cautioned that mentorship training was important but needed to focus more on the observation and planning of mentee lessons. This was also a prevalent suggestion in a review of the successful New Brunswick Beginning Teacher Induction

Program (Gill, as cited in Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). Participants in that program found it highly beneficial but recommended increased classroom observation by mentors and increased mentor training as two ways to further strengthen the program.

A review of the literature surrounding mentor training indicates a dichotomy of opinions. For example Feiman-Nemser (1996) states “Most mentoring programs provide some orientation or training” (p. 4), while more recent research by Howe (2006) indicates that “mentor teachers rarely have any special training or qualifications” (p. 290). Some of the differences may arise from what the researchers consider to be quality training.

Feiman-Nemser (1996) indicated that most mentor training included such common topics as clinical supervision, effective teaching research, new teacher concerns, and theories of adult learning. Less common (but not less important) were opportunities for mentor reflection. Feiman-Nemser suggests that most training programs usually occur before the mentor begins their duties but “mentors are more likely to develop their practice as mentors if they also have opportunities to discuss questions and problems that arise in the course of their work with novices” (p. 4).

Howe (2006) states “the quality of training received is critical” (p. 289). His research compared North American new teacher mentorship/induction programs with other programs from around the world. He determined that in comparison with colleagues from other countries, North American mentors received very little training.

One of the most successful mentor programs, the Santa Cruz New Teacher Program, integrates extensive mandatory mentor training into its program (Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). Glassford and Salinitri report:

Topics include identifying new teachers' needs, selecting appropriate support strategies, utilizing observation skills, and the application of peer coaching methods. A weekly half-day mentor forum then provides them with ongoing professional development, and participation in a community of learners with whom they share strategies, concerns and successes. Mirroring the behaviour expected of novice teachers, the mentors set goals, conduct periodic reviews of progress, and revise their practices based upon this reflective assessment. (pp. 18-19)

Fulton et al.'s (2005) report of induction in the USA reviewed five highly successful comprehensive induction programs (Appendix C) and found that all five contained quality mentorship training components including topics such as coaching, teaching standards, assessment, and knowledge relevant to the individual school boards. The duration of training lasted from a minimum of three days to training sessions spread throughout the year. Reviews of successful programs indicate some of the knowledge that mentors need to be effective, but also suggest that mentor training is most effective when it is relevant and important to the individual school or division (Cameron, 2007). This makes the development of a standard, comprehensive, list of knowledge and skills required for effective mentor training difficult to assemble. Regardless, researchers seem to be in agreement that quality mentor training is essential to an effective mentorship program (Fulton et al., 2005; Holloway, 2001; Howe, 2006).

Mentor Program Effectiveness

To be effective, mentoring programs need focus and structure (Holloway, 2001) and need to use trained mentors and intensive in-service training (Howe, 2006). Wong (2004) believes that effective mentorship programs are predicated by effective mentors. He states

“the mentor must be used in combination with the other components of the induction process. In fact, in many induction programs, many of the mentors are the trainers of the other components (p. 42). Wong (2008) also contends that effective mentorship program all share similar characteristics; they “fully train mentors, pair first and second year teachers with mentors in similar grades and subject areas, and provide release time and common planning time for mentors and mentored” (p. 1). The New Teacher Center (NTC, 2006) in a study of a successful New York City induction program provides a comparison of effective and ineffective mentor programs (Appendix D). The NTC suggests that effective programs release mentors full time, support rigorous mentor selection and training, and focus on new teacher guidance and progress. They recommend that effective programs include multi-year mentoring in order to foster “deep learning about instruction” (NTC, 2006, p. 6). Glassford and Salinitri (2007) suggest that:

The period of induction must extend for two to three years, and it must balance and blend a standardized professional vision with the complexities of a diverse society. Finally, the induction program must focus on classroom-based teacher learning. The beginning teacher must have time for, and encouragement to, become involved in observation, collaborative lesson design, model teaching, reflection, analysis of student work, goal-setting, and assessment against professional standards. This should involve support and critical dialogue, not just with an experienced mentor, but also with other beginning teachers. (p. 13)

Realistically there is no exemplary program design that can guarantee an effective mentor program (NEA, 2001). Urban schools face different challenges than rural schools. School divisions with a large turn-over of teachers may structure their programs differently

than divisions experiencing less turn-over. The NEA (2001), using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, suggests that the efficacy of a mentor program is directly related to the amount of time that mentors spend with mentees and that 88 percent of new teachers who work with mentors at least once a week report substantial improvements in their instructional skills compared to just 36 percent of new teachers who only saw their mentors “a few times a year” (p. 4). As a result of their findings the NEA (2001) determined three issues that characterize effective mentoring programs: (a) confidentiality; (b) teacher placement; and (c) time.

Confidentiality. A mentee needs/wants to be able to communicate and share their feelings and concerns openly and honestly with a colleague they trust. Sometimes this needs to be encouraged and nurtured by the mentor. A mentee will not do this unless he/she believes that the “dialogue they have with their mentor is safe and secure and that they will get nurturing and supportive feedback from that mentor” (NEA, 2001, p. 5).

Teacher placement. The NEA (2001) suggests that any mentor program will naturally become more effective if schools and administrators are willing to challenge the status quo. The status quo as mentioned earlier has often been to assign new teachers to the hardest classrooms, give them a diverse course load, saddle them with additional responsibilities and expect them to perform as well as seasoned colleagues. If administrators are willing to look at ways of providing new teachers with reduced course loads, easier class assignments, and reduced responsibilities while providing support and guidance in the form of the mentorship program then that program will be much more effective.

Time. The NEA’s (2001) third characteristic of an effective mentorship program is time. Mentors and mentees require time to participate in a variety of learning opportunities

such as “observe one another, model good teaching, and discuss instructional strategies and resources” (p. 4). Although not specifically given a number of minutes by the NEA report, a more recent study by the NTC (2006) suggests a minimum of 1.5 to 2.5 hours per week of interaction between mentors and new teachers. The NEA (2001) also suggests that the most effective programs will have time commitments built into the structure of the program so that there is no school-by-school interpretation of the concept. The NEA (2001) details many of the design features of a mentorship program that can affect the time component between mentors and mentees including:

The proximity of mentors to their protégés, the use of e-mail and other technologies to maintain a mentoring dialogue in between face-to-face mentoring sessions, the ratio of mentors to new teachers, and the question of whether or not veteran teachers should act as mentors on a full-time basis, if only for a prescribed term of service. (p. 5)

As the NEA (2001) suggests all three design features of a mentor program need to be addressed in order to create an effective program, but time seems to be the most difficult issue to agree upon. The idea of full-time versus part-time mentoring has been raised by researchers but the number of studies on full-time mentor programs has been very limited.

Full-time Versus Part-time Mentor Programs

A limited number of studies have addressed the issue of full-time versus part-time mentors (e.g., Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). Most mentor programs use the traditional “mentor teaching in the same school as the mentee” system. Programs that do use full-time or release time mentors have been referred to as “atypical” (Gilles & Wilson, 2004). Why do more programs not use a full-time mentor? Two reasons have surfaced in the literature,

(a) the financial cost to release teachers full-time, and (b) philosophical beliefs of the role of mentors.

Financially, the cost to release a teacher for a full-time term (generally two to three years) as a mentor is prohibitive for many school divisions (NTC, 2007). As Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992) found in their study of the Los Angeles mentor program, according to program documentation, mentors were required to continue teaching 60 percent of a course load but “the district lack[ed] the resources to reduce the mentor teacher's class load. As a result, mentors in Los Angeles teach full time and fit their mentoring in around the edges” (p. 3). Other researchers report similar financial constraints even though the use of full-time mentors has been shown to increase retention rates of new teachers resulting in reduced recruitment costs (Evertson & Smithey, as cited in Russell et al., 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001), and increased student achievement (Hanson & Moir, 2008; Kent et al., 2010; Strong, 2006). For some divisions it is not about the cost of the release time but instead about the belief that mentors are also the most effective and qualified teachers (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992); removing them from the classroom seems diametrically opposed to the concept of providing students with the best possible teachers.

Researchers report a variety of beliefs surrounding the issue of removing classroom duties from a mentor's list of responsibilities. Wong (2004) paraphrased Lehman (2003) when he wrote “every district should offer a multiyear induction program that provides systematic help and support, and this cannot be done adequately by another teacher with a full-time load who drops by when time permits or when a problem arises” (p. 44). Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992) reported that many mentor teachers were concerned with the complexity of the mentor role and the difficulty balancing classroom responsibilities with

the needs of their mentees (p. 3). For others, the ability to remain in the classroom to some degree while taking on mentor responsibilities was considered,

a highly important aspect of the program because we still had kids.... We knew what lunch hour felt like. We knew what three o'clock in the afternoon felt like. But we were free a large part of the day to be able to be in and out of classrooms of not only brand new teachers, but anyone who came to the district ... as an experienced teacher. (NEA, 2001, Creating, ¶ 9)

The California legislature, in the 1983 Hughes-Hart Act, mandated that mentors must continue to teach at least 60 percent of the time to “[ensure] that mentors would not become quasi-administrators detached from the day-to-day realities of classroom practice. Nor would they be forced to assume extra duties that could in time prove detrimental to their instructional effectiveness” (Futrell, 2001, p. 225). In opposition to that view is a study by Hanson and Moir (2008) which points out:

Experienced teachers participating in full-release mentor programs have the potential to influence broad classroom practice more than ever before. Not only can they affect larger numbers of students through their work with new teachers, but they can also extend their influence by forging new relationships with site administrators, program leaders, and fellow mentors. (p. 456)

Moir (2009) adds an additional benefit of full-time mentoring, “although districts may feel reluctant to recruit their best teachers away from the classroom, induction programs provide talented teachers with a midcareer boost and a powerful opportunity to develop leadership skills” (p. 16).

No empirical studies were available that definitively stated whether full or part time mentors were more effective than mentors with full teaching loads. The OCT (2003) warns that part-time mentor programs and their “heavy teaching schedules, [and] administrative and teaching related commitments, discourage many teachers from taking on associate teacher roles and leave little time for mentors and new teachers alike to engage in a successful mentoring process” (p. 9). In studies of successful mentor programs (e.g., Fulton et al., 2005; Glassford & Salinitri, 2007) reduced course loads for mentors or full time mentor teachers were present. Two examples of exemplary programs using full time mentors are the University of Missouri Teaching Fellowship and the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project.

University of Missouri Teaching Fellowship. The Teaching Fellowship program is a joint program developed by the University of Missouri to improve the experience of education graduates entering the teaching profession and to provide experienced teachers with professional development and career opportunities. The program uses a mentor teacher released from classroom duties for a minimum two year term. The school district which supplies the mentor teacher pays the salary of the mentor and one new teacher. In return, the school district receives the service of two new teachers who receive induction supports and mentoring within the program. One third of the mentor’s time is spent in the school working with the two mentees, one third of the time is spent on school designated professional development projects, and the remaining one third of the time belongs to the University. The mentorship program includes direct supervision and observation of mentees, flexible release time, significant training (and opportunity for professional development) for mentors

and a working relationship between the University and the schools. For an in-depth description of the program see Gilles and Wilson (2004).

The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project. The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, started in 1988, is one of the oldest and most cited examples of an effective and comprehensive new teacher induction program (Earley & Ross, 2006; Glassford & Salinitri, 2007; Howe, 2006). The project uses experienced teachers hired specifically for the position of mentor teacher. These teachers must possess outstanding teaching experience and an exceptional knowledge of subject matter. As part of the program, mentor teachers receive extensive training in being able to support and guide new teachers in every experience. So successful has the Santa Cruz New Teacher Program been that it has become the model that other states have attempted to emulate (Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). Over a twelve year period (1988 – 2000) the program experienced only a five percent attrition rate (Curran & Goldrick, 2002).

The Canadian Context

More and more school divisions are implementing induction and mentoring programs as a way of retaining teachers. In the past two decades induction programs have spread throughout Canada, the USA, and many other countries. More than 30 U.S. states have initiated new teacher induction programs (Curran & Goldrick, 2002; Moir, 2009), but of those only 16 states currently require and at least partially fund induction programs for all new teachers (Quality Counts, as cited in Earley & Ross, 2006). Currently, less than fifty percent of new teachers indicate that they have participated in any kind of formal (structured) induction program (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; OCT, 2006), and less than one percent have participated in a comprehensive induction program (Fulton et al., 2005; Smith

& Ingersoll, 2004; Wayne et al., 2005; Whisnant et al., 2005). New teacher induction programs are even rarer in Canada (Glassford & Salinitri, 2007). Of the 13 provinces and territories of Canada, none qualify as having comprehensive induction programs as defined by Britton et al. (2003), although two provinces, Ontario and New Brunswick, have very successful programs that fall just short of meeting the comprehensive requirements. Eight provinces/territories have initiated formal induction programs with varying levels of provincial funding and support. The remaining provinces and territories (including Manitoba) have no formal induction of new teachers at the provincial level but instead leave all education decisions to the individual school and/or division; unfortunately not all programs are created equally.

The Manitoba Context

A 2002 Manitoba Teacher's Society (MTS) report of teacher conditions echoed many of the sentiments of researchers throughout Canada and the United States. The report decried the lack of attention given to the development and retention of new teachers. It detailed the removal of services and resources from the system which have increased teacher expectations, workloads and stress. The report states:

The increased workload combined with shrinking resources and the trend of having to do more with less has created additional stress in the working lives of teachers. The workload of a teacher has no well defined limits, and as a result the demands placed on teachers can be overwhelming. Workload and stress has mounted in the teaching profession as a result of the diverse nature and increasing demands placed on teachers and the complexity and diversity of teachers' work. Teachers' working conditions, their workload and the daily stress resulting from a lack of sufficient resources and supports

are among the key factors explaining the ability to attract, recruit and retain teachers in the Manitoba public school system. (p. 35)

In response to the MTS (2002) report, the Minister of Education commissioned a report (*Teacher Supply and Demand* [TSD], 2002) on the issue of teacher supply and demand in the province of Manitoba. The TSD report indicated that “at a province-wide level, Manitoba actually has a surplus of available teachers each year, but there remains a shortage in rural and northern regions within specific subject areas and position types,” (p. 6). The report concurred with the MTS findings that in Manitoba, “recruitment and retention are major concerns” (p. 4). In Ewart’s (2009) study of Manitoba teachers, he reported a 26 percent attrition rate of new teachers in the first five years.

Similar to the experiences of teachers elsewhere in North America, MTS (2002) suggests that school divisions in Manitoba took a cavalier attitude to teacher attrition statistics prior to the nineties. The report claims:

[Unemployed Education graduates] have been used over the last decade, as a handy “reserve army” of available teachers. The school divisions have been able to fill their need for teachers with relative ease. They have not had to be overly concerned with attracting candidates to the teaching profession nor have they had to make special efforts to retain the teachers they have hired. If they needed more teachers, willing candidates have been available even for work that was not stable, permanent or full time. (p. 22-23)

The MTS (2002) report continues, “In many ways teachers have been treated as if they were disposable. Very little has been done to attract or recruit teachers. There has been a concomitant lack of attention to the development, equitable treatment, and retention of teachers” (p. 48-49). The MTS report recommended that the provincial government take a

proactive approach to the teacher retention problems evident in the Manitoba context and provide formalized initiatives to fund induction programs for new teachers and on-going mentoring programs for all teachers. The TSD (2002) report recommended that “In the long-term the [Department of Education] work with education partners to evolve the concerns and ideas expressed in this report into a Provincial Strategic Plan related to teacher recruitment and retention” (p. 7). A search of the Manitoba Education, Citizen and Youth (MECY) website (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12>) shows only one initiative connected to the TSD recommendations, the Strategic Technology-Assisted Professional Learning Environment (STAPLE). STAPLE was developed to support teachers in areas of professional development. While one of the goals of the project is to improve mentoring and collaboration, the project, and individual goal, is not geared specifically to new teachers. Similarly, a search of Manitoba Government records online turned up no other significant reference to teacher induction policies in the province of Manitoba

Attrition of teachers from the education system is very costly, both in terms of finances (Fulton et al., 2005; Villar & Strong, 2008) and student achievement (Black, Neel, & Benson, 2008; Strong, 2005). An informal survey conducted by the MTS (2002) identified only 10 employers/divisions in Manitoba (of the 37 possible) that offered mentoring and/or induction programs for beginning teachers.

Some divisions use mentoring as their predominant retention strategy, but only a handful offered specially designed programs of induction for new teachers. As with other schools throughout North America, Manitoban schools certainly offer new teachers an informal induction to the school community. This informal induction often includes orientation to the school and community, access to specific professional development

opportunities, pairing with a buddy teacher, or less often, the actual assignment of a mentor. As the research shows, these kinds of informal induction into the learning community are not as effective at improving teacher retention as formal division wide comprehensive induction programs (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Black et al., 2008; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

The MTS (2002) report concluded that:

In all of these areas where we would like to see effective programs for the recruitment and retention of teachers, we have found a lack of these programs of support for teachers. As a result at the present time, the problems in the Manitoba scene are all in the area of recruitment and retention. It is in the above areas that effective measures can be taken to improve retention. When the looming supply problems materialize, divisions that have paid some attention to retention will be in a much better position. (p. 48-49)

A perusal of the 39 Manitoba school division websites (31 rural and 8 urban), using school division homepages and in-site search capabilities, was made to determine if anything had changed after the MTS (2002) survey. I was interested in finding out whether any changes had occurred in the number of divisions offering induction and or mentoring services to new teachers. The search terms included “mentor”, “induction”, and “new teacher”. Of the 31 rural divisions in Manitoba only three made any reference to mentoring or induction of new staff. One division made a point of stating that new teacher orientation was obligatory because it was required by Workplace Safety and Health (a government agency responsible for inspection, licensing, information, and training activities in connection with safety and health in the workplace). A second school division had plans in place for the recruitment and retention of custodians and bus drivers but made no mention of

new teachers. The third rural division had a formal mentorship program run and administered on an individual school basis. Of the eight urban school divisions in Manitoba, three offered some form of mentoring and/or induction program for new teachers (one of which is “in development”). One additional division had a mentoring and induction program for new principals but made no mention of supports for new teachers. Another division included the induction of new teachers as part of its administrator evaluation rubric. It specifically states that the design and implementation of induction programs for new teachers is the responsibility of the school principal. In conclusion, nothing seems to have changed in the years since the MTS (2002) report.

The Local Context

In the larger urban school divisions of Manitoba, mentoring and/or induction programs appear to have been given a higher priority. This is most likely due to the larger size of the teaching staff, the sheer numbers of teachers leaving the division each year - although in terms of percentage the research suggests that rural and northern divisions experience a greater attrition of teachers (Phillips, 2002) - and the larger flexibility of financial resources may all play a part in the ability of these divisions to offer mentor/induction programs. The three metro divisions offering a formal mentoring and/or induction program for new teachers include orientation sessions, professional development plans, provision of in school “buddies”, assigned mentors and mentor training programs.

The school division in which this research was conducted offers a formal induction program with mentorship as its primary component. The induction program is comprised of nine components including divisional orientation, reflection, instructional and professional support, goal setting and planning, classroom participation, in school peer support system,

teacher networking, professional dialogue sessions, and professional development opportunities. The following descriptions of the induction components are paraphrased from the division literature.

Divisional orientation. Orientation sessions for new teachers are scheduled at the beginning of the year with the goal of making new teachers familiar with priorities and policies of the division as well as beginning to develop a sense of professional community.

Reflection. New teachers are encouraged to journal write for the purpose of documenting personal and professional growth, and as a useful tool for action research.

Instructional and professional support. The instructional and professional support component of the program is uniquely adapted to the specific needs of each new teacher. Examples of supports included in this component of the program may include accessing the various school teams, dealing with difficult people, curriculum planning, developing instructional and assessment strategies, writing individual education and behaviour plans, and effective time management.

Goal setting and planning. In this component of the program, mentors arrange meeting times at the beginning of the year to sit down with the new teacher and assist them to identify and plan yearly goals.

Classroom participation. This component has been identified as the most important component of the mentorship program. The full time mentors (referred to as coordinators) spend time in the new teachers' classrooms, getting to know the students and the teaching environment. This component of the program is described as imperative to setting the stage for subsequent meetings between the coordinators and the new teacher. In this component

the participation of the coordinator in the classroom attempts to foster a comfort level between the beginning teacher, students and the coordinators.

In-school peer support system. Beginning teachers are assigned an experienced teacher within their schools to act as a supportive peer. These peers are called “buddies”. Their role is to provide support and share school-specific information about procedures and policies. The goal of this connection is to develop collaborative teams for beginning teachers within their school.

Professional dialogue sessions. Experienced teachers facilitate group discussions drawing on their expertise in teaching strategies, classroom management and behaviour, and curriculum planning. Discussion groups are level or area-specific (Early Years, Middle Years, Senior Years or specialists).

Professional development opportunities. Beginning teachers are offered specific Professional Development opportunities throughout the year. The topics offered by the program change from year to year, but in the past examples of professional development topics have included: Start-up Procedures: The First Days of School, Managing your Class with Procedures and Routines, and Planning with the Brain in Mind.

Teacher networking. Beginning teachers are matched with an experienced teacher within the division at the same level. The expectation is that this match begins the development of a teacher network around the division. The beginning teacher is released from his/her classroom for one day to observe the experienced teacher’s instruction, discuss strategies, and share materials. This component also allows the beginning teachers to reflect with others on practice, issues, and challenges.

Much of the reviewed literature focuses on induction programs and mentorship components embedded within the school community (Gratch, 1998; Klug & Salzman, 1990; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Traditionally, mentor teachers have been chosen from among a new teacher's colleagues. This practice would place the mentor and mentee in close proximity throughout the school year. With this in mind, I was particularly interested in whether a formal division wide induction program, independent (and removed) of individual school autonomy, met the needs of new teachers. I was also interested in how this particular induction program compares to the ideals suggested by the literature.

At the outset of this study, the induction program was coordinated by three full-time mentors. The divisional mentors were responsible for approximately 60 to 80 first and second year teachers. Each of the divisional mentors was responsible for one of the educational levels, early years (grades one through three), middle years (grades four through eight), and senior years (grades nine through twelve). The three mentors were teachers who had demonstrated exemplary teaching. As a group they offered a range of career experiences including regular classroom instruction, special education, student services, and specialist areas.

Prior to the 2009-2010 school year (the data collection period), the induction program underwent several changes and reduced funding. The most notable change was the reduction in full time mentors from three to one and a half. In order to keep a lower mentor-to-new-teacher ratio the decision was made to remove supports for second year teachers (effectively making the program a one year induction model), while adding supports for new (first year) administrators. A second significant change occurred; in the previous induction model (prior to the 2009 school year) the mentor teachers were selected from among

teaching peers. In the current induction model the mentors selected were both former administrators. This change was most likely made because of the new program mandate of mentoring both new teachers and new administrators.

The mentor program coordinators work independently with each new teacher in many ways. Mentors connect with all new teachers before the school year begins with a professional development day designed to introduce the new teacher to classroom procedures and the development of positive learning environments. Early in the school year the divisional mentors arrange classroom visits to build a comfort level and rapport between all parties. These early school visits serve to familiarize the divisional mentors with a beginning teacher's students and classroom which in turn can help guide subsequent discussions and supports.

Another aspect of the divisional mentor's role as coordinator of the mentor program is to develop and provide relevant and timely professional development opportunities, facilitate the development of teacher networks, and assist the administration of schools with the selection of in-school buddies that can provide the ongoing day-to-day support required by the beginning teacher. Buddy teachers are selected by individual schools' administration to provide an in-school support person for each new teacher.

Divisional mentors support all new teachers through to the conclusion of their first year of teaching. It is an expected outcome of the mentorship program that new teachers will have integrated with a collegial support group through the development of the teacher networks that will provide ongoing supports as the new teachers complete the mentor program and successfully integrate into the teaching community.

Using the reviewed literature to analyze the induction program provides several insights into the program. Where the study induction program failed to satisfy the expectations of the literature served to guide the development of interview questions.

Limited versus comprehensive induction. Britton et al.'s (2003) study of induction programs resulted in a list of criteria that needed to be met in order for a program to be considered as comprehensive induction (Appendix A). Comparing the studied program to that list illustrates several strengths of the program. Of the twelve criteria the studied program fully meets six (program design, level of effort, resources, length, support, and activities) and partially meets five more (goals, policies, induction as a transitional phase, levels involved, and conditions). Areas in which the program is unable to completely satisfy the criteria involve the promotion of career learning, substantial paid release time, the articulation of roles for all levels of stakeholders, and the on-going training for the mentors. The only prominent weakness of the program (when compared to Britton et al.'s expectations) is its inability to address initial teaching conditions, specifically relating to the assigned workload, pupil-teacher ratios, and non-teaching duties of the new teacher.

21st century learning community. Fulton et al. (2005) developed the concept of the 21st century learning community for the NCTAF (Appendix B). The study program fully meets six of the eleven criteria (overall design, theoretical framework, length of induction program, teaching observations, external supports, and impact) and partially meets two more (responsible parties, and mentoring framework). When using this model, three areas stand out as possible weaknesses. One point is the role of the mentor in assessment and evaluation, while the Fulton et al. model advocates for mentor responsibility in the assessment and evaluation role, the program in this study has purposely removed that

expectation from the mentor role as part of its philosophical belief in providing unbiased non-evaluative support. For the purpose of this comparison that point of the model will be considered not applicable. The remaining two points are similar to the weakness discovered when using the Britton et al. (2003) model; teacher workload and teacher assignments. Fulton et al. recommend reducing workloads for new teachers, removing the expectation of additional duties, and placing new teachers in less challenging teaching assignments.

Mentor program quality checklist. Of the six quality mentor program characteristics suggested by the NTC (2006) (Appendix D), the studied program exhibits three (full time release mentoring, intensive and specific guidance, and multi-year mentoring) and the remaining three (the procedures surrounding the selection of the divisional mentors and by extrapolation the selection of the in-school buddies, the provision for ongoing professional development and training of the divisional mentors, and the documentation and evidence of teacher progress) are not made implicit in the program documentation. The information needed to meet the three characteristics helped develop the divisional mentor interview questions (Appendix E).

Qualities of effective mentors. In 2001 the NEA published a list of the qualities that effective mentors have. These qualities (see Figure 1, p. 30) were separated into four categories: attitude and character; professional competence and experience; communication skills; and interpersonal skills. The presence (or lack) of these qualities in the divisional mentors is not the main purpose of this research; however the new teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the divisional mentor and the mentor program certainly relies upon the presence of many of these characteristics. With this in mind, some of the interview

questions probed the existence of these qualities in the divisional mentors both from the perception of the new teachers and in the mentor selection process.

I was intrigued by a comment from Mary Futrell (2001), as she wrote about the 1983 Hughes-Hart Act passed by legislators in California, which read:

Mentors must continue to teach at least 60 percent of the time. This provision ensured that mentors would not become quasi-administrators detached from the day-to-day realities of classroom practice. Nor would they be forced to assume extra duties that could in time prove detrimental to their instructional effectiveness. (p. 225)

Futrell is a strong proponent of school-based mentor selection and compensation programs as opposed to government (state) based. Her view around the requirements of mentors made me wonder if a full time mentor teacher can meet the needs of a new teacher without becoming detached from the day-to-day realities of classroom practice.

The literature on induction programs that employ full time mentor teachers was very limited, and studies that were conducted were almost exclusively American. This study helps to address that gap in knowledge and contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering a Canadian perspective on a unique induction program utilizing full time, off-site mentors.

Summary

This research stems from my interest in the problems facing beginning teachers in their first several years of teaching. Induction strategies have ranged from the non-existent (commonly referred to as the “sink or swim” model) to the comprehensive such as seen in Santa Cruz, California. For many centuries, teachers who couldn’t handle the daily grind were simply replaced by another candidate who was waiting in the wings. In more recent

times, school divisions have begun to realize that making an investment in retaining teachers makes good financial sense and even more importantly results in increased student achievement (Black et al., 2008; Moir, 2009; OCT, 2003). Chapter three outlines the methodology that was used to conduct the study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This study examined the value of a mentoring program offered by a Manitoba school division as perceived by the mentors and the new teacher participants. I was interested in finding out whether new teachers felt the mentor program was meeting their needs and whether or not it made them feel more valued and prepared for teaching. In order to examine the effectiveness of this program, the primary research question that guided this study was, “Does the availability of a full time mentor teacher facilitate the successful introduction of a new teacher into the teaching profession?” In order to answer this question, four research questions formed the basis of this study:

1. What are the challenges that new teachers face for which they need support?
2. Benefits and Challenges of Mentoring
 - a. For New Teachers: What (if any) benefits do new teachers perceive from having access to a formal mentor? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: What (if any) benefits exist for mentors who work to support new teachers? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
3. Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure
 - a. For New Teachers: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers’ introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - a. For Mentors: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers’ introduction into

the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?

4. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and/or mentors?

Because this study was perceptual and descriptive in nature, it was conducted by the use of qualitative methods. Qualitative research is best suited for situations where the variables are unknown and exploration is required (Creswell, 2008; Maxwell, 2008). Qualitative research is defined as “a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words (or text) from participants; describes and analyzes these words for themes; and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner” (Creswell, 2008, p.46). The purpose of qualitative research is much more open-ended than quantitative. The data generated in a qualitative study serves to describe individuals and places and results in themes or broad categories that represent the findings, this in turn helps to generate a rich and complex picture (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative research is an umbrella term that has been used predominately to describe research “conducted in a natural setting to investigate a social or human issue” (Agostinho, 2005, p. 2). Given that this study focused on understanding a social and human issue in a natural setting that had had very little prior investigation, a qualitative research design using the naturalistic inquiry paradigm was considered appropriate.

The purpose of this study is to provide “thick description” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of one particular new teacher mentoring program using the perceptions of new teachers and

their full-time mentors. To this end a naturalistic inquiry paradigm was chosen. The method of inquiry employed is the semi-structured interview.

Naturalistic inquiry has its roots in the seminal work of Edwin Willem and Harold Rausch, according to Mathison (2005). Willem and Rausch first defined naturalistic inquiry as the “investigation of phenomena within and in relation to their naturally occurring contexts” (as cited in Mathison, 2005, p. 272). Lincoln and Guba (1985) built upon Willem and Rausch’s ideas to develop the concept of the naturalistic inquiry paradigm. In more recent literature the naturalistic inquiry paradigm has been referred to as “constructivist” or “interpretivist” paradigms (Agostinho, 2005; Mathison, 2005).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) defined a paradigm as a “set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimates or first principles” (p. 107). They further stipulated that it “represents a ‘worldview’ that defines, for its holder, the nature of the ‘world’, the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts” (p. 107). Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed five axioms that describe the naturalistic inquiry paradigm:

1. Reality consists of multiple constructed realities that can be understood to some extent but cannot be predicted or controlled.
2. The inquirer and the object of inquiry interact and influence each other, so they are inseparable.
3. Identifying cause from effect is impossible because all entities simultaneously shape each other.
4. Knowledge can only be described ideographically as a working hypothesis that describes an individual case.

5. All inquiry is value-laden. values, paradigm, theory, context, value-resonant/dissonant

The five axioms and characteristics of this study that demonstrate compliance to the axiom are included in Table 1.

Table 1

Naturalistic Inquiry Paradigm - The Five Axioms

Axiom	Examples of compliance in this study
1. Reality consists of multiple constructed realities that can be understood to some extent but cannot be predicted or controlled.	• The Mentoring Program provided a natural context-rich setting; it was not created for research purposes. • The program was studied from a holistic perspective; this study involves perspectives from both teacher participants and mentors. Each participant's data was compared to each other's (constant comparison), and to the existing literature. • Participant's comments were used to illustrate the findings that emerged. • The semi-structured interview method of inquiry permits a thick

	/rich description to emerge about the perspectives of new teachers regarding the access to full-time mentors; prediction and control are not intended outcomes of this study. • The criteria used to determine validity and credibility of this study are based on a naturalistic ontology
2. The inquirer and the object of inquiry interact and influence each other, so they are inseparable.	• The researcher assumed the role of a peer teacher who has experienced similar new teacher difficulties. • Semi-structured interview questions were used to guide the direction and responses of the participants. The questions were general enough to permit exploration but focused enough to delimit the study.
3. Knowledge can only be described ideographically as a working hypothesis that describes an individual case.	• The researcher placed the findings of this study into a Master's Thesis; this paper presents 'working hypotheses' of one individual case. • The emerging data learned during one interview helped to develop and

	focus subsequent interviews, which in turn helped to develop and focus a ‘working hypothesis’.
4. Identifying cause from effect is impossible because all entities simultaneously shape each other.	• While the researcher entered the study with a semi-structured interview protocol, the theory was unknown. As is the nature of qualitative research the emerging themes were simultaneously shaped by researcher and participant.
5. All inquiry is value-bound.	• The researcher comes into the study with certain values (see page 19). • Values (biases) were acknowledged and accounted for.

In addition, Lincoln and Guba suggest three mandatory requirements for a study claiming to adhere to the naturalistic inquiry paradigm:

1. The inquiry process is consistent with the ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions of the five proposed axioms
2. The inquirer is committed to the development of skills to operate as an effective instrument
3. The inquirer has developed an initial design statement

The three requirements and examples of this study's adherence are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Naturalistic Inquiry Paradigm - The Three Requirements

Requirement	Examples of compliance within this study
1. The inquiry process is consistent with the ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions of the five proposed axioms	• Detailed in Table 1
2. The inquirer is committed to the development of skills to operate as an effective instrument	• This study makes use of external auditors • The accumulation and preservation of data and data sources create an audit trail
3. The inquirer has developed an initial design statement	• A research proposal was submitted

Lincoln and Guba (1985) envisioned naturalistic inquiry to be synonymous with qualitative inquiry (p. 7); as such they espouse that the aim of naturalistic inquiry is to “develop an ideographic body of knowledge in the form of “working hypotheses” that describe the individual case” (p. 38). Lincoln and Guba suggest that naturalistic inquiry studies need to progress through three stages: (a) “orientation and overview” phase; in this

stage the initial approach to participants is made in a very open-ended way with the object being to obtain sufficient information to get some handle on what is important enough to follow up in detail (p. 235); (b) “focused exploration” phase; the analyzing of data and the gathering of in-depth information (p. 235); and (c) “member check” phase; the purpose is to confirm that the study has captured the data as intended by the participants, or to correct, amend, or extend it (p. 236).

As part of the qualitative research process, this study was based upon an extensive literature review of research related to induction and mentoring programs, an analysis of documents related to the program under study, and semi-structured interviews with new teachers and divisional mentors who participated in the program. An outline of the methods used for each of these is presented below.

Literature Review

Existing research was explored in the literature review and used to provide insight, fuel possible lines of questioning and help provide triangulation of the data results. The following questions guided my search for readings related to teacher attrition and mentoring and induction programs;

1. What reasons are there for such a high number of qualified teachers leaving the profession after a short time (1-5 years)?
2. What strategies are being employed to combat the exodus of qualified teachers from the profession?
3. How have school jurisdictions around the world implemented mentoring and induction programs to address teacher attrition?

4. How have school divisions in Canada implemented mentoring and induction programs to address teacher attrition?
5. What are the characteristics of effective mentors and mentorship programs?

In order to obtain relevant research various library databases were searched using the following terms and combinations: “induction”, “mentoring”, “retention”, “attrition”, and “beginning (new) teachers”. Care was taken to select research from peer reviewed journals and focus was provided on sources that were more recently published and/or emphasized Canadian situations. Professional organizations such as the Manitoba Teachers Society, the Ontario College of Teachers, and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation were consulted. Specific provincial school division documents and education relevant web sites such as <http://www.neafoundation.org> and <http://www.newteachercenter.org> were also accessed.

The Study Environment

The study environment is a Manitoba public school division comprised of a centralized school board office which oversees many individual schools ranging from primary through high school. There are 22 elementary schools and six secondary schools in the English program and nine elementary and three secondary schools following the French or Partial French program. The division has a teaching staff of approximately 1,100 and a non-teaching staff of 800 servicing over 15,000 students. This particular school division has employed a mentoring program for new teachers as part of its induction model. What sets this program apart is its use of full-time mentors to coordinate the induction program and to mentor the division’s new teachers. The full-time mentors are independent of the individual schools; they are employed by the division and work out of the board offices.

Researcher Positioning

In any qualitative research the researcher brings certain values and beliefs that can impact upon the data. I am a teacher and have experienced the stress and confusion of teaching during the first couple of years. My experiences as a teacher certainly guided my questioning and ground me in the analysis of gathered data. I have no experience of, nor participation in, an induction or mentorship program, although I do acknowledge that I feel that participation in an induction program would have benefited me immensely. I positioned myself as a researcher and colleague who had experienced new teacher difficulties and was interested in the perceptions of new teachers regarding the availability and benefits of a full-time mentor. Because I have no connections with the division being studied, I was not in a position of power over any of the participants.

My first couple of years in the teaching profession were fraught with anxiety and stress as I tried to figure out the “rules” of teaching. As with most teachers I was inducted into the profession very informally. I was constantly harassing the office staff to answer questions of procedural nature and asking questions of the teachers around me whenever I felt it wouldn’t make me look incompetent. As I finally felt secure enough to tackle further schooling, I immersed myself in the theoretical underpinnings of school administration, and have since developed an interest in all things related to teacher satisfaction, including but not limited to teacher attrition, retention, induction, and mentoring.

Participant Selection

After first obtaining permission to conduct the research in the division, three mentor coordinators (two current and one former) were invited to participate in the study through a letter of invitation. After gaining their consent to be involved in the study, the divisional

mentors were able to distribute an invitation for current and past program participants to volunteer for the study. From among the responses, I was able to select participants who represented the three levels of schooling; early, middle and senior years (purposeful sampling). The first two participants who responded to my letters of invitation from each of the grade levels made up the research sample. The six new teachers and three mentor coordinators (current and former) were interviewed regarding their perceptions of the value of full-time mentoring for new teachers.

Purposive sampling is a strategy in which participants are “deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell, 2008, p.235). As Maxwell (2008, p. 235) states, purposeful sampling “can be used to achieve representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected,” and “a small sample that has been systematically selected for typicality and relative homogeneity provides far more confidence that the conclusions adequately represent the average members of the population than does a sample of the same size that incorporates substantial random or accidental variation.”

Data Collection: “Orientation and Overview” Phase

The primary sources of data used in this study were the qualitative perceptions of new teachers who are participating (or have participated) in the induction program utilized by this particular school division. Further data was obtained by interviewing the divisional mentors who coordinate the program and by reviewing program documentation.

Participant Interviews

Bogdan and Biklen (2005) state that the purpose of using interviews is “to gather descriptive data in the subjects’ own words so that the researcher can develop insights on

how subjects interpret some piece of the world” (p. 95), and that “good interviews produce rich data filled with words that reveal the respondents perspectives” (p. 96). Prior to the start of this study participants provided consent to the interview and were assured that their responses and identity would remain confidential. The participants were informed that they could voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time and their responses would not be included. Once an interview was complete and had been transcribed, a copy was provided to the participant for the purpose of member checking.

This study did not require access to any confidential records. Interview notes and transcriptions were destroyed upon completion of the study. The school division in which this study takes place is described in general terms only (e.g. student and teacher populations). Names of schools and participants and any related quotations are identified only through the use of pseudonyms. The participants were identifiable only by me for the purpose of subsequent contact (i.e., member checks).

Each new teacher and mentor was interviewed once using a semi-structured interview protocol. Bogdan and Biklen (2005) assure us that “with semi-structured interviews you are confident of getting comparable data across subjects” (p. 96), and Creswell (2008) says that “one-on-one interviews are ideal for interviewing participants who are not hesitant to speak, are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably” (p. 226). In terms of the individual interview questions, Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggest that “research questions should be general enough to permit exploration but focused enough to delimit the study” (p. 38). Each participant was interviewed at a time and place that was mutually convenient. The interview protocol used in this study can be found in Appendix E.

Program Documentation

While the majority of data was accumulated from the participant interviews, program documentation was also accessed in order to fill in some of the background philosophies and divisional culture that played a part in the development and goals of the induction/mentoring program. Program documentation included written documents and information available on the division website.

Data Analysis: “Focused Exploration” Phase

Data analysis “involves working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2005, p. 147). Participant interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. The recorded interviews were then transcribed into a word document. The transcripts were returned to the participants for the purpose of member checking. Participants verified the accuracy of the data and could choose to add or delete comments. Once the accuracy of the data had been verified the transcription was entered into a qualitative research software application.

I chose to use QSR International’s NVivo 7 software to assist in the coding and categorization of data into predominate themes. Creswell (2008) describes the attributes of NVivo software as combining the ability to efficiently manage qualitative data with the processes of indexing, searching, and theorizing, while offering rapid coding, thorough exploration, and rigorous management and analysis of the data (p. 250). NVivo software was chosen over other possible choices because it was available and contains many features which made it desirable. As Welsh (2002) states:

NVivo is relatively simple to use. It is possible to import documents directly from a word processing package and code these documents easily on screen. Coding stripes can be made visible in the margins of documents so that the researcher can see, at a glance, which codes have been used where. In addition, it is possible to write memos about particular aspects of documents and link these to relevant pieces of text in different documents (Data and Software, ¶ 1).

Some researchers have expressed concern about the use of software in the analysis of qualitative data. Seidel (as cited in Welsh, 2002) felt that software may guide researchers in particular directions. Welsh (2002, Computer, ¶ 1) points out that some researchers believe the use of software “could serve to distance the researcher from the data, encourage quantitative analysis of qualitative data, and create a homogeneity in methods across the social sciences.” Proponents of qualitative software programs, however, argue that “computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) has been seen as aiding the researcher in her or his search for an accurate and transparent picture of the data whilst also providing an audit of the data analysis process as a whole—something which has often been missing in accounts of qualitative research” (Welsh, 2002, abstract), and that it “serves to facilitate an accurate and transparent data analysis process whilst also providing a quick and simple way of counting who said what and when, which in turn, provides a reliable, general picture of the data (Welsh, 2002, Computer, ¶ 1).

As each interview was completed, transcribed, and uploaded into NVivo it was compared to previous interviews in order to discover emerging categories. In this way data collection and data analysis proceeded simultaneously. This is referred to as the constant comparison data analysis method. Creswell (2008) writes, “constant comparison is an

inductive data analysis procedure...in research of generating and connecting categories by comparing incidents in the data to other incidents, incidents to categories, and categories to other categories” (p. 443). As a process of Naturalistic Inquiry, data analysis is a continuously occurring activity. This process allows the emergence of the design and the ability to further focus the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Interpretation: “Member Check” Phase

Data interpretation refers to “developing ideas about... findings and relating them to the literature and to broader concerns and concepts” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2005, p. 147). In this study interview data was compared to previous and subsequent data and to existing literature and theories in an effort to discover emerging themes from the teachers’ perspectives about the value of the full-time mentors. Specifically I was trying to interpret how new teachers perceive the value of the induction program and especially the mentorship component of the induction program in relation to their introduction to the teaching profession. Did the presence of a full-time, independent, mentor teacher provide the necessary support that new teachers feel they need?

The data obtained from the interviews and the subsequent interpretation of the data needs to be considered valid and conclusions drawn from the research need to be credible. Creswell (2008) maintains that “validation is an active part of the process of research” (p. 450). Bogdan and Biklen (2005) suggest that qualitative researchers are concerned with the accuracy and comprehensiveness of data but, “tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations” (p. 36). Qualitative studies are rarely generalizable to a defined population, but the development of a theory may be transferable

to other cases (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Maxwell, 2008) and “deep experiential understanding of one program promotes understanding of similar programs and cumulative improvement over time” (Bamberger et al., 2006, p. 272). To this end I have chosen to use several methods advocated by different researchers to assure the validity and credibility of the research.

In Joseph Maxwell’s (2008), *Designing a Qualitative Study*, seven strategies are suggested that could be used by researchers to deal with issues of validity and to increase the credibility of results: (a) intensive, long-term involvement; (b) rich data; (c) respondent validation; (d) searching for discrepant evidence and negative cases; (e) triangulation; (f) quasi-statistics; and (g) comparison. Maxwell cautions though that “not every strategy will work in a given study, and even trying to apply all the ones that are feasible might not be an efficient use of your time (p. 243). I chose to use five of the above strategies and included one additional strategy suggested by Creswell (2008).

Rich Data

Maxwell (2008) describes rich data as the accumulation of various sources of data that are detailed enough that they provide a complete and revealing picture of what is occurring. This type of data was generated through the use of intensive interviews and verbatim transcripts. Becker (as cited in Maxwell) argued that “such data counter the twin dangers of respondent duplicity and observer bias by making it difficult for respondents to produce data that uniformly support a mistaken conclusion” (p. 244). By interviewing a number of teachers who are involved in the member program at various school levels, as well as all of the mentors within the program, I was able to present rich data related to the

experiences of these individuals that helped to provide a complete picture of the efficacy of the mentoring program.

Respondent Validation

Respondent validation or “member checks” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) is the process of taking the data (usually in the form of transcripts) back to participants and asking them to verify the accuracy of the report (p. 267). Maxwell (2008) contends that “this is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstandings of what you observed. Likewise, Lincoln and Guba, suggest that member checking is the “most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314), and that “if the investigator is to be able to purport that his or her reconstructions are recognizable to audience members as adequate representations of their own (and multiple) realities, it is essential that they be given the opportunity to react to them” (p. 314). In this study interview transcripts were returned to the participants so that they could add, delete, or augment any data from the interview.

Searching for Discrepant Evidence and Negative Cases

Searching for discrepancies and cases of negative data are an important part of the validity testing in qualitative research studies (Maxwell, 2008). Specific occurrences that cannot be accounted for with existing themes and categorizations may indicate defects in the account (Maxwell, p. 244). In this study, instances of negative or discrepant data were searched for and taken into account; as Maxwell suggests “rigorously examine both the supporting and discrepant data to assess whether it is more plausible to retain or modify the conclusion, being aware of all of the pressures to ignore data that do not fit your

conclusions” (p. 244). Ultimately data that is discrepant may need to be acknowledged and reported, allowing readers to evaluate and draw their own conclusions (Maxwell, p. 245).

Triangulation

Triangulation is the collection of information from different data sources such as documentation and interviews in an effort to increase the validity (Bamberger, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Maxwell, 2008) and credibility (Creswell, 2008) of research. Creswell (2008) also points out that triangulation of data can be achieved between the collection of new information and the emerging categories (p. 450). Creswell continues “after developing a theory, validate the process by comparing it with existing processes found in the literature” (p. 450). In opposition to the belief that triangulation increases validity, Flick (as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) suggests that “triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation” (p. 5). Either way, the use of triangulation “reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations that one develops” (Maxwell, 2008, p. 245).

In this study triangulation was achieved by collecting data from a variety of sources including new teacher participants, mentor participants, program documentation, and the literature review. In addition, through the use of naturalistic inquiry methods and constant comparison analysis, new data was constantly triangulated with the emerging categories.

Comparison

Maxwell (2008) states that comparison can be used in qualitative studies for the purpose of assessing validity; In this study the induction model and mentoring component of the induction model were compared to existing literature, notably Britton et al., (2003), Fulton et al., (2005), and The New Teacher Center (2006).

External Audit

An external audit is the process of securing an outside person “to conduct a thorough review of the study and report back, in writing, the strengths and weaknesses of the project” (Creswell, 2008, p. 267). The external audit can occur at any time during the study or once the study is complete (Creswell, 2008). In this study, the faculty advisor and committee members essentially fulfill(s) the role of external auditor(s). The review, critique, and suggestions made by the external auditors enable them to “examine both the process and product of the inquiry, and determine the trustworthiness of the findings” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 128).

Confidentiality and Ethics

All interviews were confidential and were not shared in any way that threatened the anonymity of the participant. Pseudonyms were provided to replace all real names, including participants and schools. Interviews were scheduled at times that were mutually convenient. Participation in this study did not interfere in the new teacher’s current work and may have provided participants with an opportunity to reflect and make suggestions that others may use to improve upon future teacher induction programs.

Summary

This study was an attempt to understand new teacher perceptions of a unique mentorship component of an induction program used in a local urban school division. Naturalistic inquiry was employed and a qualitative interview approach used to collect data. Constant comparison of one interview to the next allowed for the emergence of themes. The validity and credibility of data and results was achieved through triangulation of data sources, the collection of internal documents related to the induction program, and a

comprehensive literature review. In addition credibility of the results was ensured through the provision of rich/thick descriptions from the research participants and the process of external auditing. Participants in the study are new teachers who are participating or have participated, in the induction program and three mentors (current and former) who coordinate, or formally coordinated, the induction program. The teacher participants represented all three levels of schooling; early, middle and senior years. The participants were chosen using purposeful sampling. They were assured of confidentiality and pseudonyms were used for all direct quotations. The next chapter will highlight the data results and analyze the results in terms of themes which emerged from the participants' interview responses.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter addresses the research questions posed to each participant in the study. As a result of the participants' response to each interview question, the data collected was transcribed and coded and direct quotations from the participants have been included in an attempt to create a clear, detailed picture of the new teachers' perceptions.

As I reviewed the coding and subsequent categories which emerged, I determined that a method in which to compare the results with all of the participants quickly and efficiently was required. After reviewing the literature, Lincoln's and Guba's (1985) idea of identifying themes in three categories, 1) consensus themes – when the majority of participants mention the same idea, 2) supported themes – when approximately half of the participants mention an idea, or as 3) individual themes – when an idea is only mentioned by a small minority of the participants was selected.

In order to begin categorizing information, Guba (as cited in Patton, 1990) suggests the researcher begin looking for similarities and differences between the different categories. In this study the analysis of data was conducted using NVivo software – a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software. As interviews were transcribed the data were compared to previous data and the emergence of common themes led to the creation of “nodes” – NVivo terminology for categories. The data from each new transcription was coded into an existing node or led to the emergence of a new node. Coding was finished when nodes existed which were internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous. Once the coding and formation of nodes was complete, a matrix was utilized to determine the number of participants who had mentioned a theme. If a majority of participants mentioned a subject it

became a consensus theme; if approximately half of the participants mentioned a theme it became supported, and; if a small minority mentioned the theme it became individual.

As indicated in Chapter One of the thesis, the primary research question that guided this study was, “Does the availability of a full time mentor teacher facilitate the successful introduction of a new teacher into the teaching profession?” In order to answer this question, four research questions formed the basis of this study:

1. What are the challenges that new teachers face for which they need support?
2. Benefits and Challenges of Mentoring
 - a. For New Teachers: What (if any) benefits do new teachers perceive from having access to a formal mentor? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: What (if any) benefits exist for mentors who work to support new teachers? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
3. Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure
 - a. For New Teachers: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers’ introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers’ introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
4. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and/or mentors?

Teacher Identified Themes

The questions asked of new teachers were an attempt to elicit responses that would illustrate new teacher perceptions of the mentoring provided through their school division's new teacher induction model. The questions focussed on several areas: new teacher challenges, the benefits or challenges of having a full-time mentor, benefits or challenges surrounding the induction program structure, and suggested induction program changes.

A significant change happened during the course of my research which needs to be mentioned; between the 2008/2009 and the 2009/2010 school year the school division's new teacher induction program suffered several cutbacks. This period in time is at the tail end of a poor economy and many Manitoba school divisions have had to reduce funding to existing educational programs. Unfortunately, in this division, one of those programs facing cutbacks was the new teacher induction program. The most notable change was the reduction in full time mentors from three to one and a half. In order to keep a low mentor-to-new-teacher ratio, the decision was made to remove supports for second year teachers (effectively making the program a one year induction model), while adding supports for new (first year) administrators. A second change occurred that may also impact upon the perceptions of new teachers. In the previous induction model (prior to the 2009 school year) the mentor teachers were selected from among teaching peers. They had demonstrated a wealth of experience and the ability to share their knowledge and experience with teachers new to the profession. In the current induction model the mentors are both former administrators. This change was most likely made because of the new program mandate of mentoring both new teachers and new administrators.

As the data were being analyzed it became apparent that differences existed in the perceptions of first year teachers participating in the current (post cutback) induction program and the third and fourth year teachers who had participated in the previous (pre-cutback) induction program. As each theme is discussed I will point out where data differed (if any) between the two groups.

Challenges Facing New Teachers

The first set of questions was used to elicit teacher responses surrounding the type of challenges that they faced as new teachers. Table 3 indicates the themes that emerged from the participant's responses.

Table 3

Themes Related to New Teacher Challenges

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ Administrative tasks ▪ Classroom management ▪ Stress and workload ▪ Time management	▪ Disassociation between home and work ▪ Organization	▪ School culture ▪ Unwilling to request help

The first consensus theme was that administrative tasks such as paperwork, computerized report cards, sitting on committees, extra supervision duties, and et cetera were unexpected responsibilities that took away from the new teachers' ability to prepare for classes. One participant commented that she "needed support just navigating a lot for report cards and

report card comments” and another stated, “there are countless meetings, meetings with resource, meetings with the academic centre, there’s department meetings, staff meetings, you need to talk to these parents; there is so much other stuff going on that it’s overwhelming at times, especially if it’s your first go around, it is absolutely overwhelming”. One particular administrative task that was mentioned by several participants was the challenge of booking and preparing for substitute teachers. As one participant stated, “how to prepare a substitute teacher, or how [to] go online on the site to find a substitute teacher” were significant challenges for her in the first year.

The second consensus theme was the difficulties that the new teachers faced involving classroom management. They struggled especially with consistency in classroom rules and procedures, the planning for and supervision of special needs students, and overall poor behaviour in the classroom. Many of the classroom management issues were exacerbated when the new teacher was hired for a term position starting in the middle of the year. As one participant stated, the biggest classroom management problem for her as a result of beginning a term in the middle of the year was the establishment of a routine:

I wasn't the one who started [the year] off, [it] was difficult to get them to sit at a desk to do work, to not poke and touch and pull hair and kick and get up and yell and roll around the floor. That was hard, and it was just a matter of being consistent... there wasn't much I don't think that happened that year... I remember doing a science unit, I remember doing some multiplication but really there wasn't much learning going on. I think I did an ELA art project that was it; it was a tough year.

The third consensus theme was stress and workload. The new teachers found themselves with an unexpected workload, often combined with the additional administrative

tasks that were found in consensus theme one. These unexpected workloads usually revolved around the teaching of unfamiliar subjects or unfamiliar grade levels, the implementation of divisional mandates (i.e. new assessment requirements), and were often directly attributable to being hired after the school year had already begun. Several participants commented that they had been hired for the very next teaching day, “the position that I was in, the term teacher had quit, just walked out and quit at four o'clock on a Tuesday... so I started there and it was like every day was just one day at a time” and another stated, “it was very tough coming in; it was a medical leave and I got hired on Friday. I found out they wanted me to come in and work and they wanted me to start on Monday; I had no books, nothing, so walking into a 75 minute period, I had no idea what I was coming into”. These emergency hires left the new teacher with little in the way of resources, materials, or supports.

Workload was one of the primary contributors of the stress experienced by new teachers but two additional factors were also identified: a lack of mentor support during term positions and a perception by new teachers that they needed to be as good as, if not better than, the experienced teachers in order to secure long term employment. The lack of mentor support for participants who had first secured small terms was considered by many to be frustrating. Comments like, “I didn't get any support last year when I did my three month term and I could've used it”, and “if I had had a mentor [there] would have been so much less stress” were common among the new teachers who had had term positions prior to their “first” year.

The perception that new teachers needed to impress administrators and colleagues by being perfect was also a contributing factor to the stress experienced by new teachers. As

one participant commented, “you want to present yourself in the best light, you want to prove that you're a good teacher and it can be very stressful”, and another stated, “you’re on a term, you want to become permanent, you need to make yourself more valuable. I’m also helping with the stage production...with basketball, and I run cricket”. As Karsenti et al. (2008) determined in their study of new teacher drop-outs:

Drop-out teachers hesitated to go to the school administration when they were having problems because they were afraid to look incompetent. This fear probably also involved job insecurity. Going to see the school principal to talk about problems in the classroom somehow means admitting that one is not yet ready for a permanent job. (p. 45)

As Karsenti et al. questioned, “How do you ask for help from the person who will eventually decide if you get a permanent job? How do you admit your weaknesses to the authority who participates in your job evaluation?” (p. 52). For several of the new teachers this perception of making themselves invaluable to the school by taking on additional duties such as coaching school teams or chairing school committees combined with the desire to appear “perfect”, was contributing significantly to the stress and workload challenges they were experiencing.

Time management was the final consensus theme. One participant stated, “I was working... sometimes seven in the morning till nine at night on school stuff.” Another said, “I lived here, I was here until 11 o'clock at night every night; I was being kicked out by the janitors”. The mentor teachers felt that time management challenges were a product of the new teachers’ inability to plan for the long term. As one mentor stated, “they tend to be working in smaller units of instruction, those first few months... we try to help them see that as you gain experience you want to be thinking bigger to plan things. You don’t have to do

as much day-to-day planning, once you're able to start making bigger units; it makes things a little bit more doable".

One supported theme was the new teachers' inability to organize their days effectively. Most of the organizational issues centered on the inability of the new teachers to locate resources and materials for teaching. As one of the mentors said, "Many new teachers are reluctant to find out what types of resources are available in their new school". One teacher commented that "you need a lot of materials and lesson plans apart from just the curricula. I hadn't done my student teaching in that level, I had done it in grade 5 and 6, so I had no material".

While all of the themes so far, and even the two individual themes that will be discussed subsequently have been well documented in the literature (e.g., Leithwood, 2006) as challenges commonly faced by new teachers, one theme found here that has not been reported in the literature was the supported theme of disassociation. Some of the new teachers found it challenging to separate events that occur at school from their home lives. As one mentor pointed out, teachers "want to please the students; they want to know if something goes wrong in the life of the students, [they] want to fix it, [they] want to know how [they] can help". She goes on to state that while these are all noble ideals, teachers, especially new teachers, need to "accept that there is a point where you're only the teacher... [you] cannot solve the problem if mom and dad are fighting and they are getting a divorce. I know what impact it has on the kid and teachers... new teachers seem to be like little sponges; they absorb all this, the life of their kids and they live in symbiosis with them... at the end of the day you have a life and you have a family and you need that break, you can't bring home work".

Two individual themes emerged from the data. One high school teacher commented that he was struggling to navigate the culture of the school, “you [have] to navigate your relationship with other staff because things are done a certain way, whether they are laid out or not”. He noted that coming in to an established culture in some ways molded the way the new teachers acted. He was unable to do the things he had expected or planned to do with his students because other more experienced teachers already did similar activities and he would be infringing upon their established routine. As he pointed out “you don't want to step on any established teacher’s feet... every year for the past 25 years they've done it in grade 11 and they’re going to get people in their grade who did it with you in grade 10 or grade 9, so you kind of have to navigate the staff expectations of what's going to happen”.

The second individual theme that emerged from the data was one teacher’s unwillingness to ask for help. When she was asked why she had not utilized her “buddy teacher” as a source of information, she responded, “I don't really go to see her too many times...I feel like I'm bothering people and I don't want to bother them because I know she's extremely busy herself; she has other work to do.... I don't like to feel like I'm constantly disrupting her or interrupting her work”. This particular teacher had had limited contact with the divisional mentor at the point that this interview was conducted. She perceived a limited value from the program and as such had made little effort to initiate access.

New teacher difficulties have been well documented in the literature (e.g., Leithwood, 2006) and with the exception of the disassociation theme there were few surprises found in the data. The challenges experienced by the new teachers do however provide a rich background in which to view the perceptions of new teachers towards the

benefits or challenges of being mentored by a full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentor within a structured induction program.

Benefits of Having Access to a Full-time Mentor.

The program being studied utilized a full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentor. Mentor teachers were each responsible for approximately 25 new teachers. Each new teacher was also assigned an in-school buddy who was able to assist him/her in the more mundane and immediate concerns of school procedures and culture. The second set of questions posed to the new teachers attempted to discover their perceptions about the benefits and/or challenges of having a full-time divisional mentor. The resulting themes are listed in Table 4 (benefits) and Table 5 (challenges).

Table 4

Themes Related to Mentor Benefits

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ Non-evaluative ▪ In-class observations	▪ Practice for evaluations ▪ Increased confidence ▪ Access to resources ▪ Ability to ask questions in confidence	▪ Flexibility

Two consensus themes emerged from the data. The first theme was the perception of the new teachers that the non-evaluative function of the divisional mentor was a benefit. As

one teacher stated, “they're not there to evaluate you and it's very comforting knowing that you have help and you can ask them anything and they're not going to judge you based on that. They're not going to run and see your principal and judge you based on anything that you say or anything that you do in the classroom”. Another said, “I think that's kind of the key of the mentorship program...there are no strings attached to asking them questions and especially when you're [on] a term, you feel a lot of pressure to perform really well and not make any mistakes and not ask questions and so you could ask them anything and you knew that you wouldn't be reprimanded and it wouldn't impact your ability to go for a job or something like that”.

The second consensus theme was the benefit of having a person capable and available to give meaningful feedback and in-class observations. It was asked of the participants if they could have received this level of support from an in-school buddy. It was the perception of the new teacher participants that while in-school buddies were *capable* of providing that level of support, under normal conditions they were unable to do so because of their own teaching responsibilities.

Four supported themes emerged from the data. The first, practice evaluations – the demonstrating of a lesson and receiving feedback prior to an administrative evaluation, was seen by those who used this option as particularly useful. As one participant commented, “[the mentor] came in, he helped me plan the evaluation, he actually did a practice with me, and it was really helpful; I felt a lot less stressed out”.

The second supported theme was the perception by some of the new teachers that having a full-time mentor increased their confidence. This perception was also indicated by one of the mentors. She commented that, as a former administrator, she had noticed that

“when teachers had a [full-time, divisional] mentor their confidence level seemed to be improved, they seemed more confident, they asked more pertinent questions, [and] were engaging in the school life much more”. One participant noted that having a full-time mentor “gives you confidence knowing that there's somebody else that you can go and talk to”. Another equated his confidence level to the presence of the mentor with the analogy of a flotation device, “it's like wearing a life jacket, you don't even realize it's around or you're using it half the time, it's just sort of there. When you do need it, when you are melting down at 10:30 at night, if you ever get to that point, so you've fallen in the water, it's there”.

The third supported theme is the availability of a more flexible and broader source of resources. As the new teachers pointed out earlier, a lack of resources was considered one of the challenges during the first year. For the teachers who took advantage of this source of materials it was considered a great benefit. Comments like, “I'd say ‘I'm looking for this’ or ‘I need this’ and [the mentor] would show up with laminated copies enough for everybody and... games prepared. He was like the God of materials for us, it was wonderful”, and “any type of resource that you wanted; if you wanted to sit down and make a lesson or make a unit with them, they had a whole bunch of resources” were typical.

The fourth supported theme was the opportunity for new teachers to ask questions in confidence. It was mentioned by several new teachers that they saw this as an important benefit of the mentor program. They were afraid that if they asked the wrong question or asked one which made them appear less professional they would be perceived poorly by their colleagues. Participants were asked if they felt comfortable asking similar questions of their in-school buddies. A few mentioned that they were comfortable but most held the belief that comments made to a colleague within the school might not remain a secret. One

new teacher participant commented “I felt so comfortable with her [divisional mentor] and there were some questions that I asked her about...different things I saw going on in the building that I never would've dared ask anybody else... I wouldn't feel comfortable asking anybody else and I asked her about it and she was able to give me some feedback”. One of the mentor participants provided similar feedback from the mentor's view:

It was essential. I don't think we'd have had the kind of conversations or the kind of professional growth that we had if the teachers couldn't throw any topic on the table.

Brand-new teachers are not going to have the same kind of conversation with the person who they're going to be working with side-by-side that they had with me because they don't want that person to know that they don't know something, that's their colleague.

Some of those tough questions, I just don't think it would happen. I think that they needed to have somebody who was removed from the school a little bit, somebody who isn't going to be with them for six or seven years on staff.

The final theme mentioned was the individual theme of flexibility. New teachers who had participated in the previous version of the mentor program indicated that the flexibility offered by the mentors was a benefit. It allowed them the opportunity to access the mentors when it was convenient for them. As one participant noted, “for me that flexibility of them [the full-time mentor] being able to come in and help with your lessons or help with your classroom set up or to help you deal with a staff member that you're having issues with, that was really the valuable piece for me”. The first year teachers participating in the current year of the mentor program had not perceived any benefits surrounding flexibility most likely due their perceived challenges of being unable to contact or meet with their assigned mentors.

Challenges Related to Having Access to a Full-time Mentor

Table 5 illustrates the challenges that new teachers perceived with the full-time, off-campus mentor. No consensus themes emerged primarily because there was a large discrepancy between first year teachers participating in the current program and the third and fourth year teachers who had participated in the previous program. While the more experienced teachers said they had experienced no challenges (a supported theme) with the mentors when they went through the program, the current first year teachers were experiencing a variety of challenges; those challenges make up the remaining supported and individual themes which emerged.

Table 5

Themes Related to Mentor Challenges

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
	▪ No challenges ▪ Mentors not present	▪ Feeling of being evaluated ▪ Inability to quickly reach mentors ▪ Inadequate content knowledge

When the question was asked whether teachers had experienced any challenges related to the availability of a full-time mentor teacher, two supported themes and three

individual themes emerged. The first supported theme, that no challenges had been experienced, was primarily perceived by the more experienced teachers who had participated in previous years. The second theme, that mentors were not present, was primarily indicated by the first year teachers participating in the current program. It was their perception that the mentors were not doing enough classroom visits or had made minimal effort to visit the new teachers in their classrooms. It is important to note that this perception was primarily held by new teachers in one particular content area whose mentor teacher held a second position within the school division. This second divisional responsibility required large segments of her time during the early months of school. While arrangements had been made to cover her absence, it was the perception of the new teachers that a mentor was not accessible to them.

Three individual themes emerged, two of which were recorded by the same teacher. A third year teacher recalling her participation in the program remembered that her classroom visits with her mentor, even though she knew that they were non-evaluative, still made her nervous and caused her stress because she perceived them as being evaluative. The same teacher indicated a concern with her mentor's knowledge of her particular content area. Specifically, as a specialist, she felt that the mentor was unfamiliar with the content area and therefore not as able to assist her in those areas. Her concerns were alleviated in the second year of the program when a new mentor was hired who had had experience in her content area. The third individual theme was a difficulty contacting the mentor teacher. This individual theme was reported by a new teacher in a particular content area who had been unable to make contact with her assigned mentor.

Benefits of the Current Program Structure

Table 6 and Table 7 illustrate the themes which emerged when participants were asked how they felt about the structure of the mentor program. Table 6 indicates the benefits of program structure and Table 7 reports the challenges.

Table 6

Themes Related to Program Structure Benefits

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ Buddy teacher ▪ Teacher network ▪ Politics of teaching (do's and don'ts) ▪ Mentor	▪ Resources	▪ Increases confidence ▪ Non-evaluative ▪ Professional development ▪ Increases job opportunities

Four consensus themes emerged regarding the benefits of the mentor program structure. Participants perceived the access to an in-school buddy, the full-time mentor, learning the politics of teaching, and the development of a teacher network as positive components of the program that helped them in their first years of teaching.

The availability of resources was a supported theme reported primarily by teachers participating in previous years. As reported earlier many of the first year teachers were struggling to make contact and receive visits from their mentor teacher; in light of the

contact issues they have been unable to take advantage of that component of the mentor program.

One of the individual themes indicated was the sense of an increased level of confidence because of supports offered by the mentor program. As one participant noted, she was more willing to try ideas and take on bigger tasks because she was confident that the mentor program could provide assistance, specifically in the provision of materials and supports; as she commented, “I always got the feeling that if I needed something I could do it”. Similarly, another participant noted “any type of resource that you wanted; if you wanted to sit down and make a lesson or make a unit with them, they had a whole bunch of resources for classroom management”. The second individual theme was the benefit that the non-evaluative nature of the program provided. “You didn't feel like you had to watch everything you said” and “just feeling like I had a place to go where I didn't have to be awesome” were two comments indicated by new teachers when discussing the value of the program to them. The third individual theme related to the type of professional development offered. One participant noted that the professional development sessions were helpful because they “explain[ed] how the brain works and... other things that we didn't do in University and we weren't going to find at workshops”. This response was a discrepancy from the majority of participants who had perceived the professional development offered by the mentorship program to be less than adequate. As Maxwell (2008) suggests, it is important to acknowledge negative or discrepant data to allow the readers to evaluate and draw their own conclusions. The final individual theme was the perception that participation in the program improves the likelihood of future employment. One participant indicated that she perceived a benefit from participating in the program not only for her professional

growth but also because of the regard for which other employers held the program. The participant noted:

I knew in the back of my mind, that being in a mentorship program would get me or help me get a job, my second time, because you make contacts. When I put that I was in the mentorship program and applied outside of the division in June, I got interviews too and they asked me about mentorship because the [mentorship program] has a very good reputation”.

Challenges Related to the Current Program Structure

Table 7 reports the challenges related to the program structure as perceived by the new teachers. Two consensus themes and two individual themes emerged from the question about program structure.

Table 7

Themes Related to Program Structure Challenges

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ No support during terms ▪ Professional development was not useful/irrelevant		▪ Harder to plan for subs than to teach ▪ More hands on strategies/tools – less theory

Many of the teachers perceived the professional development offered by the program to be irrelevant or simply not useful to them. As one participant noted, “we did an overview of the three different types of evaluation and I felt that we did that so much in university...I don't know that it was very useful. I felt that it was something that is so fresh with us as new graduates that...it was just a repeating of what I had already done. I didn't find that particularly helpful”. Other teachers found the sessions irrelevant for their situation as indicated by this comment from an itinerant teacher, “really helpful if you're a classroom teacher, not as helpful if you're in the gym or any specialty area”. Several of the new teachers teaching in the immersion schools commented that they struggled with adapting the information into their environment of the immersion classroom.

The second consensus theme was the lack of program support for teachers hired on for a term. Several of the new teachers commented that they were very stressed during their initial terms and contemplated leaving the teaching profession. They struggled through their initial term and are now working through a full year with mentor program support. Many of the challenges they are facing now with the support of a mentor were challenges they faced in their first introduction to teaching. Comments such as “if I had had a mentor it would have been so much less stress” and “I didn't get any support last year when I did my three months, and I could've used it” were common. The new teachers felt that participation in the mentor program during terms would have been beneficial for them.

The two individual themes that emerged occurred because of the way in which the professional development was offered. Teachers found it harder to plan for substitute teachers to attend professional development activities than if they had just remained in their classroom and taught. The second theme concerned the information and activities offered as

professional development. The new teachers would have preferred to receive more hands-on strategies and tools and less theory work; both of these themes are perhaps indicative of why some of the teachers found the professional development to be irrelevant.

Suggested Program Changes

The final question offered the new teachers the opportunity to suggest ways in which they felt the program could be improved. It was expected that the themes which emerged surrounding program challenges would also become themes teachers suggested as program changes. The results shown in Table 8 included four consensus themes, two supported themes, and four individual themes.

Table 8

Themes Related to Suggested Program Changes

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ Increase mentor presence during first year ▪ Better, more relevant professional development ▪ More resources/tools ▪ Increase release time to network	▪ Begin program supports during terms ▪ Increase mentor presence during second year	▪ Program support specific to itinerant/specialized positions ▪ Increase funding ▪ Mentor consistency ▪ Separate existing mentor's dossier

The majority of teachers felt that increasing the number of times mentors were in the classroom would be beneficial. As one participant noted:

I think more in class visits would be beneficial so that [the mentor] can see what my teaching style is and see my students and notice who works really hard and who is more distracted easily so that they can help me better help my students. I feel my divisional mentor doesn't know me. I am positive she doesn't know my name, where I teach, or what grade. Regular visits would help to form that personal relationship so that I would maybe feel more comfortable to go and ask her for her experience and expertise.

The second and third consensus themes were the introduction of more relevant professional development and the availability of more practical resources and materials during these workshops. While some teachers had mentioned specific professional development workshops or activities that they had found useful, the majority of teachers felt that the workshops were too theoretical and the learning was too similar to what they had just completed in their university training. Participants made the following comments, “I don't think that the session...was very useful... it was something that we had just done in university and there was an entire course on it”, “what I'm learning in these mentorship sessions isn't new information yet”, and:

[do] some research on what type of courses we've done in university then go back and re-evaluate what type of sessions that they're giving because there's so much to learn in this profession coming out of school...I think there is so much that could be covered that we shouldn't be doing stuff that we've already seen. I think as a first-year teacher, definitely one of the major concerns is a lack of resources and a lack of tools, and so bringing those tools and resources to our attention and then being able to modify them or justify them so

that they work for you in your classroom at your grade level with your material that you're teaching.

This comment by a first year teacher sums up how the majority of the new teachers perceived the professional development workshops:

I would've liked to receive the tools needed to ensure my teaching is efficient. They constantly tell us what we should be doing but are not giving us the tools to ensure the students are getting there. I know what the students need, but how do I make it easier for them to learn? I want strategies like that, not just being told what to do; because I know what I have to do as a teacher. I know what I would like for my students, it's just how do I make them get there efficiently, especially since there are 25 students at very different levels, academically and emotionally, how do I respond to their individual needs and make sure that they each grow to their full potential? I realize there are no right or wrong answers. I just want my students to learn and succeed.

The final consensus theme was the perception of new teachers that they would benefit from more release time in which to foster and develop networks among their peers. One participant noted, "I would also be interested to see if the network could be a little more established... it's tough because if you're the only high school person, talking to someone who is teaching grade 7 is almost like two different worlds. It would be nice if there was some sort of contact set up, it could even be people who have gone out of the program who are teaching in a similar area or similar situation".

The third and fourth year teachers indicated that more mentor time in the classroom during the second year of the program would also be beneficial. As one participant noted, "I think that in the second year it would be nice to see them once every two weeks too.... I had

a lot of colleagues that completely changed grades in their second year because a lot of people got picked up for a term; I think that would've been nice". It is important to note that many of the first year teachers who participated in this study had received only limited mentor visits at the time of the interviews due to the mentor's other job description. These teachers were already receiving less mentor support than for what the program called. In addition the third and fourth year teachers who were participating in the study were unaware that the second year supports had been removed entirely for the new teachers due to budgetary cutbacks.

The final supported theme was the introduction of mentor program supports during the first teaching experience. Many of the participants in this study started their career in a short term position such as a maternity leave. Under the mentor program guidelines these teachers did not qualify for mentor support even though they were first year teachers with no classroom experience other than student teaching. As reported earlier, the new teachers strongly felt that they needed and would have benefited from mentor supports during their initial term positions. When the question was posed to the mentor teachers, the response was that term support was not given based strictly on the number of teachers currently in term positions. As one mentor suggested, "help is given to permanent new teachers first. We have an awful lot of teachers who come on term..." and, "just by sheer numbers, we do have to keep our numbers manageable". This is the same reason given for the supports being removed for the new teachers in their second year.

Four individual themes emerged from the data. Teachers indicated several suggestions for what they felt could improve the program. One itinerant teacher recommended that program supports could be improved if they were less generic to teaching

and more specific to individual situations. Specifically, in this case the teacher perceived a lack of curricular supports in her specialized position during her first year of teaching. She did mention however that during her second year of teaching her new mentor was more knowledgeable in these areas.

Another suggestion was to strive for continuity of mentors. It was perceived that when a new mentor was introduced the relationship and rapport built up over the year was lost; receiving a new mentor teacher was like starting all over again.

The third individual theme was to increase funding to the program. New teachers had expectations of the program that they felt were not being met. One participant stated, “I was expecting something different.... when I heard about the mentorship program and I was informed, it hasn't been what I expected. I expected a little bit more. I was kind of disappointed with what I've gotten so far”. Two participants suggested that funding be increased to return the program to its previous level of supports.

The final individual theme to improve the program was to remove the existing mentor's dual role within the division. The teacher who made this suggestion had the unique perspective of having been a first year teacher in the program and now, in her fourth year, was an in-school buddy for a new teacher. She comments:

Right now I am the [in-school] buddy to a first-year teacher and they have made changes to their program. The person responsible for the French section of the program also has a different dossier that she's responsible for. So it's November and we have not seen her yet, so I would recommend that it be a totally separate dossier, because the first-year teachers aren't getting the same support from the divisional mentors that my group did. When I first started there were three mentors and now they're down to 1 1/2 mentors and

they're still at about the same amount of new teachers, but they need to be there. If that's their job they need to be there and we haven't seen her yet; she's out of the country.

As one would expect, the suggestions very closely aligned with the challenges that were experienced by the new teachers. Similar questions were asked of the mentor participants in an effort to provide greater detail and a different perspective on some of the issues.

Mentor Identified Themes

Three mentors participated in this study. Two serve as the current mentor coordinators and one was a previous mentor now holding an administrative position within the school division. Similar questions were asked of the mentors in an effort to provide rich detail from another perspective. Additionally, the mentors were asked for their input on the benefits and challenges that they had experienced with the program and changes they might suggest.

Challenges Facing New Teachers

The first set of questions pertained to the challenges that first year teachers experienced. Because the mentors work with approximately 30 new teachers each year they are able to provide a more diverse representation of new teachers. They identified very similar types of challenges as mentioned by the first year teachers, with classroom management skills being identified as the most significant. The mentors also identified some additional challenges that new teachers had presented to them such as challenges associated with teaching in a second language, and the stress that new teachers perceived from having to prove their competency in order to secure employment. Additionally the mentors commented that some new teachers were weak in their knowledge of content or strategy and others had difficulty seeking assistance when facing difficulties, both of which

could exacerbate challenging situations. The mentors also made a point of stating that every teacher was unique:

Some teachers have trouble managing their own time, other teachers that's not a problem.

Some teachers come in with incredible classroom management skills, but the content piece, the strategy piece is weak. Some teachers come in with great content but the managing of a class is challenging. You're going to find that every teacher has things that they do really well and things that they need help with.

Another comment mentioned:

Some people are coming to their jobs, first-year jobs, with children and family expectations at home, some are 23 years old and still living in their parents' houses so they go home and get fed. Everybody's job and life is very different and every classroom is very different. So teacher "A" could be very successful in this situation, but if they're over here where teacher "B" is they'd be struggling like teacher "B" is struggling because teacher "B" has this classroom that has seven high needs boys in it all running around.

Any experienced teacher would be going 'oh my goodness' to that classroom.

The second set of questions delved into the mentors' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of working with new teachers.

Benefits and Challenges of Working with New Teachers

The mentors acknowledged an intrinsic motivation for engaging in their work as mentors. The opportunity to give back to the profession, to watch a teacher grow professionally over the course of a year, and the satisfaction of being able to help, were all mentioned as benefits of mentoring a new teacher. As one mentor stated:

to watch a teacher grow, to watch kids in the class settle, to see kids engaged when at the beginning the year they weren't engaged, to have a conversation with a teacher about a strategy or activity and then walking in on the next visit and seeing it in place, to go from having conversations of survival to having professional conversations about what the next step is, where are you going professionally, that's pretty cool stuff... that was very rewarding.

The mentors also experienced challenges when working with new teachers. Attempting to build a rapport with a new teacher during the busiest time of the year was a challenge. Maintaining and developing effective and regular communication was also challenging. As one mentor commented:

You send out information and you contact them etcetera.... They're often slow to respond. I think that's because even getting into the routine of getting onto their computers and checking e-mails etcetera is very difficult for those first few weeks...they're feeling really overwhelmed.... It's getting that commitment from them and making sure that you're communicating regularly.

Other challenges that were mentioned by the mentors included scheduling observation times with teachers and working in a variety of different school cultures:

The first few years, I had to be really careful about the in-school culture. We had different discipline plans and different ways of doing things. For example, some schools were restitution schools; some weren't, so I had to be really careful that I didn't go outside of what was expected in the school. Eventually, I worked in all the schools so that became easier for me to do. That would be the drawback of being the external person. You had to tread carefully; you had to learn the culture of the building very quickly so

that you weren't having conversations about restitution in a school where the expectations were consequences.

Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure

The third set of questions asked about the benefits and challenges of the mentor program structure. Table 9 highlights the many benefits that the mentor teachers perceived from the program's structure. Consensus themes included the availability of an in-school buddy to handle quick, school specific types of questions and the ability of the program to introduce new teachers into the school division's culture.

Table 9

Mentor Identified Themes Related to Program Structure Benefits

Consensus Themes	Supported Themes	Individual Themes
▪ Assigning of in-school buddy teachers ▪ Initiation of new teachers into the divisional culture	▪ Mentor independent of individual schools – confidentiality ▪ Professional development relevant to the new teacher ▪ Peer networking ▪ Non-evaluative feedback and guidance	▪ Increased school engagement from new teachers ▪ Increased confidence ▪ Release time ▪ Classroom visits

Conversely, only one challenge in program structure was identified by the mentors. One mentor wished that there could be more time to visit new teachers' classrooms, particularly in situations where teachers were struggling.

Suggested Program Changes

The final question presented the mentors with an opportunity to suggest changes to the program. Two changes were suggested. One mentor suggested increasing the amount of release time available to new teachers in order to better develop a teacher network. Another mentor suggested that the program be expanded to include the first three years of a new teacher's career. As the mentor stated:

Initially, we really were hoping for that three-year commitment just because of the conversations we were able to have in the second year. The second year is so important because a lot of our conversations in the first year are about 'survival' and classroom management and figuring out the whole 'teacher thing'. Near the end of that first year we get into some really good conversations about professional growth, which we just start with in September of the next year and then we have a full year of really important powerful conversations. I just think three years would be even that much better.

This suggestion was made by a former mentor who was unaware that the current program had recently been reduced from two years of support to just one.

Summary

This chapter addressed the research questions posed to each new teacher and mentor in the study. Consensus, supported, and individual themes were generated as a result of the

participants' responses. Direct quotations from the participants provided descriptions of the nature of the themes that developed.

The next and final chapter of this thesis will summarize the study's key findings as a result of an analysis of themes created from the participant's responses. I will include recommendations for practice regarding the use of a full time mentor to facilitate the introduction of new teachers into the teaching profession and indicate possible areas for further research.

Chapter Five: Recommendations

Included in this final chapter are my conclusions based on the results of the study and recommendations to improve the use of full-time mentors within a new teacher induction program. The purpose of this study was to generate themes based on the perceptions of new teachers towards the benefits of having access to a full-time mentor and to provide “thick description” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of one particular new teacher mentoring program that utilized full-time mentors. As a result of an analysis of themes generated from the specific mentor and new teacher questions, conclusions related to the challenges facing new teachers, the benefits and challenges of formal mentorship, and suggestions made to improve the quality of the program studied in this research are outlined in the following sections.

Challenges Facing New Teachers

The initial question concerned the challenges that new teachers were experiencing during their first year. Only one challenge presented itself that had not previously been outlined in the research: the inability for some new teachers to disassociate their home and school life. This study found that new teachers brought the stress and emotions from school home to their personal life. A subsequent review of the research turned up only one recent Canadian study of new teacher drop-outs reporting a challenge of disassociation (Karsenti et al., 2008). In Karsenti et al.’s study, it was determined that one of the characteristics of new teacher drop-outs was the perception that the professional workload and time required interfered with their recreation and personal interests. New teacher drop-outs tended to neglect these attributes of their personal lives and therefore cited the inability to disassociate work from home as a reason they left the profession. Karsenti et al. found that a percentage

of new teacher drop-outs perceived that, “in order to fulfill their professional duties, their social and family lives had to suffer” (p. 39).

Interestingly, two (33%) of the new-teacher participants in this study identified disassociation between their work lives and their home lives to be a challenge. In their zeal to impress administrators and colleagues and an eagerness to “be perfect” – in the words of one participant – they neglected their personal lives in favor of their professional lives. Perhaps the disassociation characteristic identified in Karsenti et al.’s (2008) study of drop-out teachers and reported here is a component of stress and burnout from workload and other challenges and therefore not noticed or reported by other researchers. A distinction needs to be made, however, as both Karsenti et al.’s (2008) study and this study report stress and workload as distinct challenges separate from disassociation. For example all participants (100%) in this study reported stress and workload concerns to be challenges in their first-year of teaching but only two (33%) reported a challenge of disassociating their professional life from their personal life. In other words, the majority of teachers experienced stress and workload challenges in their first years of teaching but were able to maintain a healthy balance between their personal and professional roles. Could the disassociation characteristic found in this study – and reported by Karsenti et al.’s (2008) drop-out teachers – be an early indicator of new teachers at risk of leaving the profession? This may be an avenue for future research that could inform teacher retention strategies.

The new teacher participants in this study demonstrated confidence in their abilities as teachers and in their level of expectations of student achievement. They professed an understanding of what they wanted their students to achieve but often perceived a lack of resources or strategies to support them. Despite their current level of confidence, the

majority of the new teachers in this study stated that they had considered quitting during their initial introductions to the teaching profession. Many of the new teachers had started off by accepting short term assignments. These term assignments were initiated generally towards the end of the school year and occurred in challenging situations. As noted earlier, new teachers who accepted these challenging short-term teaching assignments rarely received mentor support. All of the new teachers in the study who had started in a term position indicated that mentor support would have made a difference in their initial professional introductions to teaching.

Benefits and Challenges of Formal Mentoring

The second set of questions was used to determine new teachers' perceptions regarding their access to a formal mentor, and mentors' perceptions in regards to the benefits and challenges they experience from mentoring new teachers.

New Teacher Perceptions

Some of the benefits indicated by new teachers included an increased confidence in their own abilities, the opportunity to receive non-evaluative observation and feedback, the ability to practice lessons prior to administrative evaluations, the availability of resources and materials specifically tailored to the situation in their classroom, and the opportunity to ask professionally related questions in complete confidence.

A new teacher's self-confidence correlates with an improved pedagogical development (Loughran, as cited in Kutzy, 2006) and increases his/her efficacy (Rosenholtz, as cited in Johnson, et al., 2005). In many studies, new teachers' confidence levels are associated with overall satisfaction; an increased level of confidence results in increased job satisfaction and vice versa (Johnson, et al., 2005; NEA, 2001). Job satisfaction has been

shown to be a significant factor in the retention of new teachers (Johnson, et al., 2005; Panesar, 2010). As Ewart, (2009) points out, confidence is an internal characteristic of resiliency – a skill necessary for new teachers to overcome difficult challenges. Johnson, et al. (2005) warns a decrease in confidence and poor job satisfaction can “potentially diminish the prospect that they [new teachers] will remain in the classroom through their first year” (p. 60). In addition, an increase in new teachers’ confidence contributes significantly to student learning (Rosenholtz, as cited in Johnson, et al., 2005). New teachers’ confidence and competency are improved by participation in an effective induction program which includes mentoring (Cherubini, 2007; Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; Gilles, Davis, & McGlamery, 2009; OCT, 2003). It is therefore understandable that Glassford and Salinitri (2007) suggest that the building of confidence in new teachers should be considered a primary goal of mentorship programs and an indicator of an effective program (p. 24).

The new teacher participants perceived the non-evaluative nature of the mentor program as a benefit. A perusal of the research indicates that opinions on this take two opposing sides. CoBabe’s (2002) research indicated that “many leaders in the induction movement believe that assistance and assessment are incompatible functions that should not be carried out in the same program” (p. 12). Other researchers and organizations posit the same suggestion (e.g., Lombardi, 2006; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010); while some admonish that formative assessment is an integral part of teacher development (e.g., Sweeney, as cited in CoBabe, 2002). Traditionally, mentor-teacher relationships have been considered non-evaluative, but as more school divisions take an interest in induction and mentoring the role of the mentor has begun to include assessment (Villani, 2009, p. 26).

Having a mentor able to observe and provide feedback about a lesson plan prior to being evaluated by an administrator was beneficial as perceived by the new teachers in this study. The literature supports this finding by reiterating that new teachers “report a fear of looking incompetent ... explained in part by the job insecurity that most beginning teachers experience; asking one’s employer for help could be viewed as an obstacle to securing a permanent job” (Karsenti et al., 2008, p. 58). This supports another benefit perceived by the new teachers of being able to ask professionally related questions in complete confidence. This can be another argument for removing assessment from the role of the mentor; if mentors have a function in the assessment of new teachers then it is unlikely that new teachers would willingly ask the difficult questions they need to ask in order to professionally grow. As Karsenti et al. (2008) questions, “how do you admit your weaknesses to the authority who participates in your job evaluation?” (p. 52).

Another benefit perceived by the new teachers was the availability of resources and materials, especially the availability of resources specifically tailored for their situation. The literature indicates that inadequate resources including classroom materials and support personnel are often cited as reasons for new teacher attrition (CTF, 2004; Ewart, 2009; Mihans, 2008; Panesar, 2010). An argument can be made that full-time mentors are better able to provide the resources and supports that are required by new teachers than are in-school buddies (mentors with classroom responsibilities). As one participant stated of her in-school buddy, “I don't really go to see her too many times ... I feel like I'm bothering people and I don't want to bother them, because I know she's extremely busy herself. She has other work to do I don't like to feel like I'm constantly disrupting her or interrupting

her work.” A new teacher needs to feel that their mentors are accessible to him/her and have the flexibility necessary to support him/her in his/her professional growth.

The confidentiality of the program was also considered an important benefit. New teachers valued the opportunity to ask professionally relevant questions without fearing ridicule and evaluation. This is consistent with the literature surrounding the confidential nature of many mentor programs (e.g., NEA, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010; Villani, 2009). The confidentiality of the mentor program tends to go hand-in-hand with the non-evaluative function of the program. Mentor-teacher relationships that are non-evaluative inherently contain a higher level of trust and confidentiality (Villani, 2009). In the current study the perception of high confidentiality is a product of the non-evaluative nature of the program. As the NEA (2001) stresses, new teachers need to be able to communicate openly and honestly. New teachers will not do this unless they believe the “dialogue they have with their mentor is safe and secure” (Confidentiality, ¶ 1).

The final benefit of full-time mentoring mentioned by the new teachers was a level of flexibility not available from an in-school buddy teacher. Mentors were available to new teachers in many different ways; they could be reached by telephone, including cell, by email, and in-person at the division offices. Mentors would arrange meeting times that were convenient for the new teacher. With the exception of the situation with the new mentor being out of town, this provided new teachers with more flexibility than trying to arrange mutually convenient times with an in-school buddy who was responsible for a full-time class load; a benefit also identified by the OCT (2003). Certo and Engelbright (2002) identified a lack of flexibility in new teachers’ schedules as one of the reasons cited by new teachers for leaving the teaching profession. It is an indication that the more flexibility offered by a

mentor the more likely time can be found to meet, observe and support new teachers; flexibility not likely to occur in the schedules of school-based mentors.

A divergence of opinion was noticed in regards to the perception with which new teachers viewed the benefits and challenges of having a formal full-time mentor. Participants who had participated in the previous year's program perceived very positive benefits of having a full-time mentor; teachers in their first year, participating in the new scaled-back version of the mentor program perceived comparatively limited benefits. These perceptions were primarily driven by the lack of contact they had had with their mentor, as one first year participant noted, "I feel my divisional mentor doesn't know me. I am positive she doesn't know my name, where I teach, or what grade. Regular visits would help to form that personal relationship so that I would maybe feel more comfortable to go and ask her for her experience and expertise". This is an indication that full-time mentors will be effective only if they are accessible to the new teachers and the mentor-to-new-teacher ratio is at a manageable rate.

The teachers interviewed in their third and fourth year had perceived no challenges when dealing with their mentors; first year teachers in the current program had perceived challenges making contact with mentors and arranging visits. The difference between the two groups was due to the change in the mentor program whereby the previous three full-time mentors were reduced to one full-time and one half-time mentor. Using the new-teacher-to-mentor ratio suggested by one of the mentors of 20:1 would result in the program being able to effectively support 30 new teachers. At the time of the interviews the mentors were supporting 37 first year teachers as well as an unspecified number of first year administrators. If one accounted for an additional 30 teachers who would currently be in

their second year of teaching and would have received supports in years past it becomes obvious that the 20:1 ratio could only have been supported by three full time mentors. The first-year teachers participating in the current program expressed disappointment concerning their lack of supports during the critical first three months. The argument has been made that mentors who maintain classroom responsibilities are capable of supporting new teachers (e.g., Futrell, 2001), yet in this situation it became obvious that the half-time mentor with two job descriptions was having difficulties juggling the time commitments.

Mentor Perceptions

For mentors, the opportunity to support a new teacher to grow into a competent professional provides an intrinsic motivation that tops the list of perceived benefits in the position. Most full-time mentor release positions utilize teachers who are released from their current position in order to accept a term position as teacher mentor. As such, their salary remains equal to what they had received as a teacher. For some the position may be seen as a stepping stone into administrative positions (Gilles, Davis, & McGlamery, 2009; Hanson & Moir, 2008), for others it provides “satisfaction from passing on their knowledge, and they benefit from the fresh ideas and experiences of their newer colleagues” (OCT, 2003, p. 6). The opportunity to mentor new teachers has also been shown to have a positive influence on the retention of experienced teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Mihans, 2009; Moir, 2009).

Just as new teachers experience challenges in their entry into the teaching profession, mentors also experience challenges working with new teachers. Care must be taken to not over-burden new teachers during a stressful time. Mentors must build rapport with new teachers, initiate communications, and provide timely professional development

opportunities all during the beginning of a new teacher's first teaching experience. Mentors need to be patient and supportive, but they also need to be assertive. The new teachers do not know what supports and services are available to them; therefore, the mentor needs to recognize when new teachers require these supports and make them available when the need arises. New teachers in this study point to a frustration level in the quality and timing of supports being offered by the divisional mentors. Comments such as, "I have no relationship with my out of school mentor ..., I don't know what's going on ... she's never come to this school She has never said hello or anything" and, "there hasn't been much; I thought there would be more. I was expecting them to come and evaluate my lessons, giv[e] suggestions ... watch you teach, and get feedback" were common. Crocker and Dibbon, (2008) point out that:

Designers of high intensity programs understand that because new teachers often lack the confidence to ask for help and because experienced teachers often don't want to intrude, the establishment of informal relationships is usually insufficient to ensure success in teaching. High intensity programs formalize the process for both the mentor and the protégée, ensuring that the mentoring is provided in a structured manner over an extended period of time with adequate release time for both the beginning teacher and the mentor.

(p. 57)

The flexibility inherent in the full-time mentor position is an important feature of this mentor program; it allows the mentors to be patient and available when the new teacher requires supports, not just when it fits in a schedule. But as evident in the current year when the mentor's responsibilities were combined with additional responsibilities, the new teachers expressed frustration with the lack of rapport and support in the critical first few

months. Compounding the problem is the relative inexperience of the mentors (as mentors) and a program that has undergone significant changes.

Many of the challenges mentioned by the mentors including building rapport, scheduling of teacher observation times, and maintaining regular communication can be attributed to the large number of new teachers and new administrators for whom each mentor was responsible; as the mentor-to-new-teacher ratio increased the time available to meet with individuals decreases. For this reason it is important to keep the mentor-to-teacher ratio at a manageable number without compromising the supports available to new teachers.

The literature indicates a range of suggested mentor-to-new-teacher ratios. Although no empirical studies looking specifically at effective mentor-to-teacher ratios could be found, the suggested ratios depicted in the literature depended on the type and level of mentoring that occurred. School-based mentoring or buddy-teacher systems typically use a 1:1 ratio or a maximum ratio of 1:2. Induction programs employing a full-time mentor similar to the program in this study have used 1:12 (Virginia), and 1:17 (New York). Mentoring organizations and experts suggest that a 1:15 ratio is ideal (NTC, 2006; Sweeney, 2004). In this study the mentor program successfully used a 1:20 mentor-to-new-teacher ratio in the first eight years of its operation. In the current year the division chose to reduce funding to the program which resulted in less mentors, necessitating a decrease in supports from two years to one and increasing the mentor-to-teacher ratio to approximately 1:30. This ratio increase has reduced the quality of supports available to the new teachers and decreased the collaboration time between mentors and new teachers.

Ingersoll and Kralik, (2004) in their review of induction literature, reported that offering only a basic induction program had a minimal effect upon teacher retention; high quality induction which includes mentoring, collaboration time, effective networks, and adequate resources has a much more significant effect upon teacher retention. While reducing supports may save the school division money in the short-term, it is already causing frustration and concern amongst many of the new teachers. The school division may find its long-term costs of attrition and resulting recruiting to outweigh any short-term savings.

Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure

The third question revolved around the structure of the mentor program itself. Teachers and mentors were questioned about their perceptions regarding the benefits and challenges presented by the structure of the mentor program being used by the school division.

New Teacher Perceptions

The new teachers perceived many benefits of the mentor program, including the availability of a formal mentor, the assigning of an in-school buddy, the presence of a new teacher network, access to resources and material, and the organization of professional development specific to new teachers. However, the new teachers found these supports and components of the induction program to be beneficial only when accessible. Teachers who had participated in the previous version of the induction program perceived the supports to be much more beneficial than the current first year teachers who were having trouble accessing and receiving supports.

While some of the supports were beneficial to the teachers it was pointed out that they could be improved upon. The new teacher network was perceived by some to be beneficial as indicated by this participant's response, "I was so new to the division and to the area; it was really good just to make connections with people and find out what the division's culture is and what they're involved in. So that was good, very extensive..." Others felt that improvements could still be made, "I would be interest[ed] to see if the network could be a little more established... it could even be people who have gone out of the program who are teaching in a similar area or similar situation". Previous networks seem to have been better developed. Teachers who had participated in prior induction programs perceived greater satisfaction than their current year counter-parts. However, first year teachers had not yet had the time or opportunity to really access and utilize a network during their first three months and may eventually perceive greater benefit from a network as the year progresses. As Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) reported, quality induction needs much more than just mentoring. New teacher networks can be a "significant form of professional support and growth for new teachers" (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2008, p. 27). More significantly a "*lack of collaboration and networking with colleagues is a primary factor in attrition*" (Karsenti et al., 2008, p. 17).

Another benefit of the program perceived by the new teachers was the access to professional development specifically tailored to the new teachers. However, consistent with the literature (e.g., Panesar, 2010), the actual reality of the professional development sessions offered were less than beneficial.

Some of the challenges reported by new teachers included irrelevant professional development – specifically the reiteration of teacher preparation theory, the lack of mentor

and mentor program support during term positions, and the lack of specific strategies and tools to support classroom learning.

Many of the teacher participants agreed that the offerings in their professional development sessions were often too theoretical in nature and regurgitated the information learned in their university preparation courses. New teachers are much more interested, and in need of, development in practical areas. As one participant noted:

Practical challenges... report cards, anything to do with the computer system, dealing with parents is a big one, like writing comments for report cards, writing comments for progress reports, dealing with them just on a meeting basis. If I could change the program a bit, I would make it less figurative and more practical; these are things not to do, these are things that'll get you into trouble. More practical, less to do with the ideal teaching environment; let's talk a little bit more about how to survive all the other stuff.

Report card writing, first day routines, dealing with parents, and classroom management strategies are much more relevant at this point in a new teacher's career than the professional development that is commonly offered to more experienced teachers (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992, Panesar, 2010). The new teacher professional development sessions could also be used to deliver the specific strategies and tools to support classroom learning that the new teachers indicated were lacking in the mentor program structure.

The issue of new teachers not receiving induction supports during term positions is related to the development of new teachers in general. On one hand, the division is reluctant to invest money, time, and effort into supporting a new teacher on a limited term contract only to have that teacher depart after completion of his/her term contract. On the other hand,

new teachers require support and guidance the most during their initial teaching experience which may be a term position after which they accept a full time position with the same division. Inducting a new teacher is costly for school divisions but ultimately the cost is recuperated and more in the long term retention of the teacher and the subsequent reduction in hiring and recruiting costs (NCTAF, 2006; OCT, 2003). But school divisions are reluctant to invest that initial induction cost without being assured of the long term recuperation. Ideally, provincial legislation which mandates the required induction of new teachers needs to be drafted; induction needs to begin even before a new teacher steps into a classroom, regardless of whether he/she is hired on a term, part-time or full-time contract.

Mentor Perceptions

The mentors reiterated many of the same benefits of the program perceived by the new teachers. They specifically perceived the in-school buddies as beneficial to the new teachers and mentors alike in that they relieved much of the immediate pressure on both new teachers and mentors. For new teachers, the in-school buddy provided answers to immediately pressing questions and many of the school culture and orientation questions. For the mentors, they free up time that would otherwise have been spent on simple school procedural issues, allowing the mentors to be available for the more difficult professional or pedagogical questions. They also perceived the program as being effective at initiating new teachers into the teaching profession in general and into the division and respective schools specifically. They pointed to an increased confidence of new teachers and increased engagement in the school and division environment as indicators of effective introduction.

The final benefit that the mentors perceived for themselves from the program structure was the independence provided by the program; mentors worked out of the

division office and had no evaluative function built into their roles. The mentors perceived this as a benefit because it allowed them to talk freely with new teachers and build rapport based on trust and confidentiality. In turn this seemed to satisfy the mentor's internal motivation of providing support and guidance and seeing a new teacher evolve into a confident and engaged professional.

Only one significant challenge was perceived by the mentors in the program structure; a lack of time to adequately visit each new teacher's classroom and especially to support struggling teachers. Lack of time is an issue that is only exacerbated by the increase in the mentor-to-teacher ratio. An increase in program funds, more mentors, and a subsequent decrease in the mentor-to-teacher ratio would alleviate time concerns. While in the short-term this program element is more costly, the long term benefits have been shown to be cost effective (OCT, 2006).

Suggested Changes to Improve the Current Mentor Program

The final question asked new teachers and mentors to suggest program changes that could better support new teachers in their introduction to the teaching profession and/or mentors in their delivery of supports. The suggested changes for the most part mirrored the challenges experienced with the mentor program. They included better, more relevant professional development, increased release time to network with other new or experienced teachers, and increasing the contact time with mentors - a suggestion also recommended in Gill's (2004) review of the New Brunswick Beginning Teacher Induction Program (as cited in Glassford & Salinitri, 2007).

General Conclusions Regarding Induction Programs

In addition to the stated purpose of this research there were several additional questions which I had raised in regards to the new teacher induction program being studied. One such question was whether or not the induction program offered by this school division was close to meeting the conditions as recommended by Britton et al. (2003) and Fulton et al. (2005) for comprehensive induction of new teachers. A second question concerned how this program compared to the NTC's (2006) checklist of quality mentor programs. A third question revolved around the qualities of effective mentors, and finally I had questioned the mentors about their beliefs surrounding Mary Futrell's (2001) comment about full-time mentors becoming "quasi-administrators detached from the day-to-day realities of classroom practice" (p. 225).

Limited versus Comprehensive Induction

While many researchers have weighed in on the characteristics that differentiate a limited induction program from a comprehensive one, I chose to focus on the works of Britton et al. (2003) and Fulton et al. (2005) to use as a comparison. Initially the induction program under study shared many of the characteristics indicated in Britton et al.'s (2003) and Fulton et al.'s (2005) work, but as the 2009-2010 school year began with its scaled back induction program, the alignment of program elements to these characteristics were lessened considerably. It became apparent that the induction program had suffered from financial cut-backs that significantly changed the way it was offered to new teachers. While the program, as initiated in 2001, was based upon many of the recommendations of induction researchers and included many aspects of Britton et al.'s (2003) and Fulton et al.'s (2005) suggestions, the current induction program has moved closer to the characteristics of a

limited induction program; specifically, changes to the length of program (from two years to one year) and reduced funding for the program such that fewer mentors with larger portfolios for workload minimized some of the more beneficial elements of the previous program.

Qualities of Effective Mentor Programs

In 2006 the New Teacher Center published a study on a successful New York City mentor program. Results of that study led to the creation of a checklist (Appendix D) with indicators of a high quality mentor program. Initially, it was determined that the mentor program under study met three of the six criteria, and the three remaining criteria would be explored during the interview process. With the changes to the induction program that occurred during this school year the program no longer meets one of the previously met criteria of multi-year mentoring. The previous induction program met five of the six criteria (rigorous mentor selection, full-time mentor release, intense and specific new teacher guidance, mentor training, and multi-year support) and only failed to meet one criteria (documentation of new teacher progress) due more to a philosophical stand point of being non-evaluative than from any program deficiency. Currently, with the school division's financial cutbacks, the program fully meets only one of the six criteria (full-time mentor release). Two others are met partially, rigorous mentor selection – although both current mentors are former administrators well removed from the classroom, and intensive and specific guidance – which exists in program documentation and philosophy. However, as indicated by current new teachers, support has been lacking. The remaining three criteria are not met (mentor training, documentation, and multi-year support).

Qualities of Effective Mentors

In 2001 the NEA published a report that detailed the qualities of effective mentors. As part of the interview process, new teachers and mentor participants were asked what qualities they believed the divisional mentors demonstrated that made them effective mentors. The mentor participants mentioned characteristics such as varied types of experience both in levels of schooling and in subjects or specialties, ability to interact well with adults, the ability to listen, an understanding of multi-cultural issues, bilingualism, a good reputation, being able to think outside the box, and a sense of humour.

The teacher participants added additional characteristics: a calming classroom presence, an ability to build rapport, the provision of positive feedback and suggestions, an eagerness to share information, ideas, and resources, and non-evaluative feedback, suggestions, and conversations. While the list of qualifications is certainly not as exhaustive as the list supplied by the NEA (2001), the presence of those qualities was not necessarily apparent in the mentors currently working in the program nor was the presence (or lack) specifically studied. This was because two of the three mentors who participated in this study were new to the position and as such had not yet had an opportunity to build a reputation as effective (or non-effective) mentors. In addition the characteristics supplied by participants in this study were based upon the participant's perception of what constituted effective mentoring rather than as a description of the current mentors in the program. It would be interesting to delve deeper into this line of study to determine how effective mentoring can be measured and what its effect may be upon new teachers.

Full-time Mentors and the Classroom Reality

Can a full-time mentor meet the needs of a new teacher without becoming detached from the day-to-day realities of classroom practice? One of the questions posed to the mentor participants was whether they felt able to teach new teachers about classroom issues considering that they were removed from the realities of the classroom in their role as a full-time mentor. As one participant stated:

I'm in the classroom everyday and maybe those other mentors are sitting at the back of classroom, but I wasn't, and my partners weren't. We were working with kids. If the teacher had an issue like, 'I'm really struggling with little Johnny and I don't know what I'm programming' I'd say 'We'll set up a group and I'll take the group and I'll have little Johnny in the group and I'll see what I can figure out while I have him.' I was working in the classroom every day.

The mentor makes a valid point, one that has been mentioned previously; not every induction program is created equally. This particular mentor program uses the classroom visit as its central component. As the mentor pointed out, this serves to ensure that mentors are in the classroom assisting new teachers; they are not removed and unaware of the realities of the educational classroom. In other programs that may not be the case. A second mentor participant pointed out:

I think mentoring, like anything else, depends on how long you have been doing it. I think it's true for any job that you do, a surgeon who has been teaching at the university for 20 years is not as skilled as someone who is in the ER and doing it day in and day out.... I think it's important to make an effort and visit the school and with your teacher say 'let's co-teach this class or this lesson' so you don't lose touch... because [students]

do change and they change every year.... I can see that after four years or five years, you really have to keep your knowledge very sharp, the research sharp, and be really involved because there is a tendency to have meetings in an office and not know what is going on in the classroom and that, I think, is a very important piece of [mentoring].

In this program mentor teachers are hired for three-year terms. The opportunity exists for mentors to re-apply and continue mentoring after their term is up but it also allows the school division to ensure that mentors (the best and most experienced teachers) are not out of the classroom for extended periods of time.

The Role of Buddy Teachers versus Mentors

Some schools provide new teachers with a mentor who has a full-time teaching load in addition to their responsibilities of shaping and supporting new teachers. These are often called buddy teachers or in-school buddy teachers. As Klug and Salzman (1990) indicate in their research, buddy teachers are less effective than mentor teachers who have release time (part or full) built into their schedule. The induction program in this study utilized full-time, off-campus, non-evaluative mentors but included, as a component of the induction program, an in-school buddy. This in-school buddy was a full-time teacher chosen by the administrator of the school for a variety of reasons. Some in-school buddies are chosen because they teach in close proximity to the new teacher's classroom, some are chosen because they teach the same grade or subject, and others are chosen because they have demonstrated exceptional leadership or mentor qualities (Boreen, Niday & Johnson, 2003). Unlike the full-time mentor who is hired specifically to mentor new teachers and has met certain criteria or demonstrated exceptional master teaching and receives remuneration for his/her services, in-school buddies are voluntary positions and as such encompass a wide

range of ability and effectiveness. The buddy teachers in this mentor program were chosen by the principal of the school using a suggested set of criteria. As one mentor participant stated:

Principals were asked to, ‘Pick the person on your staff who has the best interpersonal skills’, ‘Pick the person on your staff who you'd like to see this teacher model, if the combination happens to be a grade three teacher and the music teacher, so be it.’ We weren’t as concerned about the content piece as we were about choosing the person on staff who was going to make sure the new teacher was included.

The responses provided by new teachers in this study indicate that the in-school buddy teacher and the full-time mentor were utilized for very different reasons. The responses can be categorized into four types: time required to access support, intensity of support required, frequency of support, and type of support.

Time required to access supports. When questions needed answers quickly then new teachers were more likely to seek support from their buddy teacher. When an answer was not required immediately then divisional mentors were more likely to be consulted.

Intensity of support required. When a new teacher was seeking information but did not require support, then the buddy teacher was most often utilized. When the new teacher needed in-depth classroom support, the divisional mentor was consulted.

Frequency of support. New teachers in this study indicated that they used their in-school buddies when they needed answers quickly about “everyday stuff.” They used the mentors for longer-range planning and supports.

Type of support. The buddy teachers were most often utilized to provide information about school culture such as photocopying procedures, school rules and

consequences, specific student concerns, etcetera. Mentors were consulted when new teachers required career and professional information or were enquiring about divisional procedures or information.

During the course of this research I realized that the induction program in this study was following a similar path to a well regarded New York City new teacher induction program. Flynn and Nolan (2008) describe the decline of a successful new teacher induction program in the school district of “Mentorville” in their study *The Rise and Fall of a Successful Mentor Program*. While it is too early to tell whether the induction program in this study will follow a similar path as described by Flynn and Nolan (2008), there are striking similarities in the mechanism of change between Mentorville school district and this one. After twelve successful years of new teacher induction, the Mentorville superintendent that had initiated and fervently supported the program retired and a new superintendent of schools was hired. The new superintendent made many changes, some of which included: funding cut to the program by half, the dissolving of the mentor selection committee responsible for hiring qualified mentors, the severing of the cooperative relationship between the teachers union and the district, the dismissal of the teacher coordinator of the program and appointment of an administrator as coordinator, substantially reducing mentor training and new teacher professional development, and the discouraging of compatible scheduling which had previously allowed collaborative time between mentors and mentees.

In this study similar changes have occurred in the past year to the induction program in the division: funding has been reduced, the number of full-time mentors was reduced from three to one and a half (increasing the mentor-to-teacher ratio), former administrators were appointed as Mentor coordinators rather than selecting from qualified teachers, and

new teachers have been encouraged to build stronger relationships within their respective schools rather than strong mentor-mentee relationships. Time will tell if the same results as those found in New York will occur within the division studied in this research.

Recommendations for Practice

Perceptions of the new teachers participating in this study help suggest the following recommendations to facilitate the use of a mentor in the introduction of new teachers to the teaching profession;

- 1) Remove or limit the evaluative function of mentors,
- 2) Limit the number of classroom duties assigned to mentors, and
- 3) Limit the mentor-to-teacher ratio.
- 4) Provide support for new teachers entering the profession on temporary term positions
- 5) Rigorous mentor selection from among experienced teacher colleagues
- 6) Provide a voice for new teachers; incorporate new-teacher input into the induction model
- 7) Emphasize teacher improvement over teacher enculturation
- 8) Ensure the induction/mentoring model occurs over at least two years.

Remove or Limit the Evaluative Function of Mentors

Some successful programs include an assessment of new teachers by the mentor teachers and others do not (see Appendix C). Once again, this is determined by the model that a particular school division follows. However, as indicated in this study the perception of new teachers was that they were more confident and less reserved about asking questions if they knew that the mentor would not be evaluating their abilities as a teacher. As one

participant noted, “they're not there to evaluate you and it's very comforting knowing that you have help and you can ask them anything and they're not going to judge you based on that”. Participants were concerned about asking their in-school buddies more serious questions because, as one mentor suggested:

Brand-new teachers are not going to have the same kind of conversation with the person who they are going to be working with side-by-side that they had with me because they don't want that person to know that they don't know something, that's their colleague. Some of those tough questions, I just don't think it would happen. I think that they needed to have somebody who was removed from the school a little bit, somebody who wasn't going to be with them for six or seven years on staff.

The non-evaluative and off-campus component of the induction program being studied was considered one of the most important benefits of the program by the new teachers. The non-judgemental support allowed them to ask the difficult questions that they needed to ask and reflect upon in order to begin strong and lasting professional growth.

Part-time versus Full-time Mentors

The mentors in this study were full time – meaning they were not responsible for classroom duties in addition to their role as mentors. Programs such as the Santa Cruz Model, The Toledo Plan, and the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program (see Appendix C) have been very successful utilizing full-time mentors. Other programs have successfully utilized part-time mentors. While both methods can be successful, their structures are often very different. Part-time mentors responsible for classroom duties have less flexibility in their schedules than their full-time counterparts. The research would indicate that full-time mentoring is the ideal program design (e.g., NTC,

2006) but not always possible. Lombardi (2006) suggests, “full-time release will give mentors adequate time to work with new teachers in a sustained and focussed manner” (p. 64) and Wong (2004) writes “[mentoring] cannot be done adequately by another teacher with a full-time load who drops by when time permits or when a problem arises” (p. 44). Of course for every study indicating the effectiveness of full-time mentoring there is a study opposed to removing the best and brightest teachers from the classroom (e.g., Futrell, 2001). As the new teachers in this study indicated however, the flexibility of full-time mentoring was considered one of the main benefits of their induction program.

Limit the Mentor-to-Teacher Ratio

The NTC (2006) recommends a mentor-to-teacher ratio of no more than 1:15 in order to ensure interaction time between mentors and teachers of 1.25 and 2.5 hours per week. In this study, new teachers who had participated in the induction program prior to the current changes perceived the program as being very successful as it maintained a ratio of 1:20. Many of the new teachers participating in the current induction program were experiencing difficulties; the mentor-to-teacher ratio is currently close to 1:30. While there is little empirical evidence to suggest that a low mentor-to-teacher ratio is a strong indicator of a successful program, it stands to reason that the more new teachers for which a mentor is responsible, the less attention and support that the mentor can provide to each.

Provide Term Position Support

One of the greatest challenges experienced by the new-teachers in this study was the lack of supports available when they started teaching in term positions. Many new teachers begin their careers as temporary teachers (Grimmett & Echols, 2001; Phillips, 2002; Tardif, 2001) filling in for permanent teachers who have left during the school year. New teachers need to feel satisfied in their comfort level and skills and valued by their peers and administration in order to remain in the

teaching profession. What better way of showing value to a new teacher than to invest in that teacher by beginning induction immediately upon his/her hiring; whether it is a full-time permanent position or a part-time emergency replacement. Phillips (2002) points out that the “initial hiring process is a major determinant of the quality of the teaching force because seniority and tenure provisions make it difficult to reverse poor hiring decisions” and this “points to the importance of ensuring that the hiring for all categories of teacher employment (TOC [teacher-on-call], temporary or permanent contract positions) is based upon effective practice and viewed as a long-term investment” (p. 51). Phillips (2002) concludes that “evaluating all applicants, even for short-term assignments, as though they were to be teaching 25 to 35 years in their initial or similar position, may encourage districts to reconsider the efficacy of abbreviated personnel practices on strengthening the quality of a district’s teaching force” (p. 51). Essentially, beginning the induction phase the moment a new teacher enters the classroom (and ideally even before) makes sense on two fronts; increasing the efficacy of student education – effective teachers are the single most important factor in the successful education of students (Darling-Hammond, 1999; OECD, 2005) – and increasing the retention rates of competent, satisfied, and effective new teachers.

Rigorous Mentor Selection

In the study program, the previous mentor coordinators – three exemplary teachers hired through a rigorous interview process – were replaced by the current mentor coordinators, both former administrators. The two current mentors have a long administrative background and were hired in part to implement the new facet of the induction program, support for first-year administrators. This is an important program in itself but one that comes at the expense of the second year of supports for new-teachers. In addition, the collegial relationship (NEA, 2001) so necessary for the development of rapport between new teachers and their mentors is no longer present. An important aspect of the induction of new-teachers and the development of trust and respect between new teachers

and a mentor is the sense of peer support; an experienced teacher, who has been there, understands the challenges, knows effective strategies, and can offer effective support and resources for a new teacher (NTC, 2006). As the NEA (2001) suggests, good quality mentor programs utilize outstanding teachers with an excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter and have demonstrated excellent classroom-management skills. These outstanding teachers have garnered the respect of their peers. One of the criticisms of full-time mentoring has been the perception that full-time mentors risked becoming quasi-administrators and losing touch with the realities of today's classroom practice (e.g. Futrell, 2001). Utilizing former administrators as mentors would seem to lend credence to that criticism.

Provide an Avenue for New-Teacher Voice

One of the greatest critiques of the induction program was the irrelevant professional development offered to the new-teachers. The perception of the new teachers in this study was that the currently offered professional development sessions were redundant and only served to reiterate the theoretical teachings they had just completed in their university preparation courses. The new teachers suggested that practical workshops would be more beneficial to them. The school division literature indicates that one of the roles of the mentor coordinators is to develop and provide relevant and timely professional development opportunities. Another reference to professional development indicates the topics that new teachers *will* participate in; no indication occurs that the new teachers may be given input into the planning and timing of professional development. As the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) points out, comprehensive induction has professional development opportunities that are specifically tailored to the needs of beginning teachers. But the needs

of beginning teachers are always changing – as are the pre-service programs from which they graduate. A mechanism needs to be in place in which new teachers are provided with the opportunity to have their voice heard, rather than the top-down planning that currently exists.

Mentoring to Focus on Teacher Improvement – a Two Year Investment

The goal of comprehensive induction should be the long-term professional growth of new teachers. If the ultimate goal of teaching is quality education for every student, then as Darling-Hammond (2000b) points out, the best way to improve student achievement is to attend to the professional preparation of new teachers. Doerger (2002) contends that the most important function of induction programs is to socialize new teachers into the school community; he states, “these programs could become more efficient if administrators stress the components that are most effectively learned in formal and informal induction programs and work towards maximizing the enculturation processes via these programs” (p. 11) and “induction should be the vital link between the transmission of a specific educational culture and the success of the beginning teacher in that culture” (2003, ¶ 41). Other researchers indicate that socialization is realized as a goal only in basic or limited induction programs; comprehensive induction programs that last a minimum of two years promote career learning and enhance teaching quality (e.g. Britton, et al., 2003; Fulton et al., 2005). One mentor participant in this study highlights the difference between year one and year two outcomes when she states:

The second year is so important because a lot of our conversations in the first year are about ‘survival’ and classroom management and figuring out the whole ‘teacher thing’. Near the end of that first year we get into some really good conversations about

professional growth, which we just start with in September of the next year and then we have a full year of really important powerful conversations.

Some researchers indicate that the socialization of teachers happens with or without participation in a formal induction program (e.g., Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kapadia et al., 2007), others point out the perils of acculturating teachers into extant school cultures that are toxic or even simply perpetuate the status quo and inequities that currently exist in the education system (Doerger, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Johnson et al., 2005; Lombardi, 2006).

In the program being studied, the decision was made to reduce program length from two years to one, an indication perhaps that emphasis had changed from the long-term professional growth of new teachers to the short-term socialization into extant school cultures. Further evidence of this shift in outcomes may be suggested by one of the mentor's comments:

We have a directive... to make sure that our new teachers are becoming part of the professional learning that is going on within their schools and not relying solely on us and not thinking they are a separate entity from what is going on in their buildings. So that's sort of been what we have been given as a mandate.

As Britton et al. (2003) state:

Induction can be seen as a process of enculturation into a practice. It brings newcomers into an established community. Yet induction is not only about reproducing existing practice.... Induction systems need to establish an appropriate balance between supporting new teachers' entry into an established community with conventional

practices and helping them develop new kinds of teaching that advance pupil learning more effectively (p. 323).

The research indicates that for induction programs to be successful new teachers need to participate for at least two years – one year for enculturation into the school community and a second year to really get into those “powerful” conversations that lead to professional growth and ultimately, greater student achievement (NTC, 2006).

Recommendations for Further Research

Throughout the course of this study questions arose which were outside the scope of the research. These questions form the basis for further research. In a precursor study to this one, it was suggested that the induction program used for the basis of this study was responsible for an approximately 90 percent retention rate of new teachers (Armstrong, 2006). It would be interesting to study, in light of the recent cut-backs to the program, whether that retention rate can be maintained or whether it will decline over time. In addition an in-depth observation of the culture of the school division and its effects and influence upon the perceptions of new teachers regarding their induction into the teaching profession may be worthy of future research.

Additional study is needed to track new teachers who leave the teaching profession in general. This study questioned new teachers (in their first five years) about their perceptions of the induction program and its ability to successfully introduce new teachers into the teaching profession. Participants were new teachers who had (to this point) chosen to remain in the teaching profession. One of the limitations of this study was its inability to question new teachers who had left the teaching profession about their perceptions of the induction program and where it had failed them. It would be beneficial to study teachers

who had left to understand how induction programs can be improved to provide additional supports for new teachers.

As Karsenti et al. (2008) determined in their study, the inability of new teachers to disassociate their professional lives from their personal lives was a characteristic of drop-out teachers. Two of the new teacher participants (33%) in this study indicated that disassociation between their work lives and home lives was a challenge. It would be interesting to see if further research, both in this particular school division and across Canada, could study the disassociation factor to determine if it can be used as a predictor characteristic of new teachers who are at risk of dropping out of the profession. Additionally, new teachers exhibiting the disassociation characteristic could be studied to determine the level of support necessary to successfully introduce them into the teaching profession.

Finally, more Canadian studies of induction and mentoring are needed. During the review of existing literature, proportionately fewer Canadian studies were found. Where possible I have included relevant Canadian data but much of the reviewed literature utilizes United States of America statistics. While the United States' teaching profession bears many similarities to the Canadian system there are some distinct differences, not the least of which is the regard and remuneration given to Canadian teachers that is not necessarily seen south of the border (Levin, 2008). Since this study was limited to one school division in a geographically limited area and utilized a relatively small number of participants, similar studies could increase the sample size and/or involve other geographic regions in Canada, thereby continuing to expand the Canadian knowledge base.

A Personal Conclusion

As I indicated earlier in this paper, I did not have the benefit of any mentorship support, induction program, or even a formal in-school buddy to introduce me into the teaching profession. As a new teacher I struggled through as best I could, intimidated by the more experienced teachers and afraid of appearing as if I did not know anything. Looking back, I cringe to reflect upon my experience; the late nights, lack of sleep, and tough teaching assignments only made worse by my lack of classroom management skills and strategies.

As a new teacher I was hesitant to ask basic questions of my administration or colleagues, instead using the office staff to answer procedural questions and bouncing curricular and classroom management questions off any teacher who could spare a few minutes to help me. There is no doubt in my mind that I would have benefited immensely from some kind of induction support along the way. As Weiss and Weiss (1999) point out, “beginning teachers who are mentored are more effective teachers in their early years, since they learn from guided practice rather than depending upon trial-and-error alone” (p. 3). Regardless, I still teach; I did not become another teaching casualty. I believe that ten years after entering the teaching profession I am at a point where I feel confident in my role as a teacher. I survived the hard way. I taught myself from the ground up; I watched and learned from those around me. I am fortunate to still be teaching and to still be enjoying it.

There are many who suggest that induction happens with or without a formal program (e.g., Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Kapadia et al., 2007); perhaps my experience in teaching supports that statement. I wonder though how much more I could have given to my students during those years when my focus as a teacher was learning instead of teaching. I

know that student achievement during my initial years of teaching was at the bare minimum; I can't help but feel that the true purpose of teacher induction programs should be to reduce the amount of time that a new teacher requires to learn and increase the quality and efficiency with which a new teacher can teach his/her students. High quality induction programs accelerate a new teacher's professional growth towards becoming an exemplary teacher, and support them to become more effective practitioners during their early years in the classroom, thereby improving student achievement (Moir, 2009; NTC, 2007). When all is said and done, these programs are about making sure students receive the best possible education that educators can give them, right from the start.

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Appendix A: Limited versus Comprehensive Induction Programmes

(Britton et al., 2003, p. 2 - with kind permission of Springer Science and Business Media)

Program features	Limited induction	Comprehensive induction
Goals	Focuses on teacher orientation, support, enculturation, retention	Also promotes career learning, enhances teaching quality
Policies	Provides optimal participation and modest time, usually unpaid	Requires participation and provides substantial paid time
Overall program design	Employs a limited number of <i>ad hoc</i> induction providers and activities	Plans an induction system involving a complementary set of providers and activities
Induction as a transitional phase	Treats induction as an isolated phase, without explicit attention to teachers' prior knowledge or future development	Considers the influence of teacher preparation and professional development on induction programme design
Initial teaching conditions	Limited attention to initial teaching conditions	Attention to assigned courses, pupils, non-teaching duties
Level of effort	Invests limited total effort, or all effort in a few providers, activities	Requires substantial overall effort
Resources	Does not provide resources sufficient to meet programme goals	Provides adequate resources to meet programme goals
Levels of the education system involved	Involves some levels of the system, perhaps in isolation	Involves all relevant levels of the system in articulated roles
Length of program	One year or less	More than one year
Sources of support	Primarily or solely uses one mentor	Uses multiple, complementary induction providers
Conditions for novices and providers	Usually attends to learning conditions for novices	Also provides good conditions and training for providers
Activities	Uses a few types of induction activities	Uses a set of articulated, varied activities

Appendix B: Systemic Teacher Induction and the Evolution of 21st Century Learning

Communities (Fulton et al., 2005, p. 5)

	19 th Century Factory Model	20 th Century Solo Teaching Model	21 st Century Learning Community Model
OVERALL DESIGN	Teachers enter the job ready to teach as solo practitioners in a stand-alone setting, with little or no expectation for continuous growth.	Beginning teachers are oriented to district and school policies and procedures through an informal buddy system that provides emotional/survival support.	- Beginning teachers are oriented to the district, school, and community. - Emotional supports are provided by the community. - New teachers are contributors to the school's learning community. - Focus on developing teaching skills/expertise of both new teachers and veteran teachers
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	Sink-or-swim, survival of the fittest: "Only those who survive the entry period should be teaching."	Deficit model and solo practice: "Novice teachers have gaps in skills and knowledge to be filled by random acts of professional development that lead to a personal teaching style."	Professional community with shared expertise: "Novice teachers have gaps in skills and knowledge, but also areas of expertise; they learn alongside experienced teachers in a community of learners that is continually evolving."
LENGTH OF INDUCTION PROGRAM	No induction	1 year	Throughout probationary period (2-3 years) as initial stage of a multi-tiered licensing system
RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	Each teacher is on his/her own	- School - District (sometimes) - State (rarely)	- State and district policies support school initiatives - Partnerships between unions, districts, and teacher preparation programs
MENTORING FRAMEWORK	None	- Mentoring is the only induction activity - Informal one-to-one buddy system - Mentors volunteer or are selected for matching responsibilities (sometimes) - Little or no training for mentors - Limited incentives for mentors - No accountability for mentors	- Mentoring is just one part of full induction system - Mentors and novices work in teams. - Mentors are selected for skill in content, pedagogy, and ability to coach and work with other teachers. - Extensive, continuous training for mentors - Structured time and incentives for mentors (e.g., stipends, release time, professional credits and advancement) - Clear expectations and accountability of mentors and new teachers
TEACHING OBSERVATIONS	- None - Closed-door teaching	- Not required - May be used for evaluation only - Hands-off classroom autonomy	- Built-in time and multiple opportunities for new teachers to observe and be observed by other teachers - Opportunities for guided reflection and self-assessment of practice
ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION	- None - Single-level teaching license	- Summative - Conducted by principal or external evaluator once in first year of teaching, limited numbers of visits/evaluations every following 5-10 years as required for license renewal	- Formative, ongoing process - Multiple self-assessment and reflection opportunities - Peer coaching/critical friends groups - Component in tiered licensure - Beginning of path to National Board certification - Guidance out of teaching for those not suited for profession
WORKLOAD	- New teachers have same load as veteran teachers. - New teachers are often given extracurricular duties in addition to a full teaching load.	- New teachers have same load as veteran teachers. - New teachers are often given extracurricular duties in addition to a full teaching load.	- Reduced workload for new teachers (and mentors) to allow time for observations, planning, learning, and reflection - No extra duties for new teachers during induction period
TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS	- Wherever vacancies occur - Often toughest schools and classes	- Wherever vacancies occur - Often toughest schools and classes	New teachers placed in less challenging teaching assignments and/or in team teaching assignments
EXTERNAL SUPPORTS	None	Few or none (largely informal or social)	- Professional guided networks as well as informal social networks - Involvement of teacher preparation institutions - Online networks for internal and external communities provide resources, learning, support
IMPACT	- High teacher turnover is considered normal. - Teachers are viewed as interchangeable and easily replaced.	- High teacher turnover - Inexperienced, underprepared teachers concentrated in low-income schools - Loss of large numbers of teachers before they become proficient educators	- Improved teacher retention contributes to continuous teacher growth and improved teaching quality. - Teacher learning at all levels in a 21st century learning community - Each community and its network of expertise grows in strength and quality.

Appendix C: A Review of Five Highly Successful New Teacher Induction Programs

(Fulton et al., 2005)

	New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Model	California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)	Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST)	Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP)	The Toledo Plan
PROGRAM DESIGN	- Mentors each work with 15 novices. - Mentoring is a three-year position. - Mentors conduct monthly seminars for new teachers.	- Mandatory for new teachers - Currently 148 programs across the state, variations across programs - All BTSA programs must meet California's Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs.	- School- or district-based mentors or support teams - State-sponsored training for new teachers via content-specific seminars offered regionally and online	- Required by legislation 30 hours of contact between mentor and new teacher per year - Mentors matched by grade level and content area, if possible	"Consultants" are mentors who spend an average of 20 hours per semester with each intern (three-year position) "Interns" are teachers new to Toledo - One-week orientation for interns, mainly spent with consultants 10-12 interns per consultant
LENGTH OF INDUCTION PROGRAM	Two years	Normally two years, but legislation allows exceptional candidates to complete induction in one year	Two years (second year of mentoring optional); third year available if needed to pass portfolio assessment	Two years (four semesters)	- Two semesters for interns - No time limit on interventions for veteran teachers with performance problems, as identified at school by union committee, principals, or both
RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	- NTC's Santa Cruz New Teacher Project is a university/school district partnership - Nationally, NTC programs include various stakeholders: schools, districts, universities, unions, and foundations	State runs BTSA, but local programs are coordinated regionally with schools, districts, and local university involvement	State, regional service centers, districts, and schools	State, districts, universities, and schools	Union, district, and schools
MENTOR INCENTIVES	- Full-time release to work with new teachers - Professional development and career growth	Some programs have full-time release for mentors ("support providers"), some offer partial release, and some use full-time classroom teachers with a stipend and a few release days per year to work with 1-2 teachers.	- Stipend at district's discretion - Release time - Professional development and career growth - Continuing education units for participation in BEST training and for service as a mentor or assessor	- Stipend provided by state, amount determined by district - Release time - Professional development and career growth - Continuing Learning Units	- Paid for full-time mentoring - Professional development and career growth
MENTOR TRAINING	- Five days of training in coaching, observation, and use of NTC Formative Assessment System (FAS) tools - Weekly half-day forums for mentors	- Support providers are trained in the formative assessment system used by their programs, cognitive coaching, and other support resources. - Models vary from five days of training before school begins with two days of follow-up, to training spread out over the year.	20 hours in teaching standards, portfolio assessment, and coaching - Delivered through regional service centers	- Three days of assessor training (observation and portfolio assessment) provided by state - Mentor training (teacher development and focused coaching) provided by district	Three-day summer training workshop
	New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Model	California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)	Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST)	Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP)	The Toledo Plan
OBSERVATIONS/ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION	- Mentors work individually with new teachers 1-2 hours per week in their classrooms. - At the beginning of the year, mentors/new teachers use professional standards to collaboratively assess teaching practice and set goals. - Mentors/new teachers use FAS tools to guide interactions throughout the year and formally assess progress at mid-year and year's end.	- New teachers are given release time to observe mentors. 100% of BTSA new teachers had a mentor visit/observe during instruction and follow-up discussions. - Beginning teacher's performance-based assessment required to pass from preliminary to professional credential	- Mandated release time for beginning teachers and mentors to observe each others' classrooms - Minimum of 30 hours of contact with mentor, support team, other teachers in content area, principal, and/or district facilitators	- Release time for mentors to observe new teachers and for new teachers to observe mentors - Advisory observations conducted during first, second, and third semesters (as needed or requested by new teacher) - Mentor's role is not as assessor of new teacher	- One formal evaluation per semester - After second semester evaluation, PAR panel votes to accept or reject the recommendation of the consultant about further employment of novice
NEW TEACHER WORKLOAD and ASSIGNMENTS	Same as veterans	Depends on BTSA program (some new teachers in BTSA have a reduced workload)	Same as veterans	Same as veterans	Same as veterans
EXTERNAL NETWORK	Yes (NTC Online available, used in several sites)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
SCOPE	- NTC Formative Assessment System adopted by 125 California districts - Programs in 31 other states based on NTC model	22,940 new teachers in 2004-05 10,459 support providers (mentors) in 2004-05	- All public school teachers with initial educator certificate eligible to receive BEST support 64% of educator workforce participated in BEST training as beginning teachers, mentors, or assessors.	LaTAAP required for all new teachers (approximately 3,000 in 2004-05)	Districtwide
COST	Approximately \$6,000 per teacher per year, for two years	\$87.85 million (total investment by state) in 2005-06 \$5,675 per teacher per year, for two years	- State's share: \$760 per beginning teacher - District's share: \$900-\$2,800 per beginning teacher per year	Budget determined by legislative session	\$3,395 per new teacher as of March 6, 2004
RETENTION	Varies with adaptation, but retention rate for NTC's regional BTSA program, the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, estimated at 89% after six years.	Mean retention rate of BTSA participants five years after completing the program is 84%	94.3% estimated annual beginning teacher retention	Statewide data not available	Since inception of program, retention has increased 15%.

Appendix D: Quality Mentor Program Checklist

(New Teacher Center, 2006, p. 10)

What <i>high quality</i> mentoring IS	What <i>high quality</i> mentoring is NOT
Rigorous mentor selection based on qualities of an effective mentor Qualities may include evidence of outstanding teaching practice, strong intrapersonal skills, experience with adult learners, respect of peers, current knowledge of professional development.	Choosing mentors based on seniority or 'who is available' Without rigorous selection, mentors may not have the capacity to engage in meaningful interactions with new teachers, or may perpetuate mediocre or poor teaching practice.
Sanctioned time for mentor-teacher interactions NTC recommends releasing teachers full time so they can focus entirely on new teacher development. Mentors and new teachers should have at least 1.25 to 2.5 hours per week for interactions. That time should be protected by teachers and administrators.	Meetings happening occasionally or 'whenever the mentor and teacher are available' Often both parties are so busy that meeting time gets relegated down the list of priorities. The brief meetings that do occur are typically insufficient for fostering real growth.
Intensive and specific guidance moving teaching practice forward, while also providing elements of emotional/logistical support Focusing on specific areas for instructional growth help teachers know concretely how to improve. <i>Example: "Let's talk about what strategies will help you address the concern you had about reaching your struggling English Language Learner students."</i>	Non-specific, emotional/logistical support alone Emotional support is nice, but alone does little to improve teacher practice. Without specific instructional feedback, 'feel good' mentoring often prevails. <i>Example: "You're doing a great job, Jane. Keep it up!"</i>
Ongoing professional development for mentors Effective teachers don't automatically know what it is about their teaching that is effective. Many mentors are also surprised to find that conveying knowledge to students is not the same as conveying knowledge to adults. <i>High quality</i> and ongoing training is needed to help mentors develop the skills to identify and translate the elements of effective teaching to new teachers.	No training for mentors Mentors sometimes think their job is to clone themselves. Without training, these mentors will default to the 'watch-me-and-learn' strategy that too often fails to develop the skills or confidence teachers need to succeed. Effective mentoring provides collaborative guidance that helps new teachers ask the right questions and begin to take responsibility for finding answers.
Documentation and evidence of teacher progress Just like student learning, new teacher learning should be data-driven. To be effective, feedback to new teachers must be grounded in evidence about their practice. Tools to collect data about various components of their classroom practice and documentation of all mentoring conversations ensures a structure for focusing on instructional and continual growth.	Informal/non-evidence based feedback Program rigor may be compromised when interactions are based on informal conversation and 'off-the-cuff' remarks. Without structure and evidence around new teacher practice, interactions may lead to 'feel-good' mentoring that does not result in improved teaching practice.
Multi-year mentoring Mentoring should be intensive and ongoing (for at least two years) to move teacher practice forward in ways that help all students thrive. NTC suggests that most deep learning about instruction (through mentoring) happens in teachers' second and third year in the classroom.	Mentoring for first year teachers only One year mentoring programs are great at providing the support first year teachers need to survive, but they are not sufficient to help teachers reach their optimum level of effectiveness.

Appendix E: Interview Protocol for New Teachers and Mentor Teachers

Does the availability of a full time mentor teacher facilitate the successful introduction of a new teacher into the teaching profession? This is the primary research question guiding this study. The following four questions help to provide structure for the interview protocol. Each question is applicable, with slight revisions, to both the new teachers and mentor teachers.

1. What are the challenges that new teachers face for which they need support?
2. Benefits and Challenges of Mentoring
 - a. For New Teachers: What (if any) benefits do new teachers perceive from having access to a formal mentor? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: What (if any) benefits exist for mentors who work to support new teachers? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
3. Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure
 - a. For New Teachers: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
 - b. For Mentors: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?
4. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and/or mentors?

Over-arching Questions	Specific Mentor Questions	Specific Teacher Questions
1. Introductory Questions for Developing Rapport, and Contextualizing Role	1. What made you decide to become a mentor teacher in the Mentor Program? 2. What qualities do you possess that you believe give you the skills to offer a program like this? 3. What was the selection process for your position as mentor coordinator?	1. What position were you hired to fill in the school division? 2. Tell me about how you felt when you first received your position.
2. What are the challenges that new teachers face for which they need support?	4. What kinds of challenges do new teachers tend to manage on their own, and for which ones do they usually need some sort of support?	3. What aspects of having this new job did you find easy to navigate as a new person in the division? 4. What challenges did you face at first that you were able to manage on your own? 5. For what kinds of challenges did you need support from others?

3. Benefits and Challenges of Mentoring a. For New Teachers: What (if any) benefits do new teachers perceive from having access to a formal mentor? What (if any) challenges or issues remain? b. For Mentors: What (if any) benefits exist for mentors who work to support new teachers? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?	5. How do you go about building a rapport with your mentees? 6. In what ways do you benefit from working with new teachers? 7. What challenges have you faced personally, professionally, or organizationally in your role as mentor?	6. Tell me about the nature of the relationship between you and your mentor. 7. What services or supports have been offered by your Mentor Teacher? Which of these do you find most valuable? 8. What challenges have you faced personally or professionally in your relationship with your mentor?
4. Benefits and Challenges of Program Structure a. For New Teachers: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring)	8. Tell me about the structure of the mentorship program. 9. How are the processes of communication between mentors and new teachers designed and are they adequate? If so, what aspects seem to work best?	9. Describe your experience with the Mentor Program and its structure. 10. In what ways has the Mentor Program supported you as a teacher new to the profession? New to the

facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain? b. For Mentors: How has the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitated new teachers' introduction into the profession, the school division, and the school? What (if any) challenges or issues remain?	If not, what recommendations to improve the communication would you make? 10. Are there differences in the way the program structure is designed to facilitate mentoring for teachers who are new to the profession, new to the Division, or new to the school? If so, what are they? If not, should there be, and if so, what would they be? 11. In what ways do you feel that being in a non-evaluative, off-campus role as a mentor been beneficial for new teachers? What are some of the drawbacks in this role design?	Division? New to the school? 11. Has the Mentor Program been beneficial for you? If so, how? If not, why not?
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5.	What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and/or mentors?	12.	What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and mentors?	12.	What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers?
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Specific Mentor Questions

1. What made you decide to become a mentor teacher in the Mentor Program?
2. What qualities do you possess that you believe give you the skills to offer a program like this?
3. What was the selection process for your position as mentor coordinator?
4. What kinds of challenges do new teachers tend to manage on their own, and for which ones do they usually need some sort of support? What kinds of challenges do new teachers tend to manage on their own, and for which ones do they usually need some sort of support?
5. How do you go about building a rapport with your mentees?
6. In what ways do you benefit from working with new teachers?
7. What challenges have you faced personally, professionally, or organizationally in your role as mentor?
8. Tell me about the structure of the mentorship program.
9. How are the processes of communication between mentors and new teachers designed and are they adequate? If so, what aspects seem to work best? If not, what recommendations to improve the communication would you make?
10. Are there differences in the way the program structure is designed to facilitate mentoring for teachers who are new to the profession, new to the Division, or new to the school? If so, what are they? If not, should there be, and if so, what would they be?
11. In what ways do you feel that being in a non-evaluative, off-campus role as a mentor been beneficial for new teachers? What are some of the drawbacks in this role design
12. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers and mentors?

Specific Teacher Questions

1. What position were you hired to fill in the school division?
2. Tell me about how you felt when you first received your position.
3. What aspects of having this new job did you find easy to navigate as a new person in the division?
4. What challenges did you face at first that you were able to manage on your own?
5. For what kinds of challenges did you need support from others?
6. Tell me about the nature of the relationship between you and your mentor.
7. What services or supports have been offered by your Mentor Teacher? Which of these do you find most valuable?
8. What challenges have you faced personally or professionally in your relationship with your mentor?
9. Describe your experience with the Mentor Program and its structure.
10. In what ways has the Mentor Program supported you as a teacher new to the profession? New to the Division? New to the school?
11. Has the Mentor Program been beneficial for you? If so, how? If not, why not?
12. What changes could be made to the current structure of the mentoring program to improve the service for new teachers?

Appendix F: Ethics Protocol Submission Form

Protocol # _____ (Assigned by HES Admin.)

**FORT GARRY CAMPUS RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
PROTOCOL SUBMISSION FORM****Psychology/Sociology REB** ☐ **Education/Nursing REB** ☒ **Joint-Faculty REB** ☐

Check the appropriate REB for the Faculty or Department of the Principal Researcher. This form, attached research protocol, and all supporting documents, must be submitted **in quadruplicate** (original plus 3 copies), to the Office of Research Services, Human Ethics Coordinator, CTC Building, 208 - 194 Dafoe Road, 474-7122.

Principal Researcher(s): **Patrick Armstrong**

Status of Principal Researcher(s): please check

Faculty ☐ Post-Doc ☐ Student: Graduate ☒ Undergraduate ☐ Other ☐

Specify: _____

Address: **Department of Educational Administration, Foundation & Psychology**Phone: **(204) 474-9018** Fax: **(204) 474-7564** Email address:

Quickest Means of contact: **Email or (204) xxx-xxxx (work number) or (204) xxx-xxxx (home number)**

Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions

Start date: **April 22, 2009** Planned period of research (if less than one year): **April 2009 until December 2009**

Type of research (Please check):

Faculty Research:**Administrative Research:****Student Research:**Self-funded ☐ Sponsored ☐Central ☐Thesis ☒Class Project ☐

(Agency) _____

Unit-based ☐

Course Number:

Signature of Principal Researcher:

This project is approved by department/thesis committee. The advisor has reviewed and approved the protocol.

Name of Thesis Advisor: Dr. Dawn Wallin

Signature_____

(Required if thesis research)

Persons signing assure responsibility that all procedures performed under the protocol will be conducted by individuals responsibly entitled to do so, and that any deviation from the protocol will be submitted to the REB for its approval prior to implementation. Signature of the thesis advisor/course instructor indicates that student researchers have been instructed on the principles of ethics policy, on the importance of adherence to the ethical conduct of the research according to the submitted protocol (and of the necessity to report any deviations from the protocol to their advisor/instructor).

Ethics Protocol Submission Form (Basic Questions about the Project)

The questions on this form are of a general nature, designed to collect pertinent information about potential problems of an ethical nature that could arise with the proposed research project. In addition to answering the questions below, the researcher is expected to append pages (and any other necessary documents) to a submission detailing the required information about the research protocol (see page 4).

1. Will the subjects in your study be UNAWARE that they are subjects? ____ Yes ☒ No

2. Will information about the subjects be obtained from sources other than the subjects themselves? ____ Yes ☒ No

3. Are you and/or members of your research team in a position of power vis-a-vis the subjects? If yes, clarify the position of power and how it will be addressed. ____ Yes ☒ No

4. Is any inducement or coercion used to obtain the subject's participation? ____ Yes ☒ No

5. Do subjects identify themselves by name directly, or by other means that allows you or anyone else to identify data with specific subjects? If yes, indicate how confidentiality will be maintained. What precautions are to be undertaken in storing data and in its eventual destruction/disposition. ☒ Yes ____ No

As per University of Manitoba protocol, School Divisions will be contacted for permission to interview the mentors and new teachers. The school division that the mentors and new teachers work in will be described in general terms with regards to the student population size and designated as an urban division in Western Canada. The names of the schools and the participants being interviewed will not be identified and will appear as pseudonyms in the presentation of the data. Schools will be identified only as early, middle, or senior years schools. The subjects will identify themselves to the researcher only for contact purposes but identification will not occur in the data analysis or final report. Confidentiality of the data will be assured by limiting access of the data to the researcher who is directly responsible for the research. To further maintain confidentiality, all responses will be stored in a locked secured place in the researcher's home and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Direct quotations from participants will be used in the presentation of the data to illustrate developing themes. Specific permission for the use of the subject's direct quotes will be incorporated into the consent form. Any quotations that have the

potential to identify an individual will not be used in the reporting. The researcher will assure participants that raw data will not be made available to others nor will their identities be revealed. Participants will have the opportunity to conduct a member check of their transcripts so that they may add, delete or augment any data from the interview. In addition, all participants will have the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point and their comments will not be included in the study.

6. If subjects are identifiable by name, do you intend to recruit them for future studies? If yes, indicate why this is necessary and how you plan to recruit these subjects for future studies. ____ Yes ☒ No
7. Could dissemination of findings compromise confidentiality? ____ Yes ☒ No
8. Does the study involve physical or emotional stress, or the subject's expectation thereof, such as might result from conditions in the study design? ____ Yes ☒ No
9. Is there any threat to the personal safety of subjects? ____ Yes ☒ No
10. Does the study involve subjects who are not legally or practically able to give their valid consent to participate (e.g., children, or persons with mental health problems and/or cognitive impairment)? If yes, indicate how informed consent will be obtained from subjects and those authorized to speak for subjects. ____ Yes ☒ No
11. Is deception involved (i.e., will subjects be intentionally misled about the purpose of the study, their own performance, or other features of the study)? ____ Yes ☒ No
12. Is there a possibility that abuse of children or persons in care might be discovered in the course of the study? If yes, current laws require that certain offenses against children and persons in care be reported to legal authorities. Indicate the provisions that have been made for complying with the law. ____ Yes ☒ No
13. Does the study include the use of personal health information? The Manitoba Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) outlines

responsibilities of researchers to ensure safeguards that will protect personal health information. If yes, indicate provisions that will be made to comply with this Act (see document for guidance - <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/phia/index.html>).

____ Yes ☒ No

Provide additional details pertaining to any of the questions above for which you responded "yes." Attach additional pages, if necessary.

In my judgment this project involves:

☒ minimal risk

☐ more than minimal risk

(Policy #1406 defines “minimal risk” as follows: “. . . that the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater nor more likely, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in life, including those encountered during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.”)

 22 / 04 / 09
dd mm yr

Signature of Principal Researcher

Ethics Protocol Submission Form Required Information about the Research Protocol

Each application for ethics approval should include the following information and be presented in the following order, using these headings:

1. **Summary of Project:** Attach a detailed but concise (one typed page) outline of the **purpose** and **methodology** of the study describing **precisely** the procedures in which subjects will be asked to participate.

See attached Summary of Project

2. **Research Instruments:** Attach copies of **all** materials (e.g., questionnaires, tests, interview schedules, etc.) to be given to subjects and/or third parties.

See attached Interview Questions

3. **Study Subjects:** Describe the number of subjects, and how they will be recruited for this study. Are there any special characteristics of the subjects that make them especially vulnerable or require extra measures?

This study will use nine participants, six new teachers participating in a divisional mentor program, and three full-time mentors who coordinate the program. The new teachers will be recruited using purposeful sampling. Recruiting will occur in one of two ways, first the division mentors will be asked to recommend new teachers who represent the early, middle and senior levels of schooling; secondly a letter may be sent to all new teachers in an effort to obtain a range of participants. From the participants who respond to my letters, I will choose six new teachers (first or second year) representing the three levels of schooling to interview regarding their perceptions of the value of the mentoring component of the induction program. The three mentors will be invited to participate through a formal letter of invitation. There are no special characteristics that would make these participants vulnerable or require extra measures.

4. **Informed Consent:** Will consent **in writing** be obtained? If so, attach a copy of the consent form. (see guidelines on informed consent). If written consent is not to be obtained, indicate why not and the manner by which subjects' consent (verbally) or assent to participate in the study will be obtained. How will the nature of the study and subjects' participation in the study be explained to them **before** they agree to participate. How will consent be obtained from guardians of subjects from vulnerable populations? If confidential records will be consulted, indicate the nature of the records, and how subjects' consent is to be obtained. If it is essential to the research, indicate why subjects are not to be made aware of their records being consulted.

Written consent will be obtained in writing. See attached Ethics Consent Form. As per University of Manitoba protocol, School Divisions will be contacted for permission to interview the mentors and new teachers. The participants in the research study will be informed that their identities will be kept confidential, that they may ask for clarification at any time throughout the project, and that they may voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time. The method for collecting the qualitative data in the form of rich-thick descriptions from the three mentors and six teachers will be through semi-structured

interviews which will last approximately 60 minutes and will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The interviews will be conducted in the mentors' and teachers' place of work, or similar locations, in face-to-face meetings convenient to the participants. Following data recording and transcription a copy of the transcribed notes will be sent back to the participants for the purpose of member checking. Upon completion of the study, all the responses to the questions will be destroyed. No confidential records will be consulted.

5. **Deception:** Deception refers to the deliberate withholding of essential information or the provision of deliberately misleading information about the research or its purposes. If the research involves deception, the researcher must provide detailed information on the extent and nature of deception and why the research could not be conducted without it. This description must be sufficient to justify a waiver of informed consent.

There is no deception involved in this study.

7. **Feedback/Debriefing:** Describe the feedback that will be given to subjects about the research after they have completed their participation. How will the feedback be provided and by whom? If feedback will not be given, please explain why feedback is not planned. If deception is employed, debriefing is mandatory. Describe in detail the nature of the post-deception feedback, and when and how it will be given.

Feedback will be obtained through the transcript member checks of the interviews. IN addition, upon completion of the project, the researcher will provide the participants with an emailed summary of the study.

7. **Risks and Benefits:** Is there any risk to the subjects, or to a third party? If yes, provide a description of the risks and the counterbalancing benefits of the proposed study. Indicate the precautions taken by the researcher under these circumstances.

There are no risks involved in this study.

8. **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** Describe the procedures for preserving anonymity and confidentiality. If confidentiality is not an issue in this research, please explain why. Will confidential records be consulted? If yes, indicate what precautions will be taken to ensure subjects' confidentiality. How will the data be stored to ensure confidentiality? When will the data be destroyed?

As per University of Manitoba protocol, School Divisions will be contacted for permission to interview the mentors and new teachers. The school division that the mentors and new teachers work in will be described in general terms with regards to the student population size and designated as an urban division in Western Canada. The names of the schools and the participants being interviewed will not be identified and will appear as pseudonyms in the presentation of the data. Schools will be identified only as early, middle, or senior years schools. The subjects will identify themselves to the researcher only for contact purposes but identification will not occur in the data analysis or final report. Confidentiality of the data will be assured by limiting access of the data to the researcher who is directly responsible for the research. To further maintain confidentiality, all responses will be stored in a locked secured place in the researcher's home and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Direct quotations from participants will be used in the presentation of the data to illustrate developing themes. Specific permission for the use of the subject's direct quotes will be incorporated into the consent form. Any quotations that have the potential to identify an individual will not be used in the reporting. The researcher will assure participants that raw data will not be made available to others nor will their identities be revealed. Participants will have the opportunity to conduct a member check of their transcripts so that they may add, delete or augment any data from the interview. In addition, all participants will have the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point and their comments will not be included in the study.

9. **Compensation:** Will subjects be compensated for their participation? Compensation may reasonably provide subjects with assistance to defray the costs associated with study participation.

There will be no compensation involved in the study.

Ethics Protocol Submission Form

Review your submission according to this:

Checklist

Principal Researcher: Patrick Armstrong

☐	Item from the Ethics Protocol Submission Form
√	All information requested on the first page completed in legible format (typed or printed).
√	Signatures of the principal researcher (and faculty advisor, or course instructor if student research).
√	Answers to all 13 questions on pages 2-3 of Ethics Protocol Submission form.
√	Detailed information requested on page 4 of the Ethics Protocol Submission Form in the numbered order and with the headings indicated.
√	Ethics Protocol Submission Form in quadruplicate (Original plus 3 copies).
√	Research instruments: 4 copies of all instruments and other supplementary material to be given to subjects.
√	Copy of this checklist.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions

Purpose of the Study: To generate knowledge about common patterns and themes regarding the perception of new teachers towards the benefits of having access to a full-time mentor.

Data Collection Methodology: As per University of Manitoba protocol, School Divisions will be contacted for permission to interview the mentors and new teachers. The mentors' and teachers' written consent will be obtained through the Ethics Protocol Consent Form. The method for collecting the qualitative data in the form of rich-thick descriptions from the two mentors and six teachers will be through semi-structured interviews which will last approximately 60 minutes and will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The interviews will be conducted in the mentors' and teachers' schools or similar locations in face-to-face meetings convenient to the participants. At no time will the identity of the contacts be revealed and no confidential records will be consulted. Data will be stored in a locked and secure place in the researcher's home and will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

Data Analysis: This study will be utilizing constant comparison analysis by taking one piece of data (one interview or one theme) and comparing it with subsequent data to develop possible relations between various pieces of data. The literature review will then connect ideas and themes that emerge from the data to the existing literature.

Particular strategies will be employed to ensure validity and credibility of this qualitative research. Along with a rich-thick description of the subjects' perceptions, the literature review will be used to make connections in the existing literature and/or to highlight areas where further study is required.

Participants in the study will receive a summary of the study-related feedback by January 2010.

PATRICK S. ARMSTRONG

[REDACTED], Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2R3

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] Work: (204) [REDACTED] Email:

MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION FORM

For

SUPERINTENDENT of SCHOOL DIVISION

Research Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions

Researcher: Patrick Armstrong (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Date: September 17, 2009

Sponsor: University of Manitoba

Advisor: Dr. Dawn C. Wallin (University of Manitoba)

To: Superintendent of School Division

I am requesting your permission to conduct a study within the school division related to the experiences of new teachers and mentors in the Division's Mentorship Program. New teachers within your School Division participate in a Mentorship Program. Your particular mentorship program utilizes the services of three full time mentor teachers to coordinate the program. I am requesting permission to recruit the two mentor teachers/coordinators and six new teachers as participants representing early, middle and senior school teachers. Below is the Research Project Consent Form that provides information for participants about the purpose of the study, the methods of data collection, and the strategies used to ensure confidentiality.

Your signature on the Superintendent's Consent Form that follows this information letter will authorize your approval for these staff members should you choose to participate. A copy of the teacher and mentor consent forms has been included for your information.

PATRICK S. ARMSTRONG

[REDACTED], Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2R3

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] Work: (204) [REDACTED] Email:

**MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT
SUPERINTENDENT'S CONSENT FORM**

Research Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher

Perceptions

Researcher: Patrick Armstrong (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Date: September 17, 2009

Sponsor: University of Manitoba

Advisor: Dr. Dawn C. Wallin (University of Manitoba)

I hereby give permission for the research study, *Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher Perceptions* to be conducted in my School Division during the months between May 2009 and December 2009. I understand that you will be conducting interviews with six new teachers (second year) and the two mentor teachers who coordinate the mentorship program as a means for collecting data and that a copy of the data analysis and summary will be distributed to participants by January 2010.

Signature of Superintendent

Date

Feedback: If upon completion of this study you wish to see a summary of the results of the research a copy will be made available for your perusal. Please indicate your wishes by checking the appropriate box below.

_____ Please provide me with a summary of the results upon completion of the research.

_____ I do not require a summary of the research results.

PATRICK S. ARMSTRONG

[REDACTED], Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2R3

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] Work: (204) [REDACTED] Email:

**MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT
TEACHER PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

Research Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher

Perceptions

Researcher: Patrick Armstrong (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Date: September 17, 2009

Sponsor: University of Manitoba

Advisor: Dr. Dawn C. Wallin (University of Manitoba)

Dear study participant:

I am inviting you, as a new teacher who has participated in the Mentorship Program to participate in a study which will examine the perceptions of new teachers of the benefits of having a full time mentor to introduce teachers into the teaching profession. This study is being conducted as my Master's Thesis for my Master of Education Degree at the University of Manitoba. This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information. Permission has been acquired from your school division, and a copy of the signed permission is included in this package.

The purpose of this study is to generate knowledge about common patterns and themes regarding the perception of new teachers towards the benefits of having access to a full-time mentor.

This study will also investigate how the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitates new teachers' introduction

into the profession, the school division, and the school. Six new teachers who have participated in the divisions mentor program will be interviewed for this study using a semi-structured method. Along with the teachers' feedback, the two mentor teachers who coordinate the program will be interviewed to gather their perceptions regarding the mentorship program and its benefits for new teachers.

The Superintendent of your School Division is aware of this study and has provided permission for this research. The interviews will take place in schools, or similar locations of your choice, in face-to-face meetings. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with each of the six teachers and two mentor teachers involved in the study. Each interview will last approximately sixty minutes and will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Please be assured of the following:

- You are in no way obligated to participate in this study
- Your identity and that of the school in which you work, as well as that of the school division will be kept confidential and you will not be identified in any research publication or report. Any quotations that may lead to identification will not be used in the findings or writing of the report.
- No confidential records will be consulted
- Data will be stored in a locked and secure place in the researcher's home and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. The researcher will be the only person to have access to the data.
- After the interview, you will be emailed the transcript of the interview so that you may add, change, or augment the information so that it accurately reflects your views.
- Should you choose to withdraw all of your data will be destroyed and will not be used in the study.
- You will be provided a copy of the data analysis and summary by January 2010

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. In so doing, please contact the following:

Patrick Armstrong, Researcher (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] or Email: [REDACTED]

Dr. Dawn Wallin, Thesis Advisor (University of Manitoba)

Phone: (204) 474-9741 or Email: wallind@cc.umanitoba.ca

The Education and Nursing Research and Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba have approved this research. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Armstrong

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Feedback: If upon completion of this study you wish to see a summary of the results of the research a copy will be made available for your perusal. Please indicate your wishes by checking the appropriate box below.

_____ Please provide me with a summary of the results upon completion of the research.

_____ I do not require a summary of the research results.

PATRICK S. ARMSTRONG

[REDACTED], Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2R3

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] Work: (204) [REDACTED] Email:

**MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT
MENTOR PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

Research Project Title: Full Time Mentors: A Qualitative Study of New Teacher

Perceptions

Researcher: Patrick Armstrong (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Date: April 22, 2009

Sponsor: University of Manitoba

Advisor: Dr. Dawn C. Wallin (University of Manitoba)

Dear study participant:

I am inviting you, as a mentor coordinator of the Mentorship Program to participate in a study which will examine the perceptions of new teachers of the benefits of having a full time mentor to introduce teachers into the teaching profession. This study is being conducted as my Master's Thesis for my Master of Education Degree at the University of Manitoba. This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information. Permission has been acquired from your school division, and a copy of the signed permission is included in this package.

The purpose of this study is to generate knowledge about common patterns and themes regarding the perception of new teachers towards the benefits of having access to a full-time mentor.

This study will also investigate how the structure of the mentoring program (full-time, non-evaluative, off-campus mentoring) facilitates new teachers' introduction

into the profession, the school division, and the school. Six new teachers (second year) who have participated in the divisions mentor program will be interviewed for this study using a semi-structured method. Along with the teachers' feedback, the two mentor teachers who coordinate the program will be interviewed to gather their perceptions regarding the mentorship program and its benefits for new teachers.

The Superintendent of your School Division is aware of this study and has provided permission for this research. The interviews will take place in schools, or similar locations of your choice, in face-to-face meetings. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with each of the six teachers and two mentor teachers involved in the study. Each interview will last approximately sixty minutes and will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Please be assured of the following:

- You are in no way obligated to participate in this study
- Your identity and that of the school division in which you work will be kept confidential and you will not be identified in any research publication or report. Any quotations that may lead to identification will not be used in the findings or writing of the report.
- No confidential records will be consulted
- Data will be stored in a locked and secure place in the researcher's home and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. The researcher will be the only person to have access to the data.
- After the interview, you will be emailed the transcript of the interview so that you may add, change, or augment the information so that it accurately reflects your views.
- Should you choose to withdraw all of your data will be destroyed and will not be used in the study.
- You will be provided a copy of the data analysis and summary by January 2010

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. In so doing, please contact the following:

Patrick Armstrong, Researcher (M. Ed student, University of Manitoba)

Phone: (204) [REDACTED] or Email: or

Dr. Dawn Wallin, Thesis Advisor (University of Manitoba)

Phone: (204) 474-9741 or Email: wallind@cc.umanitoba.ca

The Education and Nursing Research and Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba have approved this research. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Armstrong

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Feedback: If upon completion of this study you wish to see a summary of the results of the research a copy will be made available for your perusal. Please indicate your wishes by checking the appropriate box below.

_____ Please provide me with a summary of the results upon completion of the research.

_____ I do not require a summary of the research results.