

The Teacher Learning Project
A Continuum of Standards for Comprehensive School-Based Induction

1. Committed School Leadership

The long-term success of a comprehensive approach to induction relies on school leaders' efforts to integrate it into the life of the school. (School leaders may be administrators, teachers or board members.) Strong induction is possible when school leaders promote a developmental approach to teacher learning via the shared understandings about teaching and learning that underpin effective induction and when they establish the structures (e.g. role of induction leader, time for mentor teacher development) that allow teachers to do the work of induction and do it well.

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice/ Institutionalization
<i>a. School leaders develop within the community the shared understandings about teaching and learning to teach that underpin effective induction¹.</i>	School leaders do not hold and/or take responsibility for developing the shared understandings about teaching and learning to teach that support effective induction.	School leaders embrace the shared understandings about teaching and learning to teach and refer to them when the opportunity arises.	School leaders make daily decisions in ways that embody the shared understandings about teaching and learning to teach, and are mindful of developing those understandings among community members.	School leaders and faculty have made shared understandings about teaching and learning to teach part of the fabric of the school so that they inform induction policies and practices. School leaders root decisions in these beliefs and actively work to reinforce them in the community.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. School leaders designate an induction leader and provide opportunities for him/her to build capacity to effectively lead teacher learning.</i>	School leaders do not designate anyone to lead the school's efforts to induct new faculty.	School leaders designate a teacher or administrator to coordinate and lead induction. Leader's responsibilities are unclear or conflict with other priorities.	School leaders designate a teacher or an administrator to coordinate and lead the school's induction systems and provide clear guidelines for his or her responsibilities and time for those responsibilities to be carried out.	School leaders designate an induction leader, and ensure that the induction leader receives training for the position, regular access to the leadership team, a clear job description, and compensation (time and / or money).
<i>Evidence:</i>				

¹ The Shared Understandings about Teaching and Learning that Underpin Effective Induction are a) a shared understanding of what good teaching looks like and a common language for discussing it; b) a shared understanding that teaching is complex work and learning to teach well takes time, collaboration and ongoing professional development; c) a shared understanding that all members of the faculty are collectively responsible for the growth and development of colleagues and students; and d) a shared understanding that schools should provide for serious teacher learning just as they provide for serious student learning.

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1. Committed School Leadership, continued

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice/ Institutionalization
<i>c. School leaders empower an “induction leadership team” that includes head of school, administrators and mentors and provide for the team to meet regularly.</i>	School leaders do not designate anyone to support the work of induction.	School leaders meet with the induction leader regularly as the de facto induction leadership team.	School leaders designate an induction leadership team but the team does not meet regularly and/or does not have sufficient power to make change.	School leaders empower an induction leadership team that includes the head of school, the induction leader, at least one mentor, and other relevant faculty and administrators. The team meets regularly to review the needs of new teachers, plan induction-related activities and structures, and review progress.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>d. School leaders prioritize induction activities within the budget and the master schedule; ensure appropriate structures are put in place.</i>	School leaders reserve little or no money for induction and do not protect time for induction-related activities.	School leaders reserve some money for induction, but it is cut when there are budget shortfalls. They protect some time for induction work but preempt that time for assemblies, etc.	School leaders reserve and protect time and money for induction.	School leaders include induction activities in a well-funded system of ongoing professional development for all teachers that includes built-in time for collaboration.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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1. Committed School Leadership, continued

<p><i>e. Head of school and school leaders ensure ongoing assessment and improvement of new teacher induction policies and practices. (e.g. scheduling that accommodates mentor and mentee observation and meeting time).</i></p>	<p>Head of school and school leaders rarely discuss or reflect upon the effectiveness of new teacher induction in their school.</p>	<p>The head of school and the induction leader informally discuss the success of induction policies and practices..</p>	<p>The induction leader provides regular formal and informal reports on the efficacy of new teacher induction to the head of school and relevant school leader.</p>	<p>The induction leader regularly collects data (e.g. interviews and observations of new teachers and mentors) to improve the quality of the induction program. The leader shares the data with head of school and relevant school leaders to improve the program.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				
<p><i>f. School leaders educate parents and board members about how teachers learn and inform them about how the school hires, develops and supervises teachers.</i></p>	<p>School leaders explicitly or implicitly communicate that there is no difference between novice and experienced teachers.</p>	<p>School leaders offer verbal reassurance to parents and board members that they will provide support and oversight to the new teachers in the school.</p>	<p>School leaders acknowledge that learning to teach well takes time; they publicize their systems for teacher learning to parents and board members.</p>	<p>School leaders educate parents and board members about the needs of novice and experienced teachers, publicize the school's systems for developing expertise, and invest parents and board members in creating a collaborative, growth-oriented school culture.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				

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2. Early, Information-Rich Hiring

Hiring is the first step of induction, and represents an often-overlooked opportunity to introduce candidates to the school's mission, values, resources and community.

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>a. The hiring process involves school leaders, teachers and other interested community members.</i>	One administrator interviews each candidate and makes hiring decisions independently.	The hiring committee consists of school leaders and some teachers.	The hiring committee consists of school leaders and some teachers; different committees may form to hire candidates for different positions.	Future team members are included in the hiring committee for each position. Interested members of the school community have structured and varied opportunities to interact with the candidates and a formal process for giving feedback to the hiring committee.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. The hiring process is information-rich.</i>	The hiring process consists of one or more interviews in which the candidates answer questions.	During the hiring process the candidates have an opportunity to ask questions about the school.	The committee shares information about the school and gives candidates an opportunity to observe in classrooms. The hiring committee gathers information from multiple sources.	The hiring committee systematically ensures that all candidates have multiple opportunities to learn about the school and its mission from school leaders and teachers. The hiring committee systematically gathers information about the candidate from multiple sources.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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2. Early, Information-Rich Hiring, continued

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>c. The hiring committee seeks candidates who share the school's vision of good teaching.</i>	The hiring process does not engage candidates in discussing good teaching.	The hiring committee asks questions designed to elicit the candidates' visions of good teaching.	During the hiring process the committee shares the school's vision of good teaching and asks questions designed to elicit the candidates' visions of good teaching.	During the hiring process, there are opportunities for candidates to observe in classrooms, demonstrate and discuss their practice. There are opportunities for both parties to reflect on whether the candidates' practice and vision of good teaching are good fits for the school.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>d. The hiring committee seeks candidates who can support the mission of the school.</i>	The hiring process does not engage candidates in discussing the mission of the school.	The hiring committee asks questions designed to elicit the candidates' views on the purpose of education.	During the hiring process the committee shares the school's mission with the candidates, and asks questions designed to elicit their views on that mission.	Throughout the hiring process, including demonstration lessons, there are opportunities for both parties to reflect on whether the candidate is willing and able to support the mission of the school.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>e. The hiring committee looks for a match between candidates' expertise and the available teaching positions.</i>	School leaders hire teachers based on a general sense of fit, with little regard to how their content or pedagogical expertise matches the available positions.	The hiring committee considers content and pedagogical expertise but sometimes hires teachers whose skills do not fit with available positions.	The hiring committee generally hires candidates whose content and pedagogical expertise match available teaching positions, and advocates for new hires to be assigned to those positions.	The hiring committee makes every effort to hire candidates whose content area expertise and pedagogical training match the teaching assignment. The hiring process is used to uncover teachers' areas of relative strength and weakness so that targeted summer professional development can be negotiated as part of the contract.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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2. Early, Information-Rich Hiring, continued

<i>f. School leaders assign new hires courses that are most appropriate to their experience and proficiency.</i>	School leaders routinely give new teachers the most challenging assignments, regardless of their experience or proficiency.	School leaders consider teachers' proficiency when making teaching assignments, but often give new teachers the most challenging ones.	School leaders regularly assign new teachers fewer preps and / or less challenging students than experienced teachers.	School leaders assign new teachers fewer preps, duties, and teaching hours than experienced teachers. Experienced teachers take on the more challenging assignments.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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3. Summer Preparation and Formal Orientation

The summer before new teachers begin their jobs offers a great opportunity to set them up for success, if used planfully. Formal orientation or faculty work days should at least include basic orientation to policies and facilities for new teachers; at best they model the school's shared vision of excellent teaching, promote the shared understandings about teaching and learning that underpin effective induction, reinforce values and priorities, and teach skills necessary for early success.

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>a. School leaders give new teachers their teaching assignments well before school starts.</i>	School leaders give new teachers their teaching assignments too late for summer for planning and professional development.	School leaders give new teachers their teaching assignments during the summer but assignments frequently change due to scheduling or other conflicts.	School leaders give new teachers their teaching assignments upon hire or shortly thereafter. Occasionally, assignments change before school starts.	School leaders give new teachers their teaching assignments upon hire and the teaching assignments do not change before school starts.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. During the summer, new teachers have regular access to their classrooms and curricular materials and opportunities to plan with experienced colleagues.</i>	Teachers are not given access to their classrooms, curricula or colleagues over the summer. They prepare for the upcoming year in isolation.	New teachers may enter their classrooms and plan with colleagues by special arrangement during the summer. Orientation includes some time for new teachers to work in their classrooms, during which experienced teachers are available to help upon request.	New teachers have regular access to their classrooms and curricular materials during the summer. They are notified of the building schedule and can request meetings with experienced colleagues. Orientation includes opportunities for new teachers to plan with experienced colleagues.	New teachers have regular access to their classrooms and curricular materials over the summer. School leaders arrange for new teachers to work with experienced colleagues on understanding curriculum, planning for the first few weeks of school, and setting up their classrooms throughout the summer and at orientation.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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3. Summer Preparation and Formal Orientation, continued

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>c. The summer after they are hired, new teachers participate in targeted professional development designed to help them learn the school's chosen curricula, philosophy, etc.</i>	New hires do not participate in any targeted professional development.	School leaders inform newly hired teachers about scheduled summer professional development, and invite them to attend if possible.	School leaders point newly hired teachers toward summer professional development offerings that might be relevant (such as training in Responsive Classroom or Writers' Workshop) and suggest that they sign up.	In addition to any summer professional development for all teachers, school leaders offer to pay for summer professional development for new teachers related to their needs, e.g., pedagogical training that other teachers have already had or that addresses areas of relative weakness.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>d. New teacher orientation provides the information and skill development that new teachers will need to begin the year successfully.</i>	There is no orientation or it is perfunctory, covering only administrative issues such as filling out insurance paperwork.	Orientation covers information such as school policies, procedures and a tour of the facilities.	Orientation provides opportunities for new teachers to learn about policies, procedures, facilities, and other information that school leaders think is important, such as an introduction to the community, key curricula, rituals, etc.	Orientation provides opportunities for new teachers to learn policies, procedures and important information and allows them guided practice in skills necessary for early success, such as communicating effectively with parents or collaborating with an assistant.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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3. Summer Preparation and Formal Orientation, continued

<p><i>e. Summer faculty work days, including new teacher orientation, strengthen the school's culture and vision through a carefully chosen learning agenda and purposeful pedagogy.</i></p>	<p>Teachers work alone in setting up their own classroom.</p>	<p>During the summer work days, leaders gather the faculty together periodically. These whole faculty meetings focus on administrative tasks or the delivery of information.</p>	<p>School leaders carefully construct the agenda for summer faculty work days to develop the school's culture and vision but organize it in a "stand and deliver" format that is disconnected from the school's vision of good teaching or the professional norms leaders seek to promote, such as collaboration and risk taking.</p>	<p>School leaders use summer faculty work days as a strategic opportunity to model the kinds of teaching they would like to see in classrooms, promote the shared beliefs and norms that foster a collaborative professional culture (e.g., risk taking, open discussion of practice, collaboration) and to reinforce key priorities, values or initiatives.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				

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4. Complete Curricula and Supporting Materials

A complete teaching curriculum includes a comprehensive list of skill and knowledge objectives for students; content through which to teach those skills and knowledge; suggested methods for delivering content and assessing understanding; and supporting materials. At its best, carefully chosen or developed curriculum supports the mission of the school.

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>a. The school provides basic necessities (desk, email, voice mail, supplies, etc.) to every teacher.</i>	The school does not consistently provide basic necessities to new teachers.	Upon a new teacher's request, the school provides basic communication tools such as email and voice mail.	The school provides basic supplies and communication tools such as email and voice mail. New teachers sometimes have access to a desk and computer.	In addition to providing other basic supplies, the school provides a desk and access to a computer for each new teacher. The desk and computer are always accessible to the teacher.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. The school provides complete curricula for all subjects and courses new teachers teach.</i>	The school provides little or no curricula for new teachers. New teachers may receive information about general topics and skills they are expected to teach.	The school provides a general pacing guide and a few complete units. New teachers are expected to use worksheets and other records left by previous teachers to create units and individual lessons.	The school provides a detailed pacing guide for all subject areas and provides complete curricula for some subjects or courses.	The school provides either complete published curricula or highly organized teacher-made curricula for all subject and content areas.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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4. Complete Curricula and Supporting Materials, continued

<p><i>c. The school provides professional development and ongoing support in implementing all of the curricula new teachers teach.</i></p>	<p>When the school adopts a new curriculum, all teachers participate in one-time professional development on how to implement it effectively. New teachers are expected to figure out existing curricula on their own.</p>	<p>School leaders arrange professional development on newly adopted curricula and encourage new teachers to find and participate in professional development for all other curricula they are learning to teach.</p>	<p>School leaders ensure that new teachers participate in professional development for all curricula that they are learning to teach. The school funds their participation.</p>	<p>School leaders ensure that new teachers participate in school-funded professional development and receive ongoing support as they learn to teach new curricula. New teachers systematically receive the training that veteran teachers may have received in previous years.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				
<p><i>d. Teachers have easy access to the materials needed to implement curricula.</i></p>	<p>There are few materials available to teachers and no budget for teachers to purchase materials. They draw on their personal stores of teaching materials, paid for out of pocket.</p>	<p>Some materials are available to teachers. Materials may be disorganized, stored in multiple locations, or difficult to find. Teachers can be reimbursed for a limited number of purchases.</p>	<p>Most materials are easily accessible within the school. There are funds for teachers to purchase other materials.</p>	<p>All necessary materials are organized and easily accessible. There are ample funds for teachers to purchase supplementary materials, including a “start up” fund for new teachers.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				

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5. Opportunities to Learn with and from Colleagues

Schools are most effective as sites for new teacher learning when experienced teachers feel a collective sense of responsibility for working with their novice colleagues in formal and informal ways. Structures like grade level and content area teams may facilitate practice-centered collaboration among novices and their experienced colleagues, a feature of schools associated with teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. We also believe that formal, one-on-one mentoring is a key component of induction with the potential to deeply influence novices' efficacy. Such formal mentoring is most effective when mentors are well-trained and supported in taking an "educative" role, assisting novices in enacting the school's vision of good teaching.

Standards of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>a. Each new teacher is assigned an experienced colleague with substantial classroom teaching experience as a mentor who is responsible for supporting the development of his or her teaching practice.</i>	No one is designated to support new teachers. They are expected to function just as effectively as the rest of the faculty from their first day on the job.	School leaders encourage experienced teachers to provide emotional support to all of the new teachers in the school and to answer questions when they arise.	Each new teacher is specifically designated an experienced colleague as mentor to provide support, answer questions and give occasional feedback on his or her teaching.	Each new teacher is specifically assigned a skilled, experienced colleague who is responsible for helping to foster the development of his or her instructional practice.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. The school's vision of good teaching drives new teacher development.</i>	There is no articulated vision of good teaching for the school.	There is a general, though unarticulated, sense of what good teaching is in the school. Teachers with good reputations are encouraged to support new teachers. Professional development is disconnected from an explicit vision of good teaching.	The school has an articulated vision of good teaching. Mentors are chosen because they practice good teaching, but new teachers rarely observe them. Professional development is consistent with that vision.	Mentoring practice is explicitly grounded in the vision of good teaching. Experienced teachers model such teaching for their new colleagues. Professional development is chosen to target specific aspects of that vision.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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5. Opportunities to Learn with and from Colleagues, continued

<p><i>c. New teachers have regular, frequent, scheduled opportunities to meet with their mentors and to collaborate with other colleagues.</i></p>	<p>Teachers generally plan and teach in isolation.</p>	<p>Occasionally, on their own initiative, teachers plan together and / or watch one another teach.</p>	<p>School leaders ask mentors and mentees to meet regularly and encourage teachers to co-plan and co-observe. Some common planning time is scheduled, but there is not a common understanding for how teachers should use the time.</p>	<p>Regular and frequent opportunities for teachers – including mentor pairs– to co-plan, observe and analyze teaching practice and student work are built into the master schedule. School leaders hold teachers accountable for using that time for these purposes.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				
<p><i>d. Mentors attend ongoing professional development designed to help them foster new teachers' development.</i></p>	<p>Mentor teachers receive no training or support in how to develop one another's practice.</p>	<p>School leaders encourage experienced teachers to pursue professional development in basic mentoring skills, such as how to conduct and debrief classroom observations.</p>	<p>All mentors attend generic training that covers basic mentoring skills and strategies, such as classroom observations with reflective conversations, co-planning, and looking at student work.</p>	<p>Mentors attend regular, ongoing training that is tailored to their school and differentiated for different skill and experience levels. Mentors have a timeline for addressing specific skills and a way to formatively assess new teachers' progress.</p>
<p><i>Evidence:</i></p>				

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5. Opportunities to Learn with and from Colleagues, continued

<i>e. Supervisors and mentors work together to help new teachers succeed.</i>	There is no connection between mentoring and supervision.	Occasionally, the supervisor suggests areas for new teachers to work on with the help of an experienced colleague.	There is a systematic process for the supervisor to share goals for each new teacher's growth and development with his or her mentor(s).	There are formal, regularly scheduled opportunities for supervisors, mentors, and new teachers to discuss new teachers' goals and the concrete steps that the mentors can play to help the new teachers achieve those goals.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>f. Professional development is sustained, job-embedded, and differentiated by experience and proficiency.</i>	Teachers attend off-site professional development workshops at their own initiative.	School leaders organize professional development as one-time workshops, on or off site, offered to all teachers by outside consultants or instructors.	Professional development includes workshops offered by outside consultants and teacher-to-teacher collaborative opportunities. Opportunities are occasionally differentiated.	The school regards sustained teacher-to-teacher collaboration as a means of professional development. When workshops are arranged, they are designed to be ongoing, job-embedded, and differentiated.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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6. Growth-Oriented Supervision and Evaluation

When teacher supervision is linked to clear standards for instruction and treated as a learning opportunity for all involved, it can be a powerful vehicle for teacher learning.

Standard of Practice	Before the Beginning	Beginning Awareness	On the Way	Exemplary Practice
<i>a. Formal and informal assessments of teachers' practice are based on clearly articulated standards aligned with the school's vision of good teaching and evidence of student learning.</i>	There are no explicit teaching standards and no shared vision of good teaching in the school and supervisors' assessment of teachers is disconnected from student learning.	Standards for teaching exist in the school, but assessments are not explicitly based on them. Supervisors' assessments of teachers' practice may or may not consider student learning.	Standards for teaching and goals for student learning exist and the formal assessment process is designed to incorporate them. Supervisors apply them inconsistently.	Standards for teaching and goals for student learning exist and the formal assessment process is built around them. Supervisors apply them consistently when assessing teachers.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>b. Formal supervision is based on frequent, ongoing assessments of teaching practice, which in turn inform professional goal setting and professional development.</i>	Supervisors assess teachers based on one or two haphazardly scheduled observations and hearsay; teachers attempt to create a "perfect" lesson when being observed.	Supervisors assess teachers based on a few scheduled observations and hearsay. Supervisors set improvement goals for or with teachers but do not revisit those goals.	Supervisors assess teachers based on information gathered through meetings and observations conducted throughout the year. They collaborate with teachers in setting goals but provide minimal feedback on progress.	Supervisors use regularly scheduled observations of teachers' practice and evidence of student learning to help them create, monitor and periodically revise professional goals. Supervisors help teachers attain the support and resources necessary to achieve those goals.
<i>Evidence:</i>				

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6. Growth-Oriented Supervision and Evaluation, continued

<i>c. All teachers know the criteria that will be used in supervision and rehiring decisions.</i>	School leaders give no information to teachers about the criteria for formal assessments and rehiring. School leaders and mentors may use different standards for good teaching.	School leaders articulate formal criteria for assessment and rehiring decisions; criteria such as parent feedback play an unspoken yet influential role in rehiring decisions.	School leaders articulate formal and informal criteria for assessment and rehiring decisions; teachers receive occasional feedback during the year.	School leaders share all criteria that will be used for assessment and rehiring decisions with new teachers; teachers receive relevant feedback throughout the year so that rehiring decisions do not come as a surprise.
<i>Evidence:</i>				
<i>d. Supervisors and mentors work together to help new teachers succeed.</i>	There is no connection between mentoring and supervision.	Occasionally, the supervisor suggests areas for new teachers to work on with the help of an experienced colleague.	There is a systematic process for the supervisor to share goals for each new teacher's growth and development with his or her mentor(s).	There are formal, regularly scheduled opportunities for supervisors, mentors, and new teachers to discuss new teachers' goals and the concrete steps that the mentors can play to help the new teachers achieve those goals.
<i>Evidence:</i>				