CREATING A MEANINGFUL NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM IN

THE BALDWIN-WHITEHALL SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Doctoral Capstone Project

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We hereby approve the capstone of

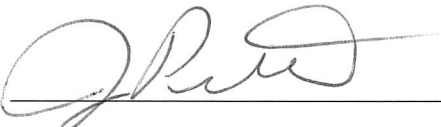Rachel L. Sprouse

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Abstract

Historic decreases in teacher preparation program enrollments across the nation and in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are resulting in school districts experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining new teachers. This crisis highlights the importance of a meaningful and effective New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) to support and retain newly hired professionals in a school district. This mixed methods study examined the NTIP in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District (BWSD) from the perspective of 22 past NTIP participants and 35 former mentor teachers from August 2016 through January 2021. Through the collection of survey data, it has been determined that the current BWSD NTIP is beneficial and helpful to new teachers, but revealed significant room for improvement in areas that are more focused on the individualized needs of the new teacher to make the NTIP more meaningful. Findings also highlighted the importance of a mentor teacher in the development and support of a new teacher during their first year of teaching. The implications of this study resulted in the recommendation of creating a two-year induction program in BWSD that provides another year under the guidance of a mentor teacher, the opportunity to participate in small group sessions addressing learners with special learning needs, and additional peer observation time. Additionally, the research brought to light the need for a mentor teacher training camp to better serve the mentor teachers who support the new teachers in the program.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In the fall of 2019, the NTIP was transferred to the responsibility of the Employee Services Department within the BWSD. This program was already a very structured process that provided a wide variety of professional development and training to new teachers in the BWSD. Since taking over responsibility of the program, the Employee Services Department has not made any drastic changes to the program, but is exploring ways to make improvements to best support all new teachers to the district. While administrators know that it is crucial to support new teachers in their practice, they should, more importantly, also be providing professional development and support in areas that are useful and beneficial to the new teacher, not simply what administrators think they need. Often, school districts place a heavy focus on improvements to the academic programming–as they should-but as a result, the importance of creating significant programs to train and support staff are often neglected.

Background

The BWSD is situated in the South Hills suburb of Pittsburgh, approximately ten miles from downtown Pittsburgh. The district covers just about 10 square miles, comprised of Whitehall Borough, Baldwin Township, and Baldwin Borough. There are nearly 4,450 students in Kindergarten through 12th grade within the district.

The overall population of the district is experiencing significant growth and is surpassing the demographic study projections previously supplied to the district. These projections show increases in population first at the elementary levels. This extraordinary

growth can be contributed to the low tax rate and the change in the overall age of district residents. BWSD is seeing an aging population move out of their single-family homes, making room for young families with young children. Currently, BWSD services a population that is 41% economically disadvantaged. Additionally, there has been a significant increase in the English Learner (EL) population over the past 10 years. The EL population within the district is approximately 9% and growing.

In addition to the growing population of EL students, the district is seeing an increase in special education students. In an effort to provide the best services and supports, the district internally operates its own emotional support, autistic support, and life skills programs. Approximately 10% of students are special education students enrolled in programs across the district. As an added support to these services, BWSD employs a full-time Transition Coordinator to meet the special education needs of the older students.

Capstone Focus

With a large population of BWSD students in need of specialized services like special education and EL acquisition coupled with the over 41% of students who are considered economically disadvantaged, new teachers to the BWSD are often placed in positions that other teachers bid or transfer out of to other positions. This phenomenon is not new to education; Coffey et al. (2019) describes how students who often require the most supports, or are marginalized due to color, race, socio-economic background, or difficult education needs, are often the students assigned to the newest, least experienced teachers. As discussed earlier, the diversity of the student population within BWSD is rapidly growing and changing. The new teachers being hired into the district, similar to

most areas across the country, do not mirror the backgrounds of our students. Nationally, predominantly white, middle-class females are hired for over 80% of teaching positions (Taie & Goldring, 2017). Teachers are then faced with not only meeting the educational needs of their students, but are also challenged with learning and understanding cultural and racial backgrounds. This aspect coupled with a shrinking candidate pool provides many layers of challenges for school districts.

Teacher attrition in the United States is about 8%. This number significantly increases to 17% among new teachers. These numbers are nearly double the attrition rates when comparing equally or higher achieving countries (Gray & Taie, 2015). Teacher attrition numbers in the double digits combined with declining enrollment in teacher preparation programs and a lower number of teachers being certified in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania places an increased burden on school districts to support and grow their young talent. BWSD is no exception to the expectation. Over the past three years, BWSD has experienced difficulty in hiring and/or keeping quality candidates as full-time teachers, or even substitutes, in the areas of Special Education, English as a Second Language, Science, and World Languages. This difficulty aligns with trends being seen across the nation (Beeson & Strange, 2003).

The BWSD is the largest employer of residents within the school district borders, supporting the community atmosphere and environment within the buildings. There are over 545 employees in the BWSD. The district is proud to maintain its own transportation fleet, food service program, technology department, and facilities department, totaling over 200 classified employees. The professional staff is made up of over 260 teachers and 38 administrators.

With the continued growth that is expected in BWSD, efforts need to be made to ensure that new teachers meet the expectations of the district. The district will need to place a renewed emphasis on the supports put in place for new teachers in order to keep new teachers in all positions.

Research Questions

The BWSD NTIP is loosely designed to help provide supports and skills for teachers new to the district. Closer examination of the current practices within the BWSD NTIP compared to research and best practices in both the educational setting and the business realm will be considered to ensure an effective NTIP for many years to come. The following research questions will be considered when exploring the previous research and closely analyzing the BWSD NTIP:

1. What aspects of the BWSD NTIP have been beneficial to new teachers with the district?

2. What aspects of the current NTIP were of least value in supporting teachers?

3. What are the perceptions of mentor teachers as indirect participants in the NTIP?

Expected Outcomes

Utilizing the research questions and best practices that are proven in reviewed literature, it is expected that the current NTIP will be revamped and refreshed to meet the needs of the newest generation of teachers coming to BWSD. Designing and developing activities and supports that are meaningful to all participants will be an integral outcome to the research. In addition to adding or refreshing the current

practices that are in place, validating the current practices of the NTIP are also an expected outcome based on the survey results collected from both previous mentor teachers and previous NTIP participants.

Financial Implications

Since the start of the 2016-2017 school year, the district has hired over 60 new teachers, and with expected enrollment increases, anticipates hiring at least 10 new teachers each year for the next three years. This estimate does not include new hires for attrition reasons. With this large number of new teachers, it will be important to acclimate them appropriately to the district in an effort to retain them for many years to come. From a financial perspective, retaining new teachers can be a great cost savings. In just the first three years, a new teacher will cost the district over $300,000 in salary and benefits alone. Not included in this figure is the time and training that new teachers receive through professional development, mentor relationships, and other activities to support new teachers. When these activities and supports are added to overall costs of a new teacher, school districts cannot afford to ignore the importance of training and keeping new teachers. The importance of appropriate training and retention is not solely for financial reasons, but certainly provides another reason to build programming surrounding best practices.

Summary

NTIPs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are developed at the local level. This flexibility allows BWSD to create a program for new teachers that meets their needs and supports them through the challenges of a teaching career. In turn,

BWSD is able to facilitate a NTIP that will give new teachers the support to help

students experience growth and success.

BWSD recognizes the importance of teachers in the education process.

Creating a research and needs based NTIP will create a meaningful program that will

allow the district to reap the benefits both financially and programmatically for the

duration of, what has the potential to be, a 30-year teaching career with the district.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Each year, schools invest a significant amount of time and effort to interviewing and hiring the best candidates to provide educational effectiveness within their districts. "Hiring is the single most important thing you can do to improve your school" (Mongeau, 2015, para. 35). Once the best candidate is found, it is imperative that the district provide the necessary supports to retain quality candidates. There are a number of factors that should be considered and addressed by school districts to help increase teacher attrition. Podolsky et al. (2019) have determined an induction program as one of five influences on teachers as they determine whether to stay in the profession. While many districts have already implemented an induction program, it is imperative to have a program that is meeting the needs of all of the participants. Too often, the induction program is a universal program and leaves many participants feeling as though they are not being fully supported.

Onboarding goes beyond simple paperwork and orientation (Davis & Shannon, 2011), and it must include support over a period of time. Other professions, including business companies, utilize comprehensive on-boarding procedures when orientating new employees to their profession or company. It will be important to review the best, common practices of onboarding new employees across professions. Focusing on the qualities of programs that allow for new employee socialization, mentorship, and professional development will be key in ensuring success. Placing an emphasis on the technical aspects of becoming acclimated to a new work environment and learning

protocols to be successful in a new position are important. Socializing employees to the way the company does business is just as crucial.

A review of the requirements for NTIP in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in the BWSD will provide a sound starting point to school districts in developing an induction program that will aid in supporting new teachers and impact the rate of attrition that will allow for a direct impact on students in the classroom.

The Art of Socializing New Employees

The Evolution of Employee Socialization

Onboarding is no longer simply filling out payroll and human resources paperwork that ensures you are paid appropriately and receiving the correct benefit levels. Onboarding has evolved to a complex system of events designed to acclimate a new hire to an organization and align them for success. Onboarding should be viewed as an organizational attempt in providing supports to the new employee by aiding in the reduction of anxiety, helping them best understand the new environment, and supplying resources for effective habits within their new position (Klein et al., 2015). Providing a high level of support for longer periods of time will help ensure new hires are fitting in to their new work environment and profession. The "fitting in" of new employees as part of the onboarding process has been described as a socialization period and includes many phases or steps to full or complete socialization within an organization.

Organizations have moved beyond the cursory paperwork protocols and are looking to mold their newly hired employees into a persona that best represents their product by adhering to the mission and goals that have been established. Businesses and

schools, as places of employment, spend a significant amount of time and money on the development of programming to integrate new employees and socialize them into the practices and beliefs of the organization.

Organizational Socialization as a Process

It is evident in the research that the terms onboarding and socialization are often used interchangeably, and describe very similar processes. *Organizational Socialization* is defined as "a process through which new employees move from being organizational outsiders to becoming organizational insiders" (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011, p. 51). Onboarding, as described by Bauer and Erdogan (2011), is the steps in the process by which new employees learn skills and gain knowledge to become successful in their job. This, in turn, helps new employees transition to becoming organizational insiders.

In 1979, John Van Maanen and Edgar H. Schein outlined six ways in which organizations approach socialization for new employees. Each of these approaches are contrasted in their explanation to provide a more wholistic understanding:

- Collective and individual socialization: Collective socialization refers to group or en masse experiences that provide the same, common experiences to new hires. Individual socialization, like internships or apprenticeships, provide unique, personalized opportunities for training.
- Formal and informal socialization: Formal training separates out new employees from all other employee groups. Informal socialization is less structured and often is a result of trial and error or on-the-job training.

- Sequential and random socialization: Just as the name implies, sequential socialization provides a systematic approach to onboarding. It employs a first, then, and last menu of trainings. Random socialization is when the steps of socialization occur in any order and the sequence is often unknown to the new hire.

- Fixed and variable socialization: In fixed socialization scenarios, new hires know the exact timeline to complete tasks in socialization. Variable socializations allow new hires to complete tasks when they are ready and/or comfortable. Often, variable socialization occurs when upward movement in an organization is not yet fully defined.

- Serial and disjunctive socialization: Mentorship opportunities are afforded through serial socialization efforts. Socialization strategies and tactics that do not partner new hires with mentors are described as disjunctive tactics.

- Investiture and divestiture socialization: Characteristics that a new hire brings to their role are utilized as part of the new hire's job responsibilities in investiture socialization. In situations where the new hire must assimilate to the new values of the workplace, the employee will need to forget old processes and experiences to develop the beliefs of the current organization. This is done through divestiture socialization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

In further research, Jones (1986) examined the socialization research of Van Maanen and Schein. Jones suggested that the six tactics described by Van Maanen and Schein could be better categorized into two smaller descriptors–institutionalized and

individualized. These two categories of socialization further classify the work of Van

Maanen and Schein into more comprehensive terms.

Institutionalized socialization to the workplace is described as training sessions

that all new hires are exposed to through formal sessions, group orientations, and mentor

programs. This classification described by Jones (1986) takes Van Maanen and Schein's

collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture tactics and places them under

the institutionalized classification. Individualized socialization identifies processes that

new hires learn along the way as they are actively working in their hired position. Taking

Van Maanen and Schein's individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and

divestiture tactics and placing them under the individualized framework described by

Jones further explains the individual role of the new hire and their need to be more

proactive in becoming socialized to the organization.

Qualities of a Comprehensive Onboarding Program

Current job market trends indicate that at any time, 25% of all employees are new

to their position, department, or organization. Additionally, workers in the age group of

18 to 37 will change jobs 10 times in their career (Rollag et al., 2005). These statistics

highlight the importance of socializing new employees effectively so that organizations

are able to reap the benefits of their new hires. The sooner new hires feel safe and

confident in their new environment, the sooner they will be able to assist in fulfilling the

mission and vision of the organization.

Onboarding provides for increased job satisfaction, increased job performance,

and also prevents against unnecessary turnover (Bauer, 2010). The stages of

organizational socialization or onboarding provide support and clarity through the journey of a new hire and their experiences within the organization. According to Bauer, there are four C's, compliance, clarification, culture, and connection, that must be considered and integrated into any effective onboarding protocol, and can be leveraged as strategical levels in the onboarding process (Bauer, 2010).

Compliance is the lowest level of onboarding and addresses the fundamental aspects of starting a new position. Items such as employee handbooks, policies, payroll documentation, and health and safety fall into this category. Providing information about job expectations and other related points of information fall under the clarification classification. Culture is the onboarding technique that gives new hires the ability to meet others in the organization, view welcome videos, and become acquainted with organizational norms. The final C of onboarding is connection, or providing opportunities for new hires to foster relationships and express their needs allows for connections within the organization (Bauer, 2010; Qualee, 2021).

The effectiveness of onboarding or socialization practices often cannot be realized until years after an employee is hired. However, onboarding processes and explicit training has been linked to overall job satisfaction in new hires (Bercu, 2017). Additionally, connections are solidified by asking staff about their experiences and needs. The training and support provided through onboarding and socialization tactics followed by the evaluation of the programming allows for new hires to continue the connectedness of the organization and has a direct impact on their attitude toward the organization (Israel et al., 2014). An effective socialization program for any new hire should include a way for feedback to be shared as well as provide an ongoing connection for professional

growth and development. New hires should be asked about their experience and whether the tactics and trainings were developed with the needs of the new employee in mind (Suggs, 2014). This perspective will allow the organization to be reflective in the implementation of new employee socialization and onboarding strategies.

Onboarding in Education

There are many similarities in the art of onboarding across employment areas. Onboarding in the realm of education is no exception to this. As seen through the research, socialization is one of the top priorities for nearly all onboarding scenarios (Bauer, 2010). In education, onboarding has been dictated by policy implemented by state legislation.

Induction programs were designed and implemented as early as the 1960s to support new teachers and keep them from leaving the profession (Serpell, 2000). Rollag et al. (2005) described that it takes nearly a full 20 weeks for a new hire to reach full productivity in their new role and organization. In the life of a teacher, and more importantly the students, this is well over half of a school year. Teachers must be at full effectiveness on the first student day to have the most impact on student learning. "Teaching is one of the few professions where novices are expected to perform the same tasks as veterans in the field," accurately described by Zaharis (2019) when identifying issues that face schools and new teachers. In addition to the expectation of performing at high levels from the onset of their career, Zaharis describes that the new teachers are more than likely experiencing some of the most stressful teaching loads and assignments in the whole school.

Often, new teachers describe their first year of teaching as "keeping their head above water," "day to day survival," or playing by a "sink or swim" mentality. New teachers who are left to survive these feelings without support are statistically more likely to leave the profession after one year. New teachers supported through an effective, well-developed induction program often are retained in the profession and have been found to have a positive impact on student achievement (Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Krasnoff, 2014; Wong, 2004).

Studies conducted at the University of Tennessee showed that students who had effective teachers over a three-year period of time showed academic gains well over 50% compared to students with less effective teachers over the same length of time (Sanders, 1996). Because school districts typically do not have the luxury of 20 weeks for teachers to be fully acclimated and operating at maximum effectiveness, school districts must find ways to support their new hires so they can be at full productivity on the first day of school. The support that new teachers are given early in their teaching career will have an impact on the new teacher's professional development for the duration of their career (Krasnoff, 2014).

Again, Mongeau (2015) shares that hiring is one of the most important processes for any school district. Arguably, supporting, training, socializing, and onboarding these new hires could be the single most important task after the hiring process is over. A successful induction program will be the key to this success. Each district must intentionally develop a comprehensive induction program that can be sustained in order to support and retain new teachers not only to the district, but also for the success of the profession (Zaharis, 2019).

History of the New Teacher Induction Program

What is Induction?

Induction provides support for new teachers who have already attained employment. Induction is not a probationary or screening tool to determine if permanent employment will be offered (Zeichner, 1979). Wong (2004) further describes:

> Induction is a systemwide, coherent, comprehensive training and support process that continues for 2 or 3 years and then seamlessly becomes part of the lifelong professional development program of the district to keep new teachers teaching and improving toward increasing their effectiveness. (p. 42)

Along with Wong's definition of induction, there is a historical pattern showing that induction has been defined by describing the goals of an induction program. Huling-Austin (1990) and Arends (1998) detailed goals of an induction program to include:

- technical training to ensure the new teacher is professionally ready to teach,

- socialization to district and school culture,

- facilitation of a comfortable and rewarding experience for the new teacher,

- providing opportunities for increased new teacher retention, and

- the meeting of requirements of policy and mandates from state and federal legislation.

Additionally, induction programs have been described as a list of common practices, procedures, and components. Components that have been commonly cited as part of a successful induction program include:

- orientation before the start of school

- reviewing documents related to working in the district (i.e. handbooks, policies)

- mentoring

- release time

- reduction in work load

- exposure to teaching practices

- common planning time with content or grade-level partners

- observations with constructive feedback

- regular access to administrator (Bland et al., 2014; Conant, 1964; Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll, 2012; Moir, 2009; Robinson, 1998; Wong, 2004; Zaharis, 2019)

Ingersoll (2012) discusses how implementing just one of the above-mentioned components of an induction program will have a positive impact on new teachers' productivity. The addition of multiple components into a comprehensive induction program will yield an even higher retention rate of new teachers beyond their first year. Kearney (2014) feels that induction programs are more important now than ever before.

Brief History of Induction in the United States

Formal induction programs can be found in research as early as the 1950s and were a result of the perceived inadequacies of teacher preparation and education programs in actually providing useful skill sets for new teachers (Elias, 1980). The creation of 5th year programs for education majors and teacher candidates were created

with the help of Ford Foundation grants to provide an internship-like experience for teacher education candidates to put the theory into practice (Elias, 1980; Serpell, 2000).

The 1960s provided even more insight to the needs of new teachers. Giving new teachers a voice as a result of a mounting body of research, attention was drawn to the experiences and needs of new teachers (Lawson, 1992). Prior to the 1960s, there was not much research that studied the needs of new teachers and their experiences and attitudes after their first year of teaching. Lawson (1992) highlighted the disconnect that teachers felt when comparing their first year of teaching experience with the content that was actually taught and emphasized in the collegiate teacher preparation programs.

In 1964, Conant released a report called *The Education of American Teachers*. In his report, Conant outlined the failure of American School Boards across the nation. This failure is attributed to the lack of support and guidance provided to new teachers. Many researchers credit Conant with outlining the foundation of early induction programs (Elias, 1980). Conant recommended five components that school districts should implement to support their new teachers. The five components that were recommended by Conant included: reduction of teaching load, assistance gathering teaching materials, mentorship, less challenging teaching assignments, and preparation to alleviate culture shock (Elias, 1980; Serpell, 2000; Zeichner, 1979).

In 1965, the Higher Education Act was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This Act supported the creation of the National Teaching Corps and "legally and politically set the stage for alternative certification programs" (Eckert, 2011, p. 933). The creation of this program was meant to be a mechanism for funding to support new teachers, but in reality, only implemented a pathway to support the employment of

teachers in high poverty areas (Eckert, 2011). Fifth year teacher programs and the establishment of the National Teaching Corps provided an internship-like experience and did not successfully provide support to new teachers in their first year as a professional (Serpell, 2000).

In spite of continued research for new teacher induction and support services, the 1970s and early 1980s did not have much significant activity supporting ongoing new teacher induction implementation. The increase of federal mandates and legislation during this era was the foundation for educational reform in the mid-1980s (Durbin, 1991; Sclan & Darling-Hammond, 1992; Lawson, 1992; Serpell, 2000) that then allowed for new teacher induction programs to become more prevalent across the United States. Along with these mandates, the mid-to-late 1980s also saw an increase in funding of these mandates to many states. By 1992, 46 of 50 states implemented new teacher induction and evaluation programs. Three additional states were evaluating and considering similar programs. The remaining two states, Nebraska and Rhode Island, did not have any policies in place or in review to address the support of their new teachers (Furtwengler, 1995; Sclan & Darling-Hammond, 1992; Serpell, 2000). As the 1990s progressed, the funding that was associated with some of these programs became unavailable. As the funding sources were eliminated, so were many induction programs (Arends, 1998; Furtwengler, 1995; Wang et al., 2010).

Induction at the State Level

Since 1987, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has required an induction program for all first-year teachers, educational specialists, and long-term substitutes in an assignment for at least 45 days (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2019). The

Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) specifies that the induction program be, at minimum, the length of one year, but it allows the local school district to create a program that could be implemented over a longer period of time.

In line with nearly all of the research that has been presented thus far, PDE also describes an effective induction program will retain teachers beyond their first year of work in the profession, and that new teachers who participate in a PDE approved induction program will:

- use instructional practices that improve student achievement;

- assign challenging work to diverse student populations;

- use standards-based curriculum frameworks; and

- accomplish the goals of the curriculum (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2019).

Pennsylvania School Code requires the induction program to include an assignment of a mentor to the new teacher and the assignment of activities to address diverse needs of learners in an inclusive setting. Diverse learners include students with learning disabilities and language barriers (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2019).

Important Professional Relationships for New Teachers

Mentorship

In 2000, Roberts proclaimed that, "Mentoring is a complex, social, and psychological activity" (p. 162). All too often do NTIPs only focus on the mentoring aspect of supporting new teachers. Wong (2004) shares that mentoring can be the primary pillar of a NTIP, but it cannot operate alone. Mentorship should be supported through other examples of socialization, orientation, professional development, and meetings

(Wong, 2004; Zembytska, 2016). Through their research, Behrstock-Sherratt et al. (2014) determined that although it is not the only factor, having access to a mentor teacher is one of the most valuable components to a new teacher feeling successful in the early years of their career.

The mentor teacher has significant influence on the development of a mentee's teaching practices. From the onset of the relationship, mentors help new teachers learn and adapt to the expectations of their school building, district, and the teaching profession as a whole (Wang & Odell, 2002). Through the practices of modeling, providing critical and constructive feedback, and on-going discussions, the mentor teacher has the ability to shape the professional practices of the mentee teacher for the next 30 years (Clarke et al., 2014; Hobson et al., 2009; Tonna et al., 2017). Often, the mentor teacher is the first and only opportunity for the mentee to receive socialization to the organization, having a profound impact of the mentee's developing opinion of the organization (Bey & Holmes, 1992). For these reasons, districts must ensure the requisite amount of thought and research has been put into partnering mentees with their mentor. The district should consider factors like success in teaching practice, ability to effectively communicate, and positive representation of the practices and beliefs of the district when looking for mentors to help support the new teachers. Additionally, mentor characteristics such as being a good listener, supportive, approachable, trustworthy, and empathetic should be sought in the selection of mentor teachers (Hobson et al., 2009; Roehrig et al., 2008). Tonna et al. (2017) describe mentoring as, "an important adjunct to teaching, because it influences and fosters the intellectual development of learners" (p. 211).

Advantages of the Mentor/Mentee Teacher Relationships

The learners in the case of mentoring are the new teacher mentees. Cultivating relationships between the mentor and the mentee is a key to the success of most situations. Just as teachers need to develop relationships with students and their families in an effort to maximize participation, the mentor/mentee relationship should be developed in the same way. Lock et al. (2006) outlined 20 ways in which mentors and mentees can work to enhance their relationship. The recommendations encourage both participants to be active in the process and become comfortable with being vulnerable. The relationship requires active participation from both individuals (Lock et al., 2006). Mentors should be prepared to listen to their mentees.

Advantages for the Mentor Teacher

Research suggests that there are as many advantages for the mentor teacher as there are for the new teacher mentee. Research from Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005), Simpson et al. (2007), and Hobson et al. (2009) shows that mentor teachers benefit from the mentor/mentee relationship by gaining new perspectives, new ideas, and improved teaching strategies. This research also shows that the mentee is valuable to the mentor by providing exposure to cutting edge teaching strategies or perspectives that the mentor teacher may not have experienced had they not engaged in the mentorship process (Hobson et al., 2009).

Mentor teachers often feel validated after participating in the new teacher mentorship program. Through this experience, they feel reassured of their own teaching practices and capabilities (Simpson et al., 2007). Due to this validation and the new-found experiences, mentor teachers also cite being reenergized and recommitted to the

teaching profession as a result of the relationship. The result of the relationship is a forced re-engagement due to the conversations between mentor and mentee (Hobson et al., 2009). Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005) reported that 70% of mentor teachers in Hong Kong felt that they benefited professionally from being a mentor teacher because of the opportunities, both formal and informal, to receive additional training and discuss teaching and learning as a craft.

Advantages for the Mentee

The overwhelming advantage of a mentorship program for the new teacher is the support and guidance provided by the mentor teacher. Scenarios describing the trainee teacher mimicking the master in all matters of content, delivery, and even vocal tone and inflection date back to the 13th century (Zembytska, 2016). When implemented appropriately, mentees are afforded the time to meet with their mentor teacher and reflect on the curriculum and their teaching practices (Tonna et al., 2017).

Earlier research and support of mentoring as part of the NTIP was largely fueled by the need to retain new teachers to the profession (Arends, 1998; Bey & Holmes, 1990; Hobson et al., 2007; Huling-Austin, 1992; Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Kralick, 2004; Tonna et al., 2017; Wong, 2004). Mentorship is one of the greatest reasons cited for success in retaining new teachers, and the more comprehensive the induction program, the higher the chance of retaining new teachers. Adding additional components to an induction program along with mentorship (i.e. release time, reduced work load, socialization, and orientation) also increases the likelihood of new teachers not leaving the profession after their first three years (Ingersoll, 2012).

Tonna et al. (2017) cited another advantage to a well-developed mentor/mentee relationship, which also aligns with an effective induction program. When an induction program incorporates a mentorship component and is comprehensive in its goals, new teachers are forced to identify their own professional learning needs. The comprehensive induction program provides an opportunity for mentees to interact with mentors in such a way that the dialogue allows for growth instead of the mentor teacher telling the mentee what to do, what to implement, or how to reflect on situations. This facilitated discovery of teaching philosophies through collaborative, purposeful conversations allows new teachers to be reflective on their practice in a supportive environment with their mentor teacher guiding and suggesting along the way (Tonna et al., 2017). Just as this identification and reflection of learning needs is an advantage, it can also pose a challenge for the mentor teacher.

Challenges for the Mentor Teacher

As teaching professionals, it is easy to stay isolated in the confines of the classroom. This feeling of isolation could lead to mentors not being fully committed to the process of being an available mentor for their mentee. Mentors often have a sense of feeling overwhelmed due to an increased workload. Typically, mentor teachers will have full teaching schedules in addition to taking on a mentor teacher role, adding more to an already over flowing plate. Mentor teachers are rarely given release time. These added responsibilities can lead to feeling overwhelmed and stressed, often without any additional supports from a professional perspective (Hobson et al., 2009). Mentor teachers should force themselves out of any potential isolation to be an active participant in the mentees' teaching careers. Mentor teachers should work to be present for their

mentee as much as possible. Building this relationship may be one more addition to an

already full plate, but as noted before, the advantages that both the mentor and mentee

will reap are priceless (Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Norman & Gansler, 2004; Simpson et

al., 2007).

The literature repeatedly cites mentor teacher training as a significant challenge in

creating the most effective mentorship programming. Research suggests that mentor

teachers could benefit from training similar to what an instructional coach receives.

Aspects of giving effective feedback after an observation and guidance on how to lead

classroom practice discussions are areas that most teachers are never trained on (Feiman-

Nemser, 1996; Huling-Austin, 1992; Kling & Brookhart, 1991; Tonna et al., 2017).

Coaching and challenging the mentee is difficult to do well. For mentors who are already

over-worked, it is often easier to share their own opinion instead of spending time

guiding the mentee through a reflective and thought-provoking discussion. Without

proper training and coaching, mentors may not be able to challenge the thinking of their

mentee, facilitate appropriate discussion, or force them to arrive at their own thoughts,

which would be an impetus for their professional learning and growth (Bullough, 2005;

Tonna et al., 2017).

Challenges for the Mentee

The success of the mentorship hinges on the foundational relationship that is

fostered between the mentor teacher and the mentee. Dobie et al. (2010) describes that a

safe space for the mentor/mentee relationship must be established before a relationship

can be built or fostered. Establishing a mutual respect between the individuals is crucial

not only for their professional practice, but on an interpersonal level. It is difficult for a

new teacher to place their trust and vulnerability in the hands of a mentor in whom they

do not feel has their best interests at heart. If a mentee is feeling a sense of judgement

from their mentor, the mentee will lose confidence in themselves and the mentor/mentee

relationship (Tonna et al., 2017). Mentoring programs should be developed to minimize

or alleviate the requirement of the mentor teacher formally evaluating the mentee. This

simple act will diminish concerns from the mentee about being judged (Dobie et al.,

2010).

   Tonna et al. (2017) details the lack of confidence that some mentees have in

themselves and their practices as a new teacher. This lack of confidence can be

detrimental to the reflective relationship that is needed for the two-way learning

necessary within the mentor/mentee pairing. New teachers must realize they have a

valuable perspective to offer to their mentor teacher. The mentee must see themselves as

an asset to the mentoring team. In order to add value, the mentee must feel safe and

confident to share their ideas and strategies and realize they will have a professional

learning impact on their mentor teacher (Hobson et al., 2009; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005;

Simpson et al., 2007; Tonna et al., 2017).

Relationships with Administration

   The relationship that principals have with beginning teachers may support or

hinder a new teacher's professional and personal well-being. Administrators have

multiple responsibilities within their school building, but most importantly, they set the

culture and climate for the building and the school's vision and mission. All of these

responsibilities require effective, clear communication from the administrator to all of the

teachers (Brock & Grady, 1998; Moir, 2009; Roberson & Roberson, 2009).

Administrators must be willing to support all teachers technically, emotionally, pedagogically, and socially, and be willing to provide guidance to their staff members (DePaul, 2000; Eaton & Sisson, 2008; Kelchtermans et al., 2009). Roberson & Roberson (2009) determined that the most critical role a principal can play is one of supporting the new and novice teachers in their buildings. Additionally, the nature of the principal's job is to lead change. Principals hold and use a power that elicits change and, in turn, an emotional response from the teachers in the building. The decisions made by principals will have an emotional response from teachers that will lead to an impact on the teaching and learning occurring in the building (Hargreaves, 2008; Roberson & Roberson, 2009).

Research conducted by Lassila et al. (2017) outlined that many new teachers will put a focus and emphasis on their relationship with the principal. In particular, the personal aspect of these relationships will be revered more than the professional side. In the research, the personal relationship is described as being parental in nature on the part of the principal. The new teacher feels a connection to the principal in this relationship because the principal is a support system and often listens to the questions of the new teacher. Teachers are attuned to when the principal shares power with the teachers but does not require the teachers to carry the decision-making burden on their own, without leadership. The principal's perceived leadership skills are very important in the opinion of new teachers and will impact the relationships teachers build with their principal (Lasilla et al., 2017).

Lasilla et al. (2017) described how perceptive new teachers are to the atmosphere around them. As supported by Roberson and Roberson (2009), the principal is directly responsible for the climate and atmosphere of the building. Lasilla et al., stated,

"Beginning teachers are very keen readers of the school atmosphere and situation, and they figure it out quickly if the poor atmosphere is due to the non-efforts of the principal." (2017, p. 499).

Relationships with the principal are viewed as meaningful when the principal creates supportive structures for teachers to experience success within the building and champions an atmosphere where teachers can build and sustain relationships with other teachers. The camaraderie and support amongst teachers is beneficial to the new teacher socialization process (Lasilla et al., 2017; Roberson & Roberson, 2009).

Through the relationship building process between the principal and new teachers, behavior norms and expectations are established, internalized, and understood. Principals hold the following expectations of new teachers:

- professional attitudes,

- adequate knowledge of the subject area for which they are hired,

- effective classroom management skills,

- excellent communication skills,

- belief in the expectation that every child can learn, and

- possession of the desire to help all students succeed (Brock & Grady, 1998).

In turn, Brock and Grady (1998) described the expectations that new teachers have of their principals. All of the expectations listed are based on communication. New teachers seek regular communication and crave affirmation and reassurance that they are exhibiting behaviors favored by the principal. New teacher expectations of principals include:

- communication to the new teacher on good teaching criteria,

- regular communication, formal and informal, with the principal by means of a regular, scheduled meeting, and

- regular visits to the classroom by the principal that include constructive feedback and affirmation of the new teacher's performance (Brock & Grady, 1998).

McCann and Johannesen (2004) conducted interviews of new and novice teachers. Their research findings supported that many new teachers have concerns around their relationships, or lack thereof, with their principal. Specifically of concern were the new teachers' relationships with the administrator who supervises and evaluates their performance. Levels of concern, anxiety, and worry rose when the new teachers felt that they did not receive specific feedback about their performance from their evaluating principal. The new teachers yearned for reassurance and knowledge that they were meeting the expectations established by their principal (McCann & Johannesen, 2004).

Ganser (2002) shared that when principals support new teachers and mentoring programs in their school, they are able to "maximize the unquestionable value of teacher mentoring as a central feature of the professional learning communities they lead" (p. 11). Principals cannot ignore or neglect their role in supporting new teachers. There is a need for the principal to build cohesion and fill the gaps of lost or unlearned knowledge and practices that occur when an established teacher departs from their building and a brand-new hire or transfer is integrated into the teaching staff. Schools that have large numbers of new teachers at any one time will experience a lack of institutional and career knowledge that is established with a veteran teaching force. This demand can be

incredibly draining on the culture and practices of a school building when there are many

new teachers on staff, or if the school consistently experiences high teacher turnover

(Darling-Hammond, 2002).

Challenges Facing Administration Relative to New Teachers

The face of the teaching profession has changed drastically over the last few

decades. The pathway to the classroom is experiencing an influx of candidates who

attained certification through non-traditional pathways and alternative routes. This

generation of second career educators are arriving with the intention of a finite amount of

time spent as a public service teacher (Peske et al., 2001). Often, newcomers to the

profession are selecting teaching as a second career or a capstone to their working life. In

addition to the "capstone" career teachers, the field is seeing an increased number of

young professionals coming to education as "early career contributors." The candidates in

the latter category are not looking to make a 30-year career out of being a teacher. Many

see the field of education as an opportunity to give back to the community or as a means

to figure out what they really want to do for a career (Peske et al., 2001).

Principal training courses have done little to teach or train aspiring principals on

the art of supporting and retaining new teachers. This becomes increasingly more

challenging when the new teachers arrive to the building with such a varied background

of experiences. Principals need to be prepared to lead buildings and support new teachers;

this includes those with alternate, non-traditional paths to the teaching force. In addition,

the field of education is seeing a large number of uncertified teachers arriving in school

buildings. This additional alternate path is mostly due to shortages in teacher preparation

programs (Ganser, 2002; Peske et al., 2001).

Those teachers who are arriving through the traditional methods of teacher training and preparation programs do not arrive without their own challenges. Abrams (2018) draws attention to the 20-to-30-year old new teachers that are entering the workforce as part of the storied millennial generation. Abrams suggests that as the new teachers of the millennial generation enter the teaching field, it may be their first time ever in the workforce. Millennials are digital natives and have always known that Google and Alexa are a way to acquire information instantly. These candidates will thrive in a school setting when their principals and administrators respond quickly and with an abundance of information. Principals should be explicit and create clarity when working with millennials, especially surrounding the topics of policies and expectations. This clarity will be especially important before looking to enforce, evaluate, or hold accountable (Abrams, 2018).

Principals and school leaders should have an awareness that millennials typically look to advance in their careers quickly. It is also imperative that school administrators understand and acknowledge that the millennial new and novice teachers could very well be the next cohort of aspiring leaders in the district. In their quest for speedy, quick, and/or immediate solutions or answers, the lack of a timely response from a principal may find the millennial new teacher searching for answers or solutions on their own. This search could potentially result in the new teacher leaving the field of education altogether. If the millennial teacher does not feel supported or valued, they will be quick to find an environment that meets their needs. Principals must be attuned to this need and predisposition, and be willing to provide the appropriate supports through regular

meetings and fostering robust, responsive mentor relationships (Gong et al., 2018; Abrams, 2018).

In 2002, Darling-Hammond argued that "school systems can create a magnetic effect when they make it clear that they are committed to finding, keeping, and supporting good teachers" (p. 12). Now more than ever, it is important for principals to play an active role in the support and retention of new teachers. Principals will see success in not only the retention of new teachers, but in the overall impact that new teachers will have on their school-wide learning community if they:

- build purposeful relationships with the new and novice teachers,

- support and foster the mentoring relationship with new teachers and their mentors,

- meet regularly, listen to, and respond to new teachers, and

- have an active role in establishing the culture and climate within the school building (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Lasilla et al., 2017; McCann & Johannesen, 2004; Roberson & Roberson, 2009).

Creating Meaningful Induction Programming in the BWSD

Although an induction program is mandated by the PDE, there is not a consistent model that is applied across the Commonwealth. Local school districts are provided a framework of topics that must be covered by an induction program, but PDE does not mandate how long the program should last or specifics on how to address individual topics. In accordance with the regulations established through Pennsylvania School Code, the BWSD has an active NTIP. The BWSD NTIP is a comprehensive, year-long program aimed at socializing and supporting all new professionals to the school district. This

includes: teachers, long-term substitutes, school nurses, school counselors, and all other educational specialists.

The BWSD NTIP aligns to the requirements of approval established by PDE. The goals of the NTIP (Baldwin-Whitehall School District, 2021) are, "to provide each inductee with a general orientation to the BWSD and to increase his/her knowledge, improve his/her teaching skills, and to assist in making him/her an integral part of our school community" (p. 3).These goals are met through participation in three days of intense orientation and socialization in August prior to the rest of the teaching staff returning to the district and through monthly induction meetings that address the topics of teaching and learning through the Danielson Framework and the PDE Standards Aligned Systems. Key components of the BWSD NTIP include mentorship, peer observations, feedback, and reflections.

Each new teacher is paired with a mentor teacher at the onset of the program. Mentors are selected based on matching certification areas with the new teacher. Mentor teachers are required to be in satisfactory standing with the district, recommended by the administration, and to have obtained tenure and Level II certification through PDE. As stated, new teachers have the opportunity to meet their mentor teacher during the first three days of orientation in August to begin the development of their relationship. The BWSD NTIP requires new teachers to meet with their mentors at least twice a month and complete a monthly report on topics that were discussed and addressed during those meetings. The meetings are not given a mandatory topic list as it is important for the new teachers to discuss pressing topics or concerns that are pertinent to their particular building or assignment.

Although new teachers are only required to complete one observation, new teachers are given a full day of release time from their teaching assignment to complete peer observations. The full day of release time allows the new teacher to have the opportunity to go beyond their grade level or team of teachers and perhaps even observe another teacher at a different building within the district. New teachers are required to reflect on the teaching practices that they observed and utilize templates provided in the NTIP manual which will guide their observation (Baldwin-Whitehall School District, 2021, p. 15) to then list ideas from their observation that they are excited to try in their classroom and items they are still thinking about or wanting to explore further (Baldwin-Whitehall School District, 2021, p. 16).

Teachers in the NTIP are asked twice a year for feedback. The first opportunity typically occurs in December/January. New teachers are asked to evaluate the applicability of the monthly meeting topics that they have participated in to this point. They are then asked to provide suggestions for topics that they would like to have addressed for the last half of the program. These suggestions are utilized to develop the remainder of the calendar for the induction year. The last opportunity for formalized feedback occurs at the end of the school year. New teachers are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the induction program, provide suggestions on improvement for upcoming NTIP topics, and determine the degree to which the objectives of the program were met. New teachers also have the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback regarding the program or their participation in the program (Baldwin-Whitehall School District, 2021, p. 13).

Lastly, new teachers are asked to meet with their supervising administrator at the end of the year. This meeting is in addition to their end of the year evaluation meeting for supervision and observation. During this meeting, the new teacher must provide their own reflection of the school year as experienced at the building-level. They are encouraged to share with their administrator both successes and areas for growth, their fondest memories of the year, or even what they wished they knew before the school year started. The principal will then share with the new teacher their assessment of the year and the progress that was made. Again, this is not meant to be evaluative in nature, but to engage in the reflective process. This reflection provides yet another opportunity for the new teacher to have individualized time with the building administration, which in turn, allows the administration to have another opportunity to make a connection with the new teachers.

The Need for Meaningful Induction in the BWSD

Since the start of the 2018 school year, BWSD has hired 67 professional employees (teachers, counselors, specialists, and nurses). Of these 67 new professional employees, 64 are still employed by the district. This staggering number can be attributed to two factors within the district. The first factor, and probably the factor that has the most impact on the number of newly hired teachers, is the significant population growth that is being experienced within the community. The second factor having a lesser impact on this number is an Early Retirement/Resignation Incentive (ERRI) that was offered to the professional staff.

The age of the BWSD community is in a state of transition; older senior citizens are moving out of their family homes for smaller, more manageable options, which opens

up real estate within the district. Younger families are purchasing these homes,

establishing roots and are sending their children to schools within BWSD. Currently, the

largest population growth is being experienced at the elementary levels. The district

anticipates this population increase to be realized at the secondary level within the next 2-

4 years. Where there is an increase of students, an increase in the need for teachers is not

far behind.

BWSD offered an ERRI to the professional employees at the end of 2018, and

again in the spring of 2020. Although it is not typical to offer availability of an ERRI in

back to back years, the district felt that it was necessary due to the uncertainty of the

COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of these offerings, 17 teachers retired or resigned under

the ERRI. The departure of these teachers required the district to hire new teachers in

their place.

BWSD also has a School Board policy that stipulates that new hires will be

granted years of service credit up to and including five years and nothing beyond. This

adds another implication for the experience levels of newly hired teachers to the district.

Having over 65 new teachers who have five or less years of experience in a public school

setting is an institutional challenge that cannot be ignored. ERRI programs give a district

the opportunity to part ways with teachers who are jaded or no longer in the business for

appropriate reasons. Not to be ignored, a district also stands to lose a tremendous amount

of institutional knowledge that retirees take with them when they retire. That knowledge

loss must be supported and gains in this area must be cultivated by induction programs.

With such a large contingency of new teachers, BWSD must ensure that the new

and novice teachers being hired are appropriately supported and trained in the ways of the

district. If the over 65 new and novice teachers are being made an afterthought, the district runs the risk of employing ineffective teachers for many years to come. Students will be the group ultimately impacted by the district's inability to facilitate a meaningful induction program for its new and novice teachers.

The population growth shows no signs of slowing in the BWSD and projections indicate that the district will need to hire at least ten staff members each year for the next four years to keep up with the growth. If that rate holds true, well over 50% of the teaching staff at BWSD will have less than ten years of teaching experience.

In school districts across United States of America, there are NTIPs that are implemented with very little focus on professionally developing the new and novice teachers. In many of these programs, mentoring is relied upon as the main component of the induction program. The mentoring relationship is often the only safety net that is provided to new teachers as they navigate the landscape of a new and challenging career (Wong et al., 2005). While BWSD supports a NTIP that is more robust than most school districts and incorporates more support than mentoring alone, the need for more specialized, individual professional development must be considered for not only the new teacher, but for mentor teachers and principals. (Ganser, 2002; Hobson et al., 2007).

The impact of a meaningful new teacher induction program cannot be underestimated. Wong (2004) appropriately stated why districts need to focus on when providing an induction opportunity to new teachers, "new teachers hired today are the teachers of the next generation. Their success will determine the success of an entire generation of students. Their success can be ensured by providing them with a comprehensive, coherent professional development plan" (p. 41).

CHAPTER III

Methodology

All new teachers in a school district are required by PDE to complete a NTIP. School districts are tasked with creating programs that check the boxes for compliance. BWSD wants to utilize the NTIP not only to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth, but to meet the needs of newly hired teachers coming to the district to establish themselves as professionals. A significant amount of time, money, and resources are dedicated to the process of recruiting, vetting, interviewing, and hiring new teachers. BWSD wants to ensure that these resources were well utilized by creating a worthwhile NTIP in an effort to support and retain newly hired teachers. The NTIP must provide a foundation for the new teachers being initiated into the district to support a long, successful career in BWSD. In general, new teachers have similar needs when starting a new position and a "one-size-fits-all" NTIP will likely support those needs. With the new challenges of teaching post-pandemic, significant teacher shortages, and the ever-evolving needs of a newly hired employee, BWSD must look at ways to create a more meaningful NTIP to support and secure the available talent for years to come.

Purpose

Now more than ever, it is important to recruit, support, and retain valuable teachers (Kearney, 2014) to BWSD. Teacher shortages are being seen across not only Pennsylvania, but the nation. In Pennsylvania alone, the number of individuals enrolling in undergraduate education programs has decreased by over 50% and the number of teaching certificates being issued by PDE has decreased by over 70% (Prose, 2022). Research shows that a comprehensive induction program will support and retain new

teachers to the district and the profession as a whole (Arends, 1998; Bland, et al., 2014; Conant, 1964; Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll, 2012; Moir, 2009; Robinson, 1998; Wong, 2004; Zaharis, 2019). The goal of this action research project will be to determine how the NTIP within BWSD can be adjusted to provide new teachers with more meaningful professional learning experiences that are directly beneficial to their immediate work.

BWSD already implements a comprehensive NTIP that exceeds the minimum requirements for programming according to PDE. In recent years, the large NTIP classes have included such vast differences in certification areas that it has been nearly impossible to meet the needs of all new professionals at one time. Teachers in an elementary classroom have different needs, questions, and demands than their peers hired at the same time who may be a school nurse, school counselor, or world language teacher.

The role of the Director of Employee Services for BWSD includes the responsibilities of advertising for open positions in the district. The Director of Employee Services is fortunate enough to also supervise the NTIP, allowing for the interaction with the newly hired teachers through the progression of onboarding and induction. From one month to the next, the activities and speakers planned for the current NTIP are well thought-out and implemented, but those activities only have direct applicability to some of the individuals sitting in the class. Rarely, outside of the first three days of induction, do all of the new teachers have a concept or skill that they can immediately take and use the next day to support their practice. Discerning what the needs are for the new teachers from year to year and finding effective ways to meet the needs of all the new teachers through the NTIP is the focus of the research questions. The questions below align with

the purpose of creating a more meaningful induction program for all new teachers in the BWSD. The end result will include aspects of the current program that are meeting new teacher needs, best practices from research, and topics specifically articulated from new teachers in the program and mentor teachers supporting the NTIP. The best practices and well researched topics will support new teachers in their profession, and show the value of BWSD through supportive and enriching measures. These supports and enhancements will lead to newly hired professionals wanting to continue their career within BWSD for many years.

The research questions that were developed to specifically support the action research outcomes are:

1. What aspects of the BWSD NTIP have been beneficial to new teachers with the district?

2. What aspects of the current NTIP were of least value in supporting teachers?

3. What are the perceptions of mentor teachers as indirect participants in the NTIP?

Setting and Participants

The BWSD is situated in the South Hills suburb of Pittsburgh, approximately ten miles from downtown Pittsburgh. The district covers just about ten square miles, comprised of Whitehall Borough, Baldwin Township, and Baldwin Borough. There are nearly 4,450 students in Kindergarten through 12th grade within the district. Currently, BWSD services a population that is 41% Economically Disadvantaged. There has also

been a significant increase in the English Learner (EL) population within the district over the past 10 years, approximately 9% and growing. In addition to the growing population of EL students, the district is seeing an increase in special education students. In an effort to provide the best services and supports, the district internally operates its own emotional support, autistic support, and life skills programs. Approximately 10% of students are special education students and are enrolled in programs across the district.

The district employs 264 professional staff members. Of those, 74.5 (28%) have been hired since the start of the 2016–2017 school year. Every new professional–teacher, counselor, nurse, etc.–is required to participate in the NTIP to meet not only the requirements of PDE, but those of BWSD. As part of the program, new teachers are paired with a tenured, permanently certified mentor teacher for the duration of their first year with the district. Mentor teachers are compensated each semester for serving in the capacity of a support system for teachers in the NTIP.

Mentor teachers have a very unique perspective of the NTIP. Because of their close work with newly hired teachers, they are able to see firsthand the short comings and the needs of each individual teacher. There is also a contingency of mentor teachers in BWSD who have served as a mentor teacher for multiple new teachers. They have seen the needs of the new teachers change from year to year or, in some cases, decade to decade. BWSD is fortunate to have a group of tenured, dedicated teachers who are committed to supporting new teachers in BWSD and, on a larger scale, supporting the profession. Their input and perspectives on the current NTIP will be beneficial to determine what aspects of the program are helping further the mission and direction of

the district, and what portions of the program should be revamped or redesigned in an

effort to support the needs of the teachers currently being hired by the district.

Teachers who completed and/or served as a mentor teacher in the BWSD NTIP

beginning in August 2016 through January 2021 were invited to participate in the

research project. There are 57 teachers identified who are currently employed within the

district and completed the NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021. All 57 of the

teachers were sent the survey cover letter (Appendix A) and the survey questions

administered through Google Forms, which included participator consent and procedures

for opting out of the research (Appendix B). Of the 57 NTIP participants identified, 22

completed the research survey.

Sixty-five current employees also served in the capacity of a mentor teacher from

August 2016 through January 2021 and were sent the research survey and survey cover

letter (Appendix C). Thirty-four of the former mentor teachers used Google Forms to

complete the survey that included consent to participate and the procedures for opting out

of the research (Appendix D). For both the NTIP participant and the mentor teacher

surveys, participants were assured of anonymity and personal, identifying information

was not collected.

Mertler (2019) recommends appropriate sample sizes when conducting research

using a survey. In research similar to this project, the sample size is small and totals less

than 100 participants for each of the surveys (Appendix C and D). With a population this

small, it is recommended that all responses are carefully considered when analyzing the

data. Mertler (2019) also recommends that the return rate on a survey represent between

10% and 20% of the total population surveyed.

For this research project, there were two surveys that were administered. The survey completed by participants who completed the NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021 yielded a 38.6% participation rate. Comparatively, the survey completed by mentor teachers had a 53.8% participation rate. These are both beyond the acceptable minimum sample sizes for research involving survey methods.

Research Plan

On their first day in the classroom, new teachers are expected to be just as effective as the teacher who has been teaching for ten years (Zeharis, 2019). Krasnoff (2014) outlines that the professional development that a new teacher receives in their first years of teaching will have a lasting impact on the rest of their career. School districts that develop a meaningful, valuable NTIP are establishing a pathway for teachers to experience success throughout their career. Induction programs relative to the field of education have only been existence since the 1950s; however, other employment fields have been implementing onboarding and socialization tactics for employee support and retention well before 1960. Examining these successful strategies will help support the development of a meaningful NTIP in BWSD.

In any field, a newly hired employee needs about 20 weeks before they are fully acclimated and able to reach full productivity within the organization (Rollag et al., 2005). For a teacher, that is well over half of the school year and represents valuable time in a student's learning journey that cannot be lost. It is known that teachers donot get an extended training period. On the first day of school, they must perform just as effectively as a veteran teacher (Zaharis, 2019). New teachers supported through an effective, well-developed induction program often are retained in the profession and have been found to

have a positive impact on student achievement (Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Krasnoff, 2014; Wong, 2004).

The onboarding of new employees has evolved over the years, from simple paperwork completion to a more comprehensive approach to employee acclimation and ultimately, a focus on employee retention. Klein et al. (2015) describe onboarding as the process of supporting new employees to help reduce their anxiety in their new workplace and allow them to feel a bit more comfortable. In many areas of employment, newly hired employees are given a training period in which they shadow someone for an extended period of time. While the field of education has student teaching requirements for graduation, there is not an on-the-job training period. When hired, new teachers are expected to perform at the highest level of effectiveness on their first day. This is a high standard that, if not supported correctly, could end in failure for a new teacher.

As part of the onboarding process, the socialization of employees should be a focus. Bauer and Erdogan (2011) describe the process of socialization as taking the outsider–the new employee–and making them an insider. This creates a sense of belonging, and also trains and supports the new hire in the way of the organization. Socialization is further explained and outlined by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) as six tactics that organizations should use during the earliest phases of new employment. The six tactics-collective and individual, formal and informal, sequential and random, fixed and variable, serial and disjunctive, and investiture and divestiture socialization–describe the methods of socialization that should be integrated. Jones (1986) further clarified the research of Van Maanen and Schein to explain that the individual employee is just as

much responsible for socialization as the organization. Socialization is an active process on the part of both the organization and the individual.

According to Bauer (2010), onboarding should include exposure and training to compliance, culture, clarification, and connection within the new employment environment. The integration of these four C's into any onboarding or orientation program for new hires will lead to increased job productivity and satisfaction, and will ultimately lead to less turnover. The effective onboarding and new employee socialization practices are linked to job satisfaction and organizational connectedness. These factors ultimately lead to more effective employees who are able to implement their knowledge as an insider and be more effective and productive employees (Bauer, 2010; Bercu, 2017; Israel et al., 2014).

Onboarding should be a focused, strategical training experience that is done in partnership with new employees, not something required of new employees. Suggs (2014) suggests that new employees should be surveyed and asked about their onboarding, socialization, and training experiences. This allows the organization to determine what was beneficial and meaningful to the new employees, but upon further reflection should allow the organization to determine where their efforts might be lacking and provide a means to implement professional development and training that is both needed and wanted by the new hires.

True onboarding practices came to light in the field of education during the 1960s out of the need to fill the gaps that were perceivably left by collegiate teacher preparation programs (Lawson, 1992). In 1964, Conant released *The Education of American Teachers*. This report outlined the failures of the system in supporting new teachers and

was the first to suggest the foundational components of a successful induction program (Elias, 1980).

The mid to late 1980s saw an increase in federal and state dollars dedicated to the development and implementation of induction programs by way of policy and mandates (Durbin, 1991; Sclan & Darling-Hammond, 1992; Lawson, 1992; Serpell, 2000). These dollars were aimed at attracting and retaining new teachers to the profession. By the late 1990s, the funding waned and so did support for induction programs across the nation (Arends, 1998; Furtwengler, 1995; Wang et al., 2010). Pennsylvania is one of the states that continued with their induction requirements as others began to pull away from the implementation.

Mongeau (2015) declared that hiring is the single most important processes for any school district. Kearny (2014), argue that a sound, research-based induction program is more important now than ever before. Hiring is the easy part. Retaining and supporting the needs of the newly hired teacher is critical to the overall success of student achievement, the district, and ultimately the profession. Once the employee is hired, school districts must find ways to provide professional development on topics that are meaningful to a new teachers' current practice. This is why a meaningful and effective NTIP must be established and implemented.

Wong (2004) describes induction as a comprehensive training and support process that is integral in the life-long professional development of a new teacher. While many induction programs are implemented for the span of a year or less, Wong suggests that induction programs should be a two to three-year process (2004). Huling-Austin (1990) and Arends (1998) detailed goals of an induction program to include:

- technical training to ensure the new teacher is professionally ready to teach,

- socialization to district and school culture,

- facilitation of a comfortable and rewarding experience for the new teacher,

- providing opportunities for increased new teacher retention, and

- the meeting of requirements of policy and mandates from state and federal legislation.

Several researchers (Bland et al., 2014; Conant, 1964; Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll, 2012; Moir, 2009; Robinson, 1998; Wong, 2004; Zaharis, 2019) suggest topics and strategies that should be included as components in a comprehensive induction program. Ingersoll (2012) states that implementing just one of the components will yield positive results. The implementation of two or more components will have a drastic impact on not only teacher productivity, but teacher retention beyond the first year of service.

The recommended components to be included in an induction program are: orientation before the school year, reviewing policies and handbooks, mentoring, access to administrators, regular observations with feedback, common planning time with colleagues, and exposure to successful teaching practices.

PDE mandated induction programs in the Commonwealth in 1987 (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2019). The requirements for an induction program included new teachers being assigned mentors and the implementation of activities and professional development surrounding diverse learner needs and inclusive practices.

Additionally, PDE states that induction programs should be a minimum of one year
(Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2019).

In BWSD, newly hired teachers are automatically included in the NTIP. It is a
yearlong program that helps to onboard and socialize new teachers to BWSD. It begins
with three days of intense training at the start of the school year discussing policies and
handbooks, introductions to the administrative team, training and distribution of
technology devices, and ends with a tour of the district. The district tour has recently
been upgraded to be a district scavenger hunt aimed at showing the newly hired teachers
the community and surrounding areas.

Throughout the year, new teachers are required to participate in a monthly
meeting that address topics that include: converting their Level I certificate to a Level II
certificate, obtaining tenure, successfully completing an observation, guidelines
surrounding educator effectiveness, the code of educator professional practice and
conduct, support for ELs and students with special learning needs, and a meet and greet
with the current Board of School Directors.

In addition to those activities and topics, a large component of the BWSD NTIP is
assigning new teachers a mentor. This mentor is assigned to help the new teacher through
their first year and be the new teacher's first source of information for questions
regarding procedural and even instructional questions. Mentor teachers are meant to be
the dedicated support person for the new teachers.

While mentor teachers are not required to participate in the monthly Induction
meetings, they are required to meet weekly with the new teacher. This gives the mentor

teacher a unique, inside perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the new teacher.

The mentor teacher's perspective on the effectiveness of the NTIP is valuable and

important to consider when determining the effectiveness of the NTIP and what

additional aspects would make the NTIP more meaningful. Those teachers who served as

a mentor teacher from August 2016 through January 2021 and are currently still

employed with the district have been included in this research project. This research asks

the mentors for their perceptions of the NTIP as indirect participants and solicits ways to

improve the program to help fortify the effectiveness of the NTIP.

While the current BWSD NTIP includes nearly all of the research-based

components, we are still implementing a "one-size fits all" program. The professional

development that is being included in the monthly induction meetings are topics that are

beneficial to most, but not all. BWSD needs to do a better job of making the NTIP

meaningful for all participants so they feel connected to the district, feel compelled to

build a career in the district, and, most importantly, be highly effective for the benefit of

all students.

Due to the recently felt teacher shortages across the nation, many new teachers are

coming to the profession by means of alternative certification programs (Peske et al.,

2001). It is also important to note that there are still some new teachers arriving at the

doors of our schools by traveling the traditional educator pipeline.

These traditionally trained educators also have drastically different needs than the

teachers arriving at districts 10-15 years ago. The new teachers of the millennial

generation will thrive in situations of extreme clarity surrounding expectations and

policies. Additionally, new teachers of the millennial generation expect an abundance of information at a quick response rate from administrators (Abrams, 2018).

The apparent dichotomy between the newer, millennial generation teacher and the newer teacher who arrives at education as a capstone to their working career poses significant challenges to those creating and implementing NTIPs. The challenge is implementing a meaningful induction program for all of the new employees while ensuring the mission and vision of the district is accurately represented for the success of everyone.

In the current economic landscape, employers are working harder than ever before to recruit and maintain valuable talent to their organizations. Schools and BWSD are no exception. Employees are leaving their current positions en masse in search of something better or even altogether new. Employers and organizations must focus on supporting their current employees through onboarding and socialization strategies. NTIPs in schools is the built-in way to ensure the needs of newly hired teachers are being met.

The induction program in BWSD satisfies the PDE mandate but further examination and scrutiny of the effectiveness of the program will provide insight on creating a more meaningful induction program that will help support and retain new teachers to BWSD. The support and retention of these teachers will ultimately have a positive influence on student achievement in the classroom which supports the reason for work in education each and every day. By examining the perceptions of the new teachers and their mentors who have participated in the NTIP, this research project hopes to support creating a more meaningful induction program through not only research-based strategies, but through exploring the needs of the teachers.

Financial Impact

While most of the financial implications of this research project are indirect, there are still fiscal factors that must be considered in the long term. Google Forms and BWSD Gmail, both cost-free platforms, were used to disseminate and collect the responses from all participants. There is a minimal cost associated with the time of the participants to complete the survey and for the researcher to conduct the survey.

Long-term fiscal implications could be seen once a more meaningful NTIP is developed and implemented for all BWSD newly hired teachers and professional staff. As the research suggests, when a meaningful professional development program is implemented, the retention rate of new hires increases. While this is again an indirect financial impact, the time that is invested by administrators during the hiring process has a noteworthy impact.

Teachers hired in BWSD are hired at a suppressed starting salary of $35,000.00. This suppressed rate is for all levels of education and experience for the first 45-days of work in the district. During the first 45 days, the new teacher must be observed and receive a satisfactory evaluation to move off of the suppressed salary step. At that time, new teachers are placed on the appropriate step that matches their years of experience. The district recognizes no more than five years of public-school experience. In addition to the experience movement, new teachers will also be credited with their education experience. These column movements on the salary scale include Bachelors, Bachelors +15 credits, Masters, Masters +15 credits, Masters +30 credits, and Doctorate. For a first-year teacher with a Bachelor's degree, they will see a jump from $35,000.00 to $45,920.00 on their 46th day of work.

In BWSD, the average new teacher will move from the suppressed salary rate to the Step 3 Masters salary scale. That salary is $51,920.00. The all-inclusive cost of a teacher in BWSD at this step and level for the 2021-2022 school year totals $96,379.48. This cost represents salary, taxes, health insurance, and Pennsylvania State Educators Retirement System (PSERS). During this first year of employment, all new teachers are required to participate in the NTIP, even if they have completed a NTIP in another district.

If that teacher leaves after one year, the district has not only incurred the costs of salary, taxes, benefits, and PSERS, but the hidden costs associated with the time and attention new teachers receive in the district. These hidden costs include but are not limited to:

- Professional Development

- Stipend for the Mentor Teacher

- Administrative Costs of the NTIP

- Presenter/Administrator costs during the NTIP

This all-inclusive cost is well over $100,000 per new teacher each year. The importance of creating a meaningful and effective NTIP can help avoid the costs associated with teacher turnover after their first year. In a district like BWSD that is hiring more than 10 new teachers a year for the past three years, the cost savings is significant.

Research Design, Methods & Data Collection

The development and design of this research project is a mixed methods study that is collecting both qualitative and quantitative data in a parallel convergent design. Surveys that collect quantitative data (demographic, content area, and years of service) and qualitative data were disseminated to both NTIP participants and mentor teachers. The qualitative data on both surveys include Likert-scale questions about specific aspects of the NTIP as well as open-ended questions allowing the survey participants to offer more specific feedback about the program from their perspectives and needs.

Many trends were recognized based on the collection of quantitative data compared with qualitative answers of both NTIP participants and mentors. The trends from the survey results of the mixed-methods surveys allowed for the perceptions and perspectives of the participants to be realized as they relate to creating a more meaningful NTIP.

An initial request to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) detailing the data collection and research plan was submitted on September 10, 2022. A request was made for clarification on how survey participants will be identified and how the survey will be administered. Additionally, the reviewer requested a letter from BWSD giving permission for the research project to be conducted. All of the additional information was provided to the IRB on September 23, 2021 (Appendix E). Final IRB approval was received on October 5, 2021 (Appendix F).

Using Google Forms, two separate surveys were created using the content approved by the IRB. Since the survey participants are all current employees of BWSD,

the Google platform is one that employees are very familiar and comfortable using. One survey was created for former participants in the NTIP and a second survey was created for those who served in the capacity of the mentor teacher. These surveys were created and edited in November 2021. Both surveys included the information about the research project and how to opt-out should a participant wish to discontinue participation. The informed consent statement was also included in the header of the survey.

Simultaneous to the creation of the surveys, BWSD School Board minutes were reviewed to develop a comprehensive list of teachers who participated in the NTIP as a participant or as a mentor from August 2016 through January 2021. The research was specific in not including anyone who is currently enrolled in the NTIP as a participant. Mentors who are currently serving in this capacity were included only if they were a mentor between August 2016 and January 2021.

The two surveys (Appendices B and D) were distributed through BWSD email using a contact group. The initial email with the survey was sent to both groups on December 11, 2021. Reminder emails were sent on December 22, 2021 and December 30, 2022. Both surveys were closed on Monday, January 17, 2022. The former NTIP participant survey yielded a 38.6% return rate and the mentor teacher survey yielded a 52.3% return rate. While the response rates were lower than anticipated, they were significant enough to provide enough data that trends and comparisons can be extrapolated.

The window in which the surveys were open was purposefully scheduled to occur over the winter break during the school year in hopes that teachers would not feel so overwhelmed and would be willing to spend a few minutes to answer the survey. This

philosophy also could have negatively impacted the return rate of survey responses.

Although there is not much evidence, the possibility exists that many teachers did not

consult their BWSD email over the winter break, resulting in many of them forgetting

about the survey. In retrospect, one additional reminder email would have been helpful in

the days before the surveys closed.

Validity

The participants in the research study spanned a period of five school years. Not

all of the NTIP participants and mentors participated during the same school year.

Because the participants were spread out over the five years, the data gathered from the

surveys specific to NTIP activities and perspectives show that the results can be

replicated for any year of the NTIP. While most of the responses from former NTIP

participants were from August 2017 through June 2021, the responses are consistent from

year to year. The Likert-scale and open-ended questions were collected through an

anonymous survey and designed to directly relate to the three research questions designed

to guide this project. The same study could be conducted for former NTIP participants

and mentor teachers for the years prior to August 2016 and after January 2021 in the

BWSD. In addition, administrators in other school districts with a fairly robust teacher

induction program could conduct the same research to determine what the needs are

within their program.

Triangulation of Data

The data was triangulated through examination of former NTIP participant

responses, former mentor teacher responses, and the actual events of the NTIP over the

years of the research cohort. Through the data provided, the research can determine the points of the NTIP that participants found beneficial or can build out a framework to support the areas that both participants and mentors would find more meaningful and beneficial to integrate into the BWSD NTIP.

This convergent parallel mixed-methods research design allowed both quantitative data and qualitative data to be collected at the same time and analyzed independently of one another. The independent analysis allows for the quantitative and qualitative data to come together in a more meaningful way and provide support for the overall interpretation of all the data combined.

Summary

The BWSD NTIP in its current implementation meets the requirements of the PDE induction mandates and on the surface is meeting the needs of the new teachers hired into the district. The current "one-size-fits all" program does not meet the needs of every new teacher hired. Research has shown that socialization and onboarding of newly hired employees is critical to enhanced productivity and retention of new teachers. The NTIP in BWSD meets the qualifications of onboarding and socialization, as well as incorporating key components established to be the most effective, but more research is needed to determine if the professional development is meaningful to all of the participants.

The research questions were developed to closely examine the current practices of the NTIP and gain the perspectives of former participants in the program and the mentor teachers that supported participants during the same time period. The surveys that were

administered will examine each component of the NTIP and determine how meaningful

the current practices and sessions are to the participants. The open-ended questions will

allow for participants in the research to share their feedback on the program and what

adjustments they feel would be beneficial to future NTIP.

Chapter IV will analyze the data collected from the survey results and draw

conclusions to the three research questions. Suggestions on how to make the BWSD

NTIP more meaningful for all participants will be included. Additionally, extensions for

how the research findings can be applied in more than just the realm of the NTIP will

also be considered.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis and Results

This research project was designed for BWSD to create a more effective New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). The research utilizes survey data from two sources to determine what aspects of the current NTIP are effective and influential, and also looks for feedback from both sources to determine what the NTIP may be lacking in its current format. Key to the analysis are the results of the surveys indicating the perceptions of both the new teachers and the mentor teachers who supported them.

To determine the effectiveness of the current NTIP, surveys were administered to collect qualitative and quantitative data on different aspects of the program. Survey responses were received and analyzed from current teachers in BWSD who have recently completed the NTIP and from current teachers who have recently served in the capacity of a mentor to a new teacher completing the NTIP.

This research project will provide valuable data for BWSD to support new teachers as they start their career in the district. The results of the survey and trends in the feedback will be presented in this chapter. The contents of this chapter will be organized into the following sections: Data Analysis, Results, Discussion, and Summary.

Data Analysis

Surveys were developed and administered to collect qualitative and quantitative data from NTIP participants and supporting mentor teachers. Surveys were sent to those associated with the NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021. Demographic data from each group was analyzed to further classify and understand the responses from the participants. This data will be instrumental in examining trends among not only grade

level and subject matter teachers, but also in examining the experiences from one year to the next within the NTIP. Survey responses were collected using Google Forms and the charts and graphs generated from the responses are shown in the Results section.

Both surveys included demographic, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions to collect details on both specific aspects of the current NTIP, and on areas that could be improved upon. Statistical analysis of each question was utilized to determine the significance of the results and will further support future implementation or change relative to that aspect of the NTIP. Open-ended questions were examined for common themes and key words to determine similar trends in responses among the participants. Not only were trends between participants identified, but patterns among individual survey participants will be highlighted, especially in the event of overly neutral or negative responses. Finally, commonalities between responses from the NTIP participants and the mentor teachers will be examined to further develop and enhance the NTIP experience.

Triangulation of Data

The data in this convergent parallel mixed methods design, is used to support the validity of the data and triangulate the quantitative and qualitative data over a series of five different cohorts. The five cohorts were all represented by different years, participants in the NTIP, and in some cases, programming. Through environmental triangulation, the factors of different participants over different years of the NTIP support the validity of the data that was collected.

Results

The survey questions were developed to answer the research questions for this study. The three research questions were specifically targeted toward either the NTIP participants or toward the mentor teachers who supported the program. This section will identify the survey results that support the specific research questions.

NTIP Participant Survey Results

The NTIP participant survey was sent to 57 current BWSD teachers who completed the BWSD NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021. Of the 57 teachers who received the survey, 22 participants completed the online Google Forms survey. Each school building in the district was equally represented through the survey responses.

The results of the NTIP participant survey will be used to address the following research questions:

- What aspects of the BWSD NTIP have been beneficial to new teachers with the district?

- What aspects of the current NTIP were of least value in supporting teachers?

Each survey participant was asked to share demographic data. This data allowed the participants to remain anonymous, but gave context to the perceptions they shared. All survey respondents who participated in the NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021 reported that they were assigned a mentor teacher and all but two reported that they were a Board approved, contracted teacher while participating in the NTIP.

All cohorts from August 2016 through January 2021 were represented in the survey results, but not evenly. The most participants were from the most recent cohort of NTIP, participants in the NTIP of 2020-2021. Figure 1 shows there were eight

respondents (36.4%) from the 2020-2021 cohort, four respondents (18.2%) from the

2019-2020 cohort, five respondents (22.7%) from 2018-2019, four respondents (18.2%)

from the 2017-2018 cohort, and only one respondent (4.5%) from the 2016-2017 NTIP

cohort.

Those respondents who participated during the 2020-2021 did not receive the

same, in-person experience compared to the other cohorts. The COVID-19 pandemic

required many sessions of the NTIP to be revised, revamped or altogether eliminated.

This needs to be understood when evaluating the data for each NTIP session and

perspective during the 2020-2021 cohort year.

Figure 1

Year of NTIP Participation

What year did you complete the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)?
22 responses

- 2020-2021
- 2019-2020
- 2018-2019
- 2017-2018
- 2016-2017
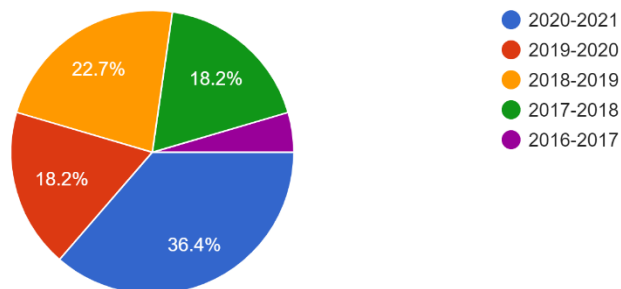
The survey participants indicated the educational area or grade level bands in

which they were working while completing the NTIP (Figure 2). Most respondents,

31.8% (7 respondents), were actively working in elementary education during their NTIP.

Based on responses from the survey, 22.7% (5 respondents) were assigned to middle

level learners, 27.3% (6 respondents) were at the high school level, 13.6% of respondents

(3 individuals) were working in the area of English as a Second Language (ESL) or

intervention specialist, and one (1) respondent indicated the option of other.

Based on triangulation of other data, it is assumed that this respondent was

assigned to more than one grade level band and could not simply select one area for their

time during NTIP. Upon further examination of this respondent's data, it should be

cautioned that the responses do not fall within the statistical significance of the other

respondents ultimately skewing the data. Each individual response from this respondent,

especially on the Likert-scale questions, should be more closely scrutinized for overall

application to the research question findings.

Figure 2

Educational Area During the NTIP
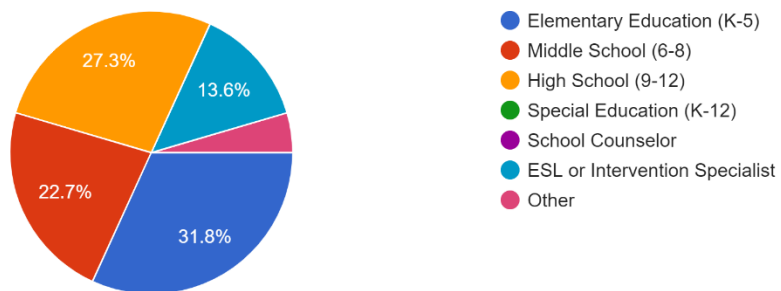
Figure 3 shows the level of education attained by the respondents to the NTIP

participant survey. Seventeen of the 22 respondents attained educational levels beyond a

bachelor's degree.

Figure 3

Highest Level of Education During the NTIP

At the time you completed the BWSD NTIP, what was your highest level of education attained?
22 responses

- Bachelors Degree
- Bachelors +15 or more
- Masters Degree
- Masters +15 or more
- Doctoral Degree
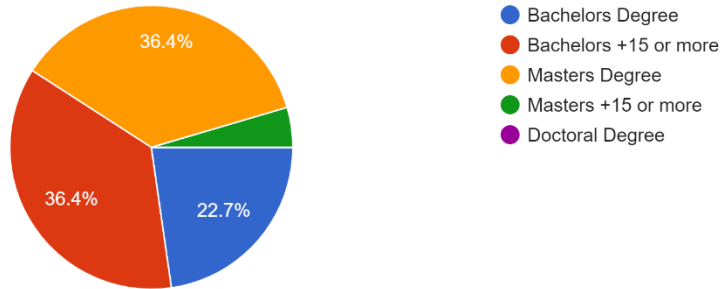
Figure 4 shows teaching experience acquired by the respondents prior to completing the NTIP at BWSD. The results show nearly 70% of NTIP participants had four or more years of teaching experience before completing the BWSD NTIP, but only 18.2% (4 respondents) acquired tenure prior to being hired by BWSD shown below in Figure 5.

Figure 4

Years of Teaching Experience Prior to BWSD NTIP

How many years of teaching experience did you have prior to being hired by the Baldwin-Whitehall
School District?
22 responses

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- 10+
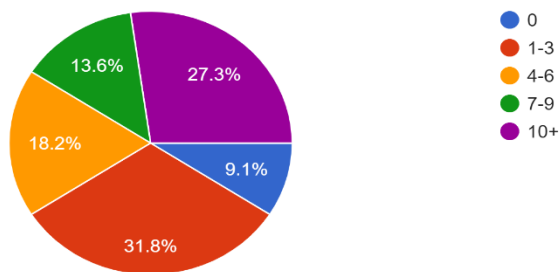
Figure 5

Tenure Acquired Before BWSD Employment

Prior to being hired by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District, did you acquire tenure in Pennsylvania?

22 responses
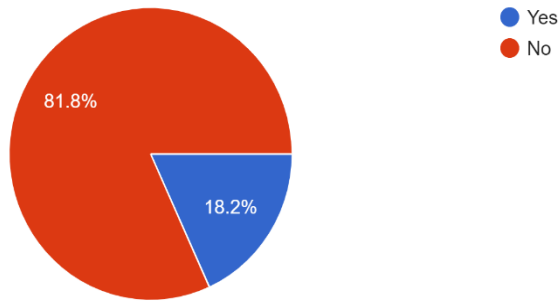
Figure 6, also below, shows that 16 of the 22 respondents (72.7%) completed an

Induction program in another school district before being hired by BWSD and

completing the BWSD NTIP.

Figure 6

Prior Completion of an Induction Program

Prior to completing the BWSD NTIP, did you complete an Induction program in any other public school district?

22 responses
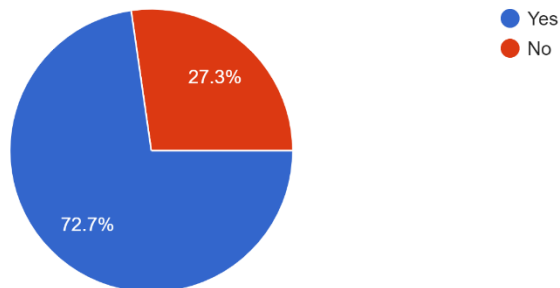
Figure 7 shows an overall feeling from the NTIP participants relative to their experiences. Nearly all respondents, 95.5%, are willing to serve as a mentor teacher for another newly hired BWSD teacher.

Figure 7

Willing to Serve as a Mentor Teacher in the Future

Since completing the NTIP, would you consider being a mentor teacher for a new teacher starting their career with BWSD?
22 responses

- Yes
- I have already served as a mentor teacher
- No thank you

95.5%
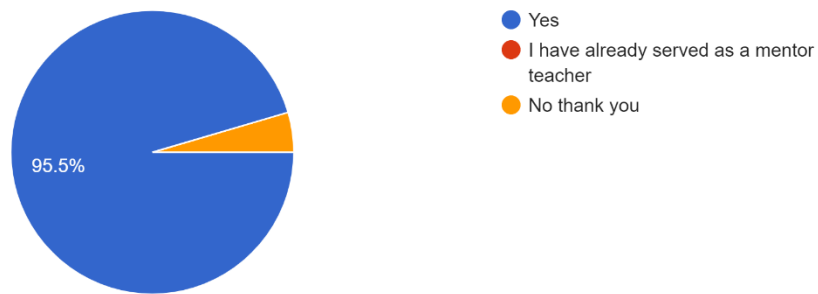
Figure 8 shows that all new teachers feel that the NTIP is valuable for new teachers and would recommend it to another new teacher, but 52.9% of respondents feel that there is room for improvement.

Figure 8

Recommend the Program to a New Teacher

In reflecting on the NTIP, would you overall recommend the program to a new teacher?
34 responses

- Absolutely!
- It was helpful, but there is room for improvements.
- No, it was a waste of time.

52.9%

47.1%
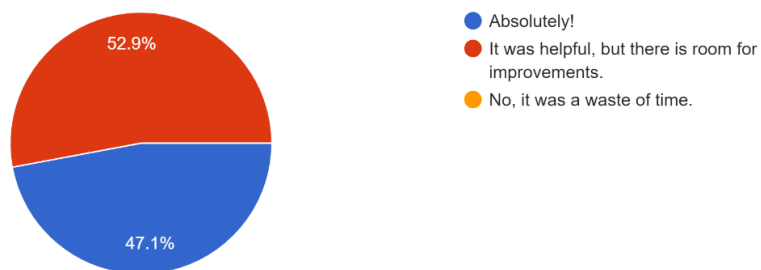
There were two categories of Likert-scale type statements that survey respondents were asked to complete. They are categorized as Agreement and Satisfaction Statements. The first set of Likert-scale Agreement Statements collected quantitative data in terms of agreement or disagreement for overall aspects of the NTIP. Respondents had the option to select a number ranging from one to five with the number one representing Strongly Disagree and the number five representing Strongly Agree. Respondents who selected the number three on the scale were assumed to have a neutral stance.

The first Agreement Statement, "I got what I expected from the NTIP," found that 86.4% of NTIP participants either agreed or strongly agreed that their expectations were met while participating in the NTIP (Figure 9). Three participants selected a neutral answer of three on the scale. Middle school teachers had the highest level of agreement with the statement and high school teacher responses had the most variation.

Figure 9

Agreement Statement #1 – I Got What I Expected.

I got what I expected from the NTIP.
22 responses
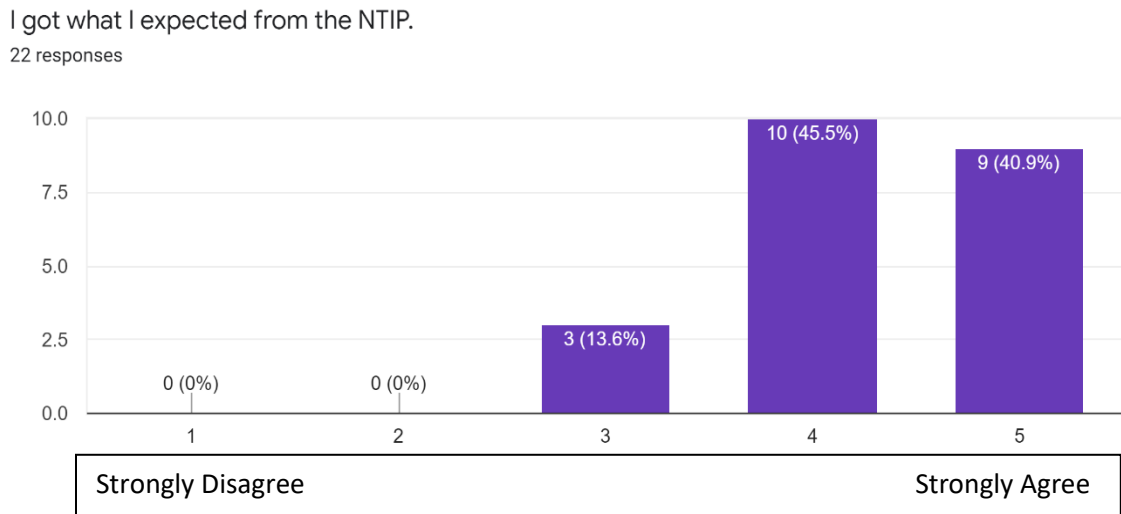
Survey respondents were asked if they agreed that sufficient time was dedicated to the NTIP. There was overall agreement with this statement from all grade-level bands of teachers (Figure 10). While 59.1% of NTIP participants strongly agreed with this statement, most of this strong agreement came from high school and elementary school teachers. On average, middle school teachers agreed with the statement. Again, three respondents selected the neutral option and two of those same three respondents selected the neutral option for the previous question.

Figure 10

Agreement Statement #2 – Sufficient Time Dedicated.

Sufficient time was dedicated to the NTIP.
22 responses

Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
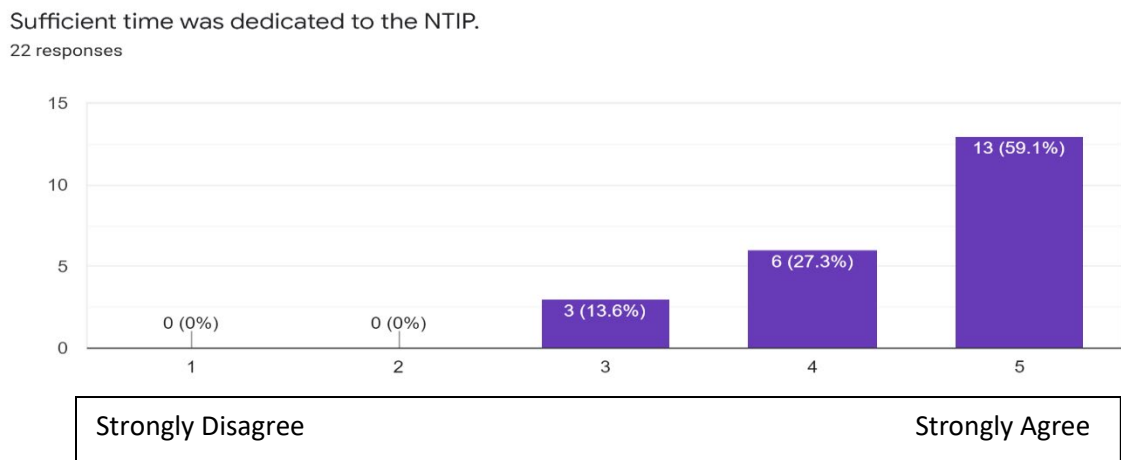
There is overwhelming agreement from all NTIP participants that the staff members presenting topics in the NTIP sessions were knowledgeable in the subjects they addressed (Figure 11). All respondents strongly agreed with this statement with the exception of two. One Elementary level teacher agreed with the statement and the only other respondent to agree is the same respondent who selected neutral options for the other two questions.

In addition to the majority of participants strongly agreeing on the staff knowledge, they also overwhelmingly strongly agreed (95.5%) with the Agreement

Statement #3 that the staff participating in the NTIP were professional in their approach.

One Middle School teacher only agreed with the statement that staff members involved

with the NTIP were professional.

Figure 11

Agreement Statement #3 – Knowledgeable NTIP Staff

The Staff conducting the NTIP sessions were knowledgeable in the subject area they presented.
22 responses
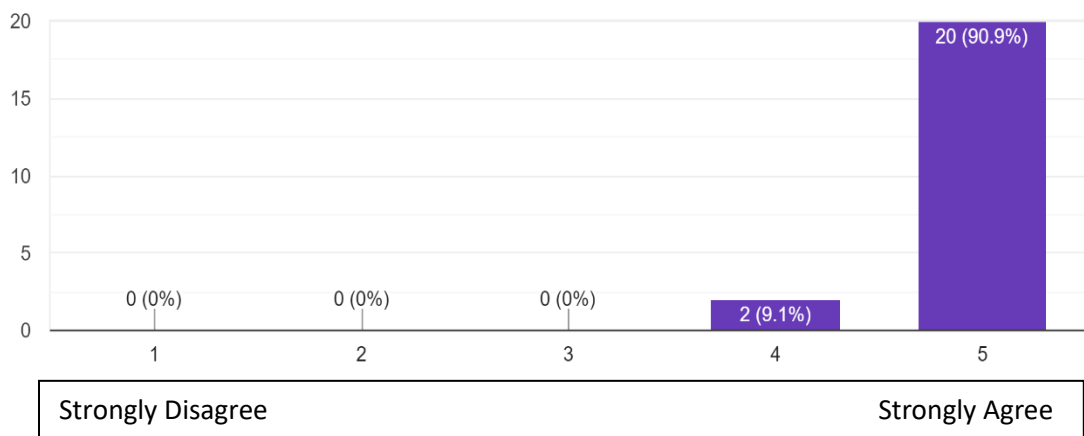
There was some disagreement with the next statement: "The information covered

in the NTIP helped me to feel confident as a new teacher in BWSD" (Figure 12).

However, a majority of the respondents 81.8% either agreed or strongly agreed with the

statement. The single respondent who expressed disagreement with this statement was an

Elementary level teacher. As with the previous three statements, there were three

respondents that selected the neutral option. Again, we see the same respondent who has

consistently selected a neutral option for previous statements selecting the neutral option

for this statement.

Figure 12

Agreement Statement #4 – Helped Me Feel Confident

The information covered in the NTIP helped me to feel confident as a new teacher in the BWSD.
22 responses

0 (0%)	1 (4.5%)	3 (13.6%)	10 (45.5%)	8 (36.4%)
1	2	3	4	5

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
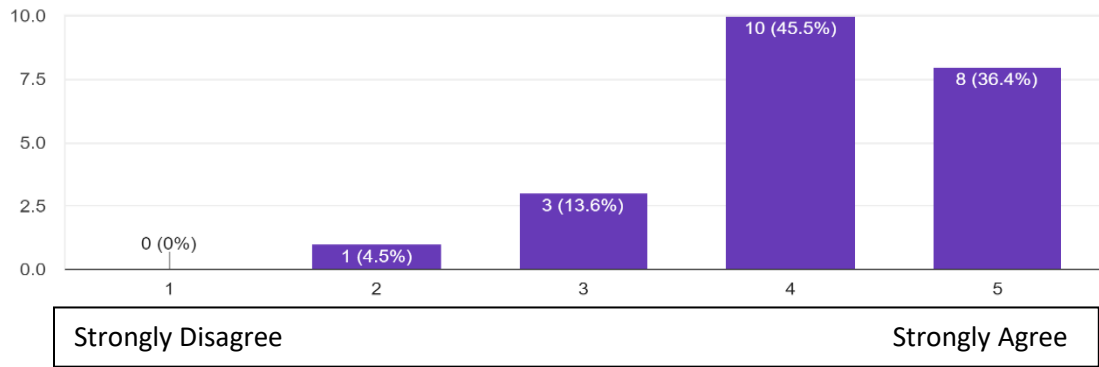
Over 45% of respondents selected the neutral response relative to sufficient time being spent on building topics (Figure 13). These 10 respondents represented all grade-level bands. Five Middle and High School teacher respondents (22.7%) agreed that sufficient time was spent on building level topics, while four respondents (18.2%) from all grade-level bands strongly agreed with the statement.

Figure 13

Agreement Statement #5 – Sufficient Time Dedicated to Building Topics

Sufficient time was dedicated to individual building topics throughout the NTIP.
22 responses

0 (0%)	3 (13.6%)	10 (45.5%)	5 (22.7%)	4 (18.2%)
1	2	3	4	5

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
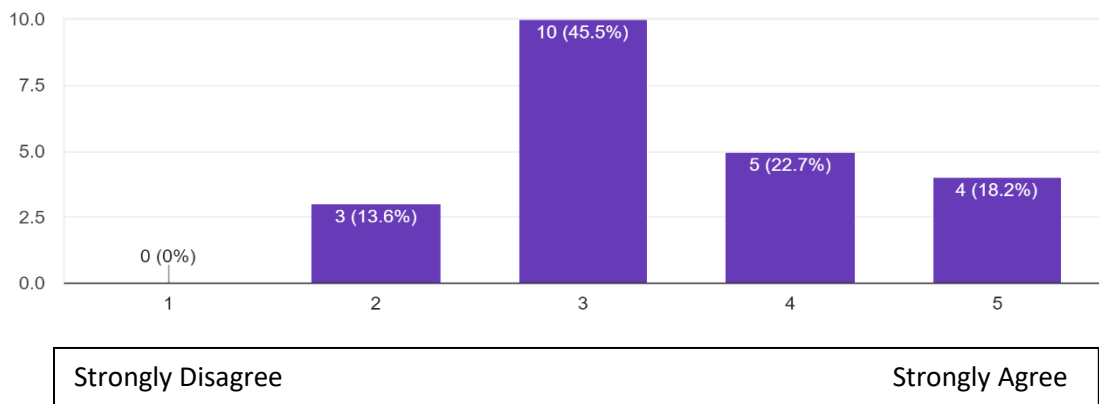
Figure 14 shows that 63.6% of respondents representative of all grade-level bands either agree or strongly agree that sufficient time was dedicated to their individual concerns as a new teacher in BWSD. The single respondent who disagreed with this statement is the same individual that selected "Other" as their certification level and a neutral response to many of the previous statements. Three Elementary level teachers, two Middle School teachers, one ESL teacher, and one High School teacher selected the neutral response for this statement, accounting for 31.8% of all respondents to this Likert-scale statement.

Figure 14

Agreement Statement # 6 – Sufficient Time Dedicated to My Concerns

Sufficient time was dedicated to my concerns and needs as a new teacher in the BWSD.
22 responses

0 (0%)	1 (4.5%)	7 (31.8%)	9 (40.9%)	5 (22.7%)
1	2	3	4	5

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
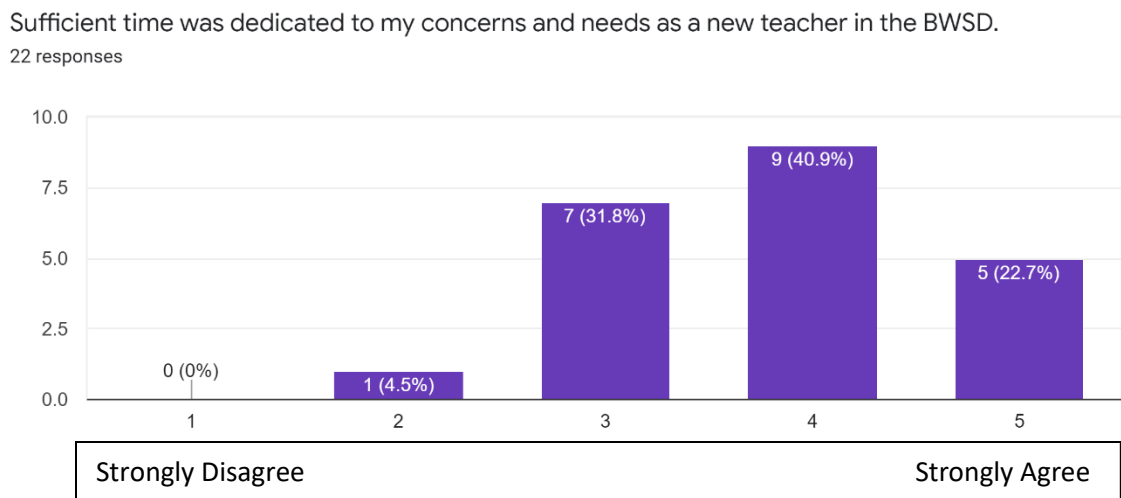
Agreement Statement #7, "The NTIP allowed me to form relationships with co-workers and other staff members," yielded an overall agreement level of 68.1%; however, seven respondents (31.8%) chose the neutral response. Of those that either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 30.7% were high school teachers, 23.1% were middle school teachers, 30.7% were elementary level teachers, 7.7% were ESL teachers, and 7.7% classified themselves in the "Other" grade level category. Figure 15

shows 9.1% of respondents, one elementary level teacher and one high school teacher, disagreed with the statement.

Figure 15

Agreement Statement #7 – NTIP Allowed Me to Form Relationships

The NTIP allowed me to form relationships with co-workers and other staff members.
22 responses
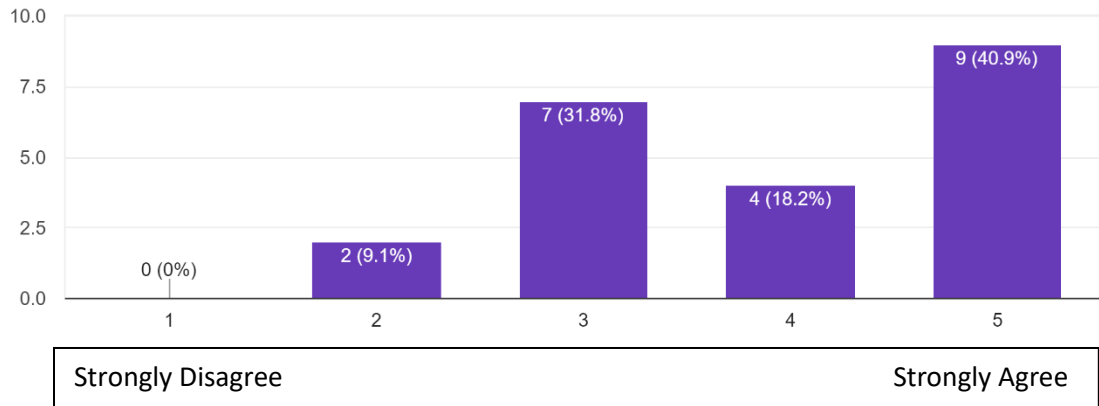
Figure 16 shows an evenly distributed response pattern from the respondents. The statement, "I would make changes to the topics presented in the NTIP," like the previous two statements, garnered a 31.8% neutral response rate from the NTIP participants. While these three statements are not related in anyway, it is important to note that there is not a pattern or a trend associated with the respondents of these three Agreement Statements.

Of the seven elementary level teachers who responded to this statement, 57.1% would agree to make changes or were neutral on the subject, compared to 60% of high school level teachers who would not make changes to the presented topics. Only 13.6% of the respondents, represented by elementary level, ESL, and middle school teachers, have a strong opinion regarding Agreement Statement #8.

Figure 16

Agreement Statement #8 – I Would Make Changes to NTIP

I would make changes to the topics presented in the NTIP.
22 responses
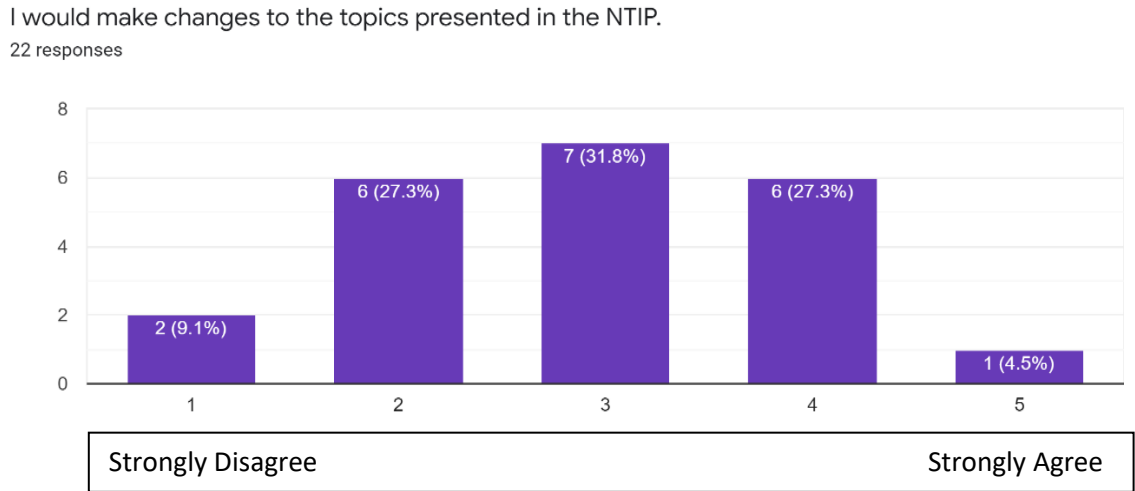
One elementary level teacher (4.5%) disagreed with the statement, "I gained a lot from my relationship with my assigned mentor teacher" (Figure 17). Exactly 50% of the respondents strongly agreed to gaining a lot through their mentor teacher relationship. Of those who strongly agreed with Agreement Statement #9, 45.4% were elementary level teachers. Five additional respondents (22.7%) agreed with the statement. While this time not as high, the neural response was chosen by 5 (22.7%) of the NTIP participants.

Figure 17

Agreement Statement #9 – I Gained from My Mentor Teacher Relationship

I gained a lot from my relationship with my assigned mentor teacher.
22 responses
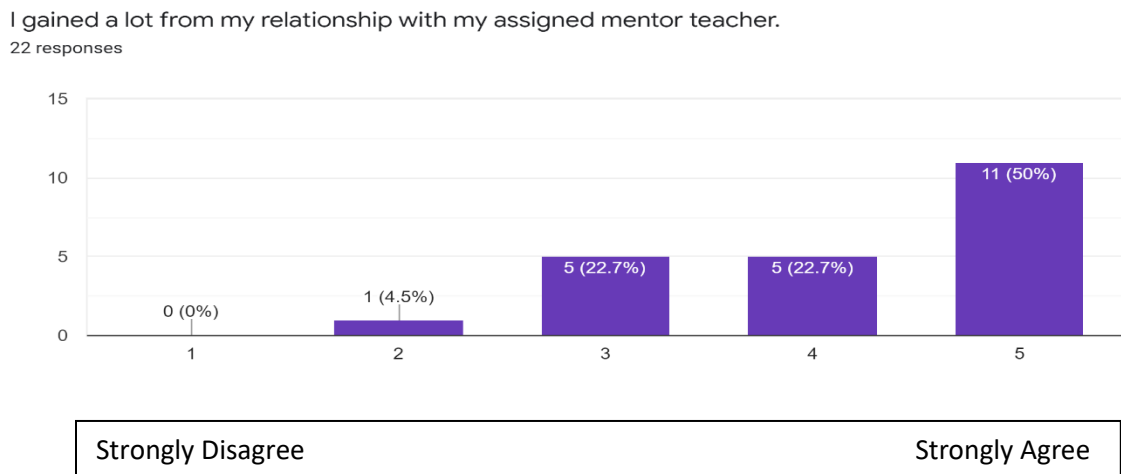
The second set of Likert-scale questions addressed specific topics that were presented to the participants in the NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021. These 11 Satisfaction Statements collected quantitative data in terms of satisfaction or dissatisfaction for the specific topics addressed through the NTIP. Respondents had the option to select a number ranging from one to five with the number one representing Very Dissatisfied and the number five representing Strongly Satisfied. Respondents who selected the number three on the scale were assumed to have a neutral stance.

This first Satisfaction Statement, "Introduction to the Administrative Staff and Other New Teachers," garnered an overall satisfaction rating from 72.7% of the respondents (Figure 18). Four, or 18.1%, remained neutral on the topic. All four of these respondents were from the middle and high school level teacher categories and all of the neutral respondents had seven or more years of teaching experience prior to completing the BWSD NTIP.

Figure 18

Satisfaction Statement #1 – Intro to Administrative Staff and New Teachers

Introduction to Administrative Staff and other New Teachers
22 responses
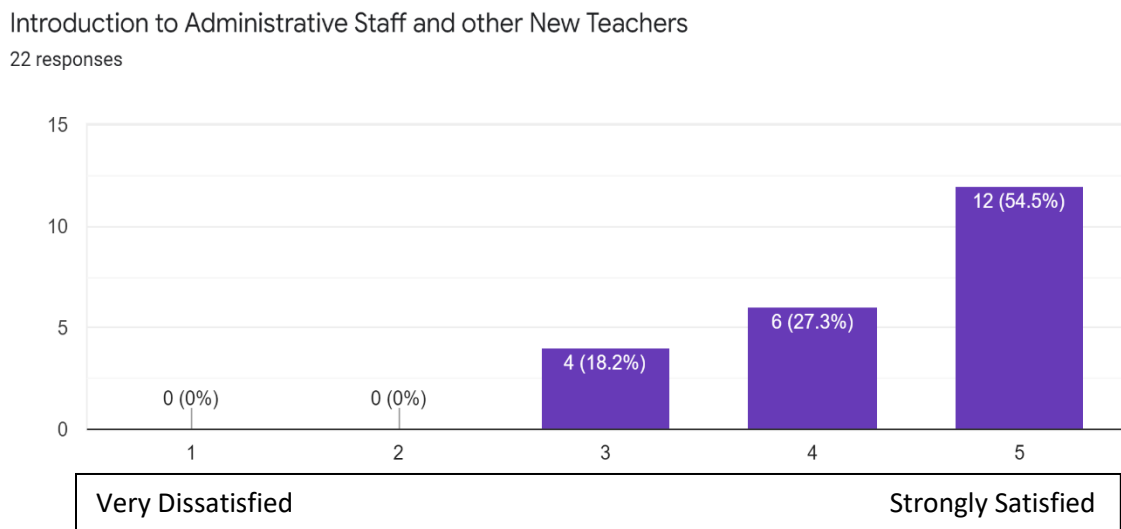
Figure 19 represents the satisfaction level with the NTIP Explanation of district Policies and Procedures. As seen in the Agreement Statements previously outlined, the single respondent who identified as "Other" for their educational area is the single dissatisfied outlier for Satisfaction Statement #2. Overall, 19 of the 22 respondents (86.3%) expressed satisfaction with the topic. One hundred percent of all elementary and high school teachers indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with explanation of district policies and procedures.

Figure 19

Satisfaction Statement #2 – Explanation of District Policies and Procedures

Explanation of District Policies and Procedures
22 responses
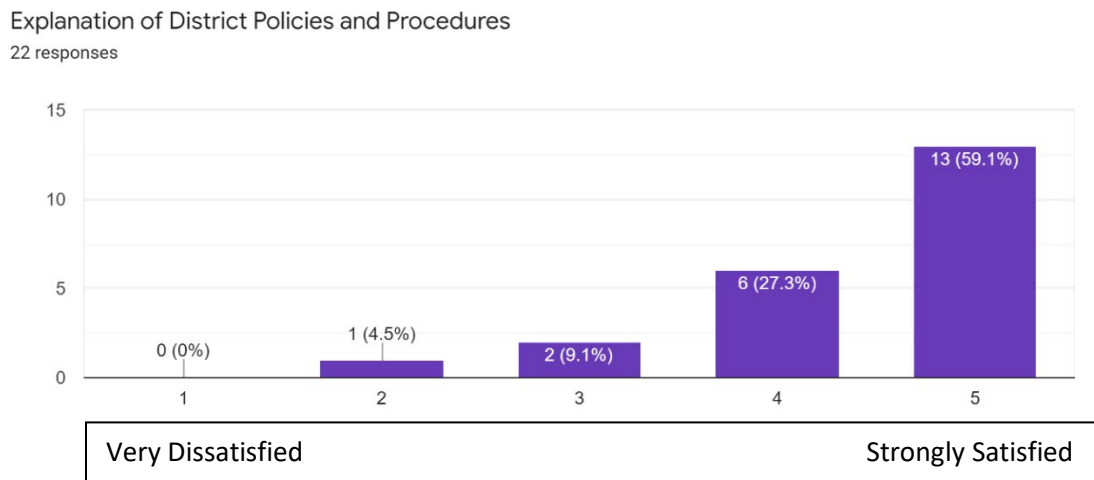
When examining the data surrounding the topic of the district Tour, there is a wide variety of responses across all educational area teachers. Figure 20 shows the distribution of responses. Five respondents (22.7%) indicated they were very satisfied, seven respondents, or 31.8%, selected satisfied, eight respondents (36.4%) selected a neutral response, and two respondents (9.1%) expressed dissatisfaction with the district Tour.

While many of the topics have remained consistent from one NTIP year to the next, the district tour is the component that has changed the most. This variation from year to year could easily explain the wide variety of responses seen in Figure 20.

Figure 20

Satisfaction Statement #3 - District Tour

District Tour
22 responses

8
6
4
2
0
0 (0%)   2 (9.1%)   8 (36.4%)   7 (31.8%)   5 (22.7%)
1   2   3   4   5
Very Dissatisfied   Strongly Satisfied
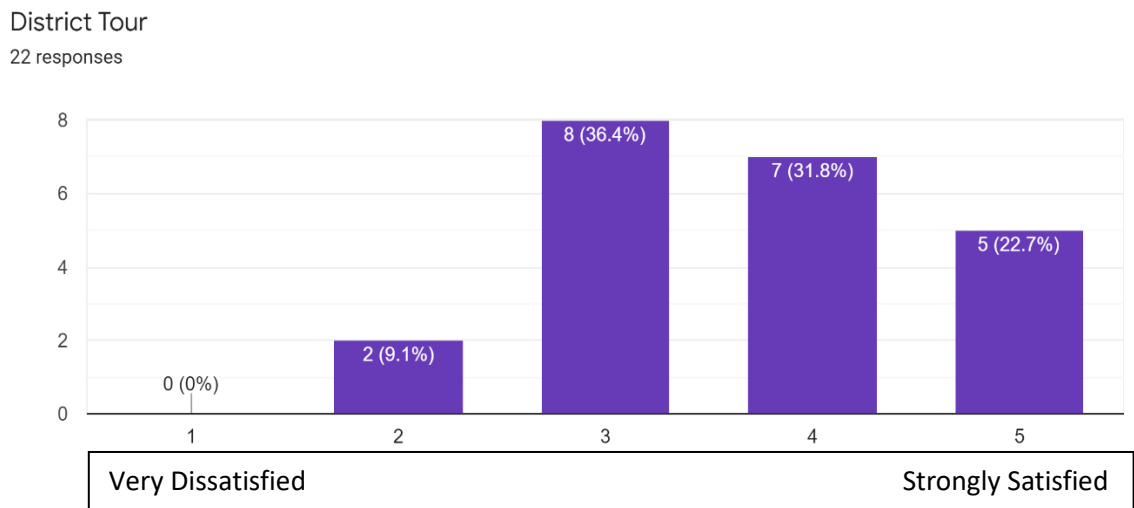
Satisfaction Statement #4 asks respondents for feedback surrounding their introduction to district technology programs and tools (Figure 21). Just over 40% (nine) of respondents remained neutral on the topic. Two NTIP participants indicated they were dissatisfied with this topic. These two participants are self-reported as having educational areas of middle school teacher and Other. The remaining 11 participants represent 50% of all NTIP participants who are either satisfied or very satisfied with the programming relative to technology.

Figure 21

Satisfaction Statement #4 – Introduction to Technology

Introduction to Technology (Hardware/Skyward/Google/Printing/Canvas, etc.)
22 responses
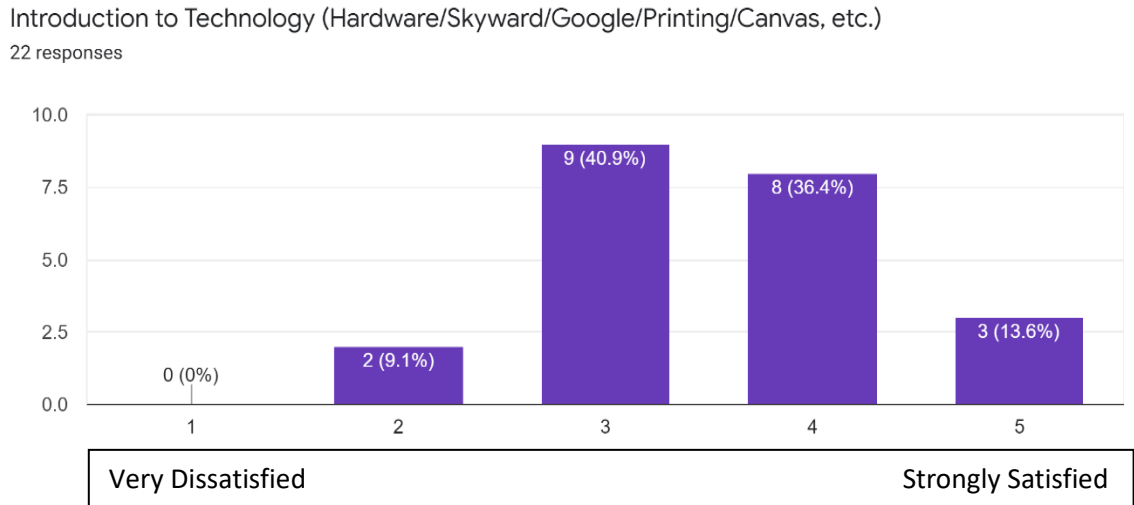
Two NTIP participants with 10 or more years of experience reported being dissatisfied with the overview of the evaluation process, DSAP, PA-ETEP, and Educator Effectiveness practices (Figure 22). Out of the six respondents who indicated a neutral rating on this statement, 66% of them have four or more years of teaching experience prior to completing the NTIP. The data shows that those teachers with little to no prior teaching experience gained the most satisfaction on this NTIP topic.

Figure 22

Satisfaction Statement #5 – Overview of Eval Process, DSAP, etc.

Overview of the Evaluation Process, PA-ETEP, Educator Effectiveness, and DSAP
22 responses
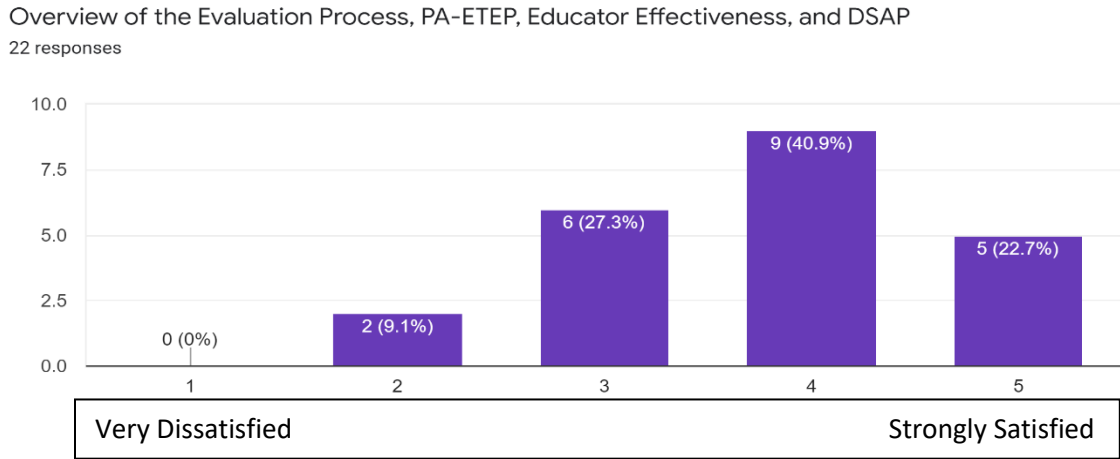
Figure 23 represents responses relative to the Topic: Explanation of Instructional I vs. Instructional II; Tenure. For this Satisfaction Statement, 27.3% (6 respondents) expressed they were very satisfied, 36.4% (8 respondents) stated they were satisfied, 31.8% (7 respondents) were neutral, and one respondent representing 4.5% of the responding population of NTIP participants stated they were dissatisfied. The single respondent who expressed dissatisfaction is best described as an elementary level teacher with 10+ years of experience.

Figure 23

Satisfaction Statement #6 – Explanation of Instructional I vs. II; Tenure

Explanation of Instructional I vs. Instructional II; Tenure
22 responses
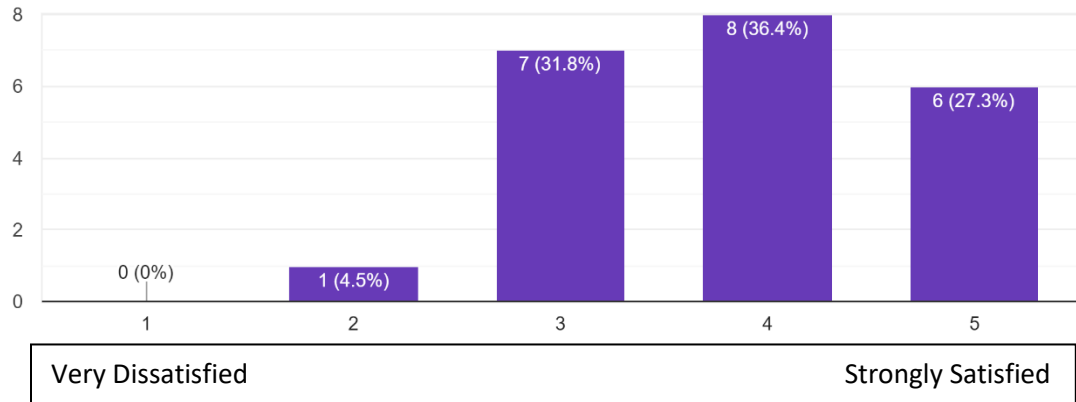
Topics in Special Education (Figure 24) has a dissatisfaction rating from 9.1% of the NTIP participants. Over half, 54.5%, of NTIP participants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with topics relating to Special Education, while 36.4% of the respondents selected a neutral rating for the topic. Overall, high school teachers reported being the most satisfied with the Special Education topics presented in the NTIP.

Figure 24

Satisfaction Statement #7 – Topics in Special Education

Topics in Special Education
22 responses
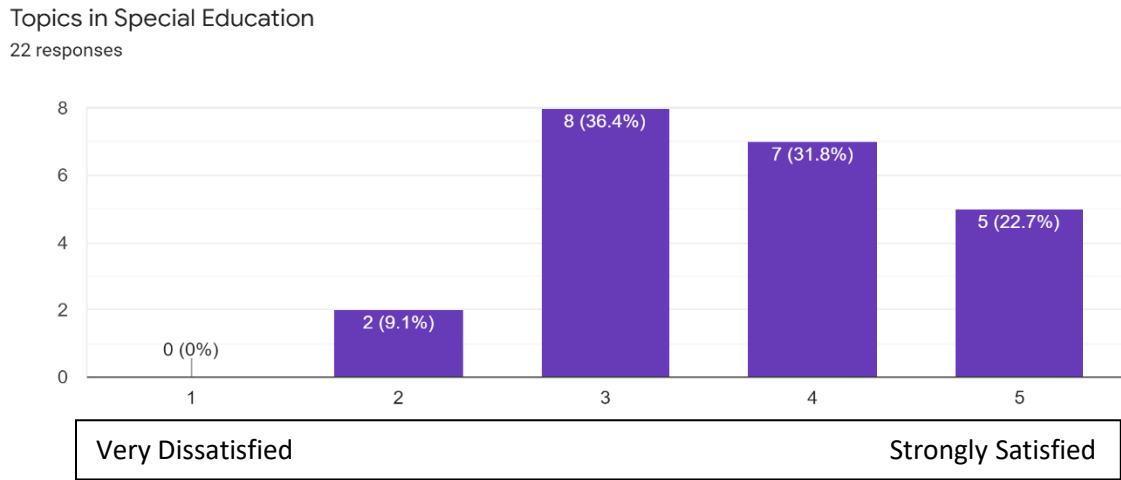
The NTIP allows for all participants to observe their peers by providing release time to conduct classroom observations. Figure 25 shows that 63.6% of NTIP participants were satisfied or very satisfied with this opportunity. One Middle School teacher was dissatisfied with this topic and seven respondents (31.8%) reported neutral satisfaction to the classroom teacher observation opportunity.

Figure 25

Satisfaction Statement #8 – Classroom Observations

Classroom Observation of Peer Teachers
22 responses
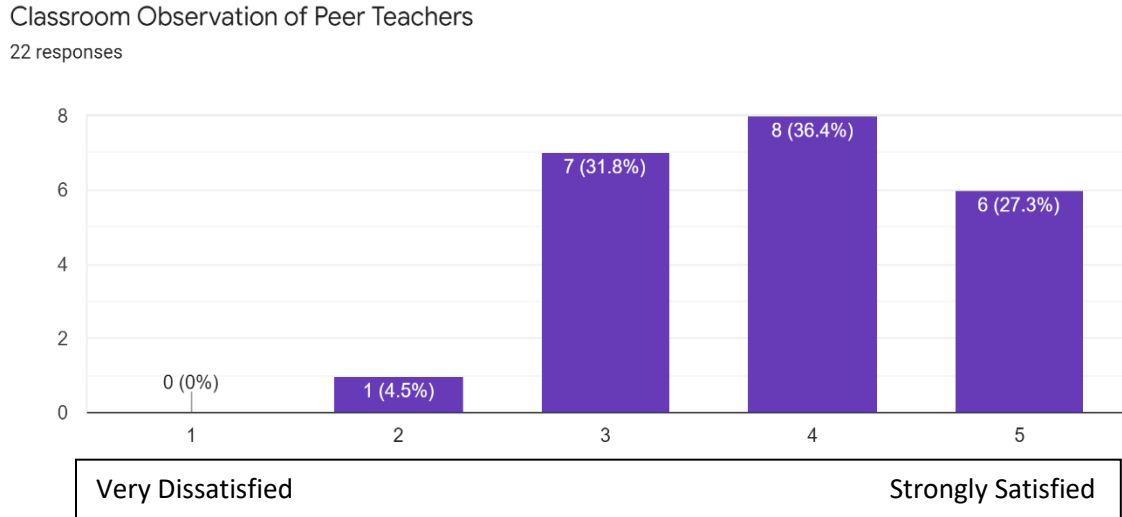
Figure 26 represents NTIP participant satisfaction relative to the topics of

Educator Misconduct and others in the Human Resource field. Sixteen of the 22

respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. One middle school level teacher was

dissatisfied with this topic while 22.7% of respondents were neutral with their response.

Figure 26

Satisfaction Statement #9 – HR Related Topics

Educator Misconduct and other HR related topics
22 responses
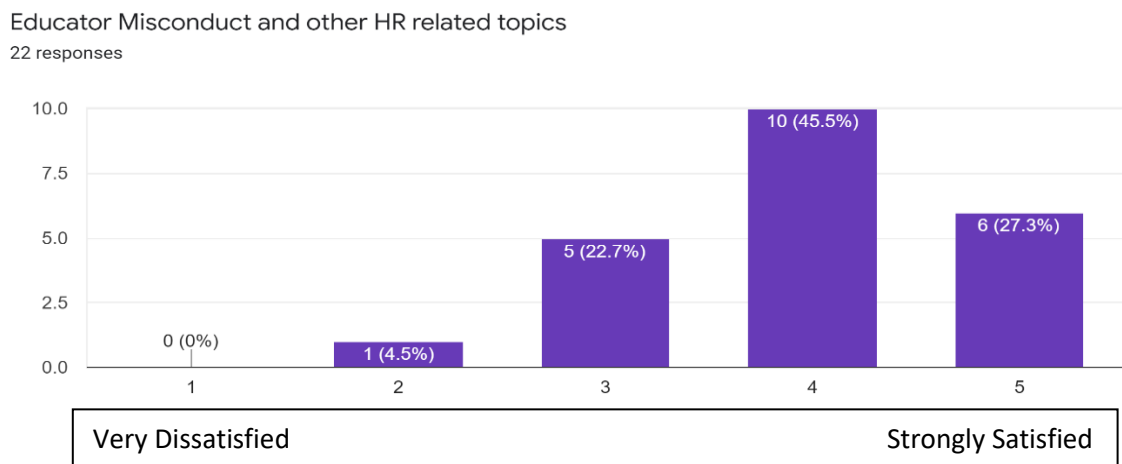
ALICE Training is a hands-on NTIP session that allows participants to role play an active intruder scenario in the classroom. Nine respondents (40.9%) indicated they were very satisfied, 36.4% were satisfied, and five respondents (22.7%) were neutral as related to their satisfaction of the ALICE Safety Training and Satisfaction Statement #10 in Figure 27.

Figure 27

Satisfaction Statement #10 – ALICE Training
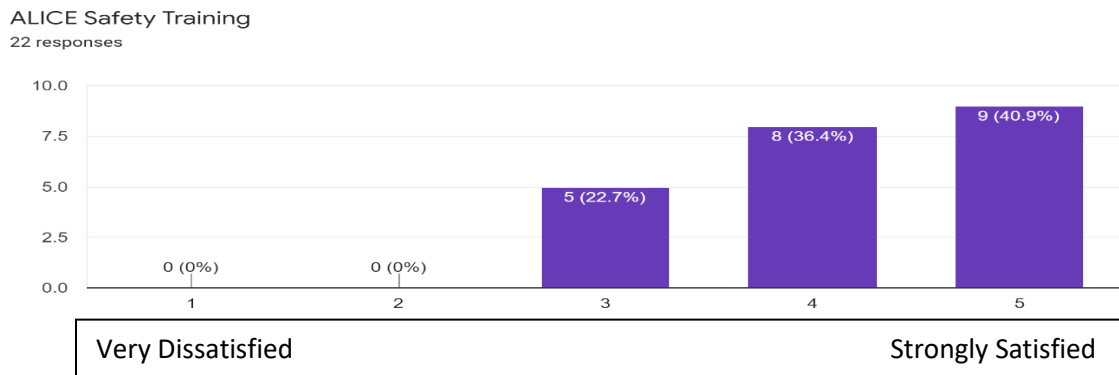
The final Satisfaction Statement addressed the NTIP sessions that introduced the Mobile Fab Lab. The Mobile Fab Lab is a collection of STEAM related tools and machines housed in a trailer that can be moved to various locations throughout the district. Teachers can request the use of the Mobile Fab Lab for their classroom to incorporate within their lessons. Things like laser engravers, 3-D printers, and computer-generated vinyl cutters were highlighted in the NTIP for teacher use in their classrooms.

Figure 28 shows a wide distribution of responses. Further examination does not find any trends or patterns among the groups indicating satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but does show some significance for those who selected the neutral response.

Four respondents (18.2%) expressed that they were very satisfied with the Mobile Fab Lab session; however, 9.1% of the respondents indicated they were very dissatisfied.

Eight respondents (36.4%) were satisfied, while conversely, only 4.5% indicated

dissatisfaction. Finally, 31.8% of the respondents expressed neutral satisfaction, but it is

important to note that of these seven respondents, five (71.4%) completed the NTIP

during the 2020-2021 school year and were impacted by the changes to the NTIP due to

the pandemic.

Figure 28

Satisfaction Statement #11 – Mobile Fab Lab or Other Technologies

Mobile Fab Lab or other Technologies utilized in the District
22 responses
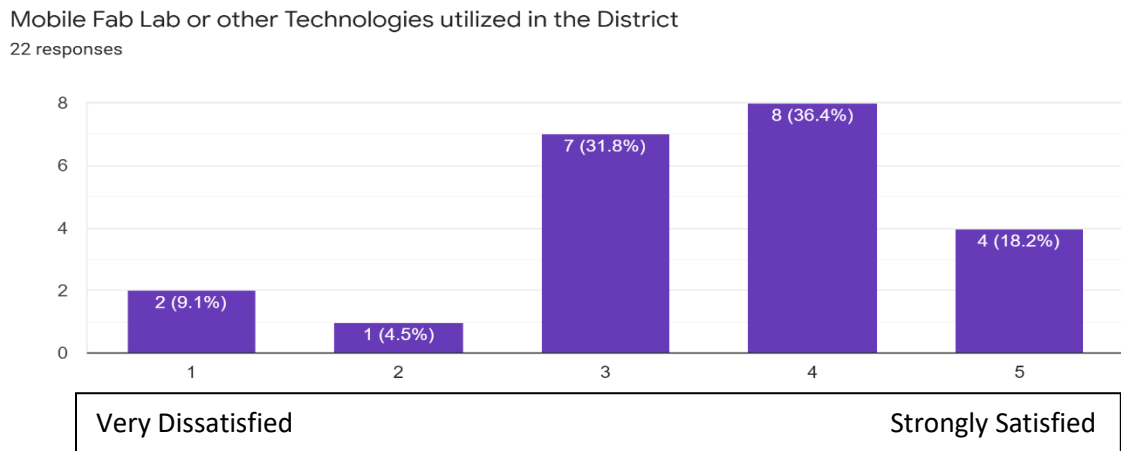
The final section of the NTIP participant Google Survey included five open-ended

questions that were not mandatory for survey completion. The open-ended questions

provided an opportunity for participants to share qualitative, perceptive data relative to

their NTIP experience. The open-ended question responses were analyzed for common

keyword themes and trends. All NTIP participants open-ended responses can be found in

Appendix G.

The first two open-ended questions were not intended to have overlap when

asked, but the answers provided by the survey respondents ultimately yielded results of

similar themes. The first open-ended question was, "Are there any topics that would be

beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first day of school that were not

covered in the three initial days of Induction? If, yes please give the suggested topics."

The second open-ended question was: "What topics/activities would you suggest be

added to aid new teachers in their first few years within BWSD?"

Of the 22 participants who completed the qualitative portions of the survey, only

13 provided feedback to the first open-ended question with only 11 responses being

related to the actual open-ended question posed, and 18 participants provided feedback

to the second open-ended question.

Among the applicable answers, six themes emerged. NTIP participants were

looking for:

- More specific instruction using Skyward including entering comments,
  sending Skylerts, manipulating grades, and attendance

- Dedicated time with their building level administrator to ask questions
  relative to discipline procedures and other building expectations

- Information about the community and the community involvement
  opportunities within the district, including sessions with South Hills
  Interfaith Movement (SHIM) and the Allegheny Health Network CHILL
  project for supporting mental health in schools

- More time to understand how PA-ETEP works for evaluations and the
  SLO; more clear directions on developing and implementing the SLO

- Peer time to discuss curriculum, the first days of school, and short
  presentations on strategies that work in their classrooms

- Social and Emotional Learning for students, self-care, and work/life
  balance for professionals

The third open-ended question asked, "In what ways did the NTIP provide the support that you needed to make the transition to BWSD? Please describe some highlights." There were 15 responses to this question with commonality among relationships with other new teachers, mentor relationships, peer observations, learning district expectations, and getting to see other parts of the district. A majority of the responses focused on relationships with new teachers and the mentor relationship. Comments included:

- I was provided with a group of professionals that understood how I felt each day. The group of new teachers in my building were able to form a strong bond and help support each other throughout our first year in the building. I felt like the monthly meetings were a nice way to check-in with each other and see how the school year was going.

- The mentor aspect of the program is great, as well as the required peer observations. I really enjoyed observing some of my colleagues and I still have wonderful working relationships with both of them.

- I think it helps give you connections with other new teachers. You get to form relationships with people going through the same process as you.

- The NTIP gave me the opportunity to get to know my mentor teacher very well. Those meetings with her really helped give me the confidence to be successful. She gave me the insight into ways to improve my teaching strategies and techniques.

NTIP participants were asked to reflect upon the mentor/mentee relationship by responding to the following open-ended question, "What feedback can you provide

about the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP from the viewpoint of a new teacher?"

Responses were received from 19 participants. Of the 19 responses, 57.9% of them

specifically mentioned the positive relationship with their mentor teacher. Only one

response detailed a negative experience. Within the comments, the following

suggestions emerged:

- Having a mentor teacher that is the same grade level or content area as you

  are

- Having more structured time with the mentor teacher as opposed to when

  things can be fit in to the schedule during the work day

- Pairing current new teachers with teachers who have recently completed

  the NTIP for another layer of support

The following comments are significant in supporting the themes and feedback

that emerged from the fourth open-ended question:

- I think just building in more time that is formally dedicated to

  mentor/mentee training rather than having to try to squeeze things in at the

  end of the day or during prep period. During that first year it felt like there

  was never enough time with my mentor even though she was wonderful

  about making time when I needed her.

- I had an absolutely fabulous mentor, but she was not in my content area.

  Because of this, I had to default to another co-worker on a lot of content

  specific questions. My mentor herself was absolutely fabulous and so

  helpful to me throughout the process, and I was able to learn a lot from

  her, but there were times that she didn't have an answer for me because her

position was different than mine. I did love that we had to have meetings

often so that we could discuss where I was at and where I could from

there.

- It would have been more helpful to have a mentor who is in the same

   position as me, even if she/he wasn't in the same school.

- I did not go to my mentor that often. I found that I had an easier time

   getting together with other teachers who taught the same subject as I did

   and were able to help with my questions.

- This was my favorite part of the whole NTIP! I think it was most helpful

   because it gave me the opportunity to discuss things that I needed to learn

   about. My whole entire team was and still is incredible. I love being able

   to learn and grow beside my colleagues.

- I did not go to my mentor that often. I found that I had an easier time

   getting together with other teachers who taught the same subject as I did

   and were able to help with my questions.

The final open-ended question allowed freedom for more qualitative data to be

collected that was not narrowly focused by the researcher. The prompt read, "Please use

the area below to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP that was not addressed or

suggestions that you have to improve the NTIP for future BWSD new hires." There were

11 total responses to this prompt, but only five of the responses were applicable to the

prompt.

NTIP participants who completed an Induction program with another district prior

to being hired by BWSD made a point to share that the current NTIP in BWSD is one of

the most organized and helpful NTIPs they participated in. The other emergent theme

from the final open-ended question described that participants would also benefit from

break-out sessions during the monthly induction meetings. Moving away from the whole

group instruction notion towards specialized, small group sessions will allow the sessions

to be more effective for all participants.

Mentor Teacher Survey Results

The Mentor Teacher survey was sent to 65 current BWSD teachers who served in

the capacity of a mentor teacher for the BWSD NTIP from August 2016 through January

2021. Of the 65 teachers who received the survey, 34 participants completed the online

Google Forms Survey.

The results of the NTIP mentor teacher survey will be used to address the

following research question:

- What are the perceptions of mentor teachers as indirect participants
  in the New Teacher Induction Program?

Each mentor teacher was asked for demographic data. This data allowed the

participants to remain anonymous, but gave context to the perceptions they shared.

Thirty-three of the 35 (97.1%) survey respondents who participated in the NTIP as a

mentor teacher from August 2016 through January 2021 reported that they have worked

in BWSD for 10+ years. One mentor teacher (2.9%) worked in the district for a period of

7-9 years. Of the 34 mentor teachers who responded to the survey, 12.1% of the mentors

completed the NTIP in BWSD prior to 2012.

The wealth of work experience is also highlighted by the highest level of

education attained by the mentor teachers who completed the survey. Figure 29 shows

that 97.1% of all mentor teachers have education beyond a bachelor's degree. Seven

mentor teachers have a bachelor's degree +15 credits. Of the 26 mentor teachers with a

master's degree, 23.5% (8 mentors) have a master's degree +15 or more credits.

Figure 29

Mentor Teacher Highest Level of Education

What is your highest level of education attained?
34 responses
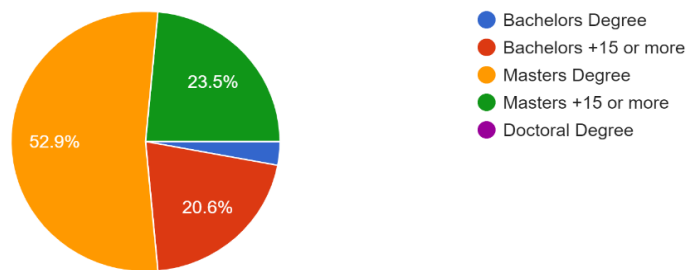
Figure 30 depicts the best representation of the educational area that the mentor

teacher worked in while serving in the capacity of a mentor for the NTIP. Mentors in the

elementary level comprise 38.2% of all mentors. Nine mentors (26.5%) represent the

middle school level and seven mentors (20.6%) are represented from the high school

level. Mentors in the area of Special Education are 11.8% of the survey respondents and

one School Counselor is represented in the survey results.

Figure 30

Mentor Teacher Educational Area

What best describes the educational area that you were working within during the year(s) you served as a mentor for the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)?
34 responses

- Elementary Education (K-5)
- Middle School (6-8)
- High School (9-12)
- Special Education (K-12)
- School Counselor
- ESL or Intervention Specialist
- Other

20.6%
11.8%
26.5%
38.2%
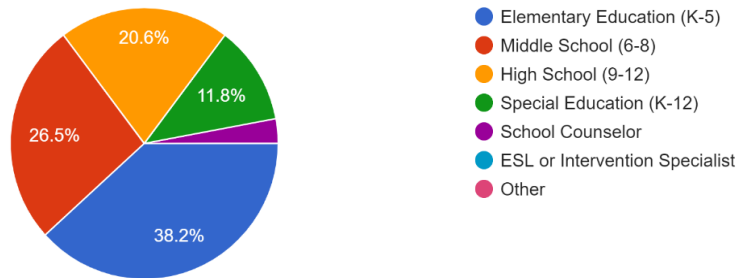
Mentor teachers were asked about their perceptions of the current BWSD NTIP. Thirty-one, or 91.2%, of the Mentor teachers overwhelmingly feel the NTIP provides a support network for new teacher (Figure 31); however, 52.9% feel that the NTIP as a whole is helpful, but there is room for improvements (Figure 32).

Figure 31

Mentor Perspective-NTIP provides a support network

Based on your experience as a mentor teacher, do you feel the NTIP provides a support network for new teachers?
34 responses

- Yes
- No

8.8%
91.2%
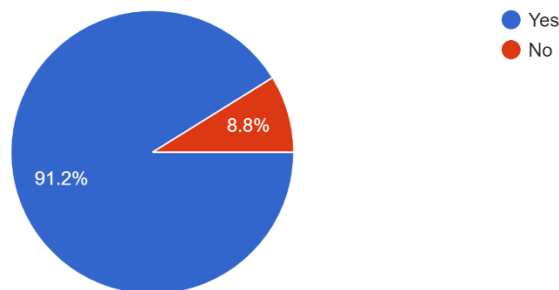
Figure 32

Mentor Perspective – Recommendation of the NTIP

In reflecting on the NTIP, would you overall recommend the program to a new teacher?
34 responses

- Absolutely!
- It was helpful, but there is room for improvements.
- No, it was a waste of time.

52.9%

47.1%
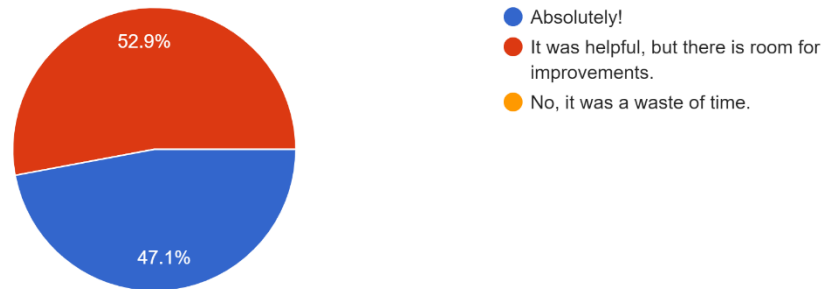
Mentor teachers who completed the survey were asked to respond to six Likert-scale statements relative to the NTIP in BWSD. These Likert-scale Agreement Statements collected quantitative data in terms of agreement or disagreement with aspects of the NTIP. Mentors had the option to select a number ranging from one to five with the number one representing Strongly Disagree and the number five representing Strongly Agree. Mentor teachers who selected the number three on the scale were assumed to have a neutral stance.

Mentor teachers were asked to respond to this statement: "The NTIP provides a variety of experiences to help new teachers feel confident in their practice" (Figure 33). Overall, 73.5% of mentor teachers agree or strongly agree with this statement. Seven (20.6%) of the mentor teachers selected the neutral response to this statement, while two mentor teachers (5.9%) disagree with the statement. Of the two mentors who disagreed with this statement, only the Special Education mentor teacher also answered that the NTIP does not prepare new teachers for a career in BWSD.

Figure 33

Mentor Agreement Statement #1 – Experiences to Feel Confident

The NTIP provides a variety of experiences to help new teachers feel confident in their practice.
34 responses

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
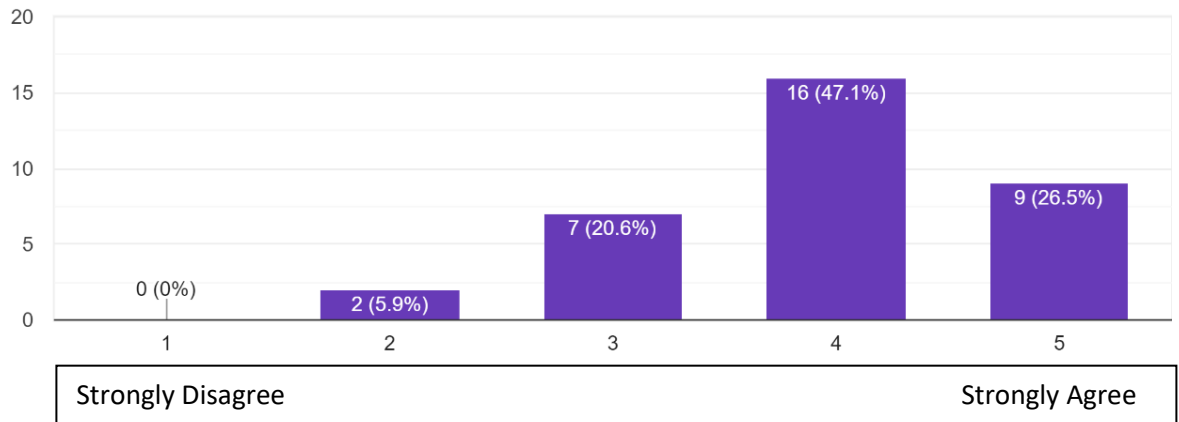
Mentors were asked to report their level of agreement to the following statement:

The mentor program embedded within the NTIP was a beneficial experience for me as a

mentor teacher. All of the high school level mentor teachers who participated in the

survey (20.5%) indicated that they agree or strongly agree that they had a beneficial

experience being a mentor teacher. Over half (55.5%) of the middle school mentor

teachers reported a neutral stance on this topic. Overall, Figure 34 shows the following:

23.5% of mentor teachers strongly agree with the statement, 38.2% agree with the

statement, 35.3% of mentor teachers are neutral on the statement, and one mentor teacher

(2.9%) disagrees with the statement.

Figure 34

Mentor Agreement Statement #2 – NTIP Program Beneficial to Mentors

The mentor program embedded within the NTIP was a beneficial experience for me as a mentor teacher.

34 responses
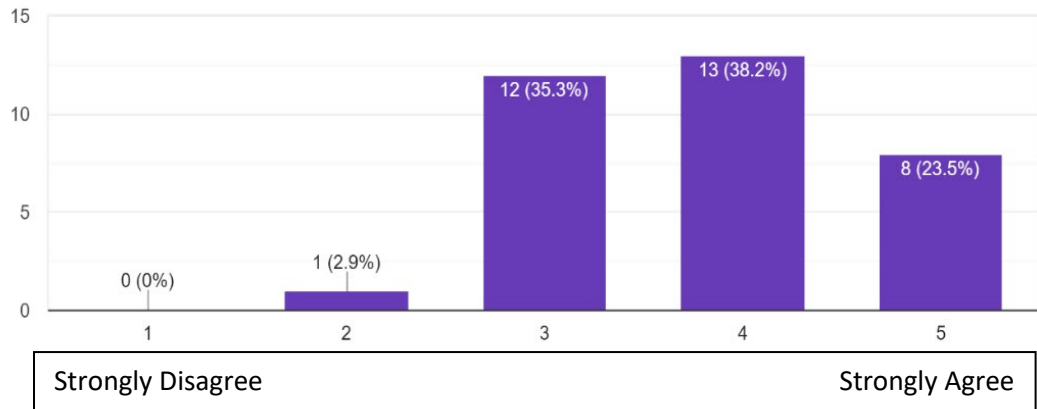
The third statement presented to mentor teachers shows a varied distribution of responses without any trends or patterns based on other categories within the mentor teacher responses. Figure 35 shows mentor teacher responses to the statement: "New teachers in the NTIP need more structure and guidelines regarding the expectations as related to the mentor/mentee relationship."

Figure 35

Mentor Agreement Statement #3 – NTIP Needs Structure for Mentor/Mentee

New Teachers in the NTIP need more structure and guidelines regarding the expectations as related to the mentor/mentee relationship.
34 responses
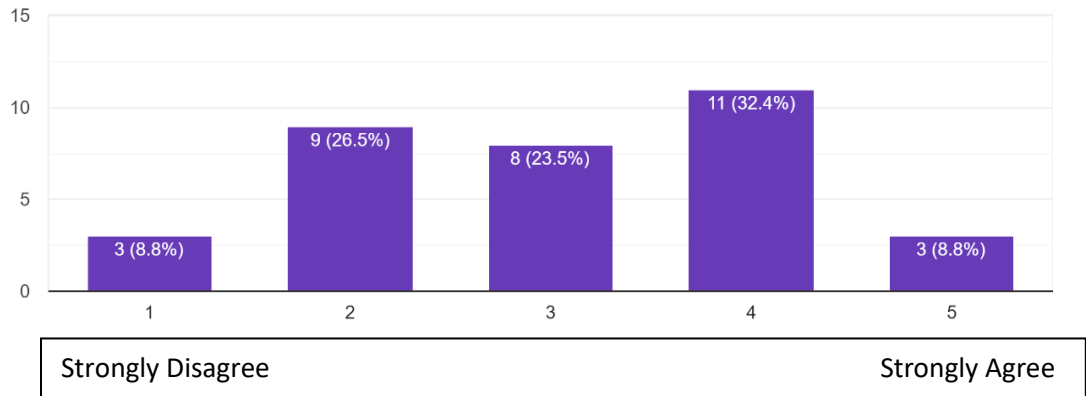
A majority of the mentor teachers, 67.6%, agree that they are prepared to support new teachers in the BWSD NTIP. Two mentor teachers (5.9%) representative of Elementary level mentor teachers disagree with the statement and feel unprepared to be supportive as a mentor teacher (Figure 36).

Figure 36

Mentor Agreement Statement #4 – Mentors are Appropriately Prepared

Mentor teachers in the NTIP are appropriately prepared to support a new teacher in the BWSD.
34 responses
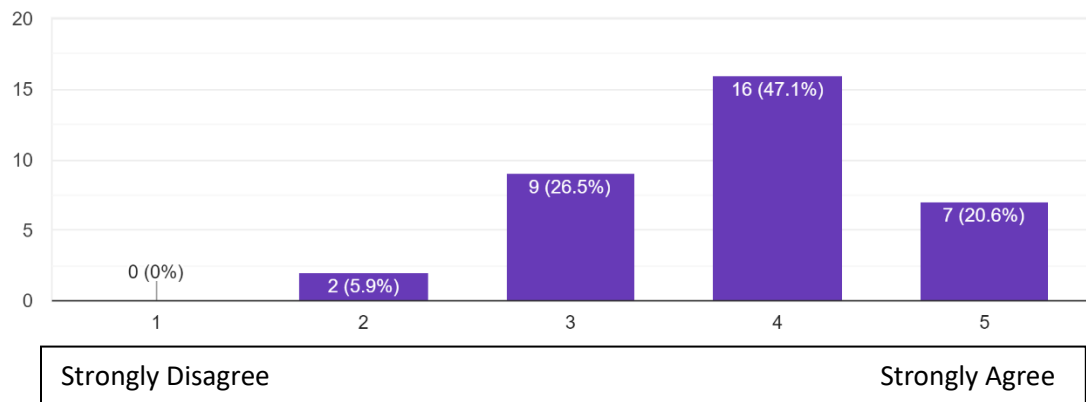
While Figure 37 depicts a majority of mentor teachers in agreement, the statement "The compensation a mentor teacher receives is commensurate with the expectations of the program," shows nine mentor teachers (26.4%) that cannot commit to agreeing with the statement. The single elementary level mentor teacher that strongly disagrees with this statement also feels that mentor teachers are not appropriately prepared to be supportive to a new teacher. Five mentor teachers (14.7%) responded with a neutral rating.

Figure 37

Mentor Agreement Statement #5 – Compensation is Commensurate

The compensation a mentor teacher receives is commensurate with the expectations of the the program.
34 responses
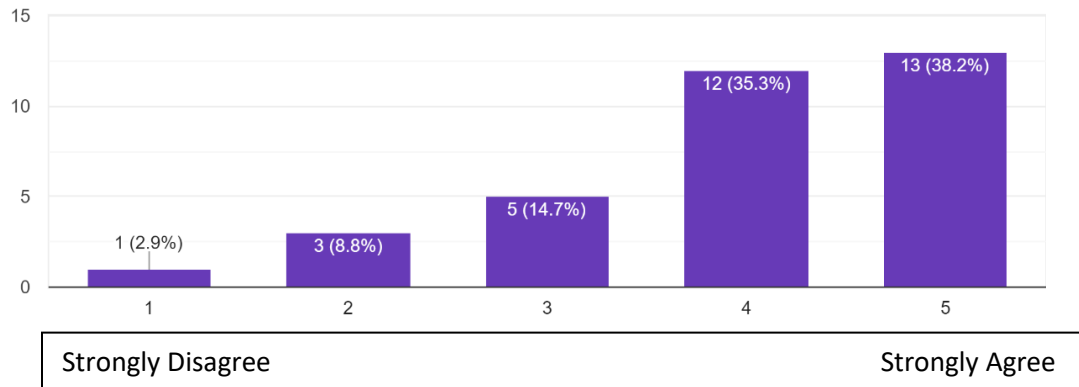
The final Likert-scale question looked for feedback on the statement: "As a mentor teacher, I feel appreciated for my work in the NTIP." Figure 38 shows that four mentor teachers disagree with this statement, representing 11.8% of mentor teachers feeling underappreciated. Conversely, 24 mentor teachers (70.5%) agree or strongly agree that they feel appreciated for their work. Again, mentor teachers selected the neutral position on this statement, representative of 17.6% of mentor teachers surveyed.

Figure 38

Mentor Agreement Statement #6 – Mentors Feel Appreciated

As a mentor teacher, I feel appreciated for my work in the NTIP
34 responses
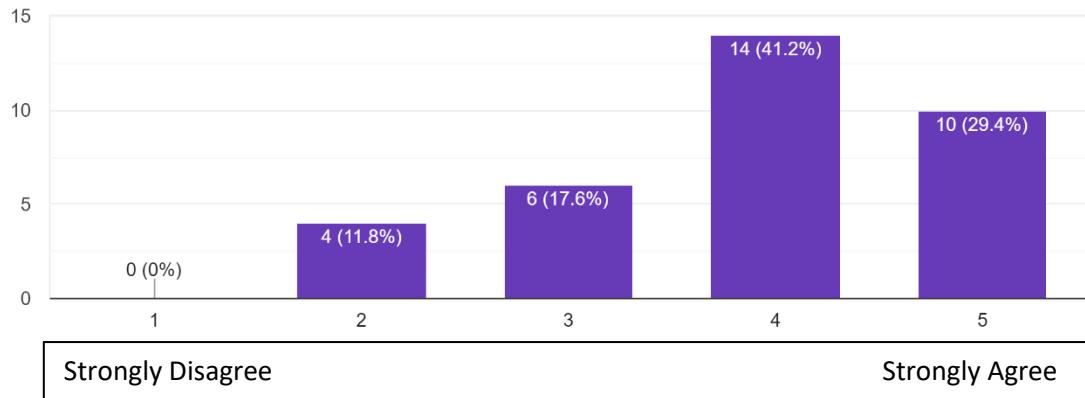
Just like the NTIP participant survey, the final section of the mentor teacher survey included open-ended questions that were not mandatory for survey completion. The four open-ended questions provided an opportunity for participants to share qualitative, perceptive data relative to their experience as a mentor in the NTIP. The open-ended question responses were analyzed for common keyword themes and trends. All mentor teacher open-ended responses can be found in Appendix H.

Again, showing similarities to the NTIP participant survey, the first two open-ended question were not intended to have overlap when asked, but the answers provided by the survey respondents ultimately yielded results of similar themes all surrounding topics that were not covered during the first days of Induction or throughout the year.

The first open-ended question asked mentor teachers: "Are there any topics that would be beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first days of school that were not covered in the initial three days of Induction? If yes, please give the suggested topics." Of the 23 responses collected for this question, four of the responses were not

applicable to the question. The included answers like "no," "NA," or "I don't think so."

There were 19 responses that helped shape the themes that emerged for this open-ended

question. Common themes included: communication, day-to-day expectations, building

procedures (including safety procedures), and technology tools.

It is important to note that mentor teachers do not participate in all of the NTIP

meetings at the start of the school year, so it is fair to assume that they may not have a

full understanding of the events of the first three days with new teachers. The following

comments best articulate mentor teacher thoughts around these topics:

- The need for positive communication and how to achieve this needs to

  be emphasized. Some new teachers may need guidelines for how to

  interact with and how to communicate effectively and respectfully

  with their colleagues.

- Job Required tasks; new employees seem to think that if they do not

  feel like doing tasks, that they are optional and just set them off to the

  side. They need to learn to balance their workload and complete all

  tasks even if this means that they must work some extra hours.

- Building level procedures for their particular school, Canvas and

  Skyward (may be new to them), DSAP what it is and expectations

- Truly, I feel some more 1:1 time sitting down and working with

  Skyward and now Canvas with an experienced teacher in their content

  area is important. Every new teacher I've met and talked with really

  struggled with the inner workings of that program which is really very

important. A contact list by building of issues and who to contact on one paper would be beneficial that can be updated.

- ALICE/fire drills per building should be discussed in more detail those first days. We've had fire alarms pulled in the first week of school, and shelter in places occur certain years where there was hardly any conversation. A quick document of what all of the terms mean and the mentor teacher going into their space and showing them should be required within the first week of school.

Due to the unintended overlap, the second open-ended question elicited similar responses from the mentor teachers. There were 26 responses to this question; however, five of those were answers that did not provide any information relative to the question. Again, general themes emerged from the responses that included: time with curriculum, peer observations, communication, support with marginalized learners and additional one-on-one time with colleagues.

Below are a few of the mentor teacher responses:

- I think there should be an opportunity for new teachers to participate in observations of other faculty within their own department and across the school.

- Canvas training – observations – time with mentor teacher on day to day items – communicating with difficult parents and children – building expectations.

- In my opinion, they should observe willing teachers and discuss best practices, while training them on the curriculum. We continue to throw

new teachers "to the wolves" without any curriculum training and expect

them to feel successful on top of the many new tasks they must learn. I

feel they need to have opportunities to plan together with team members

that teach the same topics (that may not be their mentor). Teachers could

observe them and provide feedback. New teachers should have manuals

and textbooks available to them prior to school starting.

- Truthfully, their needs to be an emphasis on interpersonal relationships.
  COVID set relationships back, but even before that, I noticed a change in
  the relationships among teachers. Teachers definitely need one another.
  We have to be open to both help and receive help.

- More training for how to support ESL families with the educational
  process. Clearly identified roles of paraprofessionals in the classroom.

The third open-ended question asked mentor teachers for positive feedback about

the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP. Responses spanned a variety of topics including

the notion that the NTIP was a waste of time for new teachers to overwhelming praise

and support for the program in regards to supporting new teachers.

There were a few comments that aligned to identify trends in the responses.

Multiple mentor teachers agreed that mentors should be paired with new teachers in their

same grade level or department. Even more important than this is making sure the mentor

and the mentee actually work in the same building. Working in the same building, in the

mentors' opinions, allows for the mentors and the mentees to spend more, much needed,

time together.

Mentors also felt that they would benefit from a short, mentor centered professional development at the beginning of the year. Mentors felt that this would be helpful in understanding the expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship and give mentors a better understanding of what was required of new teachers throughout the year.

The final open-ended question allowed mentor teachers to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP. It also elicited suggestions on improving the NTIP for future BWSD new hires. Many of the comments shared the importance of supporting new teachers in any way possible. Four of the 15 commenters shared that they feel the NTIP as it stands is good. "Overall it is a great program that is well run," and "I would just like to say that I think this program is very important and helpful! I am always happy to volunteer!" are two examples of this type of feedback.

Other suggestions included ways to help new teachers feel comfortable and supported within the first few weeks of school:

- I'd highly suggest a Google form within the first month of topics teachers really need help on for some of their meetings. I know having a schedule ahead of time is great but possibly their first meeting a month after school has started having it be a bigger deal, principal from each building, someone from it, someone from admin around to really answer questions would be useful.

- I think it would help to better prepare new teachers on the expectations for ESL students - not so much the teaching in the classroom, but how to communicate with families and which programs are available to help with this.

- Any supports we can offer new teachers are so important. Each school

  might find new ways to make new teachers feel welcome. Even a

  bulletin board in the office reminding veteran teachers who is new. In

  a building as large as the high school it's easy to not even know who is

  new and who might need some words of encouragement.

Discussion

This research project was established to create a more meaningful induction

program for new teacher participants and their mentors. The project was designed to

collect qualitative and quantitative survey data from teachers who participated in the

BWSD NTIP from August 2016 through January 2021 and teachers who served in the

capacity of a mentor teacher during that same time. Both surveys captured perceptions of

satisfaction among mentor teachers and NTIP participants relative to the topics included

in the program. Parallel questions pertaining to the overall satisfaction with the NTIP as

well as the mentor/mentee aspect of the program were asked on both surveys in an effort

to determine similarities among the NTIP participants and their mentor teachers.

Members of the 2020-2021 Induction year represent more of the survey

respondents than any other NTIP year. Of the survey respondents, 36.4%, or eight

individuals, participated in the NTIP during the 2020-2021 school year. It is important to

note that during the 2020-2021 induction year, many of the sessions highlighting the

topics listed previously were presented in an abbreviated or virtual setting due to the

COVID-19 pandemic. Over a third of the responding participants did not receive the

same or similar programming that their colleagues received in the years prior to or

following their experiences.

Responses from former NTIP participant survey addressed the first two research questions. The research questions are:

- What aspects of the BWSD NTIP have been beneficial to new teachers with the district?

- What aspects of the current NTIP were of least value in supporting teachers?

In general, participants in the NTIP felt the program was beneficial, but 12 of the 21 respondents indicated that there is room for improvement in the program. With 54.5% of all survey respondents indicating the need for program improvements, the research project seems to be justified in the goals established in creating an effective NTIP in BWSD. When considering the survey question "I would make changes to the topics presented in the NTIP," nearly 64% of the NTIP participants indicated that changes needed to be made. Further examination of the specific aspects of the NTIP helps to determine overall respondent satisfaction and ultimately, the effectiveness of the topics in the NTIP.

As a response to the first research question, the following two aspects of the NTIP resulted in over 80% of the respondents being satisfied. This satisfaction indicates respondents found benefit in the topic as it was addressed.

- Explanation of District Policies and Procedures – 86.4%

- Introduction to Administrative Staff and other New Teachers – 81.8%

The following aspects of the NTIP showed that 60% to 79.9% of the respondents indicated a satisfactory evaluation. Although these results reveal a majority of the respondents as satisfied in their experience, only 60% to 79.9% of the respondents

indicating satisfaction relative to a topic does not equate to an effective or beneficial

experience in the NTIP. If a respondent is not satisfied with their experience, the topic is

not beneficial to their learning or growth as a professional. Most of the topics listed

below are significant aspects of a new teacher's learning and responsibilities in a new

district. Therefore, the following topics should be considered as answers to the second

research question:

- ALICE Safety Training – 77.2%

- Educator Misconduct and other HR Related Topics – 72.7%

- Relationship with Assigned Mentor Teacher – 72.7%

- Explanation of Instructional I vs. Instructional II; Tenure – 68.2%

- Classroom Observation of Peer Teachers – 63.6%

- Overview of the Evaluation Process, PA-ETEP, Educator Effectiveness and
  DSAP – 63.6%

In the open-ended responses, NTIP participants specifically addressed the mentor

program and their relationship with their assigned mentor teacher. Those who chose to

comment on the program either had very positive events to highlight or provided critical

feedback of the program. Of those that provided critical feedback, the emergent theme

surrounded the need to be partnered with a teacher who worked in the same building and,

more specifically, in the same subject area or grade level as the new teacher.

NTIP participants responded that they were not satisfied with topics surrounding

technology and Special Education aspects as a whole, indicating that the sessions were

not beneficial to new teachers. The following three topics received satisfactory ratings

from less than 60% of the NTIP participants, subsequently being responses to the second research question posed:

- District Tour – 54.5%

- Topics in Special Education – 54.5%

- Introduction to Technology (Hardware/Skyward/Google/Printing/Canvas, etc.) – 50%

- Mobile Fab Lab or other Technologies utilized in the district – 50%

As previously mentioned, the participants in the 2020-2021 NTIP did not have a regular exposure to the introduced topics compared to their counterparts participating in other years of the program. During the 2020-2021 year, participants did not experience a district tour, nor did they have the typical experience with the Mobile Fab Lab due to pandemic related health and safety procedures implemented in the district. This factor alone has a significant impact on the NTIP participant perceptions of the program, correlating to the overall effectiveness and benefit during that time.

The teaching and learning model for the 2020-2021 school year was also a factor for the cohort of NTIP participants that year. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were forced to teach differently than any other cohort of new teachers. Hybrid and remote learning, along with the introduction of the Canvas learning platform, became the primary focus for delivering instruction to students during the 2020-2021 school year. Fifty percent (50%) of the teachers in this year of the NTIP indicated that they were not satisfied with the sessions that addressed the district's technology programs like Canvas, Google, and Skyward (the student information system). While these topics were stressed

more than any other year of the NTIP, participants in the 2020-2021 were obviously

feeling ill-prepared in these areas.

The final research question was addressed through the survey responses from

teachers who acted in the capacity as a mentor teacher in conjunction with the NTIP from

August 2016 through January 2021. The research question, "What are the perceptions of

mentor teachers as indirect participants in the New Teacher Induction Program" is

addressed through the quantitative and qualitative data collected via the survey that

was issued.

Of the 34 mentor teachers who responded to the survey, all would recommend the

NTIP to a new teacher; however, 52.9% of them feel that while the program is helpful,

there is room for improvements. This perception is consistent with the new teachers who

responded to the same question. Parallel to this, only 88.2% of the mentor teachers feel

that the NTIP prepares new teachers for a career in BWSD.

All of the mentor teachers participating in the survey have seven or more years of

experience teaching in BWSD. Ninety-seven percent of these teachers have 10 or more

years of experience in the district. The collective experience of the mentor teacher survey

responses represents an immense amount of institutional knowledge that can be used to

better understand the NTIP from the perspective of experience.

The majority of mentor teachers (67.6%) feel prepared to support a new teacher.

Addressing the remaining 32.4% of the mentors who do not feel prepared will be

imperative for the success of the program. Some mentors commented on implementing a

mentor teacher session at the start of the year that would set the expectations for the

mentor and new teacher relationship. This session may also help the mentors feel more prepared to take on such an important task. Aside from feeling prepared, 30 of the 34 mentor teachers (88.2%) feel they are appropriately compensated for the work that they perform within the program and the same number feel appreciated.

Many of the suggestions for improvements to the NTIP, from the mentor perspective, came through the open-ended questions. While many mentor teachers provided valuable feedback on how to make the program better, there were a few mentors that do not a full understanding of the topics addressed in the NTIP. Three of the open-ended responses suggested adding topics like a district tour and peer observations to help improve the program. Although these two topics have been a part of the NTIP for at least five years, these comments highlight the importance and value mentor teachers place on those aspects and agree they will enhance a new teachers' experience.

A significant number of mentor teachers feel that new teachers need support and training with skills related to communication with families and colleagues. Mentors feel that new teachers should be trained on the expectations the district has for responding to families and the tools that are available to communicate with families that do not speak English as their home language. Additionally, two mentors commented that new teachers need training on how to communicate with their colleagues and be collegial in the buildings.

Much like the new teachers, mentor teachers felt that the NTIP should include more professional development on technology-based systems like Canvas and Skyward, especially in recent years. Due to the shift in the way in which instruction is delivered,

mentors felt that new teachers would benefit from more direct, structured time embedded within the NTIP.

Peer observations was another theme that arose from the open-ended questions completed by mentor teachers. Many mentors commented that while the current requirement for new teachers to observe peers is valuable, they would recommend two more aspects of this requirement. Mentors feel that new teachers should have a variety of observational experiences on a more regular basis. Getting the new teachers out to see more experienced teachers will help them in their developing practices. Mentors also suggested that they, as a mentor teacher, should go into the new teacher's classroom and perform observations to provide feedback on topics like classroom management and lesson delivery.

Mentor teachers were asked to comment on the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP. As a group, the mentor teachers feel that this is a very beneficial aspect of the NTIP. They agree that more dedicated time is needed for the mentor and the new teacher to meet, especially at the start of the school year. Mentors felt that this time could be best utilized to help the new teachers work through issues and questions related to classroom management, curriculum, and the daily realities of being a new teacher.

Finally, consistent with the comments from the NTIP participants, most mentor teacher stressed the importance of having a connection with a new teacher. This connection could be that they teach the same grade-level and/or subject area; however, most mentors who commented on this theme stressed the importance of the mentor and the new teacher working in the same building.

Summary

Survey data was collected from the two critical groups of participants in the BWSD NTIP–new teacher participants and their mentor teachers. The quantitative and qualitative survey data from the NTIP participants revealed a wide variety of responses that resulted in nearly all of the results to be labeled as statistically insignificant. While from a statistical perspective the results were deemed insignificant, the data speaks to the need of a more personalized or individualized NTIP.

Both mentor teachers and NTIP participants agree that the program is valuable, but could stand to be modified to meet the needs of the new professionals within BWSD. The information and the data collected through this study provided the feedback and guidance that the BWSD administration will use to evaluate and enhance the current NTIP. The proposed adjustments to the program will be further detailed to assist in creating a more meaningful new teacher induction program in the BWSD.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Across the country, the education field is seeing a dramatic decline in individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Nationally, the numbers have decreased by 35% between 2009 and 2014. In Pennsylvania, enrollment in traditional preparation programs has decreased by 67% since 2010 (Pennsylvania Department of Education [PDE], 2022). This should be considered a crisis in education. School districts must find ways to support the new teachers being hired in an effort to retain their talents.

As discussed previously, the field of education is one of the only employment fields that require new hires to perform at 100% on their first day. Other fields have the luxury of extensive on the job training and shadowing experiences before new hires are expected to perform at the highest levels. NTIPs were developed to support new teachers to the profession of teaching. They were also designed to acclimate and socialize new teachers to the culture of their new school district.

The current BWSD NTIP exceeds the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education for an Induction program. The current plan addresses all of the PDE requirements in addition to providing procedural and cultural professional development for teachers with the BWSD system through an intense, one-year program. The purpose of this research project was to analyze the current practices of the BWSD NTIP and determine the aspects that are beneficial to the newly hired teachers and those areas that could use improvement. In light of the national teacher shortage, it is of extreme importance and value for BWSD to properly prepare and retain newly hired

teachers. The data collected in this research will be referenced when recommendations are proposed to create a more effective NTIP.

This study not only examined the perceptions of new teachers involved in the NTIP, but also examined feedback from mentor teachers who helped support new teachers in their first year with BWSD. Examining the strengths of the current program along with highlighting areas of needed improvement were the focus of the research questions. The provided feedback from the mentors and the NTIP participants, along with research on best practices related to onboarding and orientation from other fields of employment, are considered when proposing recommendations and next steps.

The goal of this research project was to create a more meaningful induction program in the BWSD. Through efforts toward satisfying this goal, BWSD should see immediate and long-lasting effects in terms of acclimating new employees, building the employee culture within the district, and long-term financial gains through the retention of new employees.

Conclusions

NTIPs gained traction in the late-1980s, within PDE implementing NTIP requirements in 1987. BWSD has continuously offered a one-year induction program that addressed district procedures, provided professional development, and the support of a mentor teacher. While the research found all of these items to be valuable, the survey participants overwhelmingly agreed that there needs to be changes to addressing the evolving needs of the NTIP participants and the students they serve.

Many onboarding, orientation, and induction programs use the framework established by Bauer (2010) to maintain effectiveness. The aspects and activities of the

current BWSD NTIP can be categorized under one of the 4 C's of Bauer's framework. The 4 C's are defined as: compliance, clarification, culture, and connection. Recommendations for creating a more effective BWSD NTIP will be categorized under one of these four pillars of proven effectiveness.

Now more than ever, it is critical to support new teachers in the areas of compliance, clarification, culture, and connection in an effort to retain them to not only BWSD, but to the profession. The conclusions and recommendations below have been made based on the research conducted in this study in order to create a more meaningful and effective BWSD NTIP.

The Process of Induction

The current BWSD NTIP is a yearlong program that starts with three intensive days of onboarding and professional development and continues with monthly meetings for the rest of the school year. As a result of the research, the BWSD NTIP will now be extended to include year two of the new hire's career within the district. Wong (2004) also suggested NTIPs to be two to three years in length; therefore, this recommendation not only aligns with the research data, but with published research as well.

Often, new teachers do not know what they don't know. The first year of teaching is a challenging and tumultuous year. During the second year of a new hire's tenure, they have the opportunity to reflect on their first year and make necessary adjustments and corrections that were not possible or even noticed during their first year of teaching. This period of reflection, revision, and implementation requires support and collaboration. By extending the NTIP into a second year, new teachers can maintain and grow their relationships with a mentor teacher and other new teachers as a cohort and have an

opportunity to grow through those connections. Additional professional development embedded in the second year of the program will also enhance their teaching practices.

The term "sticky" is meant to describe a situation that is created to ensure new hires are connected in ways beyond being paid. When individuals make more connections and relationships, they are positively connected or vested to the organization regardless of the changes occurring. By increasing an employee's "stickiness" relative to the district, you are decreasing the likelihood of them looking to start a career in another district or field altogether.

Throughout this second year, BWSD can monopolize on the time to more formally expose new teachers to the culture of the district. Through exposures to community events, building relationships with colleagues, and making them feel a part of the BWSD community, new hires remain "sticky" to the district, further supporting the likelihood of retaining the new teacher for many years to come.

In addition to more community exposure, Year 2 NTIP participants will be required to complete three peer observations. One of these three observations will be of their mentor teacher, the second will be of a grade-level or subject peer, and the final observation will be of someone outside of their grade-level and subject area.

Observations will be emphasized as a way to make connections with other teachers and to provide some clarity and guidance on best practices related to teaching and curriculum. It will be stressed to all participants that observations are designed to be non-evaluative and will not be shared with their supervising administrators. These exercises are designed solely for the purpose of professional growth and learning.

Additionally, in year two, mentor teachers will be required to observe their assigned new teacher. As with other observations, this will be a non-evaluative observation meant to provide feedback from the mentor teacher on a topic that was previously agreed upon by both the mentor and the new teacher. This will provide an opportunity for the new teacher to express an area of growth and allow the mentor teacher to provide observations and feedback relative to the agreed upon topic.

Lastly, participants in year two of the NTIP will be partnered with a new teacher in the first phase of the NTIP. This partnership will offer another layer of support and collegial relationship for not only teachers involved in the second phase of the NTIP, but also for those starting their first year in the program.

The first year of the NTIP is developed to be a more immersive, intensive experience for the participant. The second year is not meant or designed to be the same. The second year of the program is designed to keep new hires "sticky" through a purposeful set of professional development strategies. Year two of the program will see bi-monthly meetings, resulting in half of the required time of the Year one participants.

During the bi-monthly meetings, focus will be placed on the clarification pillar of Bauer's (2010) framework. Clarification is fitting because the teachers have already had exposure to the expectations and demands of their first year of teaching. The workshops during these bi-monthly meetings will be developed to provide clarification on best practices and classroom management, and highlight the educational technologies available to teachers that were not able to be realized in the first year of the NTIP.

It is important to note that on April 23, 2022, PDE released a PA Bulletin outlining changes to Chapter 49 of the Public School Code. PA Bulletin document

number 22-624 was released to school districts on May 20, 2022. Chapter 49 addresses

requirements for educator preparation, certification, induction and ongoing professional

education. In this most recent update, PDE is now requiring all NTIP across the

Commonwealth to be two-year programs. In addition to this change, districts are now

required to provide professional development in the areas of mental wellness, trauma-

informed instruction, cultural awareness, and technological and virtual engagement (PDE

2022).

      While the recommendations for revision of the BWSD NTIP as a part of the

research project were developed well before the release of this final rule on Chapter 49, it

is affirming that the recommendations in this PA Bulletin support the findings and

recommendations of this research project and further enhance the validity of the subject

matter and approach to creating a more meaningful NTIP.

      Year one of the NTIP will remain relatively close to the current structure that

exists, but will see enhancements in the areas that NTIP participants and mentor teachers

identified as not being satisfactory in the current capacity. The first three intensive days

of BWSD NTIP will aim to address all four of Bauer's 4 C's (2010). During this time, the

NTIP will receive introductions to the aspects of compliance, clarification, connection,

and culture embedded throughout the first year of the NTIP.

      Based on the survey results, the activities that addressed compliance topics

seemed to be meaningful for a large majority of participants. Activities that addressed

district policies and procedures (including safety procedures) as well as the introduction

of building administrators and other new teachers received high ratings from a majority

of the survey participants. These activities will remain the same and will be addressed within the first three days of the start of the new school year.

Connections will also be addressed during those first three days of in-service with new teachers. During this time, new teachers will be introduced to their mentor teacher and meet their NTIP Year 2 counterpart. Small group sessions will be established with all building administrators and the new teachers to begin to establish professional connections with their supervisors. It will be during those small group connections that principals will be able to review building expectations and provide an opportunity for the new teachers to ask questions specific to their building assignment.

The district tour will remain part of the first three days of in-service. This activity is an attempt to build an understanding of the culture and the background that makes up BWSD. The district tour has recently morphed into a scavenger hunt that teams up new teachers with district-level administrators in search of points of interest within the district buildings and the community at large. The 2021-2022 Induction class were the first to experience the district tour in this format and provided overwhelmingly positive feedback. The attempt is to satisfy a culture pillar, but indirectly allows new teachers to make connections with those on their scavenger hunt team.

The monthly meetings expected as part of the first year of the NTIP will continue. Mentor teachers will be invited to participate in these meetings one time each semester. This will allow for valuable, scheduled meeting time with mentor teachers. These sessions will be structured based on the needs of the participants to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. The remaining meetings will focus on small group sessions that address best

practices in teaching and learning, curriculum, marginalized learners, and communicating with families and colleagues.

The small group approach to these sessions will be new. Previous to these recommendations, NTIP participants all received the same general training. When topics like special education were addressed, those teachers who were Special Education teachers had different needs than those teachers who were regular education teachers accommodating learners with special needs in their classroom. While this time was not a complete waste for the Special Education teachers, their time could be better served in a small group setting that specifically addresses concerns special education teachers are facing. Groups can be developed based on teaching assignment, grade-level, subject level, or even years of teaching experience outside of BWSD.

A very important topic that will be addressed in these small group sessions will address the educational technologies that are required and available for all new teachers. Learning Skyward, Canvas, and Google are skills that a new teacher needs to have early in the school year in order to appropriately meet expectations of lesson plans and daily instruction. Relying on the mentor teachers and other teachers who are leaders in these topics to lead these sessions and provide support for the new teachers will be essential in the first month of the school year.

Layered on top of the meetings will be the requirement to complete at least two peer observations. Scheduling a peer observation in each semester will help the new teacher strengthen their practice, provide opportunities to ask questions, and build relationships with other teachers. Each peer observation in year two will have a specific focus. Topics like classroom management, technology integration, curriculum tools and

resources, or other grade-level and department appropriate topics will be the focus. This will also provide the new teacher another opportunity for growth in new initiatives that are being focused on for that school year.

Over two years, new teachers in BWSD will experience a NTIP that will focus on the 4C's highlighted by Bauer (2010). Sessions and systems embedded within the framework of compliance, clarification, connection, and culture will support new teachers in the early stages of their career, provide opportunities to form meaningful relationships with colleagues, give exposure to the fabric of the BWSD community, and meet the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. By focusing on all of these aspects BWSD will be able to create a more meaningful NTIP for all participants.

The Role of the Mentor Teacher

Mentorship is arguably one of the most non-negotiable aspects of a NTIP. Researchers like Ingersoll (2012), Bland et al, (2014), and Wong (2004) all cite that assigning mentors to new employees is an integral part to the success of any onboarding or orientation program. This research project was purposefully designed to assess the voices of the mentor teachers involved with the BWSD NTIP because their role is so valuable to the success of the NTIP.

Through the research, it was learned that not unlike the NTIP participants, mentor teachers found the current NTIP to be valuable but also felt that the program has the potential for growth. As a majority, mentor teachers felt appreciated for their work in the program. However, over 30% of the mentor teachers felt unprepared to take on their role as a mentor teacher.

Mentor teachers are a valuable, integral component to the BWSD NTIP. Their involvement up until this point was more of an afterthought than a carefully crafted component of the NTIP. Starting with the selection of mentors through communicating the expectations of their role, mentor teachers do not have any formal training for the responsibilities that ultimately come along with being selected as a mentor teacher. The research highlighted the importance of not overlooking this group of educators in the success of the NTIP.

Bey and Holmes (1992) discussed that the mentor teacher will have the most profound and lasting impact of the new teacher's developing opinion of the district. As such, mentor teachers will be asked to participate in a half-day Mentor Teacher Boot Camp (MTBC) prior to the start of the new teacher in-service days. This MTBC will be attended by only mentor teachers and will review the NTIP goals and expectations. Mentors will be given a handbook and will be led through a review of the components all new teachers will be exposed to through their participation in the program. Bauer's (2010) 4C's framework will also be a focus of MTBC so the mentor teacher can see the importance of all the aspects purposefully embedded into the NTIP.

During MTBC, mentor teachers will be instructed on the requirements of being a mentor, including holding monthly meetings with their assigned new teacher. During this time, mentor teachers will be trained on how to appropriately conduct a non-evaluative observation of their new teacher and constructive means to providing feedback through the observation process. MTBC will also provide the forum for mentors to ask questions they have about the program in a safe, non-judgmental setting.

Finally, mentor teachers will be presented with the importance of their role in the success of the NTIP. Mentors will be given the calendar of meetings for the year and will be directed to the monthly meetings that they will be required to attend as part of the dedicated meeting time with their new teacher. Additionally, mentors will be given the opportunity to have more direct involvement in the NTIP by volunteering to lead small group sessions throughout the year.

By adding a training component to the mentor teacher aspect of the NTIP, the district will be recognizing the importance of the mentorship relationship in creating a more effective NTIP. Mentors and their role in the development of new teachers within the district can have a profound impact on the "stickiness" and retention of the new hires to not only the district, but the teaching profession as a whole. The district placing priority on the appropriate training is the missing piece of the NTIP as it currently stands.

Financial Implications

The current BWSD NTIP operates on a minimal budget. Funds are allocated for the payment of mentor teachers and meals that are provided during the in-service days and monthly meetings. With the addition of a year two to the induction process comes additional fiscal responsibilities that must be incurred by BWSD.

In the current BWSD teacher contract, mentor teachers are paid $487 per semester for a yearly total of $974 per mentor teacher. Obviously, the grand total expense of paying mentor teachers varies from year to year and depends on the number of participants in the NTIP. With the addition of year two of the NTIP, mentors will also need to be compensated for their time dedicated to the new teacher they support during this phase of the induction program.

New fiscal considerations must be given to compensate mentor teachers congruent to the tasks that are required during year two. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will need to be developed with the Baldwin-Whitehall Education Association (BWEA) to address this compensation schedule. The MOU developed will pay teachers $250 per semester ($500 per school year) during the time they serve as a mentor teacher for a new teacher in year two of the BWSD NTIP. This number was determined because the expectations of mentors will be significantly less in year two of the program than in year one of the NTIP. The expectation is that new teachers will be able to navigate the expectations of the school year more independently in year two and will not need as much support as they did in the first year of the BWSD career. Again, the total financial burden to the district cannot be fully realized from year to year because it is inherently based upon the number of teachers in the NTIP from year to year.

Along with the additional costs of mentor teacher compensation for the program, an increase in expenses will be seen in meal costs. All NTIP meetings are held after the school day is over from 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. During these meetings, the district supplies small meals or refreshments. While this cost is not a necessity, it is another small way to show that the new teachers are appreciated and valued. With the proposed addition to the year two of the NTIP and now including mentor teachers in some of the monthly meetings, the cost will be increased. It will be important to set and stay within an allotted budget for these meals to keep costs as low as possible.

Unseen and unknown will be the cost savings realized by the district for the improvements made to the NTIP. Based on the information secured through this research project, enhancements to the NTIP will create an environment that will address

compliance, clarification, connections, and culture within BWSD. By focusing on this framework, BWSD will increase the likelihood of supporting new teachers and retaining them to the district for an extended period of their career. Through this retention, the district would experience a cost savings in the areas associated with hiring, supporting, and training a new teacher.

In addition to the tangible cost savings, the intangibles cannot be ignored. The value of the consistency a teacher brings to a classroom and curriculum from year to year is immeasurable. When the institutional knowledge of a district is built and harnessed by teachers committed to the district and profession, not only are careers developed, but student achievement and growth is fostered. This is the bottom line in all of education.

Limitations

When considering the recommendations associated with this study, a few limiting factors should be acknowledged. First, while satisfactory participation from NTIP participants and mentor teachers related to the survey questions were recorded, a larger response rate would have given greater insight to the perceptions of these groups. Determining what may have deterred teachers from responding to the survey questions would be helpful when designing future research projects of this kind.

Both survey groups included a cohort of new teachers and mentor teachers that experienced the BWSD NTIP during a global pandemic. The teachers involved in the 2020-2021 cohort did not receive the same experience in the NTIP as those who participated in the years preceding and following 2020-2021. Because some of the aspects of the NTIP were altered or altogether eliminated based on the health and safety guidelines of BWSD, perceptions of this group may be skewed.

Thirdly, the Likert-scale questions could have been developed to include less vague language. By only assigning a descriptor to the highest (five) and the lowest (one) identifiers on the Likert-scale, it is left to interpretation and assumption for values selected at the levels of four, three, and two. Although it is a safe assumption that selections of the four and two value are graded one level lower than strongly agree and strongly disagree respectively, there is ambiguity that is inserted as a result of the middle value of three.

Lastly, invitations to participate in the NTIP participant and the mentor teacher surveys were only administered to currently employed teachers in BWSD. The perceptions and values associated with those teachers who have already departed from the district, especially of those who resigned after only spending a short period of time in BWSD, could prove to be invaluable in determining what is missing from the NTIP an effort to retain new teachers to the district.

Recommendations for Future Research

Through the analysis of the findings of this research project, BWSD has received overall satisfaction ratings with the current NTIP structure and framework. Not only did it exceed the requirements of the PDE recommended induction program prior to 2022, but the perceptions of the participants in the program found their experience to be valuable. The recommendations for future implementation as a result of this research project must be seriously considered in an effort to support new teachers and meet the new requirements of induction established by PDE in May of 2022.

While this research focused solely on the professional teaching staff in BWSD, a recommendation for future research would involve the development of orientation and

induction programs for other employee groups throughout the district. Currently, new employees hired to perform jobs such as administrators, paraprofessionals, noon-time aides, bus drivers, and custodians do not receive any onboarding or orientation to the district, nor do they benefit from a shadowing experience. None of these employee groups are assigned mentors. All of these employee groups are left on their own to figure out the culture of BWSD and the expectations of their role. If these employees have a strong manager or supervisor, they may receive some basic training on policies and procedures within their working group. This is a gap in the hiring process of the district and could provide structures to retain groups of employees in light of a national worker shortage.

Through the research process, a few mentor teachers shared comments on new teachers' inabilities to communicate effectively. These comments highlight the changing workforce and workforce expectations. A research study could focus on the needs and expectations of workers new to the workforce and how their strengths can be harnessed in the current work environment. Aligned with this study could be a component that examines the weaknesses of this generation of workers and how employers need to be equipped to compensate or provide more training for these areas.

Summary

Teachers have the ability to influence student achievement, having a profound impact on a learner's life-long experiences. School districts invest a lot of time and resources to recruiting and hiring the perfect teachers for their students. In light of the nationwide teacher shortage and the lack of candidates entering teacher certification

programs, school districts need to place more emphasis and resources on retaining quality talent that they attract.

Since the 1960s, school districts across the country have implemented new teacher induction programs to supplement the skill set of newly hired teachers. These NTIPs have evolved in the last few decades to embody strategies to support and indoctrinate new hires into the culture of the school district. The BWSD currently supports a NTIP that could serve as a model to other school districts; however, there are aspects of the program that can be adjusted to better support and retain new teachers, especially in the light of the changing expectations in education.

BWSD is poised to capitalize on the findings of this research study to better utilize the resources in the district and provide maximum levels of support to all newly hired teachers for the first two years of their career in the district. Through these adjustments and enhancements, the BWSD will create a more meaningful induction program.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Survey Disclosure Letter and Consent to NTIP participants

Greetings,

You have been invited to participate in a research study that will examine the effectiveness and perceptions of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District (BWSD) New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). You were selected to receive an invitation to participate because you have completed the NTIP in the BWSD anytime from August 2016 through January 2021. Rachel Sprouse will be conducting the research in an effort to improve the current NTIP in addition to satisfying requirements for the Doctoral Program at California University of Pennsylvania.

Should you choose to accept this invitation and participate in the research study, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey that will take less than 20 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and all information collected from the electronic survey will be kept confidential. As a participant, you may withdraw from the research at any time, without penalty, and you will not be asked why. This survey will remain open until January 17, 2022.

There are minimal risks to this study. The questions asked in the survey will ask for your perception and experience in completing the NTIP. Some participants may feel uncomfortable providing information that could be viewed as critical, negative, or complaining. Please know that you are not required to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable responding to. You are also able to stop participation at any time

without question.

If you elect to be a part of this study, you will assist the researcher in better understanding

the current perceptions of the NTIP within the BWSD. The data will be utilized to

improve the NTIP starting with the 2022-2023 school year.

All survey responses will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to

it. Survey responses will be anonymous and will be stored on a secure server and will be

password-protected.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Rachel Sprouse,

at spr1545@calu.edu or at 717-712-6572. If you would like to speak with someone other

than the researcher about this project, please contact Dr. Kevin Lordon, Associate

Professor at California University of Pennsylvania, at lordon@calu.edu.

By participating in any part of the electronic survey, you are agreeing to participate in

this study. By doing so, you are indicating that you have read the form and had any

questions answered. You understand that it is your choice to participate and you can stop

at any time, without repercussions. You agree that your participation in the study is

strictly voluntary and you do not have to participate if you do not wish to do so.

This study has been approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional

Review Board. This approval is effective 10/05/2021 and expires 10/04/2022. In

addition, Dr. Lutz has approved the distribution of the survey and the subsequent

work. This approval is attached for your review.

To access the electronic survey: Former NTIP Participant Survey

I appreciate your willingness to participate in this research!

Rachel Sprouse

APPENDIX B

NTIP Participant Survey Questions

1. What year did you complete the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)?

   a. 2020-2021

   b. 2019-2020

   c. 2018-2019

   d. 2017-2018

   e. 2016-2017

2. What best describes the educational area that you were working within during the

   year you completed the NTIP?

   a. Elementary Education (K-5)

   b. Middle School (6-8)

   c. High School (9-12)

   d. Special Education (K-12)

   e. School Counselor

   f. ESL or Intervention Specialist

   g. Other

3. When you completed the BWSD NTIP, were you:

   a. A long-term substitute

   b. A Board approved, contracted employee with the BWSD

4. When you completed the BWSD NTIP, what was your highest level of education attained?

    a. Bachelor's Degree

    b. Bachelor's +15 or more

    c. Master's Degree

    d. Master's +15 or more

    e. Doctoral Degree

5. How many years of teaching experience did you have prior to being hired by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District?

    a. 0

    b. 1-3

    c. 4-6

    d. 7-9

    e. 10+

6. Prior to completing the BWSD NTIP, did you complete an Induction Program in any other public-school district?

    a. Yes

    b. No

7. Prior to being hired by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District, did you acquire tenure in Pennsylvania?

    a. Yes

    b. No

8. Through the BWSD NTIP, were you assigned a mentor?

    a. Yes

    b. No

9. In reflecting on your time in the NTIP, would you overall recommend the program to a new teacher?

    a. Absolutely!

    b. It was helpful, but there is room for improvements.

    c. No, it was a waste of time.

10. After completing the NTIP, would you consider being a mentor teacher for a new teacher starting their career with BWSD?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Please respond to the following statements (11 – 20) using the scale outlined below.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

11. I got what I expected from the NTIP.

12. Sufficient time was dedicated to the NTIP.

13. The Staff conducting the NTIP sessions were knowledgeable in their subject area.

14. The Staff involved with the NTIP were professional.

15. The information covered in the NTIP helped me feel confident as a new teacher in the BWSD.

16. Sufficient time was dedicated to individual building topics throughout the NTIP.

17. Sufficient time was dedicated to my concerns and needs as a new teacher in the

   BWSD.

18. The NTIP allowed me to form relationships with co-workers and other staff

   members.

19. I would make changes to the topics presented in the NTIP.

20. I gained a lot from my relationship with my assigned mentor teacher.

Rate the following NTIP experiences (21 – 31) using the scale outlined below.

1 = Very Dissatisfied, 2 = Somewhat Dissatisfied, 3 = Neutral/Did not Experience, 4 =
Somewhat Satisfied, 5 = Very Satisfied

21. Introduction to Administrative Staff and other New Teachers

22. Explanation of District Policies and Procedures

23. District Tour

24. Introduction to Technology (Hardware/Skyward/Google/Printing/Canvas, etc.)

25. Overview the Evaluation Process, PA-ETEP, Educator Effectiveness, and DSAP

26. Explanation of Instructional I vs. Instructional II and Tenure

27. Topics in Special Education

28. Classroom Observations of Peer Teachers

29. Educator Misconduct and other HR related topics

30. ALICE Safety Training

31. Mobile Fab Lab or other Technology utilized in the District

32. Are there any topics that would be beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first day of school that were not covered in the three initial days of Induction? If yes, please give the suggested topics.

33. What topics/activities would you suggest be added to aid new teachers in their first few years within the BWSD?

34. In what ways did the NTIP provide the support that you needed to make the transition to the BWSD? Please describe some of the highlights.

35. What feedback can you provide about the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP?

36. Please use the area below to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP that was not addressed or suggestions that you have to improve the NTIP for future BWSD new hires.

APPENDIX C

Survey Disclosure Letter and Consent to Mentor Teachers

Greetings,

You have been invited to participate in a research study that will examine the effectiveness and perceptions of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District (BWSD) New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). You were selected to receive an invitation to participate because you served in the capacity of a mentor teacher for the NTIP in the BWSD anytime from August 2016 through January 2021. Rachel Sprouse will be conducting the research in an effort to improve the current NTIP in addition to satisfying requirements for the Doctoral Program at California University of Pennsylvania.

Should you choose to accept this invitation and participate in the research study, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey that will take less than 20 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and all information collected from the electronic survey will be kept confidential. As a participant, you may withdraw from the research at any time, without penalty, and you will not be asked why.   This survey will remain open until January 17, 2022.

There are minimal risks to this study. The questions asked in the survey will ask for your perception and experience as a mentor in the NTIP. Some participants may feel uncomfortable providing information that could be viewed as critical, negative, or complaining. Please know that you are not required to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable responding to. You are also able to stop participation at any time

without question.

If you elect to be a part of this study, you will assist the researcher in better understanding

the current perceptions of the NTIP within the BWSD. The data will be utilized to

improve the NTIP starting with the 2022-2023 school year.

All survey responses will be kept confidential and only the researcher will have access to

it. Survey responses will be anonymous and will be stored on a secure server and will be

password-protected.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Rachel Sprouse,

at spr1545@calu.edu or at 717-712-6572. If you would like to speak with someone other

than the researcher about this project, please contact Dr. Kevin Lordon, Associate

Professor at California University of Pennsylvania, at lordon@calu.edu.

By participating in any part of the electronic survey, you are agreeing to participate in

this study. By doing so, you are indicating that you have read the form and had any

questions answered. You understand that it is your choice to participate and you can stop

at any time, without repercussions. You agree that your participation in the study is

strictly voluntary and you do not have to participate if you do not wish to do so.

This study has been approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional

Review Board. This approval is effective 10/05/2021 and expires 10/04/2022. In

addition, Dr. Lutz has approved the distribution of the survey and the subsequent

work. This approval is attached for your review.

To access the electronic survey: [Mentor Teacher NTIP Survey](#)

I appreciate your willingness to participate in this research!

Rachel Sprouse

APPENDIX D

Mentor Teacher Survey Questions

1. What best describes the educational area that you were working within during the

   year(s) you served as a mentor for the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)?

   a. Elementary Education (K-5)

   b. Middle School (6-8)

   c. High School (9-12)

   d. Special Education (K-12)

   e. School Counselor

   f. ESL or Intervention Specialist

   g. Other

2. What is your highest level of education attained?

   a. Bachelor's Degree

   b. Bachelor's +15 or more

   c. Master's Degree

   d. Master's +15 or more

   e. Doctoral Degree

3. How many years of teaching experience do you have teaching in the Baldwin-

   Whitehall School District?

   a. 0

   b. 1-3

   c. 4-6

      d. 7-9

      e. 10+

4. Did you yourself complete the NTIP through BWSD, as a new teacher, within the

    last 10 years (2011 or later)?

      a. Yes

      b. No

5. Do you feel the NTIP prepares teachers for a career in the BWSD?

      a. Yes

      b. No

6. Based on your experience as a mentor teacher, do you feel the NTIP provides a

    support network for new teachers?

      a. Yes

      b. No

7. In reflecting on the NTIP, would you overall recommend the program to a new

    teacher?

      a. Absolutely!

      b. It is helpful, but there is room for improvements.

      c. No, it is a waste of time.

Please respond to the following statements (8-13) using the scale outlined below.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Somewhat Agree, 5 =

Strongly Agree

8. The NTIP provides a variety of experiences to help new teachers feel confident in

    the practice.

9. The mentor program embedded within the NTIP was a beneficial experience for me as a mentor teacher.

10. New Teachers in the NTIP need more structure and guidelines regarding the expectations as related to the mentor/mentee relationship.

11. Mentor teachers in the NTIP are appropriately prepared to support a new teacher in the BWSD.

12. The compensation a new mentor receives is commensurate with the expectations of the program.

13. As a mentor teacher, I feel appreciated for my work in the NTIP.

14. Are there any topics that would be beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first day of school that were not covered in the three initial days of Induction? If yes, please give the suggested topics.

15. What topics/activities would you suggest be added to aid new teachers in their first few years within the BWSD?

16. What feedback can you provide about the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP? Please be honest regarding potential areas of growth and areas of strength within the program.

17. Please use the area below to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP that was not addressed or suggestions that you have to improve the NTIP for future BWSD new hires.

APPENDIX E

District Approval Letter

BALDWIN-WHITEHALL SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Administration

4900 Curry Road • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15236-1817
Telephone: 412-884-6300 • FAX: 412-885-7802 • www.bwschools.net

July 19, 2021

Rachel Sprouse
1639 Citation Drive
South Park, PA 15129

Dear Rachel Sprouse:

I am pleased to write a letter in support of your doctoral capstone project entitled, "Creating a Meaningful Induction Program for New Teachers in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District." The proposed research has significant value in creating a meaningful New Teacher Induction Program in this District.

Cultivating a program that is meaningful to all new teachers is especially important now as the District is experiencing a notable growth in student population which directly results in a need for more new teachers in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District. It is imperative that any new teachers to our District feel supported. This, in turn, will compel teachers to put down roots in our District and become a true asset to student learning and growth for years to come.

I have reviewed the project proposal and understand the following related to participation:
- Minimal risk to the participating teachers
- New Teachers and Mentor teachers from the previous five years will be asked to complete a simple, electronic survey
- Data collected will be used to revise and reinforce the New Teacher Induction Program beginning in the 2022-2023 school year

Please accept this letter as my formal consent and support of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District's participation in the proposed research project.

Sincerely,

Randal A. Lutz, Ed.D
Superintendent

An Equal Opportunity Employer

APPENDIX F

IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board

California University of Pennsylvania

Morgan Hall, 310

250 University Avenue

California, PA 15419

instreviewboard@calu.edu

Melissa Sovak, Ph.D.

Dear Rachel,

Please consider this email as official notification that your proposal titled "Creating a Meaningful New Teacher Induction Program in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District" (Proposal #21-003) has been approved by the California University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board as submitted.

The effective date of approval is 10/5/21 and the expiration date is 10/4/22. These dates must appear on the consent form.

Please note that Federal Policy requires that you notify the IRB promptly regarding any of the following:

(1) Any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented)

(2) Any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects

(3) Any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

(4) To continue your research beyond the approval expiration date of 10/4/2022 you must file additional information to be considered for continuing review. Please contact instreviewboard@calu.edu

Please notify the Board when data collection is complete.

Regards,

Melissa Sovak, PhD.

Chair, Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX G

NTIP Participant Open-Ended Question Responses

NTIP Participant Open Ended Question #1:	
Are there any topics that would be beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first day of school that were not covered in the three initial days of Induction? If, yes please give the suggested topics	**13 Responses**
Maybe discipline procedures? I have often been confused about this one.	
When I completed the program Skyward was not touched on much. A more thorough session on Skyward and its multiple uses (attendance, sending SkyBlasts, adjusting grades, leaving comments, finding student information, etc) would be beneficial. This may have changed since I completed the program though!	
I think that more training on Skyward would be beneficial. As a new teacher, I understood the day to day basics but never received any formal training on special functions like entering I grades, how to change failing students to a 50%, etc.	
A lot more on the significance of DSAP and hours. How to respond to PA-ETEP	
I may suggest having breakout sessions with their mentor teacher to explore the essentials to the LMS or online platform they are using. When I went through the program, we were just using Google Classroom. Now, in the new wave of education, this could be beneficial.	
I believe it would be very helpful to have had more explanation / practice with creating and implementing an SLO.	
I felt that some things were assumed knowledge among staff, things I found out by day to day talking to coworkers in the building, that could have been helpful to know. Examples: submitting weekly lesson plans, sending weekly Skyalerts, expected balance between formal/informal assignments	
I would have liked to have learned more about the community.	
Have other teachers come in and explain what they do on their first days of school to give new teachers an idea of what a first day might look like.	
Time to meet with your direct supervisor and get a feel for your building/year, as well as some time to look at your content's curriculum	
More information about DSAP (this was not something I encountered in my previous districts)	
I was not in attendance of these meetings before school started.	
I think that everything we discussed was appropriate. I know that my induction year was a little different because of the pandemic. We were very focused on Canvas in the beginning. I felt very prepared beginning the school year! I appreciated that time that was given to complete work on my own with my mentor and team members.	

NTIP Participant Open Ended Question #2:	
What topics/activities would you suggest be added to aid new teachers in their first few years within the BWSD?	**18 responses**

Now, obviously, guidance on how to use Canvas and the Google Suite to provide both in-person synchronous instruction and virtual asynchronous instruction at the same time will be needed.
More activities related to the assigned school - things are different in each building and knowing how various things work (signing up for labs/spaces, how to request a day off, how IEP meetings run, etc) would be helpful to know based on the building expectations.
More Skyward training. Definitely add explicit, in person training on Canvas for new hires.
Counselors meeting: 1. Find out which counselor has what class. 2. When to contact them 3. What to look for with each student at the beginning of year. 4. When to send students down at the beginning or year and midyear. Skyward: 1. How to change grades after submission. 2. When is the deadline to change in-complete grades. 3. How to look up additional students not in classes. 4. How to find previous class grades Administration meeting: 1. Identify what each administrators role is during the school year. 2. How to write referrals. 3. Monthly lunch with the administration team (Guidance, security, or tech department) to talk about help or concerns ... developing relationships with them. 3. Department Heads
I was very satisfied with what we had put in place.
It would be great to have new teachers have hands on practice with using technology at each of the schools (since some tech varies throughout each of the buildings) For example, how to screen share to the promethean boards, etc.
Would like to get to see other buildings more (like when the whole staff traveled to other schools and did walking tours)
I would have liked to have learned more about the Baldwin Whitehall community and maybe have some of our after school meetings reflect that by being involved in community events (BW cookie exchange, Multicultural Potluck, a trip to SHIM, etc.) rather than meetings.
Bring in more teachers who could share what they are doing in their classrooms to give the new teachers an idea of strategies that would work or technologies that the district subscribes to that can be useful (Edpuzzle, Nearpod, etc).
More on Skyward and the DSAP process, more time to actually test out the technology available (ex. Promethean board training, how to set up doc cams, whatever will be available to that teacher)
A better understanding of how the district works. Who to go to with certain questions. Possible create a flow chart. More meet and greets with building administration and teachers.
Classroom management, work-life balance, how to avoid burnout
More team/grade level/department planning time
I would definitely provide additional clerical time. As a teacher who has participated in 3 new teacher hires (with other districts), I desperately wanted and needed time to sit in my room and prepare for the first week of school. I think it would be helpful to have a set time to review district curriculum and materials with mentor teachers and/or department chairs so new teachers understand what they have available to them at the start of the school year.
A workshop or session devoted to improving education of ESL students.

I think that the topics covered hit all necessary topics for a successful year and career in the BWSD.
Additional information or resource guides related to previously teaching out of state and transitioning to PA requirements.
Discussions about common challenges faced by new teachers and strategies to overcome those challenges

NTIP Participant Open Ended Question #3:	
In what ways did the NTIP provide the support that you needed to make the transition to BWSD? Please describe some highlights.	**15 responses**
I enjoyed meeting other new staff members, learning about the technology and procedures (Skyward, PA-ETEP, etc.) of the district, and the union provided lunch. Mine was so long ago (2016-17) that I am struggling to remember the events in detail...	
The mentor aspect of the program is great, as well as the required peer observations. I really enjoyed observing some of my colleagues, and I still have wonderful working relationships with both of them!	
I learned a lot about how the day to day of teaching responsibilities, expectations, and the appropriate channels to follow in the building.	
I think it helps give you connects with other new teachers. You get to form relationships with people going through the same process as you.	
I absolutely loved working with my mentor and connecting with her. Having a mentor really provides you with extra support and a comforting face. The hands on activities were also super helpful. It was neat touring the other buildings, as well. I also loved having the opportunity being able to observe other teachers in my building between grade level and subject. I really learned a lot seeing different styles/techniques. It also really helped seeing how classroom management is conducted in various rooms.	
Helped with understanding how to set up and use Skyward for grades, especially when we did it right before report cards; found it very beneficial to do a peer observation and write up	
It was a great way to learn about the expectations and happenings within the district.	
I learned about specific policies within the district.	
I enjoy seeing the different parts of the district and highlighting some of the things that makes BWSD unique (eg. The Fab Lab).	
Having a group of people who are all starting out new.	
The NTIP connected me with other new teachers and helped me develop a great relationship with my mentor.	
It really helped to see faces of the people that would help.	
I was provided with a group of professionals that understood how I felt each day. It group of new teachers in my building were able to form a strong bond and help support each other throughout our first year in the building. I felt like the monthly meetings were a nice way to check in with each other and see how the school year was going. I did appreciate the small treat bags during Halloween and St. Patrick's Day. Small gestures like that helped me feel welcomed into the district.	
Providing a mentor/mentor meetings, encouraging peer observation	
The NTIP gave me the opportunity to get to know my mentor teacher very well. Those meetings with her really helped give me the confidence to be successful. She gave me insight into ways to improve my teaching strategies and techniques. The meeting about transitioning from level I-level II was very helpful as well because I do not have my level II certification yet. I enjoyed the time to get to know the other new teachers as well. It helped ease the nerves in the beginning!	

NTIP Participant Open Ended Question #4:	
What feedback can you provide about the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP from the viewpoint of a new teacher?	**19 responses**
It mainly felt like my mentor was there to answer questions or provide help when I requested. She also checked in every once in a while to ask how things were going. It wasn't very structured--Not that it should be. I was fine with how she mentored me--just trying to provide specific feedback.	
My mentor teacher was/is the BEST! Assigning mentor teachers that have a similar position to you is super helpful. Keeping track of the topics we discussed during our meetings was helpful, but I think it would also be nice to	
I think just building in more time that is formally dedicated to mentor/mentee training rather than having to try to squeeze things in at the end of the day or during prep period. During that first year it felt like there was never enough time with my mentor even though she was wonderful about making time when I needed her.	
Thank goodness for Maria. Although I came in with 26 years of experience, she was able to fill in the blanks of all of the above and more. The DSAP concept especially and how/why the hours.	
I relied heavily on my other coworkers for support. The mentor teacher that I had was not very helpful. I provided feedback at the end of the year, but I noticed that my mentor teacher was chosen to be a mentor teacher again. Her mentee also had the same feedback.	
My mentor was incredible, and we still have a great relationship. It is nice to have someone you can constantly rely on.	
This was one of my favorite aspects of the new teacher program. My mentor truly became a friend and role model. She really helped guide me throughout the school year. I was not afraid to ask questions and seek advice. It was really helpful to have guidance. I think it would be also really helpful to have one if you are a new teacher (contracted) after the NTIP. I was a LTS when I had a mentor. It also would have been super helpful to have one as a new contracted teacher. (For things like SLO and DSAP!)	
Very helpful to have a go-to person	
It was so nice to have someone within my building who I felt comfortable enough to turn to when I had questions.	
I did not go to my mentor that often. I found that I had an easier time getting together with other teachers who taught the same subject as I did and were able to help with my questions.	
I had an absolutely fabulous mentor, but she was not in my content area. Because of this, I had to default to another co-worker on a lot of content specific questions. My mentor herself was absolutely fabulous and so helpful to me throughout the process, and I was able to learn a lot from her, but there were times that she didn't have an answer for me because her position was different than mine. I did love that we had to have meetings often so that we could discuss where I was at and where I could from there.	
Offer more time for the mentor/mentee to work together	
The mentor/mentee experience was my favorite part of the NTIP. My mentor and I work closely together everyday (still) and collaborate often. It was an essential part of the experience for me. I would not have gotten through my first year without her.	
It would have been more helpful to have a mentor who is in the same position as me, even if she/he wasn't in the same school.	
My mentor and I got along really well. I think it would/ could be useful for the mentor/ mentee to fill out a personality survey so that the mentee is matched with someone that would work well together and be able to grow professionally with during the school year. I tried not to bother my mentor a ton because we were in different grade levels, so I tended to lean towards my grade level team with more school based questions, and utilized my mentor with more general questions related to the NTIP.	
A bit more direction on possible topics to be discussed between the mentor and their mentee	

This was my favorite part of the whole NTIP! I think it was most helpful because it gave me the opportunity to discuss things that I needed to learn about. My whole entire team was and still is incredible. I love being able to learn and grow beside my colleagues.
There were some things that my mentor was very helpful with, but other things that I would seek help or information elsewhere. I think it would be beneficial to also pair new teachers with another "new" teacher--someone who has been in the district for less than 3 years and recently went through the NTIP. Sometimes, it is helpful to have a fresh perspective in addition to the well-seasoned, veteran mentors.
I benefit from a more structured environment. I feel there should be a specific agenda for all mentor/mentee meetings.

NTIP Participant Open Ended Question #5:	
Please use the area below to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP that was not addressed or suggestions that you have to improve the NTIP for future BWSD new hires.	**11 responses**
1) Clear expectation of procedures for student discipline 2) Maybe training from the District in providing the types of lessons/instruction that it wants?	
When I was completing the NTIP, a district tour was not given, but I know that is something that has recently been added! I think that's a great idea! :)	
BWSD NTIP was the most thorough, well organized, and helpful induction program that I have participated in. Andrea, Janeen, and really everyone involved were awesome and always willing to help and answer any questions that came up.	
Please read the above.	
I think ensuring that new teachers have a good understanding of technology upon the start of the school year is a great way to make them feel comfortable and prepared in a new role.	
I believe the NTIP is a wonderful program! It really helped me grow as a new teacher. I learned so much valuable information that continues to help me! :)	
For my year, the timeline would be my suggestion. For example, we covered Skyward in the meeting that came after interims were due for the first time. It would have been more beneficial to have the Skyward discussion sooner. I was able to ask my mentor teacher for help, but covering it in the meeting would have been helpful as well.	
The idea of the peer observations is good, but we never have enough subs for it to truly be effective. It would have been really nice to see other buildings, and network with other co-workers in the district to do those observations. Instead I was squeezing it in on my prep time to make it easier for everyone and get it done.	
Provide frequent reminders about meetings. I missed a few simply due to being overwhelmed and swamped with emails.	
As previously stated, the BWSD NTIP was my third onboarding process. Therefore, I already had some prior exposure to some of the topics covered in the process. I think it would be nice to have some of the meetings differentiated by grade level/, subject area, or building. For example, some of the special education questions that 2nd grade teachers have is different from the secondary level. I did appreciate that all of my questions were answered very promptly through email anytime I had a question before or after a meeting.	
I think in the future it would be nice to split into groups either based off of the building you are assigned or grade level. This could provide more meaningful conversations and relationship building.	

APPENDIX H

Mentor Teacher Open-Ended Question Responses

Mentor Teacher Open Ended Question #1:	
Are there any topics that would be beneficial to present to new teachers prior to the first day of school that were not covered in the three initial days of Induction? If, yes please give the suggested topics.	**23 responses**

The need for positive communication and how to achieve this needs to be emphasized. Some new teachers may need guidelines for how to interact with and how to communicate effectively and respectfully with their colleagues.
*Committee Topics for them to volunteer so they feel included *Curriculum Meetings set up to preview manuals/resources that are available*Training on technology tools *A meet and greet with team members *A tour of the school and background information on community
I think a bus tour of the district would be beneficial.
General day to day requirements
Reality and day to day
My mentee did not begin at the start of the school year and I therefore do not know what was covered in these 3 initial days.
Truly, I feel some more 1:1 time sitting down and working with skyward and now canvas with an experienced teacher in their content area is important. Every new teacher I've met and talked with really struggled with the inner workings of that program which is really very important. A contact list by building of issues and who to contact on one paper would be beneficial that can be updated. Ie skyward is helpdesk then Cathy Jones, medical leave or benefits Rachel Sprouse. How to actually put in helpdesk tickets (that may be discussed now)
I was not asked to be a mentor teacher prior to the training before school. My mentee was an art teacher and I am a physical education teacher, I feel that this was beneficial in many "general" way, but I was no able to provide her with the "full" experience.
I think that a FAQ would be helpful.
Classroom management strategies and the process to send upward if it is unresolved at classroom level Building "culture" - procedures for entering attendance, grade reports, what clubs/activities offered, what principal does what tasks, etc.
N/A
I don't remember the topics that were covered prior to the first day, but safety would be important. District expectations and priorities would also be helpful for new teachers. I would also suggest time set aside with the building principal, as well, in order for the new hires to understand their administrator's teaching philosophy and expectations for their teachers.
no
I'm having trouble remembering the three initial days of induction since it was several years ago, but I think classroom management would be a good topic to cover.

Classroom Management Discipline with Dignity Tips on working with students with special needs for regular ed teachers - Differentiated Instruction
I feel that the teachers that I have worked with were prepared with the right information for the beginning of the year. If he/she was unclear of something, the right questions were asked.
Maybe some additional time allotted during the initial PD days for working with their mentor/department and curriculum specifically. I think it would help to alleviate mentees first month questions and anxiety if more time was given to prepare with others and work in their classroom.
NA
Building level procedures for their particular school, Canvas & skyward (may be new to them), DSAP what it is and expectations
Job Required tasks; new employees seem to think that if they do not feel like doing tasks, that they are optional and just set them off to the side. They need to learn to balance their workload and complete all tasks even if this means that they must work some extra hours.
No; it is nearly impossible to present everything to new teachers within the first 3 days. Some things have to be explained as they happen in teaching the very first time around.
I can not think of anything at this time.
Not that I can think of. I was in the unique situation that my new teacher was not a brand new teacher. She had been teaching for many years in another district, so she didn't need as much help/guidance as a typical new teacher. I will say that I have been a mentor teacher before and I have been in the induction program (over 10 years ago), and I think this program is EXTREMELY beneficial.

Mentor Teacher Open Ended Question #2:	
What topics/activities would you suggest be added to aid new teachers in their first few years within the BWSD?	26 responses
Truthfully, their needs to be an emphasis on interpersonal relationships. COVID set relationships back, but even before that, I noticed a change in the relationships among teachers. Teachers definitely need one another. We have to be open to both help and receive help.	
In my opinion, they should observe willing teachers and discuss best practices, while training them on the curriculum. We continue to throw new teachers "to the wolves" without any curriculum training and expect them to feel successful on top of the many new tasks they must learn. I feel they need to have opportunities to plan together with team members that teach the same topics (that may not be their mentor). Teachers could observe them and provide feedback. New teachers should have manuals and textbooks available to them prior to school starting. Over the past years it has caused more stress trying to locate these materials/resources. If we are interviewing for new positions, then it is not a surprise we need more resources for the new teacher and students. If they are board approved in July, I feel they should be allowed to decorate their room earlier(which they would want to do) since they need to attend the mandatory new teacher meetings on clerical time.	
It is a good idea to participate in extracurricular activities. The kids enjoy seeing their teachers at events.	
I think there should be an opportunity for new teachers to participate in observations of other faculty within their own department and across the school.	

Canvas training- observations - time with mentor teacher day to day - working with difficult parents/children expectations
I think the program should go more than the first year if a mentee is a brand new teacher. Newer teachers often need support for longer than their first year. Furthermore, I think topics should be added that can be specific to certain areas of certification. For instance, secondary Science teachers may find it helpful to go through lab set up with their mentors and safety expectations regarding the labs. Physical Education teachers may find it helpful to learn about the usual set up of their classes and how they are organized with so many students. I also think that a lesson plan study could be beneficial to new teachers - to have some feedback from a mentors.
This has improved but there's so much info that first bit. So an outline of reaching tenure and what all needs to be done with timelines really needs to be written out and hit harder. With switching principals and there never ending list I've seen that get messed up numerous times before. Would just be helpful. Alice/fire drills per building should be discussed in more detail those first days. We've had fire alarms pulled in the first week of school, and shelter in places occur certain years where there was hardly any conversation. A quick document of what all of the terms mean and the mentor teacher going into their space and showing them should be required within the first week of school.
I think my mentee needed help with just general everyday housekeeping items (roll sheets, class size tallies, fire drill procedures, ect.).
Canvas / Skyward / Etc
unknown
N/A
It's been several years since I participated in the new teacher program, but having been a mentor to both new teachers and student teachers, I see student discipline and time management as the biggest obstacles for new teachers at the elementary level. Fortunately, the teachers and student teachers that I have mentored have all been wonderful at the teaching part. It's always these two areas that they struggle with the most.
none
When I was a new teacher, we shared our "best practices" in the classroom. I found this helpful.
I think there should be more time built into the school day for observations within the classrooms - and not just for the new teachers - but for all members of the department. Administrators like Jill Salopek and currently, Shaun, have tried to make this work, but just logistically it is difficult because of a shortage of teachers and substitutes. It is so important though, that we are in each other's classrooms learning from each other and improving our practice.
I think that new teachers need more encouragement to take part in extra curricular activities and school wide events. I also think that new teachers need to be encouraged to bring new ideas to the table.
A comprehensive explanation of the PSER's program is desperately needed. This should include the importance and value is the 403B program
Classroom management strategies, work/life balance
Responding to parents appropriately - phone calls/emails. Interacting with staff - most new hires completely ignore staff and walk right past them without saying hello or even making any acknowledgment.
I think each building should create a "to do" list for setting up for the start of the school year: just a comprehensive checklist of items that need completed within the first coupld weeks of school. For example, locker lists, seating charts turned into office, building health information card to nurse, login for various programs, room set-up, etc.

Canvas and Skyward
Maybe the opportunity to observe other members within a department or other teachers within the school if coverage permits it to happen.
More training for how to support ESL families with the educational process Clearly identified roles of paraprofessionals in the classroom
I think that it would be beneficial for teachers to have time to observe other teachers to continue to learn best strategies in teaching as well as classroom management. This really benefits all teachers regardless of experience, however, I think it helps support newer teachers also.
Nothing at this time.
I can't think of any.

Mentor Teacher Open Ended Question #3:	
What feedback can you provide about the mentor/mentee aspect of the NTIP? Please be honest regarding potential areas of growth and areas of strength within the program.	**29 responses**

Mentor teachers need a short course on how to be an effective mentor...without the mentees present. Things have changed a lot in the last few years. Expectations and guidelines need to be clear to the mentor teacher so that information is passed to the mentee correctly.
Although I understand the accountability piece, but the paperwork involved should be lessened and provide meaningful tasks such as planning together, reviewing curriculum and resource materials. I also feel anyone, regardless of years to the district, should have a mentor teacher if they switch grade levels or any academic area.
Time for mentor/mentees to work together. This could also provide time to focus on the content/department related expectations.
From my experience, the chart with suggested topics need to be modified. Some of the topics were unclear as to what was to be covered. When I participated in the NTIP, the program was not very structured and I would have liked more guidance for both me and the new teacher.
It would be helpful to create a school based criteria for mentor teachers to address with mentees
A lot of the paperwork is not necessary. The in-service opportunities and time to work with the mentor teacher is what is valuable time spent.
I think it is beneficial to pair up mentees with a mentor in their subject area. I do believe that most of the time this is the case, however, I think it should be required.
I think having a contact person is important and honestly is a godsend. Attempting to match new people with a content area and often someone in their building is beneficial. I was a mentor teacher unofficially to a staff member because she was paired poorly and their mentor teacher didn't work in her content area and really couldn't help with a lot of the tasks that happen in the first year because it was so different.
I felt much of the time that it was more of a burden on the mentee, than a positive experience. Many times I felt my mentee was so overwhelmed and completing work for the NTIP was just another task.
Need more opportunities to meet and work thru issues that the new teacher may be having.

Built in common time or blocked time for mentor/mentees to meet. Often times in my experience we would meet in whatever quick time we could find, between classes, before school, text messages, etc. Often times one topic could take 2 days (or more) to fully answer or explain (we met in 2-3 minute increments in other words). Maybe more time in beginning of year vs end of year, but for new teachers with several preps and lots of questions, even with a dedicated mentor, it is hard to find the time!

Understanding the demographics in Baldwin-Whitehall better allows new teachers to educate students in a more appropriate way.

This was not my personal experience with my mentee, but I have heard from other newly hired teachers that they feel the program is a waste of time. They feel they don't need to have a mentor or go through a new teacher program. However, I did hear from one new hire this year that they appreciated the team building activities and camaraderie that was developed from the crew this year. This person also found the topics that were covered to be helpful. As with anything, you get out of it what you put into it.

I was a mentor teacher long ago and it has already improved a lot since then. At the time, I feel like we didn't have enough time to meet.

This seemed very helpful. It's important for a new teacher to feel he/she can go talk to a specific person for help without feeling like they are being a bother.

I think that we need more time to collaborate as teachers, and the only ways I can figure out that this could happen is if we really look at the school day and building in more flexibility.
I was hopeful that Highlander Wednesdays would be used again, but in a different form.
Why couldn't we look at making Wednesdays - maybe even twice a month - as a flexible learning day?
We could have students moving around the building, working on their PBL projects with different teachers, getting one on one help from certain teachers or learning remotely when applicable?
This would give teachers and students time to collaborate and learn from each other or work in areas that interest them.
The schedule as it is now is rushed and fragmented, and I really think students would learn more if they were able to choose a learning project, incorporate different skills from different classes, and have time to work independently or with smaller groups.

I believe that the program is thorough, however, some of the extra meetings and materials could be modified to elevate the workload.

I think the program works well and within the past few years I have seen significant change regarding the topics/PD covered during the monthly meetings to meet the needs of the entering classes of new teachers. I think the program does well to provide the new teachers with all they need to have a comprehensive knowledge of the BW ways and operations.

A monthly open forum for new teachers to openly express their thought on teaching. This should include a chance for new teachers to honestly vent the many hard parts of becoming a new teacher and the offer overwhelming amount of work required.

It is very beneficial when the mentor/mentee teach the same content area - not only can you work together on building level things but can also work closely on curriculum

I need to read the manual more often to review what is covered and what I must do as a mentor. It is up to me to keep abreast of everything that is required.

The mentor and mentee have a great relationship and work with one another closely.

I thought it was a positive experience for both individuals. Some aspects could be handled now with Google Meet (almost like a hybrid approach) with our advancements in technology.

I think it is a strong and comprehensive program. I think it is so helpful to the mentee to meet weekly with the mentor teacher. The difficult part is finding time/running out of time with limited planning time.

I realize that there are certain situations that are unique. But, I do not feel like I am being as helpful to my current mentee as I possibly could if we were in the same building.
I think that having the mentee write down questions or concerns weekly and meet with the mentor for guidance is important as well as the mentor meeting regularly with the mentee.
If a teacher already has many years of experience coming to our district, an adapted program would be beneficial.
I felt like the topics covered were appropriate and helped prepare the new teachers, but yet opened the door for further conversation with their mentors.
I would say that it would be helpful for the mentor and new teacher to be in the same grade level with common planning times. I understand why I was chosen (and I was happy to do it), but it was just difficult because we really only got to talk during scheduled times.

Mentor Teacher Open Ended Question #4:	
Please use the area below to provide feedback on any aspect of the NTIP that was not addressed or suggestions that you have to improve the NTIP for future BWSD new hires.	**15 responses**

Any teacher new to the district, a subject, grade level, building, etc. truly needs a mentor. Maybe there could be different levels of mentoring. I believe that most teachers are willing to help another teacher. However, many times the "new" teacher is need of a great deal of time from a veteran teacher. Teachers willing to do this should be compensated, not expected, not "voluntold" to help. This sets up an unfair situation.
Time with mentor teacher perhaps some more opportunities for observations
Find a way to add some social activities! Not all mentees will get out of their own classrooms or building areas, but if social activities were part of the program, mentees will have a direct route to making collegial connections, which is so important.
I'd highly suggest a google form within the first month of topics teachers really need help on for some of their meetings. I know having a schedule ahead of time is great but possibly their first meeting a month after school has started having it be a bigger deal, principal from each building, someone from it, someone from admin around to really answer questions would be useful.
I wish the mentee did not have as much to complete and the mentor could control "supervising" or the paperwork side.
We need to include the current technology and programs that teachers use everyday.
Overall it is a great program that is well run!
N/A
Perhaps have them do more classroom observations of different teachers. I've always found it helpful to get new ideas by observing others.
None.
Any supports we can offer new teachers are so important. Each school might find new ways to make new teachers feel welcome. Even a bulletin board in the office reminding veteran teachers who is new. In a building as large as the high school it's easy to not even know who is new and who might need some words of encouragement

Have a checklist to review that everything is complete prior to the start of a new hire's first day(added to our email so they receive all information given to staff/access to Canvas/parking spot/chromebook set up/id badge/phone updated/Skyward changes). It has been embarrassing when a new hire arrives to our department and these essential items are not in place.
N/A
I think it would help to better prepare new teachers on the expectations for ESL students - not so much the teaching in the classroom, but how to communicate with families and which programs are available to help with this.
I would just like to say that I think this program is very important and helpful! I am always happy to volunteer!