

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 23, 2008

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Improving Student Achievement Through the New Teacher Induction Program

ORIGINATOR: J. Bidulock

RESOURCE
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INFORMATION

Background Information

The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) is a joint initiative between Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Public Teachers' Local 37. The NTIP was developed in response to the changing demographics of the District's work force, the increasing complexities within the teaching profession, and a critical need to support and professionally develop teachers new to the teaching profession and to the District.

The mission of the NTIP is to assist and support teachers in the first year of their probationary contract. The goal of the program is to enhance teacher skills and knowledge in relation to the Quality Teaching Standards, District Priorities, and unique school and classroom contexts. Ultimately, the work of the NTIP is in the service of student learning.

The new teacher induction program aligns directly with the District Priorities. This initiative will not only foster student success in their programs of study (priority 1), but also create a healthy workplace that supports opportunities for teacher growth and professional development (priority 3). Research indicates that intensive early support embedded within a comprehensive new teacher induction program contributes to a more collaborative, healthy and innovative workplace which will result in increased job satisfaction. This initiative is also aligned with the Framework for Professional Learning component of the District's Human Resources Strategy. A strong teacher induction program reinforces the District's goal of maintaining its reputation as an employer of choice.

The Journey Begins

Commencing in the 2008-2009 school year, all teachers on a first-time probationary contract are required to participate in year one of a three-year teacher induction program. This program, offered through Consulting Services at no cost to schools, is the result of ongoing collaboration between Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Public Teachers' Local 37. The year one foundational program consists of four full-day institutes for first-year teachers. These institutes explore timely and relevant research based practices that will support new teachers in being responsive to the diverse backgrounds of the students and families they serve.

Teachers in this program will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of beneficial supports and services. These may range from collaborative planning sessions, peer observation and feedback opportunities, intervisitations with mentors and colleagues and after-school networking opportunities. These supports and services are provided by a team of consultants from Consulting Services.

Mentors

Critical to the success of the NTIP is the intensive individual support and professional learning that teachers will receive at the school site from mentor teachers. This has been successfully demonstrated over the past decade through the Mentorship Program, a joint initiative supported by the District and Edmonton Public Teachers' Local 37. Students, beginning teachers, mentors, colleagues, administrators, all receive some benefit from a healthy mentor relationship. Mentors will have the opportunity to develop specific skills required for successful mentoring (i.e. listening, observing, coaching, conferencing, giving feedback, facilitating, counseling) which can be applied to many areas within teaching and learning. Mentors will be provided two half days of professional learning at no cost to schools.

Tracking/Monitoring Progress

The success of this program will be measured regularly through narrative data, survey data, emails and conversations with the teachers in the NTIP. This data will provide relevant feedback which will move the program forward and enable district staff to be responsive to the emergent issues and needs of new teachers. In collecting this data, the facilitators will also be cognizant that the children and youth served by the new teachers are the most important guides on this journey and success of the program needs to be measured by how well they are served as well.

Summary

Success of this comprehensive program of teacher induction shifts support and services for new teachers from the periphery to the center of the collective work of the District. A *shared responsibility* for the success of this program holds the possibility of reshaping district culture from one in which new teachers "survive" to one in which they "thrive."

ES:gj