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University of Alberta

First Year Teacher Induction

by

Mark Daniel Swanson

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Educational Administration

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

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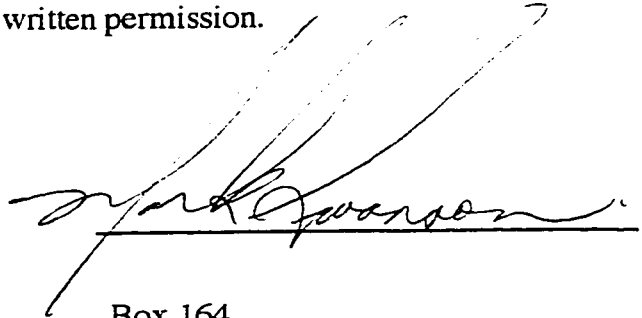
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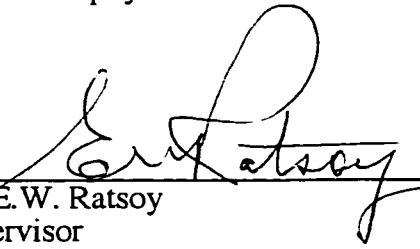
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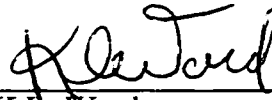
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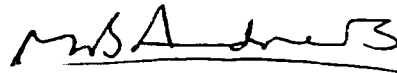
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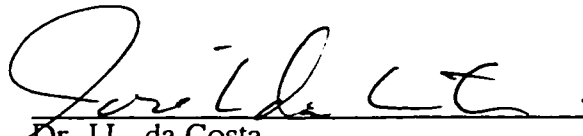
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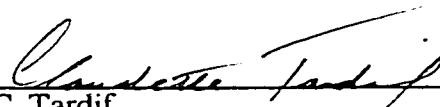
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Dedication

This work is dedicated posthumously to my parents,
Elmo and Helen Swanson.
I am forever grateful that they shared with me
their value for knowledge.

Abstract

The major purpose of this study was two fold: to obtain insight into current first year teacher induction practices and to obtain insight into the induction needs of first year teachers.

In order to accomplish this, a number of problems were derived from the literature on teacher induction to guide the study.

Participants consisted of eight first year teachers and their administrators from six rural Alberta schools. Research methods consistent with a naturalistic approach were utilized. Triangulated information-gathering techniques were employed and consisted of reviewing pertinent literature, document analysis, field notes, and content analysis of respondent interviews. Information collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. The inductive method of constant comparative data analysis was used, with the information emerging from the initial phases of collection being analyzed and applied to the subsequent phases so that theory gradually evolved.

Among the study findings were that formal and informal practices of induction in schools and jurisdictions, although similar, differed and served both the novice teacher and the jurisdiction. The role that the school administrator takes in the induction process differs from school to school. Administrators generally perceived their evaluative role as conflicting with their assistance role. Novice teachers did not seem to share this perception. Important and effective sources of assistance for novice teachers included their administrators, mentors and knowledgeable and caring colleagues.

The study revealed that, for the most part, novice teachers viewed their induction experience as positive.

Among the potential implications for practice of the study findings are guides on how to develop more effective induction programs, particularly at the school level.

Implications for theory include suggestions for the revision of the original conceptual model and the advantages of a metaphorical perspective on the teacher induction process. Suggestions for further research include extending the scope of the study, examining relationships between leadership styles and induction practices, exploring induction practices at the postsecondary level, and cross-cultural study of induction practices of novice teachers.

Acknowledgements

A number of people have made valuable contributions to this research. I am grateful to the dedicated teachers and administrators who were participants in this study. They gave freely of their time and of themselves. I am forever indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Eugene Ratsoy, whose talent, patience, and generosity are gratefully acknowledged. Other members of the supervisory and examining committees Drs. Ken Ward, Joe da Costa, Michael Andrews, Claudette Tardif, and the external examiner, Dr. Cecil Miskel, each made valuable contributions in the form of suggestions and encouragement.

Drs. Don Richards and Stephen Norris each occupied the chair of the Department during the course of my study. Their support in the form of various assistantships and teaching assignments was critical to the completion of this study. The interest and encouragement of many of the members of the Department, especially Dr. Ted Holdaway are acknowledged.

The friendship, interest, and advice of several graduate students is also appreciated. Dale Bischoff, Duane Burton, Colleen Judge, Diane Mirth, and Bill Smale were always available to discuss the study and offer advice and encouragement.

Special acknowledgment is given to Dr. Patricia Rooke, who took a special interest in my work and provided never ending encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Study

Many professions have a formal program of induction for prospective practitioners that eases their transition from university student to practicing professional. Such internship programs in professions such as architecture, law, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing and public administration allow for a bridging between what has been called the *theory-practice* gap. Professions that provide planned induction programs for neophytes increase the chances that those neophytes will obtain the necessary on-the-job knowledge and skills to be successful, satisfied, and productive members of their chosen profession (Seyfarth, 1996).

Notwithstanding this, in Alberta, a formal, province-wide planned induction program for novice teachers does not exist at present. A mechanism, similar to that in other professions, for easing the transition from the theoretical world of university studies to the practical world of the school classroom is lacking. The literature has indicated that by 1987 as many as 38 of the states in the USA had mandated such programs and were in the process of developing or implementing them (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1988; Huling-Austin, 1990). In Canada, Ontario, in particular, has taken steps to implement induction programs (Cole & McNay; 1988, Fullen, 1991; McNay & Cole, 1989).

In September 1985 the Alberta Department of Education introduced an experimental program to provide a formal program of internship for novice teachers. The Initiation to Teaching Project lasted two years. The program had a dual purpose: (a) to provide temporary employment to novice teachers in an effort to ease a situation of over supply, and (b) to assist novice teachers in the acquisition of various skills, competencies, and professional attitudes (Holdaway, Johnson, Ratsoy, & Friesen, 1994). The Department of Education commissioned an evaluation of the project, and the researchers found that the program was of great value. Recommendations were made to implement a mandatory one-year residency program that would ease the transition from university student to professional teacher (Ratsoy, Friesen, & Holdaway, 1987).

Given the present economic climate in which our school systems operate, it is unlikely that a formal program of year-long induction will be initiated in the near future. It would seem, then, that the responsibility for assisting the transition of the novice

teacher rests with the school jurisdiction and with each school and its respective principal. This is an onerous professional responsibility. Statistics indicate that 40% to 50% of teachers in the United States drop out of the profession within the first seven years, and most of those drop out of the profession within the first two years (Gordon, 1991; Schlechty & Vance, 1981). Data from one study cited by Grissmer and Kirby (1987) showed that about 20% of new teachers in the United States left the profession after just one year in the classroom. Numerous reasons have been mentioned in an attempt to account for such a high rate of attrition. Gordon (1991) cited six key reasons:

1. Difficult work assignment
2. Unclear expectations
3. Inadequate resources
4. Isolation
5. Role conflict
6. Reality shock.

More distressing, is the contention by Schlechty and Vance (1981, 1983) that it is the most academically able teachers who leave the profession in their initial years of teaching. In Alberta, where teachers do not appear to be in short supply, high rates of attrition may not present a challenge. Of greater importance, then, may be the drift of new teachers from rural and remote areas to urban jurisdictions that seems to occur. As a result, rural and remote schools may find themselves in the position of constantly socializing new teachers only to have them leave within a year or two for employment in an urban jurisdiction.

Many novice teachers leave the profession due to a lack of suitability. However, not all teachers who leave are unsuited (Seyfarth, 1996). Many might have succeeded if they had not experienced unnecessary frustration and if appropriate support and assistance had been provided (Seyfarth, 1996).

Given the lack of a formal program that addresses such problems faced by novice teachers, it is important to consider what actions various principals have taken to ensure that promising new teachers enjoy a successful first year, and thus continue their careers as teachers. It is also important to consider the induction needs of novice teachers and how principals might provide for, or arrange to provide for, these needs.

Coming to the Question

I began my teaching career at the end of November several years ago. The school where I was teaching and its community were new to me because they are several

hundred kilometers from where I had grown up. There was no formal orientation or induction to either teaching or the community. I simply had to seek out assistance and advice wherever I could find it. My first year had its ups and downs, but I do remember feeling very comfortable about approaching the principal for assistance as needed. It was he who suggested where I might find appropriate accommodation and he who had several positive and effective suggestions about my classroom management practices. I was also fortunate in having a schedule that included, on average, preparation time of 80 minutes per day. Several years later I had the experience of working with first year teachers as a school administrator. I felt that I was not effectively reaching out to them when they needed assistance from me. I simply did not know what to do for them and felt that they presumed some sort of a power differential existed between us that prevented them from seeking assistance from me. Increasingly, I became interested in exploring the area of teacher induction/orientation.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to obtain insight into the needs of novice teachers and the types and forms of assistance that principals have provided for them. These insights have provided new information about effective measures that can be taken to create a successful first year experience for the novice teacher.

The purpose of this study was twofold:

1. to obtain insight into the forms and types of assistance that school jurisdiction, teachers, and principals provide or arrange to have provided for novice teachers to assist in their induction into the profession of teaching, the school, and the community in which the school is located;
2. to obtain insight into the induction needs of novice teachers.

Justification for the Study

Graduates of Bachelor of Education programs have invested a great deal of time, effort, and financial resources in preparing for a career in a profession where success is viewed as somewhat tenuous (Huling-Austin, 1987; Marso & Pigge, 1987). Not only have the graduates committed significant personal resources to their future, but society has also subsidized their postsecondary education costs. High rates of attrition (Gordon, 1991; Seyfarth, 1996) are a cause of concern, particularly when promising teachers leave the profession of teaching in their first year in the classroom due to

negative experiences that might have been anticipated or prevented by an appropriate program of induction.

In light of these circumstances it seemed important to investigate the nature of the assistance provided by the principal and the induction needs identified by novice teachers in an effort to ascertain what contributes to, or would contribute to, a successful and rewarding experience for a novice teacher.

The study has provided improved theoretical understandings about the relationship between the novice teacher and the principal and the creation of a successful and rewarding first-year teaching experience. Through metaphorical analysis, it has also provided practical knowledge about the needs of novice teachers and the types and forms of assistance that principals are providing or arranging to provide for them and the effectiveness of such types and forms of assistance.

Major Research Problem

This study addressed the following major research problem:

What provisions do principals of rural schools make or arrange to provide for novice teachers in their effort to facilitate a successful transition for these new teachers?

To obtain information relevant to this and related questions, perceptions of five selected principals and novice teacher pairs was obtained and pertinent literature was reviewed.

Specific Research Problems

To address the major research problem, information was sought in connection with the following specific research problems:

1. What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions?
2. What role does the school administrator take and what role might the school administrator take in the induction process?
3. What are the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers?
4. What induction practices are perceived to be effective?
5. What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience?

Definitions of Terms

Novice teacher. A university graduate engaged as a full-time teacher in the first year of teaching. This term generally refers to “teachers who have completed their initial training, have received some form of professional accreditation, are employed by a school district and are in their first year of service, with a more or less normal teaching work load” (Bolam, 1995, p. 613).

Induction. A formal or informal program or processes for, or experienced by novice teachers usually coordinated by a central agency such as a university, school district or school. This term refers to “the process of support and training that is increasingly being seen as necessary for a successful first year of teaching” (Bolam, 1995, p. 612).

Mentoring. “A nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter’s professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and the protégé” (Fullen, 1991, pp. 307-308).

Orientation. The early stage in the overall induction period (Bolam, 1987, p. 746). “While an orientation to a school and community is vital, it should be viewed as the entry point, of teacher induction” (Gordon, 1991, p. 9).

Rural schools. Schools that lie beyond the established limits of the large urban school jurisdiction boundaries in Alberta.

Successful experience. An expression based upon a particular perception held by an individual novice teacher in conjunction with the probability of that novice teacher receiving an offer of a continuous employment contract.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into nine chapters and three appendices. Chapter 1 provides some background for the major research problem of the study, a statement of the five research problems, an overview of the significance of the study, and definitions of terms particular to the study.

Chapter 2 reviews research related to the study and relevant to the development of the conceptual framework that is presented at the end of the study.

Chapter 3 describes the research methods used in data collection and analysis. In addition, the chapter details the various tests of rigor that were used, methodological assumptions, limitations, delimitations, issues of confidentiality, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 introduces the participants of the study and their respective schools.

Chapter 5 presents the findings associated with the first research problem: What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions?

Chapter 6 reports and discusses the findings associated with the second and third research problems: What role do the school administrators take and what role might they take in the induction process? and, What are the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers?

Chapter 7 presents and discusses the findings associated with the fourth and fifth research problems: What induction practices are perceived to be effective? and, What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience?

Chapter 8 recaps the findings with the use of nine common metaphors that have been used to describe the process of induction into teaching.

Chapter 9, the final chapter, provides an overview of the study, a summary of the findings, the conclusions and potential implications for theory development and future research. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of some personal reflections.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature and Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study is to determine the types and forms of assistance that principals in Alberta secondary schools provide for novice teachers. The literature (Brock & Grady, 1997; Spuhler & Zetler, 1996; Wilkinson, 1994) suggests that the first year of teaching is a traumatic experience for most teachers and an experience that can be mitigated by the principal (Brock & Grady, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Sharratt & Sharratt, 1991). It is appropriate, then, to examine the literature concerning definitions of induction, the need for induction programs, types of induction programs, goals of induction programs, induction program components, the mentorship component, concerns of novice teachers, and administrative leadership in induction. In addition, it is important to consider the notion of metaphors and their ability to assist in increasing our understanding of what it is like to be a novice teacher. The conceptual framework upon which the study was constructed is presented towards the end of the chapter.

Defining Teacher Induction

Castetter (1996) broadly defines induction as “a systematic organizational effort to assist personnel to adjust readily and effectively to new assignments so that they can contribute maximally to work of the system while realizing personnel and position satisfaction” (p. 182). Zeichner (1979) refers more specifically to teacher induction as a planned program intended to provide some systematic and ongoing assistance to novice teachers for at least one school year. Bolam (1995) defines induction as “the process of support and training that is increasingly being seen as necessary for a successful first year of teaching” (p. 612). Spagnola (1997) sees induction as “the sum of experiences that brings about the conversion of the beginning teacher into an experienced professional” (pp. 14-15).

The notion of teacher induction as a form of assistance can be found in the literature dating back to the early 1960s when it was more simply defined as assisting novice teachers with their entry into a school (Shaplin, 1962). Since that time, a great deal of research has been conducted in the area and comparisons have been made with induction programs in other professions such as medicine and accounting. Induction into one of these profession is conceived of as a three-stage process that begins with recruitment and is followed by university education in preparation for the final stage,

characterized by work following graduation (Lawson, 1992, p. 163). Induction into teaching is characterized somewhat differently. It generally follows a program of university preservice preparation, is linked to employment, and ideally forms an ongoing part of the teacher's initial year of teaching that is, if it takes place at all. Huling-Austin (1990) describes induction as part of a continuum consisting of preservice, induction, and then inservice.

Need for Induction Programs

There was a great deal of support for induction programs in the literature (Cattetter, 1996; Gold, 1996; Ratsoy, Friesen, & Holdaway, 1987). McDonald and Elias (1982) carried out an extensive investigation of novice teachers. They concluded that

1. Almost all teachers experience the transition period into teaching as the most difficult aspect of their teaching life and career. Some teachers apparently move into teaching smoothly and efficiently, but the majority report that the period is one of great difficulty and even trauma.
2. The major kinds of problems and difficulties that teachers experience are readily identifiable. Most of them relate to the management and conduct of instruction. These problems are so critical that it is easy to overlook the equally obvious fact that the range of problems includes difficulties with evaluating pupils, being evaluated by the administration, working with parents, developing a consistent teaching style, finding out how the school functions, knowing the rules that must be followed, and a variety of other problems.
3. The least studied aspect of this transition period is the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation and loneliness that appear to characterize it. There is sufficient information in existing reports to indicate that these feelings are not uncommon; however, individual conversations with teachers are far more revealing than the current literature has been.
4. Almost all teachers report that they went through this transition period "on their own." They had little or no help available and found help only through their own initiative. This help usually took the form of seeking out some other teacher in whom they could confide.
5. There is probably a strong relationship between how teachers pass through the transition period and how likely they are to progress professionally to high levels of competence and endeavor (Vol. I, pp. 42-43).

In the United States the literature on teacher induction reveals that there are three major reasons for developing and implementing such programs. First, unassisted novice teachers, as a result of learning through trial and error, may have a tendency to adopt teaching strategies that are based upon their need to survive the first year (Lortie, 1975). Such strategies are often very traditional in comparison to the progressive styles that they were encouraged to practice in their preservice training (Sandefur, 1982). According to McDonald (1980), there is a tendency for these coping strategies to supplant more progressive styles and to crystallize into teaching styles that will be utilized throughout the rest of their careers. Second, unassisted novice teachers may experience personal and professional trauma as a result of their “sink or swim” introduction to the profession of teaching. Hawk (1984), Hidalgo (1986), Huling-Austin and Murphy (1987), Ryan et al. (1980), and others have documented cases where novice teachers suffered from a loss of self-confidence, experienced extreme stress and anxiety, and lost faith in their competence as teachers and people. Teachers experiencing these sorts of feelings about themselves are likely not able, as a result, to effectively carry out their duties as classroom teachers. Third, without support and assistance, many potentially good teachers leave the profession early on in their careers. The literature on the retention of novice teachers reveals that high rates of attrition continue (Chapman & Green, 1985; Harris & Associates, 1992, 1993; Schlechty & Vance 1981, 1983). Schlechty and Vance (1981 & 1983) present figures indicating that up to 30% of novice teachers leave the profession within their first two years, compared to an overall teacher turnover rate of just 6% per year. They report, “Our best estimate is that first-year teachers leave teaching at an annual rate of 15%” (1983, p. 476). Heyns (1988) estimates that 30% of beginning teachers do not teach beyond the second year and that almost 40% leave teaching within the first five years. Darling-Hammond (1997) suggests that 30% of teachers leave within the first five years and between 1988 and 1994 teacher attrition rose from 5.6% to 6.6% of all teachers (p. 56). The discrepancies notwithstanding, a vast number of teachers are choosing to leave the profession early on in their careers and according to Heyns (1988), Marso and Pigge (1997), and Wilkinson (1994) many of those that leave are capable teachers.

It is not known how many teachers in Alberta leave the profession of teaching during or at the conclusion of their initial year, nor is it known why they leave. Through an examination of the literature in this area, however, several conclusions can be reached.

Moran (1990) states that “many beginning teachers find themselves in school systems that are ill-prepared to welcome them appropriately. These beginners are isolated professionally and socially” (pp. 210-211). Armstrong (1984) suggests that many teachers leave the profession after the first or second year due to difficulties of adjustment to a school’s social structure, the competing roles with which they have to contend as teachers, and the isolating nature of classroom practice. Ryan (1970), Lortie (1975), Elias, Fisher and Simon (1980), and Veenman (1984) cited discipline, isolation, evaluation of student work, and the use of appropriate materials as commonly identified problems encountered by novice teachers that create feelings of inadequacy and incompetence. Fullan (1993) and Dworkin (1987) suggest that in addition to feelings of isolation, many beginning teachers feel that they do not enjoy the necessary support to adequately carry out their duties as teachers. Reality shock, or the difference between what one expects teaching to be like and what they actually experience teaching to be, is another explanation for the feelings of dissatisfaction many novice teachers experience. Veenman linked both personal factors (personality and attitudes) and situational factors (inadequate preparation and poor fit to assignment) to the experience of reality shock. Appropriate induction programs would address these concerns.

Research in the United States suggests that appropriate and well planned induction programs which reduce the intensity of the transition into teaching have reduced the number of teachers leaving the profession (Huling-Austin, 1987; Schaffer, Stringfield, & Wolfe, 1992). In one study, Colbert and Wolff (1992) found that 95% of novice teachers who experienced support during their initial year were teaching after their third year. In another study, Odell and Ferraro (1992) found that of those teachers who received support in their initial year of teaching, 80% were still teaching after their fifth year.

There is clearly a need for the implementation of novice teacher induction programs. Fullan (1991) contends that “the need to develop support systems for beginning teachers is a matter both of humanity (to beginning teachers and to the pupils they teach) and of teacher quality” (p. 303). Mager (1992) suggests that the need for the development of induction programs is increasingly necessary as conditions in society and schools make teaching more difficult. The increasing number of at-risk children in classrooms, an increasingly varied and extensive curriculum, and the introduction of new technologies in the classroom are making teachers’ work more difficult (Seyfarth, 1996).

Types of Induction Programs

Seyfarth (1996) identifies three types of induction programs that are in use in schools today. The first type is *Orientation Programs*. These programs tend to focus on providing the novice teacher with information on the school, jurisdiction, community, and expectations of the job. Orientation programs require a very limited amount of time from participants. The second type is *Performance Improvement Programs*. This particular type of program is generally of a longer duration. In addition to the information that one would obtain through an Orientation Program one could expect to receive individualized attention and assistance from experienced teachers and administrators in regards to instruction and evaluation. Sharing of resources, lesson plans, and tests may form part of this program. The third type is *Induction for Certification*. Such a program is generally intended to provide the state with a mechanism for evaluating and certifying new teachers. For the purposes of this study, my concern is with the first and second types mentioned.

Goals of Induction Programs

Darling-Hammond (1997) discusses the retention of teachers as a goal of induction programs in terms of their fluctuating supply and demand. Huling-Austin (1990) identified five foundation goals that are common to induction programs in the United States:

1. to improve teaching performance,
2. to increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years,
3. to promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers by improving teachers' attitudes toward themselves and the profession,
4. to satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification, and
5. to transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers (p. 539).

Cole and McNay (1988) identified four major goals of induction programs in Ontario:

1. Orientation: integrating beginning teachers, and teachers new to the setting, into the professional and social fabric of the school, school district, and neighborhood community;
2. Psychological support: promoting teachers' professional and personal self-esteem and well-being;

3. Acquisition and refinement of teaching skills: attending to the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in those areas related to daily classroom teaching in which teachers feel in most need of support; and
4. Development of a philosophy of education: including habits of reflective practice and a commitment to continued professional growth (p. 9).

A growing body of literature indicates that induction programs need to be tailored to local needs and specifically to the needs of each individual novice teacher. The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1998) has developed a document which provides suggestions for designing and implementing a local induction program which meets the need of individual novice teachers. The document presents suggested materials that can be modified so as to provide information on the local jurisdiction, school, job, and community. Odell and Ferraro (1992) suggest that induction programs designed around the perceived common needs of novice teachers may not actually meet their individual needs. Moskowitz and Stephens (1997) state that “the implementation of a successful teacher induction program appears to depend less upon the strict application of successful strategies than upon the program’s ability to understand and respond to its particular context” (p. 8). Lawson (1992), Zamperalli (1992), and Brock and Grady (1997) claim that each beginning teacher has individual needs insofar as they teach within a unique context and have unique collegial interactions. Programs need to be flexible and designed with these unique needs in mind. Gordon (1991) states that “your teachers may have unique needs that differ from those of the general population of beginning teachers” (p. 6). In terms of assigning mentors, Cole (1992) cautions that a mentor should not be assigned to a novice without first considering the unique needs of the individual.

Induction Program Components

The importance of support for the novice teacher cannot be overstated. The literature indicates that the greater the degree of support offered to the novice teacher, the greater the chance of the novice teacher to experience a successful first-year and a successful transition from student of teaching to teacher. According to Cole and McNay (1988), “Induction programs provide opportunities to help beginning teachers move more easily and, perhaps, more quickly through the early stages to more advanced and efficacious professional activity” (p. 6). The literature provides many suggestions for measures that a school and its principal might take as part of an induction program.

McNay and Cole (1989), Colbert and Wolff, (1990), and Colbert, Wolff, and DeVries (1991) stress that implementing a successful induction program necessitates collaboration among all of the interested groups. That is to say school boards, teacher associations, faculties of education, and school administrators must work together to achieve an effective program for the novice teacher. Components of the program might include a reduced teaching load, appropriate class assignments, release time for professional development, and a mentorship program (McNay & Cole, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1992; Lanier & Little, 1986). Each of these components presents a multiplicity of challenges to school administrators wishing to adopt them as part of an induction program. In any case, if an administrator wants novice teachers to succeed, he or she should make every effort to provide these novices with an appropriate assignment that allows the possibility of success.

Camp and Heath-Camp (1996) propose an induction program with the following ten components:

1. a professional development center,
2. a professional development coordinator,
3. a detailed orientation,
4. a structured mentoring program,
5. a beginning teachers' handbook,
6. a beginning teachers' peer support group,
7. administrator support,
8. ongoing inservice workshops,
9. certification course work for alternative certification teachers, and
10. coaching in reflective teaching.

The mentorship component is common to induction programs. Schein (1978) points out that the term *mentor* is used loosely to mean teacher, coach, trainer, positive role model, developer of talent, opener of doors, protector, sponsor, and successful leader. Mentors generally play a positive and supportive role in the process of inducting a novice teacher. The relationship that develops is often referred to as the *mentor/protégé* relationship. According to Odell (1987), mentors are typically veteran teachers who are exemplary teachers and strong role models for the novice teacher.

Grant and Zeichner (1981), Musthafa (1995) and Looney (1997) claimed that novice teachers can benefit a great deal from the personal assistance that an experienced colleague on staff can provide. Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) addresses the responsibilities of a mentor teacher. She includes in her list assistance with curriculum, guidance in

classroom management, and perhaps involvement in the novice teacher's evaluation. In a study of novice teachers' perceptions of the role of the mentor, Huffman and Leak (1986) found that novice teachers soundly endorse the provision for a mentor in induction practices. "Mentors were able to provide assistance, . . . encouragement, . . . and helpful suggestions, . . . guidance and moral support, . . . and even a shoulder to cry on. . . . The mentor was viewed as a friendly critic" (p. 23).

Huffman and Leak (1986) conclude that mentors should be chosen on the basis of the grade level and subject they teach. Where possible, it is desirable that it be the same as that of the novice teacher. In addition, they suggest that adequate time be provided for conferencing between the mentor and the novice teacher, that training be provided for mentors, and that incentives and rewards be provided for the mentors as well. Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) recommends that the establishment of a mentor-protégé relationship be voluntary and not a product of assignment through an induction program, because she feels that a relationship is more a matter of chemistry between two individuals than the simple provision of direction and encouragement. Factors such as gender and age need to be considered if any short-term assignment is made.

There are few clear guidelines on whether or not a mentor should be chosen and assigned to a particular novice teacher. Schaffer, Stringfield and Wolfe (1992) imply that assigning a mentor is a common practice. Spagnolo (1997) warns that care should be exercised when selecting a mentor for a novice teacher and that mentors need to be trained to do the job. Cole (1992) cautions that when assigning a mentor, consideration should be given to the unique needs of the individual novice.

Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway and Friesen (1993) conducted a major study of the Initiation to Teaching Project in Alberta. A concern among intern teachers, particularly in rural areas, was that the mentor teachers with whom they had been assigned to work were not trained in any special way for the task. Huling-Austin (1992) and Peterson and Comeaux (1987) suggest that the teachers performing in the role of mentor be prepared to spend time with novice teachers providing explanations for choices. Mentors want more than just to be told what is best practice. Vonk (1996) reports that mentors need to do more than wait for the questions because waiting results in too little direction and guidance. Mentors need to take up their teaching role with novices.

In some jurisdictions across Canada and the United States, there are training programs for mentors. The Mentor Teacher Program in California has a 30 hour required training course for teachers wishing to become certified mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 1995). North Carolina (North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction,

1998) and Montana (Zetler & Spuhler, 1997) have also experimented with training programs. The Kansas Goals 2000 Early Career Professional Development Program, a joint program between universities, the southeast Service Center, and 68 school districts, relies on trained mentors to provide support to novice teachers. Mentors attend training sessions which deal with topics such as facing fears, student motivation, discipline, conferencing skills, teaching and learning styles, instructional strategies, planning integrated curriculum, technology, and evaluating students. New Brunswick has recently implemented a province-wide induction program for beginning teachers (BTIP). The selection and training of mentors is an integral part of that program. In a recently released report on the BTIP, Scott (1997a) claims that mentors found training sessions valuable. In addition to the provision of a mentor, beginning teachers also participate in school level induction activities which include information and discussion sessions, resource sharing sessions, and opportunities to observe other teachers teaching in their classrooms. Funding of \$500.00 per pair of participants is provided by the government department. The New Brunswick Teachers' Association provides \$300.00 per pair of participants. Funding is intended for training and for providing release time for novices and mentors. Overall, the program received positive evaluations from beginning teachers. Criticisms of the program included a lack of time to meet the objectives of the program and lack of harmony between a mentor's assignment and their mentee's assignment. Despite its shortcomings, the program is highly regarded for the support that it provides to beginning teachers and the professional development opportunity it provides for mentor teachers.

A mentor program for beginning teachers has advantages for others in the school besides the novice (Ganser, 1996; Scott & Compton, 1996). Ganser (1997), in a study of classroom teachers who had identified themselves as having served as a mentor in a formal induction program, concluded that being a mentor makes a substantial positive difference in a teacher's career. Scott and Compton (1996) and Scott (1997b) reports that mentors who participated in New Brunswick's Beginning Teacher Induction program, generally made gains in knowledge of new teaching techniques and had increased opportunity to reflect on their own teaching practices.

A recent study conducted by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat (APEC) (Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997) found that there are several common conditions that underlie some of the most supportive novice teacher induction programs and that appear critical to their success. They are,

1. a culture of shared responsibility,

2. opportunity for interaction between new and experienced teachers,
3. a continuum of professional development - the novice teacher is recognized as a full fledged professional - the novice teacher is given the less difficult students to teach and the less critical classes to teach - the novice teacher is provided with release time for induction activities,
4. assessment is downplayed in favor of assistance, and
5. there are well defined goals and strong commitment of individuals.

Four stated components of the successful programs are (a) mentoring, (b) modeling of good practice, (c) targeted intervention in the form of training and workshops, and (d) assessment. Programs that were in place in member nations, including Canada, did not measure up to the expectations of APEC. Closer linkages between schools and educational institutions are necessary as is a greater commitment to funding induction programs.

The study provides information on programs in Japan and Chinese Taipei. In Japan, the induction period of novice teachers lasts one year. The program consists of three components: (a) The in-school component - running two days per week for a total of 60 days per school year, during which a novice receives training and guidance from experienced teachers and others. (b) The out of school component - consists of a weekly training sessions of varying duration held after school hours. (c) The on-board component - wherein specially selected novices are given the opportunity to go on a cruise with other novices and instructors during which instruction takes place. To accommodate the in-school component, novice teachers are given a lighter than normal teaching load and one part-time teacher is provided for every full time novice teacher.

In Chinese Taipei, after completing a four year preservice program, novice teachers embark upon a year long internship. They receive half of a normal teaching load and are provided with opportunities for observing colleagues, assisting colleagues, and attending workshops and seminars. The program has close ties with the universities.

In Alberta, the provincial Department of Education has recently published a policy document entitled *Accountability in Education: Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation* (Alberta Education, 1998). In an effort to ensure the best possible education for Alberta students, the policy outlines specific quality standards which teachers are expected to strive to attain. In the area of teacher growth, teachers are expected to develop an annual professional growth plan which is detailed in the policy. The policy further states that "An annual teacher professional growth plan . . . may

consist of a planned program of supervising a student teacher or mentoring a teacher (p. 2). The Alberta Teachers' Association has developed a pilot project with Red Deer City A.T.A. Local No. 60, the Red Deer Public School District No. 104, and the University of Alberta that twins novice teachers with experienced teachers. The project is currently in its second year and has received a very positive evaluation from the various stakeholders (Garvey, 1999). The stated goal of the project is to "clarify roles and responsibilities for mentors and school administrators and to identify and develop a support structure for protégés" (p.17). Participants in the project have identified some critical elements for success. The process seems to work more successfully if the mentor and protégé have similar teaching and grade assignments and have classrooms that are in close proximity to each other. Release time for mentor and protégé pairs is also identified as a key element of success.

Concerns of Novice Teachers

Odell (1987) contends that induction programs should be structured around the types of support that novice teachers identify as necessary for their survival. As a result of her research in schools where novice teachers received some form of assistance, she identified the following rank order of novice teacher needs:

1. ideas about instruction,
2. personal and emotional support,
3. advice on resources and materials for teaching,
4. information on school district policies and procedures, and
5. ideas for additional techniques on classroom management (p. 22).

Veenman (1984) conducted a review of 83 studies published in North America, Europe, and Australia regarding schools where novice teachers did not receive special assistance. From a list of 64 frequently mentioned problems for new teachers, he identified the following rank order of the eight most commonly identified problems:

1. classroom discipline,
2. motivating students,
3. dealing with individual differences,
4. assessing students' work,
5. relationships with parents,
6. organization of class work,
7. insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies, and
8. dealing with problems of individual students (p. 143).

In a study conducted by Brock and Grady (1996), beginning teachers report that their principal's interaction and guidance was important to them. Discipline and classroom management was ranked as their number one concern in the first year. The beginning teachers who participated in this study supported the implementation of a year-long induction program with a mentoring component.

Regardless of the problems encountered, many novice teachers could benefit from an assistance program. Preservice training is not intended to produce a fully competent practitioner. In teaching, as in other professions, competence comes with experience. Induction programs provide the transition from student to competent practitioner.

Administrative Leadership in Induction

The participation of the principal in the socialization and induction process is crucial to its success (Brock & Grady, 1996, 1997, 1998). His or her involvement can range from direct to indirect. Novice teachers expect leadership, guidance, feedback, and affirmation from their principal. They also want to be clear about what the principal's expectations are for them (Brock & Grady, 1996, 1997, 1998). Daresh and Hartley (1996) conducted a study of aspiring teachers regarding the role of the school principal. Their findings indicate that prospective teachers, and thus novices, at least initially, have an incorrect perception of the principal's role in the school. They tend to view the principal as an authoritarian figure who exists to serve their classroom work as opposed to an instructional leader who works within a collaborative decision making structure. Ganser (1995) asserts that the role of the principal in providing assistance to a novice teacher is central to the success of that teacher and in no circumstances should a mentoring program overshadow this. Bercik (1994) describes the principal's role in the induction process. She claims it is key that the principal be a team builder and in terms of facilitating the mentoring process, the principal must assist in whatever way is possible so as to maximize the effectiveness of the mentor.

Cole (1995), in a study of 27 southwestern Ontario elementary and secondary school administrators, identified the following seven concerns of school administrators that related to novice teacher induction:

1. balancing the conflicting roles of supporter and evaluator,
2. treading the fine line between development and intervention,
3. encouraging openness while respecting individuality and individualism,
4. responding to professional development needs of all teaching staff,

5. assisting and supporting new teachers within existing bureaucratic structures,
6. obtaining guidance and support, and
7. dealing with new teachers' preparedness to teach

These are concerns which need to be addressed in order to develop and implement an effective induction program.

Notwithstanding policies regarding induction at the jurisdiction level, it is important for principals to develop site-based policies in this regard. Such policies should address the following: appropriate teaching loads for novice teachers; safeguards against assigning novice teachers to large classes, classes that present unusual discipline challenges, and subjects for which the novice teacher lacks appropriate training and background to teach; establishment of a mentoring training program; and establishment of appropriate programs of orientation to the jurisdiction, the school, and the community. According to Carruthers (1986), although principals are responsible for the evaluation of novice teachers, they need to be aware that novice teachers perceive them as a possible source of help regardless of their superordinate relationship to the novice teacher.

Successful induction programs are not intended to shield or protect the weak teacher. According to Huling-Austin (1986), an appropriate induction program should help principals screen out the weak and ineffective teacher. An effective program should help ease the often traumatic transition encountered by novice teachers as they move from being a student of teaching to a competent teacher. In supplanting the common sink or swim introduction to teaching, induction programs should address the individual and ongoing needs of first year teachers.

School-based and system-based administrators fulfill an important leadership role in establishing induction programs. Dedicating budget funds and release time for novice teachers and support teachers is a tangible method of providing assistance. The principal can also assist in the establishing of temporary buddy or mentor programs in an effort to assist the novice teacher.

Metaphors for Understanding Induction

The use of metaphor makes it possible for someone to imagine and increase his/her understanding of what it is like to be another, perhaps in a different time and place. It allows one to create a quasi-pictorial representation of some abstract notion in order to gain insight and understanding of that notion (Grady, 1993). Ozick (1986)

offered the following explanation for the use of metaphor in our attempt to increase our understanding of the world.

Through metaphor, the past has the capacity to imagine us, and we it. Through metaphorical concentration, doctors can imagine what it is to be their patient. Those at the center can imagine what it is to be weak. Illuminated lives can imagine the dark. Poets in their twilight can imagine the borders of stellar fire. We strangers can imagine the familiar hearts of strangers. (p. 62)

Metaphor is an essential component of our learning and thought process, so much so that we rarely, if ever, think about the essential role it plays in assisting us to construct our understanding of reality. Morgan (1986) contended that many of the theories we call upon to assist us in making sense of our surroundings rest on metaphorical interpretations of the reality in which we exist. Put another way, it is the taken-for-granted images and metaphors that are the theories or conceptual frameworks that assist us in making sense of our world. This making sense of our world is accomplished by considering and attending to similarities and to relationships between the new and the known or, as Aristotle put it, in seeking “similarities in dissimilarities.” This can be accomplished in a very sophisticated yet playful way. Metaphors such as machine, organism, brain, culture, political system, psychic prison, flux and transformation, and instruments of domination have been used in such a way by Morgan (1986, 1997) to describe organizations.

There are certain cautions that must be kept in mind when employing metaphor in an effort to make sense of something new. Metaphors are limited in their ability to accurately describe a new phenomenon. Our understanding of the phenomenon is highly reliant on our understanding of that which is being compared and the degree of similarity or comparability between the two. A second limitation of the use of metaphors is that they frame our understanding of a phenomenon in a particular and partial way. Morgan (1986) referred to this as “one-sided insight” (p. 13). A particular metaphor can evoke an awareness of certain characteristics of a phenomenon while, at the same time, acting to repress or hide other paradoxical characteristics. In order to overcome these limitations and gain a more accurate understanding of the complexities and paradoxes of the phenomenon under study, Morgan suggested the use of multiple metaphors as “the insights of one metaphor can often help us overcome the limitations of another” (p. 353). Through a multiple metaphor analysis, he provided an imaginative and interesting insight into the structures of organizations.

Pugh, Hicks, Davis, and Veenstra (1992) suggest that metaphorical studies have much to lend to the study of education. In educational administration the use of metaphorical studies has been encouraged by many scholars (Bates, 1984; Patina, 1988; Perrin, 1987). Aspin (1984), Elliot (1984), and Tailor (1984) suggested that the study of metaphor has positive applications to the study and understanding of beliefs and processes in education. As a language form grounded in experience, metaphors provide a lens through which we look in order to deepen our understanding of schools as organizations. Miller and Fredericks (1988) offered five arguments for the use of metaphorical analysis in qualitative research in education. Ratsoy (1997) pointed out that metaphors have become a fashionable and creative means of exploring and understanding the functioning of organizations such as schools and the individuals within them. Through a multiple image approach, Ratsoy provided an in-depth conceptualization and explication of current teacher evaluation policies and practice. Metaphors such as the structural, connoisseurship, professional, deficiency, roulette, political, collaborative, cultural, legal, and growth and development have been employed by Ratsoy to deepen our understanding of such policies and practice.

Conceptual Framework

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a conceptual framework illustrates, "either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied - the key factors, constructs, or variables - and the presumed relationship between them" (p. 18). The conceptual framework that served as a foundation for this study was constructed by synthesizing the various ideas provided in the literature reviewed. The various stages of the process and the components within each stage were identified through the review of the literature and from my personal experience as a principal of a secondary school. Huling-Austin (1987) provided the core of the framework. She perceived induction as a process which falls between preservice studies and inservice activities.

The literature suggests that there is a need for the development and implementation of programs of induction into teaching. Andrews (1986; as cited in McNay & Cole, 1989) described the predominant approach to the induction of teachers in Canadian schools as "laissez-faire." I therefore submit that a novice teacher's introduction to his/her career of teaching seems more commonly to assume the characteristics of a sink or swim approach rather than those of a gradual transition.

Central to the conceptual framework was the need to identify induction measures that would help to ease a novice teacher's transition from university studies to fully-

fledged classroom teacher. The role of the school administrator was seen as an important and integral facet of the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework was therefore constructed as an aid to examining the various components of an induction program. I was able to identify factors that appear to have an effect on the various components of this study. The conceptualization of how this might be viewed is presented in Figure 2.1. What follows is the rationale for this conceptualization.

The literature review indicated that the ease with which a novice teacher passes from being a new and inexperienced university graduate to a fully-fledged teacher is directly influenced by the types of assistance that he or she receives in the first year of teaching. Assistance can take many forms. Administrators are key providers of assistance as are the novice's colleagues.

Induction measures taken at the school level have received substantial study while measures at the jurisdiction level and the community level have not received the same attention. A relationship was evident between the ease with which the novice passed through his or her initial year of teaching, his or her preservice preparation and the induction measures taken at the jurisdiction, the school, the assignment, and the community levels.

School administrators should be aware of the importance of providing an effective induction program for novice teachers and their role in the overall process. Programs need to be developed that encompass jurisdiction, school, assignment, and community. Constraints such as time and money present various challenges to administrators and require creative solutions. Figure 2.1 depicts one way in which the induction process of novice teachers might be conceptualized. The flow diagram tracks the stages one passes through from the initial stage which is a desire to become a teacher, through preparation and induction, to either retention in teaching and career-long development or attrition. The focus of the present study falls within the broken lines in Figure 2.1. The term "jurisdiction" refers to a novice's employing school board and its superintendent and central office and regional staff. "School" refers to the school in which the novice is working, its administrators, teachers, and non-academic staff. "Assignment" encompasses the teaching responsibilities assigned to and assumed by the novice. "Community" refers to the school's student catchment area, typically a town in which the school is located and the surrounding area. "Profession," not part of the scope of this study, refers to the larger body or association that a teacher becomes part of, and is governed by.

Orientation and Induction

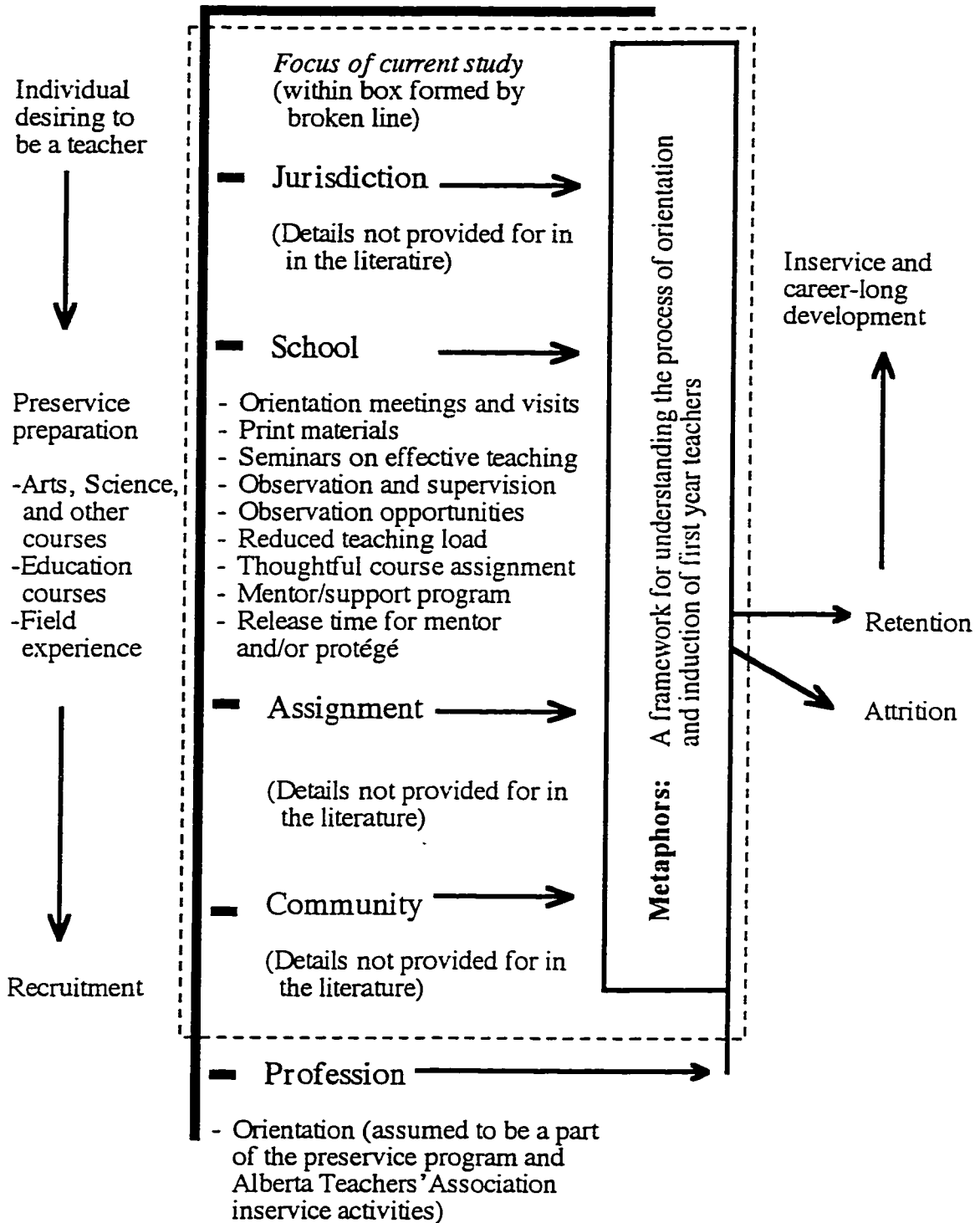


Figure 2. 1: The Induction Process: A Component Of A Teacher's Career Development

Metaphors can be utilized as a tool in order to gain deeper insights into the process and the perceived effectiveness of various measures that are part of school induction programs. An important component of this study is a metaphorical analysis of the findings. Nine common metaphors were identified and their relevancy to the findings of this study tested. The metaphors chosen and developed for this study are Sink or Swim, Sports Team, Master-Apprentice, Physician-Intern, Prison, Zoo, Military, Orchestra, and Tailor Made. These nine metaphors were chosen because they provide the reader with additional insight into the process of becoming a teacher, particularly the trials and tribulations of the first year. In addition, they bring particular meaning to certain aspects of the study and, together, provide a rich understanding of what it means to be a novice teacher in schools today.

Summary

The literature concerning definitions of induction, the need for induction programs, types of induction programs, goals of induction programs, induction program components, the mentorship component, concerns of novice teachers, and administrative leadership in induction has been examined in this chapter. As well, the conceptual framework upon which the study was constructed has been presented.

An expressed need for induction programs can be found in the literature at least as far back as the early 1960s. Since that time a great deal of research has been conducted in the area and comparisons have been made with induction programs of other professions. Many sophisticated definitions of induction are found today. All of them suggest that induction is a planned program which provides assistance and support to novices.

The transition from university graduate to experienced teacher has been recognized as the most difficult aspect of one's teaching career. Many new teachers may suffer from feelings of inadequacy, isolation, and incompetence. As a result the attrition rates are high and many potentially good teachers are lost to the profession. The literature suggests that well planned and well implemented induction programs can reduce the intensity of the transition into teaching.

Induction programs generally fall into one of three categories: (a) Orientation programs, (b) Performance Improvement Programs, and (c) Induction for Certification. This study is concerned with the first and second types mentioned. The goals of induction programs are many and varied. Similar to the need for induction

programs, the goals suggest that induction programs should provide support and assistance to the novice teacher. A growing body of literature indicates that the support which a program provides for a novice should be tailored to the needs of each individual novice.

Components of an induction program might include such things as a handbook, detailed orientations, a reduced teaching load, appropriate class assignments, release time for professional development, the provision of a mentor, and other forms of support and assistance. In the case of providing a mentor, the literature suggests that care should be taken when choosing who will perform such duties. Mentor training programs are becoming increasingly popular.

Novice teachers have many concerns. The literature suggests that there are several areas where they may need assistance including curriculum and assessment, communication, classroom management, and organization. Appropriate induction programs would provide such assistance.

The school administrator's role in the induction process is crucial to its success. The literature suggests that the school principal, in many ways, plays an important role in the overall process and is a key provider of support and assistance to the novice teacher.

School administrators need to be aware of the importance of providing an appropriate induction program for novice teachers. The conceptual framework (Figure 2.1) depicts what the stages are through which a novice teacher passes and identifies the types of assistance which might be provided to them.

Benefits of a well-organized induction program are many and seem to far outweigh the costs. Schools, teachers, students, and administrators appear to be the beneficiaries of such programs.

Finally, metaphors can be utilized as a tool in order to gain deeper insights into the process and the perceived effectiveness of various measures that are part of school induction programs. An important component of this study is the metaphorical analysis of the findings. A discussion of nine metaphors is used in Chapter 8 to provide a greater understanding of the induction needs and experiences of novice teachers.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, describes the methodology used.

CHAPTER 3

Method

This chapter outlines the methodological approach followed for this study. The general research approach, specific research design, approaches to information collection and analysis, procedures to ensure trustworthiness of the information, justification for the selected methodological approach, pilot study, assumptions, and ethical considerations are discussed. Additionally, the delimitations and limitations of the study are presented.

Research Approach

I chose research methods consistent with a naturalistic approach to research. As Greenfield (cited in Immegart & Boyd, 1979) explains:

The data derived from the interview process speak meaningfully and powerfully for individuals in specific situations, yet they find a larger significance as well. They show how individuals' sense of themselves and their world has consequences in that world, and they suggest how these meanings and consequences can be expressed in typifications, symbols or theories that provide fresh insights into social reality. (p. 168)

The method used for this study reflected the 14 operation characteristics as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 39-43): (a) natural setting, (b) human instrument, (c) utilization of tacit knowledge, (d) qualitative method, (e) purposive sampling, (f) inductive data analysis, (g) grounded theory, (h) emergent design, (i) negotiated outcomes, (j) case study reporting mode, (k) ideographic interpretation, (l) tentative application, (m) focus-determined boundaries, and (n) special criteria for trustworthiness.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to obtain insight into the needs of novice teachers and the types and forms of assistance that principals provide or can provide for them. The review of the literature indicated that a well designed induction into teaching could mitigate many of the discouraging moments encountered by novice teachers. In addition, induction practices can have positive effects on a novice teacher's decision to remain in the profession. Notwithstanding these findings, in Alberta there is no

province-wide program of induction. Induction programs that exist have been developed at the district or school level and are site-specific.

Semi-structured interviews were used in order to achieve “comparable data across subjects” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 136). According to Berg (1998), semi-structured interviews

. . . involve the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/ or special topics. These questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardized questions The intent of the researcher is to probe the world from the subject’s perspective This is accomplished through the researcher’s use of unscheduled probes that arise from the interview process itself. (p. 33)

Increased meaning is given to this process through the explications of Glesne and Peshkin (1992):

Interviewing is not simply devoted to data acquisition. It is also a time to consider relationships, silence, meanings, and explanations - four analytical acts that not only lead to new questions, but also prepare you for the more concentrated period of analysis that follows the completion of your data collection. (p. 81)

An interview guide was developed (see Appendix A) to reflect the research problems and to allow interviewees the opportunity to share their personal experiences and perceptions. The interviews began with a discussion of my research and my personal interest in induction of first year teachers. In addition, participants were asked to give a brief statement of their background, education, and experiences. This served to break the ice with the participants. Further, each set of semi-structured interviews involved eliciting responses from a school-based administrator and a novice teacher regarding the induction program in their particular school and its jurisdiction. In two instances, where administrators of two particular schools had two novice teachers on staff, information was solicited from both of the novice teachers. In the case of first year teachers, each participant was provided with the opportunity to share his or her experiences and feelings regarding his or her induction experience. In addition, participating teachers were encouraged to critique their experience in terms of what they found effective or not effective. Each school-based administrator was provided with an opportunity to share his perception of the school’s program and its effectiveness. As

well, school-based administrators were encouraged to critique the induction program presently in existence at their schools.

The interview process proved beneficial in clarifying ambiguities that could result if a questionnaire were used to collect information. Furthermore, it would be difficult to construct a questionnaire that would account for all facets of the induction process and the role of the individual in that process, thus allowing for all sorts of oversights to occur. According to Measor (1985), it is important for the researcher to build “rapport, relationships, trust and confidence” while at the same time remaining “critical and aware of what the interviewee is saying” (p. 63). Thus, a sincere attempt was made by the researcher to build authentic rapport with the participants, gaining their trust and confidence while retaining at all times a critical awareness. This ensured my credibility as researcher and enhanced the credibility of the stories that the participants so freely shared.

Information Collection and Analysis

As indicated above, the interview was employed as the method of information collection for this study. Consistent with naturalistic inquiry, the researcher was the primary instrument for information collection and analysis. Triangulated information-gathering techniques were employed and consisted of a review of the pertinent literature, keeping field notes, and content analysis of respondents’ interview transcripts. For logistical reasons, the number of school-based administrators interviewed was limited to six, and the number of novice teachers interviewed was limited to eight. As was hoped, some of the administrators participating had two novice teachers on staff who were also willing to participate. In two cases, principals designated a vice-principal to be interviewed. Two novice teachers identified that they had a mentor. These two individuals were also interviewed. All initial interviews were conducted at the respective participants’ sites of employment. When necessary, follow-up interviews were conducted by telephone.

The information for this study was gathered in three consecutive phases, and information collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. The inductive method of constant comparative data analysis was employed, with the information emerging from the initial phases of collection being analyzed and applied to the subsequent phases including the modification of the conceptual framework that underpinned this study. In addition, I was able to construct nine metaphors which served to assist my understanding of the induction process. The process was similar in vein to the gradual

evolution of a core of theory mentioned by Glaser & Strauss (1967, pp. 101-115). The phases of information collection are chronologically as follows.

Phase 1: Selection of School Divisions. The physical distance of a regional school division's central office from Edmonton was a major consideration in selecting the regional divisions initially. The distance was limited to 200 kilometers, thus allowing me to travel the distance there and back to Edmonton comfortably in a day. The regional school divisions selected also had to have schools in them that were located in rural settings. A large scale provincial map of the regional school divisions was obtained from a commercial supplier. A circle with a radius representing 200 kilometers was drawn on the map with the city of Edmonton at its center. It was determined that 12 rural, regional divisions were located in whole or in part within the circle. Names of contacts within each jurisdiction as well as the mailing address for school superintendents in each of the select jurisdictions were obtained.

These 12 superintendents were initially contacted by letter in early October 1996. The nature and purpose of the study were explained in the letter. Each superintendent was asked to provide the researcher with a list of first year teachers in his regional division, the grades taught, and the names of the first year teacher's principal and school. Replies were received from 9 of the 12 superintendents. No further contact was made with the three superintendents who did not reply. The number of first year teachers in each of the 9 regional division ranged from 3 to 14, yielding a total of 72 first year teachers. Of these 72, 52 were spending some or all of their time teaching students between Grades 7 and 12.

A second letter was sent in April 1997 to the 9 superintendents who had responded to the initial request for information. The purpose of the letter was to request their permission to make contact with those first year teachers whom they had previously indicated were teaching between Grades 7 and 12 and their corresponding principals and to solicit their participation in the study. A telephone follow-up to the letter resulted in me receiving permission from four of the nine superintendents to make contact with schools within their jurisdictions. This narrowed the pool of possible first year teacher participants to 32 and their 18 principals. One superintendent encouraged the researcher to contact a particular elementary principal who was known to have an effective first year teacher induction program in place in his school.

Phase 2: Selection of First Year Teachers and Their Principals. In early May, letters were sent to those 32 first year teachers remaining in the pool of potential participants and their 18 principals. The letter contained an explanation of the study and a request for their participation. A telephone follow-up of the 18 principals resulted in five junior high and/or senior high principals agreeing to participate. The elementary principal previously mentioned also agreed to participate. The first year teachers associated with each of the six principals also agreed to participate, yielding a total of eight first year teacher participants.

Phase 3: Information Collection. Information was collected from each novice teacher and his or her administrator through a one hour interviews. The semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix A) was used in order to maintain focus on the research objectives. Follow-up telephone conversations were employed where necessary to clarify information gleaned from the interview.

Interviews were audio-recorded. I also kept notes in a journal during or after each interview in order to record non-verbal nuances and site information deemed important. The audiotapes were transcribed soon after each interview and were reviewed by me. In addition to the interviews, I collected print material from each school to further inform the study.

Effort was made to choose participants from a variety of school regions within the geographic area, and to achieve a mixture of male and female participants.

Justification for the Selected Methodological Approach

The methodology described above was chosen because it is particularly well suited to this study and has been used by other researchers to probe similar phenomena. The following components are seen as particularly desirable:

1. Pilot interviews provided opportunity to make necessary adjustments to the interview instruments and my personal approach to the interviews. This enabled me as researcher to improve the quality and relevance of information collected.
2. The interviewing of six school-based administrators, eight novice teachers, and two mentors produced a number of interesting perceptions about what successful induction processes are, which were in place and which needed to be put into place, and what impact they had on a novice teacher's perception of success in the classroom.

3. The interpretive mode of inquiry employed in this study yielded a great deal of relevant information that may be used to assist principals with the induction of novice teachers over the course of their first year of classroom practice.

Pilot Study

Two principals and two novice teachers identified as possible subjects for this study but not included in the main study were selected for personal interview. Interviews were structured according to predetermined interview schedules. The pilot study served to act as a check on the clarity of the instrument. It also allowed the researcher to determine how much time was necessary for each interview. In addition, the pilot study assisted the researcher to identify problems with the interview schedule; following the interviews, the pilot study participants were asked to comment on the instrument and to suggest modifications. The pilot study also provided opportunity to collect some information for preliminary analysis.

Trustworthiness of the Information

Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintained that in a naturalistic inquiry it is imperative for an inquirer to convince his or her audience that the findings of the inquiry are of importance and worthy of one's attention. This is achieved by attending to four criteria that provide for trustworthiness: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. Following is a discussion of the procedures that were employed in this study to satisfy these four criteria.

Credibility. Credibility refers to the "truth" of the findings and whether they accurately represent the phenomenon or persons being studied. To establish credibility in this study, a number of procedures were employed. First, the information was triangulated through the use of multiple interview participants. Eight novice teachers and his or her principal or vice-principal were interviewed. Information obtained from interviews with principals or vice-principals and interviews with novice teachers were compared with one another in order to reinforce or expand on the study findings. Second, member checks were undertaken. Initially, each participant was provided with a complete copy of his or her interview transcript. They were asked to check the transcript for accuracy and to provide clarification or confirmation. They were also informed that they were at liberty to reject or have stricken from the transcript anything

that they found objectionable, inaccurate, or inappropriate. A second member check was undertaken once the data had been sorted and analyzed. Participants were sent relevant sections of the three data chapters, chapters 5, 6, and 7. They were asked to identify any interpretations of their data in the three chapters which gave them reason for concern. Third, regular meetings with my doctoral supervisor regarding the data and findings of this study assisted in establishing credibility.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other contexts. Consistent with Stake's claim that, "most naturalistic, ethnographic, phenomenological researchers will concentrate on describing the present case in sufficient detail so that the reader can make good comparisons (1998, pp. 97-98)," I have provided detailed descriptions of (a) the novice teachers and their principals or vice-principals who participated in this study, (b) the participants' school settings, (c) the interview schedules, and (d) the methodological approach used in carrying out this study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that it is not entirely possible for the researcher to determine the degree of transferability of findings from one context to another. Transferability is more the concern of the other researcher who is contemplating the possibility of making a transfer of findings from one context to another.

Dependability. Dependability refers to the consistency or reliability of the study and the possibility of replicating the study at another time. I used several strategies in an effort to ensure the dependability of the findings of this study. First, as mentioned earlier, pilot interviews were conducted with two principals and two novice teachers. Second, the data were triangulated through the use of multiple participants and member checks. Third, details regarding the approach to the study, the data collection, and the data analysis were provided for the reader.

An "audit trail" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319) was maintained that included audiotapes and transcripts of each interview, documentation pertaining to member checks, and journal notes. The audit trail was examined by an independent researcher. I provided the material for his inspection and explanations as necessary. The audiotapes, transcripts of the interviews, and the findings chapters were given a random check. According to the auditor, the data analysis was appropriate and the findings of the study were accurately reported. Documentation pertaining to member checks was examined and found to be in order.

Confirmability. Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are determined by the subjects and the conditions of the study and not by the biases, motivations, interests, or perspectives of the researcher. The researcher insured that the findings of the study were traceable to the information sources by employing the following strategies: (a) multiple interview participants, (b) member checking, (c) regular meetings with my doctoral supervisor, and (d) establishing an audit trail to ensure confirmability of the data produced.

Data Analysis

The interviews focused on the induction processes and their perceived effectiveness at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level.

Information was collected by means of interviews with each principal or vice-principal and each novice teacher. The semi-structured interview schedule assisted the researcher to maintain focus on the research objectives. The questions, whose content was derived from the literature, were open-ended. Each face-to-face interview was approximately one hour in length. A second interview was conducted by telephone when deemed desirable for purposes of follow-up or clarification.

Interviews were audio-recorded. The researcher also made notes in a journal to record non-verbal nuances and any site information deemed relevant. As soon as feasible following each interview, the researcher transcribed the audio-recordings and spent time reviewing notes and making clarifications while the information was still fresh in his mind. In addition to the interviews, the researcher requested from each principal and each novice teacher any print materials that might have been distributed as part of, or that were relevant to, the induction process.

The information gathered through the interviews was then analyzed qualitatively to identify domains of understanding. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) offered the following procedures for qualitative data analysis:

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves the working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns,

discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. (p. 145)

The transcripts were numbered by line and broken into more manageable units of information based on the interview questions. Color coding was then employed to further break the information into manageable and meaningful units. As Strauss and Corbin (1990) pointed out,

Conceptually our data becomes the first step in analysis. That is taking apart an observation, incident, idea or event, a name, something that stands for or represents phenomena We compare incident with incident as we go along so that similar phenomena can be given the same name. (p. 63)

Assumptions

The researcher made the following assumptions for this study:

1. Principals, vice-principals, and mentor teachers are aware of many of the struggles that novice teachers face in their first year of teaching. Some of these struggles may extend beyond the walls of the school, for example, relocation and finding accommodation, integrating into the community's social structure, financial planning, and so on.
2. Principals, vice-principals, mentor teachers, and novice teachers are aware of the "theory-practice" gap that exists between university studies and classroom experiences.
3. The participants responded to the questions in an honest and accurate manner.

Delimitations

The following delimitations applied to this study:

1. The study was delimited to obtaining information relevant to the induction of novice teachers and the role that school administrators and mentor teachers play in the induction process.
2. This study was delimited to obtaining information on novice teacher induction practices as they are carried out with regard to the jurisdiction, the school and the classroom, the teaching assignment, and the community. The study did not attempt to look at novice teacher induction into the "profession" of teaching.
3. This study focused upon the school-based administrator's role in the induction of novice teachers, while recognizing that many other school employees might assist in this function as well.

4. Only full-time novice teachers who were teaching in one school were eligible to be selected for the study.
5. The six school-based administrators and eight novice teachers were chosen from among a group of suitable school-based administrators and novice teachers identified by school superintendents within a particular geographical region of Alberta. The geographic region did not include city schools.
6. Information was obtained from six school-based administrators and eight novice teachers chosen from six different schools within three school jurisdictions. Participants were chosen to allow both genders to be equally represented as much possible. In the case of administrators, the females contacted were not willing to participate. All administrators who participated, then, are male.
7. Information was obtained from interviews and from relevant documents where these were available.

Limitations

The limitations of the study are presented below.

1. A major limitation of the findings is that the information collected was primarily perceptual data supplied by novice teacher-administrator pairs and two mentor teachers as well as some additional information obtained in relevant documents provided by the respondents.
2. Some of the novice teachers might not have been well suited to the teaching profession. Their perceptions therefore, may have been affected by their disposition to teaching. Likewise, some of the principals might not have been particularly strong and effective leaders and their responses may have reflected this fact.
3. The particular method chosen for this study imposes limits on the number of subjects that were chosen. It was not possible given the time and resources, to expand the number of participants, schools, or jurisdictions.

Ethical Considerations

The standards as outlined in the *University Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants* were applied to this study. Involvement of school-based administrators, novice teachers, and mentor teachers was voluntary. Participants were advised that they could withdraw from the study at any time. No physical or mental harm to participants was anticipated nor is any likely to have occurred; the interests and protection of subjects was safeguarded at all times. The information obtained is

presented both individually and collectively, but no individuals, schools, or school jurisdictions are identified in the dissertation. All opinions and information provided are presented anonymously, and confidentiality is guaranteed.

Once audited, the interviews on the audio-tapes were erased and records linking pseudonyms with names of participants, schools, jurisdictions, and towns were destroyed. The researcher claims to be sufficiently knowledgeable about relevant literature, procedures, risk, and possible uses for the results of this study. In accordance with the University of Alberta requirements, a research proposal was submitted for review to the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Educational Policy Studies. The Ethics Review Committee subsequently approved the study.

Summary

This chapter describes the methods used to investigate the induction experiences of first year teachers from the perspective of the novice teacher, his or her school administrator and where applicable, the mentor teacher. Six school-based administrators, eight novice teachers, and two mentors participated in this study. The participants were interviewed at their schools and, in some cases, follow-up telephone interviews were conducted. The transcripts of the interviews, relevant documents as supplied by the participants, and the researcher's observations were analyzed according to the principles of a naturalistic inquiry. In order to insure trustworthiness, efforts were made to establish credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Chapter 4 describes the study participants and their schools.

CHAPTER 4

Profile of the Participants and Their Schools

This chapter introduces the participants and their schools. This information is offered to allow the reader to contextualize the comments, quotations, and discussion that follow in the remaining chapters. Transferability of the findings of this study is related to the extent to which the experiences and understandings of the first year teachers, administrators, and mentor teachers in this study are representative of those in other rural Alberta schools and systems. By perusing the following information, readers, particularly those familiar with the induction and mentoring of first year teachers, will be able to make judgments about the general applicability of the findings of this study.

A description of each school and the participating administrator and first year teacher(s) associated with each school is presented. Where applicable, a description of the mentor teacher(s) is also included. The description of each of the participants includes reference to their age, gender, educational qualifications, and current teaching and extracurricular duties.

Pseudonyms are employed to mask the identity of each participant and their schools, as well as the town and the school jurisdictions in which the schools are located.

This section provides a brief description of each of the participating schools as well as demographic and general information about each of the first year teachers, administrators, and mentors.

Table 4.1 shows the pseudonyms of the first year teachers, their administrators, and their mentors (where applicable), as well as their respective schools, and the town and jurisdiction in which each school is located. The numbers of teachers in each school and school jurisdiction are also included. These figures are provided in categories in order to reduce the likelihood that participants could be identified.

TABLE 4.1
Participants, Schools, Jurisdiction, and Size

Participant	School	Number of teachers	Town	Jurisdiction	Number of teachers
Debbie (T) Virgil (A)	Waterford Composite High	25 - 50	Waterford	Wagon Wheel	< 500
Daniel (T) May (T) Howard (A)	Evanrude Secondary School	25 - 50	Evanrude	Saddle Hill	500 - 1000
Joseph (T) Brian (A)	Woodhouse Composite High	< 25	Woodhouse	Saddle Hill	500 - 1000
John (T) Lynden (T) Jack (A)	Jumbo Valley School	< 25	Stanford	Saddle Hill	< 500
Betty (T) Fred (A) Tracy (M)	Bynder Upper Elementary	< 25	Bynder	Knotty Pine	< 500
Dallas (T) Blaine (A) Michael (M)	Bynder Composite High	25 - 50	Bynder	Knotty Pine	< 500

T: Teacher
A: Administrator
M: Mentor

The following descriptions are based on the comments of the participating teachers, administrators, and mentors; information contained in school handbooks, newsletters, and staff and student handbooks; and observations made while visiting each school.

Waterford Composite High School

Waterford Composite High School is situated in a rural setting near the town of Waterford, which is just beyond the city limits of one of Alberta's largest urban areas. A busy secondary highway leads to the school and turns, passing in front of it. A large parking lot flanks the school. The students attending Waterford Composite High either drive or are brought to the school by bus. They come from several small towns close by or farms and acreages that are within the school's boundaries. The school building is large and has a modern look to it. Inside the school is evidence of a strong school spirit. Crowded trophy cases, banners, and honor rolls are evident in the hallways. School colors are prominently displayed in an atrium just outside the administrative offices which occupy a central position in the school. Upon entering the office area, one notices three secretaries working in proximity to each other in an open area. There are three adjoining offices to the central area, as well as a conference room and a teacher common room and work area.

General Characteristics

Waterford Composite High has a teaching staff of 25 to 50. The school offers a wide range of programs for students in Grades 10, 11, and 12. A special education program can be accessed by students who are experiencing difficulty in their program of studies. All students have access to courses offered in the areas of industrial and vocational education, business education, and fine arts. A wide range of extracurricular sports and cultural activities are made available to students. Waterford Composite High School is located in the Wagon Wheel School Jurisdiction.

Administrative Organization

The principal is assisted by two vice-principals. Department heads assist in scheduling courses and teachers and three school counselors assist students with their program and course selection.

Study Participants

Two individuals at Waterford Composite High School participated in this study.

Debbie. Debbie attended Grades 10 through 12 at Waterford Composite High School. Prior to her being hired as a teacher there, she had spent some time in the school as a substitute teacher. Many of her colleagues on staff had been her teachers. Debbie was knowledgeable about the school, the jurisdiction, and the community surrounding the school. Debbie was married and lived on an acreage in the rural area surrounding Waterford.

Debbie received her Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta. She had a double major in general sciences and Career and Technology Studies.

Debbie's teaching assignment included teaching students who were enrolled in the Integrated Occupations Program (IOP) at Waterford Composite High School. In addition, she taught Math 24, Career and Life Management (CALM) 20, Psychology, and Foods 10. Throughout the interview Debbie seemed positive about teaching and indicated that she enjoyed working with high school students. Debbie was one of the staff representatives that worked on the Grade 12 graduation committee.

Virgil. Virgil was one of the two vice-principals at Waterford Composite High School. Virgil worked with first year teachers on staff and was designated by the principal to speak to the researcher.

Virgil received his Bachelor of Education degree in Secondary Social Studies and Physical Education from the University of Alberta. After teaching for several years, Virgil resumed his formal studies and obtained a Masters of Education degree in Secondary Curriculum Studies from the University of Alberta. During this time, he worked as a Practicum Associate responsible for supervising student teachers. Following that, Virgil did post-graduate studies in Educational Administration at the University of Alberta.

Virgil had 22 years of teaching and administration experience spread throughout three secondary schools within the same jurisdiction. He was teaching classes of senior high physical education and social studies. Virgil mentioned that he enjoyed being a vice-principal as it allowed him to divide his time between teaching in the classroom and carrying out administrative duties. He suggested that at some point in his career, he would like to "sit in the principal's chair."

Virgil commuted to Waterford from a neighboring urban area.

Evanrude Secondary School

Evanrude Secondary School is located in the town of Evanrude, Alberta. Evanrude is less than half an hour's drive from one of Alberta's largest urban areas and is located just off one of Alberta's major highways. It has recently undergone extensive renovations and appears modern. The school draws its students from the small town as well as the surrounding rural area. Inside the school is evidence of a strong school spirit. A trophy case just within the main school entrance is full. Provincial and zone sports awards hang from the ceiling in the gymnasium. Student work is displayed on hallway bulletin boards. The school's administrative offices are centrally located and provide working space for two secretaries and two administrators. A staff room is located down the hall from the offices. The staff room also serves as a teacher work room.

General Characteristics

Evanrude Secondary School has a teaching staff of 25 to 30. It offers a wide range of programs for a school of its size. Students in Grades 7, 8, and 9 have access to a special education program if required. Students in Grades 10, 11, and 12 are offered a full range of core courses, as well as a wide selection of complementary courses including business education and Career and Technology Studies (CTS) modules. A strong extracurricular sports program exists at Evanrude Secondary School. Evanrude Secondary School is located within the Saddle Hill School Jurisdiction.

Administrative Organization

A vice-principal assists the principal.

Study Participants

Three individuals at Evanrude Secondary School participated in this study.

Daniel. Daniel was a graduate of one of the other schools in the Cripple Creek School Division. Prior to commencing his teaching career, he worked in a variety of positions related to his interests. After five years, Daniel decided to pursue studies leading towards a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Alberta. Daniel graduated with a major in Social Studies and a minor in Physical Education. He had spent some time as a substitute teacher before gaining a full-time teaching position. Daniel's first year assignment included courses in junior high physical education and

social studies as well as courses in senior high physical education and social studies. He was heavily involved in organizing and coaching extracurricular athletic activities. Daniel was not living in the community of Evanrude, preferring to commute every day instead.

May. May was new to the Cripple Creek School Division. She had attended Red Deer College for one year after graduating from high school. She transferred to the University of Alberta after that point and began studies leading to a Bachelor of Education degree in Business Education with a minor in English.

May's major teaching responsibility was in the area of computers and business education. She had spent a considerable amount of time setting up a new computer lab at the beginning of the year. She was the staff representative on the school's yearbook committee. May commuted to Evanrude from a neighboring small town. She was married and had just given birth to her first child.

Howard. Howard was the principal of Evanrude Secondary school. He had 21 years of experience as a teacher and administrator in three jurisdictions. Howard was a deputy superintendent for two years immediately prior to becoming principal of Evanrude Secondary School. He had a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta in Elementary Education. Howard also had a Master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of Alberta.

Howard offered that he enjoyed his work as a teacher and a school administrator despite the times when things get "very hectic."

Howard commuted to Evanrude from a nearby community where he lived with his wife and family.

Woodhouse Composite High School

Woodhouse Composite High School is located in Woodhouse, Alberta. The town has a population of approximately 5,100 and is less than an hour's drive from one of Alberta's major urban areas. One of the province's major highways provides access to Woodhouse. The school was built in the late 1960s and draws students from the town and surrounding rural area. The administrative offices are centrally located in the school. There are three secretaries located in a large open area, and the administrative offices, teacher common room, workroom, and a conference room are attached. Upon entering the school, one notices the pictures of graduating classes on the walls and several trophy cases that contain awards for extracurricular sports. The school colors and the names of the school sports teams are painted on one of the walls nearby.

Student work is displayed on several of the bulletin boards in the junior high wing of the school.

General Characteristics

Woodhouse Composite High School has a teaching staff of fewer than 25. The school offers a wide range of programs for students in Grades 7 to 12. Courses in vocational and industrial arts, fine arts, and business education are available to all students. There are special education programs for both the junior high students and the senior high students. A wide range of extracurricular and cultural activities is available to students. Woodhouse Composite High School is located within the Saddle Hill School Jurisdiction.

Administrative Organization

A vice-principal assists the principal. Three school counselors assist the students with their program and course selection.

Study Participants

Two individuals at Woodhouse Composite High School participated in this study.

Joseph. Joseph moved to Alberta from Montreal and pursued studies at the University of Alberta. He obtained a Bachelor of Education degree with a major in French and a minor in Physical Education. Prior to studying at the University of Alberta, Joseph obtained journeyman papers and worked for several years as an airbrakes specialist. He described himself as a “born teacher having always taught something like coaching martial arts and so on.” He was not familiar with the town of Woodhouse or the Cripple Creek School Division prior to being employed at Woodhouse Composite High School. Joseph’s teaching assignment included courses in French and Drama. He was involved in extracurricular coaching and supervised the school’s senior French Club.

Joseph commuted to Woodhouse from a neighboring town where he lived with his wife and their two prize canines.

Brian. Brian was the principal of Woodhouse Composite High School. He had in excess of 25 years experience as a teacher and administrator in several schools in British Columbia prior to moving to Woodhouse. His experience in British Columbia had been concentrated for the most part in northern rural communities. He had “a great

deal of experience in recruiting, hiring, and initiating new teachers” as many stayed in these remote communities for a year or two and then moved to the larger urban areas in the southern part of the province. Brian had obtained a Bachelor of Education Degree with a major in English and a Master’s of Education degree in Educational Administration from the University of British Columbia.

Brian lived in the town of Woodhouse with his wife and family.

Jumbo Valley School

Jumbo Valley School is located in a rural setting some distance from Stanford, the nearest town. It is accessed by a secondary highway that connects Stanford to a distant neighboring town. Jumbo Valley draws students from a large rural area. All students are transported to the school by bus. The school building is not particularly large. Once inside, it becomes apparent to the visitor that the school is cramped for space. Computers on desks line the main hallway. The office is located just inside the main doors. There is one secretary in a reception area of the main office, and the principal occupies an adjacent office. The staff common room is down the hall, and a teacher workroom is attached to it. Throughout the school there is evidence that suggests the presence of a strong school spirit. Student work is visible on the hallway bulletin boards, and two trophy cabinets are near to overflowing with awards.

General Characteristics

Jumbo Valley School houses kindergarten as well as Grades 1 to 9 and has a teaching staff of fewer than 25. The school boasts a strong athletic program, as well as music, band, and business education in addition to the core program of courses. Students at Jumbo Valley School tend to achieve or exceed the provincial standards on the Achievement Tests. Students in Grades 7 to 9 may participate in several extracurricular athletics programs if they desire. Jumbo Valley School is located in the Knotty Pine School Jurisdiction.

Administrative Organization

Jumbo Valley School has a principal and a vice-principal. Teachers assist students with their program and course selections.

Study Participants

Three individuals at Jumbo Valley School participated in this study.

John. Although technically a beginning teacher, John had six month's teaching experience in another school prior to accepting a position at Jumbo Valley School. Having grown up in the Lone Pine area, John was somewhat familiar with Jumbo Valley School and the neighboring town of Stanford. John's first year teaching assignment was as a generalist in Grade 3. Because there is no community surrounding Jumbo Valley School, John lived in Stanford, one of the neighboring towns. He was single.

John attended Augustana University College for three years studying Biological Sciences. He transferred to the University of Alberta and completed the requirements for a Bachelor of Science degree. At that point, he decided to pursue studies leading to a Bachelor of Education degree in Elementary Education at the Canadian Union College.

John was involved in the Alberta Teachers' Association Local as his school's staff representative.

Lynden. Lynden was new to the Lone Pine District. He grew up and attended school in an urban area some distance from Jumbo Valley School and the town of Stanford. Following high school, Lynden attended the University of Alberta and obtained a Bachelor of Education degree with a major in Music and a minor in English.

Lynden was responsible for the music and band programs at Jumbo Valley School. He taught students ranging from Grades 3 to 9. Although he stated that he enjoyed his teaching job, he found it very challenging to teach such a broad age range of students.

Lynden was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves and had some previous experience teaching various courses for the Reserves. It was as a result of his experiences in the Reserves as an instructor that he decided to pursue a career in teaching. Lynden spent a great deal of time after hours and during the school's noon break working with the marching band. The band was expected to perform when special events in the school. Also expected was participation in local parades.

Because Jumbo Valley School is located in a rural community, Lynden lived in the town of Stanford with his fiancée.

Jack. Jack was the principal of Jumbo Valley School. Due to the school's size, Jack spent most of his time during the day teaching students. He caught up on administrative matters in the evenings and on weekends. Jack also coached adults in evening computer courses.

Jack has Bachelor's degrees in Science, Physical Education, and Education. He stated that he would like to pursue a graduate degree in Educational Administration but, is "way too busy!" He was energized by the special challenges which Jumbo Valley School presents due to its size and location. He estimated that he was averaging at least 72 hours per week "on the job."

Because Jumbo Valley School was not in a town or village, Jack lived in one of the neighboring communities.

Bynder Upper Elementary School

Bynder Upper Elementary School is located in Bynder, Alberta. The town's population is approximately 7,600. The school is located on the west side of a block of land and shares playground space with the Grades 1 to 3 school that is located on the east side of the same block. The school is a long, narrow building that shows signs of age. It is due for extensive renovations in the near future. The administrative offices are located at the end of a hallway which leads to the main entrance of the school. Two secretaries share space in an outer office, with the principal's office at the back of this area. The vice-principal's office is across the main hallway from the main office. Hallway bulletin boards are crowded with student work.

General Characteristics

Bynder Upper Elementary School has a teaching staff numbering under 25. It offers programs in both English and French Immersion. It also offers a special education program for students who are in need of special assistance. Bynder Upper Elementary School is situated within the Knotty Pine School Division.

Administrative Organization

Two vice-principals assist the principal.

Study Participants

Three individuals at Bynder Upper Elementary School participated in this study.

Betty. Betty, the only beginning teacher at the school, was responsible for teaching a split Grade 4/5 French Immersion class. She had grown up in Calgary and attended school there. Following her high school graduation, Betty attended the University of Alberta's French-language Faculté Saint Jean where she pursued studies leading to a Bachelor of Education degree in Elementary Education. Throughout her

university years Betty worked as a camp counselor at one of the Canadian Parents for French summer camps. It was here that she first met Fred, the principal of Bynder Upper Elementary School, and his family who were attending the camp. Fred suggested that following her graduation from university, she contact him about a teaching position in his school.

Betty enjoyed coaching the school's cross country running team and one of the basketball teams. She was a nominee for the Edwin Parr Award for Excellence in Teaching, an award that recognizes excellence among first year teachers.

Betty lived in the town of Bynder. She had planned to move to a neighboring community in the near future. Betty was not familiar with Bynder Upper Elementary School or with the town of Bynder prior to accepting an offer to teach there.

Fred. Fred was the principal of Bynder Upper Elementary School. He had in excess of 20 years of teaching and administrative experience in the jurisdiction. Fred had a Bachelor of Education degree in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of Alberta. He was enthusiastic about his job and spoke highly of both Betty and her mentor, Tracy. Fred was excited about the fact that Betty was nominated for the Edwin Parr Award. Fred lived in the Town of Bynder with his wife and family and was an active participant in a service club there.

Tracy. Tracy was the Grade 3 French Immersion teacher at Bynder Upper Elementary School. She was designated as Betty's mentor. Betty had a Bachelor of Social Sciences degree in Psychology and a Bachelor of Education degree in Elementary Education from the University of Ottawa. Betty also had a Master's of Science degree from the University of Oregon. Betty was in her fifth year of teaching, and had taught at one other school.

Fred describes Tracy as "a star teacher, a real go getter and a real goal setter."

Like Betty, Tracy had been nominated for the Edwin Parr award at the conclusion of her first year of teaching. She was a winner.

Tracy had previous experience mentoring first year teachers and was very comfortable acting in that capacity. Like Fred and Betty, Tracy too lived in the town of Bynder.

Bynder Composite High School

Bynder Composite High School draws students from the town of Bynder as well as from a large surrounding rural area. The school, a large and rambling structure, was built in the 1960s. There is a large parking lot at one end of the school grounds.

Inside the school is evidence of a strong school spirit. Photographs of graduating classes hang in a central entry way, and there are several trophy cases brimming with awards. The office is located in a central area of the school. Three secretaries are located in a central reception area within the office. Administrative offices, a common room, a work room, and a conference room are attached. School colors are displayed just outside the office in a display case with other school memorabilia.

General Characteristics

Bynder Composite High School has a teaching staff of 25 to 30. The school offers a wide range of programs for students in Grades 10, 11, and 12, including evening credit courses as well as a special education program. In addition to the core courses, students have access to courses in vocational and industrial arts, fine arts, and business education. A wide range of extracurricular sports and cultural events are available to students. Bynder Composite High School is located in the Knotty Pine School Jurisdiction.

Administrative Organization

Two vice-principals assist the principal. Department heads assist in the scheduling of courses, and teachers and three school counselors assist students with their program and course selections.

Study Participants

Four individuals at Bynder Composite High School participated in this study.

Dallas. Dallas' first year teaching assignment at Bynder Composite High School was in Automotives and Sciences. Prior to beginning his teaching career, Dallas obtained journeyman papers in two trades, automotive mechanics and welding. He spent some time working in fields related to both trades. When his daughter began high school, Dallas decided to attend and obtained his senior high matriculation. He enjoyed taking courses and became interested in teaching as a career. Upon completing the requirements for university entrance, Dallas decided to pursue studies at the University of Alberta. He obtained a Bachelor of Education degree in Career and Technology Studies. He mentioned that he was one of very few graduates with that particular major and that he had his choice of jobs. He decided to accept the offer from Bynder Composite High.

Dallas resided in an urban community some distance from Bynder and commuted to his job. He was very familiar with the town of Bynder, having lived there for a number of years prior to becoming a teacher. Dallas was somewhat familiar with Bynder Composite High School because he had met a teacher from the school and had often assisted the teacher from time to time, helping students in the teacher's class with their automotive projects on weekends. Dallas spent a considerable amount of time after school and on weekends assisting students in the Automotives shop.

Blaine. Blaine was one of the vice-principals at Bynder Composite High School. He was designated by the principal to be interviewed by the researcher. Blaine grew up in Quebec and had obtained his Bachelor of Education degree in Elementary Education from McGill. While teaching in the Montreal area, he obtained his Master's degree in Elementary Curriculum. After five years of teaching, he became principal of an elementary school. Two years later Blaine left teaching and pursued a career in the insurance industry. After a two-year stint, he returned to education and spent three years in a central office as a deputy superintendent. With downsizing imminent, Blaine decided to move his family to Alberta. They settled in the Bynder area. Blaine has worked as an administrator in two other schools in the jurisdiction besides Bynder Composite.

Blaine has been at Bynder Composite High School for 15 years as one of the vice-principals. He has taught in "most subject areas except for Industrial Arts and Home Economics." Blaine lived in Bynder with his wife and family.

Michael. Dallas identified Michael as his mentor. Prior to beginning his career as a teacher, Michael was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. He had obtained his journeyman papers in automotive mechanics and had worked in that capacity as a member of the Forces. Holding the rank of Sergeant, Michael had extensive previous experience acting in the capacity of mentor for several individuals who served under him. Michael had enjoyed many opportunities to teach courses related to his area of expertise within the Armed Forces.

Following a term of 24 years in the Armed Forces, Michael decided to pursue a career in teaching. He attended the University of Alberta and obtained a Bachelor of Education degree in Vocational Education.

Michael lived in a neighboring community and commuted to Bynder. Michael intended to retire from his work at Bynder Composite High School in the near future.

Summary

Eight first year teachers and their administrators from six rural Alberta schools were involved in this study. In addition, two experienced teachers from two of these six schools who were identified as mentors by two of the first year teachers were also involved in this study. Three of the schools are located in one school jurisdiction, two of the schools are located in another jurisdiction, and one school is located in a third jurisdiction. Two of the schools were senior high schools, two of the schools were junior/senior high schools, one was an upper elementary school, and the sixth was an elementary/junior high school. The two senior high schools were organized according to subject departments, with each of the departments coordinated by a department head. Two of the novice teachers had assignments in elementary grades, two had assignments in senior high grades, three worked both in junior and senior high grades, and the eighth novice was assigned to both elementary and junior high grades.

Two of the first year teachers in this study, one an elementary teacher and the other a senior high teacher, clearly identified another teacher on staff as a mentor.

Two the first year teachers had spent a considerable amount of time in a previous career. Both had “papers” in a trade and had practiced their respective trades. One individual had some previous experience teaching, and one individual had some experience as a substitute teacher. All of the first year teachers indicated that, generally, they had experienced a positive first year and were looking forward to receiving an invitation to extend their teaching positions at their present school.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 present information relating to each participant’s gender, age, qualifications, years of teaching, years at current school, teaching responsibilities and extracurricular responsibilities.

The next three chapters present a discussion of the findings pertaining to each five research problems outlined in Chapter 1.

TABLE 4.2**Participants' Personal and Professional Characteristics**

Participant	Gender	Age range	Qualifications	Years of teaching experience
Debbie (T)	F	20-24	BEd	1
Virgil (A)	M	45-49	BEd, MEd	20-24
Daniel (T)	M	25-29	BEd	1
May (T)	F	20-24	BEd	1
Howard (A)	M	45-49	BEd, MEd	20-24
Joseph (T)	M	30-34	Journeyman, BEd	1
Brian (A)	M	50-54	BEd, MEd	25-29
John (T)	M	20-24	BSc, BEd	1
Lynden (T)	M	20-24	BEd	1
Jack (A)	M	35-39	BSc, BPE, BEd	15-19
Betty (T)	F	20-24	BEd	1
Fred (A)	M	40-45	BEd, MEd	20-24
Tracy (M)	F	30-34	BSc, BEd, MSc	5-10
Dallas (T)	M	40-44	Journeyman, BEd	1
Blaine (A)	M	50-54	BEd, MEd	30-34
Michael (M)	M	60-64	Journeyman, BEd	10-14

T: Teacher
A: Administrator
M: Mentor

TABLE 4.3**Participants' Responsibilities and Years in Current School**

Participant	Years at current school	Subjects taught	Other responsibilities
Debbie (T)	1	Math, Science, IOP, Calm, Foods, Psychology	Grad
Virgil (A)	22	Phys. Ed., Social Studies	Vice-Principal
Daniel (T)	1	Phys. Ed., Social Studies	Coaching
May (T)	1	Business Education	Yearbook
Howard (A)	2	Science	Principal
Joseph (T)	1	French, Drama	Coaching, French Club
Brian (A)	6	Language Arts	Principal
John (T)	1	Grade 3	School's A.T.A. Rep.
Lynden (T)	1	Music, Band	Band Programs
Jack (A)	4	Math, Science, options	Principal
Betty (T)	1	French Immersion (Grade 4/5)	Coaching
Fred (A)	13		Principal
Tracy (M)	3	French Immersion (Grade 3)	French Immersion Coordinator
Dallas (T)	1	Automotives, Science	School's A.T.A. Rep.
Blaine (A)	17	Math	Vice-Principal
Michael (M)	12	Automotives	Special Projects

T: Teacher
A: Administrator
M: Mentor

CHAPTER 5

Induction of First Year Teachers: Description and Context

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings in relation to Research Problem 1.

Research Problem 1: What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions?

The responses to the problem are presented for each first year teacher and corresponding administrator in turn. In cases where there is more than one novice teacher paired with an administrator, the first year teachers' responses are presented first, followed by those of their administrator. A *perception check* for each set of novice teacher(s) and principal or vice-principal, as the case may be, follows, providing a brief comparison and analysis of perceptions. For ethical reasons, these comparisons of perception were made by myself without the corroboration of the participants. The chapter closes with a discussion of the findings. A summary of the responses associated with Research Problem 1 is offered in the form of a conclusion to the chapter.

Debbie (Waterford Composite High School, Winding River School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Debbie's recollection of her introduction to the Winding River School Division included an afternoon session at the jurisdiction offices one day after school. She explained that "it was only after school, for maybe an hour or two." It was at this afternoon session that the central office staff were introduced and their roles explained. Some time was spent giving the first year teachers information on the process for requesting a substitute teacher. Another focus of the session was an explanation of payroll and employee benefits. An information package that included pamphlets on benefits and a school handbook was provided to the attendees for future reference. The formal part of the afternoon was followed by an informal get-together where the novice teachers were introduced to each other and given an opportunity to socialize. Debbie indicated that, overall, the afternoon session "was very useful."

Introduction to the School

Debbie explained that she was given a brief and informal tour of the school when she first began substitute teaching at the beginning of the school year. The tour included a brief introduction to the many staff members. Debbie indicated that this was sufficient in her case because she was already familiar with the school, having attended Grades 10 to 12 there a few years earlier. A highlight of Debbie's introduction to Waterford Composite High was a role playing session in preparation for parent and teacher conferences. Virgil, one of her vice-principals, facilitated the simulation, and two other novice teachers at the school participated as well. Each took turns playing the role of the teacher, as well as the role of an angry parent who was upset with the teacher, a quiet and retiring parent, and a parent angry with his/her son/daughter. Debbie went on to say that "other than that, it was more a matter of asking teachers and secretaries for help. . . . When I needed to know how to do something or what the process was for obtaining something, I just asked others in the school."

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

Debbie summed up the introduction to her teaching assignment as "very complicated." At the beginning of the school year, Debbie was brought into Waterford Composite High School as a substitute teacher. She eventually would be hired to replace the teacher for whom she was substituting. Debbie described her introduction as follows:

My teaching assignment began in September. I started as a sub, so I was shown to the room and given all of the materials necessary to teach. A teacher at the school decided to take over the cafeteria, and because I know her, she called me in as a sub. I was just out of university, and she was giving me a chance. . . . I came to the school late in the summer and found out more or less what I would be teaching.

Debbie's teaching assignment, for the most part, consisted of several modules in Career and Technology Studies (Commercial Foods), Math 24, and Psychology 20. For the most part, Debbie found her assignment "broad . . . [and] quite straightforward." The teacher who had previously taught the Commercial Foods classes was now the school cafeteria contractor. Debbie explained that she "felt comfortable slipping next door to ask Martha for advice or assistance whenever the need arose." Her assignment also included teaching Math and Science to a group of students enrolled in the Integrated Occupations Program (IOP). This was one area of her assignment about

which she felt uncomfortable. Debbie put it this way: "I have no Special Ed. training, at all! I was petrified to have to go into an IOP class." A fellow teacher who had previously taught IOP students recognized that Debbie needed some assistance with organizing this particular aspect of her assignment. In this regard, Debbie said that "she was there for me, to sort of help me through, to listen to me. . . . She provided me some materials as well."

Introduction to the Community

Debbie was not provided with an orientation to the community of Waterford or its surrounding area. She had grown up in the community in which Waterford Composite High School is situated and, therefore, was familiar with it. In cases where a teacher was new to the community, Debbie intimated that an orientation of sorts would be beneficial. Debbie referred to an example particular to her school saying:

There's a military base nearby that sends kids to the school. It would make things easier if you weren't from around here to understand something about that, . . . parents going to Bosnia and kids worried and upset. . . . It would even help me to understand it more right now.

Virgil's Perspective

According to Debbie's vice-principal, Virgil, induction of first year teachers at Waterford Composite High tends to be informal in nature compared to their orientation to the jurisdiction. In terms of the jurisdiction orientation, Virgil indicated that first year teachers spend an afternoon at the central office, at which time they are introduced to various individuals who work with them and are given an overview of some of the jurisdiction policies and many of the employment benefit programs. He felt that the time spent at the jurisdiction orientation was time well spent. In terms of the community, Virgil stated that new teachers were not given an orientation to the community for "obvious reasons." Waterford is very small, and an orientation would be of little or no benefit. Because Debbie had grown up in the surrounding community, Virgil saw no benefit resulting from such an orientation. Regarding the school, Virgil explained that new teachers are given a thorough tour of the facilities and are shown where supplies and materials can be procured. Some of the induction and orientation activities are part of the general orientation for all members of the teaching staff that occurs early in the fall term. During the first week of school at least two staff meetings are held to brief all teachers on the new year, changes in policy and procedure, and so on. Following the

meetings, first year teachers meet with the school administrators, and “there is a conversation that goes on for about half an hour.” The meetings focus on an explication of organizational values including honesty, loyalty, and community. Virgil explained the agenda this way:

We talk about organizational values. If there is some criticism about the way we do things, we need to talk about those, and be honest about those things. . . . If there are some concerns, let’s bring them out, let’s talk about them, and let’s deal with the problem. But at the same time, you need to be loyal to the place you’re trying to improve. We also talk about togetherness and supporting people. I call it developing community. . . . Find at least one person you are comfortable with and work from there.

Virgil explained that included in this “conversation” is a question-and-answer period where first year teachers are encouraged to ask the administrators questions pertaining to the school or their teaching assignment. He described the meetings as “basically an opportunity for first year teachers to tell us what it is they need to know, in addition to what we’ve told them already.” Other items discussed at these meetings include a description of jurisdiction personnel and their duties; of the Alberta Teachers’ Association and its program; and of student demographics, school programs, and student achievement and awards. Later in the first term, Virgil explained, a briefing session was held in anticipation of parent and teacher interviews. This session included opportunities for novice teachers to role-play possible scenarios and reflect on their approach to parents.

In conclusion, Virgil mentioned that “we have talked occasionally about our peer coaching program for teachers which has, in a sense, in the last two years declined considerably.” After a moment of introspection, Virgil went on to say, “I think we’ve done far less in terms of helping our first year teachers in the last two years than we have, let’s say, in the previous four or five years.”

Perception Check

Debbie’s and Virgil’s perceptions of the induction of first year teachers were similar in many respects, particularly regarding orientation to the jurisdiction and the community. Also, in terms of the orientation to the teaching assignment, it appears that both would agree that nothing particularly structured took place. Regarding the orientation to the community and to the school, there were some differences worth noting. Debbie indicated that an orientation to the community’s surrounding district

would have been beneficial for her. A number of her students had one or both of their parents enlisted in the military and were living at the nearby military base. Debbie indicated that it would have helped her to understand some of these students and their emotional needs if she had had some understanding and appreciation for the work of their parents and the inherent dangers that they faced in their line of work. Many of these enlisted parents were being dispatched to one of the United Nation's peacekeeping sites.

Debbie did not mention the meetings that focused on organizational values including honesty, loyalty, and community. Virgil perceived these meetings as opportunities where novice teachers could ask questions and receive information regarding "what they need to know." According to Debbie, most of what she needed to know was obtained by asking teachers and secretaries. Debbie's comments regarding the meetings were restricted to the meeting just prior to the first set of report cards where the first year teachers role-played various scenarios with parents.

Daniel and May (Evanrude Secondary School, Cripple Creek School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Like Debbie, both Daniel and May mentioned attending an orientation session in late August prior to the beginning of the school year. The full-day session was held at one of Cripple Creek's larger schools. As was the case in the Winding River School Division, the Cripple Creek program included the introduction of central office personnel and an explanation of their duties and responsibilities. In addition, there was an explication of the expectations that Cripple Creek had of its teachers. Again, as in Debbie's experience, the attendees received a package that outlined the various employment benefits programs of which they were part. May described the day as "having nothing to do with teaching. It was all about benefits and expectations." She also said that those hosting the session "really seemed to give a lot of hype, really make you anticipate the year and make you look forward to it." Daniel described the day as being "informational, . . . basically all employment related. . . . They gave us a couple of packages and let us know a little about the employment programs and how that would be handled."

Introduction to the School

Daniel's introduction to Evanrude Secondary School included a half hour tour of the facility in early August. "Howard [the principal] gave me a tour of the school, showed me where I would be teaching, and showed me the gymnasium." Daniel was also given the name and phone number of the teacher whom he was replacing and encouraged to contact him regarding matters of concern relating to the position. Daniel reported that he did not have any need to contact the teacher whom he was replacing.

May was hired 10 days before school started. She described herself as being "in a frazzled state" at that point. In terms of a tour of the school, May said that "I wasn't really given a tour of the school at that time: . . . This is where the staff room is, and this is where the office is, and this is where you photocopy. . . . [Instead it was] this is your room, and here you go." On May's first day in the school, the teacher whom she was replacing dropped by to see her:

When I came in here, the fellow who was here last year came here that first day. He talked to me about different things. . . . He tried to sway my opinion on certain things regarding the school. . . . He didn't help me set anything up.

May sensed strong support that day from others in the school, including the principal, the school counselor, and the school secretary.

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

Daniel and May both stated that their teaching assignments were clearly laid out for them at their respective interviews and that there were no surprises after they accepted their positions on staff. Neither had input into their assignment. According to Daniel, his assignment was "modeled on the fellow that left last year." He added that, "basically, that would have been his assignment." The same held for May. Daniel and May both felt that they were given the necessary resources to carry out their employment obligations. Daniel's assignment consisted of several sections of junior high physical education and social studies. May's assignment consisted of several sections of junior high computer education, several modules of career and technology studies (business education) and Math 13, and English 10 and 13.

Daniel and May explained that early on in the year they had formed an informal support group that included themselves and one other teacher in the school who was new to the school and about their age. This support group, according to May, "provided a forum for us to discuss some of our problems and try to work things out without going to the administrators for help." Both Daniel and May found the support

group helped them through some of the rough spots of their first year, particularly in the early months.

Introduction to the Community

As was the case with Debbie and her community, Daniel and May did not receive an orientation to their community, Evanrude. However, like Debbie, both indicated support for some sort of orientation to the community. Daniel implied that an orientation to the community would be particularly valuable with respect to rural teaching positions and felt strongly about the need to know the community in which many of his colleagues and students lived. To this end he had spent some time on his own wandering around the community prior to accepting the teaching position at Evanrude High School. He explained it this way:

The day of the interview I took a couple of hours, and I went to the County office and got all the brochures they had. . . . I walked up and down the streets and drove around . . . to check out what was here. When you are working with students and peers, its nice to be able to relate to them and what's important to them, their hopes and desires and what problems they have.

May's conception of the need for an orientation to the community was similar to that of Daniel's. However, her idea about the utility of orienting new teachers to the new community also included providing an opportunity for new residents in the community to receive an orientation to the school and its staff. May explained that "there are not only new teachers here. There are new people in the community who may not have had the opportunity to meet some of the teachers who have been here for 400 years!" She intimated that an open house evening would accomplish this.

Howard's Perspective

Howard, Daniel and May's principal, also mentioned the one-day orientation at central office. He felt that the orientation was a worthwhile event for novice teachers and that many of their questions regarding jurisdiction policy and employment programs were answered. Howard felt that an orientation to the school's community would be a worthwhile endeavor. It was not something currently in place, however. Regarding an orientation to the school and the teaching assignment, Howard indicated that when first year teachers are hired, they are paired up with experienced teachers who can fulfill a mentor role. In addition, first year teachers are encouraged to seek assistance regarding their teaching assignment and course content from other senior teachers who might be

teaching courses in the same subject area. An important part of the first year teacher's orientation to the school was a tour of the facility prior to the commencement of the school year and a staff meeting that was held just prior to the first student contact day in September. At this meeting school policies were reviewed, formal introductions of staff occurred, and general questions were answered. Howard reported that a handbook for teachers was being developed and that he hoped that this would help address some of the questions and concerns that first year teachers might have regarding the school and their role as teachers in it.

Perception Check

Daniel's, May's and Howard's perceptions of first year teacher induction were similar in many respects. Some differences were evident, however. Neither Daniel nor May indicated that they were encouraged to seek out a mentor, nor was an experienced teacher assigned to act as mentor to them. When prompted about having a mentor, both Daniel and May indicated that they had not chosen any one individual on staff to act as mentor for them. Rather, they preferred to seek assistance and advice from any one of their colleagues, depending on the situation.

Regarding their teaching assignments, both Daniel and May taught a substantial amount of their day in a subject area where they were the only teacher. It was not always possible for either of them to look to more experienced teachers for help with subject content.

In terms of the school tour, May's perception seemed quite different from Howard's. She indicated that she was given a tour only in so far as she was shown to her room. Daniel, on the other hand, reported that he had been given a tour that lasted a half hour. One would conclude that his tour was more comprehensive than May's tour and, certainly, more congruous with Howard's perception.

Neither Daniel nor May mentioned the first staff meeting. Howard had explained that general introductions and a review of school policies took place at this initial staff meeting just prior to the first student-contact day.

Joseph (Woodhouse Composite High, Cripple Creek School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Joseph attended the same one-day orientation for Cripple Creek as Daniel and May attended. Although his recollection of the content of the orientation was very

similar to those of Daniel and May, his sense of enthusiasm for what was occurring was much stronger. Joseph described the day as follows:

Actually, they did a wonderful day; . . . it was overwhelming. It was a lot of information, but I was impressed with how they handled all the new teachers. I can remember feeling quite impressed. I felt like I was part of something! I really enjoyed the way they handled it. I thought it was very good. . . . We were given our packages on obtaining substitute teachers and procedures and all that stuff. So it really did prove useful. I thought it was worthwhile!

Introduction to the School

Following Joseph's interview for a position at Woodhouse Composite, he was given a tour of the facility by the principal and vice-principal. Within a couple of days he received and accepted an offer to teach at Woodhouse Composite. Further introduction to the school took place a few days prior to the first student-contact day of the school year. Again, the principal took him on a tour of the school, showing him where his room was located. Joseph described his orientation with enthusiasm:

It was fantastic! I was met by everybody. I showed up at the office, and the principal and vice-principal proceeded to give me the keys and said, "This is what this is for. . . ." They proceeded to give me a mini tour and introduced me to people. They showed me what had been done because there was a lot of construction going on. They showed me to my classroom. The whole day people came in and out . . . and introduced themselves, . . . leaving me this resource or that resource and leaving me things to read. In fact, I sort of remember it was almost like a scene out of *The Firm*. It was a super day. I was obviously accepted. I couldn't believe it! When we sat down at the staff meeting, I was introduced to the rest of the staff. . . . I got on at the staff meeting, and that was it.

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

Joseph's teaching assignment was very clear from the time of his interview. No surprises awaited him after the point of his being hired. "This is what the job calls for. Would you be interested?" "Yes, I would!" Joseph explained that he received the necessary resources to carry out his planning and the subsequent presentation of lessons. His assignment consisted of several sections of senior high French, several sections of junior high physical education, and Physical Education 10.

Joseph explained that a husband-and-wife team of teachers on his staff befriended him early in the year. He went on to explain that he felt comfortable approaching either of them or both of them when he needed some assistance or advice regarding students or school matters. Joseph shared that he “stayed overnight at their house on several occasions when the weather was really lousy and [I] didn’t want to risk driving home.”

Introduction to the Community

As was the case with Debbie, Daniel, and May and their respective communities, Joseph did not receive an orientation to the community of Woodhouse. Like Debbie, Daniel, and May, he perceived an orientation to the community as something that would possibly benefit first year teachers who had taken up residence in the community. Joseph proceeded to further qualify his initial enthusiasm for an orientation to the community by explaining that someone like himself who was living in another community some distance away might not benefit all that much. He felt that an orientation might present demands to become involved in the school’s community. Joseph put it this way:

Sometimes just meeting people leads to involvement. It might infringe on my separation from the school. . . . I consider myself very, very involved in the school, but when I leave the school I also like the fact that I’m driving somewhere else to reside.

Joseph conceded that the need for an orientation to the community “might be different for other people.”

Brian’s Perspective

Woodhouse Composite’s principal, Brian, explained that new teachers to the jurisdiction spent a day at the central office meeting personnel and reviewing policy. The jurisdiction provided the substitute teacher for this event.

In terms of the school-based orientation, Brian began by explaining that he and his vice-principal interview prospective candidates for a teaching position at the school. Following the interview, each candidate is given a tour of the facility. Once a selection has been made, the successful candidate is contacted and arrangements are made for a meeting, where a more in-depth orientation to the school facility is provided and the necessary keys to the school and classroom(s) are handed over. At the first staff meeting of the school year, introductions are made and policy is reviewed for the benefit

of all staff members, but in particular for those new to the school. First year teachers are encouraged to identify, in time, one or two experienced staff members with whom they can establish mentor/protégé relationships. The principal and vice-principal keep a watchful eye on the first year teacher for the first few weeks and offer their assistance. At the conclusion of the first week of school, a meeting with the first year teacher, the principal and the vice-principal is arranged. Brian described the purpose of the meeting as being a question-and-answer session where the first year teacher was encouraged to ask questions in regards to any matters of concern. “‘Okay, you’ve been here for a week or two. Now, you have some questions?’”

Perception Check

For the most part, Joseph’s and Brian’s perceptions were very similar. Joseph did not mention the policy review at the first staff meeting nor did he mention the question-and-answer session at the conclusion of the first week. Brian mentioned that novice teachers were encouraged to identify one or two experienced members on staff with whom they could establish a mentor/protégé relationship. Although Joseph remarked that there were two people on staff who were assisting him professionally and personally, he did not consider those persons to be his mentors. It is not clear that Joseph was responding to the encouragement of the administrators. Rather, it seemed that he was attempting to satisfy a need that he had identified.

John and Lynden (Jumbo Valley School-Lone Pine School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Several days after the school year had commenced, as was the case with Debbie and her jurisdiction, both John and Lynden reported that they were invited to attend a one-day orientation session for first year teachers at the Lone Pine central offices. Because the meeting was held on a school day (unlike the meeting that Daniel, May, and Joseph attended), substitute teachers were provided by the jurisdiction for their classes to enable teachers to attend the session. At the session, the central office staff were introduced and their duties and responsibilities explained. Payroll matters and employee benefits were reviewed with the first year teachers. John claimed that “one of the most beneficial aspects of the meeting was the provision of information on payroll and benefits and the opportunity to ask questions in that regard.” Lynden identified a question-and-answer period where “typical first year teacher questions were addressed”

as beneficial to him. The first year teachers present were introduced to one another. At the conclusion of the afternoon session, the first year teachers were given a list of the names and telephone numbers of all of the jurisdiction's first year teachers. John described the afternoon session as an opportunity to "put faces to names, . . . an opportunity to get to know other first year teachers, what they taught, and where they taught."

Introduction to the School

In the latter part of June, Jumbo Valley School holds an annual open house and picnic for staff, parents, and students. Lynden, hired to begin teaching at Jumbo Valley School the following school year, was invited and attended this function. John, in anticipation of his interview for a position in the coming days, also attended this function. John felt that it would be "a good opportunity to get a feel for the school, . . . an opportunity to put a few names to faces and thus make the interview process a little bit more comfortable."

In August, prior to the school's opening, Lynden was given a tour of the school by the principal and introduced to the staff informally as they were encountered on the tour. He reported that more formal introductions occurred at the first staff meeting held before the first student-contact day. Both Lynden and John noted that school policy and procedures were also reviewed for the benefit of all teachers at this initial staff meeting. When asked about his introduction to the school, John offered, "I had found out on my own where my classroom was. . . . I wasn't shown around the school. There wasn't much to be shown around. Its pretty small." He went on to explain his lack of a need to be shown around: "Basically, when I came in so much earlier than most other people in August, I showed myself around. I knew that I was free to do so and to look around and see where the nooks and crannies were in the school." At Jumbo Valley School, the Parent Advisory Council invited all first year teachers and other teachers new to the school to attend their September meeting. John and Lynden were introduced to the parent council members and other parents in attendance at this meeting. Lynden explained that "all of the first year teachers were introduced at the general meeting of parents. . . . It's not unusual to get 70% of the families represented at the first meeting. It's incredible!"

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

Lynden's teaching assignment was clearly outlined for him during the employment interview in which he participated. "There were no surprises regarding the assignment." The explication of John's teaching assignment was not as straightforward. "In the interview process [early June] they told me basically what my teaching assignment would be, although they were still working on my timetable. . . . I would find out in August exactly what my teaching assignment would be." John explained that he was not bothered by this uncertainty. Both John and Lynden indicated that they received the necessary resources to carry out the responsibilities of their respective jobs. John explained that his colleagues were very forthcoming when it came to sharing unit plans, test and science and math kits. Lynden explained that because his major course load was music, "there really wasn't anybody in the school who could assist me." In fact, he explained that he taught music to students in primary, upper elementary, and junior high. The transition from one division to another often caused him difficulty. He put it this way:

It's difficult to teach Grade 3s one period and then switch to teaching Grade 8s the next. I don't think there is anybody else in the school who has to make so many age/grade transitions in a day as I have too. Nobody understands how difficult this can be. . . . Nobody seems to understand what it's like to be a band teacher in a small rural school!

John and Lynden explained that they were members of a car pool and found the time driving to and from school to be useful for discussing the challenges with which they had to deal each day.

Introduction to the Community

As was the case with Debbie, Daniel, May, and Joseph and their respective communities, both John and Lynden indicated that they did not receive an orientation to the community of Stanford or its surrounding area. Unlike Debbie, Daniel, May and Joseph, John explained that there was no need for an orientation to the school's community unless it was a remote northern community. He claimed that "most people in the profession have the outgoingness or wherewithal to go and find out things about their community." John implied that his opinion on this matter might be affected by the fact that he had grown up in a neighboring community and did not feel like a stranger in Stanford. He also indicated that the uncertainty of his position at the school had caused

him to view his move more in terms of going to another community to “live and sleep for a year. . . . Nothing permanent.”

Lynden seemed to have mixed feelings about an orientation to the community in which the school was located. He explained:

Knowing something about certain features would help. . . . In fact, it would have saved me fifty bucks! I went to a restaurant when I first arrived here. It looked really nice, but it wasn't. A \$50.00 meal, and the food was just terrible!

Lynden also felt that it was possible to find whatever one needed in a small town with a bit of initiative and some assistance as required. He explained that he had asked his principal about where he might find accommodations for rent. His principal directed him to the local newspaper, where he found several possibilities to follow up on. He also said that

I found stuff and did stuff when I needed to. I found a doctor when I needed to find one and I found a hospital when I needed the hospital. Necessity is the mother of invention or something like that!

Jack's Perspective

John's and Lynden's principal, Jack, explained that the one-day orientation that took place at the central office was a worthwhile effort to disseminate information to novice teachers. “They come back all revved up about their job and the various employee benefit programs!”

Jack describes the formal induction of first year teachers at Jumbo Valley School as straightforward and limited:

You would get ‘wandered’ around the school, . . . introduced to people, . . . introduced to your courses, . . . talked with about philosophies in planning and preparation and classroom management. We like to lay it all out on the table. That's about it. Pretty pathetic, isn't it?

In terms of informal practices, however, there seemed to be some beneficial measures being taken at Jumbo Valley School. First year teachers were given curriculum materials and sample unit and lesson plans in the summer months prior to the beginning of the school year.

We encourage planning and preparation. . . . A lot of lesson plans, tests and unit plans get passed around here. . . . We spend a lot of time developing kits for teaching various units. We hand these things off to the first year teacher to give them an easier start in September: . . . “Here's September, guys. Do this

unit first and start planning for the rest of the year.” It gives them a little breathing space as much as anything.

Jack described his staff as a small staff and as a result, very helpful towards first year teachers. In terms of assistance, there was a give-and-take structure that developed because “some of the experienced teachers are still getting their feet wet with computers. . . . These new guys know a lot about computers.” In terms of a mentorship program, Jack believes that it is more beneficial for first year teachers at Jumbo Valley School to develop relationships with all members of the staff and to feel free to ask for and receive help from whomever they desired. Again, he attributed this to the small size of his staff and their ability to effectively recognize a need for help and, subsequently, to assist the first year teacher. “I believe it’s something we can do in a small school and make it effective.” He pointed out the dangers of contriving a relationship between a first year teacher and an experienced teacher: “I may not like your attempt to mentor me. . . . Your skills and personality and your teaching style may not match mine. . . . It can become a real horror story.”

Jack commented that a formal orientation to the community did not occur. He thought that it might, however, have value. Jack explained that he encouraged novice teachers to ask him or other colleagues about any matters that concerned them. He put it this way:

If you’re new to the district, you probably need a place to hang your hat. I encourage new teachers to the school to feel free to ask me or others on staff about the availability of places to live. If they need anything else, we can help them.

Perception Check

John’s, Lynden’s and Jack’s perspectives on first year teacher orientations were very similar to one another, with the exception of the discussion of philosophies in planning and classroom management at the time of the school tour. Neither John nor Lynden mentioned this. John’s comments about the sharing of teaching units, tests and kits indicates that he was aware of some of the informal aspects of Jack’s induction practices.

Betty (Bynder Upper Elementary School-Lone Pine School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Betty attended the same orientation session to the Lone Pine School Division as had both John and Lynden. It consisted of a one-day session at the jurisdiction's central office. Substitute teachers were provided by the jurisdiction in order that novice teachers like Betty would attend. In addition to introductions to the various individuals who worked at central office, Betty and the other novice teachers were given an orientation to the employee benefit plans and a review of jurisdiction-level policy. At the end of the day, the first year teachers were given a list of first year teachers in the jurisdiction, their names, and their telephone numbers. In regards to the day, Betty concluded,

The afternoon was beneficial in that it gave me an overview of the structure of the division and the employment benefits that were available to me. . . . It basically covered the business side of things. I appreciated being given a list of the other first year teachers as well.

Introduction to the School

In early May, Tracy, the Grade 3 teacher at Bynder Upper Elementary School, contacted Betty. Tracy had had several years of experience teaching at Bynder Upper Elementary School. She would serve as Betty's mentor. The contact was made shortly after Betty had accepted an offer to teach Grade 4 at the school the following school year. According to Betty, "She [Tracy] kind of took me under her wing." This, Betty surmised, was because both of them could speak French. After signing a contract, Betty visited Bynder Upper Elementary School several times before the school year ended and spent much of her time observing Tracy and working with her. Tracy showed Betty around the school and helped her locate any materials that she would need to begin her preparations for the coming school year. According to Betty, "That's when the introduction to the school first started. . . . It was with the Grade 3 teacher [Tracy], . . . and then the other staff offered to share resources with me." Betty was introduced informally to the staff of Bynder Upper Elementary in early May, and then in September a more formal introduction took place at the first staff meeting. Betty enthusiastically described her first weeks in September at the school as "very interesting." She particularly enjoyed the first two weeks in September when "the teachers go to each other's class. . . . We spend about ten minutes in the morning going to all the other

classes and introducing ourselves to the students. When I'm in Jill's Grade 5 class, she is in my Grade 4 class. . . . That's how it works. It's wonderful!"

Tracy indicated that she provided Betty with several informal types of assistance. The examples she provided included "hallway chats about classroom management and discipline and how to handle specific individuals," as well as assistance with preparation for report cards and parent and teacher conferences.

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

Betty's introduction to her teaching assignment was carried out by Tracy, for the most part, in June. Tracy helped her to locate any of the Grade 4 materials that she would need for her preparations over the summer and reviewed her timetable with her. In preparation for the first day of classes, Tracy went "through every student in the class and wrote a descriptive paragraph about each child so that she [Betty] would have a really good understanding of who was coming in." Betty explained that Fred was very helpful as well, making all the necessary resources available for her to begin her preparations. On the first day of school, Fred escorted Betty to her classroom and introduced her to her homeroom students. Later that day, a general assembly was held. Fred introduced Betty, the only new teacher in the school, to the students.

Betty explained that as the year progressed, she felt very comfortable discussing concerns that she had about her students or the school with Tracy.

Introduction to the Community

Like Debbie, Daniel, May, and, to a lesser degree, Joseph, John, and Lynden, Betty expressed support for an orientation to the community, stating that "it's going to be your home, and you need to have a knowledge of your surroundings." She commented that she had received some assistance from a colleague in finding accommodations and had been given a tour around the town. She appreciated the informal approach to the orientation to the community and felt that it was important to be given the opportunity to ask questions when necessary. The local Welcome Wagon had also contacted Betty. She found this to have been of benefit as well. "Someone from the school had contacted them. . . . They gave me a list of all of the organizations, and I was able to make a contact because I like to play basketball." In contrast to Lynden, Betty implied that an orientation to the community was particularly helpful if the community was small in size.

Fred's Perspective

According to Betty's principal, Fred, when a first year teacher is hired to teach at Bynder Upper Elementary School, he immediately sets about to match him/her up with an experienced teacher. Fred described this practice as "the most valuable part of our program, . . . the ongoing peer coaching that happens between buddy teacher and first year teacher. . . . It's been wonderful!" In addition to promoting this peer relationship, Fred also mentioned spending considerable time with the first year teacher prior to the beginning of the school year, reviewing the staff manual with him/her.

Perception Check

Betty's and Fred's perceptions of first year teacher induction at Bynder Upper Elementary were very similar to one another. Fred did not mention the one-day orientation that took place at the jurisdiction level. Betty did not mention the review of the staff manual prior to the beginning of the school year.

Dallas (Bynder Composite High School-Lone Pine School Division)

Introduction to the Jurisdiction

Like Debbie, Daniel, and May and their respective jurisdictions; and, Betty, John, and Lynden, Dallas reported that he had attended the orientation sessions at the Lone Pine central office. Because the session lasted a full day, a substitute teacher was provided for Dallas by the jurisdiction. Dallas mentioned that he was not as comfortable at the meetings as the others claimed they were. He attributed his discomfort to the fact that he was almost 20 years older than the others and had spent a considerable amount of time in the work force already. Dallas put it this way:

I was very uncomfortable at those meetings simply because I was twenty years older than most of the other people there. Most of the first year teachers were in their first real job. It wasn't mine. I had worked before. They worried about things like sleep deprivation and not eating properly and working all these hours. I've had that all my life. . . . Their problems weren't mine, and I had little association with them as far as that goes.

Dallas explained that the day consisted mostly of a review of jurisdiction policies and employee benefit plans. As well, he reported that there was a question-and-answer period as part of the day.

Introduction to the School

Prior to being hired to teach at Bynder Composite High School, Dallas had been a guest in the Industrial Arts shops and had come to know Michael, the automotive teacher, quite well. A friendship developed between Dallas and Michael. When Dallas was interviewed and hired by the principal, he was given keys to the school and the industrial arts complex. According to Dallas, it was assumed that Michael had given him a tour of the school and that a subsequent tour would not be necessary. Dallas reported, however, that Michael had not given him a tour of the school. He went on to explain that, nevertheless, this did not prevent him from exploring the school on his own during the summer months prior to the commencement of his assignment. Dallas found other teachers whom he encountered that summer in the school to be “very helpful and more than willing to show me anything and everything that I needed.”

Michael felt strongly about the importance of orienting a novice teacher to the school. He stated that it was “probably the most important thing, . . . the knowledge of the building, surroundings, and where they can get help.”

Introduction to the Teaching Assignment

At the point of being hired, Dallas was given the names of other teachers in the school on whom he could call to seek assistance. He had already established a degree of rapport with Michael, an experienced automotives teacher. He was very comfortable with the career and technology studies modules (automotives) he was assigned to teach. He put it this way: “I’m a mechanics teacher. I should know how to teach mechanics. That was pretty much it according to the principal too.” The science course (Science 14) he was assigned to teach seemed to be a different matter. “Science? I was really afraid. I had no idea what the course was about. None whatsoever.” He called on the Science Department Head a week before school started and was provided with a curriculum and a quantity of information regarding the course he would be teaching. According to Dallas, the Department Head said, “Don’t worry about it! You will do fine.” Dallas found it a bit amusing that he “apparently didn’t have to have any background in science to teach science.” As the year progressed, Dallas kept in frequent contact with the Science Department Head and received “quite a bit of assistance.” Dallas also sought assistance from time to time from Michael in regards to his CTS assignment. Michael revealed that “there’s been times when I’ve been home and Dallas has needed something and phoned me up. To the best of my ability, I assist him with his concern.”

Introduction to the Community

As was the case with the others, Dallas reported that he was not offered an orientation to the community. He felt that he did not require such an orientation because he had resided there some years previously and felt that he still knew the community well. Like Debbie, Daniel, May, and, to a lesser degree, Joseph, John, and Lynden, Dallas indicated support for an orientation to the community because he felt that it would be helpful for new residents. Like Lynden, he indicated that it was important for a new teacher to the community to explore their surroundings on their own as well:

I don't always believe everything that I'm told. . . . It's important to find out for yourself. Someone might have a biased opinion about something. I prefer not to be biased and if I'm going to be biased, I want my reasons for being biased.

Blaine's Perspective

Dallas' principal, Blaine, explained that first year teachers at Bynder Composite High School were normally given a tour of the facility and encouraged to review the various policy handbooks that were in the teacher lounge. In addition, Blaine explained that informal question-and-answer sessions were encouraged, and the first year teacher was encouraged to approach the principal or other staff members to get whatever assistance he/she needed. Pairing with an experienced teacher was encouraged, but neither arranged nor required. Department Heads were expected to assist the first year teacher with problems and to answer any questions he/she might have. Blaine, the vice-principal of Bynder Composite High was not confident that enough was being done to assist first year teachers. He described the problem this way:

We've been accused in the past of being a tough school for someone to come into to find out what's going on in the school. Because so many of us have been here for so long, we know how it works. We are not very adept at looking at it from the rookie's perspective. We have to try and smarten ourselves up in this regard.

Perception Check

Dallas' and Blaine's perceptions of first year teacher induction at Bynder Composite High School were very similar. Dallas did not mention policy handbooks, nor did he mention the fact that he had been encouraged to seek out a mentor. He did, however, identify the other automotives teacher, Michael, as his mentor.

Summary

In the preceding section of this chapter the findings were presented in relation to Research Problem 1: What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions? This was accomplished by presenting and analyzing the responses of eight first year teachers and their respective administrators. For ease of presentation and analysis, the following categories were established for each teacher: Introduction to the Jurisdiction, Introduction to the School, Introduction to the Assignment, and Introduction to the Community. For each administrator, a category called "Perspective" was created that provided general comments made by administrators regarding the orientation experience of first year teachers in their respective schools. In addition, a final category was established that was referred to as "Perception Check." This category provided a comparison of each first year teacher's perspective on induction practices that he/she experienced and his/her administrators' perspective.

Following is a summary and discussion of the findings for each of the aforementioned categories.

Experience at the Jurisdiction Level

Depending on the jurisdiction, orientation sessions were reported as having ranged from a couple of hours in duration to a full day. As reported, the orientation offered to first year teachers in Winding River consisted of a two to three-hour session one afternoon after the close of school. Orientations in Cripple Creek and Lone Pine were held during school hours and lasted most of the day. Substitute teachers were provided by the jurisdiction. In terms of the reported content of the orientations, there was similarity from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Payroll issues, employment benefits, and arrangements for substitute teachers were highlighted at the sessions; it was a common practice to provide first year teachers with information packages on these items of interest and relevance. In addition, emphasis was placed on the introduction of jurisdiction-level personnel and the explication of their duties and responsibilities. First year teachers seemed to appreciate the opportunity that an orientation meeting provided for them to meet other new teachers in their jurisdiction and possibly establish some sort of support link that could be useful at a later date.

Experience at the School Level

Every school seems to have a unique school orientation for its first year teachers. In one of the schools where I interviewed first year teachers, the formal practice of

providing a mentor to assist the first year teacher was an integral component of the orientation and induction process. In another school, first year teachers were encouraged to choose a mentor to assist them from amongst the experienced staff members. In both of these instances, the first year teachers seemed to appreciate the efforts of their respective mentors and implied that the assistance that they received was very valuable. In two other schools, first year teachers were encouraged to seek advice and assistance from all of their more experienced colleagues. This seemed to be working rather well according to the first year teachers. In two other schools, administrators commented on peer coaching programs or mentorship programs in their schools but did not demonstrate that they were presently in effect with the first year teachers on staff. Common elements of in-school orientation programs included a tour of the school and introductions to the school staff. First year teachers in general seemed to appreciate the time spent on introducing them to their colleagues. They claimed that it was important to establish linkages with the individual staff members as soon as possible. Occasions to socialize with the staff were also appreciated and valued by the first year teachers in general. First year teachers felt that these occasions outside the structured school day helped to foster a greater sense of belonging and made it easier for them to ask for assistance.

Experience at the Assignment Level

There was a wide range of experiences amongst the sample of first year teachers in terms of the introduction they received to their respective teaching assignments. Some indicated that they were informed about the details of their teaching assignment at the time of their interview and that it was relatively well matched to their education, area of specialization, and interests. One indicated that she had assumed her teaching assignment after having substitute-taught in the position for several days, and she indicated that there was some mismatch between the assignment and her education, area of specialization, and interests. Two others indicated that they were made aware, for the most part, of what courses they would be teaching at their interviews. They were subsequently informed sometime in August of the exact details of their teaching assignments. These two individuals also indicated that there was some mismatch between their assignments and their education, area of specialization and interests.

One particular individual was introduced to her teaching assignment well in advance of the beginning of the school year by an experienced teacher who had been assigned by the principal to act as her mentor that first year.

In two cases where there was more than one first year teacher in the school, some form of support group emerged. In one case the support group was more formally established and met regularly at the school. In the second case the support group was less formally established, taking the form of a car pool. In either case, the novice teachers seemed to value and benefit from the support group.

Generally speaking, it seems that all novice teachers who participated in this study were being assisted to some degree by other members of their respective staffs or individuals who were former members of their respective staffs. In most cases, the assistance was genuinely appreciated.

Experience at the Community Level

The orientation of first year teachers to their school's community was virtually not practiced. Six of the eight first year teachers in this sample indicated that they received no orientation to the community or assistance in terms of familiarizing themselves with any aspect of the community. The remaining two of the eight first year teachers in this sample indicated that they had received some assistance in terms of locating living accommodations when they moved into the community, and one of these two indicated that the Welcome Wagon had visited her shortly after she had moved into the community. All of the first year teachers in this sample supported, to varying extents, the need for some form of orientation to the community.

Perception Checks

Regarding the specifics of particular school induction programs, the perceptions of individual administrators was for the most part congruous with their respective novice teacher's perceptions. Some differences in perception occurred and it would seem that a likely reason for this may simply be that the novice teachers were not always cognizant of the assistance or support that was being provided for them. Administrators might not see the need to bring attention to something that they consider to be an integral function of their job.

Conclusion

The concluding comments relate to Research Problem 1: What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions? The orientation and induction activities experienced by the eight first year teachers in this study varied according to their school and the jurisdiction in which their school was located.

It would seem that much of what occurs by way of orientation at the jurisdiction level has two distinct purposes. The first purpose serves the interests of the first year teacher. This is accomplished by providing novice teachers with necessary information regarding their salaries and their employment benefits, in addition to providing them with packages and an opportunity to ask questions regarding the jurisdiction and its expectations and an opportunity to network with other first year teachers in the jurisdiction. The second purpose serves the interests of the organization that exists to administer employee salaries and employment benefits. First year teachers are familiarized with forms and procedures regarding employment benefit packages in addition to other centrally controlled matters such as procuring substitute teachers. When these procedures are followed, things flow smoothly.

Orientation and induction practices at the school level tend to differ from one school to the next within jurisdictions as well as between jurisdictions. Principals and vice-principals are important players at this level and can take several measures to ease the transition for a first year teacher. It is interesting to note the discrepancies between the perceptions of first year teachers and their respective administrators in terms of what formal and informal measures are being taken to orient and induct the first year teacher. This would likely be a function of the possibility that novice teachers may not always be aware of the support and assistance that are being provided for them. Administrators might see this as an integral part of their job and something that need to receive attention from others.

Orientation to the teaching assignment also differs from school to school within jurisdictions and between jurisdictions. Often teachers know all or some of the courses that they will be teaching well in advance of the beginning of the school year. Novice teachers generally appreciate knowing the specifics of their teaching assignment in advance, because it gives them time to gather resources and prepare lessons. It is not uncommon for first year teachers to receive one or two courses to teach for which they have no educational background. In fact, this may be expected; the literature was clear on the notion that first year teachers often receive the subjects that no one else on staff cares to teach.

Novice teachers find a support group consisting of other novice teachers to be of value. In many cases, the group seems to develop spontaneously and is informal in nature without structure or schedule. The support group may take many forms as in car pool, Thursday evening at the tavern, "TGIF" after-school get-togethers at the tavern,

and so on. The venue is not as important as what takes place in terms of discussion between the novices.

First year teachers often look to other more experienced teachers for assistance with their teaching assignment. Although only two novice teachers in this study claimed to have a mentor, it is possible that there were teachers providing assistance to the other six who perhaps could be considered as informal mentors. Novice teachers looked to other teachers for assistance who were teaching in the same subject department or teachers who were perceived to be mentor figures or administrators or other staff members in general. Novice teachers appreciated assistance as offered and, when necessary, would ask for assistance.

In conclusion, it might be said that first year teachers appreciate whatever induction and orientation activities occur at the jurisdiction and school levels. Those with mentors value this particular form of assistance, and those without look to various other individuals on staff for assistance. The size of the school may have something to do with the necessity of providing a mentor or encouraging the choice of a mentor. In terms of a novice teacher's introduction to his/her teaching assignment, it would appear that mentors and support groups comprised of other novice teachers are important facilitators. Finally, an introduction to the community should be considered as part of an induction process for novice teachers.

The following chapter presents the findings pertaining to Research Problems 2 and 3.

CHAPTER 6

Induction of First Year Teachers: The Role of School Administrators

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings in relation to Research Problems 2 and 3.

Research Problem 2: What role do the school administrators take and what role might they take in the induction process?

Research Problem 3: What are the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers?

The presentation of findings in this chapter is organized around the treatment of each of the problems. Regarding Research Problem 2, comments by participating first year teachers and their respective administrators are presented in a fashion similar to that of Research Problem 1. Comments by administrators related to the third research problem are presented for each individual administrator immediately following the presentation of findings associated with the second research problem. The chapter closes with a discussion of the findings. A summary of the responses associated with Research Problems 2 and 3 is offered in the form of a conclusion to the chapter.

The Assistance Function of Administrators

This section presents findings in relation to Research Problem 2, and in particular, to the sorts of assistance identified that might be of benefit to a first year teacher and could be provided by a school administrator. Relevant information is presented for each novice teacher and his/her administrator in turn. A perception check for each set of novice teacher(s) and principal or vice-principal follows, providing a brief comparison and analysis of perceptions. For ethical reasons, these comparisons of perception were made by myself without the corroboration of the participants. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the findings presented.

Debbie's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

Debbie identified several areas where assistance from an administrator would have been helpful to her. She reported that as a first year teacher she found it very difficult to establish an effective set of classroom guidelines for student behavior. "The discipline aspect, . . . that's my biggest thing." Debbie explained that initially,

she struggled to some extent with establishing a climate in her class that was conducive to work. “At the beginning of the year, I stumbled in there and the kids just walked all over me.” Debbie disclosed that she eventually created a list of rules and a matching set of consequences for infractions of the rules. “By the end of the year, my rules were a page long. If you do this, this is the consequence and if you do that, this is the consequence, and so on. A lock-step system.” Debbie expressed that the difficulty of consistency in regards to applying the consequences was an ongoing challenge. She described it this way: “You know, sometimes students come to class late. Sometimes I might let them off the hook. I find that with some of my classes I’m really lenient, more lenient than with others.” Debbie also mentioned that she would have found it helpful to have been given a more thorough briefing about general school rules and their application to the students. Debbie commented that she was uncomfortable with the possibility that she might be inconsistent in her interpretation of the rules and application of consequences in comparison to her colleagues. Debbie also commented that it would have been beneficial to have more information on particular policies and procedures relating to the administrative duties of teachers, field trips, arranging of transportation for co-curricular excursions, and so on:

Knowing how different systems worked, meaning like in the office, . . . there are different ways of doing things. . . . You want to do it the right way the first time, . . . filling out forms . . . nobody really told me. I just stumbled into things like getting a bus. I didn’t understand the procedure for getting a bus contractor or whatever for field trips.

Debbie conceded that she was not sure whether it was possible or not to fully brief a first year teacher about these sorts of details. Debbie was very grateful for whatever information and assistance she was given whenever the need arose throughout her first year. She indicated that the administrators, her teacher colleagues, and the office secretaries were, for the most part, willing to assist her:

The school is really good. I have lots of teacher support, and everyone is really nice about explaining things around here. They are really good to me. . . . The guys I share an office with have been really good about helping me too. . . . There have been a lot of people who have really helped me, and it’s important to me. Really important!

Debbie reported that some of her colleagues were not as willing to assist her as were others. Debbie mentioned feeling “that some of the teachers here have

forgotten what it's like to be a first year teacher, and that can sometimes really cause me to get my back up against the wall. You can tell by their body language and some of the things they say.”

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil identified several examples of assistance that he provided to first year teachers to help them overcome the challenges they faced in their initial year. He expressed his belief that it was important to meet often with first year teachers throughout the first half of the year and to provide regular opportunities for them to ask questions about concerns that they might have had. Virgil reported that, in addition to the meetings, it was important for him to visit the first year teachers in their classrooms and offer help in relation to any problems they might be encountering. He explained that “in order to be effective at assisting a first year teacher, it is important to find that teachable moment and then go from there.” According to Virgil, the most common teachable moment often arose out of a discipline concern that the first year teacher had:

It's one thing to have a discipline policy and to review it with a new teacher. It's quite another thing and much more meaningful I'm sure, to examine the meaning of the policy in a particular situation. How I apply the policy and view some of the strategies that I can use to deal with the situation are important aspects to look at. . . . Defining what is acceptable and what's not and defining how to respond to unique situations is a process that has to take place over time.

Virgil also stated that it was beneficial for first year teachers to be prepared ahead of time for the various tasks to which they must attend throughout the year. Part of this preparation included participating in a simulated parent and teacher conference in order to prepare first year teachers for what to expect when the conferences took place, as well as seminars and workshops on how to use the records-keeping program in the school and generating student progress reports on the computer. Designating an experienced teacher as the first year teacher's “sounding board” was also something that Virgil described as being important in terms of providing assistance. “Usually what happens is, there is a conscious decision on my part to approach some veteran teacher to be available for the first year teacher and to keep an eye on the first year teacher.” Virgil disclosed that this

measure is taken only when warranted. He felt that it was important for first year teachers to be allowed to develop their own relationships with colleagues and to establish their own kinds of bonds.

Perception Check

Debbie and Virgil both mentioned classroom management or student discipline as an area where first year teachers need assistance. Debbie preferred a straightforward and thorough presentation of the school's policy, expectations, and consequences. She spoke of a lock-step system where every negative behavior or action had a specified consequence. Virgil, on the other hand, preferred to present information to the novice teacher on a need-to-know basis. He spoke of waiting for the teachable moment in order to make optimum sense of a policy and its application. He implied that policies are difficult to apply in a uniform manner in all cases.

Debbie also mentioned that she would have appreciated knowing more about some of the administrative processes associated with being a teacher. Assistance with the process of organizing a field trip and procuring a bus for transporting students would have been of benefit to her.

Virgil emphasized the need to provide ongoing assistance to first year teachers through regularly scheduled meetings with them, visits to their classrooms, and the designation of an experienced teacher as their "sounding board."

Daniel's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Daniel indicated that there were several areas where an administrator could provide assistance that would be of value to him. He mentioned that the orientation that he received was limited in scope and too short. Daniel suggested that a school administrator set aside an extra half day for orienting first year teachers to the community in which their school resides. Daniel described the purpose of the orientation as being an opportunity to show first year teachers around the community and, in particular, the business district and to "introduce them to some of the prominent people." Daniel explained his belief that the school was an integral part of a community and that there should be efforts made to establish linkages between the school and the business community with which the school comes into contact from time to time. Daniel indicated that time spent establishing these linkages early on would make his job as physical education teacher and coach of several extracurricular teams much easier. Daniel also suggested that more time spent

orienting first year teachers to their school would be of benefit to a first year teacher. “You get introduced to the secretaries, but you don’t really know much about them and what they do for the school. . . . They are a pretty vital part of the system.” Daniel contended that it would be beneficial for a first year teacher to be formally paired with an experienced teacher. He suggested that some degree of subject commonality between the pair would add value to practice.

I was encouraged to talk to our Social Studies Coordinator. She was very good to me. She asked me if I had the right books and plans and teaching aids. She took me to the library and got me all the resources and everything I needed. I think that was largely due to her initiative and not something that was in structure.

Daniel reported that he felt that physical education teachers like him needed a more specialized component in their orientation to their job. “A large part of my job is organizing tournaments and getting games set up with other schools.” He expressed that it was initially difficult and very time consuming to get an extracurricular sports program up and running in the school and to establish zone and provincial linkages for the program. He remarked that

learning how the league was set up would have been of value. . . . We are in a league here; that is, within a zone within the province. There are meetings for those three separate levels all over the province throughout the year for different sports. I’ve just had to wade through that as I go.

Daniel reported that his induction into this role could have been eased had “it been on paper somewhere, . . . all the procedures and the where and whens. . . . Reading through that would have helped me tremendously, . . . [providing] an explanation as to how it works.”

May’s Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

May reported that there were several areas where an administrator could have assisted her in the first year. She was responsible for the computer lab and taught courses in the area of business education. She confessed that her level of comfort with the computers was not what she would have liked it to be when she began her year. May disclosed that assistance in identifying possible sources of in-service in the area of computers would have benefited her, as would have the opportunity to attend workshops and seminars on the subject. “Time and money are big factors. I would have found it beneficial if someone could have provided me with both so that

I could have attended some conferences.” Time was something to which May returned when she mentioned that she had not had the time to learn how to search for and gather resources to complement her lesson plans. “I don’t have the time to do it all. . . . I know I have a number for ordering films, but nobody ever told me anything about it.” As the Business Education teacher in the school, May had the responsibility for planning and preparing a budget for the following year. She reported feeling very uneasy about this and suggested that assistance in this area would have helped her. She explained that

the budget . . . was a big thing for me, . . . to know how to do it. . . . I had to do a budget for Business for next year. . . . I looked at the budget the guy had prepared last year. . . . Nobody really explained a lot to me.

May also reported that it was important to her that information about students be disseminated to first year teachers who may not be familiar enough with the backgrounds of students to fully understand their predicaments and the effects that these have on the students’ learning. May stated:

I understand that some things need to be kept hush hush, but knowing the whole story instead of just a piece of the story helps when you are dealing with people. . . . Sometimes we are only told little bits of stuff. . . . A girl came in the other day. She needs another credit to graduate and there seemed to be a hush about why she didn’t have this credit that she was supposed to have. Her boyfriend was killed in a car accident, and so she came to me and explained that she was fired from her work experience program. She had missed work the day of the funeral. She was fired because she attended a funeral! I would have appreciated being told about that earlier. Just tell me, . . . don’t beat around the bush!

A final point that May made in regard to assistance, had to do with the conflict that can occur between a teacher’s personal and professional life. “People have a life outside their classroom and outside this school. Don’t call a meeting at 9:00 in the morning for 3:30 in the afternoon because I can’t come!” May reported that she had recently had a baby and needed a day’s advance notice in order to arrange for baby-sitting services.

Howard’s Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Howard shared his belief that first year teachers needed to receive assistance throughout their first year and not just at the beginning of the year. In his opinion

“you can overload these people with too much information at the beginning.” He explained that although the administrator can plan and facilitate the induction program, it was far more effective for other teachers to be involved in assisting the beginning teacher. He disclosed that he encourages novice teachers to look within and beyond the walls of the school in order to find someone in the jurisdiction with whom they can comfortably work. “I encourage and try to get staff to network with other individuals either in the school or [elsewhere] in the system.” Howard reported that he thought it was valuable to have the first year teacher and his/her predecessor meet for at least a day to discuss the program of studies and other school-related matters that might be of interest to the first year teacher.

Perception Check

Daniel explained that he felt that more time should be spent on orienting first year teachers to their surroundings, whether that is the school or the community. This would have been of great assistance to him in terms of establishing his connections with the community and familiarizing himself with its recreation facilities that he, as physical education teacher and coach of several extracurricular teams, would utilize at one point or other during the school year. He also felt that it would assist a novice teacher to be formally paired with an experienced (mentor) teacher. In addition, he felt that in his position as a physical education teacher and coach, it would have been of benefit to have had a handbook or manual that he could have used to familiarize himself with the various people and processes associated with extracurricular sports leagues.

May was concerned with receiving more time for curriculum-based workshops and seminars. She felt that this would have been of assistance to her because she was not comfortable with the course content for which she was responsible. May also explained that it would have helped her had she been given assistance with ordering films and procuring resources to complement her lesson plans. In addition, she would have appreciated assistance with planning and preparing a budget for her subject area. Finally, May identified open communication between office and teacher as an important form of assistance. She explained that it was important for teachers in general, and novice teachers in particular, to know something about the problems with which particular students are coping.

Somewhat congruous with Daniel and May, their principal, Howard, suggested that he felt that it was important for an administrator to provide ongoing

assistance to the novice teacher in the form of information throughout the course of the first year. This would prevent information overload from occurring at the beginning of the year. In some respects, this is similar to what Virgil (Debbie's principal) suggested in terms of providing information to novice teachers on a need-to-know basis. Like Virgil, Howard suggested that an important source of assistance was other teachers within the jurisdiction. Howard also felt that an important form of assistance that could be provided was arranging a meeting between the novice and his/her predecessor.

Joseph's Perspective (Teacher, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Joseph reiterated several times that there was not much the administrators could do to assist him aside from the initial tour and introductions that he received prior to the first day of school. He perceived his administrators to be very busy with their own matters. He reported that he was very sensitive about being a drain on their time. Joseph explained his feeling that it was his responsibility to seek assistance if and when he needed it and from whomever he chose:

My impression is that the principal and vice-principal have a tough job right now. . . . I don't know what other first teachers are like, but I'm not afraid to ask other teachers [to help me resolve my] problems. . . . I would ask them before I would ask the administrators.

Joseph mentioned that there were a couple of areas where he would have appreciated some assistance from the administrators. First, he would have appreciated some sort of introduction to school-level and board-level policy. "I would like to have been directed to those policies right at the beginning rather than having to ask where I could find them." Second, he would have appreciated the opportunity to do some team teaching. He reported feeling that this would have provided him with an opportunity to work with other teachers in the classroom and to learn about different approaches to students and curriculum.

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian reported that the most important assistance that he could provide for first year teachers was linked to the introduction that he provided at the first staff meeting. He explained that it was important for the staff to feel comfortable with the

first year teacher, as well as the reverse. Having achieved a level of comfort with each other, it is then possible for a mentor/protégé relationship to begin between the first year teacher and a more experienced staff member. “I think introduction to the staff is very important. . . . From that many things can flow that can be of direct benefit to the first year teacher.” In terms of providing other assistance to the first year teacher, Brian also shared his belief that it is important for the administrators to review school-level policy, procedures, timetables, and general rules with them. Brian concluded that establishing and maintaining open channels of communication between the administrators and first year teachers was important. To facilitate this, Brian met with new teachers after the first week of school and discussed any problems that they may have encountered. Further meetings of a similar nature were held throughout the school year. Brian claimed that “little problems can be dealt with this way before they turn into big problems for the first year teacher and big problems for the administrators.”

Perception Check

Although Joseph felt that it was his responsibility to seek assistance, when pressed, he explained that it would have been helpful to be given some sort of introduction to school-level and board-level policy. In addition, he felt it would have been of assistance to him if an opportunity to team-teach had been organized.

Brian, Joseph’s principal, felt that an important form of assistance that he could provide to novice teachers was tied to their initial introduction to the other members of the staff. He felt that it was important to achieve a certain level of comfort through this so that it would be possible for a mentor/protégé relationship to develop naturally between the novice and an experienced staff member. In part, similar to what Joseph had identified as a possible form of assistance, Brian suggested that it was important to provide first year teachers with a briefing on school-level policies, as well as procedures, timetables, and general rules. In addition, similar to Virgil (Debbie’s principal), Brian also emphasized regular meetings and, similar to May, open channels of communication as important forms of assistance.

John’s Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

John indicated that an administrator could assist a first year teacher by providing all of the various resources that he or she might need in the coming year.

John reported that as a new teacher he would also appreciate having some flexibility in the budget so that he could purchase the resources and materials necessary to deliver the courses he was assigned. He believed that it was not a fair practice to expect a first year teacher to live within the confines of a budget prepared by his predecessor. He put it this way,

For a new teacher coming in, I think administrators should leave some flexibility in their budget, not having ordered all the supplies based on the previous teacher's requests. Different teachers have different methods and utilize different resources. A previous teacher's budget can tie your hands.

John also indicated that it was important for administrators to spend time introducing first year teachers to the staff with whom they would be working. He reported that first year teachers need to be encouraged to become familiar with both the school custodian and the secretary, who, according to John, "were the central nervous system of the school and were responsible for keeping things running."

John mentioned "prep time" and suggested that administrators should attempt, where possible, to give first year teachers as much preparation time as possible. He appreciated that his principal regarded "prep time" as an opportunity for teachers and for students to have a break from each other, and that he considered it acceptable to "put your feet up in the staff room, have a coffee and forget about doing any work for a while." John felt that it was necessary for first year teachers to have a relaxing break from the classroom. He expressed his awareness of the difficulty of providing adequate preparation time in certain circumstances, particularly in rural schools where school budgets are stretched thin.

The final point that John mentioned related to social activities for the staff. He indicated that it was important for administrators to provide opportunity for the staff to get together socially once in a while. That this occur at the beginning of the school year was particularly important for John. He suggested that first year teachers needed opportunities to spend time with their colleagues away from the school setting. Knowing one another socially would have benefits for the job as well. John put it this way; "I think it's important for administrators to incorporate some sort of social event apart from school, . . . especially at the beginning of the year, . . . where you can get to know each other apart from the school setting."

Lynden's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

Lynden focused on the need for others, especially administrators, to remember what it was like to be a first year teacher. He suggested that from this reflection a sense of openness toward and understanding of the first year teacher would emerge. Lynden stated:

I know I won't forget what it was like to be a first year teacher. . . . I think the biggest thing a principal can do . . . to assist a first year teacher is to remember what it is like and then to be open and understanding, . . . to be receptive to my needs. . . . There should be no such thing as a stupid problem.

Jack's Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack reported that the assistance that first year teachers needed and received in his school ultimately defined by the school being a small rural school and somewhat isolated from the rest of the world. It was his opinion that because the school was small it was understaffed and, as a result, people had to work together to achieve the school's goals. As Jack put it:

We're a small school out in the boonies. . . . We're under-staffed, under-budgeted, under-everything. The whole world is picking on us basically. As a result, we all stick together pretty tight and help each other. . . . It's a real community feeling here.

Jack claimed that it was important for first year teachers in his school to perceive him as one of their colleagues and not necessarily as the principal. Much of his time was spent in teaching, with very little left over for administrative duties. He reported that teaching 75% to 80% of the time helped first year teachers to view him as a colleague and therefore as an approachable individual should they need particular assistance. Jack stated, "I think the biggest role that I can play is that of plain colleague. . . . I don't want to intimidate them. . . . I don't want to come across as the heavy, the principal." He explained that it was important for him to informally visit the classrooms of first year teachers often in the first few months of the school year and be in touch with their needs. Jack preferred an informal approach to gaining this understanding. He stated:

I try to see first year teachers a lot early in the year. In September I don't wear a suit and I try not to wear a tie if I can possibly avoid it. I try not to be imposing. . . . I wander in and out of classrooms, unannounced, like crazy.

I walk in and sit down and watch what's going on. I get on my hands and knees and play with the Plasticine with the kids, drop a sticky note on the teacher's desk thanking them for a wonderful and fun time.

Given his teaching load, Jack reported that he encouraged first year teachers to seek assistance from whomever made them feel comfortable or whoever was free when they needed the assistance. He reported that it is important for first year teachers to experiment and explore in terms of their lesson planning. He acknowledged that doing things his way was not necessarily the best or only way to do them. "First year teachers have the ability to introduce new methods and techniques into schools. . . . I encourage that." Jack affirmed that it was important to provide social opportunities for his staff to mingle outside school hours. It would provide an opportunity for first year teachers to bond with the more experienced staff members and result in greater understanding and cooperation between them, as well as producing greater commitment to the school by the first year teacher.

Perception Check

John mentioned several forms of assistance that he felt would be meaningful for him. These included provision of resources, flexibility in budgets, introductions to others on staff as well as the custodian and secretary, adequate preparation time, and organized social activities. Lynden was not quite as specific as John when asked to identify means of assistance from which he could have benefited. Lynden simply summed it all up by explaining that experienced teachers and administrators should not forget what it is like to be a novice teacher. John and Lynden's principal, Jack, felt that it was important for an administrator to project an image of colleague. As well, it was important to informally visit novice teachers' classrooms as often as possible and work with their needs as they arise. Jack also mentioned that he felt that it was important to encourage first year teachers to seek assistance from whomever made them feel comfortable. Like John, Jack mentioned that assistance might come in the form of organized social activities that would allow relationships to develop between experienced and novice teachers.

Betty's Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Betty reported that the peer coaching [mentor] program at her school was of great benefit to her in her first year of teaching. She explained that teaching in the French Immersion program in the school made it more practical for her to approach

another teacher in that program area for assistance rather than the principal. Betty indicated that “the peer coaching model that’s emphasized here is an excellent tool. . . I’m French Immersion, and the principal doesn’t speak French. . . . The Grade 3 teacher knows where all the resources are, and she’s taught the children I now teach.” Notwithstanding this, however, Betty stated that it was important for the administrator to be approachable and understanding of the needs of a first year teacher. “I felt very comfortable going to Fred and seeking help or resources. . . . He usually puts me in touch with a resource person who can give me the assistance that I need. . . . He’s very approachable that way and I really appreciate it.” Betty’s mentor, Tracy, felt that it was important for administrators to be “approachable, available, and understanding.” Like Betty, Tracy felt that the mentorship program was very helpful and worthwhile. She exclaimed that “my idea of an induction program includes a mentorship component!”

Fred’s Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Fred reported that it was important to create an ongoing system of assistance for first year teachers in order to alleviate most of their concerns as they arose throughout the year. He explained that this began in June after the hiring had been done. Fred stated that he liked to invite first year teachers to visit the school to familiarize themselves with the physical layout of the building, the location of resources and the personnel working there. At this time the first year teacher is *buddied* with another teacher whom Fred has carefully selected and informed. According to Fred, it is out of this arranged relationship that “it all happens: . . . lots of discussion about programming, planning, and meeting student needs.” Fred also reported that it is important for him and the assistant principal to meet with the first year teacher in June to review the school policies, procedures, and expectations. “I like to welcome them to the school with the assistant principal, do an overview of the staff manual with them, and give them a basic idea of what our expectations are in the school.” Fred cautioned that “you need to be really careful as principal that you don’t totally overwhelm them with information. You can scare them and make them feel uncomfortable.” In terms of providing assistance, Fred summed it up by saying, “That’s it! I leave the rest up to the *buddy* teacher.”

Perception Check

Betty identified the peer coaching program as an important form of assistance for a first year teacher. In addition, she felt that it was important for an administrator to be approachable and, similar to Lynden's comments, understanding of first year teachers and their needs.

Betty's principal, Fred, like Betty, stated that the peer coaching program or *buddying* of teachers was an important form of assistance that administrators can provide for novice teachers. He, like Brian (Joseph's principal), also suggested that it was important to review school policies, procedures, and expectations with novice teachers prior to the beginning of the school year. Similarly to Brian and the other administrators, Fred cautioned against overwhelming novice teachers with information early in the year.

Dallas' Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Composite High School)

Dallas reported that first year teachers need assistance with the clarification of policy and rules in the school. He indicated that he found it difficult to determine what behavior was acceptable from students and what behavior was not. He noticed differences in tolerance for behaviors among the other teachers on staff and among the administrators. Dallas stated the difficulty this way,

I have problems with where I fit in the school as a teacher. I circulate around the halls and look for students wearing hats. I try to maintain order as much as possible. . . . I'm not sure, however, what the norm is around this school in terms of what's acceptable behavior and what's not. I have problems figuring that out. I'm still not sure where that line is because it varies from teacher to teacher, from vice-principal to vice-principal. It varies, so I'm very unsure where the line is, even today. . . . It would help me if that were clarified for me.

Dallas also mentioned that he had been chosen to sit on several committees. He reported that he was not sure just how it came to be in some cases and felt a bit put upon as a result. "I've been elected to the odd committee. I had no idea what I had been elected to do or why I had been elected. . . . I was just dumped on! I must have missed a meeting or something." Michael, Dallas' mentor, offered a slightly different point of view regarding the level of Dallas' involvement in staff matters. "When Dallas came, he wanted to be involved in as much stuff as he could, to be accepted I suspect. I told him, 'Don't overload yourself!'" Dallas also

mentioned that there was a discrepancy between what he had learned at university regarding long-range planning and what he had found to work in reality.

I think that the biggest waste of time was preparing detailed plans a month ahead for each of my courses. . . . The old-timers here don't plan that far ahead; they plan for tomorrow. . . . I felt that I was obligated to plan a month ahead because that's what I had been taught in university. . . . That's just not practical with the students I teach.... I like to have plans for a week ahead. Any more than that is a waste of time the way things change.

Dallas reported that he had wasted a great deal of valuable time as a result and would have appreciated some assistance in the area of planning as it relates to the reality of schools and the particular students he taught. He admitted, however, that although he could have been told, "Save some time!" he didn't ask anyone for assistance in this regard.

Michael felt strongly about giving novice teachers room to make their own decisions. In addition, he felt strongly about respecting differences in teaching styles. When a novice needs assistance, he or she should take the initiative and ask. Michael put it this way. "I've mentored novices before. Dallas is surprisingly open about when he needs something. Some people aren't. As a result of his openness and willingness to ask, Dallas has been easier to help than others in the past." Michael added that if a mentor recognized a potential problem, he or she should not wait for the protégé to ask for assistance. Rather, he or she should "proceed diplomatically to assist the novice and take care not to become overbearing or too pushy."

Blaine's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Blaine explained that there were basically two forms of assistance that he felt were of benefit to the first year teacher and could be sustained over the duration of the year. The first is the facilitation of a *buddy* relationship with an experienced teacher. How this was accomplished was a bit vague, but basically someone on staff would volunteer to be a *buddy* with the first year teacher. He reported that it was usually someone who was teaching similar courses to those of the first year teacher. Blaine explained that "the two generally share an office, . . . an office located in the near vicinity of the classrooms where the two are teaching." He indicated that the sharing of an office facilitated the sharing of materials and ideas between the two teachers. In addition to the *buddying* of a first year teacher with an

experienced teacher, it was also common practice to allocate more than the usual “prep time” to a first year teacher. According to Blaine, “his practice allows them more time to mark, do lesson plans, and talk to their *buddy* teacher.”

Perception Check

Dallas indicated that there were two major forms of assistance that should be provided for novice teachers. First, there is a need for the clarification of school policies and rules. This is similar to what Debbie had mentioned. Like Debbie, Dallas had some questions regarding consequences for student misbehavior. He perceived that there was a lack of consistency among staff members in the application of the consequences. He did not want students to view him as too lenient, but he did not want to be overly strict either. The other form of assistance that Dallas mentioned had to do with lesson planning. He felt that he had wasted a great deal of time being overprepared.

Blaine, Dallas’ principal, also offered two forms of assistance that he felt administrators needed to provide novice teachers. First, it is important, according to Blaine, to facilitate a *buddy* relationship between a novice and an experienced teacher. Second, Blaine (like John) felt that first year teachers should receive more than the usual allocation of “prep time.” This would be a very effective form of assistance.

Section Summary

This first section of the chapter presents findings in relation to Research Problem 2. In particular, it identifies the sorts of assistance of potential benefit to a first year teacher that could be provided by a school administrator. Relevant information gathered at the interviews was presented for each novice teacher and his/her administrator in turn. Various forms of assistance were identified by novice teachers and by administrators. Most frequently mentioned by teachers was the need for a review of school policies and an understanding of what the appropriate consequences are for students when they are in breach of policy. Novice teachers have a “need to know” everything at once, and administrators seem to want to protect them from information overload. The most frequently mentioned form of assistance by administrators was encouragement to find an experienced teacher who would provide assistance or mentoring for novice teachers. Although mentioned by four of six principals, only two of eight novice teachers clearly identified that they

had a mentor. The other six novices, however, indicated that they sought assistance from more experienced teachers. Teachers and administrators mentioned many other forms of assistance needed or provided.

The Evaluation Function of Administrators

The following section presents findings related to Problem 3 and, in particular, to whether or not the administrator's evaluative function is perceived to be a constraint on his/her ability to assist first year teachers. Relevant information gleaned from the interview transcripts is presented for each novice teacher and his/her administrator in turn. A perception check for each set of novice teacher(s) and principal or vice-principal, as the case may be, follows, providing a brief comparison and analysis of the respondent perceptions. For ethical reasons, these comparisons of perception were made by myself without the corroboration of the participants. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the ideas presented.

Debbie's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

Debbie reported that she did not see any problem with seeking assistance from her administrators notwithstanding that they would be responsible for recommending her for a continuing contract of employment at the year end. She remarked that she had developed a very collegial relationship with her principal and vice-principals (Virgil is one of the vice-principals) and felt comfortable in seeking assistance from them when necessary. Debbie indicated that she welcomed the opportunity of having one of them visit her classroom and looked forward to receiving feedback from them. She reported that she was particularly comfortable about seeking assistance from one of the vice-principals, because he was responsible for the programs of the students with whom she worked. Debbie stated:

I don't hesitate to ask Virgil for assistance. . . . He understands where I am coming from. . . . He deals with the I.O.P. students. . . . On my very first field trip I had a student drinking a Molson Canadian on the bus. I caught him. . . . I remember Virgil telling me to calm down. I was just totally in a frenzy. He told me that it didn't reflect on me at all. Having that contact with administrators and having their support is really helpful.

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil reported that he believed that the evaluative function of the administrator with respect to first year teachers had the potential to conflict with the administrator's assistance function. He suggested that the four core values that he had mentioned earlier - loyalty, honesty, commitment, and support - should work to overcome any barriers that might present themselves between the administrator and the first year teacher. He reported the belief that the quality of graduates from Faculties of Education has increased dramatically over the years, thus producing first year teachers who are "much more skillful, mature, and committed to the teaching profession. . . . As a result, the usual concerns regarding their competence don't usually come to the forefront." This, combined with a commitment to the four core values on the part of the first year teacher, produces someone who is willing to say, "These are my strengths and these are my weaknesses that I need assistance with." Virgil indicated that his roles as assistance provider and evaluator could work together. "I think that my role as the evaluator is also to provide some resources . . . to establish a climate of trust and to make sure that they can, in fact, improve." Virgil explained that the barriers, although not real, might indeed exist in the mind of the first year teacher, thus preventing development of supportive relationships that would allow first year teachers to seek genuine assistance from their administrators. "So there will be some resistance there. . . . They may not be experiencing anything particularly serious. . . . They may only lack an understanding of the school's culture, . . . so that's why they need someone else on staff to talk to."

Perception Check

Debbie felt comfortable seeking assistance from her administrators. She had developed a very collegial relationship with the vice-principal in particular and sought assistance from him whenever necessary.

Virgil, Debbie's vice-principal, seemed to suggest that the evaluative function and the assistance function of an administrator might come into conflict, if only in the mind of the first year teacher.

Daniel's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Daniel explained that the evaluation function of the administrators makes it difficult for a first year teacher to seek assistance from them. He commented as follows:

You want to look as good as you possibly can in that person's eyes because they are responsible for hiring you. Therefore you might be hesitant to ask about problems, . . . to request help from administrators. It's their spot to be stuck in the middle. You want to be buddies and friends, but still they've got that bottom line at the end of the year, and they have to respond to that. And that might mean a new job for the first year teacher.

Daniel added that he was much more comfortable seeking assistance from some of the other teachers on staff whom he knew well.

May's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

May stated that regardless of the administrators' responsibility for evaluation, she would approach them when necessary for assistance. She reported that it was important to develop a good rapport with the administrators early in the year that would result in their being more approachable and more sensitive to the first year teacher's need for assistance. May explained, "I have a good rapport with the administrators in this school.... I can tease them a little bit. . . . But, when I need assistance, I have to be able to go to them for support." However, she conceded that she would be more comfortable seeking assistance from some of the other teachers on staff with whom she felt comfortable.

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Howard explained that from an administrator's point of view, there is no conflict between the roles of assistance provider and evaluator. He added, however, that it was understandable if a first year teacher perceived a conflict to exist. Howard stated that evaluation is common in all lines of work today and that it is linked to the assistance function.

I suppose they do look at the fact that I have a recommendation to make at some point in time as to whether or not they get a continuing contract. . . . If the teacher is a marginal teacher, it can be serious. If the teacher is a borderline teacher, we can assist that person by suggesting that they make certain changes.

Perception Check

Daniel felt that the evaluative function of an administrator made it difficult for a novice teacher to seek assistance from him/her. Daniel felt that a novice teacher would be more comfortable seeking assistance from a colleague rather than an administrator. May, on the other hand, felt very strongly that if a good rapport existed between the administrator and the novice teacher, there should be no problem in seeking advice from him/her. In this respect, May's perception was similar to Debbie's. Notwithstanding this, May, like Daniel, felt that a novice teacher might be more comfortable seeking assistance from a colleague rather than an administrator.

Daniel's and May's principal, Howard, indicated that although it might be common for a novice teacher to perceive a conflict between the two roles of assistance provider and evaluator at their school, no conflict existed. An administrator, in Howard's view, could be both assistance provider and performance evaluator .

Joseph's Perspective (Teacher, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Joseph explained that he did not have any problems seeking assistance from his administrators because in his words, "I don't fear the evaluation." He did convey, however, that if he were a younger first year teacher, he might feel intimidated by the administrators and therefore not feel so free to approach them for assistance. He mentioned that he had welcomed administrators to visit his classroom on many occasions and wished that they would do it more often. In his opinion, the visits were important because "you want to know that you are doing a good job, that you're on the same page. . . . You want to know that you are doing a good job, . . . not because of contract reasons, but because of my own personal reasons." .

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian reported that the role of administrator as assistance provider was not necessarily in conflict with the role of the administrator as evaluator. In his opinion, first year teachers probably held the perception that the two roles were in conflict. He explained it this way, "First year teachers probably believe that a conflict of roles

exists. . . . I would hope that they don't have such a perception because of the role of the teaching principal." Brian reported that a first year teacher should feel a sense of collegiality with the administrator because the administrator was also a teacher and therefore could empathize with the first year teacher. However, as Brian claimed, "beginning teachers need a satisfactory evaluation at the end of the year. I'm sure the evaluation thing is always in the back of their mind, and what they will be doing next year."

Perception Check

Joseph indicated that he did not sense any conflict between the two administrator functions, assistance and evaluation. He indicated that he might feel differently if he were a younger individual. Brian, Joseph's principal, viewed the two functions in a similar way to Howard. There was no conflict between the two functions, although he did concede that it is understandable a novice teacher might perceive a conflict between the two.

Lynden's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

Lynden reported that he did not experience any problems resulting from the administrators performing both the evaluative function and the assistance function. He indicated that he felt free to ask the principal or vice-principal for assistance with any problems he encountered. He conveyed appreciation for his administrators being his teaching colleagues as well as carrying out administrative responsibilities. Lynden summed his feelings up by stating, "I always felt if I had any problems about anything, that I could ask the administrators about them. They would never make me feel stupid or intimidated."

John's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

John explained that there could be a conflict between the administrator's functions as evaluator and assistance provider. He indicated that he felt this to be particularly true in specific instances, like discipline issues. He stated:

I think that a first year teacher may be a bit hesitant to go to an administrator to seek assistance with a discipline problem for fear that it may reflect on [that teacher's] discipline procedures. This could be perceived as a sign of weakness on your part, and the last thing you want is to look weak.

In regard to his personal experiences, however, he stated that “it had not been too much of an issue. . . . The administrators have been so accepting and helpful.” He summed it up this way:

At this school we’re hired with the understanding that we can do the job; otherwise they wouldn’t have hired us. They stand back and let us do our job and if we have any problems or if we want some help from them, they are there to help us. I don’t feel that there’s anyone breathing down my neck or looking over my shoulder all the time to see if I’m doing things right.

Jack’s Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack explained that he did not believe that his roles as evaluator of first year teachers and assistance provider were in conflict with each other and did not sense that the first year teachers in the school perceived a conflict between the two functions either. Although he indicated that it had been a concern of his for some time, he felt that the two functions of supervision could work together to the benefit of the first year teacher. Jack stated:

I start early in the year with evaluation and make it a formative process right from square one. When I see that something is getting away on someone, . . . I make suggestions to the person...or I get someone else to help them.

Jack suggested that as long as the first year teacher was open to suggestions and willing to attempt change and to grow, there was no need to feel threatened and certainly nothing to fear in terms of his/her future employment as a teacher in his school. Jack put it this way:

As long as a teacher is developing and growing, sooner or later they will end up being what they need to be. . . . I think the only way I would feel really comfortable in letting a first year teacher go at the end of their first year is if it was something that I thought was crucial for the kids, and (a) they looked at me and told me to blow it out my ear, or (b) if they just couldn’t handle the necessary adjustment that was required of them.

Perception Check

Neither Lynden nor John felt that a conflict existed between the assistance and evaluation functions of the administrators in their school. John expressed a concern in that he could see problems between the two depending on the school and nature of the administrators. Jack, Lynden and John’s principal, felt that the two

functions did not necessarily have to conflict. In fact, he felt that they could complement one another to the benefit of the novice teacher.

Betty's Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Upper Elementary)

Betty expressed her belief that there is a connection between the evaluative function of the administrators and the assistance function. Through evaluation, a first year teacher can be assisted in identifying areas where improvement is needed. The administrators can then offer assistance to the first year teacher as required. She stated that "as a first year teacher, you have to look at areas where you're experiencing problems. If I don't see someone now for suggestions on how to improve, then how will I improve?" Betty explained that it was important for administrators to establish an appropriate, nonthreatening climate that would allow the first year teacher to freely seek their assistance or the assistance of other experienced teacher's. This, she conveyed, was important because of the first year teachers need to get "a good evaluation." Betty summed it up this way:

I think a first year teacher's comfort level with seeking assistance from the administrators depends on the atmosphere of the school and the impression the principal gives right from the start. If they give the impression that they are there to help and they are approachable and if the first year teacher feels comfortable enough to go see them, I think the fear of evaluation is eliminated somewhat.

Fred's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary)

Fred explained that, although he would like to believe that the evaluative function of administrators has no effect on their ability to be of assistance to first year teachers, he thought that, realistically, it did. He suggested that it would be natural for a first year teacher to feel concerned about approaching the school principal for assistance, partly because of the knowledge that it would be the principal who would ultimately decide whether or not a first year teacher would be granted a continuing contract of employment towards the end of the year. Fred concluded that

when I'm doing any type of in-class formal observation, I do my utmost to tell the teacher to just do their thing. I want them to do it the way they do it every day, and then I take it from there. But there's got to be a certain degree of discomfort.

Perception Check

Betty and Fred had similar perceptions of the assistance and evaluative functions of administrators. Betty stated that there was an important linkage between the two in that appropriate assistance was dependent upon evaluation. Fred made every effort to create a nonthreatening atmosphere in his school for novice teachers so that they would be more comfortable approaching him for assistance. He certainly could understand that novice teachers might have perceived a conflict between the two functions in so far as the principal was responsible for the novice's summative evaluation at the conclusion of the first year.

Dallas' Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Composite High School)

Dallas reported that he did not have any difficulty approaching his administrators for assistance, notwithstanding that they would be responsible for recommending him for a continuing contract of employment. The fact that his department head was also responsible for evaluating him seemed to alleviate any hesitancy that he might have experienced in approaching his administrators for assistance. Dallas stated:

I've frequently sought assistance from the administrators. I've approached the principal with problems that I've had in class and requested help in dealing with certain students. I've never hesitated. . . . My department head is also given the right to evaluate me. I have excellent rapport with him so I haven't hesitated asking him for assistance either. In fact, he probably knows more about what goes on in my classes than he should sometimes.

Blaine's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Blaine was uncertain as to whether or not a conflict existed between the evaluative function and assistance function of administrators in regards to first year teachers. At his school, it was common to arrange for an experienced teacher to assist the first year teacher throughout the year. Blaine explained that every attempt was made to match the first year teacher with someone who was teaching similar courses. This allowed for sharing of course materials, exams and so on. In addition, the experienced teacher was charged with carrying out an ongoing formative evaluation of the first year teacher. Near the conclusion of the year, the

experienced teacher's assessment of the first year teacher carried substantial weight when the principal made recommendation for continuing employment. Should the experienced teacher perceive a conflict between assisting and evaluating the first year teacher, Blaine indicated that a change was made. He explained:

As soon as we feel that the assistor or the first year teacher, either one of them, is the least bit unsure, we change the role and get somebody else in as the evaluator. The assistor is then freed up to be just straight assistor.

Blaine suggested that this program allowed the first year teacher to seek assistance from whomever he or she felt comfortable with, including the administrators.

Perception Check

Dallas seemed certain that the assistance function and evaluation function performed by his administrators conflicted with each other. He felt comfortable approaching the principal or vice-principal when needed, as well as the department head. Dallas indicated that the rapport that one had with the administration might be important.

Blaine, Dallas' vice-principal, was not as sure as Dallas was about this issue. He explained that every attempt was made to assist novices with choosing a mentor as a way of alleviating the novice teacher's perception that a conflict between the two functions might have existed.

Section Summary

This section presented findings in relation to Problem 3 and, in particular, to whether or not the administrator's evaluative function is perceived to be a constraint on his/her ability to assist first year teachers. Relevant information was presented for each novice teacher and his/her administrator in turn. From the point of view of six of eight novice teachers, administrators could effectively provide assistance to novice teachers regardless of the fact that they were also responsible for evaluating the performance of the novices. The other two novice teachers felt some discomfort approaching their administrator for assistance because he/she was responsible for their summative evaluation. Four of six administrators felt that their evaluation responsibilities might act to constrain novice teachers from seeking assistance from them. One administrator was more certain that the evaluative function would act as a

constraint, and another felt that it would have virtually no effect in terms of a novice teacher's request for assistance.

Factors Inhibiting the Provision of Assistance to Beginning Teachers

This section of the chapter presents findings related to Problem 3 and, in particular, to the identification of perceived constraints that might affect an administrator's ability to assist first year teachers. Relevant information is presented for the six administrators who participated in this study. Each administrator was asked to consider whether or not he perceived any constraints on his ability to provide assistance to first year teachers. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the information presented.

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil highlighted two factors that inhibited his ability to assist first year teachers. The first one was reduced funding and the effects that it had on work loads at the school level. Teachers were expected to teach more and larger classes than in the past. This resulted in his time being stretched in many directions, including an enlarged teaching responsibility. Virgil explained it as follows:

We have suffered from reduced funding the last four or five years. The squeeze will likely continue for the next couple of years. It's hit us hard....

We're not going to be in the position to hire any new teachers for the next while. In fact, we've had to implement the staff reduction policy for the first time. There are, of course, morale problems on staff that go along with that.... Everyone here is very, very busy, including the administrators.

The second inhibitor that Virgil mentioned was the implementation of site-based decision making. He felt that as more and more responsibility for operating the school fell on the administrators, it became increasingly difficult to find the time or resources to assist first year teachers. About time he said, "Time is money. There you go. That is the bottom line. That's a sick way to run a building!"

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Howard explained that a major inhibitor for him in terms of assisting first year teachers was subject specialization and content. "If the principal hasn't the knowledge in that first year teacher's area of specialization, it can be difficult to

assist them.” He used the examples of senior high chemistry and band to highlight his point. He added, however, that it would not be difficult to assist them with strategies for the delivery of the material though. Like Virgil, Howard mentioned lack of time as an inhibitor. He claimed that it is difficult to carry a partial teaching load and assist the teachers on his staff adequately.

Brian’s Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian, like Virgil and Howard, identified lack of time as the prevalent inhibitor having an impact on his ability to assist novice teachers. Changes in the organization of schools and their management in recent years, he felt, seemed to have limited the amount of time and also the resources available to him to spend on assisting first year teachers. In the latter respect too, he seemed in agreement with Virgil. Brian explained it this way:

I think that there’s a lot of sink or swim attitude towards first year teachers out there. . . . In our case, we have gone through regionalization. . . . Our school jurisdiction has become very decentralized and more urban in focus. . . . All of those changes have had an impact on the administrators here. No wonder we have less time to do the things we should do like assisting first year teachers. No wonder we hear such alarming statistics about people going into the profession and dropping out in the first four or five years.

Jack’s Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack identified two factors that inhibited his ability to assist first year teachers. Like the preceding three respondents, he mentioned lack of time as a factor. He reported that he found it difficult to spend time when required with individuals due to his heavy teaching load. In this respect his explanation was similar to that of others. He intimated that his teaching load of 75% to 85% was a result of the limited funding available to his school. The other factor that Jack identified was a lack of available resources. Again, we hear a familiar refrain. He stated that “it would really be of benefit to first year teachers if they had some sort of data bank to access that would provide them with lesson plans, materials, and tests - the stuff you need to get by in the world of teaching with.” In addition, he reported that he felt that it would be beneficial if first year teachers had a reduced teaching load for their first year. “If they taught for half a day and then had the other half to

plan and mark or observe other teachers teach and work with a mentor, it would be very helpful. However, you need money to set up something like that.”

Fred’s Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Fred reported that time was the inhibitor that he encountered most often. In this respect he was in agreement with all of the others. He mentioned that the best-laid plans often did not materialize when it came to supervision and assistance of teachers. He put it this way,

In September, you have all those grandiose ideas that you are going to get into every classroom once a week on an informal basis, and you are going to do all these great things, [but] pretty soon you’re tied up with school council and budget. Time is probably the biggest inhibitor [to my] being able to get into the classrooms as frequently as I’d like. . . . It also affects the level of support that I can offer to first year teachers.

Blaine’s Perspective (Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Like the other respondents, Blaine explained that lack of time was an inhibiting factor in regards to providing assistance to first year teachers. He suggested that first year teachers have to feel comfortable about seeking assistance from other teachers on staff because the administrators have so little time to share with them. Blaine stated,

Time. With what’s been happening with site-based decision making, the biggest impact on the principal is the amount of time he gets tied up with school council and working on committees. There’s a committee for everything, it seems.

Blaine summed the predicament up this way: “Administrators are putting quite a bit of faith in others on staff to let us know if things aren’t going well. We just don’t spend a lot of time worrying about it otherwise.”

Section Summary

This section presented findings in relation to Problem 3 and, in particular, to the identification of perceived constraints that might affect an administrator’s ability to assist first year teachers. Relevant information was presented for the six administrators who participated in this study.

Each of the six administrators mentioned that time was a major constraint in terms of their ability to assist novice teachers. Associated with time is funding. Two administrators specifically referred to recent reductions in funding as a major constraint. One administrator mentioned that subject specialization and content made it challenging to provide curricular assistance to novice teachers. Another administrator mentioned, in association with lack of funding, the inability to reduce a novice teacher's teaching load as a means of providing assistance.

Factors Facilitating the Provision of Assistance to Beginning Teachers

This section of the chapter presents findings related to Problem 3 and, in particular, to the sorts of things that facilitate an administrator's efforts to assist first year teachers. Relevant information is presented for the six administrators who participated in this study. Each administrator was asked to consider what factors facilitated his efforts to provide assistance to first year teachers. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the information presented.

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil explained that at his school during the past three or four years, teachers had become increasingly interested in accepting student teachers from the university. This led to the creation of a program to assist student teachers with their eventual transition from being students at the university to the classroom where they would soon be full-time teachers. The job-application process and interview skills, classroom management, and discipline were the central features of the program. Virgil's school also invited professional development consultants from the Alberta Teachers' Association to present a series of lectures on what it means to be a teacher in Alberta. The inception of this program as well as a willingness by members of the staff at his school to take student teachers led to a greater understanding of some of the needs of first year teachers. Virgil stated that

we have taken our responsibility for student teachers very seriously here the last three or four years. We've been working with a cohort of student teachers, and we've developed an excellent program for them. I think that has encouraged staff and maybe drawn the attention of some people to the need to work with first year teachers.

Virgil also indicated that the principal's leadership had been an important factor in creating an understanding among staff about the needs of first year teachers. He elaborated:

The principal here is a superb and wonderful person. He possesses tremendous people skills and recognizes people's need to grow. He encourages teachers and makes it possible for them to work at the university as practicum associates. They learn from the program what kinds of things we need to focus on in order to assist first year teachers.

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Howard reported that the availability of resource persons within the school as well as within the jurisdiction acted to facilitate his efforts to assist first year teachers. He explained that "the knowledge of other people available to assist is very important and very powerful. . . . It allows me to direct problems to someone who is an expert and can really help the first year teacher." Howard speculated that staff in larger urban schools would be able to provide more in-house assistance to a first year teacher as compared with those in smaller rural schools. The presence of department heads, he thought, would change the assistance function of the principal somewhat. Howard felt that "the department heads would be available to provide the assistance to the first year teachers, making the principal more of a facilitator of assistance than an assistance provider."

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian explained that he found it much easier to assist first year teachers if there were an outside interest in common between himself and the first year teacher. This common interest would facilitate dialogue with the first year teacher and eventually lead to the development of a stronger relationship between the two. In turn this would allow a level of trust to build where the first year teacher could feel free to seek assistance. Brian put it this way: "Outside interests and from there it goes into teaching. I mean, if we have something in common, it is a lot easier for me to communicate with a person. Certainly, that is an asset."

Jack's Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack stated that the small size of his school and the *esprit de corps* and feeling of community that existed amongst his staff were probably the two most important factors that facilitated his efforts to assist first year teachers. Another important factor identified was the knowledgeable and caring teachers on staff who were willing to assist first year teachers. He described it this way,

The staff here are [quite exceptional]. Everybody goes beyond the normal call of duty. They coach [all the sports]; that says a lot about our little school. They are involved with kids inside and outside of the classroom. We do all kinds of things. The commitment to pride that's in the building is pretty amazing. It's a great place! We have such a blend of teacher types, and it's okay to be different here. We have the 'gung ho' types, and we have the quiet types. They're all knowledgeable and caring teachers who will give you the shirts off their backs at any point in time.

Jack also felt that his attempts to portray himself as *colleague* as opposed to *administrator* had its benefits when he was assisting first year teachers. Jack put it this way,

I know that first year teachers are busy as anything but I spend a lot of time getting them to help me on projects after school hours. . . . I'm able to develop a working relationship with them. . . . In a school this size, I don't think they relate to me as 'the heavy' because I'm teaching just like they are.

Fred's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Fred explained that the one thing that facilitated his efforts to assist first year teachers was the mentoring or *buddy* program that was established at his school. He put it this way: "The mentoring program that we have in place at this school allows me to very effectively assist the first year teacher in an indirect manner. Other than the mentoring program, I can't think of anything else." The mentoring program allowed Fred to put the first year teacher in touch with an experienced teacher in the school. Every attempt was made to choose an experienced teacher who shared a common subject or grade area with the novice. The experienced teacher was also selected to work with the beginning teacher according to like personality where possible. Only experienced teachers who could be considered master teachers were chosen to assist. Fred claimed, "We don't just choose anybody to work with the first year teacher. . . . We choose exceptional individuals who have a lot to offer."

Blaine's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Blaine reported that he found that the mentor program that was loosely in place at his school acted to facilitate his efforts to assist the first year teachers. It was the responsibility of the various department heads to assist first year teachers who were working in their department as much as was possible. Blaine indicated that the school administrators had made a decision several years earlier to establish department heads in order to provide another level of assistance for teachers in the school. Blaine suggested that part of the reason for designating a particular teacher as department head was

to give recognition to master teachers, . . . to provide a little shot in the arm for them. . . . They get a little break in their teaching load and a few thousand bucks extra salary. . . . The expectation is, then, that they will provide assistance for [the department's] teachers and, in particular, first year teachers.

Blaine also appreciated the level of preparation that teachers receive in their preservice program at the university. He stated:

I think first year teachers are much better prepared now than they were years ago. . . . The ones that are getting jobs are pretty impressive. . . . They know the modularization stuff and they know the computer stuff better than we old guys. . . . When I think back, I was recruited into my first teaching position a year before I graduated. It wasn't that I was so great; there just weren't that many teachers back then.

Section Summary

This section presented findings in relation to Problem 3 and, in particular, to the sorts of things that facilitate an administrator's efforts to assist first year teachers. Relevant information was presented for the six administrators who participated in this study.

Each administrator identified at least one item that facilitated his/her ability to assist novice teachers. Two administrators indicated that the mentorship program that was in place in their schools acted to facilitate their opportunity to assist first year teachers. Three administrators stated that the willingness and ability of their staff colleagues facilitated their ability to provide assistance. One administrator felt that the leadership style of the principal was an important factor in this matter, and

another felt that the identification of common interests between himself and a novice teacher and the trust that can grow out of this relationship facilitated the provision of assistance.

Summary

This summary addresses the key components of Research Problem 2 and Research Problem 3.

Regarding the issue of assistance associated with the second research problem, the respondents offered a wide variety of types of assistance that they felt would be of benefit to first year teachers and might be provided by school administrators. Two teachers mentioned that they would benefit from an increased amount of “prep time” during the school day. Three teachers agreed that they would benefit from an increase in time spent on orientation to school and district level policies. Two teachers reported that more time spent on the initial orientation to the school would have been beneficial to them. Two teachers mentioned that it was important for administrators to encourage or establish a mentor/protégé relationship for them. In addition, assistance with creating budgets was discussed by two teachers as something with which they would appreciate assistance, and one teacher believed that it was important for their administrators to be empathetic and understanding. Assistance with classroom management and professional development opportunities, orientation to the community, opportunities for team teaching, increased availability of resources, opportunities for staff socialization, and clarification of the school’s expectations regarding committee work were also mentioned by teachers as beneficial types of assistance that an administrator might provide.

The most commonly mentioned forms of assistance that administrators might provide for the benefit of first year teachers included the provision of, or encouragement to find, a mentor on staff; year-long, ongoing informal assistance; and a review of school policies. In addition, they identified provision of preparation time, classroom visits, appropriate introductions during the initial orientation to the school, an early orientation to the school, open channels of communication, provision of social opportunities, perception of principal as colleague, and a sensitivity towards overloading the first year teacher with information.

Regarding the issue in Research Problem 3 of the evaluative function versus the assistance function of an administration, five of eight first year teachers felt that

the evaluative function of an administrator does not constrain his/her ability to assist first year teachers, two thought that it did act as a constraint, and one teacher believed that it might act as a constraint. One of six principals thought the evaluative function did not act as a constraint, whereas three thought that it did, and one thought that it might.

In regards to the perceived-constraints issue in Research Problem 3, administrators identified a variety of perceived constraints that affected their ability to assist first year teachers, as well as a variety of things that facilitated their efforts to assist first year teachers. In terms of constraints, all six administrators identified lack of time as a constraint. Three administrators suggested that this was a result of the present way in which schools were organized and operated. Two identified the lack of sufficient financial resources as constraints. Two mentioned that their heavy teaching loads acted to constrain them from assisting first year teachers.

In terms of factors that facilitated their efforts to assist first year teachers, two administrators mentioned that establishing a mentorship program was a very effective means of providing assistance. In addition, three administrators asserted that a knowledgeable and caring staff made it much easier to provide assistance for first year teachers. An understanding that comes from working with student teachers was also discussed as a factor that facilitates an administrator's efforts to assist first year teachers.

Conclusions

The concluding comments relate to Research Problem 2: "What role does the school administrator take and what role might the school administrator take in the induction process?" and Research Problem 3: "What are the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers?"

The role that the school administrator takes in the induction process varied from school to school. Administrators offered assistance in many forms to first year teachers. Many administrators recognized the value of involving other experienced staff members in the induction process and encouraged the development of a mentor/protégé relationship. The need that first year teachers have for assistance seemed to vary from school to school and the types of assistance desired or required by them seemed to vary from individual teacher to individual teacher.

In regards to the administrators' evaluative function, first year teachers did not generally perceive this function as a constraint on their administrator's ability to

provide them with assistance. Administrators, on the other hand, tended to perceive their evaluative function as a constraint or believed that first year teachers would perceive it as a constraint. Most other constraints mentioned by administrators were really linked to a lack of time on their part or a lack of financial resources. Lack of time was expressly mentioned by all of the administrators interviewed for this study. A variety of measures were identified by administrators as factors that facilitated their efforts to assist first year teachers. The most important seemed to be a caring and knowledgeable staff. Linked with this factor would be an active and effective mentorship program within the school.

The following chapter presents the findings pertaining to Research Problems 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 7

Induction of First Year Teachers: Perceptions and Perspectives

This chapter addresses Research Problems 4 and 5. These two research problems relate to both first year teachers and school administrators. Following is an outline of each of the research problems.

Research Problem 4: What induction practices are perceived to be effective?

Research Problem 5: What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience?

The presentation of findings in this chapter is organized around the treatment of each of the research problems for each of the participating first year teachers and their administrator in turn. The chapter closes with a discussion of the findings. A summary of the responses associated with Research Problems 4 and 5 is offered in the form of a conclusion to the chapter.

Effective Induction Practices

This section presents findings in relation to Research Problem 4 and, in particular, findings relating to the identification of some of the more effective measures taken as part of a particular school's induction program. Relevant information regarding jurisdiction, school, teaching assignment, and community is presented for each novice teacher and his/her administrator in turn. A *perception check* for each set of novice teacher(s) and principal or vice-principal as the case may be, follows, providing a brief comparison and analysis of perceptions. For ethical reasons, these comparisons of perception were made by myself without the corroboration of the participants. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the information presented.

Debbie's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Debbie found that the time spent at the jurisdiction orientation was time well spent. She felt that the afternoon session was rather brief, though, and that "there were still lots of things that could have been addressed in addition to introducing all of the people."

School. Debbie indicated that she most appreciated the support and assistance that she received from the administration and her colleagues. She felt that this benefited her the most because it was available to her throughout the course of the year.

Teaching assignment. Again, Debbie indicated that the support that she received from others was very valuable to her. She also appreciated being in contact with the person who had previously held her teaching position. Debbie felt that this person had been a very effective resource when she needed assistance particular to her teaching assignment. Debbie summed it up this way: “It goes to the helpfulness aspect. . . . It’s important to have someone there to assist you.”

Community. Debbie did not receive an orientation to the community in which the school resides. She was familiar with the community because she had previously resided in it and had attended Waterford Composite High School as a student. Prior to being hired to teach at the school, Debbie had been a substitute teacher there on several occasions.

Virgil’s Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Virgil claimed that “the orientation to the jurisdiction is probably the least effective component in the overall induction program in the eyes of the first year teacher.” He intimated that a first year teacher is more concerned with what occurs at the school level compared to what occurs at the jurisdiction level.

School. Virgil mentioned two practices that he felt were important and effective and were representative of their “philosophy towards first year teachers .” He stated, “The most important thing is, in that first week or so, to establish a sense of trust and a sense of belonging, . . . a sense that we have a common goal.” He also felt that the preparation program for the first set of parent and teacher conferences was very beneficial to the first year teacher. He put it this way:

Around midterms, we start doing the role playing in preparation for parent and teacher conferences.... It really seems to help in terms of dealing with body language and wording and avoiding the usual pitfalls. . . . After the real thing, we have a social evening for the whole staff. We blow off some steam and talk about how things went. . . . It’s a bit of an informal assessment, a conversation. I think it’s fun!

Teaching assignment. Virgil indicated that their peer coaching program was very effective in terms of assisting first year teachers with their teaching assignment. He stated, “A veteran teacher can provide a great deal of help for a first year teacher.” Virgil also indicated that it was important to provide a first year teacher with all of the necessary resources so that they could begin planning their courses.

Community. Orientation to the community was not provided due to the small size of the community and its proximity to a large urban area. Many of the school's teachers lived elsewhere and commuted to work daily.

Perception Check

Debbie seemed to feel that the orientation at the jurisdiction level was of some value. In contrast, Virgil felt that it was likely the least valuable component in a novice teacher's overall induction experience. Regarding the orientation to the school that Debbie experienced, she stated that she appreciated the overall support that she received from her colleagues. Virgil's comments support Debbie's in that he explained that establishing a sense of trust and a feeling of belonging were important. He also felt that the preparation program for parent and teacher conferences was an important component of the school's induction program. In terms of the orientation to the teaching assignment, Debbie's and Virgil's comments supported each other. Debbie spoke of the values of being in contact with the teacher who had previously held her position. Virgil spoke of the value of a peer coaching program. Given the location of the school and its proximity to a major urban center, neither Debbie nor Virgil seemed to feel that an orientation to the school's community would be of benefit to a novice teacher.

Daniel's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Jurisdiction. Daniel mentioned that the half-day orientation to the jurisdiction that he received was "pretty good." He found, however, that its focus was rather narrow in that most of the afternoon was spent discussing the technicalities of lesson planning, employment benefits, and salaries. He seemed disappointed that "it didn't relate at all to instructional practices and classroom management."

School. Daniel felt that his initial orientation to the school building and the opportunity that it provided him to ask problems was very beneficial despite the fact that he was "pretty emotional and flabbergasted" in becoming a first year teacher. He also appreciated the friendly gestures of his colleagues and their offers of assistance during the first few days of the school year. He stated that

some sort of follow-up opportunity to the orientation to ask additional problems the first few weeks would have been welcome, and I'm sure the administration would have been open to it, but I didn't ask. As a first year teacher, the temptation is to want to do everything yourself. You don't want to appear incompetent.

Teaching assignment. Daniel indicated that the general support that his colleagues offered him and their willingness to share resources with him were very beneficial.

Community. Daniel took the initiative to orient himself to the community. Daniel lived in another community some distance from Evanrude. He commuted to work on a daily basis and therefore did not need any assistance in locating accommodation or services.

May's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Jurisdiction. May felt that the orientation session that the jurisdiction organized was somewhat helpful. She stated that being hired so late in the summer had caused her to "walk around in a daze." As a result, she found it all "a bit overwhelming and an information overload." The explanation of salary and benefits that was provided was appreciated.

School. May found the assistance and companionship that her colleagues offered her to be very beneficial. The school secretary's and the counselor's offers of assistance were particularly appreciated.

Teaching assignment. May's only comment regarding her introduction to her teaching assignment was that "it was very straightforward." She implied that being hired late in the summer did not allow time for a very detailed introduction to her teaching assignment.

Community. May did not receive an orientation to the community of Evanrude. She lived in a neighboring community and commuted to Evanrude daily and therefore did not need assistance locating accommodation or services.

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Jurisdiction. Howard implied that it was important for first year teachers to meet the administrative staff at the jurisdiction level in order to understand who is responsible for each of the various duties. This was accomplished at the beginning of the school year when first year teachers met at the jurisdiction office. Introductions took place, and salary and employment benefits were explained.

School. Howard felt that first year teachers benefited a great deal from the open door policy that the school administration had implemented some years ago. He felt that this was an important aspect of "providing information and assistance on the spot." He also felt that the willingness of the staff to provide assistance was of great

benefit to first year teachers in the school. In addition, Howard also mentioned that providing information about community services, resources and contact people had been beneficial to first year teachers.

Teaching assignment. Howard felt that it was beneficial for an administrator to review a first year teacher's assignment with him/her and field any questions or concerns that might arise. He also implied that it was important to facilitate contact with the teacher who had previously had the assignment or part thereof. This would allow an opportunity for the first year teacher to ask specific questions about the courses and their content.

Community. Orientation to the community was not provided. Staff members were willing to assist in whatever ways they could. Many of the school's teachers lived elsewhere and commuted to work everyday.

Perception Check

Daniel's and May's comments regarding their orientation to the jurisdiction were somewhat less than enthusiastic. Both seemed to appreciate the information on salary and employee benefit plans. Daniel would have appreciated information on instructional practices and classroom management. May was overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information that was disseminated. Howard, their principal, felt that the jurisdiction orientation was useful in that it was important for novice teachers to become familiar with the various individuals at the central office and their duties. Regarding their orientations to the school, both Daniel and May seemed very positive. They expressed appreciation for the willingness of their colleagues to help them. In addition, May mentioned that she particularly appreciated the assistance she received from the school secretary and the school counselor. Howard's comments were similar to Daniel and May's in that he felt it was important for the administrators to be accessible and therefore able to assist novice teachers as the need presented itself. Howard also felt that it was important for others on staff to be supportive and provide assistance when and where it was needed. In terms of the orientation to his teaching assignment, Daniel appreciated the assistance that his colleagues provided. May, on the other hand, claimed that as a result of being hired late, it was not possible for anyone to provide her with any sort of introduction to her teaching assignment. Howard felt that it was important for school administrators to spend time with novice teachers and answer questions they might have regarding their teaching assignment. He also stated that it was helpful for a novice teacher to establish a contact with the teacher who previously had had the teaching

assignment. Neither Daniel nor May received an orientation to the community in which the school was located. Daniel, although not living in the community, took the initiative to explore the community on his own. May, having lived in the community, was already familiar with it and saw no need for an orientation. Howard acknowledged that many of the school's teachers lived elsewhere and commuted to work. He felt that staff members would be willing to assist a novice teacher if he/she required assistance locating services or finding accommodation in the community.

Joseph's Perspective (Teacher, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Joseph rated the orientation program at the jurisdiction level high overall. Rather than choose some specific events that were most effective, Daniel chose to view the experience as a whole. He claimed that, overall, he was "very impressed" and that the program "was very professional and well organized." He remarked that "they made me feel as though I was a professional. I felt like I was joining a team of professionals. I felt like I was involved in something important."

School. Joseph chose to focus on his colleagues and the support that he sensed he received from them as well as their friendly and welcoming nature. He pointed out that the first two days of the school year, which that were planning days, allowed him the opportunity to meet many of the other teachers in the school. Joseph described it like this:

The first couple of days the teachers came in and out of my classroom and introduced themselves. I spent a few minutes talking with each of them as they came and went. It was open and friendly. I didn't want serious stuff in that situation. I didn't want to spend a lot of time visiting either. I had things to do and I wanted to get them done. It was nice that people were coming in to introduce themselves. They came to me; I didn't go to them. It was nice, the fact they came to me. It made me feel like I could go up to them in the hallway the next time and say, "Hey! How are you doing? Can I get some assistance with this or that?"

Teaching assignment. Joseph found his introduction to his teaching assignment to be straightforward. He appreciated the assistance that he received from his administrators and colleagues in locating the appropriate documents and resources to assist him in his course preparations.

Community. Joseph was not oriented to the community of Woodhouse. He lived some distance from the community and commuted to work on a daily basis. Joseph did not require assistance in locating accommodations or services.

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Brian implied that, overall, the orientation to the jurisdiction was effective and provided first year teachers with pertinent information regarding jurisdiction-wide policy, salary, and benefit plans. He also intimated that it provided an important opportunity for the first year teachers in the jurisdiction to meet one another as well as an opportunity for them to meet the various people in the jurisdiction offices with whom they might deal throughout the year.

School. Brian indicated that the introductions to the staff in the school were an important and effective aspect of a first year teacher's induction. These introductions were viewed as a foundation for the establishment of professional relationships that could provide a first year teacher with the opportunity to seek assistance. In addition, Brian also felt that the meeting with the first year teacher that he conducted after the first week or so of school was effective in that it provided the first year teacher with an important opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.

Teaching assignment. Brian felt that the most effective introduction to one's teaching assignment at Woodhouse Composite included the provision of resources and the establishment of an open and trusting relationship that would allow the first year teacher to ask for assistance when needed.

Community. First year teachers were not provided with an orientation to the community of Woodhouse. Brian indicated that an orientation to the community might be important depending on the size of the community and its location vis-à-vis other communities. He put it this way: "When there is no other place to live but in town, it would be important to introduce them to the mayor and the minister . . . and to give them a tour of the town, . . . talk to them about living in a fish bowl."

Perception Check

Joseph and his principal, Brian, gave the orientation to the jurisdiction a very high rating. Both indicated that it was an important part of an overall induction program. At the school level, Joseph appreciated the assistance and support that he received from his colleagues. Brian explained that initial staff introductions were very

important because they were the beginnings of professional relationships that would lead to sources of assistance for the novice teacher. In terms of the teaching assignment orientation, Joseph again stated that he appreciated the assistance of his colleagues. Brian's comments support Joseph's in that Brian felt that it was important not only to provide resources, but also to establish an open door relationship with the novice so that he/she would not hesitate to seek assistance when the need arose. An orientation to the school's community was not provided. Joseph commuted to work and did not need assistance with locating services or accommodation. Brian felt that an orientation to the community would be useful for a novice teacher who had chosen to move into the community.

John's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

Jurisdiction. John indicated that

at the jurisdiction level, the most effective aspect was the first year teachers' meeting. It was effective in regards to the fact that it gives people an opportunity to become familiar with procedures and expectations and administrative tasks and duties.

School. John found that "the general openness of the administrators" and their eagerness to assist was a very effective aspect of his induction to Jumbo Valley School.

Teaching assignment. Regarding his teaching assignment, John stated that "nothing particularly stands out as being effective." He implied that the assistance that he received from his administrators and colleagues was helpful.

Community. John was not oriented to the community surrounding Jumbo Valley School or to the nearby town of Stanford. He viewed his assignment at Jumbo Valley School as for one year only. As a result, he did not see Stanford as his permanent residence and therefore did not access any of the services that Stanford offered. John found it useful to attend the year-end open house hosted by the Parent Advisory Council. He indicated that it provided him with some sense of whom the community surrounding the school consisted.

Lynden's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

Jurisdiction. Lynden indicated that the occasion for all of the first year teachers in the jurisdiction to gather in one place was very effective. It provided an opportunity for him to realize that "there's other people in the same boat. . . . In talking to them you realize that they are going through exactly the same thing you are going

through.” He implied that it was useful to meet the other first year teachers in the jurisdiction and share problems and challenges with them. He summed it up this way:

It makes you feel less lonely, and it makes you feel like you’re normal. You look around this school and I’m having all these problems and no one else is, and its like, “What am I doing wrong?” Then you get to this first year teacher get-together and its like “Oh, okay, I’m not doing anything wrong. This is normal.” and that’s a good feeling.

School. Lynden indicated that there were two things that he felt were effective in terms of his induction to the school. First, he felt that his attendance at the first Parent Advisory Council meeting had been beneficial in that he had the opportunity to be introduced to many of the parents of the children whom he was teaching. He claimed that it was useful to meet the parents because “it’s nice knowing when you are calling a child’s parents, for whatever reason, that they are not a stranger.” The second aspect of Lynden’s induction to the school that he felt was an effective practice was an informal gathering of the staff at the conclusion of the first week of school at one of his colleague’s home. Lynden stated:

The Friday at the end of the first week, we went to Matthew’s acreage for a barbecue. It was an opportunity to get together and talk with other teachers. . . . I think that this provided a foundation for the relationships that I have enjoyed this past year with other staff members. It was great! It gave us a chance to talk with each other because you never get a chance during the school day to really get out and talk with the people you work with because you are spending all your time talking with the people you teach. It was great even if you didn’t talk to this person or that person, just to be able to say, “Oh, that’s Sharon,” or “That’s Roberta.”

Teaching assignment. Lynden indicated that the most effective practice linked with his introduction to his teaching assignment was his principal’s insistence that he have his year plans on the principal’s desk by the end of September. Lynden said, “It forced me to get on top of things. . . . I was here some nights until 11:00 doing those year plans!”

Community. Lynden did not receive a formal orientation to the community surrounding Jumbo Valley School or to the nearby town of Stanford. The principal assisted him in locating accommodations in Stanford. Lynden also mentioned that the year-end open house that the Parent Advisory Council hosted provided him with a useful introduction to the community surrounding the school.

Jack's Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jurisdiction. Jack indicated that the first year teachers' orientation session that the jurisdiction organized was, overall, very effective. He implied that the personality of the jurisdiction's assistant superintendent had a great deal to do with its effectiveness.

Jack described it this way:

The assistant superintendent orchestrates the workshop. . . . He is a very warm, positive type person. He's big on patting people on the back. That is something first year teachers need a bunch of because they're always questioning themselves.

Jack felt that the session was effective in that it provided first year teachers with the opportunity to meet others in the jurisdiction and to do some networking with each other. According to Jack, "It also provides them with the opportunity to get together and compare horror stories with each other and discover that maybe it's not so bad after all."

School. Jack implied that the small size of the Jumbo Valley School had something to do with the overall effectiveness of the induction program. The small number of staff members allowed for the development of a closely knit and caring community that benefited first year teachers. Structures for facilitating assistance weren't as necessary in a school the size of Jumbo Valley School as they were in larger schools "where first year teachers could otherwise fall through the cracks."

Teaching assignment. Jack intimated that the most effective practice that occurred in this area at Jumbo Valley School involved providing first year teachers with the necessary resources to begin their planning. In addition, he mentioned that the sharing of resources, lesson plans, and tests among the staff was a very effective way to assist a first year teacher.

Community. Jumbo Valley did not provide a formal orientation to the community surrounding the school or to the nearby town of Stanford. First year teachers were encouraged to attend the annual open house at the school in June in order to get a sense of the school's community. They were also encouraged to seek advice and assistance from the administration or their colleagues regarding accommodations or services in Stanford.

Perception Check

John and Lynden found the jurisdiction level orientation a positive experience in that it provided them and other novice teachers in the jurisdiction with the opportunity to gather and listen to presentations on policies, expectations, and employment benefits. Jack, their principal, agreed that the orientation allowed first year teachers throughout the jurisdiction to meet one another and do some networking. In terms of the orientation to the school, John appreciated the fact that the administration was eager to assist him. Lynden viewed his orientation to the school in a broader fashion, indicating that he found his attendance at the Parent Advisory meeting to have been beneficial to him. Lynden also mentioned that he appreciated an opportunity to get together socially with his colleagues soon after school had commenced for the year. Jack believed that the effectiveness of the school's orientation was linked to its small size. He felt that the community-like atmosphere in the small rural school was something that was of great benefit to novice teachers. Regarding their orientation to their respective teaching assignments, John found that the administration's willingness to assist was a benefit to him, and Lynden felt that the principal's insistence on organizing lessons plans was of great benefit to him. Jack believed that it was important to provide novice teachers with all of the necessary resources. In addition, he felt that it was beneficial to make available lesson plans and tests that staff members had used in previous years. Neither John nor Lynden was formally oriented to the community surrounding their school. In accord with Jack, they felt that their exposure to the members of the school's community at the annual school open house in June had been of benefit to them.

Betty's Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Jurisdiction. Betty suggested that the orientation day that the jurisdiction organized was, overall, very effective. She mentioned that the presentations on jurisdiction policies and educational plans were a particularly effective aspect of the program. Betty also felt that the opportunity to meet with other first year teachers and "share concerns about classroom management and evaluation" was a very effective part of the jurisdiction's program for first year teachers.

School. In terms of her induction to the school, Betty felt that the "general support from people" that she received was the most effective aspect of the program. She also appreciated the fact that she been assisted by her principal in identifying a colleague who could serve as a mentor for her. She implied that this was a very

effective induction measure and that it had been of benefit to her throughout her first year of teaching.

Teaching assignment. Betty's introduction to her teaching assignment was initiated by the principal at the end of June prior to her first day as a teacher the following September. She implied that the timing of the introduction was an effective measure. Betty described it this way:

I was invited to come in to the school in June before the school year had ended. I could even go to talk to the Grade 4/5 teacher who was a first year teacher herself. She was able to give me some insight as well as tell me how the program worked, especially in split classes or a 4/5 class. She explained how she handled some of the things like content. I had the opportunity to pick up the curriculums and the books I needed so that I could begin planning in the summer for the following fall. That was really a most valuable experience!

Community. Betty explained that the willingness of the school staff to assist her with her orientation to the community was extremely effective. She put it this way:

It was the reception I got in June when I came here. Everyone was willing to give me addresses and contact numbers for apartments. That was my biggest concern at the time. The fact that someone contacted the Welcome Wagon, or thought to do that, stands out in my mind.

Fred's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Jurisdiction. Fred rated the jurisdiction orientation as overall, "very good." In particular, he felt that the sessions on effective teaching and planning were effective.

School. Fred indicated that the single most effective aspect of a first year teacher's induction was the creation of an effective relationship with someone else on staff who could act as a mentor for the new teacher. He viewed other aspects of the school's induction program as "probably not important as long as the mentor is doing their part." Fred did indicate that he felt it was important for the principal to meet often with the first year teacher and offer assistance when needed.

Teaching assignment. Fred intimated that the most effective practice that occurred in this area at Bynder Elementary involved providing first year teachers with a mentor to assist them. In addition, he mentioned that the provision of resources prior to the beginning of the school was important.

Community. Fred felt that the assistance that the staff could provide a first year teacher in terms of an orientation to the community was a very effective measure.

“The staff can provide all sorts of assistance and answers to questions about the community.” He also felt that contacting the Welcome Wagon was another effective aspect of the orientation to the community.

Perception Check

Betty and her principal, Fred, indicated that the jurisdiction-level orientation was a positive experience for novice teachers. Betty found it particularly useful to meet other first year teachers from the jurisdiction. Fred felt that the sessions on effective teaching and planning were worthwhile. In terms of the orientation to the school, both Debbie and Fred agreed that the provision of a mentor was an extremely important aspect. Betty appreciated the willingness of her colleagues to assist and support her. Fred felt that it was important for administrators to meet often with first year teachers and offer assistance when necessary. Regarding the orientation to the teaching assignment, Betty explained that meeting early on with other teachers in the school who could provide assistance had been valuable to her. Fred felt that the provision of a mentor was an effective measure here. As far as being oriented to the community, Betty and Fred felt that Betty’s colleagues had been a tremendous source of assistance in this regard. Betty mentioned that someone had even called the Welcome Wagon, which Fred felt was an effective aspect of an orientation program.

Dallas’ Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Dallas did not find the jurisdiction level orientation to be a positive experience. Given his age and previous experience in the world of work, it did not seem to meet his needs. He indicated that he “felt very much alone” in that most of the other participants were younger and teaching at different grade levels than he was. He explained it this way:

I felt uncomfortable, I felt very much alone. . . . Most of them were kindergarten teachers or elementary teachers. . . . I couldn’t relate to the types of situations they had; . . . their problems seemed silly to me. My situation is an entirely different situation. . . . Some of the other teachers there, like junior highs, fit in. They seemed to relate quite well to what was going on. They were younger.

School. Dallas suggested that the most effective measure taken at the school-level induction was the encouraging of a mentor relationship with one of the experienced staff members.

Teaching assignment. Dallas indicated that the most effective measure taken in regards to the introduction to his teaching assignment was the offers of assistance that he received from the experienced teachers who were teaching courses in the same departments in which he was teaching courses. In particular, he appreciated the assistance that his mentor offered him in regards to the content of his courses and his teaching approaches.

Community. Dallas did not receive an orientation to the community of Bynder. He had lived and worked there previously and was familiar with the community.

Blaine's Perspective (Vice-principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Jurisdiction. Blaine indicated support for the jurisdiction orientation overall. He felt that it was effective in that "its primary function isn't to improve what teachers are doing in the classroom; rather, it's an introduction to the system so that new teachers understand who people are and where they fit on the organization charts."

School. Blaine implied that the most effective measure taken at the school level induction was the initial tour of the school and the introductions to staff. He put it this way: "Its important for them to feel at home; . . . they have to be comfortable enough to ask for assistance."

Teaching assignment. Blaine suggested that the establishment of a mentor relationship was the most effective measure taken in terms of introducing a first year teacher to his/her teaching assignment. He felt that many of the problems that first year teachers encounter could be avoided or minimized if a suitable mentor assisted the first year teacher.

Community. Blaine indicated that it is not usual for a new teacher to be oriented to the community. He implied that the administration and staff of the school were willing to assist the first year teacher when necessary.

Perception Check

Dallas was not impressed with the orientation to the jurisdiction in which he participated, possibly because he was older than most of the other novice teachers who attended. Blaine, Dallas' vice-principal, felt that the orientation at the jurisdiction level was appropriate for novice teachers because it provided them with an overview of the system and where they fit into it. In terms of the orientation to the school, Dallas

explained that of greatest value was the encouragement he received to choose a mentor from among the more experienced staff members. Blaine felt that the initial staff introductions were of great importance because they provided the basis for relationships to develop. Regarding the orientation to the teaching assignment, Dallas felt that the assistance that he had received from his colleagues and from his mentor were very valuable. Blaine agreed in that he felt that the development of a mentor relationship was an important aspect of this orientation. A mentor could assist a novice teacher with many of the challenges they faced in this regard. In terms of an orientation to the school's community, neither Dallas nor Blaine thought that this was of much importance. Dallas was not a stranger to the community, and Blaine felt that a novice teacher's colleagues could provide assistance in this area as well.

Section Summary

Overall, orientations to the jurisdiction received favorable evaluations. Six of eight novice teachers found them to be effective in terms of their overall induction to teaching. One novice teacher found the orientation to be somewhat helpful and another found the orientation to be an uncomfortable experience. Two novice teachers mentioned that they found the information on employment benefits and salaries useful, two found the opportunity to network with other novice teachers useful, and two found the presentations on jurisdiction level policy useful. Also mentioned by novice teachers was the introduction of central office personnel and information on lesson planning. The six administrators interviewed for this study also found jurisdiction level orientations effective, although one stated that it was the least effective component of the overall induction program. Three administrators mentioned that the introduction of central office personnel was useful for novice teachers, two administrators mentioned presentations on employment benefits and salaries as useful, and two administrators simply rated the jurisdiction presentation overall as useful for novice teachers. Also considered useful was the presentation of jurisdiction-level policy, an opportunity for networking with other novice teachers, and presentations on teaching and planning.

Orientations to the school were viewed positively by all eight novice teachers and six administrators. Six novice teachers mentioned that they appreciated the support and assistance provided by their colleagues. Two novice teachers mentioned that the provision of or encouragement to identify a mentor among their colleagues was an effective measure of the school-level orientation. Also mentioned as effective orientation strategies by novice teachers was the orientation to the school building, attendance at the

school's Parent Advisory Council meetings, and the social gathering of the staff. Two administrators identified the support and assistance of colleagues as effective orientation measures, and two mentioned the initial introduction to the staff as important. Administrators also mentioned establishing a sense of trust and belonging, preparation programs, orientation to the school building, and the provision of a mentor as effective measures in an orientation program.

Regarding their orientation to their teaching assignment, six novice teachers were positive in their responses and two were somewhat negative. Six novices mentioned that they appreciated the support and assistance of their colleagues. Also mentioned as effective by novice teachers was contact with the previous teacher, forced organization in terms of lesson planning, and the assistance received from a mentor. Administrators were generally favorable in their review of orientation to teaching assignments. Four of six asserted that it was important to make available to the novice all of the necessary resources for planning and teaching. Two administrators considered the provision of a mentor an effective measure. Also mentioned was the establishment of a peer coaching program, support and assistance of colleagues, contact with the previous teacher, and the sharing of lessons and tests.

In terms of the orientation to the community, in general, novice teachers and administrators took a neutral position on what measures might be considered effective. Of the eight teachers interviewed for this study, one lived in the community where his/her school was located. Three, living in a community other than where their schools were located, were familiar with the community. The one teacher who lived within the school's community did receive assistance from colleagues in finding a place to live and locating necessary services. This particular novice and her principal both mentioned that the Welcome Wagon could be an effective component of an orientation to a community.

Successful Transition

This section presents findings in relation to Research Problem 5 and, in particular, what a first year teacher's transition to the classroom is like and what is considered to be the ideal first year teacher induction program. Responses to each of the above issues are presented one after the other. The responses are presented for each of the first year teachers and his/her corresponding administrator in turn. In cases where there is more than one first year teacher paired with an administrator, the first year teachers' responses are presented one after the other, with their administrator's responses presented last. A perception check for each set of novice teacher(s) and

principal or vice-principal, as the case may be, follows, providing a brief comparison and analysis of perceptions. For ethical reasons, these comparisons of perception were made by myself without the corroboration of the participants. This section concludes with a brief analysis and summary of the information presented.

Debbie's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

Debbie had mixed feelings about whether or not she had been well prepared at university for the reality of teaching day to day. She implied that much of what she studied in her education classes was irrelevant to her work in the classroom. In terms of her preparation, nothing came close to preparing her for the demands of the job. Debbie summed it up this way:

I don't believe I was well prepared in university. Teaching is very different from student teaching. There is not the same demands placed upon you. It's totally different! They made me write hour-long lesson plans at university. I don't have the time to do that now. . . . I remember being in a class, and they said to us, "You are not a teacher until you have taught for at least six years!" I completely believe that now! There are so many things that I will do differently next year. I'm still learning. There's still stuff that I'm learning about the school and different things.

Debbie gave credit to her courses in classroom management and psychology, which she felt, had given her a firm grounding in terms of dealing with student discipline challenges.

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil indicated that the transition period for a first year teacher could be a difficult and challenging experience. Recent changes to provincial funding structures for education have complicated the process. Larger classes and more judicious allocations of "prep time" are examples of factors that have had an impact on the first year teacher transition experience.

Traditionally, the transition can be tough. . . . Part of the Alberta Advantage is that you have to make effective use of the resources, and at this school in the last three or four years, consciously we made an effort to become as efficient as we possibly can. The biggest bang for the taxpayers' dollar. Consequently, we are running large classes and have had to look at our release time very carefully.

We've had to reset our priorities, and I'm afraid that hasn't been in the best interests of the first year teacher exactly.

Perception Check

Debbie and Virgil had similar perceptions regarding the transition that first year teachers pass through as they leave university and move through their first year of teaching. Debbie did not credit her university program for preparing her for the challenges of the first year. Virgil felt that present economic structures did nothing to ease the transition for a novice teacher.

Daniel's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Daniel felt that the professors at university could have prepared him "a lot more" for the rigors of the job. He maintained that his experience substitute teaching had given him an invaluable insight into teaching. He felt that this experience had "provided a wealth of experiences as to what's out there and how things work." Pertaining to the value of substitute teaching in terms of preparing teachers, he said:

I don't know if you could ever make a subbing experience mandatory, but this kind of field work as part of your schooling would sure help, . . . particularly if the experience was for an extended period of time and in many different schools.

May's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

May was not positive about her university preparation for teaching. She stated: No! I hadn't been well prepared. The first few days were tough. After that it became easier in some ways, but not always knowing what to do was hard on my nerves sometimes. Once it all got rolling, it was okay. . . . As far as training at university, it didn't train me to work here. Maybe things are different in the city.

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Howard suggested that first year teachers need substantial assistance to ensure their passage through the transition period from university to the end of the first year. He stated that "the first year is a real challenge for most. The transition is bumpy, it's a rocky road, and they need every bit of assistance we can give them."

Perception Check

Daniel, May, and Howard seemed to view the challenge of the first year from similar perspectives. Daniel and May felt that their university program was not particularly effective in preparing them for the rigors of the classroom. Daniel credited his experiences as a substitute teacher with giving him the preparation that he had. Howard stated that novice teachers need all of the assistance that can be mustered.

Joseph's Perspective (Teacher, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Joseph felt that he had been well prepared in university for the demands of teaching. He had had a very positive experience in his practicum and as a result had begun to think about his philosophy regarding students and teaching. In his last year of university, Joseph volunteered to participate in a research study that one of his professors was conducting. He explained the positive impact of that on him: "I was starting to determine more and more what my philosophy of education was. Although I was struggling a bit in year four, I was spending quality time with one of my professors. . . constructing my philosophy about teaching and life." Joseph's only criticism in regards to his university preparation was that

there is too much emphasis on content and specialization. . . . There should be more on the philosophy of education, . . . and there should be less emphasis on becoming a specialist and more emphasis on becoming a generalist, because I believe that teaching is not subject directed; it's philosophy.

Joseph summed up his discussion on philosophy, saying, "Some people might think I'm odd."

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian intimated that the first year of teaching for a teacher is perhaps the most challenging year. The challenge is partly due to the fact that school administrators tend to load up first year teachers' schedules. Often, first year teachers are given the same number of periods in a day to teach as teachers with a great deal more experience. In addition, first year teachers are often expected to carry out extra curricular duties.

It gets very complex. . . . When we hire a person full-time equivalent here, they teach seven out of eight blocks, which is the same as a teacher who has taught for thirty years. The beginning teacher is asked to teach several different

courses, meaning that they have a lot of preparation to do for every day. In addition, we ask them to take on some coaching as well.

Brian suggested that paying more attention to the way in which teaching timetables are constructed could ease the transition. Where possible, first year teachers should be given fewer subjects to teach and fewer levels of the same subject to teach.

Perception Check

Unlike Debbie, Daniel, and May, Joseph felt that his university experience had prepared him well for the rigors of teaching. He suggested that knowing one's philosophy of education was a great help. Brian suggested that the first year of teaching was a difficult time of transition for novice teachers. He attributed a great deal of this challenge to the fact that novice teachers are often given difficult teaching assignments.

John's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

John explained his transition to the classroom as "fairly smooth" because he had been hired to teach the same grade in which he had done his practicum. He therefore felt that he had been "fairly well prepared" in university for the demands of teaching. In addition, he suggested that his volunteer experience in schools at the same grade level was valuable preparation.

Lynden's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School).

Lynden had mixed feelings about his university preparation for the job of teacher. In terms of content, delivery and classroom management, he felt that his university program was a good preparation. However, he stated that

In terms of the administrative stuff, I wasn't prepared. Hot dog orders, newsletters and that sort of thing, . . . it took me a while to establish a system to deal with them. Even just cleaning the classroom took me a while to get used to. When you're on your practicum your cooperating teaching looks after all that. . . . I had no problem with the teaching part but all that extra stuff that goes along with it, . . . it took me a while to get a handle on it all. . . . There should be some discussion and dialogue at university about coping mechanisms for those things.

Jack's Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack described the transition period as a time when the first year teacher is transformed from "a neophyte to a more seasoned beginner." Part of the transformation takes place in isolation while more experienced teachers sit back and watch. His own transitional experience as a first year teacher reminded Jack of the needs of first year teachers in his school.

First year teachers change dramatically the first six to eight weeks they're here. They walk in the door a little bit tentative, trying things this way and everybody staying out of their way. Most of them aren't too shy about experimenting with new ways of doing things. . . . They watch various teachers and see different styles. We try to minimize the shock for them, but there is always some of that sink or swim stuff around here. I don't think you can get away from it in any school. I hope the transition isn't as bad now as it was when I was first starting out. I first taught in a small country school. I had 40 out of 40 periods a week to teach. On top of that I coached and ran the students' union. I must have been crazy! I lost 22 pounds that year and ended up a basket case.

Perception Check

John and Lynden, like Joseph, were positive about the role their university experience played in preparing them for their first year of teaching. In addition to his university training, John felt that his experience as a volunteer in the classroom was valuable preparation. Lynden qualified his response by indicating that there were some deficiencies in the preparation. Jack, John and Lynden's principal, stated that the first year was a very challenging year, and the novice was often in isolation from others.

Betty's Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Overall, Betty felt that her university preparation for teaching was adequate. She noted that she would have appreciated more course work in the area of student evaluation. "I felt that ongoing continuous evaluation was an overwhelming aspect of my job. I felt the least prepared for that."

Fred's Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Fred suggested that due to their preservice training, the transition for new teachers is not as problematic as it once was. Challenges such as classroom

management continually need to be addressed as a result of changes in the structures of society:

I find students coming out of university today are a lot more skilled than when we went to university. They have a lot better knowledge of what planning looks like and how it should work. I find that new teachers coming out of university are well trained, but classroom management is still an area that the universities could work on because we have such a diverse range of kids in our classrooms now. It's just horrendous! To be able to deal with those kids one on one and meet their needs is a real challenge.

Perception Check

Betty, like Joseph and Lynden, felt that her university experience was of some value in terms of preparing her for her career as a teacher. She indicated that it had some deficiencies, however. Her principal, Fred, felt that the transition period was not as difficult as it once was. He suggested that some of the challenges that face a first year teacher are created by external forces and therefore cannot be totally controlled.

Dallas' Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Composite High School)

Dallas expressed overall satisfaction with his university preparation. As a result, he found the transition between university and teaching "fairly smooth." He mentioned that one challenge for which he had not been prepared was the different pace at which students work. He found his adjustment to this to be "the biggest one thing that affected my teaching. . . . I had to change my teaching strategies immensely to accommodate the differences."

Blaine's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Blaine contended that the first year presents a tough transitional period for teachers. The assistance of colleagues can help to ease the challenges somewhat:

There's no doubt about it, the first year can be a tough ride for a new teacher. They get a lot of theory in their university programs, but here in the school, in the classroom is where it really happens! We do all that we can to assist a new teacher with their transition to the classroom. . . . If you are teaching anything except a one-teacher program in the school, there are several people who have already likely taught the course. They are really good about sharing.

Perception Check

Dallas, like Joseph, John, Lynden, and Betty, felt that his university experience had prepared him for his career as a teacher, but he did identify one area of deficiency. Blaine, Dallas' vice-principal, felt that the first year was the most challenging year for a teacher and that the novice's colleagues could be of assistance in easing the challenge.

Section Summary

Five of eight novice teachers indicated that their university studies trained them well for the challenges of the first year of teaching. Three of these four novices qualified their positive response and two did not. One of the two teachers who gave an unqualified endorsement of his university preparation also stated that his work as a classroom volunteer was valuable preparation. Three of eight novice teachers indicated that their university program was not adequate or effective preparation for their first year of teaching. One of the three novices indicated that his experience as a substitute teacher was much more valuable.

The six administrators interviewed for this study agreed that the first year of teaching was a very challenging year for novice teachers. Different reasons were suggested, including such things as difficult assignments, working in isolation, and a general need for assistance.

Ideal Induction

Debbie's Perspective (Teacher, Waterford Composite High School)

Debbie indicated that an ideal induction program for first year teachers should include the provision of a handbook and a detailed tour of the school which would assist the first year teacher in becoming familiar with the school and locating resources and supplies. She also felt that it would be beneficial for a first year teacher to receive assistance regarding the procedure for acquiring a substitute teacher and the process of planning for a substitute teacher. As well, she indicated that assistance in using the Internet and locating teaching resources would be of benefit to a first year teacher. Debbie stated that someone on staff other than the principal should be designated to assist the first year teacher with these needs. In addition to these items, Debbie felt that a reduced teaching load with full pay was an important consideration for first year

teachers. Debbie stressed that administrators should consider the number of different courses that they assign a first year teacher to teach. She put it this way:

There's this teacher and she's taught for fifteen years, and she has four classes of one course and she has one class of another course. Then there's this first year teacher who has six different courses to teach. Maybe things should be evened out a bit so there's equity in terms of assignments. I know for myself, prepping for more than one class of the same course cuts down on "prep time" a lot.

Virgil's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Waterford Composite High School)

Virgil suggested that an important component of an ideal induction would be the provision of a handbook for the first year teacher. Included in the handbook would be information on the school and the community as well as "all of the basic nuts-and-bolt kinds of questions and answers like how to organize a field trip." Virgil also emphasized that an ideal induction would include establishing a month-by-month action plan for dealing with issues that emerge at particular times throughout the school year. Virgil explained:

You could have 80 or 90 things that you could talk about, month by month, eight or nine issues each month as they come up. . . . In the first month of September, it would be going through the expectations and the philosophies, the nuts and bolts. In the mid-term you talk about some more nuts-and-bolts kinds of things like the marking programs, evaluation schemes, progress reporting, how to converse with other teachers, how to deal with the chronically late student and so on. All of those kinds of day-to-day things.

The final aspect of an ideal induction program that Virgil mentioned was in regards to facilitating discussions about expectations. He implied that it would be worthwhile to establish a forum for first year teachers, students, and parents, where the expectations that each had of the other could be discussed.

Virgil perceived time and money to be the two biggest constraints on his ability to create the ideal induction. In terms of some of the recommendations made in the literature, he suggested that it just wasn't possible to allocate more release time to first year teachers or release time to mentors. Virgil put it this way:

Part of the Alberta Advantage is that you have to make effective use of resources. The last three or four years, we have consciously made every effort

to become as efficient as possible. . . . We've had to look at release time very carefully, and we've had to set priorities. I'm afraid the need to provide this sort of experience for first year teachers has fallen down the list.

Virgil also referred to the provision of professional development activities and their impact on first year teachers in the school in the past. He indicated that one aspect of the literature that had been previously addressed was the creation of an atmosphere conducive to collaboration amongst teachers. Virgil implied that at present, teachers' needs in this area were not being met because of increased class sizes, work loads, and stress levels. Several attempts at peer coaching had also been made, with limited success. The program was perceived as something in which only weak teachers needed to participate. As a result, participation was avoided, and the program was no longer in place at Waterford Composite High School.

Perception Check

Debbie and her vice-principal, Virgil, identified several items that would be components of an ideal induction program. Both explicitly mentioned that the provision of a handbook was important. Debbie implied that the provision of a mentor was also an important component. Most of the specific items that either mentioned could be aggregated under the general heading of open and frequent communication and would result naturally from that. Virgil's bottom line was that schools are severely restricted in terms of the assistance that they can provide for novice teachers as a result of budget constraints.

Daniel's Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

Daniel suggested that a coordinated effort on the part of the jurisdiction and the school would produce a more effective first year teacher induction program. He felt that "a pooling of their resources could produce something more substantial." He also indicated that his ideal program would include making other teachers' course materials available for the first year teacher's use. His assistant principal had suggested placing course materials in the school library so that first year teachers could have access to them. He explained that this would be a good idea because a first year teacher "would have something to look at in terms of how the course was taught previously." He emphasized that it would be important to include the names and phone numbers of community contacts in the materials so that someone like himself who was teaching

physical education would know who to contact regarding the booking of community facilities for student use. Daniel felt that it would be helpful

if it were all down somewhere: . . . the number for the driving range and who to talk to over there, . . . the number for the curling rink and who to talk to there, . . . all the things a first year teacher has to spend a lot of time doing.

Daniel also suggested that a first year teacher have his/her “prep time” divided evenly between semesters. He stated:

It would have been really nice to have had some “prep time” in the first semester. . . . I’m content with what I have; . . . I’ve almost got too much right now, but I was really struggling in the first semester. . . . If it could be spread out throughout the year, it would be better.

Daniel felt that a reduced teaching load would be an important component of an ideal program. He said, “Ideally, a reduced teaching load, say 75% with full pay would be very helpful, and I think the first year teachers would do a much better job.” Daniel’s final point (similar to a point made by Debbie) was in regards to designating someone on staff to act as a resource person or mentor for the first year teacher. He said:

A specific person on staff to assist would be an important part of the ideal program, . . . a specific person that would step forward and help you . . . not the administrators, because I know they are very busy with their own work, and I feel compassion for them. A first year teacher doesn’t want to ask them much because he or she might seem incompetent. . . . You hesitate to go to administration. . . . A mature teacher would be ideal, . . . someone who could act as a mentor.

May’s Perspective (Teacher, Evanrude Secondary School)

May suggested that an ideal induction program should include scheduled monthly meetings between the first year teachers and the school administrators. These meetings would be informal in nature and allow the first year teachers to talk about some of their concerns and to ask questions and seek advice about recent matters. It would also provide the administrators with an opportunity to inform the first year teachers of upcoming events and other matters of concern. May felt that these monthly meetings would decrease the amount of paper that first year teachers receive in their mail boxes and are expected to read. She said, “The monthly meetings would be a big thing. . . . There are too many papers, little notices in mailboxes. . . . Half the time I don’t read them. Lots of them, little whatnots. Talk to us instead!”

Howard's Perspective (Principal, Evanrude Secondary School)

Howard thought that it was important for first year teachers in small schools such as Evanrude Secondary to have the opportunity to meet and socialize with other teachers in the jurisdiction because it would allow first year teachers to meet experienced teachers from within the jurisdiction. This would provide them with the opportunity to make contacts with and later seek assistance from other teachers who are teaching the same courses. Howard said, "It's a lot easier to make a phone call and ask for assistance if you've met a person than it is if you only have a name." At the school level, Howard indicated that it would be ideal if there were more time to spend with first year teachers reviewing school-level matters such as "policy and procedures regarding field trips, securing a substitute teacher and those kinds of things." Howard concluded that "for most of us, it's been so long since we've personally gone through the exercise that it's easy to overlook many things."

Howard, like Virgil, thought that the literature on first year teacher's induction programs was "great! However, the costs in terms of money and time that are associated with them are prohibitive," He indicated that this was particularly a concern in smaller schools, where it was not possible to provide increased release time for first year teachers or mentors because of the need to offer a full program of courses.

Howard put it this way:

I'm working on the timetable right now. I'm looking at offering a Math 31 class to 10 or 12 students. That means that someone else is going to have to teach a class of 30 to 32 students to make up for the numbers. If I don't offer the class the students who want to take it may choose to go elsewhere for their Grade 12. It's a dilemma. How can I provide more release time and offer a robust selection of courses at the same time?

Perception Check

Daniel, May, and their principal, Howard, identified several components of an ideal induction program. Although not specifically mentioned by all three, it seemed that opportunities to meet other teachers and share in their resources are an important component. Again, as with Debbie and Virgil, communication is an important aspect of an induction program. Open channels produce opportunities to share concerns and suggest solutions to problems. Howard, similarly to Virgil, suggested that the lack of available funds makes it difficult to provide the necessary assistance to novice teachers.

Joseph's Perspective (Teacher, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Joseph felt that an ideal induction program should include a timeline of the year providing information that would inform the first year teacher of what to expect at particular times of the year. He put it this way:

I would like to give each first year teacher more information about what they can expect at certain times of the year within their first year of teaching. I know around Christmas time I was really whipped out. I wasn't sure why. I'm young and fit, and yet I found myself very, very tired. I would have liked to have had an idea of what you can expect by Christmas time. . . . I would have liked to have had an idea of what students are like in the Spring and around final exam time, . . . a timeline of what things are like.

This is somewhat similar to Virgil's (Debbie's vice-principal) suggestion regarding a month-by-month action plan. Joseph also suggested that he would include an in-depth orientation on resources and where to locate them as part of the ideal induction program. The final thing that Joseph mentioned was in regards to providing each first year teacher with a list of teachers in the jurisdiction who are teaching the same courses and who might be willing to assist. This was similar to a suggestion made by Daniel (first year teacher, Evanrude Secondary School).

Brian's Perspective (Principal, Woodhouse Composite High School)

Brian suggested that an internship program should be a component of an ideal induction program. He said, "An internship where they work with a master teacher for a significant amount of time like a semester or even a full year would be ideal." Brian felt that such a program should have built-in rewards for the master teacher. He suggested that the master teacher be given a monetary stipend for each first year teacher with whom he or she worked. Brian also felt that administrators needed more time to spend with first year teachers and those teachers who assisted them. In addition, Brian indicated that first year teachers need more time to develop and suggested that they be timetabled to teach less than what is normally considered a full load of courses. Brian summed up his discussion of the ideal program this way:

I think when I got hired and you got hired, it was the same process as it is now, survival! Yes, sink or swim! We taught the same number of classes and maybe

more subjects or grades as someone who had been teaching for 30 years. We were even expected to spend time coaching on top of that. It's pretty much the same thing now. Beginning teachers have to have more time to develop.

Brian, like Virgil and Howard, felt that the literature contained some very interesting suggestions regarding first year teacher induction. However, he stated:

It's not financially feasible with site-based management of schools. You're talking several thousands of dollars to implement a program with more release time and so on. I can't see there being enough of a surplus to provide more release time for first year teachers or mentors or to provide more professional development opportunities.

Brian suggested that it might be feasible to allow first year teachers to take one day a month to visit and observe master teachers within the school and within the jurisdiction.

Perception Check

Joseph and his principal, Brian, identified several components of an ideal induction program. Joseph focused on the provision items that could be easily provided at little or no cost. Brian's perspective was much broader and focused on the provision of time for either the novice teacher or for colleagues who would spend time assisting the novice. Like Virgil and Howard, Brian also felt that the feasibility of providing an effective induction program was greatly hampered because of the lack of available funds.

John's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

John felt that the Alberta Teachers' Association first year teachers' conference should be an integral part of any school's induction program. As a first year teacher, John had attended the conference and had found it to be "vital" to his induction. He also implied that it was important for administrators and first year teachers to bond but did not offer any suggestions as to how this might be accomplished.

Lynden's Perspective (Teacher, Jumbo Valley School)

At the jurisdiction level, Lynden would have had a handbook prepared that would include a section on the town of Stanford and the various services that the town offered.

A Welcome to Stanford book, . . . information on the Welcome Wagon, some coupons and a map of the town, . . . information on the family doctors, where the hospital is and so on, . . . where the grocery stores are, where the office supply store is, and where the bookstore is. . . . Have the information all in one place.

At the school level, Lynden felt that it would be useful to have colleagues sit in on a first year teacher's classes early in the school term and provide him/her with positive feedback on what they observed. Lynden, somewhat similar-to Howard (Daniel and May's principal), felt that it was important for the school to provide opportunities for teachers to socialize and become better acquainted with one another, particularly in the case of first year teachers who might not know anyone on staff very well. He said:

Social opportunities are important, especially in small schools like this. If something comes up, you're either going to cut into someone else's class or you're going to need someone else to take your class for you. If you don't have rapport with other teachers, there's going to be problems.

Lynden felt that a reduced teaching load in the first year might prevent absences due to sickness caused by fatigue. He put it this way:

I don't know one person who I know from my university days that got a job this year and didn't get sick in October or November. I know it was in November when it hit me. I got a stress-related rash. I was really sick from the combination of being tired and being stressed. A friend of mine got pneumonia and lost part of a lung. He was off work for weeks. . . . If you can prevent the use of sick days by increasing "prep time," a lot of money can be saved.

Lynden, like Debbie and Daniel, also felt that the establishment of a mentorship program would be of value, particularly in larger schools. In the school where he taught, however, he felt that the staff at large had served him in this role. He implied that this was possible only in schools where the staff was small in number. He explained it this way: "At a big school, a mentor program would be ideal. On a small staff like this that is open and helpful, you don't need that. I didn't need a mentor; I just talked to different people about different things."

Jack's Perspective (Principal, Jumbo Valley School)

Jack suggested that an ideal induction program would have first year teachers teaching half time and spending the remainder of their time working with a mentor teacher. He put it this way,

I would immediately cut their course load in half and try to factor into the remaining time some collaborative time or time with a mentor, . . . perhaps some team teaching experiences as well. They could go with a master teacher and work with them, not for them but with them. . . . They could prep and plan and adapt and change and spend as much time out of the classroom learning new things as they were spending in the classroom trying to cope with what happened yesterday.

Jack implied that it was important to attach a measure of accountability to this process. He suggested that first year teachers would be expected to produce a portfolio and, at the conclusion of their first year, make a present of their materials to their colleagues.

Jack felt that the literature presented some interesting and valuable suggestions regarding the induction of first year teachers. Like Virgil, Howard, and Brian, Jack realized that the costs in terms of money and time were prohibitive in a small school such as Jumbo Valley; increased release time for first year teachers and their mentors was not feasible. As did Brian, Jack indicated that he favored the implementation of an internship program. The program would be an integral component of a first year teacher's university preparation for teaching.

Perception Check

John, Lynden, and their principal, Jack, identified several items of an ideal induction program. John valued the Alberta Teachers' Association conference for novice teachers. Lynden, like Jack, suggested that a reduced teaching load for a novice teacher as well as the provision of a mentor would be valuable components. Jack, similarly to Virgil, Howard, and Brian, felt that the costs of providing this sort of assistance was too great in terms of present school budgets.

Betty's Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

Betty believed (somewhat as May, first year teacher, Evanrude Secondary School, did) that an ideal program for her would include bimonthly meetings at the jurisdiction level with all first year teachers and selected master teachers in attendance.

Each meeting would be organized around a specific theme and deal with topics that were of particular interest to the first year teachers and their needs at the time. Betty also indicated, as did Debbie, Daniel, and Lynden, that the ideal program would have a mentorship component in it. She felt that this was “very important and very effective.”

Fred’s Perspective (Principal, Bynder Upper Elementary School)

According to Fred, the most important component in the ideal induction program was time. He suggested that more time would allow a more thorough orientation to the jurisdiction and the school. He said:

Given the time, I think it would be ideal if you could have two days in August before school starts to orient the teachers completely to the system and the system’s expectations of how the system operates and then, on the second day, spend a lot of time talking about effective teaching and little techniques and strategies for having a successful first year.

In addition, Fred suggested that it would be beneficial to have another day in the latter part of September to meet with the first year teachers to discuss problems that they are encountering, strategies for dealing with the specific problems, and possible sources of assistance.

Fred agreed with what the literature suggested regarding first year teacher induction. However, in terms of reducing teaching times for the first year teacher and the mentor, Fred said, “It’s going to be a struggle.” He felt that it would be a particularly difficult task to provide more release time to the first year teacher. In terms of the mentor, Fred felt that the principal of the school might be able to cover classes once in a while to allow the mentor time to meet with the first year teacher.

Perception Check

Betty and her principal Fred agreed that the provision of a mentor was an important component of an induction program. Betty also suggested that regular meetings throughout the year were important for communication purposes. Fred felt that time was the most important component of an induction program. Like the other administrators before him, Fred felt restricted because of the cost associated with an effective program.

Dallas' Perspective (Teacher, Bynder Composite High School)

Dallas indicated that a perfect induction program for a first year teacher would include one preparation period a day, all year long. This was similar to a suggestion made by Daniel (first year teacher, Evanrude Secondary School). In addition, Dallas valued a mentorship component as part of an ideal induction program. He suggested that "there should also be some sort of system to provide frequent feedback on how the first year teacher is doing." He implied that it would be more useful to receive the feedback early in the year rather than later. Like Lynden, Dallas also favored frequent formal evaluation because "it can help to build your confidence up. You need that. You need to know that you are meeting the expectations that others have of you."

Blaine's Perspective (Vice-Principal, Bynder Composite High School)

Blaine indicated that the ideal program for a school the size of Bynder Composite High School would not look much different from the present program. He suggested that there are many opportunities for first year teachers to seek assistance. Blaine said that

what tends to happen is that young teachers get to know other young teachers in the system. Not only have they got the people on their own staff to seek assistance from, they have others in the jurisdiction. You're as close as your e-mail and there are all sorts of little networks that people have created. There's a lot of support there.

Blaine summed up his comments on this subject by saying, "I'm sure if we try to formally create more stuff, we would just undermine some of the natural things that are there already."

Blaine agreed with many of the suggestions regarding the induction of first year teachers in the literature. Like all of the other administrators, he expressed concerns about funding some of the suggestions such as release time. He felt that a great deal could be accomplished by way of inducting first year teachers through a solid professional development program at the school level. However, with tight budgets, funds for professional development are now scarce.

Perception Check

Dallas and Blaine seemed to suggest that providing assistance was important regardless of the form the assistance took. Dallas liked the idea of the provision of a

mentor as well as frequent observation of his teaching. Blaine suggested that there was a possible problem in formalizing programs in that they become too rigid and lacking in spontaneity. Like the other administrators who participated in this study, Blaine was concerned about where the financial resources were going to come from to finance an ideal program.

Section Summary

The novice teachers made a number of interesting suggestions regarding what they felt were important components in an ideal induction program. Six out of eight novices mentioned that the provision of a mentor was valuable, three out of eight mentioned that the provision of a handbook was valuable, and three out of eight mentioned that a reduced teaching load was a valuable component.

Administrators also made a number of interesting suggestions in regards to what they considered valuable components of an ideal induction program. Two administrators out of six mentioned that they valued a reduced teaching load for novice teachers, and two mentioned that they valued the provision of a mentor to assist the novice teacher. There was general agreement among administrators that the greatest obstacle to providing an ideal induction program for novice teachers was the lack of available financial resources.

Summary and Discussion

This discussion addresses Specific Research Problem 4: What induction practices are perceived to be effective? and Research Problem 5: What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience?

In an effort to identify some of the more effective induction measures currently in place in various schools and their jurisdictions, the teachers and administrators involved in this study were asked to comment on what they perceived to be the most effective measures at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level. Following is a review of their comments, category by category.

Jurisdiction Level

All but one of the teachers reported that the orientation experience at the jurisdiction level was valuable. In general, the teachers expressed an appreciation for the efforts made at the jurisdiction level to familiarize them with policy, procedures, and

personnel. They appreciated the opportunity provided by the meeting(s) to meet first year teachers from other schools within the jurisdiction.

In general, the administrators felt that the orientation to the jurisdiction was an effective and valuable component of the first year teacher induction program. In general, they felt that the orientation provided first year teachers with an opportunity to become familiar with jurisdiction policy, procedures, and personnel. Two administrators also stated that they felt that the orientation provided an important opportunity for first year teachers to network with other first year teachers in the jurisdiction. One administrator indicated that the sessions on effective teaching and planning provided by the jurisdiction were of particular value to first year teachers.

School Level

All of the teachers who participated in this study reported in one form or another that the support that they received from their colleagues was the most valuable aspect of their school-level orientation. One teacher mentioned that in addition to the assistance and support that she received from fellow teachers on staff, she also received valuable assistance from the school's support staff. Two teachers specifically mentioned that they appreciated the openness and support of their respective schools' administration, and two teachers mentioned that they found the mentorship program at their schools to be an effective induction measure. Another teacher found the Parent Advisory Council to be a source of support.

The administrator's responses regarding this question were mixed. Two administrators reported that it was important to establish an open door policy with first year teachers that would allow open and honest dialogue to occur. Two administrators indicated that the introduction of the first year teacher to the rest of the staff was very important in terms of establishing a caring atmosphere in which the first year teacher would feel comfortable asking for assistance. Another administrator felt that it was important to encourage first year teachers to find a more experienced teacher who should serve as a mentor to them.

Assignment Level

The most commonly mentioned measure that teachers found to be of assistance to them regarding their teaching assignment was the assistance that they received from their colleagues and the school administration. Two teachers specifically referred to the support and assistance that they received from their mentor. One teacher reported that it

was particularly effective to be introduced to her teaching assignment the previous June, leaving her the summer to make preparations for the courses and students she would be teaching the following September.

The administrators reported several different measures that they found effective in terms of orienting the first year teacher to their assignment. One administrator reported that encouraging contact with the teacher who had previously held the assignment was worthwhile. Some administrators indicated that it was beneficial to provide the first year teacher with all of the necessary resources. One administrator mentioned that he felt it was important to establish an open and trusting relationship with the first year teacher. Two administrators mentioned the importance of encouraging and establishing a relationship between the first year teacher and a more experienced teacher on staff who could act as a mentor for the first year teacher.

Community Level

A community-level orientation was not a common experience for the teachers in this study. Five of the eight teachers reported that they did not receive any sort of orientation to the community in which their school was located. Of the other three teachers, one reported a visit from the Welcome Wagon and assistance from her colleagues in finding suitable accommodations. Two teachers reported that they had attended an open house at their school that provided them with the opportunity to become familiar with some of the parents of children at their school. All of the teachers interviewed indicated that they informally received information on their community, services, and accommodations.

The administrators reported that their schools did not have a formal introduction or orientation to the community. One administrator reported that he encouraged newly hired teachers to his school to attend the school's open house in June if they had been hired previous to the summer break. Another administrator indicated that he contacted the community Welcome Wagon in an effort to assist the new teachers with becoming familiar with the community and the services it has to offer. Another administrator reported that he relied on the school staff to assist new teachers in becoming familiar with the community and its services.

The teachers involved in this study were asked to comment on what the transition from university student to classroom teacher was like. Following is a review of their comments.

Most of the teachers interviewed as part of this study indicated some level of satisfaction with their university program in terms of providing them with the knowledge and skills to perform their duties in the classroom. Three teachers in this category expressed a great deal of satisfaction with their university program. Two of the teachers indicated that they had mixed feelings about the effectiveness of their university program, and two indicated that they were poorly prepared or not prepared at all for the challenges of the classroom that they would meet as first year teachers.

The administrators involved in this study were asked to comment on what the transition from university student to classroom teacher was like for first year teachers. Following is a review of their comments.

Those administrators interviewed as part of this study indicated that the transition period with which first year teachers are faced is a difficult period, and perhaps the most challenging year of their career. One administrator contended that the transition period was not as problematic for first year teachers as it had once been. This in part was due to the more effective training that they were receiving at university. Regardless, the first year teacher's peers eased the transition period to a great extent. Their assistance was of immeasurable benefit to the first year teacher. The administrators seemed to agree that most first year teachers need substantial assistance with many of the day-to-day aspects of the job.

In an attempt to identify some of the components of an ideal induction program, the teachers involved in this study were asked to comment on what they perceived to be the ideal induction program. Following is a review of their comments.

Of the eight teachers interviewed for this study, two suggested that a handbook containing important and useful information on the jurisdiction, school, and community would be an important component of an ideal induction program. Three teachers mentioned that an ideal program would include a reduced teaching load for first year teachers without a corresponding reduction in salary. In regards to "prep time," two teachers mentioned that it should be one period per day balanced throughout the school year. Four teachers suggested that an ideal induction program would include a mentorship component where first year teachers would be encouraged to seek out a more experienced staff member to assist them throughout the year. Two teachers mentioned that early and frequent observation of their teaching would be part of their ideal induction program. They felt that the need for positive feedback was very important. Other items mentioned for inclusion in the ideal program by individual teachers included:

- coordination of efforts between jurisdiction and school
- establishment of a resource bank of lessons, and community contacts
- monthly meetings for first year teachers and administrators
- establishment of open and face-to-face communication
- a timeline of the year's activities and events
- a list of teachers in the jurisdiction and the courses or grades they teach
- attendance at the Alberta Teachers' Association First Year Teachers' Conference
- a briefing on students and the school's expectations regarding achievement and behavior
- provision of social activities and staff gatherings
- bimonthly meetings of all first year teachers in the jurisdiction and a few selected master teachers.

In an attempt to identify some of the components of an ideal induction program, the administrators involved in this study were asked to comment on what they perceived to be the ideal induction program. Following is a review of their comments.

Most of the administrators who participated in this study suggested that first year teachers should be given a handbook at the beginning of the year containing information on various topics of interest to first year teachers, as well as some sort of timeline detailing the events of the coming year. Providing opportunities for first year teachers to socialize with other first year teachers in the jurisdiction as well as opportunities to socialize with fellow staff members was considered to be an important aspect of an ideal induction program. One administrator suggested that some sort of internship program be implemented whereby a first year teacher would be hired on full salary but would not be expected to carry a full teaching load, at least at the outset of the first year. One administrator suggested that an ideal induction program would include increasing the amount of time that school administrators had to work with first year teachers, as well as providing funds for the release of mentor teachers who would assist the first year teachers. Many of the administrators mentioned the lack of time and funding in one way or another when talking about induction programs for first year teachers. It was suggested by one administrator that funds be made available to reward mentor teachers for their efforts to assist first year teachers.

Conclusions

The concluding comments relate to Research Problem 4: What induction practices are perceived to be effective? and Research Problem 5: What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience?

Generally speaking, it can be concluded that orientations at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level were perceived by first year teachers and their school administrators to be effective if not adequate. Time and again, the mention of assistance provided by colleagues and support staff figured prominently in the first year teachers' comments about their induction experiences. First year teachers were easily overwhelmed with the duties of their position and as a result, appreciated efforts to smooth their transition into the role of teacher. In particular, they seemed to appreciate knowing that someone was there for them to approach with their questions and ideas as the year progressed. Administrators were fully aware of the challenges that first year teachers faced. They were cognizant of the fact that first year teachers might require substantial assistance from either themselves or their colleagues. Interestingly, when I first asked the participating teachers about their ideas regarding an ideal induction program, most indicated that their personal experience had been the ideal.

Experiences such as volunteer work in schools and substitute teaching seemed to prepare new teachers, to some degree, for the challenges of their first year.

Induction programs varied from school to school and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Administrators seemed to appreciate the importance of developing an induction program, and most saw some form of mentorship as an important component of such a program. In addition, a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience seemed to include appropriate preparation for the demands of the classroom placed on teachers at the preservice stage. In this study, many of the teachers felt that they were not well enough prepared at the preservice stage for their first year.

The following chapter presents a discussion of nine metaphors that assist in the understanding of the process of novice teacher induction.

CHAPTER 8

Induction of First Year Teachers: Metaphors for Understanding the Process

This chapter presents a framework for understanding the process of induction of first year teachers and the role of the school principal. Metaphorical analysis is utilized as a tool in order to gain insights into the process and the perceived effectiveness of various measures that are part of school induction programs. The chapter begins with a discussion of the use of metaphor as a means of achieving an understanding of complex concepts, processes, and beliefs in education. Following that, nine metaphors are explored and analyzed to varying degrees within the context of first year teacher induction practices. The metaphors chosen and developed for this study are Sink or Swim, Sports Team, Master-Apprentice, Physician-Intern, Prison, Zoo, Military, Musical Orchestra, and Tailor Made. These nine metaphors were chosen because they provide the reader with additional insight into the process of becoming a teacher, particularly the trials and tribulations of the first year. In addition, they bring particular meaning to certain aspects of the study, and together, provide a rich understanding of what it means to be a novice teacher in schools today. An attempt to apply each metaphor to the context of schools and first year teacher induction has been made. Each metaphor's strengths and weaknesses are discussed in terms of its application to the context and the findings of this study. Some of the metaphors are dealt with in greater detail than others. Following the presentation and discussion of the nine metaphors is a listing of the major findings of this study. The chapter closes with a discussion of the nine metaphors and an analysis of them and their utility in terms of creating a greater understanding of the process of first year teacher induction. Each metaphor is examined in terms of its strengths and shortcomings vis-à-vis some of the major findings of this study. In addition, I provide implications for the improvement of induction practices through the formulation of new and, it is hoped, better policy and procedures.

The Sink or Swim Metaphor

A first year teacher's induction to the profession can be likened to learning to swim. This metaphor has long been used in the field of teacher education, although some aspects discussed below may be new.

Preservice preparation programs attempt to provide an effective combination of theoretical foundation and field experience in an effort to give prospective teachers a running start as they enter the profession. As many first year teachers come to realize, however, there is nothing quite like having responsibility for your own classroom. Student teaching experiences in large measure are in many respects contrived experiences where ultimate responsibility for student behavior and achievement rests with the cooperating classroom teacher. Because there is no experience like the real thing, the first year of teaching is really a time of learning by trial and error, when one either sinks or learns to swim. First year teachers may experience feelings of isolation and inadequacy as they make their way through the year. The trials of the first year can be minimized by the principal, who, acting in the capacity of a lifeguard, can perform two functions in order to assist the first year teacher. The first function includes providing a float or lifebuoy when the going gets tough or in anticipation of tough spots. Lifebuoys can take many forms. Commonly mentioned examples include the provision of a mentor, appropriate assignment and scheduling, and preparation time. The second function is one of playing swim coach and instructor. The principal can take an active role in observing, instructing, evaluating, and encouraging the first year teachers as they progress through the various stages of learning to swim and master the development of different strokes or strategies to assist them as they swim their way through the school year. As long as the first year teacher is not in over his/her head or out of his/her depth, he/she should move throughout the experience. At the end of the year, when the first year teacher climbs out of the pool, he/she should possess a feeling of accomplishment and confidence. He/she has completed a long swim. Signs of exhaustion and weight loss would be normal. Successive jumps into the water in each of the following years should provide increasingly successful experiences for the individual.

Major Strengths

The sink or swim metaphor recognizes the high level of autonomy that a first year teacher enjoys in the classroom. Seldom is anyone present with the first year teacher unless his/her presence has been requested or an evaluator/assessor drops in. This metaphor accounts for the fact that classroom teachers are responsible for performing specific duties in relation to their job and recognizes that first year teachers are trained professionals capable of performing the duties required of them. Further, the metaphor accounts for some of the findings of this study as follows:
Findings 3 and 12:

First year teachers (new swimmers) are able to identify for their administrators (lifeguards) the types of assistance that they require. For instance, they may wish to have a mentor (senior swimmer) if one has not already been provided, or they might wish to participate in a more thorough review of jurisdiction-level and school-level policies (learn-to-swim manuals and rules to observe when swimming/diving in “unfamiliar waters”). In this study, first year teachers identified a number of ways that an administrator might assist them. The more commonly mentioned forms included provision of a mentor or encouragement to find a mentor; year-long, ongoing informal assistance; and a more thorough review of jurisdiction-level and school-level policies. In addition, some participants mentioned increased preparation time, more classroom visits on the part of the administrator, appropriate introduction during the initial orientation to the school, an early orientation to the school, open channels of communication, provision of social opportunities with the staff, creating a perception of principal as colleague, and a sensitivity towards overloading first year teachers with information.

Finding 5:

Time, insufficient resources, and heavy teaching loads are constraints that affect an administrator’s (lifeguard’s) ability to assist first year teachers (new swimmers). In this study, two of six administrators identified lack of time as a constraint in terms of providing assistance for first year teachers. In addition, two administrators identified lack of resources to be a constraint, and two administrators identified heavy teaching loads as a constraint.

Finding 6:

School administrators (lifeguards) are often not the only persons involved in a first year teacher’s (new swimmer’s) induction. Administrators may decide to be less involved, allowing a mentor (senior swimmer) or other staff members (competent swimmers) to assist the first year teacher (new swimmer) in a direct way. Two of the eight first year teachers who participated in this study indicated that they had a mentor. One of the two teachers had chosen a mentor, the other teacher had a mentor assigned.

Findings 8 and 9:

Administrators recognize the first year of teaching (first time in deep water) as perhaps the most challenging time of a teacher’s (swimmer’s) career, and a time of trial and error. The first year (first time in deep water) is a time in a teacher’s (swimmer’s) career when he/she needs substantial assistance. In this study principals agreed in one form or another that the first year of teaching is a difficult and trying time for teachers.

Major Weaknesses

Implicit in this metaphor is the suggestion that a formal program of induction including an introduction to the water and its hazards is not ordinarily undertaken and therefore not valued. This seems contrary to what one generally finds. According to the findings of this study, induction programs of various sorts exist and are, for the most part, valued at the jurisdiction, school, and assignment levels. Although it is not common for a formal induction to the community to occur, first year teachers and administrators generally agreed that such would be worthwhile, particularly for those first year teachers new to the school's community. In this study two first year teachers who were new to their school's community were invited to attend the school's annual open house. Another teacher appreciated a visit from the community's Welcome Wagon.

In addition, this metaphor does not account for the following:

Finding #4:

The evaluation component of an administrator's (lifeguard's) job has an effect on his/her ability to be perceived as a helper by a first year teacher (new swimmer). In this study five of eight first year teachers felt that the evaluative function of an administrator does not constrain his/her ability to provide assistance to first year teachers. Two participating first year teachers thought that it did act as a constraint, and one thought that it might act as a constraint. On the other hand, only one of the six principals thought that the evaluative function did not act, at least to some degree, as a constraint. In swimming the person who is responsible for evaluating the progress of a learner is the examiner. It would be very unusual for the examiner to be the same person as the instructor. Possessing particular qualifications above and beyond those of an instructor, the examiner is often brought in from elsewhere to evaluate the swimmers. This insures that there is an incorruptible distance between the instructor function and the examiner function. This is not the case between principal and novice teacher.

Finding #10:

Preparation for teaching (swimming) occurs through preservice programs as well as through substitute teaching or volunteer experiences. In this study three first year teachers expressed a great deal of satisfaction with their university program. Two teachers indicated that they had mixed feelings regarding their university program, and two indicated that they were poorly prepared or not prepared at all for the challenges of the classroom. Preparation for swimming takes place through formal and informal

lessons. Many individuals are introduced to the water at an early age, by siblings or parents. Formal swimming lessons as preparation for independent activity might not take place for several years after the initial and perhaps ongoing informal introduction. Aspects of substitution or volunteering do not seem to apply to the metaphor.

Finding #13:

Participant perception of the utility of the induction experience is positive. All eight of the first year teachers who participated in this study had very positive perceptions of their induction experiences. In swimming the initial experience or experiences can be frightening and traumatic. Not all individual participants would describe their introduction to swimming as pleasant or positive.

Recapitulation. The sink or swim metaphor is essentially reactive in nature. The lifeguard (principal) waits for the new swimmer (first year teacher) to ask for help before throwing the lifebuoy out, or does so only after becoming aware of problems or impending dangers. In extreme circumstances when the new swimmer (first year teacher) finds himself/herself out of his/her depth or over his/her head, the lifeguard (principal) fulfills a resuscitative function, breathing life back into the new swimmer (first year teacher) who has encountered circumstances that threaten survival in the water (profession). The metaphor “fits” in that it describes various aspects of a novice teacher’s experience. It accounts for the fact that the school administrators (lifeguards) are not the only individuals available and capable of assisting the novice (beginner swimmer). It also recognizes the fact that availability of resources can be a constraint on the ability to provide assistance to the novice (beginner swimmer). Further, it recognizes that the initial introduction is a time of trial and error where the novice (beginner swimmer) will require much assistance.

The Sports Team Metaphor

A school staff can be likened to a sports team. Each teacher or player has a specified and specialized job to perform in order to contribute to the achievement of a collective or team goal. The goal that the sports team (staff) attempts to achieve is dependent on the sport being played. It could be a touchdown, a goal, or an earned run. The goal that a school staff is attempting to achieve can also be varied. It might include creating an effective learning atmosphere in which children can maximize their learning, or it might include creating a safe and caring environment in which children can learn. A principal or coach heads up the team, providing leadership and vision. He/she is generally a person of experience and, as a result, is generally respected by his/her peers

for such. The team is part of a league (school division) that is managed by a central administration (central office).

On a school staff, as on a sports team, there are bound to be persons who have varied amounts of experience. Some will be highly seasoned teachers who have taught for years, and others will be rookie teachers who have just been drafted or hired into their positions. More experienced teachers will often fulfill the role of player coach, providing assistance and positive reinforcement to the rookie teacher as necessary. In sports, rookie players are often relegated to the back bench, and the amount of play time they receive is limited. With experience comes more play time and, finally, a position on the front bench. This is not the case, of course, in teaching, but it is something that perhaps bears further study. The coach, while assisting the rookie player, evaluates him/her continually, assessing the player's value to the team and his/her suitability in terms of membership on the team. In sports, rookie players are provided with a play book that contains the team's strategies for advancing and winning the game. In teaching, first year teachers should be provided with a play book of sorts that provides them with all of the necessary information and policies in order to feel comfortable within their position. Previous experience with the sport, including volunteering and substituting for other players, will ease the transition from the back bench to the front bench.

Major Strengths

The sports team metaphor acknowledges that the first year teacher is a member of a larger group that is attempting to achieve a collective goal. Like the individual players on a sports team, each individual teacher performs a specific function that is integral in terms of achieving the collective goal. Further, the metaphor accounts for some of the findings of this study as follows:

Finding 1:

All participating jurisdictions and schools had some sort of orientation program for their first year teachers. The eight novice teachers and six administrators who participated in this study felt that the programs had value. Introductions to management (central office administration and support personnel) and fellow players (school administration, teachers, and support personnel) and an orientation to the facilities (school, supply rooms, and classroom) where the team practices and plays in is an important component of a new player's (novice teacher's) overall welcome to a sports team (school).

Finding 3:

First year teachers identified a number of ways in which a school administrator might assist them. Within this metaphor, the principal is seen as a team player who, like the team captain, has the added responsibility of providing leadership and organization. Forms of assistance most commonly identified by novice teachers included the provision of a mentor or encouragement to select one; year-long, ongoing informal assistance; and a more thorough review of jurisdiction and school-level policies. On a sports team players may benefit from the influence and encouragement of a mentor, someone to whom they can look up. This was certainly the case when one thinks of the influence that Lady Byng Award winner Wayne Gretzky had on his team players over the years, inspiring them to practice hard and play a clean game. Players also benefit from ongoing informal assistance during their practices and scrimmages, as well as briefings on the rules of the game.

Finding 9:

The first year teacher's peers ease the transition period to a great extent. Their assistance is of immeasurable benefit to the first year teacher. The first year teacher (rookie player) can turn to one or many others on staff (the team) to seek assistance. The first year teachers who participated in this study indicated that they do turn to their colleagues for assistance. Two of the teachers had a mentor to whom they turned most often. In sports, one only has to watch an awards ceremony on television to realize how often a player is inspired and assisted by another player or other players on a team. Credit for one's success is frequently given to the team or other individuals on the team. The term *mentor* is uttered frequently during these acceptance speeches in an attempt to recognize the contributions of other team players to an individual's success.

Finding #12:

There were many commonly mentioned components of an ideal induction program, including the provision of a handbook. This metaphor acknowledges that a play book or plan is necessary in order to accomplish the team goals. The play book makes it easier for newcomers to keep abreast of what is happening. In this study, two of eight teachers and many of the administrators suggested that a handbook containing important and useful information on the jurisdiction, school, and community would be an important component of an ideal induction program.

In addition, the metaphor embodies several other findings of this study. For example, the importance of providing induction experiences for rookie players (new teachers), that is, introductions to the team, the facility, the rules and policies, the

management, and the details of the position. Also, the metaphor points to the importance of the postgame, preseason, and postseason socials that allow the team (staff) to come together and experience each other in a less structured environment. The metaphor also allows for rookie players (first year teachers) to acknowledge that their sports camps (preservice programs) provide them with the knowledge and skills to perform their duties. Finally, the metaphor recognizes that many rookie players (new teachers) would likely describe their induction experience as the ideal induction experience. After all, what else would they have to compare it to?

Major Weaknesses

This metaphor does not sufficiently describe the responsibilities that must be assumed by a first year teacher. A first year teacher does not spend a great deal of time on a back bench observing the team and cheering them on, awaiting the opportunity to play. Nor does a rookie teacher come from a farm team with years of experience, a track record, and a reputation for being proficient at the game. From day one on the job the first year teacher is it. He/she often has extremely limited exposure to teaching through practicum experiences and is expected to assume the same responsibilities as are expected of any other teacher in the school. In addition, the Sports Team metaphor does not adequately account for the following findings of this study:

Finding 5:

Time, insufficient financial resources, and heavy teaching loads were perceived by administrators as constraints affecting their ability to assist first year teachers. Although this may be somewhat true for sports teams, an exact comparison between coaches and school administrators is not feasible. There seems to be a much greater chance for variability in school finances and student enrollments as than in team income and the number of players on the team. Team income can be increased in many different ways to meet financial needs, and the number of players on a team can be easily capped. Neither is easy to do in schools.

Finding 6:

A knowledgeable and caring staff, mentorship programs, and an understanding that comes from working with student teachers were identified as elements that facilitate an administrator's efforts to assist first year teachers. Again, the comparison to a sports team is not easy to make. A rookie player may depend on his/her teammates to a degree; however, there is always an element of competition between players for recognition from the fans, coach, and management. In terms of mentoring, one of the more senior

teammates may be perceived by the rookie player as being a mentor. This might seem similar to the first year teacher's situation; however, the process of becoming a teacher is much different than that of becoming a member of a sports team. In team sports players generally come to a senior team with previous and sometimes extensive experience in the sport. In addition, the team players practice together frequently to perfect their various plays and individual techniques. In teaching, individuals come to the profession with limited experience. There is very little opportunity for on-the-job practice of plays and techniques. In a very limited way, such practice occurs during preservice preparation. In regards to sports teams, mentoring would seem to be more a function of providing inspiration and example than that of providing assistance and counseling. Therefore, I would submit that the practice of mentoring is substantially different between the two activities.

Finding 8:

The first year is a difficult year and perhaps the most challenging year of a teacher's career. The school administrators who participated in this study felt that the first year of teaching was a difficult time for new teachers. This has limited application to the sport team metaphor. One's participation in a team sport such as hockey or baseball begins at a very early age with a team consisting of others with no previous experience in the sport. Alternately, if one is introduced to the sport at a later age and is playing with more experienced players, it is common to be eased into playing for the team by taking a position on the back bench for a period of time. With observation and practice, one is eventually elevated to the front line.

Finding 11:

Classroom administrivia can be a demanding and frustrating aspect of the first year. Sports teams or their organizations, generally have individuals associated with them who have been hired to look after all of the various administrative functions. In classrooms, much of the administrative detail falls to teachers. There typically aren't any managers or agents or administrative assistants to lend teachers a hand with their administrative tasks.

Recapitulation. The Sports Team metaphor provides some interesting parallels for those who work in schools. The structures of a team organization overlay the structures of a school organization rather well. Both organizations benefit from orienting their players to the team, the league, and the facilities in which they will be playing. The concept of pursuing and achieving a goal is the common objective for

both, and both benefit from having a play book to familiarize the players with various aspects of the game. The metaphor breaks down in terms of the training for the job. As illustrated, the process for becoming a teacher is much different from the process of becoming a football or hockey player. Another major flaw in the applicability of the metaphor is that it does not recognize the dearth of responsibilities with which first year teachers are faced from day one on the job. There is no back bench on which to sit and no player to shadow while becoming familiar with the position.

The Master-Apprentice Metaphor

This metaphor has a particular meaning in the context of schools and the induction of first year teachers. Novice teachers' apprenticeship begins with their preservice experience as student teacher. At that time they are familiarized with the task and routines associated with teaching. Following that limited introduction, graduates of Faculties of Education, although still apprentices, are deemed ready to assume the duties of teaching.

In terms of assisting newly hired apprentices, a principal might select several more experienced teachers from his/her staff or himself/herself to work closely with the first year teachers. Ideally, these master teachers are chosen for their expertise as teachers, their commitment to teaching as a profession, their understanding that career-long learning is an essential and integral aspect of effective and successful teaching, and the esteem in which their colleagues hold them. Like a master carpenter or electrician, the master teacher accepts responsibility for providing on-the-job training and assistance for the apprentice teacher. The apprentice teacher, at least in the ideal situation, initially spends time each day under the tutelage of the master teacher mindfully observing the master in the classroom and receiving instruction and information outside the classroom on a myriad of topics. With the passage of time, the apprentice gradually accepts increasing responsibility for a group of students or a set of courses. Eventually, the apprentice is elevated to the rank of journeyman and is no longer required to work under the close supervision of a master. One day, with sufficient experience and expertise, the journeyman might be recognized as a master of the trade and thus, be eligible to assist and mentor apprentices.

In the context of schools, the principal may be viewed as one of the masters, as well, as the job foreman.

Major Strengths

Implicit in this metaphor is an understanding of the protracted nature of learning to teach. It also implies that some aspects of becoming a competent and effective teacher are best learned from a master teacher while on the job. This metaphor supports many of the findings of this study including the following:

Finding 1:

Orientation programs are common, effective, and valued. An apprentice receives an orientation to the work place for various reasons, including safety. It is important to know where the various store rooms, supply rooms, and storage areas are located. It might also be important to know where various work stations are located within the shop and who is located at the stations. A prime reason for an orientation to the shop or work area is associated with safety. Like an apprentice, it is important for a novice teacher to receive an orientation to the jurisdiction and the school. In particular, an orientation to a school will provide an awareness of where supplies are located, where the various rooms are located in the school and which colleagues are associated with the various classrooms. Safety is also an important reason for orienting a novice teacher to school. It is important to know where first aid supplies are located and which fire exits to use when in various parts of the school.

Finding 3:

First year teachers appreciate the provision of a mentor or the encouragement to select a mentor. Like the apprentice, the novice teacher realizes the value of working under the tutelage of a master. The master (mentor) assists the apprentice (novice) with his/her work when necessary and provides advice when required.

Finding 4:

First year teachers did not perceive the evaluative function of the administrator as a constraint on his/her ability to assist. Principals, however, were more likely to perceive their evaluative function as a constraint. Like an apprentice, a novice teacher is aware of the fact that the principal (job foreman) is constantly assessing him or her. Notwithstanding this awareness, however, the novice appreciates that the principal can provide him or her with a great deal of assistance, including the appointment of a mentor (master) who would provide assistance beyond the assistance that other staff colleagues (journeymen) might provide.

Finding 8:

Administrators seem to agree that the most challenging year of a teacher's career is likely to be their first year. It is a time of trial and error and a time when they need

substantial assistance. Like the job foreman, the principal keeps a close eye on the novice (apprentice) and provides necessary assistance for the individual in an effort to help him/her to succeed.

Major Weaknesses

The master/apprentice metaphor has many weaknesses in terms of its application to this study on first year teachers and their administrators. The metaphor tends to rely on a seemingly paternalistic relationship between master and apprentice. It does not recognize the collegial nature of the relationship that exists between a teacher and his/her colleagues and between teacher and his/her principal. Further, the metaphor does not account for the autonomy that teachers as professionals enjoy. A novice teacher, like a veteran of twenty-five years, is considered a fully fledged teacher. A novice does not have to have his/her work inspected in the same way that an apprentice does or have someone qualified "sign off" for him/her. Other findings that the master/apprentice metaphor does not support include the following:

Finding 5:

Time, insufficient financial resources, and heavy teaching loads are constraints that affect an administrator's ability to assist first year teachers and an impediment to establishing effective induction programs. In trades, unlike in teaching, the requirements and duration of an apprenticeship are explicitly outlined. In the trades the apprenticeship must take place according to prescription regardless of financial factors and time constraints. Generally speaking, an apprentice would be hired by a shop at a low wage, not to replace a journeyman, but to work with one. It is recognized that the apprentice has some learning to do before the individual can be certified as journeyman and therefore command a higher wage. When a novice teacher is hired, he/she is hired to replace another teacher, not to work with another teacher. Like the apprentice, the novice teacher is hired at a salary lower than that of a highly experienced teacher, recognizing his/her need to learn on the job. However, this income difference is minor in comparison with the difference between apprentice and journeyman. There is no requirement, however, that learning programs be established or that individuals in the workplace be designated for the benefit of novice teachers' ongoing education.

Finding 10

Substitute-teaching experience and/or volunteer experience can help ameliorate some of the challenges of the first year. The apprentice does not have the same opportunities available to him/her in regards to substituting in the place of another

apprentice, journeyman, or master. It is, however, possible for a novice teacher who has never been hired as a teacher to substitute for a period of time for another novice teacher, for an experienced teacher, or even in some cases for a principal. The last-mentioned would definitely be the case if one were called in as a substitute teacher to a Hutterite colony school where there is only one teacher, a teaching principal.

Recapitulation. The Master-Apprentice metaphor has some interesting relevance for understanding first year teacher induction. Parallels can be drawn between the novice teacher and the apprentice, the journeyman and the experienced teacher, the master tradesman and the master teacher, and the foreman and the principal. The first year of work is often the most challenging and a time when the apprentice and novice teacher are in greatest need of assistance. Orientation to the workplace and introduction to those others who work there is important both to the apprentice and the novice teacher. As well, it is recognized that the principal and the foreman can provide various means of assistance to their apprentices, including the provision of a mentor or master to assist them. These efforts are appreciated by the novices notwithstanding the fact that the principal and foreman also evaluate the apprentice's progress. The metaphor falls short in describing the process of surviving the first year of teaching in that it does not adequately portray the effect that a lack of resources can have on a year-long induction program. In addition, the metaphor does not account for the possibility of easing one's transition into teaching through substituting for others.

The Resident-Physician Model

Individuals who graduate from university programs in medicine are expected to spend two years in a residency program before they become fully fledged, practicing physicians and are therefore able to gain certification from their professional organization. During the period of residency, prospective physicians spend time working in or rotating among various specialized areas of medicine under the supervision of experienced colleagues. The experience within each of the rotations must be judged successful in order for the prospective physician to gain certification status. The initial internship residency period provides an opportunity for a controlled transition from university to the work place to occur.

Major Strengths

This metaphor recognizes that an important aspect of adult learning is on-the-job education. The dynamic of the workplace cannot be recreated in the classroom. This particular metaphor also recognizes the important role that peers as educators play within a profession. Like the apprentice metaphor, the resident metaphor has some important strengths and, indeed, supports all of the findings of this study but one.

Major Weaknesses

The duration of a residency period in medicine is two years. Teachers would consider this a major time commitment, and the cost associated would be difficult for both the resident and the institution to bear. A major weakness of this metaphor in terms of supporting the findings of this study has to do with evaluation. In the study it was found that first year teachers do not perceive the evaluative function of their administrator as a constraint on his/her ability to assist. This may be due in part to the notion that, in teaching, measuring the effects of many of our individual actions towards students in isolation from other actions is difficult or impossible. In medicine, however, this does not seem to hold. Unlike in teaching, the resident's errors would, in some cases at least, be obvious to another and have immediate effects on the resident's patients. The consequences of the errors may at the extreme, be life threatening. A less extreme consequence might take the form of increased or needless pain or discomfort in the patient. Evaluating a teacher, then, takes on a much different meaning from evaluating a resident physician.

The Prison Metaphor

Schools have often been likened to prisons, particularly by those highly critical of them. They are secure places that are often highly structured in terms of their architecture and sometimes in terms of the hierarchy of authority that exists within them. A school principal can be likened to a prison warden, the teaching staff can be likened to the prison guards, and students can be likened to the prisoners. It is the warden who is entrusted with ultimate authority for what happens or does not happen within the prison. The guards report to the warden and are under his/her supervision. He/she has the power to revoke privileges from one, a few, or all of the inmates and ultimately to lock them up if situations warrant. Many of the individuals hired for positions within the prison system today are graduates from college-level law enforcement and criminology

programs. They receive an orientation to the facility in which they have been hired to work, as well as an orientation to the policies pertaining to their job.

Major Strengths

This metaphor, when applied to teaching, allows one to better understand the social distance that is created between students, teachers, and administrators. In terms of first year teachers, this social distance may present itself as an impediment to seeking assistance from others, and, in particular, the principal. This metaphor supports all of the findings of this study except for two.

Major Weaknesses

This metaphor does not give recognition to the collegial relationship that increasingly describes that between principal and teacher. It also implies a very mechanistic set of responses to various circumstances, denying the individuality of the prison guard, regardless of his/her level of on-the-job experience. There is at least one fundamental weakness with this metaphor in terms of its application to this study. The weakness has to do with the findings regarding the induction of first year teachers to the community in which their school is located. It would be beneficial for new teachers to a community to be oriented into the community and to become familiar with its culture, because the students whom they teach will be, for the most part, from that community or its surrounding area. This does not seem to apply to prison guards. Indeed, the prison guards need to be concerned only with the institution in which they work. They may commute from outside the community to work. Many of their charges will likely be from communities well beyond the bounds of the community in which the prison is located. Another weakness of this metaphor is in relation to the collegial relationship that increasingly exists between teacher and administrator. Prisons are seemingly structured in a more hierarchical fashion than are schools. This has implications for relationships between workers, supervisors and evaluators. These same weaknesses also apply to the Zoo metaphor and to the Military metaphor.

The Zoo Metaphor

The zoo manager is likened to the principal, and the zoo keepers are likened to the teachers. Like a collection of teachers, there will be some zoo keepers with more experience on the job than others. They may receive assistance and direction from the manager who is their supervisor, or they may receive assistance from other more

experienced zoo keepers. The animals that are caged or penned are likened to the students. They are a captive audience like the prisoners in the “School as Prison” metaphor. The animals are sorted homogeneously so that large mammals are in one pavilion, small mammals are in another, reptiles are in a third pavilion, fish are in a fourth pavilion, and so on.

Major Strengths

Like the Prison metaphor, the Zoo metaphor, when applied to teaching, allows one to better understand the social distance that is created between students, teachers, and administration. In terms of first year teachers, this social distance may present itself as an impediment to seeking assistance from others, and in particular, the principal. This metaphor supports all of the findings of this study except for two.

Major Weaknesses

Like the Prison metaphor, this metaphor does not give recognition to the collegial relationship that develops that between principal and teacher. As a result of a less collegial model of decision making than in schools, the evaluative function of the zoo manager is likely to be perceived as more of a constraint to providing assistance to his/her workers. This is particularly true in the more highly structured prison and military metaphors. In addition, this metaphor relies much more heavily on the much greater differences between zoo workers and the animals that are caged than on the differences between teachers and students.

The Military Metaphor

Like the Prison metaphor, the Military metaphor is constructed around the notion of authority and control. A principal can be likened to a Sergeant Major. The troops are the teachers, the recruits are the first year teachers, and the opposing force is the students. Lines of authority are clearly drawn within this model. Those with less authority follow the orders of those with more. Authority is obeyed; it is not questioned without consequence.

Major Strengths

This metaphor is illustrative of the relationships and social distance that exists between individuals within a school. Like the Prison and Zoo metaphors, this metaphor supports all but two of the findings of this study.

Major Weaknesses

Like the prison metaphor, this metaphor relies on a highly structured environment and well disciplined players. Although popular at one time, such structure and discipline are increasingly difficult to find in today's schools. In addition, the induction of a new recruit is difficult to compare to that of a new teacher. The jobs seem so different, as do the outcomes of each job. The metaphor also fails to give recognition to the individuality of each of the players. Like the Prison and Military metaphors, this metaphor does not harmonize with two of the major findings of this study. First, the metaphor does not account for an orientation to the community surrounding the institution. Although this did not take place in any of the schools that partook in this study, it was something that was supported in principle by first year teachers and administrators. Soldiers are moved around at the whim of their superiors. Their community becomes their immediate surroundings. Their success does not seem to rely on an understanding or appreciation for the community near which their base resides.

The Orchestra Metaphor

In the Orchestra Metaphor the principal is likened to the conductor, the teachers to the members of the orchestra, and the students to the audience. The orchestra consists of an eclectic collection of different individuals playing different instruments. All of the players, arranged in different sections according to the type of instrument that they play, are assumed to have mastered their instrument, regardless of the amount of experience they have as a member of an orchestra. The less experienced members in each section are likely coached, formally or informally, by those players with more experience. It takes a great deal of hard work and cooperation on the part of each individual. The conductor must be a strong leader who can call upon the various musicians and their instruments at precisely the right moment in order for the orchestra to achieve the rich harmony of a symphony. Without a strong conductor, the symphony orchestra would likely produce a cacophony.

Major Strengths

The Orchestra metaphor recognizes the interconnectivity and yet special competencies of the various people who work in schools. It also recognizes that new teachers are assumed to have mastery of most of the content they will be teaching and

the pedagogical techniques they will need to implement in their classrooms in order to be successful. The metaphor supports many of the findings of this study including the need for adequately financed induction programs. In addition, it also supports the idea that the first year on the job is often the most challenging year, and new teachers are often in need of substantial assistance from their peers and their administrators. Any related past experience can ameliorate, to some degree, the transition, and there are many steps administrator and fellow staff members can take to ease the transition.

Major Weaknesses

This metaphor does not recognize that teachers spend a great deal of their working day in isolation. Also, teaching, unlike playing in an orchestra, allows for very little practice in anticipation of the performance before an audience. The metaphor has several inherent weaknesses when applied to this study. These include an inability to account for the evaluative function of administrators and the perception of such as an impediment to providing assistance to first year teachers. In terms of an orchestra, conductors are continually evaluating and subsequently assisting the members of the orchestra in terms of adjusting their contribution to its musical output. In addition, the metaphor does not account for the amount of administritivia that classroom teachers have to perform nor the effect that that has on their ability to teach. This is not the same as the off-stage practice that is required of the members of a symphony, which indeed, similar to the hours and hours of preparation that are demanded of teachers after the school day ends.

The Tailor-Made Metaphor

Men and women come in many shapes and sizes. For most, those who fall within the ranges of average height and weight, buying a suit is as simple as walking into a men's or women's store and choosing one off the rack of ready-mades. With minor alterations, the suit will fit well. There are, however, some men and women who are not able to find a well-fitting "off-the-rack" suit; they must have their suits tailored to their specific size and shape. Generally speaking, having a suit tailored is more costly than buying a ready-made suit, but the attention to detail by the tailor will result in a better fit. Regarding first year teachers, they come to schools with varying needs to which principals must be ready to tailor their induction programs. A program tailored to individual needs is likely more demanding in terms of time and resources, but it should prove more effective in terms of assisting the novice.

Major Strengths

This metaphor is extremely flexible in terms of describing teachers, administrators, and first year teacher induction programs. It accommodates a great deal of difference between novice teachers and their particular school and allows for the first year teacher to have input into his/her induction by expressing needs and desires. This metaphor capably encompasses all of the findings of this study. The first year teacher, likened to the customer in this metaphor, is provided with a program that meets her/his individual needs and the needs of the school and system. It represents an *à la carte* approach to first year teacher induction.

Major Weaknesses

Although minor, there is one weakness that should be mentioned. The metaphor suggests that it would be possible to individually tailor an induction program for each first year teacher. In certain circumstances this may not be feasible. The availability and distribution of resources is always an issue in schools. Resources allocated to teacher induction programs are resources that are not available for student programs or other classroom needs.

Discussion

Nine metaphors were presented in this chapter with the purpose of creating a sharper understanding of what it is like to be a first year teacher and a supervisor who is assisting that first year teacher. The nine metaphors chosen and developed for this study were Sink or Swim, Sports Team, Master-Apprentice, Physician-Intern, Prison, Zoo, Military, Orchestra, and Tailor Made. Strengths and weaknesses were presented for each metaphor. Although each metaphor had some application to the findings of the study and thus increased my understanding of first year teacher induction processes, no single metaphor provided a complete picture. Some metaphors, however, may have greater utility in terms of providing a deeper understanding of the realities of being a novice teacher. Some of the metaphors overlap with each other, and, indeed, some are identical in terms of the understanding that they represent.

Certainly, the Sink or Swim metaphor presents an acute view of what it is like to be a first year teacher from the perspective of the novice. It's live-or-die perspective fits neatly into the dualistic perceptions that have become so common and that run so deep in our Western culture. The dualism does not recognize that there might be stages of

success or minimum performance standards in terms of mastering the art and science of teaching. A simple pass-or-fail view tends to prevail among many learners at all levels of our educational systems, including novice teachers. There is nothing that can adequately prepare a novice teacher for the rigors of the first year of teaching. Preservice programs valiantly attempt to do the best they can to achieve this, but fall far short of portraying and creating the reality that awaits the novice. In many ways, surviving the first year is very much like learning to swim.

The Sports Team metaphor has limited value in terms of describing the experiences of a first year teacher. Structurally, it seems sound in terms of explaining the bureaucratic hierarchy that exist in schools. It also places a great deal of emphasis on a play book, not only for the rookies but also for the more experienced players as well. The metaphor goes beyond describing the realities of the first year teacher experience in terms of projecting the overall picture as two pieces rather than one. That is to say, the metaphor relies on there being an opponent. Although schools increasingly compete with one another, it is not usual to view the novice teacher as going head to head with an opponent.

The Master-Apprentice metaphor presents some interesting parallel views between the training of tradespeople and the training of teachers. It has some utility in terms of assisting in our understanding of what it is like to be a first year teacher and the processes through which one goes. Preservice programs and on-the-job training are common processes. Differences in levels of decision-making autonomy and the concept of a journeyman having to give approval for the work that an apprentice does set the metaphor apart from the reality of being a novice teacher. In addition, it is a stretch to compare the structures of schools as places of work to the many and varied places of work where tradespeople are found.

The Physician-Intern metaphor provides a fairly good description of the process of becoming a teacher. On-the-job training and ongoing formative evaluation are essential to the novice in both professions. Those practitioners who are proficient in their areas of specialization provide assistance, and frequent evaluation occurs throughout the program that leads to certification.

The Prison, Zoo, and Military metaphors are very limited in terms of the understanding that they provide. They are predicated on strict lines of authority and rigid institutional structures. These metaphors may be more illustrative of schools and the processes of teacher induction in days gone by. However, many children continue

to refer to schools as prisons, likely because they curtail the freedom that students normally enjoy outside school by imposing schedules and other demands on them.

The Orchestra metaphor seems to have less descriptive value in terms of what it is like to be a novice teacher. It does not account for the fact that a novice teacher, although part of a team, carries out much of his/her duties in isolation from his/her colleagues. The principal does not oversee his/her every move and provide correction as necessary. The metaphor is useful in that it offers insights into the relationships between the various individuals in a school with whom the novice will work. It suggests that a great degree of harmony is required between a teacher and his/her colleagues in order to achieve the best possible for the students.

The Tailor-Made metaphor is helpful to our understanding in that it describes for us the ideal induction experience for first year teachers. It is an inclusive and an *à la carte* approach in terms of providing the forms of assistance we know to be of value to novice teachers. Each novice is respected as an individual within this model and is placed in a program that is tailored to his/her specific needs. This accounts for differences of needs that present themselves between first year teachers within the same school and between schools within the same jurisdiction.

Although none of the metaphors presented are unique in regards to their application to the field of education, the Prison, Zoo, Military, Orchestra, and Tailor-Made metaphors are innovative in regards to their application to the novice teacher. In terms of utility, I have suggested that some are more meaningful in terms of increasing our insight into the need for teacher induction programs. Of particular value is the Tailor-Made metaphor. It suggests that induction programs should be constructed with the needs of the individual novice in mind.

To recount what Morgan (1986) stated, it is important to realize that a metaphor is simply another frame through which we view a particular element in order to increase our understanding of the element. By imposing a particular metaphorical interpretation on something, we are “highlighting certain interpretations” and thus “tend to force others into a background role” (p. 13). It is important, in an effort to expand our understanding of something, that we approach it from various directions. In an effort to achieve a greater understanding of first year teacher induction processes, I have explored nine metaphors. Each of these metaphors can stand alone and provide some insight into the process. The nine metaphors taken together give a much more interesting and richer portrait of the processes involved.

The following chapter presents an overview of the study, conclusions and implications. Also included are my personal reflections regarding this study.

CHAPTER 9

Overview, Conclusions, and Implications of the Study

Many professions have a formal program of induction for prospective practitioners. Such programs bridge the theory practice gap and attempt to ease the transition from university student to practicing professional. According to Seyfarth (1996), professions that provide well-planned induction programs for novices increase the chances of success for those individuals by furnishing necessary on-the-job knowledge and skills. In Ontario the province has taken steps to implement province-wide induction programs (Cole & McNay, 1988; Fullan, 1991; McNay & Cole, 1989). In the United States at least 38 states have mandated induction programs and are in the process of developing and implementing them (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1988; Huling-Austin, 1990). In September 1985 the Alberta Department of Education, to provide a formal program of internship for novice teachers, introduced an experimental program. The Initiation to Teaching Project lasted two years. The program had a dual purpose: (a) to provide temporary employment to novice teachers in an effort to ease a situation of over supply, and (b) to assist novice teachers in the acquisition of various skills, competencies, and professional attitudes (Holdaway, Johnson, Ratsoy, & Friesen, 1994). The Department of Education commissioned an evaluation of the project, and the researchers found that the program was of great value. Recommendations were made to implement a mandatory one-year residency program that would ease the transition from university student to professional teacher (Ratsoy, Friesen, & Holdaway, 1987). The provincial Department of Education never acted upon the report recommendations. Given the present economic climate, it is doubtful that a province-wide program will be developed in the near future. The responsibility for assisting novice teachers rests with the school jurisdiction and with individual schools and their principals. It is therefore an onerous professional responsibility to provide a supportive school climate that will allow novice teachers to be successful. Statistics indicate that 40% to 50% of teachers in the United States drop out of the profession within the first seven years, and most of those drop out of the profession within the first two years (Gordon, 1991; Schlechty & Vance, 1981). Data from a study cited by Grissmer and Kirby (1987) showed that about 20% of new teachers in the United States left the profession after just one year in the classroom. Gordon cited difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, isolation, role

conflict, and reality shock as factors contributing to novice-teacher attrition. It is true that many teachers who leave the profession may be unsuited; however, Seyfarth contended that not all that leave are unsuited. Many might have succeeded if they had not experienced unnecessary frustration and if appropriate support had been provided.

Notice is again being taken of the importance of providing assistance to novice teachers. The Alberta Department of Education has developed a policy entitled *Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation*. The policy requires that every teacher in Alberta's public schools develop an annual professional growth plan. According to the policy, "An annual teacher professional growth plan . . . may consist of a planned program of supervising a student teacher or mentoring a teacher" (Alberta Education, 1998).

This chapter provides an overview of the entire study. It is organized into four main sections. First, a summary of this study of first year teacher induction, including the purpose, methods, and findings, is presented; second, a number of conclusions are developed within a discussion of the findings; third, some implications for practice, for theory, and for research are identified; and fourth, some of the researcher's personal reflections on the process involved in various aspects of carrying out this study are shared with the reader.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of the study, the methods that were employed in addressing the research problems, and the findings detailed in earlier chapters are summarized in this section.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose was to obtain insight into the needs of novice teachers and the types and forms of assistance that principals have provided for them. The study provides new information about effective measures that may be useful in creating a successful first year experience for the novice teacher.

The purpose of this study was two fold:

1. to obtain insight into the forms and types of assistance that school jurisdictions, teachers, and principals provide or arrange to have provided for novice teachers to assist in their induction into the profession of teaching, the school, and the community in which the school is located; and
2. to obtain insight into the induction needs of novice teachers.

Justification for the Study

Graduates of Bachelor of Education programs have invested a great deal of time, effort, and financial resources preparing for a career in a profession where success is viewed as somewhat tenuous (Huling-Austin, 1987; Marso & Pigge, 1987). Not only have the graduates committed significant personal resources to their future career, but society has also subsidized their postsecondary education costs. High rates of attrition (Gordon, 1991; Seyfarth, 1996) are a cause of concern, particularly when promising teachers leave the profession of teaching in their first year in the classroom due to negative experiences that might have been anticipated or prevented by an appropriate program of induction.

In light of these circumstances, it seemed important to investigate the nature of the assistance provided by the principal and the induction needs identified by novice teachers in an effort to ascertain what contributes to, or would contribute to, a successful and rewarding experience for the novice teacher.

The study provides improved theoretical understandings about the relationship between the novice teacher and the principal and the creation of a successful and rewarding first-year teaching experience. It also provides practical knowledge about the needs of novice teachers, the types and forms of assistance that principals are providing or arranging to provide for them, and the effectiveness of such types and forms of assistance.

Method

Eight first year teachers, their six principals or vice-principals, and two mentor teachers participated in this study. Interview schedules were developed for both the school-based administrators and the novice teachers (Appendix A). A pilot study of the question schedules provided the opportunity to refine the information-gathering and analysis techniques and to identify important issues for consideration in this study. Following this initial stage, each participating teacher and his/her respective administrator were interviewed. The interviews focused on the induction process and its perceived effectiveness at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level.

Information collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. The inductive method of constant comparative data analysis was employed, with the information

emerging from the initial phases of collection being analyzed and applied to the subsequent phases so that theory gradually evolved (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that in a naturalistic inquiry it is imperative for an inquirer to convince his or her audience that the findings of the inquiry are of importance and worthy of one's attention. This is achieved by attending to four criteria that provide for trustworthiness: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. This was ensured by taking the necessary prescribed steps for each criteria including member checks and the maintenance of an audit trail.

Findings

The findings of this study are presented in five categories: (a) the formal and informal practices of induction that occur in schools and jurisdictions, (b) the sorts of assistance that may be of benefit to a first year teacher that might be provided by a school administrator, (c) the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers, (d) induction practices that are perceived to be effective, and (e) successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience

The formal and informal practices of induction that occur in schools and jurisdictions. Depending on the jurisdiction, orientation sessions ranged from a couple of hours in duration to a full day. In terms of content, there was similarity from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. At the school level, every school seemed to have a unique orientation for its first year teachers. Common elements of in-school orientation programs included a tour of the school and introductions to the school staff.

At the assignment level there was a wide range of experiences among the sample of first year teachers in terms of the introduction they received.

The orientation of first year teachers to their school's community was virtually not practiced.

Regarding the specifics of particular school induction programs, the perceptions of individual administrators were for the most part congruous with their respective novice teacher's perceptions. Although some differences in perception did occur.

The sorts of assistance that may be of benefit to a first year teacher that might be provided by a school administrator. The respondents offered a wide variety of types of assistance that they felt would be of benefit to first year teachers and might be provided by school administrators.

The most commonly identified forms of assistance that administrators contended might benefit first year teachers included the provision of or encouragement to find a mentor on staff; year-long, ongoing informal assistance; and a review of school policies. In addition, they mentioned provision of preparation time, classroom visits, appropriate introductions during the initial orientation to the school, an early orientation to the school, open channels of communication, provision of social opportunities, perception of principal as colleague, and a sensitivity towards not overloading the first year teacher with information.

Constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers. The evaluative function of the school administrator was identified as one of a number of possible constraints. In a study of student teachers conducted in 1984, Tardif found that evaluation was “a continual source of stress and anxiety [for the student teachers]” (p. 189). In this study concerning novice teachers, it is not known if evaluation was generally perceived that way; however, it is known in terms of the participants of this study that the administrator, who is ultimately responsible for evaluation, was not necessarily perceived as the source of that stress and anxiety. Administrators identified a variety of other perceived constraints that affected their ability to assist novices including a lack of time, the present way in which schools were organized and operated, the lack of sufficient financial resources, and heavy administrator teaching loads.

Establishing a mentorship program, encouraging a knowledgeable and caring staff to assist, and an understanding that comes from working with student teachers were discussed as factors that facilitates an administrator’s efforts to assist first year teachers.

Time and money are often cited constraints on administrator efforts to provide appropriate and effective induction programs for novice teachers. Although these two resources are important to an effective program, there are cost-neutral measure which should be taken regardless. Administrators must take steps to insure that communication channels are established and subsequently maintained. Novice teachers need to know that their colleagues are willing to listen and to help them. Socialization with colleagues after school hours is important to novice teachers. This allows them to establish less formal relationships with their colleagues and to build trust. A family or community atmosphere can be fostered and result in a much higher level of comfort and confidence.

Induction practices that are perceived to be effective. In an effort to identify some of the more effective induction measures currently in place in various schools and their jurisdictions, the teachers and administrators involved in this study were asked to comment on what they perceived to be the most effective measures at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level. Following is a review of their comments under each of these four categories.

Jurisdiction Level. In general, the teachers expressed appreciation for the efforts made at the jurisdiction level to familiarize them with jurisdiction policy, procedures, and personnel. They also appreciated the opportunity to meet first year teachers from other schools within the jurisdiction.

In general, the administrators reported that the orientation to the jurisdiction was an effective and valuable component of the first year teacher induction program.

School Level. All of the participants in this study reported that the support that novices received from their colleagues was the most valuable aspect of their school-level orientation. Also mentioned by one or more participants to be a source of support was the school's support staff, the school's administrators, a mentorship program, and the parent advisory council.

Responses from administrators' on this matter included open and honest dialogue with novices, introductions to the rest of the staff in terms of establishing a caring atmosphere so that the first year teacher would feel comfortable in asking for assistance, and identifying a mentor to assist the novice.

Assignment Level. The most commonly mentioned measure that teachers found to be of assistance to them regarding their teaching assignment was the assistance that they received from their individual colleagues and administrator. Also mentioned was assistance from a mentor, and an early introduction to the teaching assignment.

The administrators reported several different measures that they found effective in terms of orienting the first year teacher to their assignment including contact with the teacher who had previously held the assignment, providing all of the necessary resources, the establishment of an open and trusting relationship with the first year teacher, and encouraging and establishing a relationship between the first year teacher and a more experienced teacher on staff who could act as a mentor for the first year teacher.

Community Level. All of the teachers indicated that they had received information informally about their community, its services, and accommodations. The

administrators reported that their schools had no formal introduction or orientation to the community.

Successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year experience. Most of the teachers interviewed reported some level of satisfaction with their university program in terms of providing them with the knowledge and skills to perform their duties in the classroom.

The administrators involved in this study indicated that this transition period is a difficult one and perhaps the most challenging year of a teacher's career. They agreed that most first year teachers need substantial assistance with many of the day-to-day aspects of the job.

In an attempt to identify some of the components of an ideal induction program, the teachers involved in this study were asked to comment on what they perceived to be the ideal induction program. Interestingly, when asked to compare their induction with the ideal induction program they had proposed, most indicated that their experience had been the ideal.

Commonly mentioned components of an ideal induction program a handbook containing helpful information about the jurisdiction, the school and the community, a reduced teaching load for first year teachers without a corresponding reduction of pay, adequate and appropriate "prep time", a mentorship component, early and frequent observation, and positive feedback. It was also suggested that volunteer experience or experience as a substitute teacher proved to be very beneficial preparation for the rigors of the classroom. A number of other suggestions were made by individual teachers.

Administrators suggested that first year teachers should be given a handbook at the beginning of the year containing information on various topics of interest to first year teachers, as well as a timeline detailing the events of the coming year. Providing opportunities for first year teachers to socialize with other first year teachers in the jurisdiction as well as with fellow staff members was considered to be an important aspect of an ideal induction program. Also mentioned was that an internship program be implemented whereby a first year teacher would be hired on full salary but would not be expected to carry a full teaching load, increasing the amount of time that school administrators worked with first year teachers, as well as providing funds to release mentor teachers from some of their classroom responsibilities thereby enabling them to assist novice teachers. Administrators frequently mentioned lack of time and lack of funding when talking about induction programs for first year teachers.

Conclusions

This study examined the induction process of novice teachers from (a) the perspective of the novice teacher, and (b) the perspective of the school administrator. The conclusions of this study are based on the findings and correspond with each of the research problems.

Research Problem 1:

What formal and informal practices of induction occur in schools and jurisdictions?

A. The orientation and induction activities experienced by the eight first year teachers in this study varied according to the jurisdiction in which their school was located.

It seems that much of what occurs by way of orientation at the jurisdiction level has two distinct purposes. The first purpose serves the interests of the first year teacher by providing novice teachers with necessary information on matters of salary and employment benefits, in addition to providing them with packages and an opportunity to ask questions regarding the jurisdiction and its expectations. In addition, the jurisdiction orientation provides novice teachers with an occasion to network with others in the jurisdiction. The latter point is one that Seyfarth (1996) claimed is of particular importance. The second purpose serves the interests of the jurisdiction that administers employee salaries and employment benefits. First year teachers are introduced to various forms and procedures regarding employment benefit packages. In addition, they receive instruction relating to other centrally controlled matters such as arranging for a substitute teacher. As in any large and highly structured organization, when procedures are followed, things flow smoothly (Allison, 1980; Hoy & Miskel, 1996).

B. Orientation and induction practices at the school level tend to differ from one school to the next within jurisdictions as well as between jurisdictions.

Principals and vice-principals are important players at this level and can take several measures to ease the transition for a first year teacher (Brock & Grady, 1997). Their support is essential to the success of an induction program (Dinham, 1992). It is interesting to note the discrepancies between the perceptions of first year teachers and those of their respective administrators in terms of what formal and informal measures are being taken to orient and induct the first year teacher. This may be a function of the lack of awareness by novice teachers of the support and assistance that is being provided

for them. Administrators may need to be more vocal about this support and assistance that they are providing for novice teachers.

C. Orientation to the teaching assignment also differs from school to school within jurisdictions and between jurisdictions.

Often teachers are aware well in advance of all, or at least some, of the courses that they will be teaching in an upcoming school year. Congruent with advice given by Brock and Grady (1997), the novice teachers generally appreciated or would have appreciated knowing the specifics of their teaching assignments in advance. It allowed or would have allowed precious time for gathering resources and preparing lessons. It is not uncommon for first year teachers to be assigned one or two courses to teach for which they have no formal preparation. In fact, this may be expected, because the literature was clear on the notion that first year teachers often receive the subjects that no one else on staff cares to teach (Gordon, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1987).

D. Novice teachers find a support group comprised of other novice teachers to be of value.

In many cases, the group seems to develop spontaneously and is informal in nature without structure or schedule. The support group might take many forms such as a car pool, a Thursday evening at the tavern, "TGIF" after-school get-togethers, and so on. The venue is not as important as what takes place in terms of discussion between the novices. Encouraging the establishment of these forms of support from peers addresses aspects of fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation as described by McDonald and Elias (1982).

E. First year teachers often look to other more experienced teachers for assistance with their teaching assignment.

The literature in the area of novice teacher induction discussed the importance of establishing mentorship programs for first year teachers (Carruthers, 1986, 1993; Huling-Austin, 1992; Lanier & Little, 1986; McNay & Cole, 1989). Although only two novice teachers in this study claimed to have a mentor, it is possible that there were teachers providing assistance to the other six who perhaps could be considered as informal mentors. Novice teachers looked for assistance to other teachers who were teaching in the same subject department, to teachers who were perceived to be mentor figures, or to administrators or other staff members in general (Castetter, 1996). Novice

teachers appreciated assistance as offered and, when necessary, would ask for assistance.

F. It might be said that first year teachers appreciate whatever induction and orientation activities occur at the jurisdiction and school levels.

Similar to Carruthers' (1986, 1993) findings, those with mentors value this particular form of assistance, and those without, look to various other individuals on staff for assistance. The size of the school might have something to do with the necessity of providing a mentor or encouraging the choice of a mentor. In terms of a novice teacher's introduction to their teaching assignment, it appears that mentoring individuals and support groups of other novice teachers are important facilitators (Casterter, 1996). Finally, an orientation program that includes an introduction to the community should be considered as part of an induction process for novice teachers (Casterter, 1996; Seyfarth, 1996).

Research Problem 2:

What role does the school administrator take and what role might the school administrator take in the induction process?

* The role that the school administrator takes in the induction process varies from school to school.

Administrators offer assistance in many forms to first year teachers. Many administrators recognize the value of involving other experienced staff members in the induction process and encouraging the development of a mentor/protégé relationship. The need that first year teachers have for assistance seems to vary from school to school, and the types of assistance required by them seems to vary from individual teacher to individual teacher.

Research Problem 3:

What are the constraints on school administrators that hinder their efforts to assist first year teachers?

* In regards to the administrator's evaluative function, first year teachers do not generally perceive this function as a constraint on the administrator's ability to provide them with assistance.

This conclusion is similar to what Brock and Grady (1997) suggest. It also resembles Carruthers' (1986) findings in his study of novice teacher induction in

Alberta. Administrators, on the other hand, tend to perceive their evaluative function as a constraint or believe that first year teachers perceive it as a constraint. This is compatible with Castetter's (1996) contention. Similar to Bolam's (1987) and Brock and Grady's (1997) suggestions, most other constraints mentioned by administrators in this study are really linked to a lack of time on their part to provide assistance or a lack of financial resources to create an innovative induction program. Lack of time was expressly mentioned by all of the administrators interviewed for this study. Several elements were identified by administrators that facilitate their efforts to assist first year teachers. Most important seemed to be a caring and knowledgeable staff. Subsumed by this measure would be an active and effective mentorship program within the school.

Research Problem 4:

What induction practices are perceived to be effective?

A. Generally speaking, it can be concluded that orientations at the jurisdiction level, the school level, the assignment level, and the community level are perceived by first year teachers and their school administrators to be effective.

Similar to Huling-Austin's (1988) findings, time and again the mention of assistance provided by colleagues and support staff figured prominently in the first year teachers' comments about their induction experiences. First year teachers are easily overwhelmed with the duties of their position and, as a result, appreciate any efforts made to smooth their transition to the role of teacher. In particular, they seem to appreciate knowing that someone is there to answer their questions and provide ideas as the year progresses. Administrators seem to be aware of the challenges that first year teachers face. They were cognizant of the fact that first year teachers may require substantial assistance from either the administrator or their colleagues. Interestingly, when I first asked the participating teachers about their ideas regarding an ideal induction program, most indicated that their personal experience had been the ideal.

B. Experiences such as volunteer work in schools and substitute teaching seem to prepare new teachers, to some degree, for the challenges of their first year.

Research Problem 5:

What constitutes a successful transition from the preservice stage of preparation to the conclusion of the first year?

* As Brock and Grady (1997) contended, many of the teachers in this study felt that they were not well enough prepared at the preservice stage for their first year.

Given that, it is crucial for jurisdictions and schools to provide thoughtful induction experiences for novice teachers. Administrators seemed to appreciate the importance of developing induction programs, and most saw value in establishing a mentorship component. Although induction programs varied from school to school and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, novice teachers found them very beneficial and appreciated whatever assistance and advice their administrators and colleagues gave them.

Recommendations for Practice, Theory and Research

Practice

The following recommendations are offered for consideration by Faculties of Education, school jurisdiction administrators, school administrators, and teachers.

There appears to be a general need for faculties of education to address the needs of first year teachers at various stages of a student's academic program. It is important to address the often-heard remarks, "I didn't know what to expect!" or "I wasn't adequately prepared!" Many first year teachers feel that they have not been adequately prepared at the preservice stage for their first year of teaching. Faculties of Education need to revisit the goals of their teacher preparation programs and measure the comments of their graduates against the intended outcomes. If one does not concur with the other, a study of possible modifications to the program should be undertaken. Faculties of Education should also avail themselves for consultation with individual jurisdictions and schools with the aim of developing effective induction programs to bridge the theory-practice gap, perceived or extant.

It is important for school administrators to acknowledge the deficit as expressed by novice teachers. Having done so, it is then incumbent upon them to establish a support system to address the needs of the novice. An initial step to take is to inform novices of the importance of identifying someone within the school who can provide assistance to them. They also need to be encouraged to seek out assistance whenever

they need it and from whomever they feel can provide such assistance, including the principal of the school.

Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the importance of induction programs and the role or the jurisdiction of school administrators in planning and executing the programs. Again, it would be desirable for Faculties of Education to address this need in their graduate-level principal preparation programs. For example, a course could be designed around the literature that supported novice teacher induction. The course could have as its culminating project the requirement of each student to develop an induction program for his/her school. Jurisdictions should provide appropriate inservice programs for their in-school administrators so that there are opportunities to share on a district-wide level effective induction practices. There would likely be implications for policy at the provincial level. Funding could be earmarked for the provision of expertise and programs in the area of teacher induction so that inservice programs at the district level would be meaningful experiences for administrators.

Principals might need incentives and ongoing encouragement to develop effective programs of induction. Again, this might have implications for policy at the provincial level and certainly has implications for funding. The lack of financial resources and the lack of time were a constraints on school administrators' ability to provide assistance to novice teachers. The funding of appropriate induction programs might need to be addressed. Principals provide assistance where possible and also credited the ability of their knowledgeable and caring colleagues on staff to provide necessary assistance to novices. Mentorship programs, where in place, proved to be very effective means for assisting novice teachers. School administrators seem to realize the value of such programs, whether or not they have implemented such a program in their respective schools.

Although novice teachers tended not to view their principal's evaluative function as a constraint on his/her ability to provide assistance, principals held the opposite view. Principals observed that first year teachers may not be seeking assistance from them because they are responsible for providing for the evaluation of the novice and, ultimately, providing a recommendation for or against awarding new teachers with a continuous contract of employment in the jurisdiction. In light of this, provincial policy in this area might need review. Responsibility for evaluation might be more appropriately placed with the central office administrators or supervisors rather than on the school administrators. Time previously spent on personnel evaluation could be devoted to assisting novice teachers and other teachers in need.

Principals should be encouraged to spend more time and effort on orienting novice teachers to their teaching assignments. The notion that one has a degree and is therefore qualified and ready to go into the classroom and assume full teaching responsibilities should be critically examined. The value of planning and implementing a thoughtful induction to the jurisdiction, the school, the assignment, and the community has merit and should be carefully considered.

Theory

Effectively organized and executed teacher induction programs certainly contribute to the improvement of schools. School administrators, through effective leadership, can make valuable contributions in this area and thus have a positive impact on the teaching profession. In this section I comment on the conceptual framework that provided the initial guidance for this study, and I explore nine metaphors and their potential for increasing our comprehension of what it is like to be a novice teacher and our awareness of the process of teacher induction. In addition, I comment briefly on the education and professional development programs for administrators and, finally, on job satisfaction and the first year teacher.

Conceptual Framework. When I constructed the Conceptual Framework for this study it was my intention to provide myself with a map of the territory that I would be investigating (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The Conceptual Framework was used to guide the construction of the research problems, which, in turn, gave this study its initial orientation. In relation to the relevant literature surrounding the topic of teacher induction, the Conceptual Framework aptly illustrates various stages of the process an individual teacher follows in his/her life as a teacher. The focus of the study was narrowed into an investigation of the various induction and orientation processes at the school, jurisdiction and community levels. The findings of the study would suggest several additions to the Conceptual Framework. Table 9.1 is a depiction of the Conceptual Framework. Additions are identified by broken lines and *italics*.

Novice teachers generally found the Jurisdiction orientation meeting useful in that they were provided with pertinent employment related information as well as introductions to central office staff and other novices teaching in the jurisdiction. At the School level, novice teachers appreciated opportunities for socializing with their colleagues after school hours. This is an addition to the model. Novice teachers typically appreciate assistance with their many assigned duties, especially the classes they are responsible for teaching. Assistance can be provided through a formal mentor

Orientation and Induction

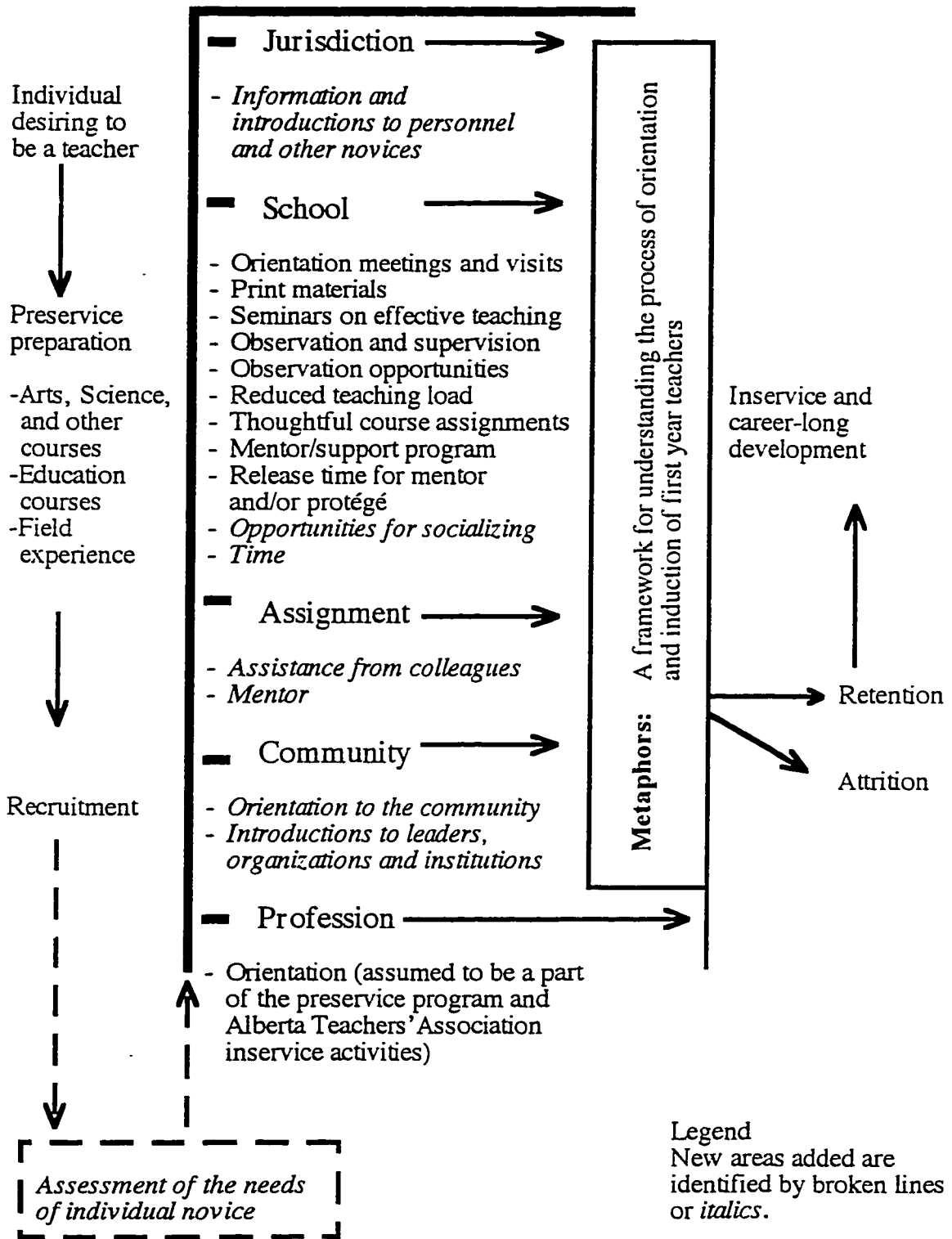


Figure 9.1: Revised Conceptual Framework
The Induction Process: A Component Of A Teacher's Career Development

arrangement or less formally, through their colleagues. This aspect has been included in the revised framework. Consideration needs to be given to the possibility of developing orientation programs for novice teachers to the community in which they find themselves teaching and living. Such programs might include introductions or orientations to the community's leaders, organizations, and institutions.

In so far as possible, induction programs should be tailored to the needs of the individual novice teachers.

In Chapter 8 I explored metaphors with the aim of enriching our understanding of the induction process and our comprehension of what it is like to be a novice teacher. The nine metaphors chosen and developed were Sink or Swim, Sports Team, Master-Apprentice, Physician-Intern, Prison, Zoo, Military, Orchestra, and Tailor Made. Each metaphor has its limitations in terms of increasing our understanding of the reality of being a novice teacher and of the process of induction to teaching. Morgan (1986) suggested that a multiple metaphor approach can increase our understanding of organizations and their functions. Ratsoy (1997) pointed out that metaphors have become a fashionable and creative means of exploring and understanding the functioning of organizations such as schools and the individuals within them. Through a multiple image approach, Ratsoy (1997) provides an in-depth conceptualization and explication of current teacher evaluation policies and practice. Metaphors like the structural, connoisseurship, professional, deficiency, roulette, political, collaborative, cultural, legal, and growth and development have been employed by Ratsoy to deepen our understanding of such policies and practice. In the current study a multiple metaphor approach was used to enhance insight into and understanding of the initial stage of the teaching career and of the needs associated with it. The metaphors allow one to step back from the topic of novice teacher induction and view the process from a new perspective. School administrators might find this to be useful for gaining further insights into induction programs and their utility. If players are inducted into sports teams, why not into school staffs? If soldiers are inducted into the military, why not teachers into the profession of teaching?

Strengths and weaknesses were presented for each of the chosen metaphors. Although each metaphor had some relevance to the findings of the study and thus increased my understanding of first year teacher induction processes, no single metaphor provided a complete picture. Some metaphors, however, may have greater utility in terms of enriching our understanding of the realities of being a novice teacher.

Some of the metaphors overlap with others, and, indeed, some are very similar in terms of the understandings that they provide.

Certainly, the Sink or Swim metaphor presents an acute view of what it is like to be a first year teacher from the perspective of the novice. Its live-or-die perspective fits neatly into the dualistic perceptions that have become so common and that run so deep in our Western culture. The dualism does not recognize that there might be stages of successful growth in terms of mastering the art and science of teaching; but then, neither do many first year teachers. It is simply a pass-or-fail view that prevails among many learners at all levels of our educational systems, including novice teachers. There is nothing that can adequately prepare a novice teacher for the rigors of the first year of teaching. Preservice programs valiantly attempt to do the best they can to achieve this, but fall far short of portraying and creating the reality that awaits the novices. In many ways surviving the first year is very much like the non-swimmer learning to swim by being thrown into the deep end.

The Tailor-Made metaphor is useful to our understanding in that it describes for us the ideal induction experience for first year teachers. It is an inclusive and *à la carte* approach in terms of providing the forms of assistance we know to be of value to novice teachers. Each novice is respected as an individual within this model and is placed in a program that is tailored to his/her specific needs. This accounts for differences in needs that present themselves between first year teachers within the same school and between schools within the same jurisdiction.

The Sports Team metaphor has limited value in terms of describing the experiences of a first year teacher. Structurally, it seems sound in terms of creating the bureaucratic hierarchy that exists in schools. It also places a great deal of emphasis on a play book, not only for the rookies but also for the more experienced players. This may be likened to the school's policy handbook or the handbook that a novice teacher might be given as part of an induction program. The metaphor goes beyond describing the realities of the first year teacher experience in terms of projecting the overall picture as two pieces rather than one. That is to say, the metaphor relies on there being an opposing team. It is not usual to view the novice teacher as belonging to a team that is going head to head with an opposing team.

The Master-Apprentice metaphor presents some interesting parallel views between the training within the trades and the training of teachers. It has some utility in terms of assisting with our understanding of what it is like to be a first year teacher and the processes through which one goes. Preservice programs and on-the-job training are

common processes. Differences in levels of decision-making autonomy and the concept of a journeyman having to give approval for the work that an apprentice does sets the metaphor apart from the reality of being a novice teacher. A novice teacher, like a veteran teacher of 20 years, takes responsibility for his/her students. The autonomy for decision making is the same for the novice as it is for the veteran. Although the principal or mentor teacher may be likened to the journeyman or the master, he/she does not have the same authority over the novice. The nature of work differs substantially as well. Trades are concerned with “things” as compared to teachers who are concerned with “people.” In addition, it is a stretch to compare the rigid structures of schools as places of work to the many and varied places of work where tradespeople are found.

The Physician-Intern metaphor provides a fairly good description of the process of becoming a teacher. On-the-job training and ongoing formative evaluation are essential to the novice in both professions. Assistance is provided by those practitioners who are proficient in their areas of specialization and frequent evaluation occurs throughout the program leading to certification. Like the Master-Apprentice, however, the relationship between the Physician and Intern is different in some aspects compared to that of the novice teacher and principal. Novice teachers enjoy much greater autonomy regarding their work than do residents. Novice teachers are viewed as certified teachers and accorded all rights and responsibilities that go with that.

The Prison, Zoo, and Military metaphors are very limited in terms of the understanding that they provide us. They are predicated on strict lines of authority and rigid institutional structures. These metaphors may be more illustrative of schools and the processes of teacher induction in days gone by.

The Orchestra metaphors seem to have less descriptive value in terms of what it is like to be a novice teacher. It offer some insights into the relationships between the various individuals in a school with whom the novice will work. It does not account for the degree of isolation in which teachers work. It does not accurately portray the relationship between the teacher and principal. It is a relationship that is less directive and more respective of spheres of autonomy.

To reiterate, Morgan (1986) contended that it is important to realize that a metaphor is simply another frame through which we view a particular element of what we wish for a greater understanding. By imposing a particular metaphorical interpretation on something, we are “highlighting certain interpretations” and thus “tend to force others into a background role” (p. 13). It is important, in an effort to expand our understanding of something, that we approach it from various perspectives. To

achieve a greater understanding of first year teacher induction processes, I have explored nine metaphors. Each of these metaphors can stand alone and provide some insight into the process. Viewed holistically, they give a much more interesting and richer portrayal of the induction processes and the theory surrounding those processes.

Education and professional development. Principal preparation programs offered at the district level or through university programs deal with a wide array of important topics. To be effective, preparation programs, according to Griffiths, Stout, and Forsyth (1988), should consist of studying theoretical models and a technical core of school administration knowledge, as well as developing problem-solving skills. Further, participants in preparation programs would partake in a supervised practicum and, additionally, would have to demonstrate minimum levels of competence in various aspects of the job. A component of the core of school administration knowledge is a study of school personnel (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). Planning and implementing teacher induction programs would fit within this core area of knowledge. The study of relevant metaphors would also be useful. Miskel (1990) further asserted that for administrator preparation programs to be successful at meeting the needs of principals today, there must be an increase in faculty commitment to and involvement in research.

Job satisfaction. A first year teacher's introduction to his/her career does not have to be the sink-or-swim introduction that has been so commonly described in the literature and by novice teachers. Indeed, effective school administrators should recognize the possibility of a linkage existing between job satisfaction of novice teachers, expectancy, motivation, and a thoughtful induction program (Miskel, Defrain, & Wilcox, 1980; Miskel, McDonald, & Bloom, 1983). School administrators play a vital role in the planning and success of induction programs. The organizational climate of their school as well as the value that they place on such programs will determine the degree of success that the program achieves.

Research

This qualitative study involved interviews with eight novice teachers and their principals or vice-principals in six schools within three jurisdictions in the province of Alberta. The limitations and delimitations of the study are recognized and have been presented in Chapter 2. For purposes of generalizability, it is recommended that a larger study be undertaken on a province-wide basis with a sampling of schools from all of the jurisdictions. Based on the findings of this larger study, the provincial Department of

Education and the various bodies of professionals associated with education in the province might decide to work on a policy regarding induction.

A second area of research that needs to be undertaken in regards to first year teacher induction is related to administrator leadership style and induction program organization and effectiveness. As a result of conducting this study, I became aware of the great deal of difference in leadership style that exists from one school to another. Personal style might be linked to size of school and the type of induction program developed might also be linked to school size. The smaller the school, the closer the contact the principal seemed to have with his teaching colleagues. Also, the smaller the school, the more informal the approach to induction and orientation seemed to be.

A third area of potential research would involve looking at the induction of professors at the postsecondary level and making comparisons with the induction of novice teachers at the elementary and secondary school levels. Given the increased sense of isolation at the university level, there seems to be a great need for induction programs of a year or two in duration and for the development of a mentorship component. Many new professors are simply given an office and a list of courses that they will be responsible for teaching. Time is not spent introducing or orienting them to the many other responsibilities of their job such as graduate supervision, obtaining a research grant, and so on.

Further, it would be beneficial to undertake extensive and wide ranging cross-cultural studies in the area of teacher induction in an effort to ascertain what is being done for novice teachers in other parts of the world (Paine, 1990; Shiina & Chonan, 1993; Sparks, 1993). The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariate has published its findings on teacher training and professional development in three of its eight member nations (Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997). In a cross-cultural study of principals' managerial behaviors, Chung and Miskel (1989) found that the job tasks performed by school principals in Korea and the United States were very similar to one another. Taking this one step further, it would be beneficial to study the specifics of the tasks, where interesting differences in approach to induction of first year teachers might be found. For instance, research from Japan indicates that an effective induction and mentorship program has been developed and implemented in their schools (Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997).

Personal Reflections

The road has been long and, at times, arduous. Reflecting back on this experience has provided me with several insights that I would like to share with others who have taken an interest in this study.

This qualitative study offered the participants, both novice teachers and their administrators, the opportunity to share their perceptions and insights into the process of first year teacher induction. The interviews provided the participants with an opportunity to reflect upon the needs of first year teachers and the role of the school in providing for these needs. Novice teachers had an opportunity to reflect upon the programs that they had experienced. Such a study required the participants to evaluate the benefits, weaknesses and goals of their school's induction program. In addition, participants were invited to dream about what they perceived the ideal induction program to be. It was interesting in that the participants were not eager to criticize the program in which they had participated or to make suggestions for change. The general consensus was that the program in which each individual had participated was a very good program. Principals were aware of many of the suggestions for induction program components that are found in the literature. Suggestions such as reduced teaching loads for novices and release time for mentors and novices were understandably viewed as too costly given the recent cuts to education. Administrators therefore did not consider these for implementation. Cost-neutral items such as the provision of a mentor, thoughtful course assignments, and observation opportunities, although identified by administrators, were not always implemented by them in their schools. This I found perplexing.

In terms of the design of my study, I would at another time approach it from a much less structured perspective. In retrospect I found that my schedule of questions was too rigid in terms of focus and did not allow the participants to really describe what their experience as novice or "supervisor of the novice" had been like. I would ask fewer questions, and those that I would ask would be broad in nature and very open ended.

I have learned much about the topic I set out to study. My original intent was to inform my curiosity about what the administrator's role is in the induction process in an effort to assist me in constructing an effective induction program for myself once I am back at work in schools and, potentially, for other administrators. The study, I feel, has allowed me, in some measure, to accomplish these goals.

And now, a word about methodology. The transition from the positivist, quantitative paradigm to the naturalistic, qualitative paradigm has not been easy for me. In fact, the process of conversion continues. For my Master's degree research requirement, I conducted a study of high school seniors in an attempt to ascertain whether or not there was a relationship between learning style and achievement (Swanson, 1993). Data were collected from an n of 46 using the Myers Briggs Type Indicator questionnaire. In addition, scores from teacher administered exams and the provincial Diploma Exams were obtained. I was involved in the realm of statistical analysis and was astounded with the results I could produce using measures like Chi-square, t-tests, and Fisher's z_r . The study I would eventually undertake for the research requirement of the Doctoral program I enrolled in necessitated a shift in research paradigms. That shift I have attempted, with some degree of success I hope.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedules

Interview Schedule for Principals

1. Is there a written school and/or jurisdiction policy on the orientation and induction process of beginning teachers? (request copies).
2. Does your school have an information handbook for new and first-year teachers? Does the jurisdiction have one? (request copies).
3. As a new beginning teacher on your school's staff this year, what would I experience in terms of an orientation and induction?
4. Describe your role in the orientation and induction of beginning teachers in your school.
5. Explain whether or not your evaluation function as principal affects your assistance function with regard to novice teachers.
6. Identify and describe some of the more effective practices in your school's and jurisdiction's induction program.
7. Discuss what you feel would be the ideal induction program - assuming that you had sufficient resources available at your disposal.
8. How does this differ from what is presently done in your school and jurisdiction?
9. The literature indicates that an effective induction program might include some of the following items.
 - reduced teaching load for the first-year teacher
 - development of a mentor/protégé partnership
 - released time for the mentor teacher
 - ongoing program of professional development for mentor/protégéPlease comment on the appropriateness of these items to an induction program and the feasibility of incorporating them into your present program.
10. What sorts of things act to facilitate your efforts as principal to assist your beginning teachers? Discuss.
12. What sorts of things act to inhibit your efforts as principal to assist your beginning teachers. Discuss.

Interview Schedule for Novice Teachers

1. Describe your introduction to this particular school jurisdiction you are working for. In what ways were you initially oriented to the jurisdiction? Who was involved in the orientation process?
2. Describe your introduction to this school. In what ways were you initially orientated to the school? Who was involved in the orientation process?
3. Describe the introduction to your teaching assignment. Who introduced you to your assignment?
4. How did you come to be acquainted with the community in which the school is located?
5. As a teacher, what's it like living in this community?
6. Is it necessary to provide an orientation to the school's surrounding community? Discuss.
7. What sorts of assistance would you find beneficial that could be provided by a school principal?
8. What were some of the most effective practices in terms of your induction to the jurisdiction?
9. ...to the school?
10. ...to your teaching assignment?
11. ...to the community?
12. What were some of the least effective or ineffective practices in terms of your induction in general?
13. Tell me what your transition to the classroom was like. Had you been well prepared for the demands of the job?
14. If you were responsible for designing an induction program for first-year teachers, what sort of things would you undertake to do? What would the ideal induction program look like?
15. Why do you feel such an "ideal" program is not currently in place in your school?

Appendix B: Correspondence



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7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7625
Fax (403) 492-2024

October 15, 1996

Mr. Superintendent
Alberta School Regional Div. #XX
Street & Ave.,
Somewhere, Alberta
TXX XXX

Dear Sir:

I am a Doctoral student in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta. Under the supervision of Dr. Eugene Ratsoy, I am preparing my research proposal on the types and forms of assistance which principals can provide to ensure a successful experience for first-year teachers.

Currently, I am compiling an inventory of novice teachers (teachers in their initial year of teaching). It would be of great assistance to me if you would arrange to have the attached form completed by someone in your Divisional office to provide me the names and locations of novice teachers in your jurisdiction as well as their respective principals.

Preparing this inventory is the first stage of the study. At the next stage I will be seeking your permission to contact a small number of these teachers and their principals for interviews about their adjustment to teaching. The inventory of names and addresses of those not selected will be destroyed at that time. Confidentiality is assured.

I appreciate your assistance in this matter. Should you have any questions please contact me at 988-9408 (res.) or 492-4913 (office), or my supervisor, Dr. Eugene Ratsoy at 492-3373 or at his home at 436-9996.

I have attached a stamped, addressed envelope for your convenience or the information can be faxed to me at 492-2024.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Mark Swanson

Mr. Superintendent
Alberta School Regional Div. #XX
Street & Ave.,
Somewhere, Alberta
TXX XXX

Do you have any novice teachers (teachers in their initial year of teaching) working within your region?

Yes No

If "Yes", please continue. If "No" please mail or fax as is.

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Please return to:
Mark Swanson
7-104 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta
T6G 2G5

Fax: 492-2024

Note: A novice teacher is a teacher in his/her initial year of teaching.

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name of novice teacher: _____

Name of school: _____

Address of School: _____

Name of school's principal: _____

Type of school (circle grades taught): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Please duplicate this page if you have more than seven novice teachers in your jurisdiction.

Please return to:
Mark Swanson
7-104 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta
T6G 2G5

Fax: 492-2024



University of Alberta
Edmonton

Department of Educational Policy Studies
Educational Administration, Educational Foundations, Adult and Higher Education
Faculty of Education

Canada T6G 2G5

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7625
Fax (403) 492-2024

May 7, 1997

Ms. School Principal
Local School
General Delivery
Somewhere, AB
TXX XXX

Dear Ms. Principal:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. As part of the degree requirements, I am conducting a study that will focus on the role of the principal in the orientation and induction of novice teachers in secondary schools beyond the greater Edmonton metropolitan area. The purpose of this study is to provide insight into current orientation and induction practices and also the orientation and induction needs of first year teachers.

I have your superintendent's permission to contact you, other members of your staff, and at least one first year teachers on your staff as potential candidates in my study. You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are currently working with at least one first year teacher and your superintendent has identified you as a principal who has some expertise in this area to share. I would very much appreciate you participation. I will be contacting you by telephone in a few days time to determine your willingness to be involved.

As a participant in this study you would take part in an audiotaped interview with me at a mutually convenient time and location. The interview will be approximately an hour in length.

As a participant you would have the right to withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. It is recognized that you would also have the right to withdraw your permission to allow me to use all or part of the transcript of the interview in which you take part. A copy of the transcript would be forwarded to you to allow you to check for accuracy. You will be invited to confirm, clarify, or reject any parts of your transcribed statements. Should you decide to exercise your "opt-out" or "veto" right, you may do so at any time by telephoning me at 492-4913, emailing me at mswanson@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca, or writing me at the above address. You may also decide to opt out at any point during the interview simply by stating a desire to do so.

The study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Educational Policy Studies. Confidentiality and anonymity are assured. In the dissertation, your name, the name of your school, the town, and the jurisdiction in which it is located will be altered to protect your identity. If you desire, you will be provided with a summary of the dissertation findings and conclusions arising from the study.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to speaking with you by telephone in a few days time. If at any time, you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact me in one of the three ways identified in the fourth paragraph or telephone my supervisor, Dr. Eugene Ratsoy at 492-3373.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Swanson



University of Alberta
Edmonton

Department of Educational Policy Studies
Educational Administration, Educational Foundations, Adult and Higher Education
Faculty of Education

Canada T6G 2G5

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7625
Fax (403) 492-2024

May 7, 1997

Ms. Novice Teacher
Local School
General Delivery
Somewhere, AB
TXX XXX

Dear Ms. Novice Teacher:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. As part of the degree requirements, I am conducting a study that will focus on the role of the principal in the orientation and induction of novice teachers in secondary schools beyond the greater Edmonton metropolitan area. The purpose of this study is to provide insight into current orientation and induction practices and also the orientation and induction needs of first year teachers.

I have your superintendent's permission to contact you as a potential candidate in my study. I would very much appreciate your participation. I will be contacting you by telephone in a few days time to determine your willingness to be involved.

As a participant in this study you would take part in an audiotaped interview with me at a mutually convenient time and location. The interview will be approximately an hour in length.

As a participant you would have the right to withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. It is recognized that you would also have the right to withdraw your permission to allow me to use all or part of the transcript of the interview in which you take part. A copy of the transcript would be forwarded to you to allow you to check for accuracy. You will be invited to confirm, clarify, or reject any parts of your transcribed statements. Should you decide to exercise your "opt-out" or "veto" right, you may do so at any time by telephoning me at 492-4913, emailing me at mswanson@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca, or writing me at the above address. You may also decide to opt out at any point during the interview simply by stating a desire to do so.

The study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Educational Policy Studies. Confidentiality and anonymity are assured. In the dissertation, your name, the name of your school, the town, and the jurisdiction in which it is located will be altered to protect your identity. If you desire, you will be provided with a summary of the dissertation findings and conclusions arising from the study.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to speaking with you by telephone in a few days time. If at any time, you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact me in one of the three ways identified in the fourth paragraph or telephone my supervisor, Dr. Eugene Ratsoy at 492-3373.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Swanson



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Edmonton

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Canada T6G 2G5

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7625
Fax (403) 492-2024

September 15, 1997

Ms. Study Participant
Local School
General Delivery
Somewhere, AB
TXX XXX

Dear Participant:

Re: Study on the induction of first year teachers

Attached is a copy of the transcript of the interview that you completed with me in June of this year for the above-noted study. Would you please review the transcript and advise me if there are any comments in it that misrepresent your views or that you would not like me to include in the analysis. I have enclosed a stamped, addressed envelope to assist you in this regard. Simply strike out any words or lines of words, complete the enclosed form, and return both to me. Should the transcript be all right, return the completed form to me. I would very much appreciate hearing from you by October 17.

Please note that this copy of the transcript is a semi-edited account of the interview. Should any of your comments be quoted in the study, they will be edited. Additionally, any names mentioned or comments made which may identify you, others in your school, your school or jurisdiction will be changed if those sections are quoted or referred to.

My best wishes for your continued success.

Respectfully,

Mark Swanson, Ph. D Cand.

Re: Study on the induction of first year teachers.

I hereby give Mark Swanson (Ph. D. Cand.) permission to quote any part of the transcript of the interview in which I participated regarding the above study.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Re: Study on the induction of first year teachers.

I am restricting Mark Swanson's (Ph.D. Cand.) use of the transcript of the interview in which I participated regarding the above study. I hereby give him permission to use only those sections of the transcript which I have not stricken.

Signature: _____

Name: _____



University of Alberta
Edmonton

Department of Educational Policy Studies
Educational Administration, Educational Foundations, Adult and Higher Education
Faculty of Education

Canada T6G 2G5

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7625
Fax (403) 492-2024

February 18, 1999

Dear Participant:

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the three chapters of my dissertation that report the information you provided during the interview(s). My supervisor has recommended that I return these chapters to you so that you may read them and advise me if there is anything that you are uncomfortable with. Although I have provided you with a copy of the interview transcripts, I agree with my supervisor that it is best to err on the side of caution and give you another opportunity to veto any quotes or general comments that you are concerned about.

You will notice that you, your school, your town, and the school jurisdiction you work for have been given a pseudonym and also, as far as possible, information about you, your school, your town, and the jurisdiction you work for has been presented in as general a manner as possible to reduce the likelihood that you can be identified. This is standard practice in this kind of research.

While you are reading this please keep in mind that even though you know who you are, others will not. While dissertations have a reputation for not being widely read, it is possible that at some point in the future, a person who may know you, your school, or the jurisdiction may read the document and guess at your identity. I would also like to publish one or more articles based on the study, although in these I will report the findings in a more general form.

Please read these chapters carefully. A report form is attached which will allow you to respond to them if you so desire. Please sign the report form and return to me in the stamped self-addressed envelope provided by March 5, 1999. It is important that I get approval from each participant. Should you have any questions or concerns, please phone me at 780-439-3849 after 6:00 p.m.

Please dispose of the document when you have read it as it is possible that a participant would like to have changes made. I will send you a summary of the document when it is complete and has been defended.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

Regards

Mark Swanson

To: Mark Swanson

Re: Dissertation Member Check #2

From: _____

I have read the material from Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

I do not have any concerns with the material.
(Your response to the material or suggestions would be appreciated-
use space below).

I have concerns - they are as follows:

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix C: Résumé

Resumé

Mark Daniel Swanson

Born at Clarsholm, Alberta on August 4, 1957

Post Secondary Education

- | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1997 | Ph. D. Candidate in Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta |
| 1993 | Master's of Education Degree in Teaching
University of Lethbridge |
| 1990 | Master's of Arts Degree in Religious Studies
Gonzaga University |
| 1982 | Diploma in Political Science
University of Alberta |
| 1981 | Bachelor of Arts Degree
University of Alberta |
| 1979 | Bachelor of Education Degree
University of Alberta |

Teaching Experience

Subjects taught: Social Studies and Religious Studies; grades 7 to 12

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1993 to 1995 | Palliser Regional School Division #26 |
| 1983 to 1991 | Wainwright Roman Catholic Separate School District #31 |
| 1982 to 1983 | Willow Creek School Division #28 |

Administrative Experience

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1986 to 1990 | Vice-Principal, Blessed Sacrament School |
| 1993 to 1995 | Principal, Coalhurst High School |