

Guiding early educators with andragogy: A mixed-methods case study of new teacher induction,
support, and development

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This study set out to evaluate the effectiveness of a multi-year new-teacher induction program, which encompassed a first-year mentoring component and four years of continuous professional development to support new teachers during their pre-tenure phase. Using a mixed methods case study approach, the research sought to determine the most beneficial professional supports for new teachers, gauge the influence of sustained professional development on them, examine the correlation between the program and (1) new teacher retention, (2) self-efficacy, and (3) overall job satisfaction, and assess the broader impact of a new teacher induction program on teacher quality. Data collection involved both qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys, interviews, and the analysis of teacher retention and evaluation data. The study employed Logit model regression analyses for teacher retention data to explore retention odds ratios and Fixed Effect Regression models to scrutinize teacher evaluation data, investigating the impact of various factors on teacher evaluation scores. Key findings demonstrated that the *Grow to Great* induction program notably enhanced teachers' self-efficacy, pedagogical skills, professional learning communities, and access to support systems. Nevertheless, the program's sustainability faced challenges due to elevated attrition rates within the school or district, affecting teachers' engagement in the program. These results underscore the significant influence of school climate on teachers' capacity to learn and develop professionally. The implications of this research stress the need for continuous professional support for new teachers throughout their pre-tenure years and the critical importance of identifying effective support mechanisms for their development. Future research should prioritize conducting longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impact of new teacher induction programs on teaching practices and student assessment scores, thus shedding light on their enduring contributions to educational quality.

Research should also delve into strategies, interventions, and support systems designed to bridge the learning gap between veteran and pre-tenured educators adopting research-based best practices. A longitudinal approach will offer insights into challenges, successes, and the role of ongoing professional development in sustaining improvements. Additionally, there is a need for research focused on developing a teacher evaluation system that guarantees reliability and transparency while fostering intrinsic motivation among educators, encouraging continuous improvement in instructional practices. Such a system should place emphasis on constructive feedback and personalized development pathways to ultimately enhance overall teaching quality and empower educators.

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Ellen

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated in loving memory of my dear mom and dad, Louise and Robert Moskowitz, the two extraordinary parents who shaped my life. Your love, guidance, and presence continue to be a source of strength even in your absence. This dissertation is a tribute to the incredible parents you were, the inspiration you gave me, the belief in myself you have instilled and the everlasting commitment to living and learning. I carry your love with me as I navigate life's journey.

To my precious nieces Olivia and Anna, this book is lovingly dedicated to the two brightest stars in my life. Your infectious laughter, curiosity and boundless energy have brought immense joy to my world. As I share these words with you, I hope they ignite your imagination and inspire you to dream big. May you always know how deeply loved and cherished you are and may this work serve as a reminder of the infinite possibilities that await you. May you pursue your dreams with unwavering determination.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Education continues to be the backbone of Western society (Golden, 1999); the process of teaching and learning has been one in which people have engaged in various forms for centuries. As Hansen (2021) framed teaching in his book, *Reimagining the Call to Teach*, “Teaching means leading others to know what they did not know before. . . It means leading others to know how to do things they could not do before. . . It means showing others the attitudes or orientations they did not embody before. . . And it means leading others to believe things they did not believe before” (p. 1). Although the content and context has changed over time, the idea and importance of learning, and teaching, has not. In America, although “informal” education occurred from its founding, the first public school - Boston Latin- opened in Massachusetts in 1635 (Business Wire, 2010). With this school opening, so did the formal career of teaching.

Teaching is a calling for many educators. Driven by the sense of personal fulfillment, public service, devotion to human well-being, an outward-looking sentiment or passion, teaching is the career choice for tens of thousands of dedicated teachers (Hansen, 2021). Factors such as low pay, legislative bureaucracy, and lack of school safety continue to weigh on and impact prospective teachers' decisions to enter and stay in teaching (Maxouris & Zdanowicz, 2022). These challenges have led to a shortage of teachers and decreased enrollment in preservice education programs throughout the country. The education field is in a national crisis and teachers, our greatest resource, seem to be running out.

Not Enough Teachers

The teacher shortage continues to plague our school districts. With what seems like decades of teacher shortages, schools around the country struggle to adequately fill their classrooms with high-quality educators (Sherratt, 2016). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996), released a report entitled, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future, Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future." The purpose of this report was written with the express focus on providing strategies to improve teacher education programs and training, heighten the public perception of the teaching profession and retaining teachers (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996). Nearly twenty years after this report was published, the LPI: Learning Policy Institute published their own report in 2016, that nearly mimics the concerns that were highlighted in the previous NCTA report (Sutcher et al., 2016). This report indicated that the teacher shortage of 2016 was motivated by four primary factors:

- A decline in teacher preparation enrollments
- District efforts to return to pre-recession pupil-teacher ratios
- Increasing student enrollment, and
- High teacher attrition

This projected shortage, in 2016, was anticipated to reach its peak in 2021 with the demand for teachers reaching 300,000 teachers per year, with less than 200,000 applicants (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996, p. 15). Little did the world predict that just four years later, educators would be faced with one of their greatest challenges of all time. On March 17, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic effectively brought the world to a halt, closing schools and forcing educators to figure out a way to continue instruction completely on-line. Teachers reported feeling over-worked, emotionally drained, and unsure of their future (Bill et

al., 2022). The effects of this period on the field of education are clear. While the data have yet to be captured formally, news reports have widely documented the massive teacher retirements and great struggle school districts are currently having to find new teachers to fill those vacancies. Carver-Thomas (2022) stated:

Michigan, for example, saw a 44% jump in midyear retirements between 2020 and 2021. Similarly, in California, statewide teacher retirement data show a 26% increase in retirements in the second half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019. One large California district saw increases of 25% in retirements, 66% in resignations, and 50% in leaves of absence since the pandemic began (p. 4).

These numbers, although just reports from a few states, are staggering. The increase in early retirements because of the stress put on teachers due to the pandemic just adds to the increasingly complex problem of having too many teacher vacancies to fill.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Teacher Shortage

The national teacher shortage was a crisis prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but now after surviving what many educators have described as two of the most challenging years of their personal and professional lives, many are calling it quits, and very few young people are entering the field (Ghildial, 2021). In a study conducted on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the perceptions of teaching on undergraduate perspective teachers (UPTs), Bill et al. (2022) found that, “more than a third (35%) of UPTs reported becoming less interested in teaching because of the pandemic” (p. 37). While more than half of the respondents reported no change in their perceptions of teaching *because* of the pandemic, more than fifty percent of those undergraduates had already decided to not pursue a career in education *before* the pandemic hit. These

undergraduate prospective teachers highlighted their diminished interest in teaching based on how they saw educators being treated during the pandemic, being put in harm's way, all of this "illustrated school districts and the broader public's disrespect of the teaching profession" (Bill et al., 2022, p. 38). With the influx of work-from-home jobs with the safety and appeal coupled with the very public portrayal of the challenges educators had to face daily being on the front lines of the pandemic, it would be hard to anticipate many new undergraduates rushing to choose education as their future career.

The Impact of the Teacher Shortage on Schools

The effects that teacher shortages have on schools is vast. This struggle, compounded by increasing teacher resignations and the struggle to recruit new educators into the field makes the impact of those shortages even more substantial (Dos Santos, 2021). Each time a teacher leaves a school – or leaves the profession completely – there is a high financial cost that is associated with this resignation. In 2007, it was estimated that the nation's schools spent approximately \$7 billion dollars on replacing teachers that left their schools the year before, a decade later because of inflation, that cost went up to \$8 billion dollars (Sutcher et al., 2019). The case for teacher retention is both a fiscal one and a cultural one. With less district funds and resources being spent on recruitment and training, more money would be available to invest in classrooms.

Additionally, not only do we need to think of the human resources perspective of the difficult process to recruit, interview, and hire high quality teachers, but also the impact that this turnover has on schools and students. "Teacher shortages can significantly depress student achievement, as schools can often cancel courses due to vacancies or staff classes with substitutes and underprepared teachers who are not certified to teach their subject matter"

(Carver-Thomas, 2022, p.5). This impact on students is great and can have a lasting effect on their learning and achievement for many years to come. Good teachers engage students in learning, inspire them with their own passion and empower them to take risks and persevere through difficult tasks. When teachers are transient, temporary, or constantly in flux, a student's ability to build this connection to a teacher and school community is at risk (Darling-Hammond, 2010). While staffing classes with substitutes or underprepared teachers might be an effective way to get the basic operations of a building to work, the lasting impact on the school's sense of community, a student's engagement in learning, the community's attachment and, might take years to restore (Sutcher et al., 2016). Teachers play a crucial role in a student's success, high turnover rate of teachers may impact a school's ability to offer a rigorous academic education, which can result in lower student achievement (Sorensen & Ladd, 2020).

Recruiting High-Quality Teachers

With so many vacancies, the responsibility to recruit, hire and retain quality teacher candidates is of the utmost importance. Teachers are the backbone of every school district. Not only do teachers build the culture of the school but have a huge impact on the overall success of students. Darling-Hammond (2010) suggested that substantial evidence suggests that well-prepared, expert, experienced, teachers are among the most important determinants of student achievement. Teachers play a significant role in student achievement and success; having highly qualified teachers guarantees higher student performance (Sorensen & Ladd, 2020). Teacher preparation, teacher education and teacher certification and even the scores received on teacher exams are all determinants of teacher quality that have shown to have a direct correlation to student achievement (Clotfelter et al., 2007). When teachers have graduated from an accredited college and are certified in their area of instruction, they are more properly prepared to support

students through strong pedagogical practices, classroom connections and strong content knowledge. When recruiting new teachers, it is ideal to have educators that are certified in their area of practice and have been a part of an accredited teacher preparation program (Clotfelter et al., 2007), as they are more likely to remain in the teaching profession, which over time, will assist in increasing instructional practices, but enrollment in teacher-preparation programs has declined sharply. In New York, which enrollment is 10% of the nation's teachers, participation in state teaching programs has decreased by more than half since 2009 (Gabor, 2022). This drop in enrollment in teacher preparation programs leaves little hope for districts looking to fill so many vacancies with prepared and qualified teachers. While New York is just one example, Partelow (2019), in her research found that, since 2010, there has been an increasing enrollment in bachelor's degree programs, there has, at the same time been a decrease in teacher preparation programs by more than one third.

While it is clear that enrollment in teacher preparation programs has decreased, it is unclear, based on the limited state-published data, as to where the vacancies in the education field truly are and which positions are needing to be filled by substitute or under-qualified teachers. Nguyen et al. (2020) aggregated the data from each state to examine where and to what extent teacher shortages truly exist. According to their data, there are over 36,000 teacher positions that are currently vacant, with a majority of those vacancies (more than 22,000) residing in the Southern part of the United States (Nguyen et al., 2020). In their study, they also report that a large portion of teaching positions across the United States are being filled with teachers that are not qualified to teach the subject or class they are hired to teach (Nguyen et al., 2020). The teaching profession is struggling to train, retain and hire qualified educators to fill the vacancies that are present in our schools. With the enrollment decreases in preservice programs

and the declining appeal of the profession, in general, the retention of teacher and the bolstering of the profession is of utmost importance.

Given the low supply of teachers and the high volume of vacancies, the possibility of finding these high-quality teachers is limiting, making the pool of applicants appear shallow. This problem is exacerbated for schools in high-poverty neighborhoods. Haycock & Hanushek (2010) stated:

Researcher Marguerite Roza and others have produced considerable evidence that teachers in schools serving the most-disadvantaged students have lower average salaries, reflecting in large part the movement of more-experienced teachers away from schools with a higher proportion of minority students and with lower-achieving students. There is also evidence that these schools tend to have more teachers with emergency credentials and without regular certification (p .3).

The students that are in the most need of high-quality teachers are disproportionately disadvantaged in the recruitment process. These school districts often struggle to recruit teachers with higher educational certifications, prior teaching experience, or proper certification credentials. Many times, if they do, these teachers are first year teachers, with a lot to learn and with much room to grow. These new teachers- if they choose to stay in the profession - tend to leave these schools for ones with better working conditions or higher salaries after honing their skills for a few years in more challenging schools (Nguyen et al., 2020). They seek schools with greater autonomy, higher salaries and better working conditions. Teaching is a challenging profession, and the way society sees the value of teachers greatly impacts many of the factors the determine whether an early career educator stays in the profession or not.

Teaching in our Society

While seen by some as the cornerstone to communities, it is widely asserted that teaching has become a profession that is overworked, underpaid, and significantly undervalued. “For the first time in years, a majority of parents surveyed by PDK International in 2018 said they do not want their children to become teachers” (Partelow, 2020, p. 1). Some contributing factors are teacher’s working conditions, lack of career pathways and options and stagnant salaries that, in general, are not increasing with the cost of inflation: “In 2018, teachers earned 13% less than they had 20 years earlier in inflation-adjusted terms. In 30 states, teacher wages are so low that a 10-year veteran supporting a family of four would qualify for government assistance” (Gabor, 2022, p. 2). Typically, the low salaries are offset by the desirable working conditions of schools. While “working conditions” cannot be defined by any singular term, factors that contribute to positive working conditions within a school are positive school community, condition of the school, support of the administration, availability of resources, class size, number of teaching hours and “duties,” and personal agency (Murnane & Steele, 2007). Negative working conditions for teachers, as outlined by Nguyen et al. (2020) include poor school facilities, teaching assignments that are not aligned to one’s area of expertise, lack of access to teaching resources and supplies, and high levels of student discipline problems.

Additionally, they outline those negative working conditions within a school can be characterized by a lack of administrator efficacy and support, lack of teacher mentoring and induction, insufficient professional development, and little time for professional collaboration (Nguyen et al., 2020). Often times, shorter work years, family-friendly work hours as well as other non-monetary benefits entice candidates to enter the field of education. Many of the conditions, including (but not limited to) family-friendly working hours, availability of

resources, number of teaching hours that have made teaching such an appealing profession, despite the disparate pay to other industries, have been compromised during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Work hours have been extended, the sense of community within the school building has diminished, the number of duties and teaching hours has increased as well as many others. Teachers are increasingly being asked to adapt to the ever-changing norms of a post-covid system, utilize new and emerging technology effectively, personalize instruction for all students, all while being responsive to the well-being and mental health of each individual child (Beart, 2022). While all of this is important for students, the pressures on teachers to perform, learn and keep up have been amplified. We are all hoping that as the pandemic ceases to ravish the country, many of these factors will return to a more normal state. Even with a sense of normalcy, one can only hope that the damage to the applicant pool is short-lived and that we can continue to attract and recruit high quality teachers.

Holding on to our Teachers

The national teacher shortage has been an issue discussed in educational research for many years. Sutchter et al. (2019) explained this challenge as being caused by a wide variety of factors which is including teacher turnover, the creation of teachers into other fields and industries, changes in programming in schools, and the overall appeal of the teaching profession. Teacher attrition is not only challenging because of its profound effect on student learning, but it has an adverse effect on school culture and overall school improvement. Boyd et al. (2007) stated:

High turnover creates instability in schools making it more difficult to have coherent instruction. This instability may be particularly problematic when schools are trying to

implement reforms, as the new teachers coming in each year are likely to repeat mistakes rather than improve upon implementation of reform (p. 2).

Holding on to and retaining our teachers should be set as an essential priority for every school and district leader. When a teacher stays in the profession and in their home school for prolonged periods of time, they get the opportunity to compound their learning year after year and deepen their understanding of a school's vision of teaching, instruction, and best practices. The longer a teacher stays in the profession, the better able they are to manage the daily functioning of a classroom and the more familiar they are with the content and material (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017). This understanding provides opportunities for teachers to collaborate on curriculum, content, and lesson structure and delivery with depth and intentionality (Cordingley et al., 2005). With collegial relationships and an understanding of a school's vision, a teacher develops a greater ability to deliver high quality instruction. When we are able to retain teachers, not only do our teachers grow as practitioners, but our schools grow and develop as institutions of learning with a collective vision towards supporting students. With a staff of teachers that are connected and aligned, a school can move forward in their mission to educate students and build community. Preventing a continual revolving door of new teachers in and out of our school and our student's lives means that we are improving each student's future success, academic trajectory, and social-emotional well-being.

When a school district is made up of experienced teachers, the students in that school are more likely to grow, learn, feel supported and achieve. As a teacher matures and gains experience in the field, their ability level to meet the demands of the profession and meet the needs of their students increases. A literature review on teacher effectiveness by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016, found that of the 30 studies reviewed 28 of them found a positive

correlation between years of teaching experience and student achievement, where teacher effectiveness was judged based upon student test score gains. Various studies throughout this literature review exposed what many teachers and leaders in the field all intuitively know, that as a teacher gains years of experience in the classroom, their effectiveness as a teacher increases, as well (Jimerson & Haddock, 2015; Chetty et al., 2014; Tymms et al., 2018). They stated that all 28 of the 30 studies pointed out that teachers continue to grow and improve throughout their teaching career. Studies demonstrated that teachers early in their career make the most significant and fastest gains in effectiveness, but teachers continue to grow and develop over the entire trajectory of their career (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). The newer the teacher is, the less effective they are with many of the responsibilities of the profession and in producing comparable student achievement data as their more veteran peers. A more experienced teacher has a larger effect on student learning, achievement, and outcomes (Chetty et al., 2014). Investment in the success and development of new teachers is an investment in the success of their students.

Additionally, recruitment, hiring, training and onboarding new teachers is a time, and resource-intensive process which diverts finite resources and leadership energy from the goals of effectively actualizing their school and district vision of effectively and collectively supporting student learning and growing together. Unfortunately, it is widely known that new teachers leave the profession in alarming numbers within their first year, but for those that make it through year one, unfortunately many more leave throughout various points within their first five years in the field. “The estimated rate of leaving during the first 3 years was 25.5% during the first 4 years was 32% and during the first 5 years was 38.5%” (Boe et al., 2008, p.9). New teachers need more support, training, and development at the onset of their career to sustain the daily pressures

and feel successful in their practice. According to Sutchter et al. (2019), new teachers need to feel supported and a part of a community:

In addition to teaching loads and resources, teachers' plans to stay in teaching and their reasons for actually having left are strongly associated with how they feel about administrative support, collegial opportunities, and teacher input into decision-making.

When these elements are present, retaining teachers is easier (p. 28).

As a district, supporting our new teachers with connections to colleagues and administrators is an essential component to ensuring that new teachers feel successful early in their career. While the research of Moir (1999) described the phases of a first-year teacher's experience, the experience of teachers as they progress through their second, third and even fourth year of teaching tends to still be unpredictable and stressful and require a similar level of support and connection. While the experience of teachers after their first year might be mitigated with a few less surprises and some more familiar faces, the expectations in both performance and competency dramatically increase. The level of stress, obligation, and anxiety on second year teachers can equal that of their first year and struggle to stay engaged and feel fulfilled in the profession. Teachers in their pre-tenure years are held to the same or similar expectations as their veteran colleagues (Hagger et al., 2011). With one to three years' worth of experience, pre-tenured teachers are still learning to navigate the expansive of a classroom, the demands of their district and community, and the fluctuating needs of the diverse learners. Veteran teachers have the ability to reference years of experience and deep buckets of strategies to be able to meet the daily challenges of the everyday life of a teacher; pre-tenured teachers have limited experiences to reference and therefore shallow buckets to pull from (Romano & Gibson, 2006). All these stressors as well as a myriad of other factors contribute to the high turnover rate in new teachers. To retain our new teachers,

we must employ strategies and provide professional development that support their growth as instructors, help them build a network and community of professionals, and provide for them a support system of experienced educators and administrators that will guide them through the twists and turns of the daily life of a teacher.

New Teacher Induction & Supporting New Teachers

With published reports projecting widespread teacher shortages (Espinoza et al., 2018), districts and states have increasingly prioritized creating new teacher induction programs to address attrition. Wong (2005) defined induction as, “induction is a comprehensive process of sustained training and support for new teachers” (p. 41). These programs, although vastly different from state to state and district to district, typically target the needs of first year teachers, with only three states: Iowa, Connecticut and Delaware requiring school districts to support teachers into their second year of teaching. New teachers require support, not only to adjust to the cultural norms of the community and to learn about the district’s vision, but also to build and develop their skills as a teacher of children. Induction programs are essential to the success of new teachers. Kardos and Liu (2003), as part of the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, discovered that:

- 56% of new teachers report that no extra assistance is available to them as new teachers;
- 43% of new teachers go through their entire first year of teaching without being observed by a mentor or a more experienced teacher; and
- 77% of new teachers shoulder the same load of academic and administrative responsibilities carried by their veteran colleagues. Only 23% have any sort of reduced load.

Teacher's skills develop over time and new teachers benefit from on-going, sustained professional development to support their growth, develop their sense of community and help them in figuring out the nuances and strategies that will allow them to be successful.

The theory behind induction holds that “teaching is complex work, that pre-employment teacher preparation is rarely sufficient to provide all of the knowledge and skill necessary to successful teaching, and that a significant portion can be acquired only while on the job” (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p 4). According to Wong (2005), successful new teacher induction programs are ones that are comprised of a multi-year professional development program that is comprehensive, coherent and sustained. As part of this program, key stakeholders and activities must be incorporated to give the participants an extensive understanding of what it takes to effectively support the needs of all learners. When teachers have the opportunity to participate in sustained professional development programs such as this, they are more likely to stay within the profession. Induction programs provide new teachers with pedagogical knowledge to improve classroom practice, making them feel more prepared, effective and successful. These programs also provide a rich professional learning community for new teachers. The cohort of colleagues that are hired together and learn together through the duration of this program build a sense of collegiality and trust that also helps new teachers feel more invested in a school and district. A meta-analysis of teacher turnover found that when teachers are supported by their school administrators and feel as if the school has a healthy culture and climate, they are less likely to leave (Nguyen et al., 2020). When districts have robust and comprehensive induction programs, facilitated by district and building personnel, new teachers get the strong message that they are seen, valued, and supported.

Purpose of Study

Based on all the above research and evidence, the purpose of this case study was to review the existing research on new teacher induction programs, explore the needs of new teachers within the first years of their career, and determine what supports are necessary to develop and retain high-quality teachers. This data would then be used to refine and revise a four-year induction program being implemented in a low-need, high-resource suburban school district. This study aimed to better understand the needs of new teachers throughout their pre-tenure years, how ongoing professional development supported their growth, and if it impacts their efficacy as a teacher and helps to retain them in a highly resourced, low-need suburban school district.

The research questions that will be driving this work are:

- What professional supports are most advantageous to new teachers?;
- To what extent does an on-going, sustained professional development program impact the experience of new teachers?;
- What is the relationship between a sustained professional development program and (1) new teacher retention, (2) feelings of self-efficacy, and (3) overall job satisfaction?; and
- To what extent does a new teacher induction program impact teacher quality?

The content of this induction program curriculum will spiral and progress toward the major concepts and ideas essential to develop the practices of effective teaching, advancing in both complexity and sophistication as teachers move through their pre-tenure period. The goal of the program will be to provide new teachers, the professional support they need to develop their skills as educators; equip them with the tools and strategies essential to facilitating a safe and academically challenging educational community and provide new teachers with the guidance to successfully navigate the landscape and landmines of their school community and the teaching

profession. This multi-year teacher induction program with its focus on developing a teachers' pedagogical effectiveness, will ensure that every teacher hired and retained by the school district has the appropriate skill set to address the needs of the diverse set of learners year after year. Through the implementation of this curriculum to the cohort of teachers in year one, two, three and four of their pre-tenure period, teachers will not only increase their instructional capacity, but will have the opportunity to curate a supportive professional learning network with the members of their cohort. These strong collegial relationships combined with the clear structure for professional growth, will not only support the cultivation of master teachers, but will in theory, encourage greater teacher satisfaction and retention.

Based on best practices in professional development as well as current research on the needs of new teachers and adult learners, the program is designed to be an intensive, comprehensive program that is sustained over time. Designed to meet the needs of new teachers as they develop skills over their initial four years of service, the *Grow to Great*, program takes into account the needs of new teachers both as practitioners and as people who desire connection and support within the workplace. It is with this in mind that many, if not all of these aspects can be utilized with and for other new teacher groups with different demographics and from various locations. The *Grow to Great* induction program, with a bi-monthly meeting pattern, is curated to engage the new teachers in instructional methodologies and theories of practice that is integrated into their daily work (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). All the instructional methods utilized in the program model demonstrate relevant instructional practices that teachers can turnkey and immediately apply to their own classroom. Each year of the program has an essential question that guides a focus of the year with the intention of meeting the needs of the teachers at their developmental stage of professional learning:

Table 1-1: Grow to Great: Essential Questions

<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 4</i>
<i>Connecting, Building and Learning:</i> <i>What does it take to be a successful teacher? What are effective teaching practices, classroom structures and connections that are established within your first year?</i>	<i>Creating a Foundation:</i> <i>What are the foundational instructional structures to facilitate a productive learning environment? What is the research behind instructional structures and practices?</i>	<i>Expanding our Instruction:</i> <i>How can we intentionally redesign learning experiences to create a culture for learning that empowers students to take ownership of their learning process while problem solving, exploring inquiry and genuinely collaborating with their peers?</i> <i>How can we plan for, and ensure that each learner is challenged appropriately and in a way that supports maximum growth?</i>	<i>Empowering our Leaders:</i> <i>How can we develop future teacher leaders? From planning instruction to designing curriculum, how do leaders lead both locally and globally?</i>

These questions create coherence and guide the implementation of every unit. They also focus each individual session and provide the support structure for each teacher. Throughout each year, there is an additional built-in layer of support in the form of structured bi-monthly sessions. The first-year teachers have an assigned mentor for the duration of their first year. Additionally, throughout the full scope of the program, the pre-tenured teachers have access to the full professional development team for in-classroom coaching, support, advisement, planning and instructional modeling. This comprehensive program is designed to provide new teachers the access and choice to the many layers and levels of support. The effectiveness of this program will be assessed through a qualitative analysis of teacher interviews and surveys with participants as they move through each year of the program and a quantitative review of teacher evaluation scores and student assessment scores. The data collected will inform both the implementation of

the program and the revisions that need to be made along the way. Additionally, the data will reveal whether the implementation of this program makes a significant impact on the feelings of competency a teacher experiences.

Crafted as a tool to facilitate the learning and growth of new teachers, *Grow to Great* also has the potential to drive the future vision, culture, and belief system of the entire school district. With the outlining of core beliefs and guiding principles, *Grow to Great* is simultaneously developing the new foundation upon which our district stands. *Grow to Great* is written based upon core beliefs and guiding principles:

Table 1-2: Grow to Great- Core Beliefs about Teaching and Learning

<i>Core Beliefs about Teaching & Teachers:</i>	
1. <i>Teacher effectiveness matters as skillful teachers more positively impact student growth than those less skillful</i> 2. <i>Given the right support, all teachers can become skillful teachers</i> 3. <i>Skillful teachers engage in research-based practices that positively and dramatically impact student learning</i> 4. <i>These research-based practices are known, and must be explicitly taught and practiced so they are mastered over time</i> 5. <i>Skillful teachers build a sophisticated mental model as they progress through developmental stages</i> 6. <i>Grow to Great has been designed as a roadmap through these stages</i>	

Table 1-3: Grow to Great-Guiding Principles

<i>Guiding Principles</i>	<i>Principles Defined</i>	<i>For Teachers</i>	<i>For Students</i>
<i>Connected</i>	<i>Relationships matter</i>	• <i>Welcoming, inclusive and affirming</i> • <i>Support of mentors & leaders to support professional and personal development</i> • <i>Connected to the school community</i>	• <i>Welcoming, inclusive and affirming</i> • <i>Support of adult advocates to guide academic and personal development</i> • <i>Connected to peers & mentors</i>

		• Nurture an inspiring local and global PLN	
Equitable	<i>All teachers & students deserve success</i>	• Support structures designed to be equitable	• Support structures designed to be equitable • Student-centered, unbiased and fair policies and practices
Engaging	<i>Relevant, participatory, and motivating</i>	• Learning is active and purposeful • PD is relevant, long-term, job embedded	• Learning is active and purposeful
Responsive	<i>Safe and joyful spaces through social and emotional competencies</i>	• Schools are physically, emotionally and academically safe for • Respected, valued and understood	• Schools are physically, emotionally and academically safe • Respected, valued and understood
Rigorous	<i>High expectations for all</i>	• Deeply knowledgeable in content, skills • Rich pedagogy • Understanding of Zone of Proximal Development	• Appropriately challenging curriculum • Emphasis of transferable skills
Empowering	<i>Take responsibility for learning and support the learning of others</i>	• Learning is exploratory, inquiry based, and democratic • Empowered to set goals through guided inquiry	• Learning is exploratory, inquiry based, and democratic • Empowered to set goals through guided inquiry

These core beliefs and guiding principles articulate what is important to our school district and community. Through the four years of *Grow to Great*, new teachers will be exposed to these beliefs and practices both implicitly and explicitly. Year after year, as cohorts of pre-tenured teachers move through this program, these beliefs will become ingrained into the culture of our district.

The implementation of the four-year new teacher induction program is a significant investment by school districts in both time and money. In a highly resourced, low-need suburban school district, we have the luxury of having an in-house professional development team that can implement and carry out the professional development program as well as a contractually negotiated stipend for mentors of new teachers. For other school districts that do not have a team of professional developers, school building and district administrators can fill the role of delivering the content and supporting new teachers. Nationally, new teacher induction programs are emerging (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Many of the programs consist of assigning a new teacher a mentor, some have the addition of professional development but few to none have programs that follow and support the needs of new teachers throughout their pre-tenure years, most likely due to the high cost and commitment of resources to this process (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). At the same time, nationally, school districts invest time and resources into recruiting and hiring new teachers each year because so many teachers leave the profession, battling every year to ensure that their students achieve, investing time and money into new curriculum that is supposed to be the magic fix (Sutcher et al., 2016). If school districts shifted those same resources to investing in improving the practice of the teachers, they bring on board each year, theoretically they will see greater gains in student achievement for a similar price tag. A sustained, recursive, and responsive induction program will support the goal of increasing teacher effectiveness and ultimately student achievement.

Since the financial cost of teacher attrition and the impact on student achievement is as great as it is, school districts should consider investing in the teachers they hire. Through a structured system of support, mentorship and professional development, districts can support pre-tenured teachers so that they not only stay in the classroom, but that while they are there,

now and for years after, they will employ instructional practices that leverage the best current thinking on teaching and learning. *Grow to Great* will give school districts a map on how to support new teachers entering their school district throughout their four-year pre-tenure process to take them from novice teachers to efficient, master teachers. This investment in teachers now is an investment in our students today and in the future. This articulation of values, goals, and research based best practices sets the tone and culture of the school and district to be a community of professionals that learn together with a shared investment in student achievement. The impact of creating effective teachers can, in theory be measured, but the potential lasting shift in school culture over time, can only be seen and felt. It is my hope that this shift towards a learning culture in my school district is one of the additional outcomes of *Grow to Great*.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The research is clear that of all the things that school districts can do to advance student learning, nothing matters more than teacher quality (Jimerson & Haddock, 2015; Chetty, et al., 2014; Tymms et al., 2018); and nothing matters more to teacher quality than robust, ongoing, professional learning (Farmer, 2020; Darling-Hammond & Orphanos, 2009). Our best teachers embrace each school year, each class, each day and aim to nurture, support, and educate their students. Teachers who approach their work as a profession and not just a job understand that this profession is intertwined with moments of both intense joy and struggle, but as I see it, teaching is one of the greatest professions one can choose. “Teachers play a leading role in teaching learning situations. [They are] a model for [their] students. It is [them] who inspires, motivates, and encourages the youth in the process of learning.” (Qureshi & Niazi, 2012, p. 30). Our teachers have a profound impact on their students and understand the responsibility before them; they understand that each child gets only one singular opportunity, to be a first grader, seventh grader or even a junior in high school. The students are given this chance to learn and grow in their respective grade level with their assigned teacher, in their assigned classroom community for that year and the teachers are fully aware of how precious each day of each year is for these students.

The responsibility of educating children is great, but it is one that teachers and schools all over the country bear, welcome and embrace year after year. When students enter a classroom at the beginning of the school year, they are beginning their journey of growth and development for that year. The teacher assigned to that class, whether brand new to the profession or a veteran, has the responsibility to lead the next ten months of learning and development for those students. Teachers work, like any professional, to hone their skills, deepen their knowledge and perfect

their craft. So many teachers that enter the profession truly believe as Wong (2004) stated, “Teachers hired today are the teachers for the next generation. Their success will determine the success of an entire generation of students” (p. 41). Educating children, the future generation, has been one of the goals and purposes of schools. Parents, guardians, and families put their students onto busses or drop their students at the front entrance of the school every fall excited with the possibilities that lay ahead for their students.

In a profession with so much responsibility and demands towards professionalism and perfectionism, teaching is a field that is intricate beyond comprehension and many times vastly misunderstood. Scholars continue to unpack the complexity of the field, the challenges for new teachers, the importance of professional learning and continued growth, and the impact of teacher turnover and retention on our students and the field, a review of the literature has been conducted. Through this literature review, clarity of both definition and context will emerge to help determine the gap in both the research and current practice in regard to supporting the needs of new teachers, particularly as adult learners, as they progress through the first several years of their career. Supporting new teachers, requires the ability for those delivering the support to not only be familiar with the pedagogical practices that will meet the needs of students, but those that will meet the adult learners where they are as both professionals and learners.

Adults as Learners: A Theoretical Framework

How and why adults learn vastly differs from that of children and thus, must be approached and studied as its own field and applied when coaching new teachers. In the 1970’s, Malcolm Knowles resurrected a rather venerable field of study, Andragogy (*and-ra-goh-gy*), the study of adult learners. While the study of adult learning, the ability and motivation of adults to

learn, has been ongoing since the time of Socrates, the field regained its attention after World War I. Through the years after the war many scientists, and psychologists spent time developing their understanding of adult learners, why they learn, how they learn and what they are capable of learning, but it was not until Knowles that the ideas and concepts developed over the previous fifty years were turned into a comprehensive theory on adult learning (Knowles et al., 2020). In Knowles' Andragogical theory of adult learning, he outlined that there are a core set of learning principles for adults (Knowles et al., 2020):

1. The learner's need to know
2. Self-concept of the learner
3. Prior experience of the learner
4. Readiness to learn
5. Orientation to learning
6. Motivation to learn

Knowles believed that these six core principles and the context and goals of the learning can be adapted to reach all adult learners (Knowles et al., 2020). Table 2-1 below summarizes the basic principles of each of the six adult learning principles.

Table 2-1: Andragogical Model

Learning Principle	Core Ideas
The Need to Know	• Adults need to know why they need to learn something before they learn it. • Adults will dive deeply into learning tasks if they understand the benefits of learning and the consequences of not knowing. • Adults respond to experiences that raise their awareness of personal gaps in their present abilities to the abilities they wish to possess.
The Learner's Self Concept	• Adults see themselves as being responsible for their decisions, lives, and choices. Thus, they believe themselves to be self-directed. • Putting adults in the role of "learner" reduces them to the role of "dependent" which challenges their belief about themselves. • Adults respond better to learning experiences that can be self-directed, rather than dependent on a "teacher".
The Role of the Learner's Experiences	• Adults arrive at learning situations with a greater range of diversity in their quantity and quality of lived experiences.

	• These lived experiences create great heterogeneity and the need for individualization of teaching and learning strategies. • The focus of adult education is on techniques that tap into the experience of the learners. • Adult education needs to help adults review and reflect on how their prior experiences might have created biases and habits that need to be modified. • To adults, their lived experience defines their identity. To ignore their experience, is to ignore and devalue who they are.
Readiness to Learn	• Adults are eager to learn things that they need to know how to do to be successful in relevant and developmentally appropriate situations in their life.
Orientation to Learning	• Adults are motivated to learn by experiences that are centered on solving problems or issues that arise in their daily life and can improve the quality of their life.
Motivation	• While learning for adults can be a response to an external motivator, most of the time it is stimulated from internal sources. • Additionally, learning can be blocked barriers of negative self-concept, lack of access to resources, time constraints, etc.

(Knowles et al., 2020)

In 1990, Knowles recognized in the initial pillar, the adult's desire to need to know, "...real or simulated experiences in which the learners discover for themselves the gaps between where they are now and where they want to be" (Knowles, 1990, p. 65) establishes the foundation of their desire to know why they are learning what they are learning. For new teachers, the need to know could stem from their desire to improve their craft, meet the needs of the learners assigned to them and feel more efficient and effective in their methods. The next principle, self-concept of the learner, Knowles (1968) described the desire to learn in adults as being more self-directed and more independent:

At some point he starts experiencing the joy of deciding things for himself, first in little matters and then in more important ones, and by adolescence he is well along the way toward rebelling against having his life run by the adult world. He becomes an adult psychologically at the point at which his concept of himself changes from one of

dependency to one of autonomy...At the point at which this change occurs, there develops in the human being a deep psychological need to be perceived by himself and by others as being indeed self-directing (p. 229).

The role of the educator, as believed by Knowles, was to create a space and climate that was conducive for adult learners to engage in self-discovery. As a facilitator of adult learning, Knowles viewed himself as one that guided adults through their learning journey, rather than as an educator who conveyed knowledge in a single-direction manner. According to Knowles (1975), "I see my role to be that of a guide for, and facilitator of, your inquiry, as well as being a source of information about facts, ideas, and other forms of help" (Knowles, 1975, p.10). For new teachers, creating identity as an educator manifests in how they establish routines, establish rapport with students, create a community of learners and lead students toward their own self-discovery. The third principle of learning incorporates the lived experiences of the adult learner. In the text, *Andragogy, not Pedagogy* (1968), Knowles acknowledged how much of an impact the experiences of life shape the adult learner and provide vast resources and knowledge from which the learner can draw from. Knowles stated, "an adult will define himself in terms of his experience. His self-identity is derived from what he has done" (Knowles, 1968, p. 352). This is essential to consider when working with and planning for new teachers. Considering who they are, where they come from and what their lived experiences have been can and should inform the content and methods of delivery.

The fourth principle identifies how someone's readiness to learn evolves as someone's position in life changes: "Whereas the developmental tasks of youth tend to be the products primarily of physiological and mental maturation, those of the adult years are the products primarily of the evolution of social roles" (Knowles, 1970, p. 91). As life circumstances change,

an adult's need and desire to learn new skills also evolves and shifts. One's readiness to learn a new skill or idea is based on where they are in their life and what their current life circumstances call for; timing, in adult education, might just be everything. New teachers, over the course of their pre-tenure period, will have evolving and changing needs. Their experiences in the classroom over time will influence their capacity and ability to process more complex and sophisticated pedagogical structures. As their maturity both as an adult and a professional increase, so will their ability to learn and apply more complex skills.

Principle five, orientation to learning, speaks to the assumption that an adults' need to learn is driven by their need to apply their learning to relevant life circumstances. Knowles (1990) identified that adult learning is motivated by their desire to solve the problems that they face on a daily basis: "Adults are motivated to devote energy to learn something to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations" (p. 59). Recognizing that adults are motivated to learn by their desire to solve the problems they face each day is a component of new teacher induction programs that is essential to consider when planning to meet the needs of these new educators. Recognizing that the instruction needs to be grounded in application and supports their ability to grow and improve in their current context encourages facilitators of new teacher induction program to ground the work in real life situations and in practice over theory. In the sixth assumption, Knowles (1990) stated, "While adults are responsive to some external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries and the like), the most potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, and the like)" (p.113). For new educators, this principle could not be truer. Often, teachers enter the profession to help kids grow and learn and most teachers strive to do that with both proficiency and efficacy. The feeling of

accomplishment from making connections with students and meeting the academic needs of your students is often a driving factor for new teachers (Doran, 2020).

Andragogy as a Framework for New Teacher Induction

The six pillars of andragogy, as laid out by Knowles, provided a framework for assessing, planning and implementing adult education. Merriam (2001) explained that Knowles crafted a model for how adult learning should be designed, implemented, and evaluated. His frameworks are both that of a learning theory and a design theory. Specifically, Knowles (1968; 1970; 2020) suggested that andragogical teaching “...is concerned with providing procedures and resources for helping learners acquire information and skills” (p. 120). He viewed the transmission of skills and content from teacher to student pedagogical whereas andragogical teaching was focused on supporting the adult learner in discovering and designing the process of learning. Paramount to all the adult learning principles, he acknowledged that a psychologically safe, trusting, respectful, positive, and physically comfortable environment is essential to a productive learning space (1973, 1995). Knowles believed that without physical and psychological safety, adults could not engage in learning at any level and that their desire or willingness to take the risk or be vulnerable and open to learning would not be accessible. The importance of cultivating safety within teacher learning and induction programs fosters teachers' professional and personal growth (Fry, 2010). When considering the needs of new teachers as adult learners, it is essential that any successful induction program centers on the principles of andragogy in order to ensure that the learner is met with respect, but also that the content is delivered in a way that is able to best received and contextualized. If new teacher induction programs are to ensure that new teachers increase their effectiveness by improving their craft while building skills and strategies

that supports them in feeling successful and satisfied in their profession, then it is likely that they will feel fulfilled and find the joy of teaching and decide to remain in this career long beyond their teacher induction program.

New Teachers as Adult Learners

New teachers, within the first few months of their career, find themselves faced with some of the most trying moments early on. As Smith et al. (2004) stated:

Upon accepting a teaching position in a school, [new teachers] are often left on their own to succeed or fail within the confines of their own classrooms, an experience likened by some to being "lost at sea." Indeed, critics have long assailed teaching as an occupation that "cannibalizes its young" and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to a sink or swim, trial by fire, or boot camp experience (p. 28).

Newly hired teachers, right out of preservice programs, are placed into classrooms with students and are held to similar expectations of success as related to student achievement as their veteran counterparts (Romano & Gibson, 2006). Due to budget cuts, enrollment changes, or retirements, new teachers are routinely shuffled around as they move from grade to grade or subject to subject because of their lack of seniority. Many teachers, in the beginning of their career, are shuffled between grade levels, schools, and even subjects based upon what openings are available in the school or district (Atteberry et al., 2016). In some circumstances, new teachers are given a mentor teacher in their first year, who assist them in navigating the responsibilities of a new teacher: the curriculum, the cultural components of the school and the nuances of the school day. Even though new teachers are faced with all the same struggles in this new situation as their first year, they are now on their own in a new position, with a new curriculum, but

without the same support, professional development, or guidance. The difference is, because it is their second year, the expectations are higher and there is an assumed proficiency with instruction, content, and professional practice. Year three can again be a shift in assignment, grade level, or even school for new colleagues as often seniority status dictates what and where a person is assigned to teach. For first through fourth-year teachers, this can be another year of several firsts: new colleagues and new curriculum, with consistently rising standards and expectations, but a proportionate decrease in the amount of support and mentoring.

Long days, grueling pace, and the time spent “figuring it out” leaves many new teachers floundering in these early years. It is no wonder that about 25% of new teachers leave their profession after just their first year of teaching (Boyd et al., 2007). The support given to first year teachers through mentoring is helpful, but not sufficient. Mentor teachers are typically teachers themselves, with a full course load of classes and a dynamic roster of students. The pull on their time is great. While they are knowledgeable and dedicated to their new mentee, the continuous support that a new teacher needs is not always possible if the mentor is the only option from which to draw this support. Additionally, having a veteran teacher to rely on to guide new teachers as they begin their teaching career is a great source of support (St. George & Robinson, 2011), but as soon as year one is over, the lack of support thereafter presents additional challenges for the new teacher. The feeling of being overwhelmed and under supported causes many new teachers to leave the profession before they even get the chance to experience the magic of a well-run classroom, perfectly executed lesson or a connection with a student that potentially made a lasting impact (Romano & Gibson, 2006).

Teachers in the first few years of their career and usually in the pre-tenure period within their district, experience such a rollercoaster in their pre-tenure period of teaching. Moir (1999)

described the stages of the first year of a teacher's career in four parts: Anticipation Phase, Survival Phase, Disillusionment Phase, Rejuvenation Phase and Reflection Phase; the latter phases that hopefully renew their spirit to teach again the following year. Teachers move thorough the process of these stages throughout the ten-month August through June cycle of the school year. Each phase is filled with its highs and lows. Sometimes fueled by adrenaline and caffeine, the first-year teacher's journey through this year and the phases outlined by Moir (1999) is layered with worry and confusion. In a case study, Romano and Gibson (2006) documented the experience of a first-year elementary teacher in order to determine the central issues that were thematic in the discussions throughout the year. The categories that they established were external policy, inclusion of students with disabilities, classroom management, personal issues, content and pedagogy, parents, and teacher evaluation (Romano & Gibson, 2006). This new teacher, like many other new teachers, experience a myriad of both successes and failures throughout this initial teaching experience. The learning trajectory of a new teacher is vast and fast. "Numerous studies confirm the unremarkable finding that, on average, brand new teachers are less effective than those with some experience. Most of these studies also find that teachers show the greatest gains from experience during their initial years in the classroom" (Kini, 2016, p.16). With support and guidance that is targeted to the needs of new teachers, we can simultaneously make the experience less chaotic, stressful, and unpredictable for new teachers and make the teaching and learning in the classroom more effective for the students and for teachers to feel more successful as well. Although teacher effectiveness remains a goal for much of the new teacher support efforts, the vague notions of teacher effectiveness and quality make this targeted, individualized support challenging.

Teacher Effectiveness

Effective teachers are not born; they are developed. To define what an effective teacher is proves to be a challenge as it is an idea that is comprised of many components; some can be measured quantitatively, others are more qualitative in nature. Defining teacher effectiveness is crucial to anyone examining this idea or concept. While a common understanding is crucial, the terms “teacher effectiveness” and even “teacher quality,” which are often used interchangeably, are not only not well defined in the literature but also nebulous when a definition is presented. Thus, the current and most universally used definition of teacher effectiveness is one based on a teacher’s ability to demonstrate growth in a student’s test scores and academic achievement (Rivkin et al., 2005). Ladd & Sorenson (2017) further explored and expanded on the idea of teacher effectiveness in his research and stated that “effective teachers do more for students on a daily basis than simply imparting a narrow set of reading or math skills. Ideally, such teachers cultivate character, discipline and curiosity, and a variety of other capacities that are sometimes referred to as non-cognitive skills” (p. 3). Typically, in research, teacher effectiveness is defined by value-added measures. Value-added measures estimate the impact of teachers on student achievement, while holding constant external factors that could otherwise impact a student’s performance. Some of those factors are socio-economic status, student effort, school quality, etcetera (Sass, 2008).

Many researchers have believed that how effective the teacher is determines the success and growth rate of the students in their class for many years to come (Jimerson & Haddock, 2015; Chetty et al., 2014; Tymms et al., 2018). In fact, No Child Left Behind (2001) legislation and then later, the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), emerged from this very belief (Goldstein, 2014). In 1996, Sanders and Rivers, studied the cumulative effect of teacher effectiveness on

academic achievement. In their study, they showed that, “regardless of initial achievement level (of students), teachers in the top quintile facilitated desirable academic progress for all students. However, regardless of their entering achievement levels, students under the tutelage of teachers in the bottom quintile made unsatisfactory gains” (p. 7). The impact of the teacher on student learning and achievement in that current school year cannot be denied. Teacher effectiveness and how to measure it appropriately has been debated and researched in the educational community for decades.

Hanushek (1992) found in his study that, “the estimated difference in annual achievement growth between having a good and having a bad teacher can be more than one grade level equivalent in test performance” (p. 107). Later on, research has explored other aspects of a similar research study to explore if removing the bottom 25% of first year teachers would add economic value (Goldstein, 2014). These studies were all later challenged by the idea that “effective teachers can narrow, but not close achievement and employment gaps that reflect broader income, wealth and racial inequalities of American society” (Goldstein, 2014, p.207). Despite the research and the counter research, the research data shows that the effect of having an inexperienced or ineffective teacher impact on a student’s learning in that year and can compromise their ability to catch up and make progress in later years of school.

The teacher, and how effective they are in their instruction, additionally makes an impact on a student’s learning trajectory not only in the current school year, but in many years after. Tymms et al. (2018) found that the progress children made in the classrooms of effective teachers when they were four years old had a lasting and statistically significant impact on their academic success until they were eleven years old. They also found that having more than one year in the classroom of an effective teacher had an additive, compounding advantage on student

learning, but that it was rare for students to have consecutive experiences in effective classrooms (Tymms et al., 2018). Chetty et al. (2014) continued to study the impact of a teacher “value added” impact on student outcomes into adulthood. In their study, they found:

A one standard deviation improvement in teacher VA (value added) in a single grade raises the probability of college attendance at age 20 by 0.82 percentage points, relative to a sample mean of 37 percent. Improvements in teacher quality also raise the quality of the colleges which students attend, as measured by the average earnings of previous graduates of that college (p. 263).

Over time, since the initial Sanders and Rivers (1996) research on value added, statisticians fine-tuned the method of evaluating value added to account for “family income and English proficiency, but also for a student’s race, gender, disability status, how often [they] was absent from class, whether [they] had been enrolled in summer school, and whether [they] had recently moved, been suspended, or repeated a grade” (Goldstein, 2014, p. 206). While a school’s main function is to support student learning to ensure student achievement, schools need to ensure that every teacher that interacts with students has the skills to support the needs of all students. As described above, it is very complicated to assess a teacher’s effectiveness by just using student end of year assessment scores. Goldstein (2014) believed that:

When value added is calculated for a teacher using just a single year’s worth of test score data, the error rate is 35 percent- meaning more than one in three teachers who are average will be misclassified as excellent or ineffective, and one in three teachers who excel or are terrible will be called average. Even with three years of data, one in four teachers will be misclassified. It is difficult, if not impossible, to compute an accurate value-added score for teachers who work in teams within a single classroom. . .or for the

two-thirds of teachers who teach grades or classes not subject to standardized tests (p. 206-207).

While value added is challenging to measure, we do know that effective teachers play a large role in the success of their students not just academically, but in how they impact the lives, overall well-being, and motivation of each student. Defining teacher effectiveness becomes even more nuanced as Qureshi & Niazi (2012) pointed out: “An effective teacher is passionate, involved and dedicated in the affairs of his students. They treat them as human and desire that they should be adequately equipped with all traits and strengths needed to face the hard realities of life in future” (p. 36). Teaching is not just a profession about content delivery, it is a human profession, in which connection, relationships and community all matter. According to Qureshi & Niazi (2012), an effective teacher is one that can inspire and influence students through respectful interactions and deep understanding of their content. They believed that an effective teacher engages, motivates, and empowers students to try challenging tasks that they would otherwise be unlikely to attempt. Part of being an effective teacher is about knowing the students, what they like and dislike, how they will react to the environment around them how to engage them in lessons and new learning, how to entice them to sustain attention to challenging tasks for longer periods of time. An effective educator knows the whole child, as well as their content, and uses that knowledge to inspire learning. Qureshi & Niazi (2012) believed that part of being an effective teacher is one that inspires risk taking, passion and creates connection amongst themselves and the teacher. If we limit the definition of an effective teacher to only one that improves student test scores, we miss out on the opportunity to see the moments in teaching that are the ones that could make a difference in a child’s life or a school community (Goe et al., 2008). Thus, defining and assessing teacher effectiveness is so challenging to do when only

looked at through the lens of value-added measures. Danielson (2007), in *Framework for Teaching*, attempted to encapsulate the many facets of teaching that not only include effective instructional practices, but also the establishment of a community of learners within the classroom environment and participation within the school community.

One of the most widely used frameworks that defines effective teaching in today's educational community is the one laid out by Danielson (2007) through her *Framework for Teaching*. In this framework, Danielson claimed that effective teaching is a complex process made up of four components: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibility (Danielson, 2007). The Danielson framework has been widely used as an evaluation tool of teacher effectiveness since its publication. Danielson, broadly speaking, defines an effective teacher as one that is "highly effective" in their overall content knowledge and instructional delivery, organization of both a lesson and classroom environment, ability to establish a classroom community that exudes both academic rigor and respect, and demonstrates a commitment to the larger school community.

So, while many researchers have spent a lot of time defining teacher effectiveness by scores of value-added and student assessments, the definition of what it means to be effective as an educator is murky, intertwined, and complicated; which mirrors the complex nature of the role of an educator each day. This literature review will explore many of the angles and complexities of this definition and the role of teachers at various stages of their career in fulfilling the vast definitions of what it means to be an effective teacher and the role that plays in teacher retention. As such, the definition of teacher effectiveness used for the purposes of this research will be one that combines both qualitative and quantitative measures; that takes into account a teacher's ability to demonstrate effective teaching according to the components outlined in the Charlotte

Danielson Rubric as well as standardized measures of student achievement. While the value-added models for assessing teacher effectiveness provide a neat and clean framework in which to assess a teacher's ability to produce growth on measures of student achievement, to me, teaching is a more complex profession that cannot be assessed using just test scores. Teacher effectiveness must encompass a teacher's ability to connect with students and colleagues, become a member of the school community, lean into new learning, be reflective in their practice, and collaborate with others. These more qualitative measures are hard to capture in a value-added model but do a lot for both students and the school community. Effective teachers are ones that not only produce value-added measures related to academic gains for their students, but also add value to students' lives, the lives of their colleagues and their school community. Evaluating what effective teaching looks like is no easy feat and the expectations and stakes for new teachers during this evaluation process are both extremely high and challenging to meet.

Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness

While defining effectiveness in teaching has been difficult, many researchers have tried to do so by assessing teacher effectiveness. Their research believes that each child has the opportunity to learn and grow a substantial amount each year, but sometimes the reality is, that as each child journeys into their new classroom each fall, their success is largely already pre-determined by the quality of the teacher at the front of the room. Danielson's (2007) framework is a widely used tool for observations and has defined effective teaching in today's educational community. In this framework, Danielson understood that effective teaching is a complex process made up of four components: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibility (Danielson, 2007). While published as a tool to

guide schools, teachers, and administrators in supporting the growth of teachers, the Danielson framework has been largely used as an evaluation tool of teacher effectiveness. Since the accountability measures laid forth in No Child Left behind in 2001, this bastardization of her framework has shifted her understanding of the complex practice of teaching into a score and rating system. With the Danielson framework that has been converted into a rubric, teachers are assessed on a four-point scale that ranges from Highly Effective (4) to Ineffective (1), with any score receiving an Effective (3) or better is seen as positive. If completed accurately, the composite score of these observations should indicate an overall position on the continuum for teachers between Highly Effective, Effective, Developing and Ineffective. While this is now used as a framework for evaluation and support administrative decisions about a teacher's need for professional development, for the purposes of this work, we will rely heavily on the Danielson definition of an "effective teacher," since it is one of the most widely used and widely understood models of determining teacher effectiveness. At the same time, for the purposes of this research, we will not discount the inspiration and passion that Qureshi & Niazi (2012) and Ladd & Sorenson (2017) depicted as crucial characteristics of an effective teacher.

The idea of an "effective teacher" is comprised of many various components and made more nebulous for teachers just beginning their work. Even though academic achievement is a crucial component to teacher effectiveness, it can and should not be the only measure. As explored earlier, if we limit the definition of an effective teacher to only one that improves student test scores, we miss out on the opportunity to see the moments in teaching that are the ones that could make a difference in a child's life or a school community (Goe et al., 2008). Experienced teachers do not just demonstrate their ability to produce gains in academic achievement that is tracked by test scores and future earnings, but their impact on students

expands far beyond those data sets. In 2017, Ladd & Sorenson studied the compounding effect of teacher experience on middle school students. The study demonstrated that not only do experienced teachers produce higher academic gains, but also an increase in student attendance, improvement in student behavior as demonstrated by a decrease in discipline issues and an increase in student's reading for pleasure (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017). Experienced teachers do not just bring with them a greater knowledge of the content and pedagogy, but of how to connect and inspire students. These skills are ones that develop over time and with experience. The more that can be put into place to support, retain and develop teachers over time, the more likely it will be each student is being placed in the hands of an effective teacher and, the more confidently developing teachers can refine their practice. Teacher turnover and subsequently, teacher retention, should be a top priority of every educational institution not only because of the negative impact that turnover has on the resources of the institution but on the effects, it has on a teacher and student's learning, feelings of overall success, and social emotional well-being.

Yearly, teachers get assessed and evaluated by administrators on their ability to demonstrate the composite of effective teaching. These observations are the cause of much stress, anxiety and turmoil for teachers, especially new teachers, but if conducted properly, can be used to support teacher growth and development. For new teachers, these observations are one of the major tools that are used to determine whether a non-tenured teacher is asked to return the following year, or not and ultimately, if they receive tenure at the end of their probationary period.

Even though academic achievement is a crucial component to teacher effectiveness, it cannot and should not be the only measure. Teacher effectiveness is not only difficult to define, but also even more complicated by a teacher's status. A novice teacher's ability to demonstrate

all the aforementioned skills that, taken as a whole, determine teacher effectiveness, is limited- thus, assessing their ability within the first few years of their career is both challenging and complicated. Therefore, investing resources in improving the practice of teachers is supporting the success, growth and learning of all students as well as supporting the needs and well-being of teachers. With this information in mind, it is essential that school leaders ensure that schools commit to recruiting high quality teachers, work with those teachers and model best practices and ensure that they are supported and valued so that they not only grow as practitioners but feel the success and magic of student learning that inspires educators to stay in the profession for many years to come.

Professional Development for Teacher Effectiveness

Since the No Child Left Behind (2001) legislation and more recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), educators are continually provided with opportunities to improve their teaching and as they try new pedagogical practices through federally-mandated professional development. As the landscape of teaching continues to change the environment within the education field of continual growth and learning has become an essential component of being an educator. Garret et al. (2019) completed a meta-analysis in which they stated that professional development involves focused interventions supporting teacher growth, subsequent student achievement, and fostering teacher understanding of their development within their work environment (Garret et al., 2019). Vanassche & Kelchtermans (2016) later expanded on the definition and define professional development as “the complex learning processes resulting from the meaningful interactions between the individual teacher educator and his/her working

context” (p.1). Thus, professional learning is an imperative and crucial component to the growth of teachers, and by extension, students, and schools.

The education of teachers is an on-going process that requires dedication by schools, leaders, and teachers alike. Professional development and a continued focus on adult learning must be a key part of any school district’s plan to support and improve the success of the instructional staff in their district. The intentional moves schools, districts and leaders make to invest in professional development that promotes the purposeful and continual education of the teaching staff, will pay off in dividends in teacher performance, job satisfaction and in teacher efficiency (Farmer, 2020). Teacher professional development is a commitment by schools, districts, leaders, and teachers towards the common goal of student growth and achievement. School leaders, which take on the role of instructional leaders and mentors, should embrace the opportunity to guide the school staff towards creating a culture of learning that focuses on supporting the needs of students and collaborating around the use of data to make decisions about instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2009). Schools that dedicate their time and effort to continued teacher education are ones that prioritize student learning and, ultimately, teacher retention and effectiveness. For this to occur, a comprehensive system of instructional improvement that supports not only the expansion of content knowledge, but development of common beliefs and language about teaching and learning is vital. By doing this, the school community will be strengthening, practicing, and advancing teachers’ pedagogical skills while fostering a community of supportive and invested colleagues (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

While a system that honors the preferences, needs and realities of all the adults is a system is one that will truly make an impact. “For teachers, learning occurs in many different aspects of practice, including their classrooms, their school communities, and professional

development courses or workshops” (Borko, 2004, p. 4). To make an impact on teacher and student learning, a district’s fidelity to professional development and student learning, to the achievement and learning of all students, must not only include and cater to the needs and levels of tenured and veteran teachers, but also be differentiated enough to focus on developing the skills of the newest teachers. New teachers enter the profession with the most to learn, greatest need for professional development and with the highest potential towards growth and learning (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Professional development, if tailored to the specific needs of newly hired teachers, can have the greatest and most immediate impact on student learning. This professional development will not only support new teachers at a time in their career when they are the readiest to absorb and learn at the fastest rate, but it will meet them at the point in their career when they are facing some of the largest hurdles and biggest challenges. The first years of teaching are notorious for being demanding (Hagger et al., 2011), with the right sustained professional development in the form of a systematic and comprehensive new teacher induction program, school districts can support new teachers through the struggles of these initial years while at the same time developing the skills that they need to become more effective instructors.

New Teacher Induction

With a surge in attention paid to the needs of new teachers there has been a steady increase in the number of states and districts that are creating new teacher induction programs for their new entrants as both a form of professional development and ongoing professional support. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that between 1990 and 2008, the percentage of new teachers that participated in new teacher induction programs rose from 40% to 80% respectively. Now, when educators, policy makers and school leaders think about support for new teachers, they

often refer to the assistance given to a first-year teacher in their first-year induction program. While professional development, mentoring and guidance are necessary for our new entrants in this format, it is also essential that teachers throughout their pre-tenure process receive continued and sustained professional development and support. This continued professional development is as necessary for teachers throughout their pre-tenure period as it is for our first-year teachers to help them navigate the complexities of the teaching world, develop their skills, and become effective educators.

However, recent research has found a wavering commitment by states and districts to new teacher induction programs although research has shown that teacher satisfaction, effectiveness, and retention are all correlated to the school district's commitment to scope of its teacher induction program (Johnson & Kardos, 2002). Even though new teachers report that induction programs with extensive teacher training report higher satisfaction rates and demonstrate greater efficacy in their classroom (Delisio, 2017), district level support and training tend to cease after the first year of a new teacher's entrance into a school district. Whether it is a lack of resources, money, or time, second- and third-year teachers are left to navigate and learn on their own. Wong (2004) stated that teachers are often encouraged to be creative but are forced to operate independently. They rarely get the opportunity to see another teacher teach and are just expected to close their doors and be an expert at their craft. With induction programs that support the needs of new teachers throughout their probationary period, districts can provide direct professional development and training that will ensure a development of that teacher's skill level, provide opportunities for collaboration and professional dialogue, allow for professional learning and intervisitations, and generate a professional network within the district. All of this will, in turn, create a support structure that will encourage new teachers to stay in the

field. Annette Breaux, author of *New Teacher Induction*, stated in the article published by Delisio (2017) that:

Induction. . . involves ongoing, systematic training and support for new teachers beginning before the first day of school and continuing throughout the first two or three years of teaching. . . Induction, on the other hand, has been shown to improve teacher effectiveness and increase teacher retention (p. 6).

Therefore, it is essential that schools, across the country expand their definition of new teachers to include all of those teachers that are untenured and in the early stages of their career so that they can focus on supporting the growth and development of these “new teachers.”

Over the course of the four years, a new teacher’s needs change as they grow and gain experience. As their repertoire expands, the professional development offered to them, and the topics shared with them should shift to reflect their advancing skill and changing needs. As Wong (2004) outlined in his writing on teacher induction programs,

The most successful induction programs. . . offer a continuum of professional development through systematic training over a period of 2 or 3 years. Provide a study group in which new teachers can network and build support. . . integrate mentoring . . . incorporate a strong sense of administrative support . . . present a structure for modeling effective teaching (p. 48).

What new teachers need is an induction program, with a foundation in research-based practices, mapped to the needs of teachers over the trajectory of their growth can help support the maturation of these novice teachers into expert teachers. A professional development program for new teachers that will yield the best results will be one that is focused on teacher instruction and student learning, long-term, locally run, and collaborative (Hiebert et al., 2002). The

investment of time and resources into new teachers is not only an investment in the class of new hires each year, and in a commitment to retaining the teachers a district brings onboard, but also in the quality instructional practices and commitment to the educational vision of the school district.

Mentoring in New Teacher Induction Programs

Often, when districts employ a “teacher induction program,” to support their new teachers, they pair their teachers with a mentor teacher. It is important to clarify that a “mentoring program,” and a “teacher induction program,” are not one in the same. While mentoring is a part of an induction program and is a piece of the induction program being assessed as part of this research project, it is only one piece of a comprehensive and structured professional development program designed to support the needs of teachers new to teaching. Smith (2004) found that a robust induction program consists of a multi-tiered program with mentoring being one of the components. Smith said that a teacher induction program consists of, “having a mentor from the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, having regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and being part of an external network of teachers” (p. 35).

A mentor is a valuable resource that can provide a crucial layer of support for new teachers. While mentoring is one aspect of a teacher induction program, it is not sufficient as a fully comprehensive support for new teachers. New teachers need the support of a mentor combined with an extensive professional development program that supports the growth and development of their instructional practices. Mentoring does not, in isolation, provide enough support for new teachers to transfer in a measurable way to enhance student learning (Wong,

2004). Despite this evidence, many states mandate that all new teachers have a mentor, but do not mandate any further form of a teacher induction or professional development program. An induction program is actually, “a comprehensive, coherent and sustained professional development process - that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers and seamlessly progress them into a lifelong learning program” (Wong, 2004, p. 42). Teacher induction programs that combine the power of mentoring with a comprehensive professional development curriculum has the potential to address the issues of teacher attrition and teacher efficacy, while at the same time improving job satisfaction and improving the overall school culture and climate.

As we have come to understand, the art and science of teaching is complex and the needs of new teachers in this complex system are vast. As adult learners, new teachers need to be surrounded by a program that considers their needs in a 360° manner. As the previous literature has shown, new teachers need to have the support from administrators, mentors, and colleagues as well as the professional development that will support their needs as an adult learner as they grow and progress in experience (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Wong, 2004). The research on the needs of new teachers combined with the principles of andragogy provide a framework that outlines what are the structures necessary for a successful induction program that will both build the skills of new teachers but encourage a supportive environment in which they will want to stay.

Revisiting Andragogy as a Framework for Teacher Support

With the focus and intention of new teacher induction programs to be able to support the instructional practices, social development, and feelings of self-efficacy amongst new teachers, it

is essential that we consider the adult learning framework of Andragogy, as laid out by Knowles (1968; 1970; 2020). This, as the theoretical framework, will provide a lens through which the experience of new teachers in a school district can be viewed and assessed. Their self-identification of the presence or absence of elements of each of the principles of andragogy will help identify aspects of the induction program that would lead to its overall ability to meet the needs of the adult new teachers. Andragogy, the theory that will frame this work will guide the development, revision, and perspective on which to construct the writing of the new teacher induction program, the assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses, and the context for which new teacher induction programs, in general, should be viewed through. Andragogy, with its focus on the adult as the learner, puts the "student" at the center of this work with a keen and vital look at how and why adults engage in learning. For any induction program to be successful, in any school district, consideration of who the learners are must be considered.

From Theory to Action

As this project will not only be a review of the reasoning and rationale for a new teacher induction program but will be an empirical research study of the implementation of a new teacher induction program, Knowles' (1968; 1970; 1973; 1990; 2020) work provides context in which to guide the implementation and to assess the impact and efficacy of the program as well. With the goals of the four-year new teacher induction program being multi-faceted, we must ensure that these programs are both designed and implemented well. On one hand, new teacher induction programs are designed to support the growth and development of new teacher's instructional abilities to produce rich, flexible, and responsive learning environments for students. With this focus, teachers' instructional practices improve, their effectiveness as a

teacher increases and students have better learning experiences, both academically and socially. With this, new teachers have feelings of success and engagement.

Additionally, new teacher induction programs have proven to be a key tool in retaining teachers. Nguyen and Redding (2020) demonstrated that not only are new teachers more likely to stay in teaching when their classroom skills improve, but when they feel a sense of connectedness to their colleagues and support from their administration. New teacher induction programs, if done well, can help schools create effective teachers and retain them. “A new paradigm is needed for powerful systems of professional learning by which a clear vision of effective teaching informs the entire program and new teachers receive comprehensive induction and access to school-based collaborative learning” (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014, p.1). The Andragogy framework outlined by Malcolm Knowles will prove to be a guide to the needs of adult learners as they transition into a new school district so that new teachers can feel supported, connected, and successful. With the vast research provided by the ideas presented by Knowles’ study of andragogy, we will be able to examine both how to support and develop the adult learners engaged in new teacher induction programs. The research and framework provided by Knowles (1968; 1973; 1990; 2020) reveals how an intensive and responsive new teacher induction program and the corresponding professional development focused on the needs of adult learners, can enrich and enhance the skill levels of the new teachers and how this support can translate into the desire for teachers to stay in their school or district.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this case study was to review the existing research on new teacher induction programs, explore the needs of new teachers within the first years of their career, and determine what supports are necessary to develop and retain high-quality teachers. This data would then be used to refine and revise a four-year induction program being implemented in a low-need, high-resource suburban school district. This study aimed to better understand the needs of new teachers throughout their pre-tenure years, how ongoing professional development supported their growth, and if it impacts their efficacy as a teacher and helps to retain them in a highly resourced, low-need suburban school district. Throughout this research, I explored the experience of teachers participating in the new teacher induction program, how this program impacted their teacher evaluation scores, and how the program impacted teacher practice through both teacher evaluation and their own feelings of self-efficacy. Since so much of a new teacher's career is determined by the results of these teacher observations, the goal of the quantitative research dimension is to see whether teacher evaluations are a valid tool for assessing and determining teacher effectiveness (Xu et al., 2016). Additionally, I hoped to see what, if any, variables are associated with teacher evaluation scores. Some of the variables we will be looking at are not only years of teaching experience, but level of teacher (elementary, middle, high) and department (English, Math, Science, etc.) to see if certain variables are predictors of higher scores. I also examined the relationship between who a teacher is observed by and their evaluation score; does it matter if a teacher is evaluated by someone at their school building or at the district level? I also explored if teacher evaluation scores can be used to track teacher improvement over the course of a school year. Additionally, I examined if participation, for pre-

tenured teachers, in the new teacher induction program is evidenced by a teacher's observation score or retention. To do this work, I will evaluate a teacher induction program that consists of a four-year professional development curriculum with a first-year mentoring component that supports new teachers throughout their pre-tenure period.

The research questions that will be driving this work are:

- What professional supports are most advantageous to new teachers?;
- To what extent does an on-going, sustained professional development program impact the experience of new teachers?;
- What is the relationship between a sustained professional development program and (1) new teacher retention, (2) feelings of self-efficacy, and (3) overall job satisfaction?; and
- To what extent does a new teacher induction program impact teacher quality?

The new teacher induction program is a multi-faceted program that consists of a curriculum that is implemented to cohorts of teachers new to the school district. The program, beginning in year one consists of new teacher orientation, mentoring, access to professional developers that specialize in supporting the needs of first year teachers and full year of professional development training on the foundational knowledge needed in your first year of teaching. Each subsequent year after that, continues with a specially designed year-long professional development program tailored to the needs of that particular year of pre-tenure and built upon the principles of Andragogy, access to professional developers that specialize in those needs, and the cohort of new teachers as a professional learning community. The goals each year is to provide these adult learners with the support structures they need to both feel successful in their position, create a shared language and shared experience for the new teachers, have the access to resources and support that they need, and to develop a cohort of colleagues to lean on and refer to for many years to come. With the professional development and support as well as

the emphasis paid to not only forming collegial relationships, but also on them as adult learners, it is the hope that they will feel safe, supported, successful, and content with their choice to come and work for this school district and will remain a teacher here well beyond tenure.

Positionality Statement

I am currently the Director of Professional Learning for an affluent K-12, suburban school district in the Northeast region of the United States. My journey from a teacher to a professional developer has been rockier than I would have guessed. That journey, and possibly the learning that came from the struggle, has led me to where I am today and ultimately, to this research. I began my teaching career as an eager and optimistic elementary teacher who was determined to impact the lives of our littlest learners and bring joy to learning. Even though I graduated from a highly competitive University with great grades, I struggled to get an initial teaching job. Finally landing a six-week maternity-leave position, I launched into my career as a fourth-grade teacher. Since I was only a leave replacement, I was left to my own devices; I was given no formal mentor, was not invited to attend any professional development, or new teacher orientation. From never having taught before, to leading a class of 24 curious and excited nine-year-old students, I was left on my own. With little to no support from my building administrators, I struggled my way through this leave position. I felt myself growing and learning along the way more from my failures than my successes. Luckily, my colleagues and the families liked me, and I was asked to stay on for another year in this school as a section of kindergarten opened up. In this new role, my grade level colleagues did their best to help me, but I mostly navigated yet another grade level on my own. Throughout my experiences, I had observations from my building administrators but despite my preparation, and my requests for

help I struggled to perform at a level that I was proud of. After my second observation, I was devastated. I left my post-observation conference questioning whether this was even the right career choice for me; I felt lost, defeated, and ultimately hopeless.

As a new teacher my experience was unfortunately not unique. My passion for teaching and education, paired with my determination to help the next generation, drove my desire to continue in the field despite my minimal support. To improve my practice, I realized I had to seek out my own professional development, which to me meant going back to school. I began to get degree after degree. A Master's of Literacy, certification as a specialist in the Preventing Academic Failure (PAF) Method of Reading Instruction followed by a Master of Special Education and an Advanced Certificate in Autistic Spectrum Disorders was the only professional development that truly helped me hone my craft and my understanding of pedagogy and the science of learning. Piecing together my academic learning, with the experiences I was having with students, I knew I was improving. The evidence was clear in the progress my students were making, the efficiency I was now teaching with and the structures I was now able to employ.

I realized that I was in a place of privilege in which I could afford the cost of graduate school and had the time and resources to take classes at night. I was also privileged in that, despite being let go from a few schools at the onset of my career, I still had people in each building that believed in me, and I was able to find a new school that was willing to take a risk on hiring me. Not everyone has the opportunity to go to school at night or gets the chance to find a new job each fall. I do realize that in some ways, I was lucky. At the same time, I also realize that despite my undying determination and my steadfast commitment to this field, I questioned whether teaching was for me so many times during the first five years of my career. The road as

a new teacher was so hard, it was so rocky, and I felt truly isolated, unsupported, and unsure. As I sit here now, I am shocked I did not give up.

It was the students and the magic of learning that kept me in the classroom. The realization that I had the unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children; that just by seeing and valuing a student, could change the trajectory of their life. That magic that teachers have, the potential of that connection, kept me in the classroom. I truly believe that teachers are amongst the most influential people in a child's life. As teachers, we can shape the future of a single child and a whole generation. Teachers are wonderful, altruistic, magical humans that lead and teach with their hearts and souls. With all of that being true, in my role as professional developer, I see first-hand how teachers new to the profession and new to the community need to be nurtured, cared for, and supported. With my combined experience working with new teachers, the research on the needs of new teachers and my own experience as a new teacher, I passionately believe that we must help our new teachers navigate the field of education so that they feel successful in all the aspects of their job. Navigating the complexities of the school culture, lesson planning and delivery, curriculum writing, as well as understanding the hidden culture of each grade level or department; new teachers need guidance, a collegial network, and a support system to learn and grow within.

I recognize the bias which I come to this work with, carrying the weight of my own experiences, as well as the understanding of the current reality in which we are losing teachers by the dozens in schools across the country (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). I also recognize that there are so many other contributing factors to why teachers leave the field of education that are different than mine. Teachers teach in under-resourced schools, are underpaid, experience toxic work environments, as well as so many other factors. While these were not

necessarily part of my experience, the fact that teaching is one of the most important professions, and one that is so challenging to navigate remains true for so many reasons. My passion for the education field, student learning and for the success and well-being of teachers, hinders my ability to clearly see a system that does anything else but support teachers to keep them and help them grow. I do recognize that my position as both the facilitator and the author of the program being implemented throughout this research program, while also the researcher will play a role in my interactions with the participants, I will make efforts to bracket those biases when working with the teachers participating in the *Grow to Great* new teacher program. This research will add to the conversation and be able to identify the ways in which new teachers need support, what support they need, what support is too much and what is the progression of instructional models for new teachers as they gain both experience and sophistication in their practice. As this research progresses, the educators within the *Grow to Great* program, the smaller group of teachers that will help to provide their perspective of the program as they are experiencing it, as well as my own position and goals for the work will help to uncover how knowledge is both grown and shared to best support these new teachers.

Research Design

The research that I have conducted was an empirical mixed-methods case study research project that will examine both the experience of teachers participating in the new teacher induction program, but also explore how this program impacted their teacher evaluation scores. Mixed-methods design was chosen to strengthen the validity of the final conclusions and the data collected varied as some was of qualitative and other was quantitative (Butin, 2010). This method suits the needs of this research project as it allowed me to capture the insight and

experiences from the participants, while also seeing if there was a correlation between the professional development work and the growth of teachers. Creswell (2015) stated that “the core argument for a mixed methods design is that the combination of both forms of data provides a better understanding of a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative data alone” (p. 45). As such data was collected and analyzed in both qualitative and quantitative forms, but with a priority placed on the experiences of the participants with the qualitative data as a source to provide a deeper, more complex understanding and perspective of the program and its impact.

Methodology

The case study methodology was employed for this research project as I was exploring new teachers within this school district as the case to be studied. Case study methodology was chosen for this research project as it aligns with, as Yin (2018) outlined, a research study that relies on a distinct situation in which there are many variables at play that guides the design, data collection and analysis and relies on the collection of many sources of evidence to triangulate in order to tell the whole story of the case. In this case study, participants were chosen so that there is a random representation of the multiple perspectives of the participants. Aligned to the characteristics of a case study, there were “multiple voices, exhibiting characteristics of similarity, dissimilarity, redundancy and variety, are sought in order to gain greater knowledge of a wider group, such as a more general population, rather than simply the individual informants who are contributing data” (Shenton, 2004, p. 65). Creswell (2015) explained that a case study is a type of design that explores a real- life system over time, through multiple data sources and varieties. For the purposes of this research, the case study methodology fit best as both qualitative and quantitative data was explored as well as an in-depth analysis of participants’

experiences and subjectivities within as these align with programmatic aims. Additionally, an in-depth examination of quantitatively represented trends related to teacher retention and attrition was completed in order to enhance the qualitative accounts related to programmatic and district-aligned professional development. While the program documents and curriculum of the new teacher program were an important aspect to the creation of the program, the experiences of the new teachers as well as the teacher attrition data portrayed a narrative of the robust and multi-dimensional events that occur during a new teacher's pre-tenure years. This vast array of data, as well as the breadth of experiences captured materialized to encapsulate the full picture of the case that is being studied: the experiences of new teachers, participating in a multi-year new teacher induction program within the context of this school district. To confirm the credibility of the research, a constructivist approach to data analysis and coding was applied to this case study research methodology. "A constructivist approach acknowledges the interpretative nature of the findings" (Maher et al., 2018, p. 5). This approach was applied to the data so that the themes and meanings across the data emerged as the data was read, analyzed and understood. Since the case study of this new teacher induction program within the context of this school district was so broad and varied, the patterns of new teacher experiences across subject areas, grade levels and so many other variables needed to organically emerge. Because of these multiple-means of data, exploring all of this as one complete case, provided the insight necessary to better comprehend the full scope of this induction program and inform the chosen methods of data collection.

Mixed Methods: Design & Rationale

As discussed, a mixed methods design was executed for the data collection and analysis. The quantitative data received from the teacher evaluation scores, the student assessment data

was looked at in conjunction with the qualitative data received from the teacher interviews, documents, and survey to get at the heart of each of the research questions. While the data could, stand on its own as a source of discussion, the power of the data and determining the success and impact of a new teacher induction program is truly in the consolidation of this data (Vogl, 2019). The rationale for this is in the practicality and complexity of this endeavor. Instituting a new teacher induction program of this magnitude, depth, breadth, and scope requires extensive time, effort, and resources on the part of a school district. This research explored if the opportunity cost for this type of program outweighed the cost in teacher retention, teacher effectiveness and teacher satisfaction. When a school district looks to employ a program as resource rich as this one, the data must be available that supports growth not only in teacher satisfaction and feelings of self-efficacy, but also show the numerical data of teacher improvement. It is in the integration and triangulation of this data in which school districts will be able to make the choice as to whether an induction program, similar to *Grow to Great* can fit in their community. With the absence of one or the other type of data, either quantitative or qualitative, a less complete and partially informed construction of the impact, I believe that districts would be less likely to move forward with a program to support the needs of new teachers.

Epistemology

Throughout this research, the understanding of the needs of new teachers and the structures that are necessary to support them are all grounded in the construction of the knowledge that was shared from their real-life experiences. Being aware of the epistemology of research and how the construction of knowledge is being developed is an important part of the research process. “Epistemology is concerned with how people come to know something and

how knowledge is confirmed” (Henning & Roberts, 2016, p. 19). Koro-Ljungberg et al. (2009) stated that, “the argument for epistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and methodological transparency becomes especially important in the current political and academic climate, in which many question the design choices, purposes, and trustworthiness of qualitative studies and other alternative research approaches” (p. 687). Additionally, the validation of the research process and the transparency of my choices throughout the research process validates not only my process, but the results that I find. By choosing a theoretical perspective that grounded the research project aligned me, as the researcher, to make justified and guided choices throughout the process. The inquiry process followed throughout the research journey will be both dependable and authentic as to be able to capture not only my own perspective, but the perspectives of others (Given, 2008). Throughout this research, the understandings of the participants as they experience the social, political and psychological elements of the world, the constructivist approach allowed me, the researcher to triangulate and record these multiple perspectives and evaluate them as parts of a whole true, lived experience (Given, 2008).

Constructivism allows me as the researcher to track the lived experience of the participants and being able to triangulate the data across multiple participants, so that I was able to center the experience of the participants and the importance of the “social interactions and the interpretation of reality by the individual” (Henning & Roberts, 2016, p. 19). Through this viewpoint, multiple realities were constructed by different people and different groups based on each participant’s understanding, perspective, background, and experience. “Constructivism seeks to understand phenomena through the interpretation and meaning constructed by the individual” (Henning & Roberts, 2016, p. 20). These constructions of understanding from the

perspective of each individual helped to determine a whole and complete picture of the reality that is being experienced.

Constructivism and Andragogy

For my project work, I conducted a case study review of a new teacher induction program within my own school district. As a result, I looked at this work through the theoretical framework of andragogy. Andragogy provided me with the opportunity to not only describe the essence of teacher induction, but to describe the lives of early entry educators and to assess their experiences against the six principles of this framework: the learner's need to know, self-concept of the learner, prior experience of the learner, readiness to learn, orientation to learning and motivation to learn (Knowles, 2020). For the purposes of this study, I explored the experiences of new teachers through a constructivist orientation which helped me to cultivate and elevate the constructed realities of those teacher experiences through the framework outlined by andragogy.

The program design of *Grow to Great* was based upon the principles of Andragogy, in order to meet the needs of each of the adult learners in the program. Each of the participants, being a new teacher to this school district, and participating in the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program, assessed the experience of these new teachers as they construct and share the realities of their experiences both as a new teacher and throughout the induction program. The experience needed to be interpreted and constructed from their understanding of their journey being a learner as a new teacher and moving through a new teacher induction program. This is an experience that is both unique and shared; each participant underwent the realities of being new to the school district in a different way but had a shared understanding of both the induction program and the phenomenon of being a new teacher. Through their involvement in the new

teacher induction program, when examined through the theoretical framework of Andragogy an in-depth exploration of early career educators was constructed as they lived through the reality of the probationary period of their career in a new school district.

Participants

The participants in the study were comprised of all teachers registered in the four-year *Grow to Great* program. As the *Grow to Great* program was in the initial stages of roll out, in the school year 2021-22, the first year of data collection, the program ran the first three years of the new teacher support with approximately 75 teachers enrolled over the three support years. In the school year, 2022-23, we rolled out, for the first time, the fourth year of the new teacher induction program. As a result, the number of participants and interviewees were scheduled to increase between the two data collection periods. We were anticipating an increase of approximately 25 members for the 2022-23 school year, increasing the participation total to approximately 100. For the interviews, this increased the number of interviewees from 12 in the first round of data collection (four per year of the program) to 16 in the subsequent school year.

All of these participants were teachers that are in their pre-tenure stage of their career in this school district. That being said, some of these teachers were early career teachers, while others were more veteran teachers that transferred to this school district after several years of teaching experience in another school(s). All the participants, approximately 75 in the 2021-22 school year and approximately 100 in the 2022-23 school year, received a survey in which they shared insights about their experience in the particular year of the *Grow to Great* program for which they are registered.

The survey was not anonymous, but confidential, as I tracked response data over time. While I do recognize that having the survey be confidential rather than anonymous might impact the validity of the responses, I was hopeful that the benefits of being able to track participant's experiences over time throughout the program will outweigh the potential negative impact. According to Whelan (2007), it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that measures have been put into place to ensure both privacy and confidentiality of responses, all of which will be done upon administration of the survey and in the survey disclosure statement at the top of the electronic instrument. Additionally, issues of confidentiality are a matter of individual perspective. Individual respondent's likelihood to respond differently to anonymous versus confidential surveys seem to pertain to the respondent's perception of how sensitive the information is that is being collected as well as how concerned they are about the information possibly being disclosed (Whelan, 2007). In his research study, Whelan (2007) examined the impact of participants responses taking a confidential versus anonymous survey. According to his findings, participants were able to distinguish the difference when a survey was anonymous versus one that was confidential, but he found that the fear of evaluation based on their responses based on the level of confidentiality were the greatest determinant for how participants chose to answer items on the questionnaires. He stated that regardless of anonymity or confidential condition, "it may not be the survey condition itself that influences a survey respondent's concern for social evaluation, but their perception of how confidential their responses to the survey may be" (Whelan, 2007, p.7). These findings influenced the way in which I interpreted the survey responses. While the need for identification to track respondent's answers over time, trumps the decision to keep the survey anonymous, I tried to be aware that the potential

disclosure of this data might insight participants to respond with more curtailed or partial answers for fear of evaluation or judgment.

Sample Selection & Recruitment

Interview participants were recruited from the list of registrants to provide a cross section of both gender, grade level and content area. Three to four participants were recruited to participate from each year of the program. The intention was to choose subjects based on the ability to get a variety of teachers from different disciplines, grade levels, genders, backgrounds, and experiences, to be able to draw commonalities and differences across and throughout their responses.

The recruitment process was rather easy as all the members that were originally contacted agreed to participate in the interview portions of the research. I was curious whether my positionality as a professional developer, facilitator of the program and researcher influenced the high participation rate and therefore pushed people to agree to the process despite feeling uninterested, concerned, or overwhelmed.

I obtained IRB consent and approval to complete both the survey and interview (See Appendix C & D) and IRB consent was received from all participants in the interview process. A statement of confidentiality was shared with all the participants completing the survey and the option to partake in the research was determined by the participant's willingness to respond to the questionnaire. The privacy, purpose and security of their information was always shared with the interview participants prior to beginning the initial interview and the IRB form was fully read and consent was received. I reached out to the interview participants originally via email (See Appendix E) to solicit their interest in participating and finding out more information. After that,

an in-person meeting was scheduled to go into further detail about the research study, time commitment and confidentiality. Upon agreement, participants and I scheduled our first interview in a location and time that was conducive to the participants.

Since data has already been collected for the Spring 2002 session, the first round of twelve interviews have already concluded. The basic information of each participant is listed in Table 3-1, below:

Table 3-1: Interview Participant Basic Information

Interviewee Name* (all names are pseudonyms)	M/F	Grade & Subject Taught	Year started in district	Prior years teaching experience
Linda	F	Elementary School, Third Grade	2019-20	2
Karol	F	Elementary School, Third Grade	2019-20	16
Nate	M	High School, Math	2020-21	0
Amy	F	Middle School, Special Ed	2021-22	3
Rob	M	High School, Art	2021-22	6
Gale	F	Middle School, ELA	2021-22	9
Ashley	F	Middle School, Special Ed	2020-21	4
Donna	F	Middle School, Science	2019-20	4
Adam	M	High School, Science	2019-20	8
Joe	M	High School, Social Studies	2020-21	13
Jess	F	Elementary School, Special Ed	2020-21	5
Kim	F	Elementary School, Kindergarten	2021-22	5
Kate	F	Middle School, Special Ed	2022-23	13
Cindy	F	Elementary School, Fourth Grade	2022-23	10
Maya	F	Elementary School, First Grade	2022-23	9
Chris	M	High School, English	2022-23	

Since this initial data collection, one of the participants, Karol, was transferred to a different position and therefore, no longer participated in the new teacher induction program. Four teachers who began in the new teacher induction program were hired for the 2022-23 school year and have been added to this list. One participant's interview, Nate, did not get recorded in the initial round of interviews, due to an error in technology on behalf of the researcher. As a result,

only the interview notes will be able to be used for this round of data collection for this participant.

Setting

As referenced above, the research was conducted in the case study school district, which is a K-12, highly resourced suburban school district in the Northern United States that spans about 20 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). The community thrives on its rolling hills, vast landscapes, and ease of transportation into neighboring cities. The school district is made up of six schools: three elementary, two middle and one high school; with a population under 20,000. The vast majority of the community's residents have a bachelor's degree or higher (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2022), reflecting an overwhelmingly economically advantaged district. This detail impacts the generalizability of this research study. There are approximately 3,625 students; who are roughly evenly split between male and female-identifying and encompass several demographic groups:

Table 3-2: District Demographic Information (2019-2020)

Demographic Category	Percentage as of (2019-2020)
Black or African American	1%
Hispanic or Latino	6%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	14%
White	74%
Multiracial	5%
Emergent Bilinguals	1%
Students with Disabilities	10%

([State] Department of Education, 2022)

While most of the student population identifies as White, 26% of the student body does not; and less than ten percent identify as emergent bilinguals. From the demographic breakdown and the

previously laid out statistics, this school district is one that also does not have many residents who would be considered economically disadvantaged. This factor comes into play when thinking about the generalizability of this research study as it is taking place in a school district that has a consistent 98% graduation rate (NCES.ed.gov, 2022) and has access to a lot of resources.

The district, as of 2022, has over five hundred staff members across six schools, relatively evenly split between teachers and support staff. As a mid-sized suburban school district, the setting of this research and staffing of this school community reflects qualities that are similar to other educational settings. The table above highlights some of the staffing features of the district that place it squarely as a mid-sized suburban district. Each of the six schools within the district has a full-time librarian and the availability of instructional aides that support teachers with tasks such as copying, lunch duty and dismissal. The district staff breakdown also highlights the proportionality in size between our K-6 (elementary) and 7-12 (secondary) program. Each school is operated by a principal and at least one assistant principal. The high school is supported by four assistant principals. I, myself, have worked in the school district for 15 years, first as a teacher and currently as the Director of Professional Learning. While my previous connection to the district has provided me with the opportunity to develop many relationships with teachers and staff members within the system, for the purposes of this research, it does require some further unpacking due to the possible ethical conflicts that can arise throughout this process.

Qualitative Data Collection

Interviews

Qualitative data will be collected in the forms of both surveys and interviews. Data collection occurred three times over the course of this research study, beginning at the end of the spring semester of 2022, the winter semester of 2022, and the spring semester of 2023.

Approximately three to four participants from each year of the *Grow to Great* program were asked to participate in interviews throughout the research process. Interviews are an important type of data collection as “interviews can enable more accurate screening of participants because the interviewer can talk with the interviewee to gather and clarify demographic information. Interviews allow for capturing verbal and nonverbal cues. Similarly, interviews can capture emotions and behaviors” (Henning & Roberts, 2016, p.170). These non-verbal cues and emotions of the participants are aspects that cannot be captured from an online survey. Additionally, interviews are “informed by rigorous methods and research and require forethought and structure and guidelines for implementing them” (Henning & Roberts, 2016, p.169). A semi-structured interview process was followed with approximately a total of 40 questions to guide the discussion (See Appendix A). This type of interview was chosen to allow for a more conversational feel to the interviews and for flexibility to ask more probing questions as the interview progresses based on the responses of the interviewee.

While each participant had the same skeleton of an interview, the semi-structured interview approach allows for me, the researcher, to dig deeper into certain responses that may provide additional interesting and imperative information (Henning & Roberts, 2016). Each interview took about forty-five to sixty minutes and gathered a combination of baseline demographic information as well as information that will give insight towards the experiences,

perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge of each interviewee (Patton, 2003). The interview questions were structured to gain insight from the participants to verify whether they felt supported as an adult learner based upon the six principles of andragogy. Interviews were scheduled via email but conducted in person in a private setting on school grounds. Each participant chose the location of the interview. Some interviews were conducted in the teacher's classroom, while others were done in conference rooms within the school buildings. The interviews were conducted in a location that the participant chooses so that it is a location that they feel both safe, comfortable and is confidential. The 45-60 minute time frame was a consideration made when designing the survey in order to take into account the needs and stress levels of the participants. The surveys and interviews provided an overarching and explicit understanding of the experience of teachers, across the school district as they move through their first few years. The data collected helped to identify the needs, struggles, successes, and overall experiences of teachers at different times throughout their first four years.

Surveys

A survey was sent to the entire list of participants in all the four years of the *Grow to Great* program (See Appendix B). "Questionnaires have proved to be an efficient. . . means of gathering evidence on program impact, gaining insight into program improvement and knowing more about the target audience" (Pope et al., 2005, p. 4). The survey provided an opportunity to gather qualitative data from the full list of participants within the *Grow to Great* induction program. Babbie (2017) believed that survey research, for a social science researcher that is looking to collect data from a large population, is an effective method of data collection. Since the list of participants enrolled in the new teacher induction program over the four years spans

between 75-100 participants, survey is an effective and efficient method to use to collect and compare data. Additionally, the survey helped me begin to get insight into the research questions:

- To what extent does an on-going, sustained professional development program impact the experience of new teachers?;
- What are the professional needs and supports of new teachers?; and
- How does a sustained professional development program support teacher retention, feelings of self-efficacy, and overall satisfaction in their job?

This same survey will be sent at each data collection interval.

The survey questions were divided into four basic areas: basic demographic information, course content, you as a learner, reflections. In an effort to keep the cognitive burden low for respondents, questions in each section were composed of a mix of open-ended response questions and questions that respondents could rate on a Likert scale (1-5). Because respondents were required to read the questions, think critically, and respond (Fink, 2013), the cognitive load to complete a survey can be a burden so the Likert scale questions will reduce the cognitive load of the participants. “The higher the cognitive burden, the less likely respondents are to answer accurately or to complete the questionnaire. The easier the questionnaire, the more useful and accurate the results will be” (Harlacher, 2016, p. 4). On the other hand, open ended responses provide useful information to help understand the full and comprehensive viewpoint of the respondent. Harlacher (2016) also believed that when a researcher uses open-ended questions, it gives the respondent an opportunity to respond without perceived limitations. This allows the researcher to collect data without missing any critical information that might have been missed by other closed and constrained questions. The data, when collected in this manner, provided the opportunity to have both a collection of quantitative responses where I was able to track trends

within a cohort year, and eventually over time, but also allowed me to gather the qualitative data that lets me understand even more deeply the experience of the participants.

The construction of the survey used for teachers in the *Grow to Great* program in this way, was essential for a high percentage of return. In trying to be responsive to the needs of the participants, the stress and load that they are carrying, I was cognizant to ensure that both the time needed to respond to the survey and the cognitive load is not too much of a burden. Being overworked and overloaded as is, new teachers might have struggled to put forth the effort and energy to respond fully to surveys that were dense and required a vast investment of time. Therefore, throughout the survey, each section was constructed using a similar pattern where there is a series of Likert scale questions, followed by two open-ended response questions. For these open-ended questions, participants chose to write as much or as little as they felt necessary. After the basic demographic section there were three following sections of the survey: course content, you as a learner, and reflections.

The questions in the “course content” section of the survey was designed to gather data around the participant’s perceptions of the applicability and appropriateness of the content being taught in the year of the program which they are participating. These questions were asked on a Likert scale for the respondents to give a 1-5 rating. The participants were asked about whether the content of the new teacher program was appropriate, engaging, demonstrated valuable instructional practices, made them consider other ways of doing things in their classroom, and was backed by research. The respondents for this section also had the option to add their open-ended responses to what they think is most impactful and least impactful.

In the section, “you as a learner,” the questions were designed to assess the program and facilitator’s ability to address the needs of the participants based on the principles of Andragogy.

The participants were asked to rate the program, again on a Likert scale of 1-5 based on the six principles of Andragogy. Following the Likert scale questions, were two open-ended response questions that asked the participants to both explain their experience in the program and add what could have been done to meet their needs better. In the last and final portion of the survey, the “reflections” portion of the survey is to gain insight on their own perceived growth as an educator within the classroom and the district and to gain feedback as to areas of improvement for the induction program.

The sections of the survey were set up in this way to expressly reflect the information needed to address each of the research questions. The second section of the survey focused on gathering data towards the research questions of: What are the professional needs and supports of new teachers? and how does a sustained professional development program support teacher retention, feelings of self-efficacy, and overall satisfaction in their job? While the third section of the survey really supports the development of insight towards the research question: How does a sustained professional development program support teacher retention, feelings of self-efficacy, and overall satisfaction in their job? While the survey will capture the broad scope of the experiences of a majority the participants, a deeper and more in-depth look into the context of the program will help to understand their induction program experience more fully. Therefore, an examination of the documents related to the program will be a vital source of data.

Program Documents

An additional source of data that was collected as part of this case study was an array of program documents. In the interest of getting a full understanding of the experience of the new teacher induction program, and whether this program answered what professional supports are

most advantageous to new teachers, the extent that a new teacher induction program impact teacher quality and the extent that an on-going, sustained professional development program impact the experience of new teachers, a full and robust review of not only the experiences of the participants will be necessary, but also an exploration of the foundational and curricular documents that the program is built upon was necessary. The documents collected were used to verify the claims made by the interview participants and survey data and provided a deeper understanding of the global context.

The documents collected for this review were a compilation of the *Grow to Great* curricular materials including the unit plans, lesson outlines and slide decks, any supplementary resources used throughout the program, as well as any mission or vision documents. All of these documents as they were created by either myself or members of my professional development team, were retrieved from the shared drive that we all contribute to and collaborate in. These program documents can be referenced in Appendix F-K.

Data Collected

Throughout the research period, there were three intervals of data collection, the first of which occurring in the Spring of 2022, followed by Winter of 2023, and then concluding with the final round of data collection in the Spring of 2023. At each of these intervals the *Grow to Great* survey was administered and a round of interviews was conducted. Table 4.2 and 4.3 outline the participation rate at each of the data collection intervals.

Table 3-3: Survey Data Participation

Data collection period	Total # of participants	Total # completed	% Completed
Spring 2022	71	58	81.7%
Winter 2022	84	74	88%

Spring 2023	67	56	83.6%
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Table 3-4: Interview Data Participation

Data collection period	Year 1 Teachers Interviewed	Year 2 Teachers Interviewed	Year 3 Teachers Interviewed	Year 4 Teachers Interviewed	TOTAL
Spring 2022	4	4	4		12
Winter 2022	4	4	4	3	15
Spring 2023	4	4	4	3	15

Qualitative Data Analysis

Interviews

The interviews were recorded and transcribed and then uploaded to a digital qualitative software tool that assisted in the coding, grouping and sorting of the transcription data for analysis. The qualitative data received from the interviews and from the open-ended questions embedded in the survey was analyzed for themes using a qualitative data software tool, Quirkos. This tool allowed me to easily sort, code and classify the data into various themes and subcategories. Upon beginning the coding of the data, themes and patterns emerged as I sorted through the responses. From this, I was able to analyze and identify trends within each of the codes.

According to Saldaña (2012), coding the data with words or phrases and grouping these together, patterns, themes and understanding will begin to emerge. My first round of data coding was done through the application of elemental methods of data coding (Saldaña, 2016). Through the combination of structural coding and then descriptive coding in which codes categorize data into broad buckets or topics. This type of data sorting allowed me to assign labels and categories to the vast content acquired across data sources and link them together into these structural or

descriptive categories (Saldaña, 2016). From there, further data coding was done to each of the individual categories.

The following round of data coding was to evaluate the actions, thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the participants. As such a combination of In Vivo and process coding structures was utilized for this stage of the process (Saldaña, 2016). Through these coding structures, I was able to capture the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the participants within the study in direct relation to my research questions and their experiences (Saldaña, 2016).

Finally, as meaning began to emerge from the captured data, I employed an additional round of data coding in which my goal was to develop a sense of organization, themes, categories from the first rounds of data coding (Saldaña, 2016). For this, I used the method of pattern coding to make sense out of the coded data that I have from the interviews and surveys to examine it for overlaps, patterns, redundancies and then combine them all into broad themes (Creswell, 2015). The broad patterns and themes emerged from the data by breaking the codes into text segments, grouping the text segment codes into similar codes to look for patterns, organize these codes to explore if new codes emerge, and then examine these broader patterns for the larger themes that emerge (Creswell, 2015).

Through these many rounds of coding, more nuanced layers of each big idea was able to be identified and organized. Through this process of coding, an examination of the themes for sub themes and layers, looking for first and second order abstractions. In this part of coding, “You subsume minor themes within major themes and include major themes within broader themes. The entire analysis becomes more and more complex as the researcher works upward toward broader and broader levels of abstraction” (Creswell, 2015, p. 250). Through this multi-round process of coding, I was able to derive from the data more clear answers to my research

questions so as to explore: what parts of the new teacher induction program stood out to the new teachers, what elements did not feel as supportive as it could have been, what their needs were and are at each stage of their tenure as well as how they, as adult learners, felt and were treated throughout the program.

Surveys

For the open-ended survey data, I also used the software program Quirkos to assist in the coding of this data. I used the same process as outlined above using the structural and deductive coding strategies followed by in vivo and pattern coding in my first round of data analysis to see what themes emerge from the data. I then, upon my second cycle of deductive coding, looked for the larger patterns to help drive further analysis and understanding. When further rounds of coding needs to be done, I conducted it with both the interview and survey data to discern even more clarity and understanding from the data acquired.

For the Likert scale questions on the survey, I intended to track changes over time for each of the cohorts as well as each of the individual programs. My initial intention was to look across each question to assess what teacher's responses indicate and compare that data to the next data collected for that program year. Throughout the data collection and analysis, tracking an individual's response and how their response changed over time proved to not be as important as the overall trends in the survey data or the statements made in response to the open-ended questions. Thus, the research plan was changed to not include the data processing of tracking individual responses over time.

Comprehensive Content Document Analysis

Bowen (2009) stated that when researchers analyze documents, they employ a systematic procedure for evaluating and reviewing all the printed and electronic related documents. A review of a diverse set of program documents including curricular materials, student work, program vision and mission statements, as well as unit and lesson plans was conducted to gain a full understanding of the new teacher induction program, the progression of content and the skills being addressed through the induction program. A document analysis supports the research effort in not only providing supplementary data but gives “data on the context within which research participants operate” (Bowen, 2009, p. 29). This data and the context that it provided will enhance the story told by data collected from the participants during the interviews and the surveys.

The document analysis process intended to be a comprehensive content analysis that would have included identifying the documents to review, making sense of the documents and their relation to each other, and synthesizing the data within the documents (Bowen, 2009). Just like with interviews and survey data, this qualitative data was intended to be organized into major themes, and categories through several rounds of analysis and coding. “Document analysis involves skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation. The iterative process of analysis combines elements of content and thematic analysis. Content analysis is the process of organizing information into categories related to the central questions of the research” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). Analyzing the documents pertinent to *Grow to Great* provided an understanding of context and background underscoring participants’ experiences. While program documents provided an understanding of the program’s overall goals, vision, mission, framework, and curriculum; the surveys, interviews, and quantitative data

on both teacher retention and teacher evaluation and quality provided a clear picture of the intent of the program and its impact on the experiences of new teachers including their feelings of self-efficacy and overall job satisfaction.

Quantitative Data: Teacher Evaluation & Teacher Retention

Quantitative data sources included an examination of district teacher evaluation scores from 2019-2022 and teacher resignation data from 2015-2023. Teacher evaluation scores were analyzed to examine whether there is a correlation between the professional development the new teachers are receiving in the new teacher induction program and their evaluation scores. Teacher evaluation scores were received by the school district for the school years between 2019-2022. Teacher evaluation scores are able to track teacher performance over the course of the single school year, and if enrolled in the new teacher induction program for consecutive years, over the course of those years as well. While overall distinctions are able to be made about the use of teacher evaluations in assessing a teacher's overall ability to teach, this data is crucial in examining whether teacher evaluations are a tool that can accurately assess a teacher's ability to teach well based on the performance standards outlined by the Danielson Rubric. This data helped to explore the extent to which new teacher induction programs can support the development of teacher pedagogical skills and teacher's overall effectiveness.

Quantitative Data Methods

Teacher Evaluation

The research objective is to study factors that can influence teacher's performance during 2019-2022 which are measured by teacher's composite score. The quantitative method is to

focus on modeling teacher's rating by using a multivariate regression model to determine teacher's composite score controlling for various teacher characteristics and external factors (experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects). A multivariate linear model is used to estimate teacher's composite score. The independent variables include experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects. The regression results provide us with information on how teacher performance will be affected if there is a change in their experience, tenure, and other school and department attributes. Therefore, in order to measure the variation of teacher's performance, relevant school and department attributes will also be incorporated in the linear multivariate regression besides teachers' characteristics. Since the data is panel data which varies across teachers and over time, fixed effects or random effects panel data methods can be used. Hausman test was provided to examine which method was more appropriate. If we fail to reject the null hypothesis, we can conclude that a more efficient estimate is the random effects estimate. However, if we reject the null hypothesis in the Hausman test, we conclude that a more consistent estimate is the fixed effects estimate.

The following panel data - multivariate linear model is used to estimate teacher's composite score. The independent variable include experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects as shown in the mathematical model as follows:

$$Teacher_Score_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Experience_{i,t} + \beta_2 * Probationary_{i,t} + \beta_3 * Male_{i,t} + \beta_4 * Formal_evaluation_{i,t} + \beta_5 * Admin_level_{i,t} + \beta_6 * Schooling_years_{i,t} + \beta_7 * School_levels_{i,t} + \beta_8 * Departments + c_i + \varepsilon_{it}$$

where c_i is assumed to be correlated with independent variables $X_{i,t}$ which includes the following variables: experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects in the fixed effects (FE) model and c_i is not correlated with $X_{i,t}$ in the random effects (RE) model.

When the NTI program is evaluated, the following panel data - multivariate linear model is used to estimate teacher's composite score. The independent variable include NTI program, experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects as shown in the mathematical model as follows:

$$Teacher_Score_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * NTI_Program_{i,t} + \beta_2 * Experience_{i,t} + \beta_3 * Probationary_{i,t} + \beta_4 * Male_{i,t} + \beta_5 * Formal_evaluation_{i,t} + \beta_6 * Admin_level_{i,t} + \beta_7 * Schooling_years_{i,t} + \beta_8 * School_levels_{i,t} + \beta_9 * Departments + c_i + \varepsilon_{it}$$

The data used was the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2022-2023 teacher evaluation data from the highly resourced suburban school district. This data was merged with two smaller data sets, teacher seniority data from 2022 and the New Teacher Induction Program enrollment data from 2021, 2022, 2023. The data included a comprehensive view of a teacher's evaluation history, including the type of observation completed, the evaluator who completed the observation, their status as a teacher (tenured or probationary), their teaching assignment, and their school. The data did not include demographic information on the teachers beyond their gender. Additionally, while the seniority data indicates the number of years teaching in this school district, it does not consider total number of teaching years overall, as many of the teachers have held teaching jobs prior to teaching in this school district.

The main dependent variable in this dataset is teacher evaluation composite score. We measure this amongst a variety of variables including gender, years of experience, department, school level, evaluator, etcetera. The data are arranged in two separate ways to examine two

different main concepts. Initially, the data was arranged in order to analyze each teacher's individual performance over a year. The data was cleaned and organized so that the difference between scores received on a teacher's initial observation, second observation and third observation could be tracked and graphed. This information would give us an indication as to how a teacher improves over the course of a single school year. With this data arrangement, there were five possibilities. Over the course of a year, a teacher's scores could remain constant, increase, decrease or form a parabolic shape in which their scores, improved forming a "U-shape" or did not improve, which would form a "U-inverse" shape. Some of the limitations with this arrangement of data were highlighted during the 2019-20 school year. Due to COVID, not all teachers (especially tenured teachers) received the standard number of 3 observations per year. This interruption would skew the results and provide less data to analyze. The data was then organized to that a teacher's observations were aligned across a year. This arrangement allowed the researcher to explore a teacher's mean observation score and how that score interacted with the other variables. This data provided information to examine whether or not a teacher's score on their evaluations showed a trajectory of positive growth. In relation to the research question: To what extent does a new teacher induction program support the development of teacher pedagogical skills and impact a teacher's overall effectiveness? A teacher's evaluation data should reflect a change in scores over the course of the years enrolled in the *Grow to Great* program.

The quantitative data analysis of teacher retention data took place in a similar way. Teacher retention had been tracked since 2015 as a culmination of public Board of Education meeting records. In this district, teachers are listed as "resigned" when they are not returning to the school district on public documents. The teacher retention data was analyzed to track teacher

retention over the years of 2015-2023 to see the trends of teacher turnover per year of hire. It is important to note that after a large number of teacher resignations in the spring of 2019, the pilot of the *Grow to Great* New teacher program was launched in order to support the needs and promote the success of new teachers in the school district. Data was analyzed with this lens.

Teacher Retention

Additionally, teacher retention data was used to study factors that can influence teacher's resignation during 2015-2022. The quantitative method is to focus on modeling teacher's resignation by using a logistic model and assess factors that can determine teacher's resignation controlling for various teacher characteristics and external factors (pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects).

A non-linear regression with a binomial link or a logit model was used to analyze the impact of various factors including teacher characteristics and external factors (pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects) that can determine teacher's resignation. This model is appropriate because the dependent variable is binary and the prediction of probability of teacher's resignation is always between 0 and 1. The linear probability model is also used as a baseline model to compare with the logit model.

I. Logit Model

Based on this research objective, for the logit model, I estimated the following equations respectively:

(1) Logit model

$$P(Y=1|X) = \frac{e^{X\beta}}{1+e^{X\beta}}$$

where $X\beta = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Pre-tenure years} + \beta_2 \text{Male} + \beta_3 \text{Schooling years} + \beta_4 \text{School levels} + \beta_5 \text{Departments} + e$

and Y = teacher's resignation

$Y = 1$ when teacher is resigned and $Y = 0$ when teacher is not resigned.

and X includes the following variables: pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects.

To interpret the results from the logit regression, we have the estimated odds ratio is:

$$\widehat{OR} = e^{\hat{\beta}_1}$$

and

$$\log(\widehat{OR}) = \hat{\beta}_1$$

$$\text{Est. Odds Ratio} = e^{\hat{\beta}_1} \Rightarrow \text{Est. \% Change in Odds} = 100(e^{\hat{\beta}_1} - 1)\%$$

Therefore, % change in odds = $100(e^{\hat{\beta}_1} - 1) \%$

This implies that every additional unit increase in X is associated with $100(e^{\hat{\beta}_1} - 1) \%$ higher odds of the dependent variable on average.

II. Linear Probability Model

$P(Y=1|X) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Pre-tenure years} + \beta_2 \text{Male} + \beta_3 \text{Schooling years} + \beta_4 \text{School levels} + \beta_5 \text{Departments} + e$

with the same definitions of Y and X above.

Y = teacher's resignation

$Y = 1$ when teacher is resigned and $Y = 0$ when teacher is not resigned.

and X includes the following variables: pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects.

Ethical Considerations

Ethically and honestly conducting research with human subjects is a vitally important part of this process. Henning and Roberts (2016) stated that, “understanding the ethical implications of this work and adhering to expectations of moral behavior is vital for those performing assessment” (p.236). Issues of ethics must be addressed to ensure the safety,

anonymity, and well-being of the participants in the study. This study is based on many of the basic principles of ethical research, with the greatest focus paid to the fact that participants have full autonomy and that no harm will be done to them or others through their participation and that there will be a benefit to them and others through their support (Henning & Roberts, 2016). The IRB consent forms provided a statement of confidentiality throughout the study and an exit clause, should participants make the decision to not answer questions, or to not continue with the prospective study after it has started. All the data collected, interview transcripts and survey results remained confidential and were downloaded onto a private drive, labeled for accuracy and locked away safely. Throughout the data collection and analysis process, anonymity of the respondents was preserved, however pseudonyms were continued to be used throughout the process to protect the identity of the subjects.

Anonymity of the schools and district were also vital to this research. Maintaining the privacy of the district and the schools within is core to the maintenance of confidentiality. Throughout the research the school names were either omitted, changed, or generally referred to by simply their school level, (i.e.- elementary school, high school, etc.). The school district name was also either omitted, changed, or referred to as simply the, “School District.” Permission was granted and received from District level administrators to conduct and report on this research. The administrators were aware of the confidentiality parameters for each participant but were also promised that data that could be used to inform and improve the practice within the *Grow to Great* program, without identifiable information, would be shared and used accordingly.

Throughout the study, the participants were aware that some of the raw data and findings were going to be shared with the rest of the professional development team and with administrators in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, who oversee the implementation of

the New Teacher Induction program. The participants were repeatedly reminded and asked for permission to share some of the data from their surveys and interviews in an effort to improve the program and experience for future cohorts of new teachers. Throughout the coding of the data, and prior to sharing any of the data, any possible identifiable information was redacted or modified. Any information related to the specific subject area they teach, (more specific than “Science” or “elementary”), the names of their specific schools, colleagues, administrators, etcetera was all removed. I remained mindful and consistent about keeping their names disguised and only referring to them, in conversation and print by their pseudonym. I provided information about the research study and how their participation in the study would directly result in the changes and modifications made within the individual year of the program as well as the overall formation, goals and vision of our new teacher induction work.

Strategies to Ensure Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the criteria for rigor for qualitative research. Shenton (2004) unpacked Lincoln & Guba's (1985) tenets of trustworthiness in qualitative research: there are four criteria for social science researchers to ensure trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Shenton describes credibility in research is earned when the researcher attempts or present a clear and honest representation of the phenomenon in its context. When this clear picture is presented with sufficient details for the reader to understand the setting, participants and scope of the work, transferability is able to be evaluated by the reader to examine whether or not the research environment is similar to their own setting and therefore, the findings could be justifiably applied. Shenton explains that this criterion is difficult to achieve in qualitative research as a full and accurate description of a research context can only be

met by best efforts, but is necessary in order for future researchers to replicate the study. Probably the most important element of confirmability, according to Shenton is the demonstration of how the findings emerge from the data rather than the researchers own predetermined ideas, beliefs, or biases (Shenton, 2004). In an effort to secure the trustworthiness of this research project, each area of confirmability was examined in detail as the research unfolds and the data is examined.

Credibility

To ensure that my study is credible, I have included measures to guarantee the credibility of this research. “Credibility ensures the study measures what is intended and is a true reflection of the social reality of the participants” (Maher et al., 2018, p. 3). My own experience being connected to this system ensures an “adequate understanding of the organization and to establish a relationship of trust between the parties” (Shenton, 2004, p. 65). As a member adjacent to the organization and facilitator of the *Grow to Great* induction program, my interactions with the participants of the program as well as my movement throughout the district to collect data is uninhibited by constraints placed on an outside researcher.

In an effort to ensure credibility, each participant that was sent the digital survey was given the option to not respond. Additionally, for interview participants, each participant was given the opportunity to deny participation in the interview, remove themselves from the process mid-way through the research and choose to not respond to any question. Although the participants were aware that not only do I carry the role of researcher, author, and facilitator of this *Grow to Great* induction program, all interviewees are encouraged to be honest with their responses so that their experiences can help to improve, clarify and better the induction program

for future cohorts of educators. In order to keep my own personal bias in this process and this conflict of interest in bounds, several reflective and debriefing conferences with supervisors and committee members were had to ensure that this potential conflict of interest does not skew the results or my interpretation of the data. In addition, the research was conducted over a period of two school years, and over three main data collection intervals. This prolonged engagement with the participants ensured that there is accuracy in the reporting of the experiences of the participants. Member checks were conducted throughout the research process to ensure validity and accuracy of the data. These checks were conducted with the interview participants to ensure that the data is being read, interpreted, and understood to accurately represent and reflect the qualitative experiences of the participants. Member checks were done to ensure that the emerging theories are both accurate and unbiased.

To pay close attention to my own developing understanding, theory, and interpretations of the data, reflective journaling and notetaking was conducted throughout the research design process, interviews, transcriptions, and coding. In addition to reflective journaling, I ensured that there was appropriate data triangulation throughout the research process to illustrate confirmability. The use of various types of data both qualitative: interviews and surveys and quantitative: evaluation scores and student assessments helped to ensure the validity of the analysis and help to fill in the gaps of any single data collection method, when executed in concert with the others (Shenton, 2004). Data was also triangulated using the wide variety and number of interviewees. Rather than conducting a small case study with only 3-4 participant interviewees, this research was conducted so that there were up to 16 interviews conducted at each interview time period (Creswell, 2015). Shenton (2004) pointed out how researchers can utilize different viewpoints and experiences to get a rich picture of the overall needs and attitudes

of the participants. As such, this verification of experiences against and with those of others validated the ability of this research to transfer to other sites.

Transferability

Maier et al. (2018) classified transferability as “the ability of the findings to be transferred to other contexts or settings. Because qualitative research is specific to a particular context, it is important a “thick description” of the particular research context is provided allowing the reader to assess whether it is transferable to their situation or not” (Maier et al., 2018, p. 3). This “thick description” lies in the description of the setting, context and participants involved in my research study. Verifying the details of the context in which the research is taking place is an essential component to valid social research. According to Shenton, “it is the responsibility of the investigator to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork sites is provided to enable the reader to make such a transfer. They maintain that, since the researcher knows only the “sending context”, he or she cannot make transferability inferences” (Shenton, 2004, p. 69). In order to ensure transferability, I made certain that descriptions of both process and context are complete, clear, and accurate. I did this through conferences with peers, and reflective consultations with committee members. This system of checks with my peers, and committee members provided a professional perspective and lens that helped me to clarify any and all details that might remain unclear, questions that seem unanswered and add in details to the work that might need support to clarify misconceptions for the reader.

Dependability

For qualitative research, the goal is for another researcher to be able to pick up and replicate the research experiment. “Dependability ensures the process is described in sufficient detail to facilitate another researcher to repeat the work. This requires a detailed audit trail” (Maher et al., 2018, p. 3). In order to establish dependability, all forms and communications have been added to the appendix of this research. Additionally, the participant selection process, setting, context, and constraints have been discussed in detail. As much information has been provided without crossing the boundary of compromising confidentiality of both the participants and the school setting.

The research process as well as the process of data analysis, coding and interpretation will be added to this work with complete transparency to provide a lens into the process as well as a roadmap for their own future study. For the sake of verification of research practices, and transparency of methods, a full description of the process of how I designed my research and carried it out, collected the data necessary for this case study research, including the details of events that occur along the way, and the assessment and reflection of the work (Shenton, 2004).

Confirmability

Not only is complete transparency important to provide a roadmap for future studies, but it is also crucial to ensure trustworthiness of the study. I have spent extensive time ensuring the trustworthiness of my research study in this area. “Confirmability is comparable to objectivity in quantitative studies. Here, the goal is to minimize investigator bias by acknowledging researcher predispositions” (Maher et al., 2018, p. 3). Recognizing that I have prior connections to some district and school level employees, I am not only the researcher, but also I am the one who gathers and analyzes the data. These connections may have skewed not only the responses that

the participants provide in both their interviews, but also in their surveys. I recognized that my prior connections to a handful of participants provides both benefits and challenges in confirmability. In one sense, it allowed me to establish relationships with the participants that went beyond the scope of this research, providing the opportunity to establish trusting relationships, coaching partnerships, and to provide mentorship to many of the nearly 100 participants in the new teacher induction program. From my professional experiences as a now former classroom teacher-turned-external administrator, this is beneficial, and in fact, this research project gave me the opportunity to speak a common language on educational issues with participants in an even more in-depth manner. As a result, I discussed these issues with my research supervisors at my debriefing sessions. I asked for peer review from colleagues to check my research notes, data, and coding with a special recognition of and attention to researcher bias. Finally, I maintained a comprehensive audit trail of any and all of the strategic decision-making, data gathering, and analysis that occurred throughout this process.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations of a study exist regardless of a researcher's best effort to attain reliable and valid results. Limitations are, "the unfortunate and unplanned factors that arise during a study and which can negatively affect results" (Alexander, 2020, p.13). Creswell (2016) expanded this definition to include that the findings of a study are affected by certain limitations. For example, I recognize the transferability of the findings of my study are limited due to the nature of the participants and the years of experience that they come to the new teacher program already having served. Many of them are hard to even classify as new teachers in the sense that they are not new to the field of education, but are, in fact, new to the school district. As displayed in the

breakdown of the interviewees (see Table 3-1), all of the teachers in the new teacher induction program, except for one, came to the district with several years of teaching experience prior. This may draw into question whether the results of this study would still hold true for a class of new teachers that were directly out of their preservice education program. Additionally, while the findings will represent a cross section of the participants within the program, there are clear gaps in content areas and age levels of teachers represented. As such, one could infer that such experiences would be different based on what type of teacher was being interviewed. The recruitment of participants from the new teacher induction program roster, a program in which I am one of the facilitators, might have also limited the trustworthiness and dependability of the responses.

Another limitation to the transferability of the study would be the access to facilitators for the new teacher induction program. Each year of the program is facilitated by members of the team that works in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. This team consists of professional developers, the Director of Technology and Mathematics and the Director of Literacy and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum. All these team members partner to facilitate a year of the program and support new teachers. While it is wonderful to have access to so many team members within the office of Curriculum and Instruction, who focus on professional development, teaching and learning as the core of their work, this is a luxury not shared by many other districts and therefore may be hard to transfer to other contexts. While the work could definitely be executed by district and building leaders, the amount of time, coordination and alignment to the vision is vast. For an administrator that is also trying to run a school building, a program, executed such as this one, would be a challenge to conduct on top of their regular duties. While many researchers would look to the importance of transferability in replicating a

similar induction program in their respective locations, a strength of this, and any other, district aligned teacher induction program is its contextualization aligned to teachers' experiences in specific locations.

This research study assessing the effectiveness of the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program encountered limitations primarily attributed to researcher positionality and the subjects' perceptions of the researcher in relation to the program. Researcher positionality, referring to the background and biases of the researcher, can inadvertently influence the study's data collection, and interpretation of results. In the context of this study, the researcher's personal experiences, and professional orientation might unconsciously have shaped the approach and framing of the research, potentially introducing unintentional bias. Moreover, how the subjects perceive the researcher's alignment with the *Grow to Great* program could have impacted their willingness to share authentic insights. If participants perceived the researcher as an advocate or critic of the program, they might have altered their responses to either align with or contest the researcher's perceived stance. These limitations underscore the need for careful reflexivity and transparency in navigating the complex interplay between researcher positionality and subjects' perceptions to ensure the study's integrity and validity.

The research study evaluating the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program encounters notable limitations attributed to a substantial level of administrator turnover within the district from 2019 to 2022. This turnover can significantly impact the overall experience, evaluations, and retention rate of new teachers participating in the program. Administrators play a pivotal role in shaping the implementation and support systems for new teachers, influencing their day-to-day experiences, professional development opportunities, performance assessments as well as one's internal feelings of stability and security. Rapid changes in administrative

leadership during the specified period could lead to inconsistencies in program delivery, varying expectations, and shifts in organizational priorities. As a result, the quality of support and guidance provided to new teachers fluctuated, potentially affecting their overall job satisfaction and effectiveness. The instability caused by administrator turnover could have also influenced how new teachers perceive the program's value and their subsequent decisions to either continue teaching within the district or seek opportunities elsewhere. These limitations emphasize the need to acknowledge and account for the dynamic administrative landscape when interpreting the outcomes of the *Grow to Great* induction program study.

Similarly, the research study is also confronted with limitations arising from elevated levels of teacher hiring, retirements, and turnover during the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, primarily attributable to the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic induced an unprecedented and rapid transformation in the educational landscape, leading to fluctuations in staffing needs, instructional modalities, and overall school dynamics. The resultant surge in teacher turnover, driven by factors such as health concerns, remote teaching challenges, and shifting personal priorities, could engender a unique set of experiences and perceptions among new teachers participating in the *Grow to Great* program. The circumstances surrounding the pandemic-induced turnover might not be representative of typical teaching conditions, potentially confounding the study's findings. Additionally, the influx of new hires due to increased demands for cohort teaching might dilute the program's impact and create challenges in accurately assessing the program's effectiveness. Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for contextualizing the study's outcomes within the exceptional circumstances brought about by the pandemic.

Another inherent limitation in the research study evaluating the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program stems from the omission of student assessment scores as a measure to determine whether enhancements in teachers' instructional approaches translate into statistically significant improvements in student performance outcomes. While the program's focus on refining teaching practices is undoubtedly crucial, the ultimate goal of any educational initiative is to positively impact student learning. The absence of student assessment data leaves a critical gap in the ability to establish a direct link between the professional development provided by *Grow to Great* and the quantifiable progress of students. Incorporating student assessment scores would have enabled a comprehensive analysis of the program's overall effectiveness by connecting teacher growth with tangible educational outcomes. Recognizing this limitation is essential for a well-rounded interpretation of the study's findings and to foster a more holistic understanding of the program's impact on both educators and their students.

Delimitations represent researcher-imposed limitations to regulate the scope of the study. Alexander (2020) stated that delimitations are, “the purposeful restrictions that researchers place on their search plan, with an awareness of what those restrictions may mean for the outcomes they report (p. 13). Alexander believed that researchers should not only, “justify the specific delimitations they have instituted but also have consideration of the potential consequences of those decisions” (p. 13). Some of the delimitations imposed on the study by the researcher was the duration of the data collection period as well as the frequency of data collection. It was decided by the researcher that data was going to be collected at every semester break from the Spring of 2022 through the Spring of 2023. This allocated three intervals for interviews and survey data collection. While the new teacher induction program spans a much larger time period, it would be impossible and quite daunting to collect and analyze data over years of the

program. While some data collection methods might be continued after this research study to maintain high levels of satisfaction and a focus on continued growth and improvement, three intervals of analysis will be conducted for the purposes of this research project.

Additionally, in order to respect the time of the participants, a delimitation that I implemented was to limit the duration of the interviews. All participants are full time teachers, with vast responsibilities in and out of the classroom. In order to make their participation in the research not a hinderance on their work or personal life, I committed to limit the length of the interviews to under 60 minutes. While the consequence of this might be less than thorough interviews, it was determined that honoring the needs of the new teachers and respecting the demands placed on their time was more essential and epitomized the essence of the induction program. If I were to neglect the needs of the new teacher for the purposes of these interviews, I felt that I was acting in contrast to the exact principles I was trying to abide by in this research.

A third delimiting factor of this research was that a majority of the literature read and reviewed throughout this research process centered the experience of American and/or Western-based school systems (Shin, 2012). I chose not to include research from non-Western countries. While I was not aware of this while I was conducting the research, and completing the literature review, as I was reflecting on the models and research I was basing my beliefs and work off of, I came to the realization that my own implicit bias and blind spot came through in my failure to include any research into the educational systems and new teacher structures that exist in other non-Eurocentric cultures. Although the exclusion of research and program models from Eastern perspectives might be considered a drawback, my intentions for setting this scholarly boundary represents my desire to create a framework for teacher development that is most relevant to the

educational and teaching experiences that are closely representative to my own school context, and one most aligned with where many teachers who participate in this program plan to teach.

Study Overview

Again, the purpose of this study is to examine the needs and subsequent support systems necessary for new teachers throughout their pre-tenure period based upon the theories of Andragogy. As previously mentioned, much of the literature around new teacher retention points to the need for successful induction programs that span multiple years (Delisio, 2017; Wong, 2004; Sutchter et al., 2019) to help new teachers develop feelings of self- efficacy, strong pedagogical skills, an understanding of school culture and climate and support for the development of skills including establishing managing workloads, planning lessons, establishing classroom routines, classroom management techniques and developing relationships with students (Doran, 2020).

Based on this need to support new teachers in the case study school district, I have conducted a mixed-methods case study review of the four-year new teacher induction program *Grow to Great*. Through this research, I have examined the lived experiences of the participants of the *Grow to Great* program through a qualitative review of interviews, survey data and documents. I will triangulate this data with the quantitative data received from teacher evaluations and teacher retention data. The combination of this data will provide insight as to whether a multi-year new teacher induction program impacts the experience of new teachers, supports their feelings of self-efficacy, and overall satisfaction in their job and demonstrates the development of teacher pedagogical skills and impact a teacher's overall effectiveness. The data, taken all together will help to inform, align, and restructure the development of *Grow to Great*.

Chapter 4 - Findings

The purpose of this case study was to review the existing research on new teacher induction programs, explore the needs of new teachers within the first years of their career, and determine what supports are necessary to develop and retain high-quality teachers. This data would then be used to refine and revise a four-year induction program being implemented in a low-need, high-resource suburban school district. As described in Chapter III, a case study approach was used to capture a whole picture understanding to identify the needs and perspectives of teachers, the practices that support their growth and retention, as well as the data that supports their performance in the sample district.

A comprehensive literature review served to articulate a need for on-going and sustained support in the form of professional development for new teachers. This literature review articulated the need for support in the form of strong collegial relationships, support from administration, clearly articulated vision and expectation, consistent job placement or assignments, as well as access to resources and supports. The literature review also provided the theoretical framework of Andragogy (Knowles, 1968; 1970; 2020) in which the motivation to learn for adult learners was articulated. Data were collected to analyze the research questions posed:

- What professional supports are most advantageous to new teachers?;
- To what extent does an on-going, sustained professional development program impact the experience of new teachers?;
- What is the relationship between a sustained professional development program and (1) new teacher retention, (2) feelings of self-efficacy, and (3) overall job satisfaction?; and
- To what extent does a new teacher induction program impact teacher quality?

Chapter Overview

Data for this chapter will be organized by theme in order to best address the ideas presented by the participants through interviews and survey responses. Additionally, quantitative data will be presented on the topics of teacher retention and teacher evaluation to highlight the impact of the *Grow to Great* program and to support and validate the sentiment shared by research participants to establish the context around which participants' interviews revolve. The narrative that emerged from the data established the context for the environment in which the new teachers operate, their needs as educators as well as how the *Grow to Great* program supported their professional growth, overall satisfaction, feelings of self-efficacy and the improvement in teacher evaluation scores.

The data presented by study participants underscored three overarching pillars of support that hold significant value for new teachers: a robust professional learning community comprising supportive colleagues at all levels, including mentors, administrators, peers, and professional developers, and the crucial element of clarity and consistency in expectations, responsibilities, and norms. While these professional support systems emerged as highly advantageous for pre-tenure teachers, participants also emphasized the transformative impact of the new teacher induction program on their professional journey as they transitioned into the school district. Specifically, they highlighted that the program facilitated their transition through enhanced access to valuable resources and personnel, as well as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. This access and newfound knowledge played a pivotal role in nurturing their sense of support and fostering their growth during their initial years in the new school district. Throughout the findings though, teachers highlighted a lack of clarity and guidance around what it took to be considered a successful educator. This lack of transparency presented a

tension between the evaluations that were completed with seemingly high effectiveness ratings and the quantitative data which reflects the high attrition rate in the district. And so, retention and attrition data are presented first, as a way to set the stage for the kinds of qualitative responses teachers discussed related to a broader lack of support and clarity from administration, despite the creation of the new teacher induction program to attempt to mitigate those gaps.

The themes that emerged from the data established the teacher attrition data as essential information to set the context for the experience and setting of new teachers, while the qualitative data provided clarity around what new teachers need to persevere despite this greater context. Finally, data are shared to highlight the impact of the new teacher induction program on program participant's evaluation scores. Data were examined to contrast pre-tenured teachers enrolled in the program against those that were not participating in the program to explore if there was a statistically significant improvement in teacher's evaluation scores for those taking advantage of the learning. This data pulled together the impact of the program on a teacher's overall instruction and circles back to the question raised in the initial sections of this chapter around teacher attrition. The names of participant teachers are pseudonyms to protect their identities, though gender identification and content area of the participants has been preserved throughout the findings. Supporting data will highlight the findings and implications for the data will be addressed and discussed in further detail in Chapter V.

Establishing Context: District Teacher Attrition and Efforts Toward Retention

To assess the relationship between *Grow to Great* as a sustained professional development program and district new teacher retention, data were examined from retention data

collected between the school years 2015-2022. This sustained professional development program aims to strengthen new teachers' instructional skills and pedagogical knowledge, to prepare those teachers to perform at highly proficient levels on teacher evaluations, and to understand the culture and expectations of the school district. In doing so, new teachers would hopefully do well on evaluations, make it through the tenure process easily, and would remain teaching within the school district. A new teacher induction program, done well, strives to prepare, and therefore, retain teachers at high rates. Additionally, analyzing teacher retention data helps to set the context for the work environment within this school district. When examining whether this new teacher induction program impacted the experience and job satisfaction of new teachers, it is vital to understand the motivation of the adult learners in this program (Knowles, 2020) that is associated with the sense of security that teachers felt for their ability to keep their jobs.

The retention data for this school district was collected between the 2015 and 2022 school year based upon publicly available data from Board of Education meeting minutes. When a teacher leaves this school district, it is reflected in the Board of Education meeting minutes and archived on the district website. Based upon when a new teacher was hired, as a probationary track teacher, when a teacher was given tenure, or when a teacher resigned, I calculated years of service to determine the duration of a teacher's service. No data are available to differentiate why a teacher left: whether they left the profession completely, transferred to another district, left under their own free-will, or whether they were asked to leave. For the purpose of this research, I operated from the belief that a teacher leaving the school district was still a loss of a teacher, no matter the reason. In this school district, a teacher leaving before receiving tenure is often due to the fact that they were not asked to return for the following school year, based on historical and cultural knowledge that I have as a participant researcher from the historical knowledge gained

from within this particular school district. While the data presented show that since the large jump of teacher resignations in the spring of 2019, when the induction program was then piloted in the fall of that year, there continued to be an increase in resignations, but the correlation of the program and that resignation level is unclear as other external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and administrator turnover could have played a role. Retention and attrition rates from this school district sets the stage and context for the qualitative responses that teachers later shared despite the creation of this program to attempt to mitigate those gaps.

Overall, since 2015, the school district has hired 187 new teachers. Table 4-1 and 4-2 show the descriptive statistics of teachers during 2015-2022.

Table 4-1: Descriptive Statistics of New Teacher Retention during 2015-2022

Variable	Obs.	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Resigned	187	0.40	0.49	0	1
Pre-tenure years	187	2.55	1.22	1	5
Male	187	0.24	0.43	0	1

Source: Author's Survey of Teacher Retention (ASTR) 2015-2022

Note: Author's computation of summary statistics from 2015-2022 ASTR data

Table 4-2: Percentage of Teacher Resignation during 2015-2022

Resigned	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Not resigned	113	60.43	60.43
Resigned	74	39.57	100

Table 4-3: Frequency of New Teacher's Gender during 2015-2022

Gender	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Female	142	75.94	75.94
Male	45	24.06	100

Table 4-4: Frequency of Teacher's Cohort Hire Year during 2015-2022

year	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
2015	20	10.70	10.70
2016	16	8.56	19.25
2017	19	10.16	29.41
2018	17	9.09	38.50
2019	26	13.90	52.41
2020	29	15.51	67.91
2021	37	19.79	87.70
2022	23	12.30	100

Table 4-5: Frequency of Teacher's School during 2015-2022

School Level	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Elementary	54	28.88	28.88
Middle	48	25.67	54.55
High	85	45.45	100.00

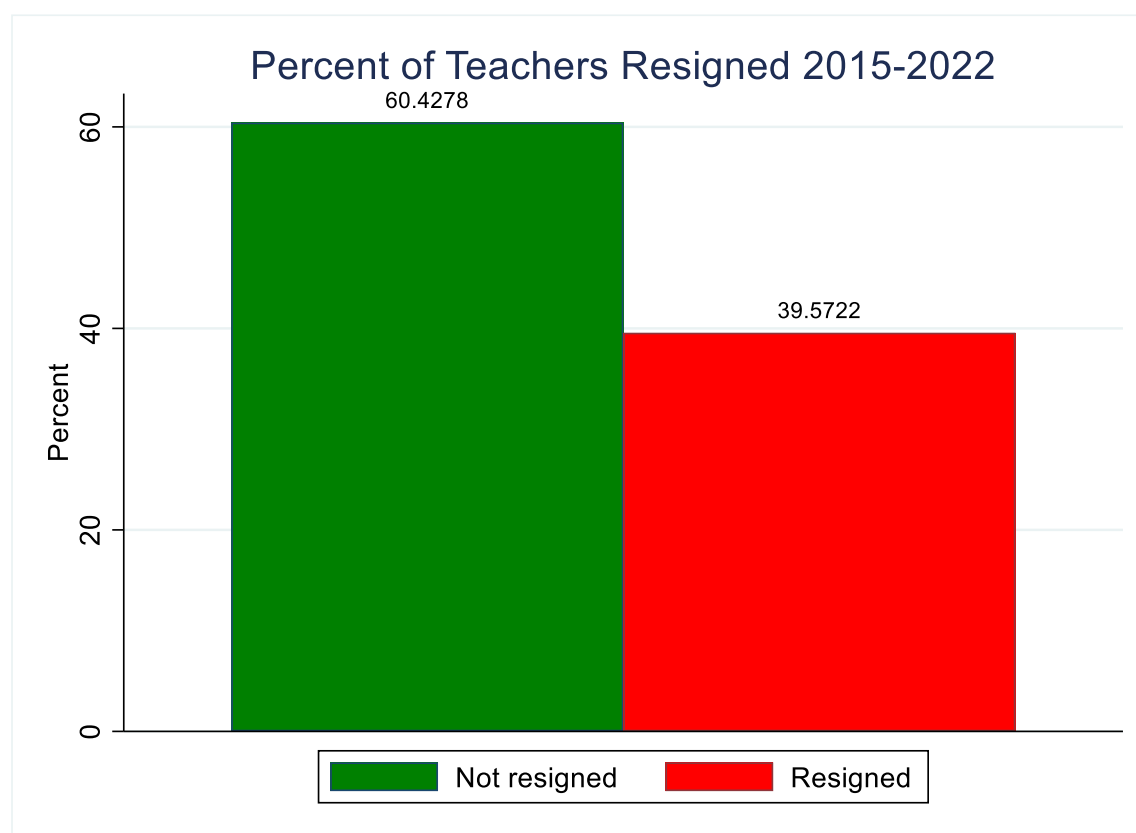
Table 4-6: Frequency of Teacher's Department during 2015-2022

Departments	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Arts	18	9.63	9.63
Elementary	32	17.11	26.74
English	23	12.30	39.04
Math	10	5.35	44.39
Other Languages	14	7.49	51.87
Others	10	5.35	57.22
PE	12	6.42	63.64

PPS	40	21.39	85.03
Science	15	8.02	93.05
Social Studies	13	6.950	100

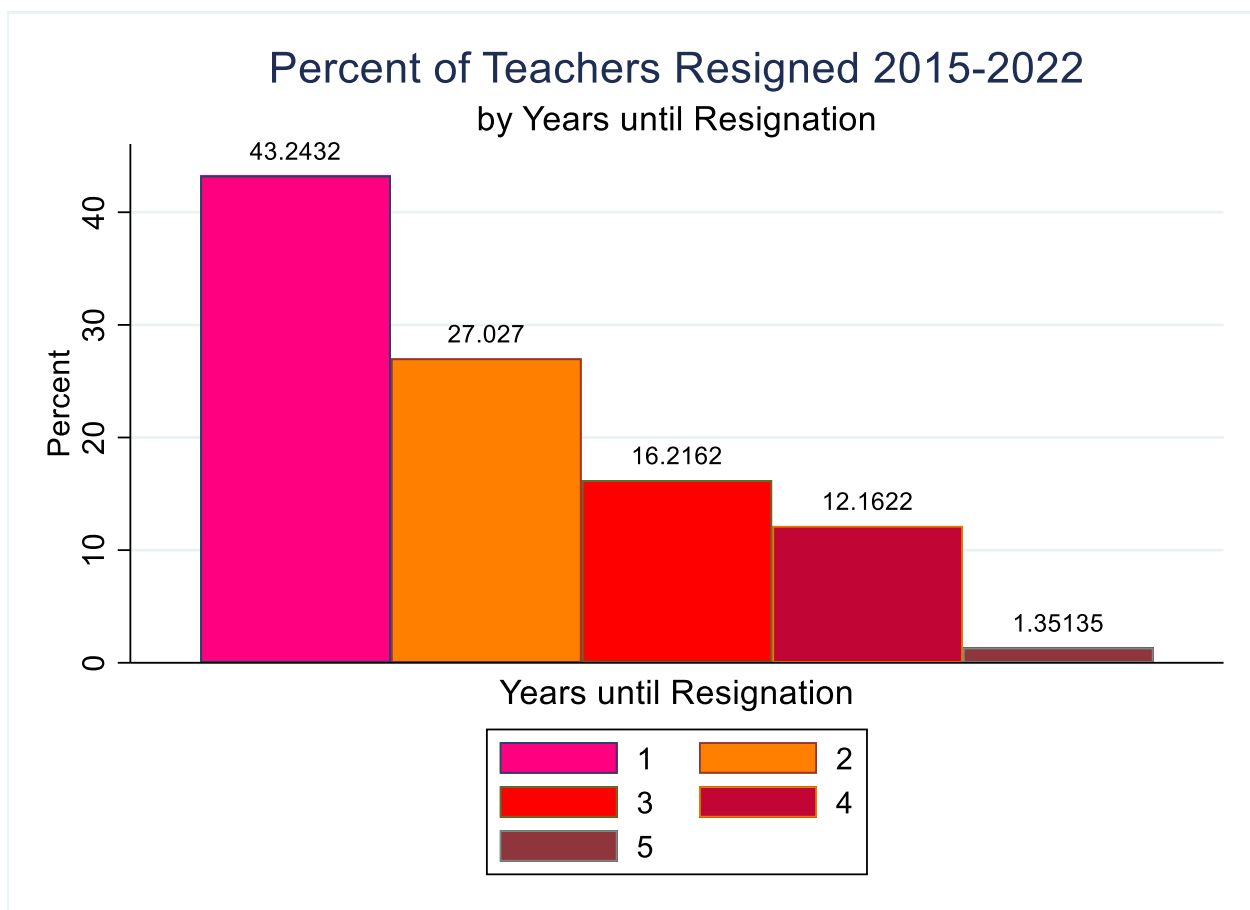
Of the 187 new hires since the 2015 school year, the data demonstrated that 39.35% of those teachers “resigned” as per the Board of Education Meeting minutes. The graph below (Figure 1) demonstrates this percentage. This percentage is equivalent to 74 teachers resigning over the eight years of data collection, which averages out to be 9.25 teachers leaving the district every year. For comparison purposes, according to New York State publicly shared data, the district in 2021 employed a total of 331 teachers, 15 school counselors and 2 social workers (data.NYSED.gov).

Figure 1: Percent of New Teachers Resigned (2015-2022)



Since data collection began in 2015, teachers at various points in their probation (first 4 years prior to receiving tenure) have resigned from the school district. The data states (see Figure 2, below), that 43.24% of the teachers that resign do so after year one, while 27% more do so after year two and still another 16% resign after year three, while only 12% resign after their fourth year in the district. Overall, approximately 70% of the new hires to this district resign after their second year of service.

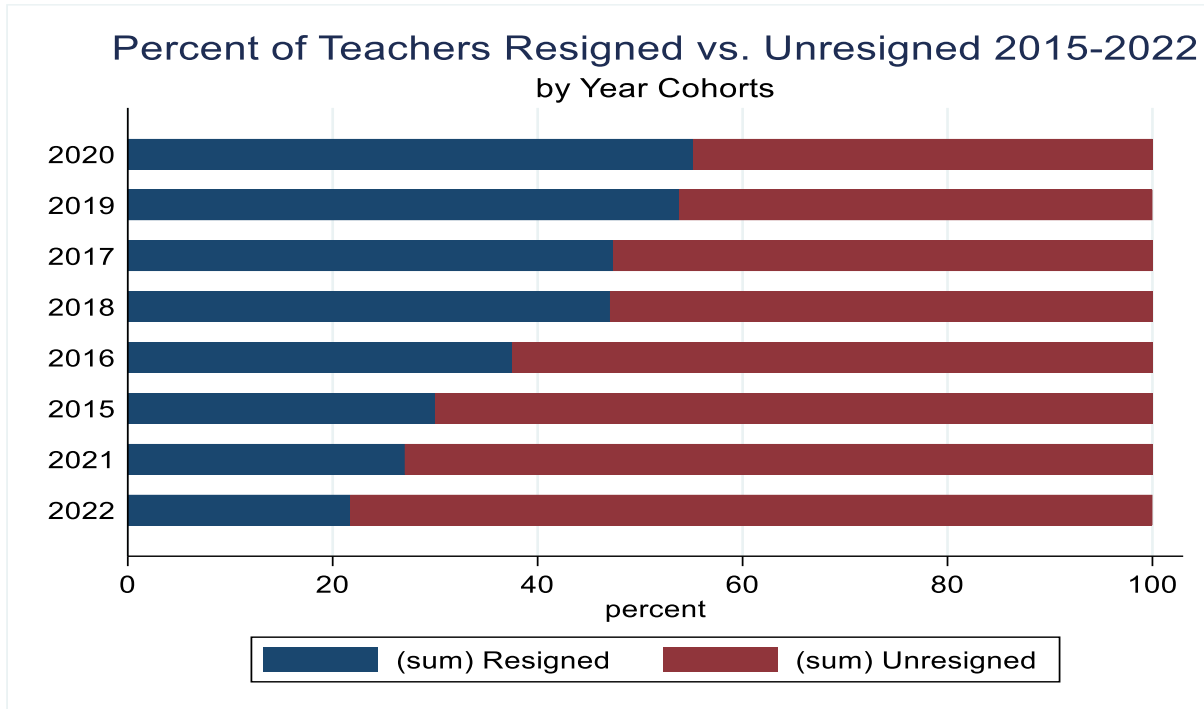
Figure 2: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Years until Resignation 2015-2022



Across the years of data collection, the comparison of the number of teachers that resigned in each cohort of new hires within this school district as compared to the number of teachers that were retained from year to year is a valuable piece of information. The data presented in Figure 3 below demonstrates that between 2015-2018, the number of teachers that resigned from teaching

within the school district was consistently less than the number of teachers that were retained. In the 2019 and 2020 cohort, the data demonstrates a shift, where one can see the number of teachers that are being retained to be less than the number of teachers that are resigning.

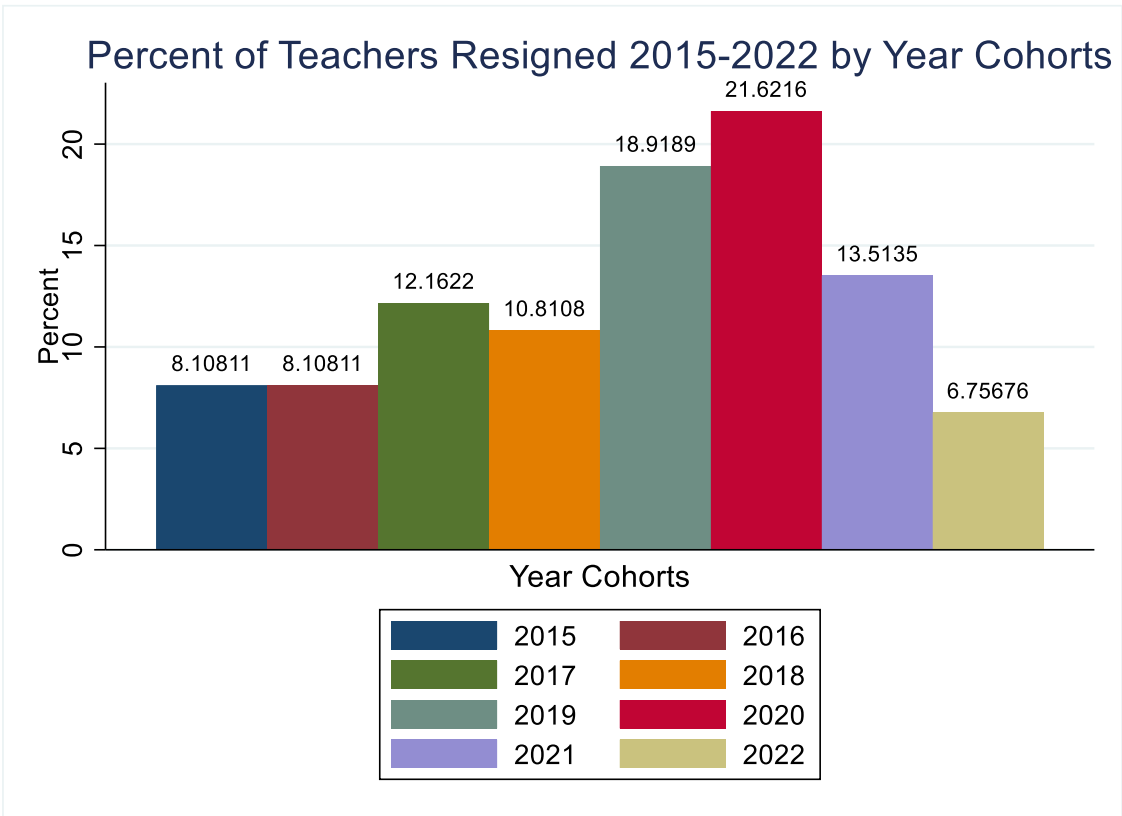
Figure 3: Comparison of Percent of Teachers Retained and Resigned



In Figure 4, the same data is represented in the form of percentages of teachers within the cohorts that have resigned from the school district between 2015-2022. As presented in the graph, more than 40% of the new hires in the 2019 and 2020 cohort have resigned as of the writing of this research paper in September of 2023, while less than 40% of the 2017 and 2018 cohort have currently resigned. Members of the 2021 cohort are in their second year of service, and already,

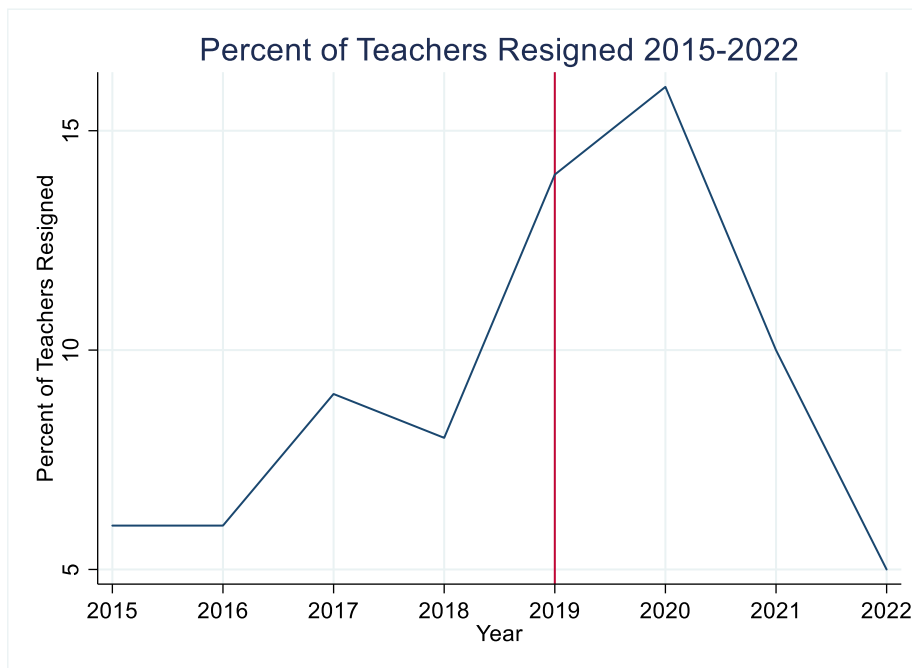
13.5% of that cohort has resigned, while approximately 7% of our first-year new hires have resigned as of the writing of this research paper in September of 2023.

Figure 4: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Year Cohorts 2015-2022



As a result of the stark shift in retention and attrition rates in the district, a time series graph was created to examine the relationship between the new teacher induction program and new teacher retention. The data was captured to identify the year in which the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program was piloted (2019), so that all the data can be compared to what happened prior to the pilot and eventual full implementation of the program as compared to retention rates prior to the implementation of the four-year induction program.

Figure 5: Time Series Graph of Percent of Teachers Resigned 2015-2022 with 2019 as benchmark year.

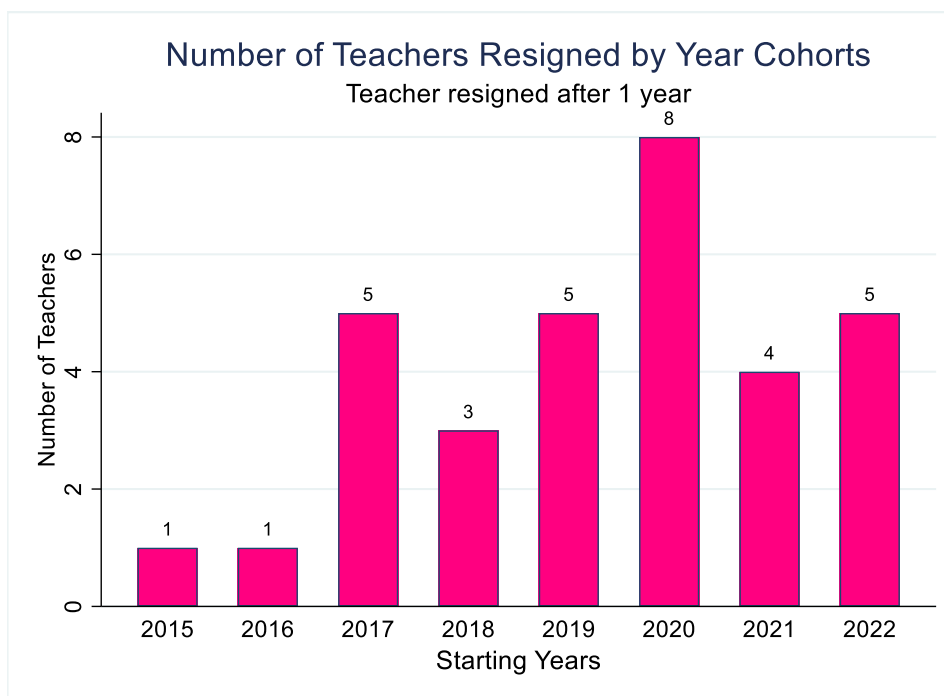


As demonstrated by this time series graph, there was a significant increase in the percent of resignations in the 2019 cohort and then again in the 2020 cohort of hires. While the 2021 cohort currently shows less resignations than the two previous years, it is still a higher percentage than the total number of resignations in any of the years between 2015 and 2018.

As previously stated, and demonstrated by the graph presented in Figure 2, 43% of the new hires resign after year one of their probationary period. When analyzing the data by cohort group as demonstrated in Figure 6 below, the result shows that over the last eight years, there have been three instances in which five first year teachers have resigned, one instance in which four first year teachers resigned, one instance in which three first year teachers resigned and two instances in which one first year teacher resigned. An outlier on the graph is in 2020, in which eight first year teachers resigned. During this year, the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged our country; and while there is no data to confirm that these teachers resigned due to the pandemic, it is notable that we did see the greatest number of resignations of first year teachers at this time. Teacher resignations can happen for a variety of reasons: relocation, shifts in one's personal life

circumstances, etcetera. However, certain fluctuations in resignation rates might also suggest something about experiences of new teachers in the district; and can imply whether the new teacher induction program mitigated these issues. Nevertheless, the augmenting rate of teacher resignations in the district speaks to the potentially underlying contextual issues; ones that teacher testimonies highlight later in the chapter.

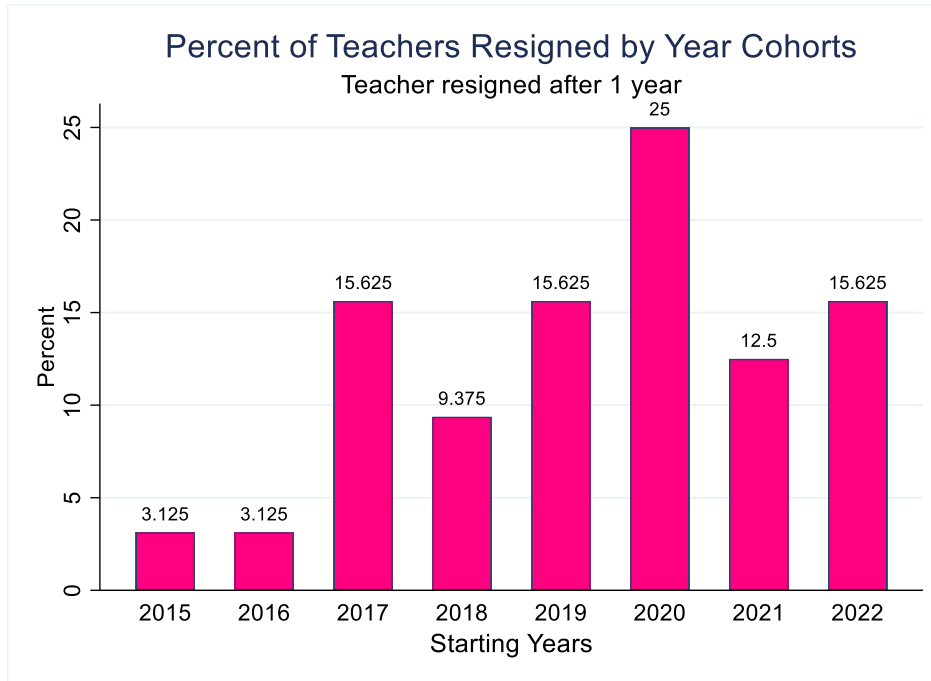
Figure 6: Number of Teachers resigned after 1 year of service per cohort year



In order to look at this data in a different way, the data was analyzed by percentages per cohort year (See Figure 7 below). As the data states, 25% of first year teacher resignations occurred within the 2020 class of new hires, while 15% of the population of teachers that resigned in their first year is from the 2017, 2019 and 2022 cohort. It is notable to compare the percentage of teachers that resign after year one of service between 2015-2018 to 2019-2022. In count, 10 teachers (see Figure 5) resigned in their first year of service within the first four years of data collection, which is the equivalent to approximately 30% (see Figure 7) of the total of first year

resignations. In the latter four years of data collection, 22 teachers (see Figure 6) have resigned within their first year of service, equaling nearly 70% (see Figure 7) of the total number of teachers resigning within their first year.

Figure 7: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 1 year



Similarly, for teachers that are in their second through fourth year of their probationary period that resign from this school district, 65% of the teachers that resign in their second year of service have resigned since 2019; where in the four years prior (2015-2018), only 35% of teachers in their second year resigned from the school district (see Figure 8, below). In their third year, 58% of the teachers that have resigned have done so since 2019 (see Figure 10). Teachers that make it to their fourth year of their probationary period, which in New York, is typically their tenure year if they had not previously been tenured in another school district, 33% of the teachers that resign in their fourth year have done so since the 2019 cohort (see Figure 12).

Figure 8: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 2 years

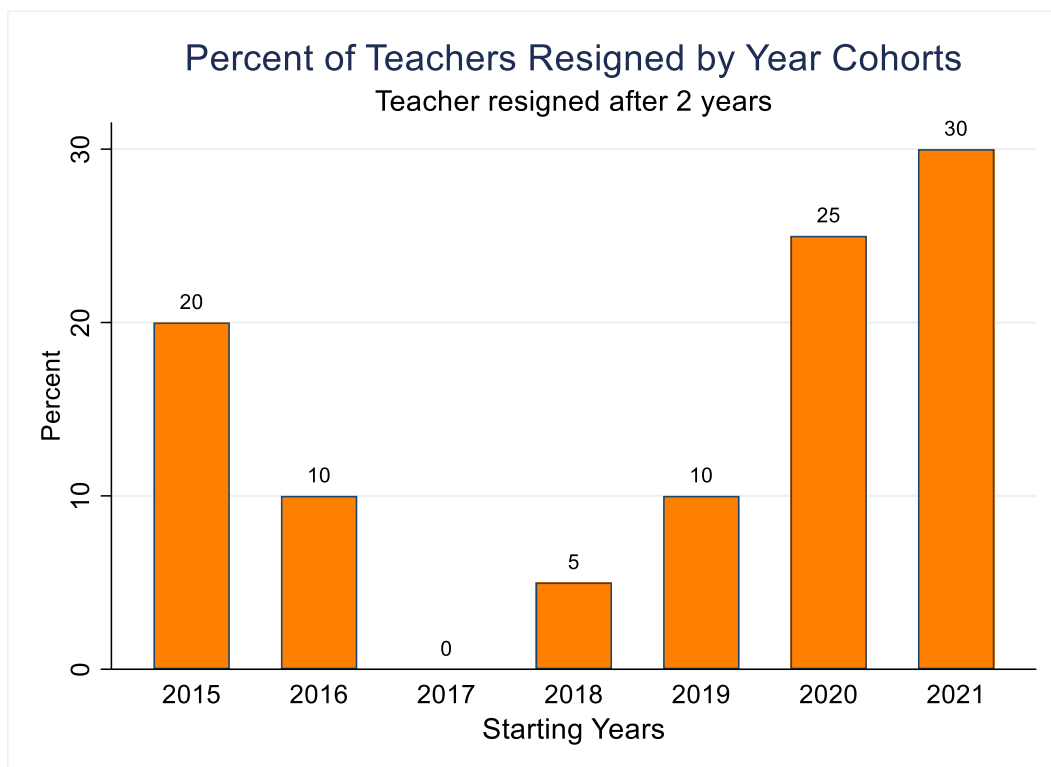


Figure 9: Number of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 2 years

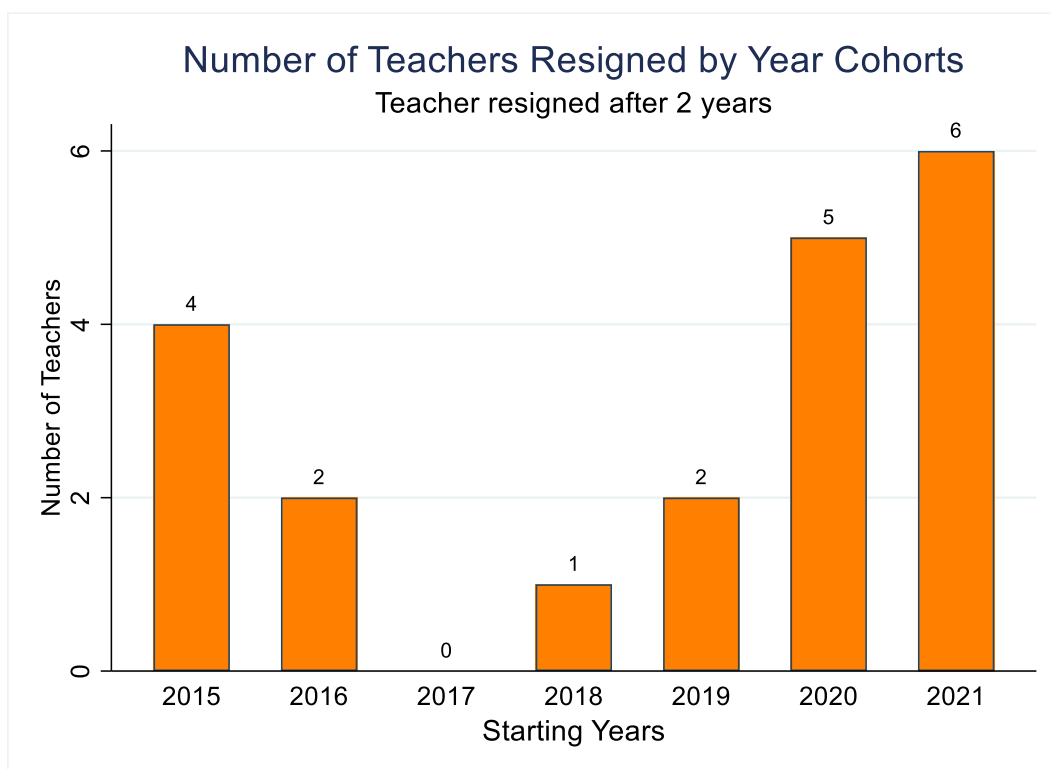


Figure 10: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 3 years

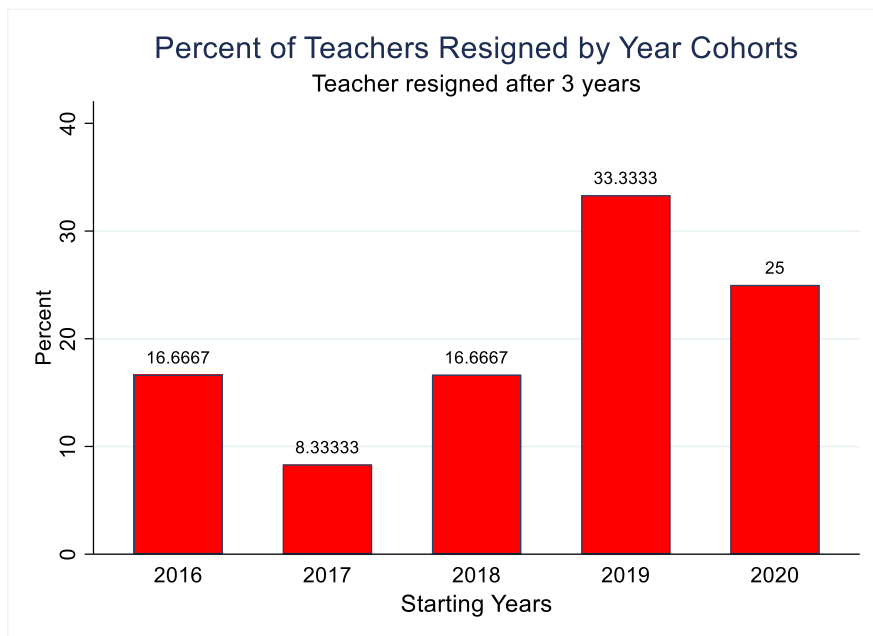


Figure 11: Number of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 3 years

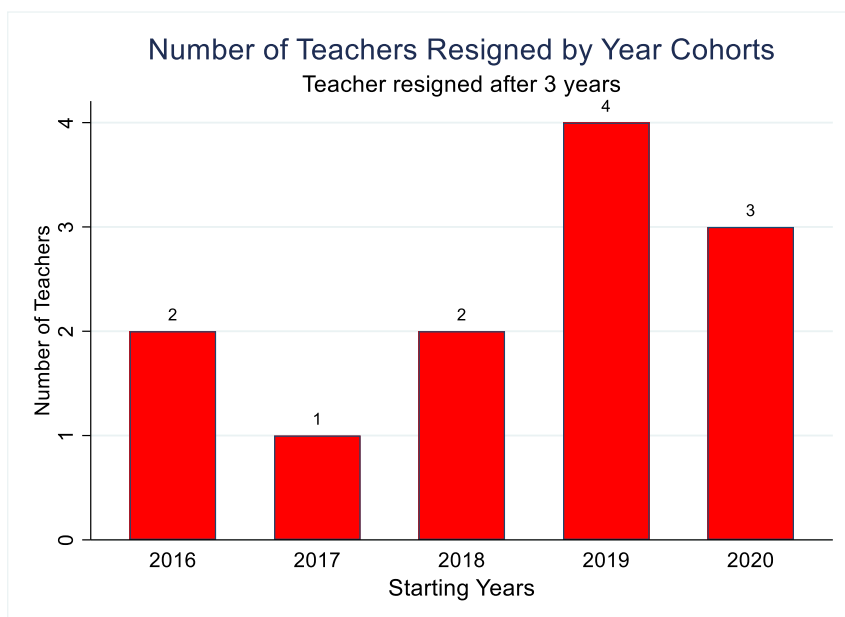


Figure 12: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 4 years

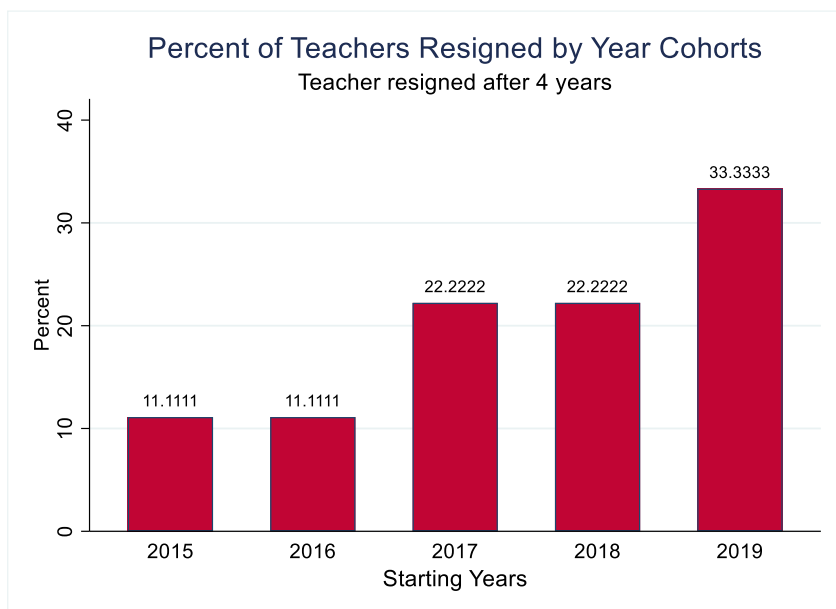
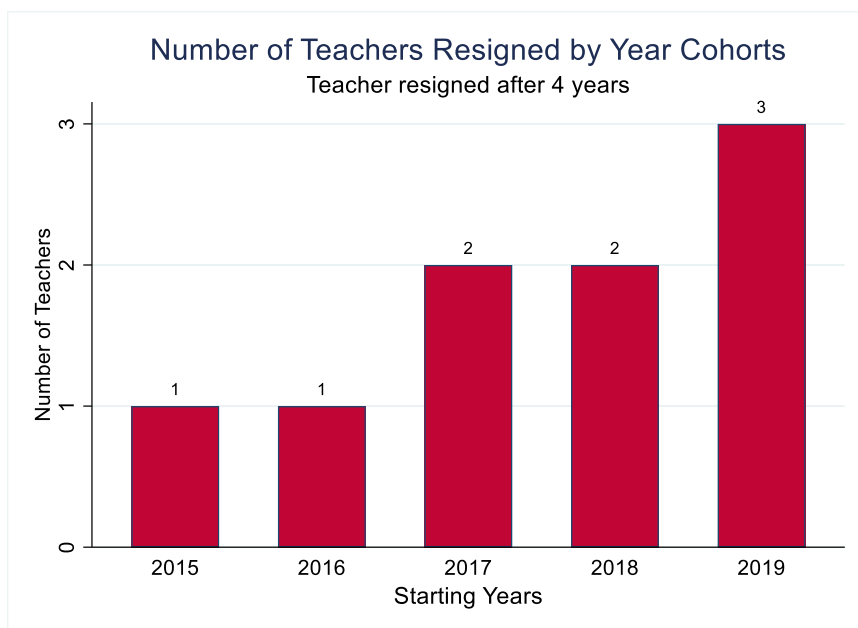


Figure 13: Number of Teachers Resigned by Cohorts- Teachers resigned after 4 years



In light of the high rates of attrition, it was also important to see if there is a correlation between the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program and teacher retention by grade level and department. According to the data, 56% of the teachers that have resigned from the district during the data collection period taught high school, approximately 28% were from our two

middle schools (combined), and approximately 15% were from our elementary schools (combined). As demonstrated in Figure 14, teacher resignations in one of the middle schools occur at twice the rate of the other middle school. Additionally, the sum of resignation percents from our middle and elementary schools of approximately 43% does not equal the total resignations of approximately 56% from the high school. While the high school, in general, has the greatest number of teaching staff members, it is not proportional to the number of resignations. As per Table 4-3 below, the high school teaching staff only amounts to approximately 34% of the entire teaching population, while the combination of the two middle schools add up to approximately 33.5% of the teaching staff, leaving the remaining approximately 31% at the elementary level. It is interesting to note that despite making up 34% of the entire staff population, 56% of the resignations stem from the high school which speaks to the need to scrutinize this sizable attrition rate further and examine the overall context and experience of new teachers in this school district.

Figure 14: Percent of Teachers Resigned by School Level (2015-2022)

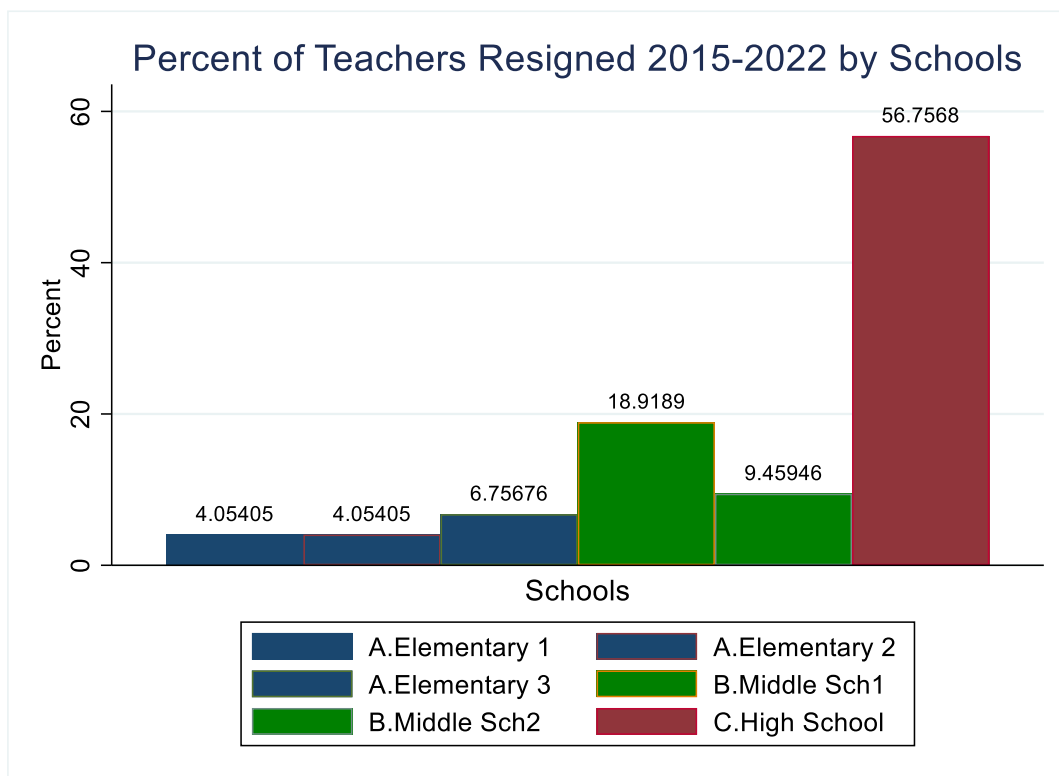


Table 4-7: Percent of Teachers Per School Level- District Wide (2022)

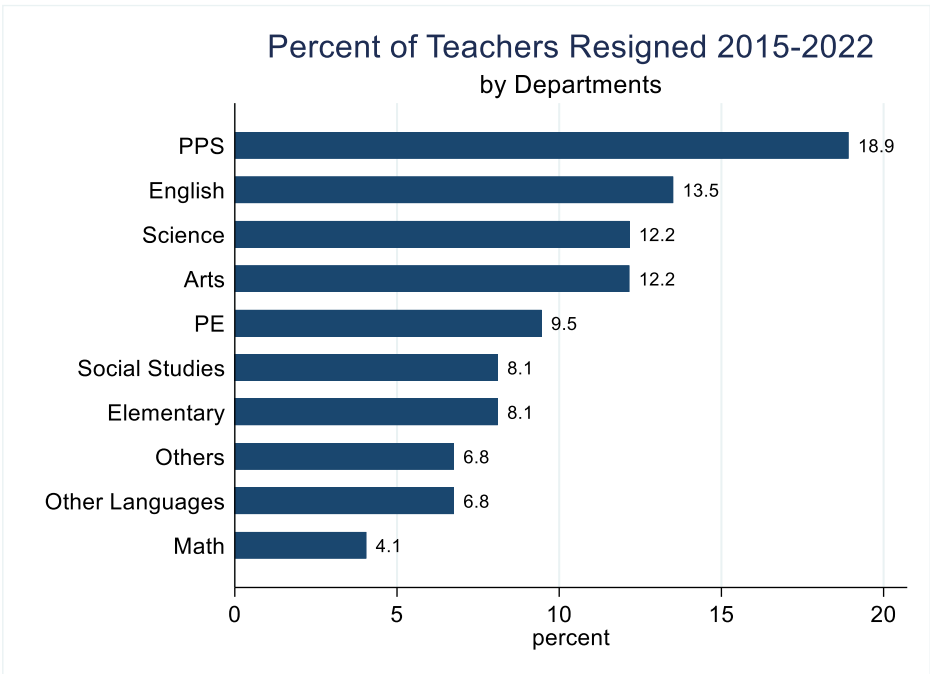
School Level	Percentage of Teaching Staff
High School	34.77%
Middle School 1	16.62%
Middle School 2	16.92%
Elementary 1	10.15%
Elementary 2	10.46%
Elementary 3	10.15%

To examine what supports are advantageous to new teachers, as well as what impacts the experience of new teachers and their overall job satisfaction, it is important to see what departments have been retaining teachers, over time, and from which departments teachers have been resigning. According to the data collected and displayed in Figure 15, overall, teachers from the Pupil Personnel Department (PPS), which includes Special Education and all Related Services, have the highest percentage of teacher resignations throughout the data collection period. Following PPS, teachers in the English, Science, and Arts (visual and performing) have

been most frequently resigning from this school district over the last eight years. PE, Social Studies, Elementary and Other Languages, all have a less than 10% resignation rate.

Interestingly, our lowest department with resignations is the Math department with only 4.1% of the teachers that have resigned from the school district are Mathematics teachers, which is 1/3 fewer resignations than those resigning from the Science department and half of the number of Elementary teachers resigning.

Figure 15: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Department (2015-2022)



When looking at this data, it is interesting to further investigate at what point in the tenure process for new teachers were educators in each of these departments more likely to resign. According to the Figures below 16-19, approximately 45% of the PPS teachers, 25% of the PE teachers, resign within the first two years of service. Teachers of English are more likely to resign in the fourth year of service, while teachers of science are more likely to resign after their third year within the district. This data as presented, do not align with the goals of the *Grow to*

Great induction program; as it strives to support all teachers in their ability to increase their quality of instruction and feelings of self-efficacy regardless of content area.

Figure 16: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Department- Teachers resigned after 1 year

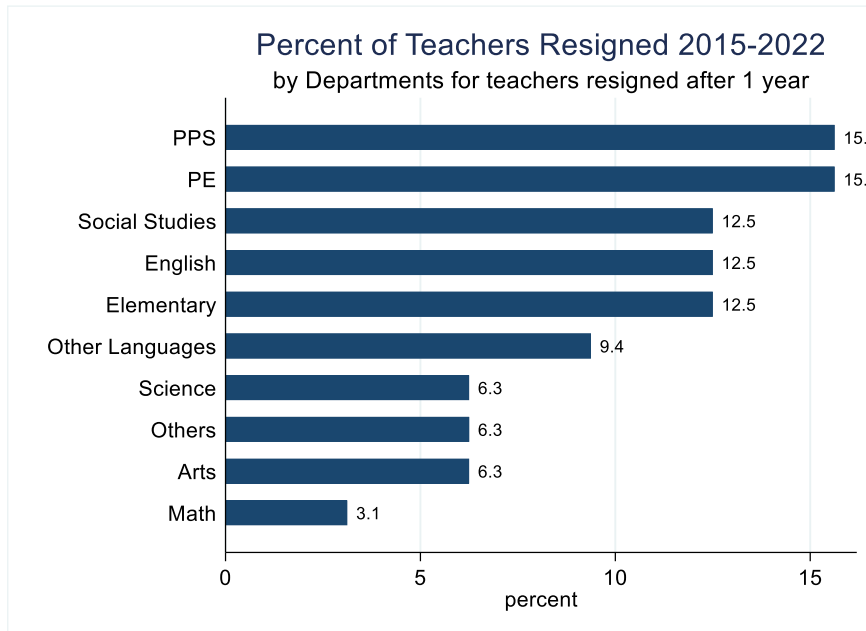


Figure 17: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Department- Teachers resigned after 2 years

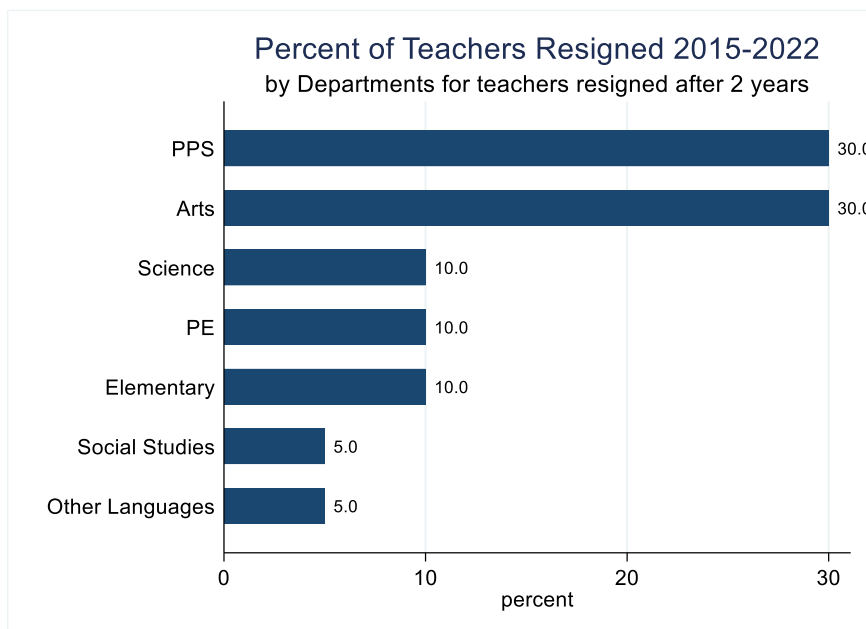


Figure 18: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Department- Teachers resigned after 3 years

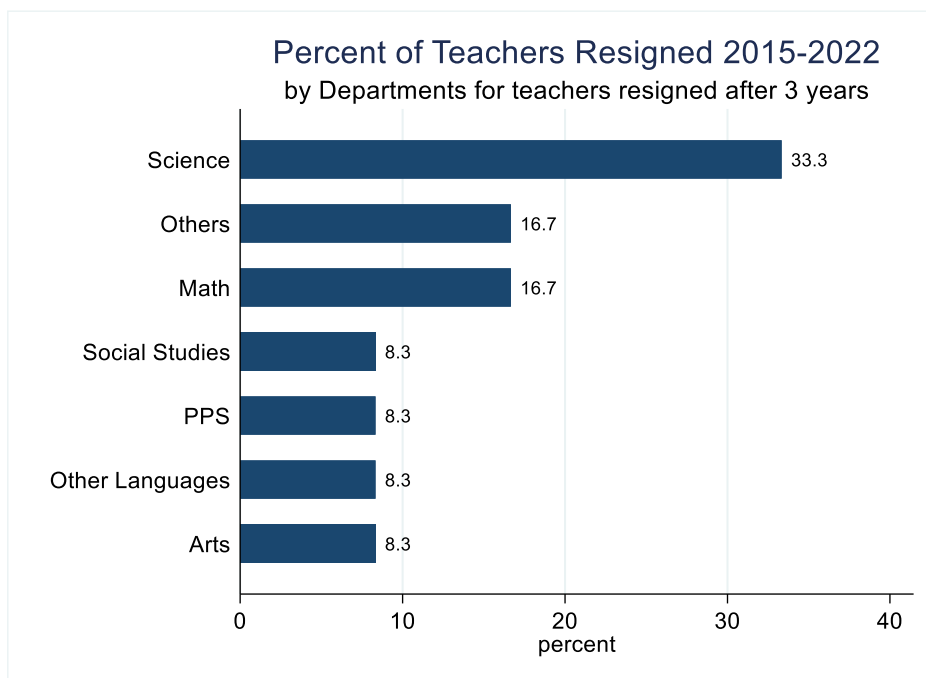
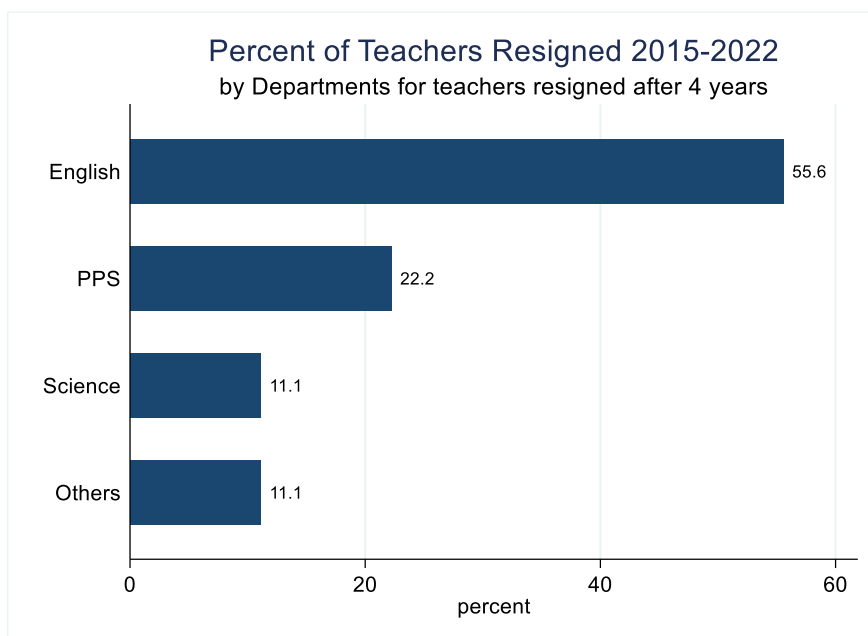


Figure 19: Percent of Teachers Resigned by Department- Teachers resigned after 4 years



When looking across school level, as demonstrated in Figures 21-23, each level demonstrates a different proportion of teacher resignations. As shown, the Middle School PPS department has the highest percentage of resignations, as compared to the elementary or high school. Where, in contrast, teachers in the Arts in the Elementary level resign at a higher rate than they do at the

Middle or High School level. The number of English and Science teacher resignations, according to this data, mostly come from the High School, where an equal percentage of Social Studies resignations come from the Middle and High School.

Figure 20: Percent of Teachers Resigned by School Level and Department, Elementary (2015-2022)

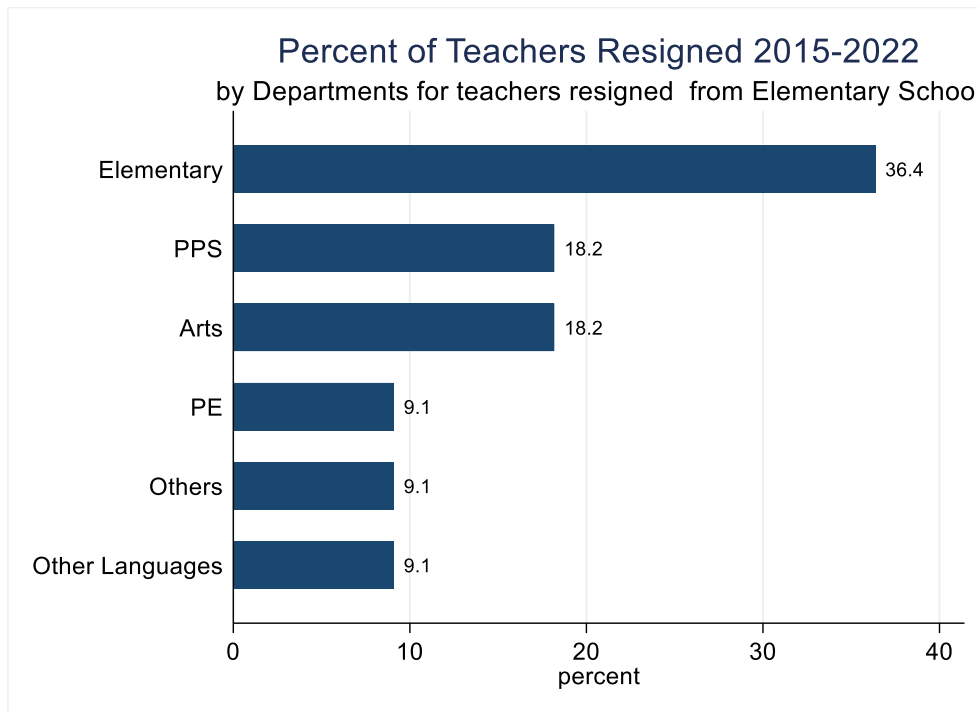


Figure 21: Percent of Teachers Resigned by School Level and Department, Middle School (2015-2022)

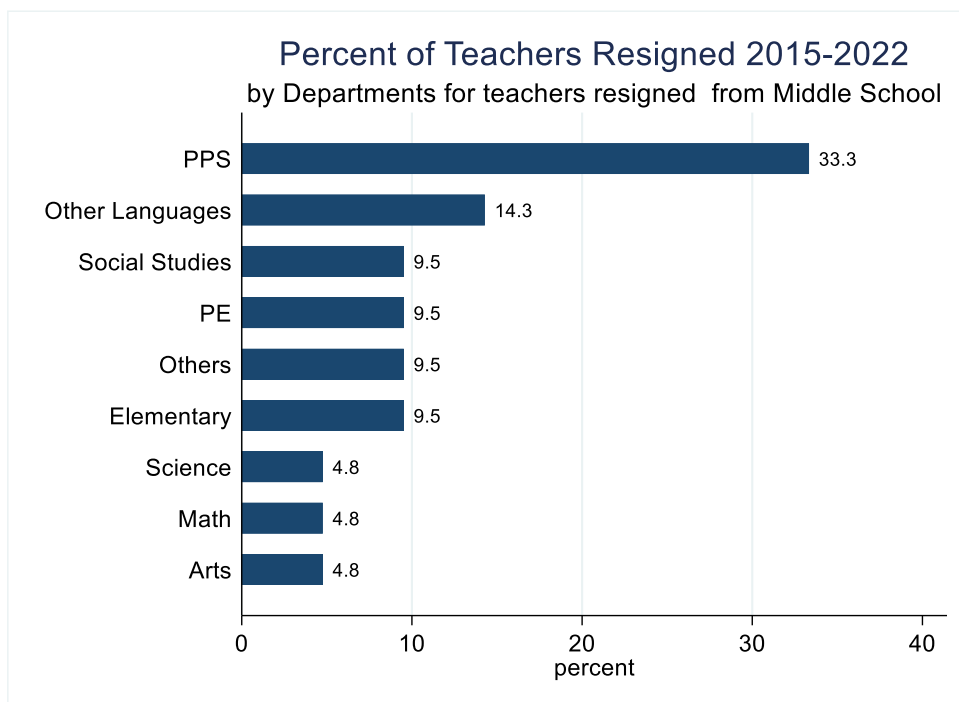
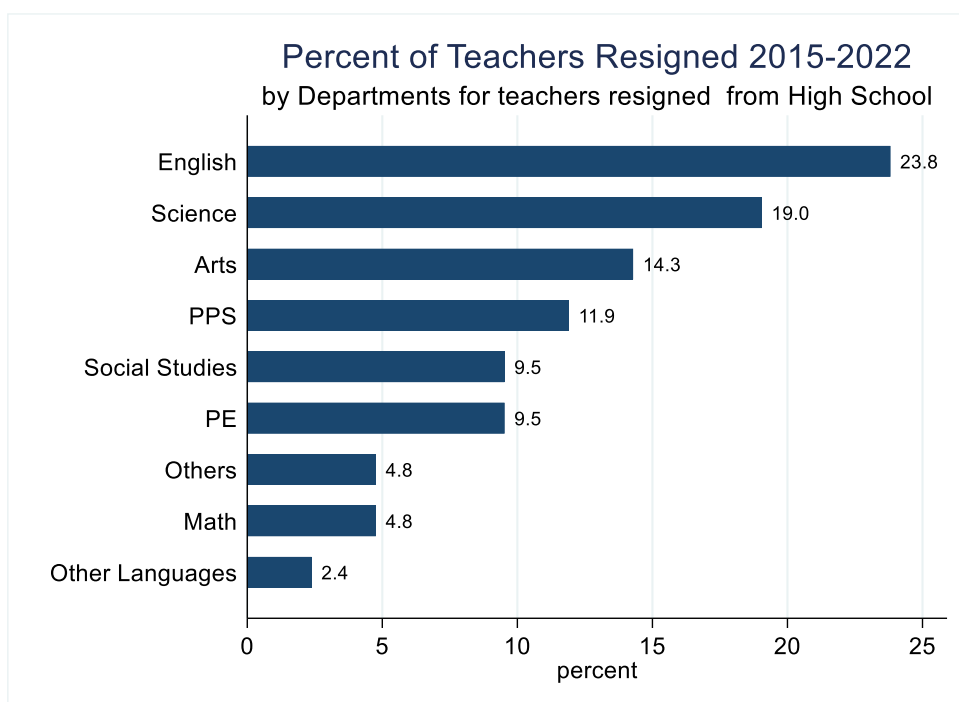


Figure 22: Percent of Teachers Resigned by School Level and Department, High School (2015-2022)



As stated in Chapter III, the research objective was to study factors that can influence teacher's resignation during 2015-2022. This quantitative data shines a light on the impact of the

Grow to Great program on initial context of the teacher experience; while the qualitative data, presented later in the chapter, will provide a more in-depth look at the experience of the educators amid district-wide obstacles of teacher attrition. The quantitative data focused on modeling teacher's resignation by using a logistic model and assess factors that can determine teacher's resignation controlling for various teacher characteristics and external factors (pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects). A non-linear regression with a binomial link or a logit model was used to analyze the impact of various factors including teacher characteristics and external factors (pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects) that can determine a teacher's resignation. This model is appropriate because the dependent variable is binary and the prediction of probability of a teacher's resignation is always between 0 and 1. The linear probability model is also used as a baseline model to compare with the logit model. Using these models, the following results were drawn.

Table 4-8: Estimation Results for Teacher's Resignation during 2015-2022

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	<i>Dependent Variable: Resigned (0/1)</i>		
Variables	Linear Probability	Logit (Coefficient)	Logit (Odds ratio)
Pre-tenure years	-0.317*** (0.0322)	-3.216*** (0.599)	0.0401*** (.024)
Male	-0.0181 (0.0757)	-0.364 (0.571)	0.695 (.396)
<i>Schooling year</i>	(Reference group = 2019)		
2015	-0.0717 (0.118)	-0.985 (1.171)	0.373 (.437)
2016	-0.0105	-0.494	0.61

	(0.127)	(1.041)	(.635)
2017	-0.00203 (0.120)	-0.105 (1.035)	0.9 (.932)
2018	-0.00381 (0.125)	-0.674 (1.016)	0.51 (.518)
2020	-0.183 (0.109)	-2.865** (1.043)	0.0570** (.059)
2021	-0.615*** (0.111)	-6.339*** (1.370)	0.00177*** (.0024)
2022	-0.945*** (0.133)	-9.592*** (1.886)	0.0000683*** (.0001)

School Levels (Reference group =Elementary School)

Middle school	0.172 (0.0977)	1.134 (0.757)	3.107 (2.353)
High school	0.0725 (0.0972)	0.232 (0.776)	1.261 (.979)

Departments (Reference group = PPS)

Arts	-0.0221 (0.113)	-0.976 (0.983)	0.377 (.370)
Elementary	-0.0483 (0.113)	-1.185 (1.092)	0.306 (.334)
English	0.0450 (0.107)	0.661 (0.704)	1.936 (1.362)
Math	-0.199 (0.144)	-1.846 (1.179)	0.158 (.186)
Other Languages	-0.00105 (0.122)	-0.243 (0.915)	0.784 (.717)
Others	0.0227 (0.138)	0.0573 (1.046)	1.059 (1.108)

PE	-0.0800 (0.135)	-0.504 (1.156)	0.604 (.699)
Science	0.0854 (0.122)	0.475 (0.817)	1.608 (1.3143)
Social Studies	-0.130 (0.134)	-0.649 (1.083)	0.522 (.566)
Constant	1.409*** (0.170)	11.07*** (2.529)	64080.32*** (162070.7)
<i>N</i>	187	187	187

Note: ***, **, * indicates statistical significance at 1%, 5% and 10% level respectively (* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$). Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table 4-7 shows the regression results of three models presenting how various factors for teachers are associated with teacher resignation probability. Model 1 shows the relationship between teacher's resignation and other variables including pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects in a linear form. Model 2 and Model 3 show the relationship between teacher's resignation and other variables including pre-tenure years, gender, schooling years, school levels, and teaching subjects in a non-linear form. Both Model 2 and Model 3 are logit models, in which Model 2 shows the coefficients and Model 3 shows the odds ratio that will be used for interpretation. The regression results present that one more year of tenure, in the same school district, is associated with 96% lower odds of resignation on average, holding other things constant. Schooling years 2020-2022 have lower odds of resignation than schooling year 2019 whereas schooling years 2015-2018 have the same odds of resignation as schooling year 2019. Specifically, 2020 is associated with 94.3% lower odds of resignation than 2019 on average, holding other things constant. With lower difference, 2021 is associated with 99.82% lower odds of resignation than 2019 on average, holding other things constant.

Meanwhile, with similar effect, 2022 is associated with 99.993% lower odds of resignation than 2019 on average, holding other things constant. Middle schools or high schools have the same odds of resignation as elementary school since there are no significant coefficients for variables middle schools or high schools. Male has the same odds of resignation as female and no difference in odds of resignation between departments or teaching subjects since there are no significant coefficients for variables male and departments. The estimation results show that variables are statistically significant at 5% level including pre-tenure years, schooling years 2020-2022.

Linear regression results are also examined. The linear probability model (LPM) results in Model 1 showed comparable results as in the logit model's results. Both LPM and logit models have similar direction or signs between Model 1 and Model 3 for significant variables.

The results suggest an interesting perspective related to how an ongoing, sustained professional development program impacts the experience of new teachers, as well as the relationship between a sustained professional development program and new teacher retention. While the data show that since the large jump of teacher resignations in the spring of 2019, when the induction program was then piloted in the fall of that year, there continued to be an increase in resignations; but the correlation of the program and that resignation level is unclear as other external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and administrator turnover could have played a role. Additionally, with the introduction of the new teacher induction program, there was an increase in the expectations for new teachers, based on their experience and opportunities for learning and growth in the program. Due to the fact that program participants were learning high-level pedagogical strategies, administration in each school building placed increased focus on new teachers implementing these strategies, worrying less about veteran teachers'

implementation of these strategies. This potential rise in expectations could be attributed to the sustained level of resignations. Further exploration of the correlation between this new teacher induction program and new teacher retention will be discussed in this chapter.

The data presented on teacher attrition and retention establishes the context for the experience and culture of the school district. This data not only demonstrates why the induction program was first established, as a means to support new teachers in their success and retention in the school district, but also to examine the level of turnover that occurs despite this support. This data also sheds light on some of the immeasurable variables that new teachers will present later in the chapter such as an uneven level of support due to a lack of clarity surrounding evaluations and how role expectations presented a variety of stopgaps in the form of a colleague community. Additionally, the accompanying data presented by new teachers later in this chapter will also highlight both gratitude for the program space and support, as well as raise questions around their place within the district. All of this speaks to some of the questionable trends around resignation and attrition rates.

From Attrition to Satisfaction?

Unveiling the Supporting Factors in a New Teacher's Experience

After examining the intricacies of the district's teacher retention data, it is evident that while statistics provide us with invaluable insights, they only paint part of the picture. Within the numbers lie the stories and experiences of educators who have identified the professional supports that have shaped their professional experience within their school and district. In the following sections, data will be explored how robust professional learning communities, the clarity of expectations, administrator support, and opportunities to build new knowledge

contribute to fostering a positive experience within the educational community. The findings are recorded below in subheadings according to the themes that were distilled from the data compiled.

Professional Learning Community

Participants highlighted a supportive professional learning community as a key factor in their experience as teachers new to a school district. In surveys and interviews, participants discussed the importance of their professional learning communities as support systems in their first few years as teachers. Participants identified the professional community to be comprised of colleagues within the induction program, mentors, administrators, and coaches. Participants noted their mentors, administrators, colleagues, and professional developers as members of these communities who shaped participants' feelings of support during their pre-tenure years within the school district. The ways in which—and extent to which—each of these people or groups provided support to new colleagues are outlined in the following sections.

The Importance of Mentor Teachers

Participants described the importance of their relationships with their mentor teachers (See Appendix A). Mentors are assigned by building administrators based on the perceived strengths and needs of the new colleague. Out of the 16 participants interviewed with Interview Protocol 1, all the participants reported that having a mentor, whether at their current institution or at a previous district, was a key part of their onboarding experience. Many of the respondents noted that their mentor relationship was a beneficial support to their new teacher experience because their mentor was paired with them based on their individual practitioner needs. While

some teachers needed a mentor to assist them in acclimating to the community, others needed a mentor to support them with instruction, content, and planning. For example, one Middle School Science teacher, Donna, cited that, “the fact that [Mentor] was teaching the same thing was very helpful.” She went on to discuss how sharing content with her mentor allowed her to feel supported with instruction, content, and planning. This teacher stated that her mentor relationship was “helpful” because they spent a majority of their time co-planning, bouncing “ideas” off each other and problem-solving any confusions. She stated the best part was collaborating: “I think the biggest thing is the collaboration piece. My mentor was someone who had been teaching for so much longer than me, so they just had a different lens or scope. I liked the ideas he brought.” Additionally, she mentioned how her mentor was helpful in planning for observations as her mentor had a deep understanding of her content and could help her think through the nuances of her lesson for both planning and execution purposes.

Other new teachers who were paired with mentors of the same content or grade level areas mentioned how their similarities of experiences allowed for an understanding of the district’s ways of work and pedagogical “expectations.” This mutual understanding provided clear opportunities for coaching and advice for navigating “meetings” with other colleagues. A Middle School Special Education teacher, Amy, stated that having her mentor at the same grade level and assignment was beneficial: “It was good because she understood all the expectations of the eighth grade and was able to help me with the IEP and transition to High School meetings.” This level of shared experience supported pre-tenured teachers in understanding expectations while providing the support needed for effective planning. Additionally, it also allowed for participants to develop greater competency and proficiency with the language of their discipline.

From there, participants stated that when they shared content or subject areas with their mentor, this mentor-mentee collaboration new teacher's pedagogical knowledge. One of the Middle School English teachers, Gale, noted that:

Teacher's College Reader's and Writer's Workshop has a lot of particular language that they use and a lot of very particular ways that they do things. She's been really able to help me with that because when I first started, I had the structure down, but I was like. . . They even conference a certain way. . . That [my mentor's] been able to help me with figuring that out.

Other participants mentioned how their mentor would foster new pedagogical ideas by bringing in new tools or resources. A Middle School Science Teacher, Donna, recalled how her "[Mentor] was really techie so she was able to give me ideas that I never thought of." This teacher mentioned how these ideas pushed her instruction and practice to find ways to incorporate and engage more of her students into her lessons.

Nevertheless, participants paired with mentors of different grade levels or content areas still spoke of a beneficial experience; but noted that the mentor relationship was built more around acclimating them to the school community, rather than on instructional coaching. An Elementary teacher, Linda mentioned, "I personally love [Mentor], and I think she did a wonderful job mentoring me in the cultural aspects of [school]. She couldn't really mentor me in the curriculum, which is fine since she was on a different grade level." A High School Science teacher, Adam, noted that when he needed advice on what to teach, he would seek out his department colleagues, rather than his mentor, but when he needed advice on the school, his mentor would be the first point-of-contact: "When we were doing lesson planning and stuff, it was [department colleague] I talked to about what she was doing. That was kind of challenging

from that standpoint, I think, but from learning the school and how to acclimate myself, I think with [my mentor], I couldn't ask for more." While he stated that the difference in grade level between him and his mentor, at times, made it challenging to get all his questions answered, he appreciated the support his mentor was able to provide and found the content support from his colleagues to meet his instructional needs. Participants spoke of how these mentors supported them with either acclimating to the school community or specifically to their content area or grade level, highlighting mentors as integral parts of establishing a professional learning community.

Mentor Approachability and Reliability

To this end, participants noted that perceiving their mentors as supportive rested on the level of their mentors' approachability and reliability. Overall, new teachers appreciated the relationship with their mentors, viewing them as colleagues they could go to and rely on for continued holistic support. One new colleague, Kim, stated, "I felt like I can go to her even like when it wasn't our scheduled time to. I was not bugging her all the time, but I felt that whenever I went with to ask her a question or if I was like, 'Can we just meet an extra time, whether it be before or after school?' I never felt like it was a bother." Participants viewed these relationships as overwhelmingly supportive. While each partnership had regularly scheduled times to meet during the school day, other participants stated that support lasted sometimes beyond normal work hours. One participant, a Special Education Teacher, Jess, stated: "She was available to talk at any time. I would talk to her on the weekends." While this is not an expectation of mentoring, the new colleagues mentioned the bond that they formed with their mentor was one that went beyond other collegial relationships, and often beyond school contract hours. All participants

mentioned that their mentor was willing to help, willing to support them in any way and made them feel comfortable. When speaking to participants further along in their pre-tenure journey, many of them discussed how their mentor continues to be a resource and safe space for them to seek advice, run ideas by, and positioned them as a trusted advisor. Although new teachers spoke of the importance of mentor reliability and approachability, the mentor–mentee relationship was even, at times, reciprocal in that both partners benefitted from the pairing in ways that helped them grow.

A Beneficial, Collaborative Partnership

Participants reflected that even though the mentor was typically the more veteran teacher, in many instances, each colleague benefitted from the partnership. Throughout the interviews, participants mentioned how the relationships with their mentor developed into a collaborative partnership in which each member shared ideas and learned from the other; despite the gap in experience between the two colleagues. Kim reflected that:

I think [my mentor] and I are similar in a lot of ways. I think it was a good choice. She's so supportive. She shares things. I share with her. She shares things with me and it's just like, 'this is how I do it. Maybe it'll fit you.' Then sometimes she would come in here and be like, 'I really like the way that you did that. I'm going to try it.'

Partnerships such as this one highlight how mentors and mentees share resources, ideas and even learn from each other. Gale reflected that, "I never once pretended to know more than her, and she never once pretended to know more than me. It was very collaborative. Sometimes she'd walk in and see, I don't know, a chart or something I did and be like, 'Oh, I really like that idea. I'm going to use that.'" A partnership in which both members come to the situation "not

pretending to know more” than the other, ended up benefiting from the mentor-new colleague pairing. A new special education teacher mentioned how her mentor made her feel valued because of her prior experience in a different district: “I also felt like I was able to bring something to the table too, because testing-wise, I did a lot more testing at my old school. I think also coming from this place, she would ask me, ‘which test would you do for this kid?’ I think I brought a little bit to the table, too.” Participants highlighted the beneficial reciprocal relationship between the new teacher and mentor. For a High School Social Studies Teacher, he noted how his mentor and he not only taught the same course, shared in the planning of the course, but more importantly had the same beliefs about instruction and student learning: “It was really, really helpful to be teamed with someone whose pedagogy is the same as mine, to see what this place can be. Because if I had been paired with someone who has maybe more old school pedagogy, I might have felt more restrained.” Not only was the reciprocity of these relationships an important factor for participants’ success, but participants also highlighted the salience of structured communication with their mentors.

Structured Communication

In this way, while each of the mentor partnerships created open communication systems, some of these systems exceeded the established mentor guidelines and communication protocols established by the Mentor program. As part of the Mentor Program Guidelines, mentors were required to meet with their new colleagues once a week during the fall semester and monthly during the spring semester (See Appendix H). One Elementary new teacher, Karol, mentioned how structured communication protocols established by the program guidelines benefitted her success in her first year. “We met consistently. That was the one definite. I was impressed with

that because I feel like those are the kinds of things that can be like, ‘When will we meet?’ But she was here every Thursday. Every Thursday morning, we would meet, and I would come with a list of the big questions I had.” Participants like Karol came to rely on that consistent communication as an additional support structure. Weekly meetings were one protocol that new colleagues mentioned that supported their transition in their first year, but some partnerships found other methods to collaborate outside of those weekly meetings.

Mentors and their new teacher partners implemented structures that allowed the members to collaborate outside of the required weekly meetings. For example, one pairing set up a collaborative shared document where each member would put ideas and topics they would want to discuss before their weekly meeting. Gale reflected that, “Something that we started later that made it work was we started to have a Google Doc where we charted every week before we met. At some point, we would both write in things we each wanted to go over and then we would list like, what we had accomplished and steps for next time.” Another Middle School Special Education partnership set up a series of inter-visits—times when the members of the partnership would visit and observe in each other’s classroom—and later drafting a regular schedule for observing each other. They would then give each other feedback and talk about instructional practices and teacher moves that they saw, could improve, or wanted to try out. Another mentor partnership engaged in a book study to help improve their collective instruction, Gale later reflected, “[My Mentor] gave me this text called *The Whole Novel Approach* by Kate Roberts. I read it on my own. Then in our meetings, we talked about it. How to make it happen in the classroom. What does it look like? She shared with me some of her lessons on what that looked like.” These mentor partnerships engaged with each other in consistent and structured ways that participants viewed as integral, but that also fostered learning in a reciprocal relationship.

Overall, mentors proved to be a resource that new colleagues found to be vital to their success in their first year.

Programmatic Connections between Colleagues

One of participants' recurring points of discussion spanning all cohort years of the *Grow to Great* program was the importance of the connection to colleagues that the program established. Over the course of the new teacher induction program, teachers across subject areas and grade levels learn together as a cohort, a model that participants positioned as integral to feelings of support. An elementary classroom teacher, Kim, stated, "What I like is building a network of people that are very similar, like-minded, have the same types of ideas for the classroom. I like that idea, working even just across the district, with the teachers, and finding ways that we can work together." Other teachers mentioned that establishing "a network" of colleagues through the program—even across schools and disciplines—enhanced their experience by establishing a cohesive and supportive network. Donna noted its importance: "I think new teachers need to know that they have people supporting them and that I feel very strongly about. I never felt unsupported here." Another colleague expanded by viewing the members of the new teacher cohort as resources and "supportive," positive motivators. A High School Art teacher, Rob stated, "There's always somebody I can go to, because when times get tough, you have to trust the ones that can support you. I knew from the get-go that, you, and the whole new teacher community also at that mindset is that we're not here to bring you down." Gale reflected that the connections and relationships made within the program's cohort fostered instructional and cross-building collaboration: "My principal here asked me about doing a project with the ELA teachers from [Name] Middle School, an end-of-year experience as far as

writing a letter to yourself for kids in eighth grade to then get when they graduate from high school. In order to coordinate that, I had to coordinate it with [Other Middle School], and I have to coordinate it with the high school. I reached out to [High School Teacher]. It was easy for me to do, and I felt comfortable doing it right away because I know her because of this program." Consequently, the connections formed through the new teacher network of colleagues created opportunities for some participant teachers to seamlessly work across content areas, grade levels, and buildings.

Other teachers reflected how the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program supported their feelings of self-efficacy by developing their interpersonal skills and relationships. One survey respondent stated that, "In the beginning of the experience it was about meeting new people, making relationships, understanding the values of the school district, and understanding my role (how I fit in). There was a lot to learn and a lot to take in. Over the course of the year, I have felt more comfortable to learn and share." Similarly, another teacher also noted how the new teacher professional development classes helped her to be more "participatory" and share her voice more than she normally would. Kim stated, "I think it's easier to be more participatory because it is a smaller group, and it doesn't feel as overwhelming because there is so many of us. I feel like I am participating more within those group discussions, the smaller group, rather than just taking a back seat and being more of just an observer." Participants shared how this new teacher induction program supported teachers new to the district to develop feelings of self-efficacy by fostering confidence and encouraging "participating" as a new teacher within a community of peers. While connections to colleagues and feelings of self-efficacy were discussed in some interviews, new colleagues also highlighted

how the new teacher program provided them with access to a learning community within the school district.

Participants mentioned that the professional development program impacted their experience as pre-tenure teachers within the district by fostering meaningful pedagogical “relationships.” Participants felt that the program helped to create a network of colleagues with whom they could “learn alongside.” One survey respondent stated: “It was inspiring to learn alongside my colleagues. They are all such incredible educators, and it was motivating to hear all the great things going on in their classrooms. We have built strong relationships, and it has helped me become a better teacher; and I also feel more connected to my peers across the district.” Participants reported the program offered a space for pre-tenure teachers to develop “meaningful friendships” and “engage in conversations.” As one new teacher responded, “it was a wonderful experience, filled with engaging conversations and new meaningful teacher friendships. I learned more than I anticipated/expected to in my first year of teaching and I'm grateful.” Alongside building relationships and learning together, new teachers reported that they were able to learn *from* each other. One participant reported, “I really enjoyed the experience and hearing from first time teacher’s similar situations that I too was facing in the classroom.” While another participant stated, “It was nice to be with new colleagues and to learn from their experiences in the district.” As noted, participants valued learning with and learning “from [the] experiences” of colleagues with various levels of prior teaching experience, as well as from those who taught at other school buildings. Participants expressed how the new teacher induction program enhanced teacher relationship-building and sense of community.

To that end, participants mentioned that learning together and working with other teachers united teacher-participants around a "common experience" of learning which they

viewed as a positive feature of the induction program. A survey response stated, “I enjoyed this experience because it allowed for time to reflect on common experiences with other professionals new to [district]. The transition to the district was intimidating coming from a familiar position of six years, so having a place where every single person in the room was new to the situation was comforting.” Having this shared experience and those that were in “similar situations” allowed new teachers to “connect.” One survey participant shared that they “enjoyed the opportunity to meet other new people in the district and see the various schools. Particularly as a new person in the middle of the year, it was neat to meet people who are in similar situations.” Participants highlighted how this common experience and shared situation allowed teachers to “bond,” which a survey respondent framed as the “defining trait” of the program: “Bonding with my peers who are new to the district was the defining trait of the course. I really enjoyed my time with ALL of the participants including instructors. It is so pleasant to spend time with a room full of passionate and talented professionals. This time building friendships and/or professional relationships was invaluable.” New teachers, in both surveys and interviews, identified that the time spent with colleagues, learning together, and developing relationships through the shared, similar experience of learning as defining ways the new teacher induction program supported them throughout their pre-tenure years.

[Missed] Opportunities for Administrative Support

Viewing them as integral members of their learning community, participants also noted the significance of administrative support. Participants noted the significance of initial meetings through follow up face time with district level administrators. A majority of participant new colleagues reflected on their experiences at the summer, district-run New Teacher Orientation

during Interview 1 (See Appendix A.) in which they mentioned that some of the most impactful moments involved time spent with the district level administrators. Ashley reflected:

I'm meeting all the administration in a kind of a personal setting, a welcoming, low stake setting. That activity that we did where we charted the hierarchy of who and where, I still can't wrap my brain around that, but I find myself thinking back to that as I do learn people in action here. That was helpful.

A new colleague, Donna, mentioned how meeting the district administrators during new teacher orientation helped them not only put a face to the name; but that the meeting also helped them feel more comfortable when that administrator came to observe them later in the school year. "I thought that was a big deal, just because these are the people that are observing you, so you should have a relationship with them. They should know who you are. You get a mini-introduction." From these meet-and-greet activities, participants noted that feeling seen and known by the district administration contributed to feeling more welcomed and supported. Participants' discussion of meet-and-greet opportunities with administration showcased the significance of establishing initial connections with leadership.

Participants also noted how their building administration shaped the way they acclimated to their schools. In some schools, building administrators helped their new colleagues navigate the school building and school culture in formal ways. One new colleague, an elementary classroom teacher, Maya, mentioned how her building administrators set up a monthly new teacher group for all pre-tenure teachers. "[Principal] and [Assistant Principal] did start this new teacher meeting where we meet once a month to discuss anything that I am concerned about or stressed about. Sometimes they have things that they want to go over to bring us up to speed. That's been really helpful." A fourth-grade teacher, Cindy, also mentioned how her building

administrator was a key motivator in her engagement with new instructional strategies. “My assistant principal, she is the one who took me under her wing, and she gave me explicit feedback of what I was doing really well and what I wasn't doing. She would always say, ‘You're so hungry and I love it.’ I want to always be better.” These participants reflected ways in which building administrators provided support and encouragement to new colleagues navigating their new schools throughout their pre-tenure process.

Participants additionally noted times in which building administration struggled to not only provide support to new teachers, but also hiding their personal opinions of teachers which impacted the evaluation process by creating an increasing level of stress and “burn-out” for the new staff members. Gale reflected on her experience:

I can honestly say that my administrators and the coaches there (in a previous district), they did everything they could to help that teacher. They were not alone. Here, it has not been like that. It's been like, the kids don't like you for one reason or something and it's like, the teacher is bad. The teacher is just bad. I don't know. Then it's almost like a little bit of playing favorites in a way. It comes off that way. I think there is a little bit of this person, we're going to give certain support to and then another person, we're not.

She continued to reflect on her experience by stating, “I do know that it's clear how administrators feel about certain teachers. I think the kids can see that.” Participants stated that this lack of support and question of trust led to new colleagues’ feelings of stress:

I do think that they are almost not supportive of certain teachers, but they feel one way and if one teacher feels what they feel, they're like, ‘oh, they're right.’ And if another teacher doesn't, it's like, ‘oh, they're wrong.’ And I feel like in some ways as an admin, you should stay neutral to that. Everyone must be treated exactly the same.

In this school, this new teacher, as well as others were affected by the challenges of what they perceived as inequitable treatment by school leaders. One teacher, Ashley, from the same school noted a similar feeling and expressed the emotional weight that this treatment was taking on her. She stated:

The burnout is happening a lot faster than it did, any other year in my life. It's been really, really stressful. I just feel like I'm taking it, internalizing everyone's feelings now and trying to find a solution for everyone. Although I don't personalize any negative feelings towards me, I do find that I'm internalizing and trying to help everyone now. So that's where the burnout is for me.

With a strong support and connection to administrators and the feeling that they are supporting new teachers, administrators have the power to engage new colleagues to try new things, take risks and work hard for the benefit of their students. When the support from school leaders is not there, teachers demonstrated that they could "internalize" the negativity that emerges from school stakeholders and can lead to "negative feelings," stress and eventually, "burn out."

New teachers had the opportunity to interact with administrators, not only through new teacher orientation and at their building level, but through the new teacher induction program, as well. Nevertheless, participants discussed how although initial meetings established contact, once in their roles, they felt support seemed uneven, which fostered discomfort. In sum, although participants highlighted the significant support and collaborative underpinnings to their relationships with mentors and cohort colleagues, their descriptions of administrative support illustrated a stark contrast.

Assessing Administration as Program Leads

In years two, three and four, a district level administrator and professional developer teamed up to facilitate the *Grow to Great* program. This combination created a different dynamic for new teachers, receiving mixed feedback from participants. While some year-two teachers appreciated having the expectations clearly laid out by district administration, one interviewee felt that they could not “speak freely” or “ask questions” with an administrator present. As stated by a Middle School teacher, Amy shared that:

Some have felt that in [year one], when it was [professional developers], they felt totally cool and comfortable. Some have felt that when you bring an actual administrator as a part of every week, some people feel uneasy and not as comfortable with freely speaking, asking questions, or showing that maybe they're not so sure about something because they feel like, not that it's evaluative, but that he knows that about them.

While the courses are designed to be opportunities to learn, some new colleagues in year two felt that the presence of an administrator in the course limited their opportunity to ask questions and decipher difficult moments. Rob, in his interview, reflected on a time when he was trying to decipher a challenging evaluation that had just taken place by the administrator that was facilitating the second-year teacher course. The new teacher mentioned how it became a tricky situation: “I wonder if he wasn't there for that, if it was just professional developers, if that still would have happened, one of you would have taken me and said, ‘Let's talk about this together and break it down. Let me tell you a little about what I think he was thinking.’ You guys are always able to give us really good advice also about handling situations.” The contrast of this teacher explaining when they were unclear about something and how they perceived it to be handled in the presence of an administrator versus just professional developers highlighted this

teacher worry about “asking questions” and the difference in responses to program facilitator dynamics.

On the other hand, other year-two teachers mentioned how the administrator and professional developer functioned as thought partners for them through the program. Kim reflected on a time in class where they were working through a problem of practice by sharing, “They are there, and we could talk with them like thought partners and work through challenges. It's helpful when we have times like that to work. They're there just as a thought partner or to work together with other people and hearing what they have to say.” Later she also recalled, in her interview how valuable it was to have “face time” with the administrator running the course. She stated:

I think there's something really valuable about having that face time with [administrator], because I think having that time with him, put me on his radar. I feel like without having that time, he maybe wouldn't even know who I am. I think that that's something special about what you're doing here because, he's a big boss for curriculum and instruction. As seen from this participant, having the “face time” with administrators to get to know new teachers and for the new teachers to get to know and understand their “philosophies” around curriculum and instruction was an important aspect of the facilitation of this program.

In contrast, teachers in their third year of the pre-tenure process communicated enjoyment at having a district-level administrator facilitate their program. In general, they thought the “time to interact” with this administrator gave them an opportunity to not only learn, but also to understand clearly what the expectations are for them as they approach tenure. In the survey, a respondent stated, “I like having the opportunity to have [district administrator] as the teacher in year 3. I think it is important to have that time to interact with upper administration

and hear from them what they value as a district and learn from those with more experience.”

Participants demonstrated a transition in perspective and need from year two to year three. The teachers in year two still felt “uneasy,” while teachers in year three were ready to embrace more “learning.” This was evidenced by Linda, in her interview, noting that, “I think [administrator] is literally brilliant. I’m watching him teach and I’m like, ‘He’s just so good.’ We have a lot to learn from him.” Recognizing what the administrator has to share as an expert in curriculum and instruction was stated by a survey participant by noting how much the administrator has to “teach” and how the relationship forged in this program helps new teachers not feel “intimidated” when he observes them in their classrooms. That teacher mentioned that: “In terms of strengths of the program, we’re learning from someone that just has so much to teach. I feel like just [district administrator] leading it it’s letting him get to know us and us get to know him, so we’re not intimidated when he comes to observe us later on in the year.” This relationship not only clarifies what “good instruction” looks like within the school district, but it also gives the teachers an opportunity “for him to get to know us and us to get to know him” and demonstrate who they are over time. The participants demonstrated in their responses in both the survey and interviews that the *Grow to Great* program supports a teacher’s access to staff developers and administrators. Teachers conveyed various needs, such as access to professional developers, and access to administrators based on where they were in their trajectory of years in the district and therefore benefitted from various support structures throughout their tenure process.

Professional Developers: Advisors, Coaches, & Resources

Participants also noted access to and relationships with professional developers was a supportive resource throughout their pre-tenure years. As part of the program, professional

developers existed as resources for collaboration, for seeking advice and professional coaching. Adam mentioned how he received coaching from a staff developer that improved his teaching practices: “he had lots of different ideas of how to have discussion-based teaching. It was the first time I was introduced to that. He showed me different ways of how to use jigsaw and things that; I had never really done any discussion-based teaching before now.” This new colleague went on to say how his once lecture-based teaching has shifted because of this professional development; and how his classroom feels more “discussion based” and student centered. Amy noted how professional developers helped her reach her potential when it came to instructional practices: “I always say the support that I have here, the availability of anybody on the staff development team, just knowing that I could go to really anybody. I think I really found my confidence in what I'm capable of doing.” This teacher explains how through a few rounds of coaching cycles with members of the professional development team, she was able to “gain confidence” in her teaching.

Many new teachers mentioned how they utilized the professional developers for professional advice. A Kindergarten teacher, Kim, reflected: “I feel like if I ever reach out to anyone, [professional developers] were always very responsive and helpful. I think that was great. I don't think they have missed the mark on anything.” New teachers utilized professional developers for support related to the induction program structure, to help them navigate the intricacies of communication. As Chris reflected: “Especially with the support we got from the PD developers. It's really good to have that middleman between the teachers and the admins who can kind of like -they work with both so they know.” Chris also reflected that the facilitator of their program also provided instructional coaching: “[A Professional Developer] has been coming and observing me and [teacher]. Not observing but helping us with our instruction.

Coaching us. What's more valuable than that?" Participants stated that access to professional developers as facilitators of the first-year new teacher program was a "positive" and "supportive" component of the first year. Rob, in this interview shared that:

It's good to know that there's a community that stays the course. There are people like [professional developer], like [professional developer], that know what it takes, that pulls us along positively. There's always somebody I can go to, because when times get tough, you have people that can support you. I knew from the get-go that, you, and the whole [first year new teacher] community also has that mindset of support. We're here for you and to help you grow. This is a community.

Beyond advice and mentoring for instruction and school culture, new colleagues sought out staff developers when they were in times of need emotionally, as well.

At times, new teachers utilized the staff developers as supportive resources for daily help or during times of need. A High School Social Studies teacher, Joe, when talking about his process through his first three years in the district and the teacher evaluation process reflected:

I think as far as the developers, I'm thankful to get to work with them. I've never felt that they didn't have the time to stop for a question. They all have given up their time to come into classrooms when they didn't have to. For me, that's the most important thing, is that trust all of them and if something blew up, I could come to any of them. I know that they have my back, and they will help me figure out a way out.

The feeling that professional developers are always available to "stop for a question" and that they "have their back" and will assist new teachers to "figure out a way out" was a key factor in this type of support for participant new colleagues. Participants spoke to the professional

developers' support on instructional practices, advice on school culture, and help with navigating challenging times, positioning developers as helpful throughout their pre-tenure experience.

The *Grow to Great* program aimed to provide the opportunity for new teachers to intimately engage professional developers during their pre-tenure years. As facilitators of the courses delivered throughout teachers' pre-tenure period, professional developers and district level administrators support the facilitation and development of the new teacher support program. Participants noted how year one of the *Grow to Great* program, which was facilitated by professional developers, supported them with "planning," having someone to "collaborate with," prepare them with the "tenure process" and "positive motivators." A teacher in this year of the program, that responded to the survey, felt that "Having a person (or persons) from the PD team to contact regularly, meet with, and collaborate on materials" was valuable as a support as they transition to the school district and their position. Rob had expressed that, "A lot of people used [professional developers] to ask questions about things like, 'This happened. How do I handle this? What do I do?'" New teachers in the first year in the district found the connection to professional developers to be helpful in navigating planning. One new teacher, in the survey replied that they:

Would love to have even more one-on-one time with the professional developers. They are extremely available and make that known to us! But sometimes, the juggle of balancing the changes of being a teacher in a new district can make it difficult in the daily schedule. When the time allows during the new teacher meeting, the one-on-one time is invaluable.

Participants identified the connection to professional developers to be a "support" and resource. Gale reflected, "I think that people go through this instructional program and really do it. I don't

see how they couldn't be prepared for tenure. Especially with the support they get from the PD developers.” These relationships support the teachers with a guide and mentor that can advise them on cultural norms and instructional practices. The facilitation of the program by teacher-level professional developers were reported by survey respondents and interview participants to “help them grow.” Nevertheless, professional developers were only a small part of the larger professional community available as a support to new teachers.

Revisiting Gratitude for the Professional Learning Community

The *Grow to Great* program fostered a robust Professional Learning Community, comprising mentors, colleagues, administrators, and professional developers. Through this community, participants' reflections illuminated moments of both professional and personal appreciation, underscoring the gratitude they felt for the supportive and enriching learning environment that had been established. Participants highlighted this supportive community as one of the key features of the program, one that they are “thankful for.” Participants cited this community as a vehicle that helped them find their “confidence” as it provided them with “thought partners” and people that were undergoing a “common experience.” The Professional Learning Community established by this induction program supported new teachers in establishing relationships, feeling supported as well as developing a network of professionals with a shared understanding and knowledge base.

In summary, participants reflected in their survey responses that the experience provided them with an opportunity to be “a part of a community of learners” by whom they felt “energized and inspired.” One survey participant reflected on their experience by sharing:

The experience of participating as a learner in this year of professional development was energizing and inspiring. I have often left this course feeling inspired by the new ideas that have been shared or taught. I also find it to be very helpful that we have two course leaders who have made themselves extremely accessible to all of us, as I always knew I could go to them as a resource if I had a question or challenge.

Participants felt that the ideas shared in the course as well as the access to facilitators and colleagues to go to as resources for new teachers was essential to their development and satisfaction. This community of teacher-learner-colleagues built upon “respect” that, as one participant shared in their survey response that the *Grow to Great* program, helped them “grow” instructionally. “I felt respected, a part of a community of learners, and challenged to grow as an educator.” Another participant echoed this sentiment when stating in their survey response, “I love my colleagues and instructors, so I looked forward to coming here each Monday. Our conversations have helped me as a teacher and a teacher leader. I liked that we were able to work on whatever made sense for each of us in our current roles.” Participants highlighted the sense of community, relationships with colleagues and instructors, and personal and professional growth as keyways that this program led to their satisfaction. In an interview, Rob reflected on how important these relationships were to his satisfaction within the district. He stated:

I think it's important to have those kinds of people, whether it be people in the school with you or people that you started with in [the first-year program]. Going forward, I think it's nice to have people that have a shared experience with you, to be able to hear what they're going through, good or bad, and being able to help each other. I think that's a good part about [the second-year program] and being able to see these people, as frequently as we do, to be able to touch base.

Per participants, the sense of community among new teachers played an important role in their overall job satisfaction, as it fostered a supportive network, encouraged collaboration, and provided a platform for professional growth and shared experiences.

The sense of community, relationships, and ability to collaborate and learn with and from their peers was expressed by participants as another way that this program facilitated their overall satisfaction. “Collaboration” and “support” were identified by participants through survey responses as ways they felt as if they had a “foundation” within the district. One respondent stated: “And we are there for each other. I think without spending those days together, learning what this district was all about and their vision, I would not have that support that I need. It's just great to have that as your foundation.” Building this “network” of colleagues to communicate with and learn from enhanced their experience, learning, satisfaction and overall sense of community within the school district. One survey respondent highlighted that the new teacher program was, “a positive experience. In addition to the content of the course, I got to network with a lot of different people.” This network allowed for the collaboration and relationship building that another participant highlighted in their response: “The best parts of the new teacher program were being able to meet regularly with all of the new teachers, being able to check in with them and being able to collaborate with them, hear what they're saying.” Collaborating with new teacher colleagues, building collegial relationships and networking with different people supported the participants’ feeling of overall job satisfaction.

Another member highlighted how these relationships and chances to collaborate fostered experiences to transfer the learning from the courses and “implement it in the classroom.” They stated, “I liked all of the chances to collaborate with everyone and different people and hear about how their school years are going and taking you guys were doing the best and trying to

implement it in the classroom.” The ability to collaborate and share ideas among new teachers is important for a new teacher’s job satisfaction, as it creates an enriching and supportive work environment that promotes mutual support, development of skill and knowledge and continuous professional development.

Becoming the ‘Quality’ Teacher

In this study, participants share data that delves into the transformative impact of the *Grow to Great* program on their professional development and growth as practitioners. The following analysis will uncover an array of themes that emerged from the data, illustrating how this program played a pivotal role in not only building upon participants’ prior knowledge but also expanding their teaching practices. Furthermore, participants illuminated how the program facilitated access to essential professional resources. However, participants also unveil ways and instances where the program missed the mark in meeting the diverse needs of all the teachers it aimed to serve. Through this comprehensive examination of the data, a nuanced perspective on the program’s effectiveness in supporting educators in their ongoing journey of growth to become a “quality” educator is explored.

Building Upon Prior Knowledge

Through interviews and surveys, participants shared that the professional development courses facilitated the “rethink[ing]” of existing foundational knowledge and cultivating new knowledge of pedagogical tools—but with varied success. Strategies presented in the courses provided new teachers with the opportunity to build upon their prior instructional knowledge as well as rethink current practices to reflect on more current research. For some teachers, material

fostered "rethinking" their practices; nevertheless, the vast majority of teachers spoke to how the program material benefitted them pedagogically. Participants shared how the courses developed upon the foundation they already had to improve their instructional skills. Many survey and interview participants reflected on how the content taught in the courses helped them "rethink" or "reflect on" their thinking around familiar practices building on their prior knowledge. One respondent stated:

Many different aspects of the course have made me reflect on how I am reaching all my students through use of space, grouping, assessments, feedback, and grading. It has encouraged me to rethink what the impact of a grade is and what it's based on. It has also pushed me to think through best practices -- based on research -- towards communicating feedback with students to elicit authentic learning and growth.

Pushing participants to think through best practices in communication, feedback, grading, assessments, and use of classroom space encouraged teachers enrolled in the program to be reflective on how and why they were doing what they were doing in their classroom. A respondent to the survey added to this idea by commenting on the "skills" that they learned in the course, "I learned a multitude of skills to increase engagement for students during this course. I felt that what we learned was applicable across instructional disciplines." Participants noted that the content in the course "pushed" them to "think" and "reflect" about their practices:

This was an engaging experience that really pushed me to think about the choices I make and the planning I do as an educator. The course prompted me to reflect frequently on my work as a teacher and my relationships with students and made me want to continue to evolve to do better.

Evolving as “an educator,” developing “skills,” thinking critically about the “choices made in planning” to elicit “authentic learning” all equate to stronger, more capable, and effective educators.

Some respondents even highlighted how the content covered in the course “pushed” them to think about parts of instruction that they “have not thought of.” One survey respondent stated: “This year really pushed my thinking in areas that I have not thought of while developing lessons. Expanding my ideas on what makes a good lesson and how to organize/structure using the 10 core components that we discussed.” Adding to this idea about thinking about parts of instruction that they had not considered before, a new teacher responded that: “Had I not done that PD with you guys on space, I probably wouldn't really be thinking about that because to me kids sitting in rooms is just the way you learn best, and that would have been just fine. There are things... I'm sure I was a fine teacher before, but now I'm a much better teacher than I was.” Helping teachers think about parts of instruction that they previously “didn't give much thought to,” building on what they already knew, as well as pointing out that there was not “just one way” to do things were key components of the learning that took place in these professional development courses. Donna, in her interview shared:

It was pretty cool to think about all the different ways that you can arrange a lesson. I mean, there is so much to introduce a good lesson plan, which I didn't give too much thought about the lesson plan, thinking about structure of it. The workshop model it's something I had never been introduced to. It is something that I could use because in that lesson structure, you have students in many different places doing many different things. I did a few lessons thinking through that model, but also just thinking about the station activities. When I have so many stations, I thought there was just one way to do it.

New teachers, through these courses, demonstrated that they had been exposed to multiple ways to do and think about their classroom and instruction, here before, they had a singular way. This multi-faceted instructional approach and deeper understanding that new teachers gained through these courses demonstrated that there are no right or wrong ways to teach, but different ways to make intentional instructional decisions. Additionally, teachers in the *Grow to Great* program often stated that program participation offered them the opportunity to be a learner alongside their colleagues. Many participants cited opportunities in which they collaborated with their cohort members or facilitators to “spark new ideas” or “move forward” with a challenge. Jess stated that:

I've found it really useful to meet with the secondary group during these sessions. This is our second year together and I feel like a valued member among them. Time spent collaborating with them has sparked ideas I've wanted to try out with my own students. It's also opened my eyes to where my students are headed beyond the elementary setting. They have helped me reprioritize my teaching and focus mostly on supporting my students in being life-long learners and as independent as possible.

Participants reflected that building and applying knowledge with colleagues supported new teachers in feeling more confident.

Expanding Practices

Respondents highlighted how instruction in the induction courses helped them to “think more deeply” to help them expand on their repertoire of instructional practices. Utilizing this existing knowledge and fostering deeper thinking allowed some of the participants to apply this learning in their classroom in “new ways.” One respondent stated that the biggest take-away

from the course was: “Ways to think more deeply about designing lessons, methods of station teaching, thinking about the parts of a lesson more fluidly.” As one survey response stated: “Thinking of new ways to do stations was very helpful. Continuing to rethink how to develop a lesson and the pieces that can be put together in so many ways has really expanded my thinking on how to structure a lesson. I have found it very helpful in thinking of ways to do strategy groups and conferencing while student went through the lesson.” Participants mentioned that the opportunity to “rethink” instruction, curriculum, and teaching in “new ways” helped them in thinking critically about the instructional choices they made. Nate, a High School Math teacher highlights how he now, “really understands” curriculum development and expresses confidence in his own teaching. He stated:

It's been a phenomenal year for me. I really feel like it came into my own with teaching. I really understand how to do curriculum development and give myself the right constraints. Pull the right standards from the right sources. Organize them into an effective course with strong instructional techniques. I'm really happy with this year. It's been an awesome year.

Ashley reiterated the idea that the course material was not only filling in the gaps of her previous learning but how she felt like she was learning material at “grad-level” which is “stimulating” her to think about her practice. Ashley stated, “As much as the classes might be after work, I leave them I feel like I learned something at grad-level criteria, sometimes. I walk away and I feel like I just attended a grad-level class. That makes me feel really good, because I'm stimulated by those things.” With the content taught in the new teacher induction program, these teachers are expressed increased feelings of self- efficacy as they expanded their instructional practices and skills.

Participants spoke of the knowledge they were encountering through the *Grow to Great* program as "stretching [their] thinking." This knowledge helped them to view familiar strategies in "new ways;" and this knowledge "pushed" their pedagogical thought to new territories. In a survey response, a participant mentioned: "This year of professional development stretched my thinking. It made me think of the curriculum and the class I teach in a new light." Another participant felt that the content of the courses "added new teaching methodologies" to help "expand their thinking." They stated in their survey response, "The methods of engaging instruction we were taught helped me to add new teaching methodologies to the classroom. Additionally, many conversations helped me to expand my thinking leading to a more equitable learning environment for all learners." Participants noted that the "content and ideas" presented in the course were those that could be "easily implemented" and supported this teacher in shifting their pedagogy. "I really appreciated that all of the content and ideas that were exposed to us could be easily implemented into my classroom the next day." Some of these instructional tools shared supported the growth of instructional knowledge for teachers in the *Grow to Great* program.

Additionally, through the *Grow to Great* program, new teachers discussed feelings of self-efficacy and skills that positioned them as leaders within the school. One teacher in their survey stated, "Participating in the course allowed me to think about how I will help my department move forward with curriculum work." New teacher participants expressed how it was "really helpful" to develop leadership skills such as the ability to solve problems, think ahead, and to lead their colleagues in the writing of curriculum. One survey respondent stated, "Now I am more confident and comfortable to actually write my own curriculum and understand what I teach versus what I'm not teaching. I found it to be really helpful. It's something that when

I was in grad school and my first 10 years of teaching, it was never said to me at all.”

Participants reflected that participation in the new teacher induction program supported their feelings of self-efficacy by helping them develop confidence in their instructional practice and leadership skills. Additionally, it helped them to be able to collaborate with colleagues as well as take on the role as leader within their department.

Furthermore, participants cited resources, research, and modeling throughout the course as instructional supports that helped them build their instructional toolkit. One survey respondent noted that, “The most impactful components that I've experienced in our course thus far are those that are tied to research - as a learner, I know that I buy into ideas very quickly if I see that they have been proven to work in practice.” Participants mentioned how the program provided them with “resources” that helped them to “engage students” and establish a “positive classroom culture.” One survey respondent stated that: “The ‘We Got This’ course was my favorite because we were able to read the text on our own and walked away with an excellent resource. I liked the conversations that took place here and thought it was very helpful in engaging in positive classroom culture.” Related to the same text, another survey response highlighted, “I really enjoyed reading ‘We Got This.’ I am eager to use the template introduced on page 39 to help me think about how I can support targeted students.” Participants appreciated the resources and research shared by the *Grow to Great* program facilitators as they provided “enjoy[ment]” as well as strategies to “support students.”

Participants reflected that not only were these resources shared and discussed in the program helpful, but the instructional strategies that were modeled by the facilitators were also a “great way” to expand their pedagogical skills. Jess shared in her interview that:

[Professional Developer] modeled, for example, the total participation techniques, how we were able to run stations, etcetera. Sometimes, I go home so overwhelmed in a good way, because I have so many resources. ‘This could work out when we're doing a feedback session. This could work out when we do a brainstorming process.’ Modeling that for us, and actually seeing it in real time with adults was a great way for me to then relay that to my classroom and it just helps me out a lot.

Ultimately, participants discussed how the combination of research-backed resources, interactive modeling, and engaging discussions provided new teachers with a comprehensive instructional toolkit, helping them to feel empowered to create positive classroom cultures and effectively support targeted students. The *Grow to Great* program provided new teachers with an opportunity to reflect or rethink their current practices, expand on their previous knowledge and realize other methods to provide instruction to students. Participants reflected on how the new teacher induction program supported them in developing a range of instructional knowledge, including new pedagogical tools and the opportunity to build upon their existing pedagogies. New teachers shared that the courses facilitated deep thinking and reflection, encouraging teachers to rethink their practices and apply new methodologies.

Access to Professional Books/Texts

In addition, many of the new teachers highlighted how access to various resources enhanced their experience as a new teacher. Some of the resources varied from tangible items such as curriculum materials, to less-tangible things such as professional development. New colleagues expressed the value of physical materials to support their work. Many of them noted that in past schools and districts, they lacked curriculum guides. Maya highlighted this difference

when she stated, “I actually have manuals, which is crazy because I would have to use other people's usernames and passwords from other schools, but here actually, I'm given the resources that I need to teach and the charts.” The teacher went on to say how she uses these guides to plan and learn the curriculum she needs to teach. Another elementary teacher, Cindy, stated that having access to the curriculum materials helped deepen her understanding of the content and the structure of a lesson: “even though I have experience with these units, I feel like my understanding is deepening now because I have more resources and consultants coming in and helping me. I'm very grateful for that.” So, while Cindy taught this particular curriculum prior to arriving in the district, she noted that having the resources as pedagogical support helped deepen her knowledge and improve her practice.

Beyond curricular materials, new teachers mentioned how access to professional texts enhanced their experience as a new teacher. Maya shared a story about how she was talking to her Assistant Principal about different ways to arrange her classroom, “For example, I met with him about creating flexible seating and spacing, I've never done that in the city. No one encourages that. It's not necessarily curriculum, but it's important. He gave me this book the next day, *Space*, by Robert Dillon, and I read it.” She went on to later note the positive changes to her classroom environment stemming from this text. Another new teacher, who teaches High School English, Chris, mentioned that in the first year of the new teacher program, he has been exposed to many authors and researchers that have expanded his teaching strategies: “From the Hattie research to the Cornelius Minor book. Then the awesome resource that I took home was the TPT (*Total Participation Techniques*) book. The strategies from that were awesome.” He went on to mention how this learning has enhanced not only his practice, but his understanding of what is expected in the district: “It helped me understand what... Because every district is different, what

they want to see in their lessons. That was clear. It's helpful to get those resources that talk about it. But that's really what I started here for.” Participants highlighted how having access to curricular resources and professional texts supports them in deepening their understanding of what and how to teach, promotes the learning of new teaching strategies, and creates more student-centered learning environments.

Where Courses Missed the Mark

Pacing

While previous participants highlighted how the new teacher induction program supported teachers in having greater access to pedagogical knowledge which led to a development of their skills, and a feeling of being more effective as an educator. Despite these feelings of self-efficacy, inter-personal skills, and new knowledge, participants in the program also identified ways in which the program was not meeting their needs as instructors and adult learners. Some teachers noted that the pace of the course did not meet their needs. In an interview, Rob stated that they struggled to “make changes” in their practice because of the “quick turnover” of topics. Rob stated that, “It's really hard to do that quick turnover and change things even if you have good ideas. It would be nice to do maybe half of it like, ‘We're going to talk to you about this and do a lesson, and then you're going to actually make changes for tomorrow and then next week you will get feedback from your peers/the facilitators on the spot.’” Without the feedback loop and opportunities to apply the learning to their actual work, participants felt that the content moved too fast for them to actually make changes to their instruction and perfect their practices. Nate reflected on the year of professional learning that, “I think that the idea is really good. I do think though, it would be even better if we had time to

work instead of being talked to so much. Like we're going to talk about activations- it would almost be better for us to pull out what we're working on, even if it means people are working more independently- and go straight into our lessons.” Participants expressed wanting time to work on and update their lessons with the new skills and strategies that they were learning in the course so that they had time to practice the skills. Some participants believed that the courses lacked adequate pacing, hindering their ability to implement meaningful changes in their teaching practices. The quick turnover of topics left little room for applying the newly acquired knowledge to their work, leading to frustration and a desire for a more balanced approach that allowed for practical application and independent work on lessons.

Redundant and Irrelevant Material

Additionally, some participants felt that some of the work was “redundant.” In her interview, Jess stated: “I think that maybe we spent a little too much time on the whole lesson plan. I think some people felt there's a little redundancy like, ‘Oh, yeah. We know.’ I feel like we took every section- then we went through it. I think at this point, you have teachers coming with years and years of experience of using a lesson plan like that.” Another High School teacher, Nate, in their interview reflected that some of the “foundational” information that was covered in the courses might be something teachers need to “brush up on” so that everyone is “on the same page,” but that the professional development time could be used more effectively if the learning was “applied” to their own setting. He stated:

Some of the foundational stuff - I knew, it seemed like my colleagues knew it. I thought, ‘Can we apply this to use our time in a more effective way?’ Just either finding out a way to differentiate that because it could be that people really do need to brush up on. I think

it's important to make sure we're on the same page about why that's important, but then just apply as fast as possible.

Identifying the material as foundational and needing to be differentiated based upon the skill level of the participants was an idea reiterated by a few participants. One participant even suggested using a self-assessment of what teachers needed support with as a way to differentiate and improve the course content. Nate suggested, "I also think, too, maybe a little bit of leveling where teachers use their own evaluation/their own self-assessments and think, 'This is what I'm strong at or not.'" As many of the new teachers to this district are not novice teachers and come with prior years of teaching experience, matching their needs to the course content was a challenge. Not feeling like the content met their needs as learners, whether the level of challenge was not right or the topic did not match their assignment, made participation in the new teacher induction program challenging. While some of the respondents expressed opinions that portrayed that the information presented built on their existing knowledge or expanded what they already knew, others reported that too much time was spent on content that was "redundant" and "foundational."

Similarly, some of the participants highlighted how the content was not relevant to them as individuals within their specific teaching context. A Middle School Special Education teacher, Amy, reflected in her interview that, "I need to understand what applies and what doesn't. Not just the 'Oh, you should be doing this. It's best practice.' I'm a special ed teacher and this isn't even how my day is formatted or structured. So how do I do this?" Similarly, this point was reiterated by Kate, another Special Education teacher, when she reflected that the lesson planning model that was taught in the program did not reflect the model of instruction used for special education services. She said in her interview, "At first, I was a little concerned as to how

some of the concepts and the learning targets align with anything that had to do with special education. I still question that sometimes because we dissected the lesson plan template.

Oftentimes, it seemed just geared towards a general education teacher's perspective.”

Participants' feelings highlighted a need for improvement, where the *Grow to Great* induction program failed to meet their specific role-based needs.

Mandated PD

Some teachers reflected that the new teacher induction program struggled to meet their needs due to the fact that they felt like they were doing what the “district wants” because they felt like “they had to.” Joe reflected on using the district’s lesson plan template, that he felt, “It was almost like, ‘I’m going to use this because the district wants to, but I felt like I had to-shove something into a box and think about it in a way that I hadn’t really intended to.’” Not only did Joe state that, at times, he felt that he was going along with what was taught because he had to, but there was an implied sense of “following the rules” in order to please administration.

Similarly, another participant mentioned how “keeping administration happy” was a motivating factor, even if it was challenging to do. Amy stated, “You want to keep administration happy always. And that’s very hard when you don’t know what’s going to keep the administration happy. In one minute, you’re being told you need to do this for the next minute. If it doesn’t fit the situation, then that’s not okay anymore. You shouldn’t have done it that way. That’s what you’re just told.” Participants sharing the need to appease and please district leaders both with their instructional practices as well as the ways they spend their time outside of the classroom was part of the challenge of the new teacher experience.

The rapid tempo of the course, coupled with limited opportunities for reflection and practical application, was further exacerbated by participants' challenges in grasping the precise expectations of the "district" regarding the involvement of new colleagues in professional development, the structure of lessons, and the specific criteria to be demonstrated during observations. This confusion was further discussed in a later interview with Amy when she highlighted how the observation process and expectations for new teachers was different for probationary teachers than tenured teachers. She stated that, "The expectation that we, as second year teachers, were doing that [implementing research based instructional practices and co-teaching models] when we have colleagues that aren't, it felt like a little bit of a gray area." While the inconsistent expectations were a source of frustration for some of the participants in the new teacher induction program, as highlighted by the previous statements, one participant mentioned that even the name of the program was "insulting". This High School Science teacher, in his interview stated that since many of the "new teachers" were not new to the profession, but rather just new to this school district, being treated as "new" by the district was difficult. Adam shared, "I mean, you probably hear it. A lot of the teachers were just like, 'Why are we in this new teacher program? It seems insulting in some way.' Maybe the best thing to do is don't call it a New Teacher Program." Helping teachers manage the district's expectations, support teachers in understanding what they need to do to keep "administration happy" including what professional development was mandatory and what was optional as well as navigating their own professional authority and agency was a way in which this induction program struggled to support the needs of some of the teachers new to the district.

Clarity & Consistency

In addition to expanding instructional practices and a professional community, participants highlighted how vital both clarity and consistency were for success throughout their pre-tenure years. Interview participants shared the pivotal role that clarity and consistency play in easing the transition of pre-tenure teachers into their roles. These reflections shed light on the pivotal role that clarity and consistency played in facilitating the transition of the pre-tenure teachers' participants into their new roles. Participants shared the multifaceted dimensions of this idea, drawing attention to specific elements that emerged as essential sources of support for novice educators. Among the key factors identified, they emphasized the significance of clearly articulated community expectations, instructional norms, and a shared educational vision. Additionally, they highlighted the impact of well-defined evaluation processes and the continuity of teaching assignments spanning more than one consecutive school year. Through these in-depth discussions, participants provided a comprehensive understanding of how these aspects collectively contribute to a smoother and more successful transition for pre-tenure teachers, ultimately fostering their growth, development, job satisfaction and feelings of self-efficacy.

Clear Articulation of Expectations & Vision

One of the supports the participants prioritized was clearly articulated expectations for new teachers from district and building leaders related to instruction, professional responsibilities, and the district's vision for teaching and learning. New colleague-participants mentioned that the articulation of both teacher expectations and vision for their job performance was both "helpful" and appreciated as it gave them a guide as to what they needed to do to be successful. Chris reflected: "That's why coming here and doing [the 1st year New Teacher

Program] was interesting, because there's definitely a clear, like this is where you're at, this is where they want you to be. That was helpful.” An Elementary Special Education teacher, Jess, noted that the clear expectations helped them feel successful, understand what to teach, and how to navigate the culture:

She just really told me how to drive; what's expected of me, what's needed, what are they looking for. She helped me break up and dissect the lesson plan, too. She also really helped me with the new year evaluation and what has been shown to her the past that was helpful in how to break it down.

These statements by the new colleagues demonstrate how the clarity around district and school-level teacher expectations helped new teachers navigate their professional contexts. When expectations were well-defined, new teachers felt a sense of clarity and direction.

However, when expectations were not clearly articulated, teachers felt a sense of ambiguity, and a lack of “intentionality” and “concreteness.” When talking about the curriculum maps for her grade level, Ashley mentioned that: “I've noticed the scope and sequence is not as intentional or make sense at certain times, I think we jump around. At times here, I've had to refer to the state common core standards, or literacy standards in general to think what we want students to achieve.” This teacher noted how “jump[ing] around” in the -curriculum hindered her ability to feel successful in her teaching context. She continued to note that: “Coming here, my philosophy shifted. I noticed that a lot of the standards don't seem as concrete. There's a lot of abstract thinking, a lot of higher order thinking, but I'm not sure we're taking the steps to get where we need to get to retain information over time, or if we are just teaching in order to teach and move on.” She also noted how without the clearly articulated curriculum, it was challenging

to meet the needs of students since she was spending so much of her time teaching new strategies to students:

In New York City, I feel like because we were aligned and knew that the skills would carry forward, like citing evidence, how to write a constructor response, we would always teach strategies like skills. And then the content would just shift, but the strategies would stay the same. They would actually only get better, like the gradual release would be better moving forward, as opposed to, here's new content, here's a different way to do it.

Ashley went on to identify that not only is there a need for an articulated curriculum, but that an instructional model would be beneficial:

I have noticed that UDL strategies are definitely needed for all learners, even in a location of affluence, in a location with a multitude of resources. I find that the foundation is not solidified here. I'm not sure how we expect students to be so vertically aligned when there's so much difference in approach, so much difference in content, expectation, personal relationships with adults.

This new teacher expressed that the “vertical alignment” curriculum in regard to “content, expectations and relationships” supports new teachers in understanding what to teach and how to teach, while supporting them in meeting the needs of their students.

Teachers also noted that when expectations were not clearly articulated, they felt unsure and “overwhelmed.” Rob, a high school teacher expressed, “I think when you're not being reassured or not clear on what the expectation for you is, and feeling like you can't really figure it out. I think it caused me as a person to like shell up and become overwhelmed and feel like I wasn't capable of certain aspects.” Joe felt that when he didn't understand the expectations and various school norms, he was left focusing on the wrong aspects of his work early on:

I came from the city. Huge difference. It was like, ‘Is this what we do?’ You want to also fit in when you get here. That is intimidating. Do you write objectives on the board? Do we put learning targets on the board? Do I have students’ sequence to read? Those are things that I didn't know. I think I might have pushed myself too hard to do them, and that shouldn't have been my focus in September. It should have been positive, positive, positive, phone calls, emails, notes, relationships.

Participants stressed that when they understood the vision for instruction, and the expectations for professional practice they were more able to feel secure in their teaching and in their teaching contexts.

Understanding of District Expectations and Evaluation Process

Even though participants identified a lack of clarity around expectations for new teachers, they did identify how the *Grow to Great* program aimed to provide them with a clearer understanding of the district “expectations,” “culture,” and ways to be successful throughout the evaluation process. Joe, a High School Social Studies teacher, reflected this sentiment in his third year, “It was a positive and safe environment to learn about culture and expectations of [district]. Especially since I came from a charter school this has been a larger shift for me.” A survey respondent stated that the course helped them by “laying out expectations” of the school district. “This was so helpful to acclimate to this district. I felt like [professional developers] laid out expectations for us really well.” Through this program, not only did participants reflect that the articulation of expectations helped them to “acclimate” but also that this program helped them as a “learner.” They stated: “This experience helped me as a learner by learning more about the philosophy of the district and what [district] values.” A survey respondent mentioned that

understanding the “mindset” of the district as well as what is “expected” as a teacher within the community was an important component of the program: “I felt like it gave me a window into [district] and the mindset that’s here. I feel like [the professional developers] would say things or the activities they do help me to think about, ‘Okay, this is [district]. This is what their expected expectations are.’” A survey respondent stated that defining “success” and “expectations” and what new teachers “should do” to meet those expectations was “helpful.” They stated:

What was helpful to me was, again, these are the expectations in the district, this is what we should do, and this is honestly what the district is expecting. They’re just setting us up in terms of like, ‘These are our expectations. Follow them. Then you’ll be successful.

Participants continually expressed the need and desire to understand and meet the district’s expectations. “Following [the] expectations,” as stated by participants, was a key to being “successful” as a new teacher in this district.

Develop Understanding and Confidence

In both interviews and survey responses, participants expressed that the *Grow to Great* program, and the learning that was occurring therein, contributed to feelings of “confidence” in their practice and clarity around the expectations for instruction and classroom culture within the district. Many teachers expressed this through expressions of “building self-confidence” and “coming into my own.” Cindy stated in her interview that the induction program exposed her to “what’s expected, with all the modeling, the samples, and giving us the opportunity to implement that. I think that is important. If you’re not shown, and not modeled, how can one be expected to know? I think that builds my confidence. If I don’t know, I’m not going to be as confident as an educator as I would like to be.” Interview participants stated that for teachers that had previous

teaching experience, the “foundation” given through these professional development programs about what is considered “best practice” within this new school district was a strength of the program. Gale, a Middle School English teacher, in their interview stated:

I liked the parts of the lessons that were focused on for first year, I thought that they started with the foundation. That was good because even for someone who's wrote a gillion lesson plans, I got a foundation of what [district] both calls best practice and from where you need to start. I felt like I was able to reflect a lot on how I was doing things like what I knew when I came here. I was able to then fine tune what I do to streamline that more.

A survey respondent highlighted this idea when they spoke about how the content of the courses helped them to create lessons that met the “district criteria.” They stated: “Learning about the lesson plan structure and template was very helpful as it allowed me to successfully create lesson plans that meet the district criteria.” Participants continually highlighted how the instruction into what is expected by the school district and community was an essential element of the *Grow to Great* program.

Participants spoke about how the knowledge they gained in the courses helped them to be successful in their observations. One survey response stated: “I think going over the parts of the lesson plan were helpful as that really helped me to reflect on my teaching. That also helped with my observations.” In an interview, Gale discussed how the conversation with administrators before observations were “in line with” what was being taught in the professional development courses. “When I was observed, both by my principal and my District administrator they were very much in line with what was going on in [Year 1]. In my principal's observation, he brought up something about [Year 1] that we had previously done two weeks prior, and I had done it in my lesson, and he made note of that.” Cindy, also stated in her interview that through this

program she received an understanding of how the Danielson Evaluation rubric is being combined with the district “expectations” so that she can understand how to be an “effective teacher.” She stated that, “I get an overview. You get to try it and then go have time to implement it in your own classroom. I like how they're hitting the different components of the Danielson with [district] expectation, how to be an effective teacher.” Cindy articulated that the understanding and explicit statement of not only what is being “expected” of new teachers but the definition of what it is to be a successful teacher in the district supported teachers in defining what success looks like in this district. In summary, the *Grow to Great* program demonstrated to provide new teachers with a clear understanding of the district's culture, expectations, and the models of “best practice.”

Participants reflected that by articulating expectations and highlighting the district's mindset, the program helps them to acclimate and align their practices with district values. Participants shared how the program also assisted teachers in understanding the criteria for success and effectively implementing the district's evaluation rubric. The program's emphasis on providing a foundation of best practices and aligning lesson plans with district criteria enables new teachers to reflect, fine-tune their teaching, and meet district expectations. Furthermore, as shared through participant interviews, the knowledge gained in the courses contributes to successful observations and advancement in overall instructional practices that improves a teacher's feelings of self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Continuity of Assignment & Responsibilities

Thirteen out of the sixteen teachers interviewed expressed how having continuity of their teaching assignment and subsequent responsibilities was a key component in feeling successful

during their pre-tenure period. Of those thirteen, four of the teachers hoped for consistency of their assignment, while nine noted the benefits of the consistency of their assignment. From participants, continuity of assignment was determined to mean not only teaching the same grade or subject, but sometimes even in the same school. Teachers relayed that during their first year, extensive time was spent on learning the new school and district norms and, for many, the “brand new curriculum” that they had little time to feel comfortable in their instructional practices. Adam, when reflecting on his second year of teaching the same content stated, “It got progressively easier this year, especially being able to- for the first time, in four years, I actually teach the same thing a second year in a row and just get to work on the curriculum. So not doing total revisions or something brand new in [course 1] and in [course 2]. So, it was really great this year.” By the second year, new colleagues who were able to stay with their same teaching assignment noted that they began feeling more comfortable with the curriculum and felt more effective in their practices. Donna noted: “This is the first year I don't feel like a new teacher. That's because I taught something different every year I've taught.” By the third year, their confidence with both curriculum and instruction was seemingly hitting a stride. Linda stated that, “Because I've taught third grade now, for four years, I know my curriculum so well, that now I'm able to make better choices where I leverage student choice more. It's a more student-centered classroom. I know what the expectations are for my core curriculum so I'm able to make better choices.” This teacher spoke to their increased differentiation and “student-centered classroom” stemming from assignment consistency. Participants reflected that this consistency helps to not only feel more grounded in their instruction, but also to have familiarity with the grade level and content.

Additionally, participants stated that consistency of assignment supported their feelings of self-confidence. Donna, a middle school science teacher, reflected that after four years amongst the same team of colleagues, she finally has more of a “voice” within the team. “I feel like I have more of a voice, like I’ll add some more [to] conversations where in the past I didn’t, and that’s whether it’s in a department meeting, like a small group and a faculty meeting.” This feeling of “voice” is important to Donna as well as the growth of the department as these new colleagues eventually “lead the way” within their teams. One fourth-year Science teacher, Adam, commented that: “this year, I feel like I’m kind of leading the way for my two teammates. We’re using my stuff and I’m kind of like laying the groundwork and then we work together to revise things. So that’s kind of a good way to help them out. I mean, I didn’t have that last year and I wish I had that.” Participants demonstrated that the benefits of consistency of assignment provided them with the opportunity to “lead the way” and “lay the groundwork” as their confidence and experience grows.

In contrast, participants also stated, that when they do not have consistency of teaching assignment, they were left, year after year, feeling uncertain. Amy reflected after receiving a shift in her co-teaching assignment for the third year in a row: “It’s just a weird thing, where I’m going to go and what the future is going to hold? And what is my model of a classroom going to look like? It’s very strange, and each class is so different.” In addition to feelings of professional uncertainty, another elementary teacher hoped for consistency of her teaching assignment in the near future:

I think consistency would be really helpful in the future. I think that I’ve really developed a relationship with a lot of my teammates that has worked, and the kids have been decent, and I have had really good success with the parents, but I’ve been doing so much to make

sure that those things are happening. And it's just like, I don't know where I am going to be next year.

Participants reflected that a lack of consistency in their teaching assignments made them feel uncertain about their professional futures. This uncertainty, as reflected by participants, made it challenging for new teachers to gain feelings of self-efficacy or confidence in their skill since they struggle to know what or where they will be teaching the following year.

Understanding of School & Teaching Norms

Participants felt that an understanding of school building norms and more general teaching norms was a support they needed. When asked what they wished they knew when they first started, many of them responded with including but not limited to: “how to use the copy machine” or “how to bring your kids to lunch” as well as “what do you call the classes?” For example, Nate replied, “I know you're going to laugh, but how to use the copy machine? It's those little things and they're different in every building. I know that sounds like so silly, but it's those little things that teachers use that if they can't use it, like the copy machine is a biggie.” While teachers noted that they wanted to know not only how to use and access the basic resources within the school building, but also what some of the unwritten rules of the school were. Karol, in her interview, stated that she wanted to know the “nitty gritty things. Thinking about even just weird school-based details, like how do you bring your kids to lunch? What do you call the classes? Do you call them by their room number? Do you call by their teacher name? It's just weird little details that for me make me feel better to know.” All of these nuances differ per school building, but participants reflected that knowing this information upfront could have supported them to “feel better” about their work.

Other teachers mentioned how they wanted to understand some of the policies and practices in a school building. For example, a High School Social Studies teacher, Joe, referenced wanting direction on how to handle parent communication and student discipline. “That's important to me. Can we have flowcharts for, let's say a parent sends an e-mail about a grade, that stuff? Who should I go to talk when do I know if something's an emergency versus not? When do you get an AP involved versus handle it in house? That type of stuff, is unspoken.” New colleagues mentioned that these clear directions and protocols would be a useful resource for new teachers to help navigate difficult or confusing student and parent interactions. As a Middle School teacher, Gale spoke of wanting to know what the district’s policy on student behavior was to help her navigate a challenging student in her class. “There were a few things where even teams talk about like, what's the behavior plan? What's the district's policy on behavior?” In this case, she wanted clarity on how to respond to student behavior, when to involve parents and administrators. Participants noted how an explicit awareness of policies and practices, particularly related to student conduct, would have helped them acclimate to the ways the district operates.

An Investment in Teachers

Overall, teachers felt that more support was needed to meet “district expectations” and understand what the district wants as well as a need to feel valued as an educator with a solid base of experience and expertise that can add to the community. A goal of a continuous professional development program is to assist new teachers during their transition into a different school district and provide ongoing support throughout their pre-tenure years. Additionally, the program endeavors to foster a positive work environment where participants not only find joy in

their daily tasks, but also experience a sense of satisfaction in their teaching journey. Participants reflected on how this program led them to feel supported by the district's "investment" in them as an employee through the "transition." One teacher demonstrated how this program highlights the district's support of them as teachers when they stated, "This experience has been super helpful in my transition into [district]. Each school district has a different culture and set of teacher expectations. It is very nice to have a program that supports that transition."

Additionally, another survey respondent shared the idea that not only through the program did they build relationships, gain knowledge, but felt valued by the opportunity to participate in the *Grow to Great* program. They stated:

I have enjoyed the chance to have new teachers/models/mentors. I love that in year three I feel like my cohort are some of my closest friends in the district. I feel the PD is very worth my time--I always learn a lot--and the effort put in by the teachers demonstrates the district's investment in me as an employee and as a person.

Feeling appreciation from the district they serve, these new colleagues cultivate a positive and supportive work environment, which, in turn, elevates their commitment and effectiveness in the classroom while enhancing their overall job satisfaction.

Participants noted how clarity of expectations, school norms and teaching standards were paramount to their feelings of being supported. Liked to these supports, new teachers noted how the consistency of teaching assignment over time supports them in feeling more comfortable and effective in their practice. These professional supports were identified as the key factors that make new teachers feel successful within their pre-tenure years in a school district.

Measuring Teacher ‘Quality’

Having explored the critical foundations of support provided by the new teacher induction program, which encompass a robust professional learning community, clarity of expectations and vision and a professional development program that supports the development of teacher skill, an exploration of the program's role in enhancing the professional growth and evaluation outcomes of pre-tenure teachers highlights the impact of the program on teacher's instructional ability. Specifically, examining the extent to which the *Grow to Great* program supports teachers in elevating their overall evaluation scores when assessed using the Danielson Rubric. Through a comprehensive analysis, the relationship between the program's support structure and teachers' ability to improve their instructional practices, ultimately resulting in higher evaluation scores and a more enriching educational experience for students will be illuminated.

To assess whether the sustained professional development program assisted in teacher improvement, as reflected by teacher evaluation scores received through teacher observations. Data was examined from teacher evaluations given for the school years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. To examine the relationship between the professional development program and a new teacher's improvement in instructional practices, we would expect to see an increase in teacher evaluation scores over time. Questions about inter-rater reliability and validity of the teacher evaluation rubric are addressed below. The results are recorded below in subheadings according to the themes that were distilled from the data compiled.

Descriptive Statistics

The data analyzed to evaluate this question were taken from teacher evaluation data from 2019-2022. Both tenured and pre-tenured teachers are part of the sample set for the data. Within the sample, 77.97% of the participants were female, while 22.03% were male (See Table 4-9). During this period, a total of 2,261 evaluations were analyzed in which 62% of which were administered to tenured teachers and 37% were administered to probationary (pre-tenured) teachers (See Table 4-10). Teachers within this school district span across three school levels: Elementary, Middle and High School. Within this data set, 29.96% of the teachers are classified as Elementary, 28.13% are Middle and 41.91% are High School (See Table 4-11). Within these school levels, teachers are also categorized by their department. As Table 4-14 shows, the largest categories of teachers are Elementary, followed by PPS (Pupil Personnel Services) which includes Teachers of Special Education, Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Reading, Multi-Lingual Learners, etcetera. Many other teachers are classified by the specific content they teach, such as Science, Math, Social Studies, Physical Education (PE), English, etcetera.

Two types of evaluations are given to teachers within the school district: formal and unannounced. A formal observation, given typically twice a year for pre-tenured teachers and once for tenured teaching staff and is a scheduled, full class period observation scored on the Danielson Rubric; an unannounced observation is administered one time per school year for all teachers and is an unscheduled 10–15-minute observation scored on certain components of the Danielson Rubric. Within this data set, 60.86% of the observations administered were formal, while 39.14% were unannounced (See Table 4-12). In addition, observations, both formal and unannounced, are conducted by all administrators throughout the district. Some observations are

administered by building level administrators, while some are by district-level administrators. About 70% of the observations (See Table 4-13), in this school district, are completed by building level administrators (Assistant Principals or Principals), while the remaining approximately 30% are completed by District level administrators (Directors, Assistant Superintendents and Superintendent).

Table 4-9: Frequency of Teacher's Gender

Gender	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Female	1,763	77.97	77.97
Male	498	22.03	100.00

Table 4-10: Frequency of Teacher Evaluation Type

Evaluation Type	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
probationary	838	37.06	37.06
tenured	1,423	62.94	100.00

Table 4-11: Frequency of School Levels

School level	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Elementary	674	29.96	29.96
Middle	633	28.13	58.09
High	943	41.91	100.00

Table 4-12: Frequency of Formal Evaluation

Formal evaluation	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
unannounced	885	39.14	39.14
formal	1,376	60.86	100.00

Table 4-13: Frequency of Administration Level

Admin level	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
N/A	12	0.55	0.55
Assist. Principal	947	43.70	44.25
Principal	603	27.83	72.08
Director	319	14.72	86.80
Assist. Superintendent	224	10.34	97.14
Superintendent	62	2.86	100.00

Table 4-14: Frequency of Departments

Department Group	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Arts	151	7.09	7.09
Elementary	523	24.55	31.64
English	256	12.02	43.66
Math	155	7.28	50.94
Other Languages	190	8.92	59.86
Others	58	2.72	62.58
PE	20	0.94	63.52
PPS	420	19.72	83.24
Science	213	10.00	93.24
Social Studies	144	6.76	100.00

Evaluations: By the Numbers

A sustained professional development program that aims to strengthen the instructional skills and pedagogical knowledge of the new teachers within the program strives to prepare those

teachers with the ability to perform at highly proficient levels on teacher evaluations as well as understand the culture and expectations of the school district. In doing so, new teachers would do well, make it through the tenure process easily and want to remain teaching within the school district throughout the rest of their career. A new teacher induction program, done well, strives to prepare teachers so they perform at high levels and score, on the Danielson Rubric, between Effective and Highly Effective. The program also aims to support pre-tenure teachers in improving over time. Data was analyzed to see if the *Grow to Great* program not only supports effective teaching as rated by teacher evaluations, demonstrates a development of teacher skill over time and when compared to pre-tenured teachers not enrolled in the induction program, does their evaluation score show a statistically significant positive difference.

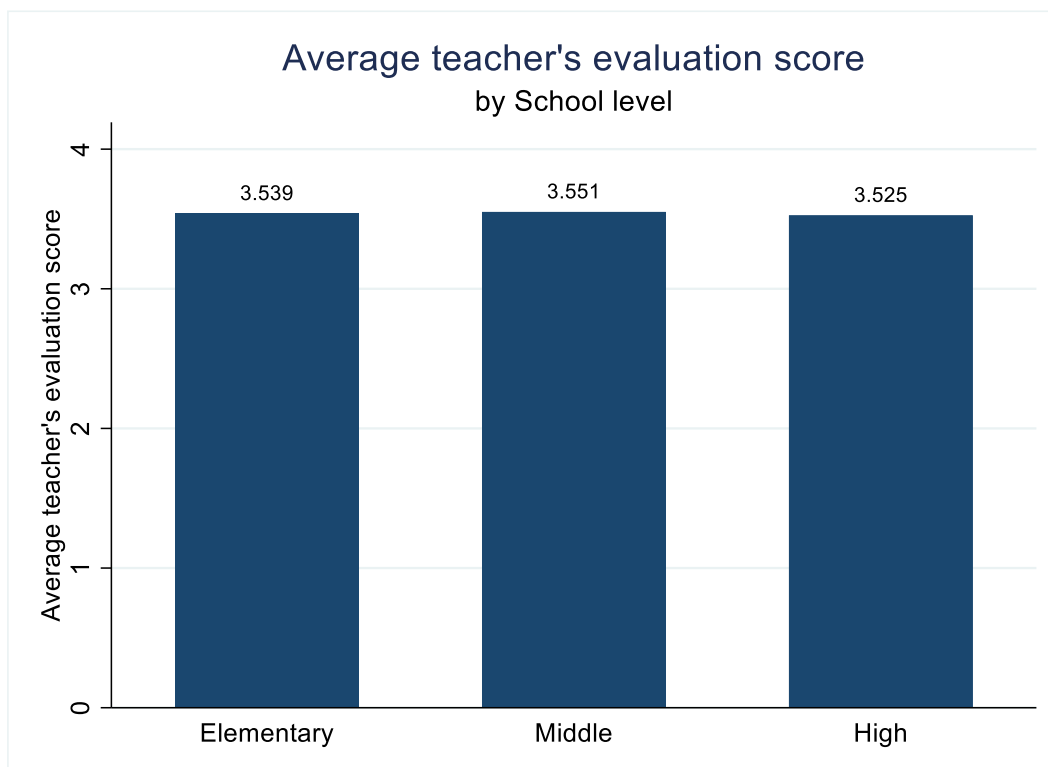
Analysis

In the primary analysis, the descriptive statistics showed that the composite scores given to teachers on their observations showed that the mean scores for teacher evaluations are a 3.54. Based on the descriptive data provided in Table 4-15, the data shows that the average years of experience for teachers within this school district are greater than 13 years.

Table 4-15: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers during 2019-2022

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max
Composite Score	2261	3.54	0.38	2	4
Experience (years)	2261	13.36	9.71	0.39	48.73
Probationary	2261	0.37	0.48	0	1
Male	2261	0.22	0.41	0	1
Elementary	2261	0.30	0.46	0	1
Middle School	2250	0.28	0.45	0	1
High School	2250	0.42	0.49	0	1
School year	2261	2.65	1.09	1	4

Figure 23: Average score by School Levels



According to the data presented in Figure 23, the mean evaluation score for teachers at the Elementary level: 3.539, Middle School: 3.551, and High School: 3.525. Descriptively, the data showed that when the data is sorted by several factors, it all highlighted similar results. Regardless of school level, department, or evaluator, your observation scores were all likely to be above a 3, “Effective” rating.

Figure 24: Average score by Departments Average score by Departments

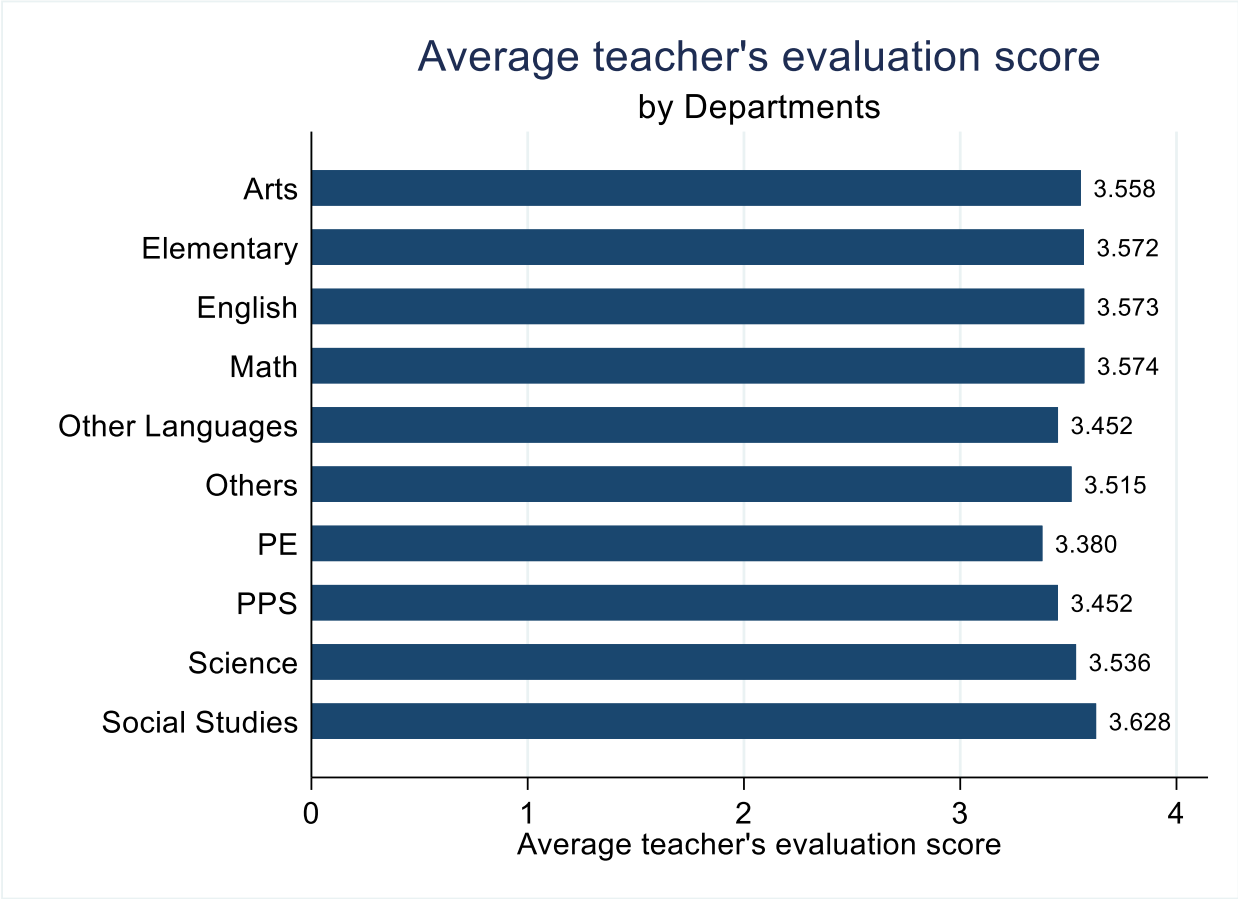


Figure 25: Average score by Administration Levels

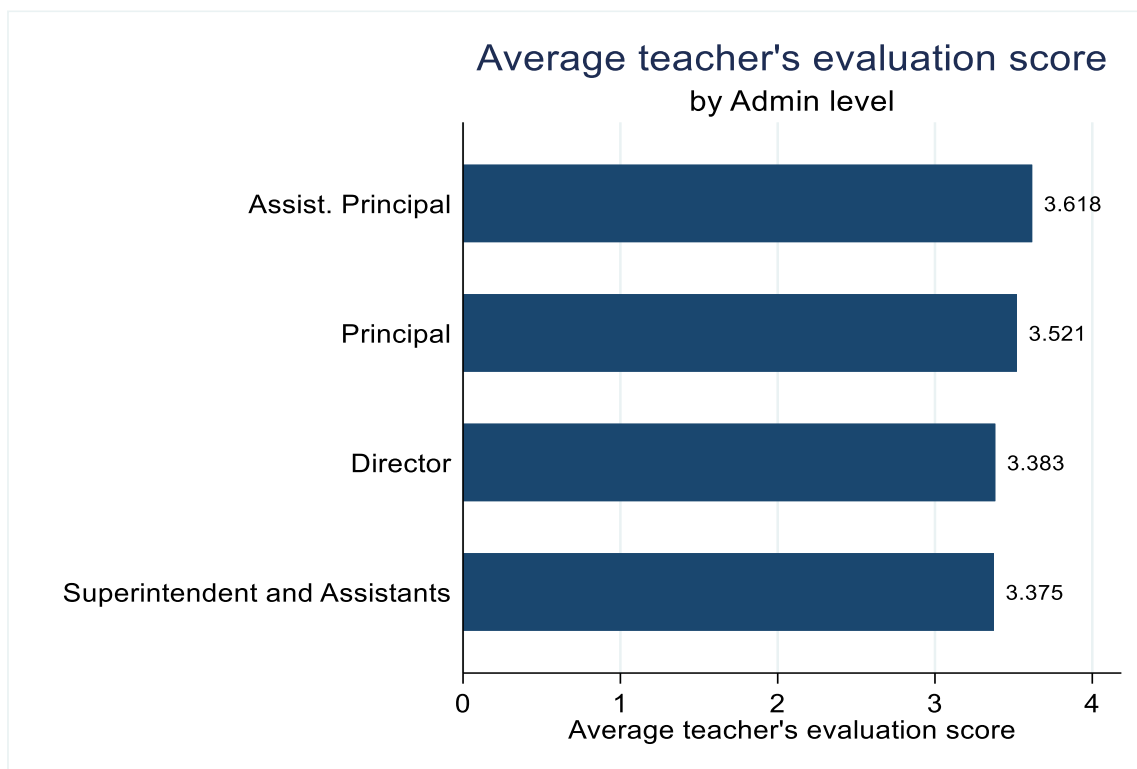
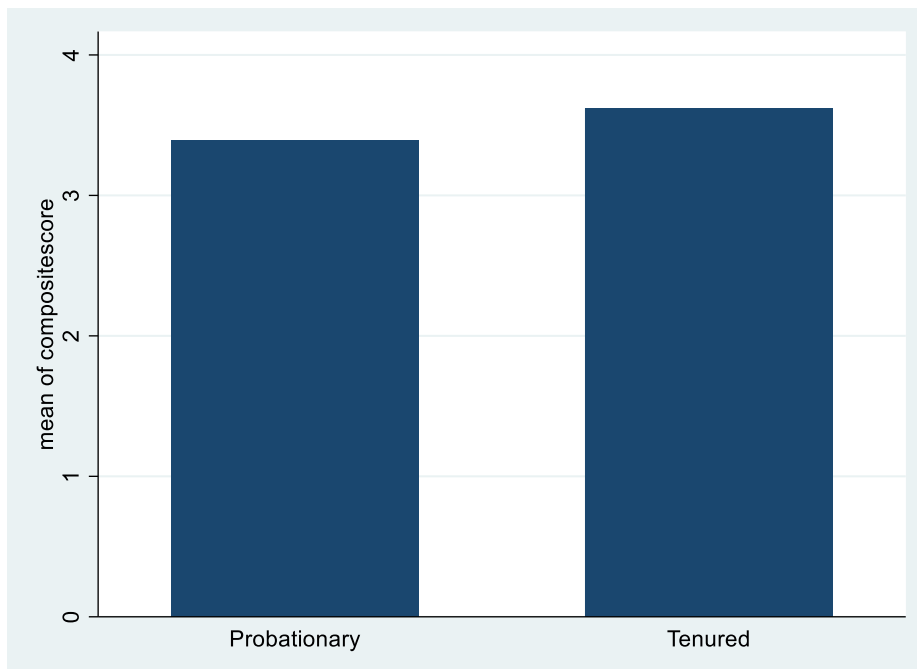


Figure 26: Average score by Teacher's Tenure



With all teachers scoring within the “Effective” to “Highly Effective” range (between a 3 and a 4) on their observations, on average, teacher evaluations for both tenured and pre-tenured

teachers have little to no variance (Figure 26). Despite that being true, Table 4-16 below shows the regression results of three models presenting how various factors for teachers' characteristics, school and departments are associated with teacher performance. Model 1 shows the relationship between teacher's performance and other variables including experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects in a linear form considered in a cross-sectional data. Model 2 and Model 3 show the relationship between teacher's resignation and other variables including experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects in a linear form with random effects and fixed effects panel data models.

Fixed vs. Random Effect Models

Since the data is panel data, which varies across teachers and over time, fixed effects or random effects panel data methods can be used. To measure the variation of teacher's performance, relevant school and department attributes will also be incorporated in the linear multivariate regression besides teachers' characteristics including experience, probationary, gender, and teaching subjects.

For panel data models, we can use either fixed or random effect models (FE or RE) depending on whether the unobserved effects are correlated with independent variables including experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects. RE is more efficient and precise, but sometimes biased because of endogeneity. Hausman tests were used to determine whether FE or RE models can be used. The Hausman tests are statistically significant with p-values = XXX (p-value < 0.05), thus the null hypothesis is rejected, and we can conclude that a more consistent estimates are the fixed

effects estimates. Therefore, FE models are the right models to use for estimating teacher's composite score or teacher performance.

The estimation results from Table 4-16 from the FE model show that one more year of experience is associated with 0.0489 higher score in teacher performance on average, holding other things constant. Cohort years are also statistically significant factor that can explain the variation in teacher performance. However, being probationary, gender, school level, formal evaluation, teaching subjects and some administration level (assistant) are not statistically significant at 5% level. This suggests that when individual teacher's unobserved factors are controlled for, teacher's experience and cohort years are important factors that can explain the variation in teacher performance controlling for other teacher's characteristics or school and department factors.

Table 4-16: Estimation Results for Teacher's Evaluation Score

	(1) Pooled OLS	(2) Random Effects	(3) Fixed Effects
Experience (Years)	0.00285* (0.00125)	0.00562** (0.00178)	0.0489*** (0.0134)
Probationary	-0.122*** (0.0257)	-0.0784* (0.0324)	0.0290 (0.0461)
Male	0.00798 (0.0211)	-0.0191 (0.0331)	
Middle	0.0141 (0.0303)	0.0132 (0.0474)	
High	0.0500 (0.0321)	0.0695 (0.0495)	
Formal Evaluation	-0.0255 (0.0164)	-0.0205 (0.0141)	-0.0191 (0.0142)
Admin Level			

Assist. Principal	-0.0345 (0.103)	0.00989 (0.0951)	0.0352 (0.0975)
Principal	-0.0689 (0.105)	-0.0277 (0.0964)	-0.00173 (0.0990)
Director	-0.216* (0.105)	-0.170 (0.0970)	-0.135 (0.0997)
Assistant Superintendent	-0.149 (0.105)	-0.126 (0.0970)	-0.111 (0.0995)
Superintendent	-0.231* (0.113)	-0.231* (0.104)	-0.238* (0.106)
School year 2020-2021	0.0835*** (0.0231)	0.0797*** (0.0206)	0.0813*** (0.0214)
School year 2021-2022	0.117*** (0.0236)	0.121*** (0.0216)	0.130*** (0.0228)
School year 2022-2023	0.0962*** (0.0234)	0.0950*** (0.0218)	0.0996*** (0.0234)
Arts	0.0505 (0.0352)	0.0155 (0.0553)	
Elementary	0.0700* (0.0312)	0.0594 (0.0492)	
English	0.0793** (0.0301)	0.0829 (0.0476)	
Math	0.0600 (0.0350)	0.0605 (0.0569)	
Other Languages	-0.0677* (0.0323)	-0.0419 (0.0501)	
Others	-0.0374 (0.0525)	-0.0409 (0.0742)	

PE	-0.0674 (0.0907)	-0.0901 (0.130)	
Science	0.0354 (0.0317)	0.0345 (0.0501)	
Social Studies	0.0868* (0.0375)	0.0402 (0.0593)	
Constant	3.493*** (0.113)	3.395*** (0.114)	2.828*** (0.205)
<i>N</i>	2048	2048	2048
<i>R</i> ²	0.1416	0.1359	0.0760

Standard errors in parentheses

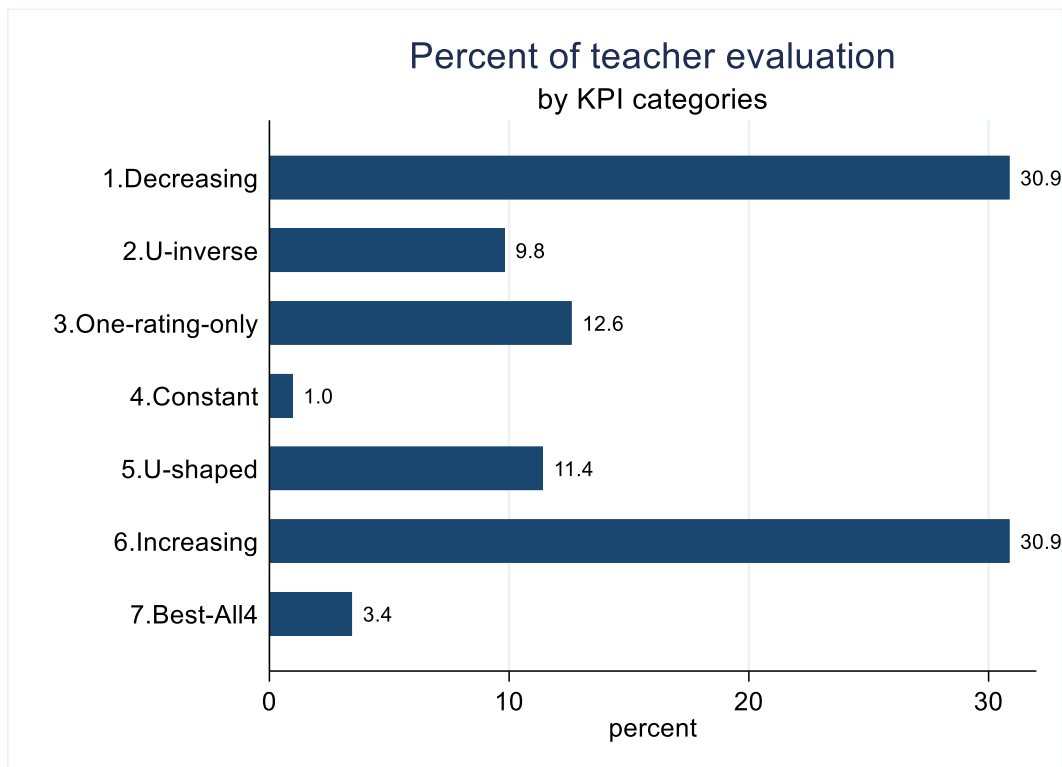
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Key Performance Indicators

Further data analysis was completed to explore whether teacher observations could be used to assess teacher growth over a school year. The data were analyzed to see how many teachers had observation scores that improved over the course of the year, decreased, remained constant or formed a parabolic U or U-inverse shape. The data indicated that teacher observations demonstrated changes in scores over the course of the year as represented in Figure 27 below. Upon further investigation of the data, it was concluded that the data for tenured teachers is not valid, making the comparison also invalid. During the 2019-20, and 2020-21 school year, due to COVID, teacher evaluation protocols were modified. While probationary teachers were still required to receive their full set of three annual evaluations, tenured teachers only completed two. Therefore, it became rare to have a tenured teacher with three evaluations for those school years, making the parabolic performance shapes invalid. Taking that into account, the overall data showed that an equal percentage of teachers have scores that decrease or increase over the course of the school year, with 30.9% of teachers obtaining one of those two models over one school year. Only 1% of teachers remained constant over the year, while 3.4%

stayed at the highest level of a score of “4” throughout the whole year. Conversely, 9.8% and 11.4% of the teachers within the data set demonstrated scores that depicted the U-inverse and U-Shaped graphs, respectively. In total, it can be summarized that 30.9% of the teachers that increased over the year, the 3.4% of the teachers that scored all 4s on their evaluations, added to the 11.4% that also showed improvement totals 45.7% of the teachers in this data set demonstrate an improvement in their teaching scores over the course of a school year, while 54.3% either remain constant or decrease in their evaluation scores.

Figure 27: Percent of ALL Teacher’s Evaluation by KPI categories



Interestingly, when key performance data is broken down into the teacher categories of “tenured” and “probationary” 38.23% of the tenured teachers show decreasing scores, while 35.98% demonstrate increasing score (Figure 28 and 29). In contrast to 18.36% of the probationary teachers that decrease over the course of a school year, and 22.2% increase. None of the tenured teaching staff have scores that form a U or U-inverse shape, while 30.79% of the

probationary teachers receive scores that demonstrate a U-shape and 26.49% demonstrate a U-inverse shape. None of the probationary teachers receive scores of “4” consistently throughout the school year.

Figure 28: Percent of KPIs for Tenured Teacher

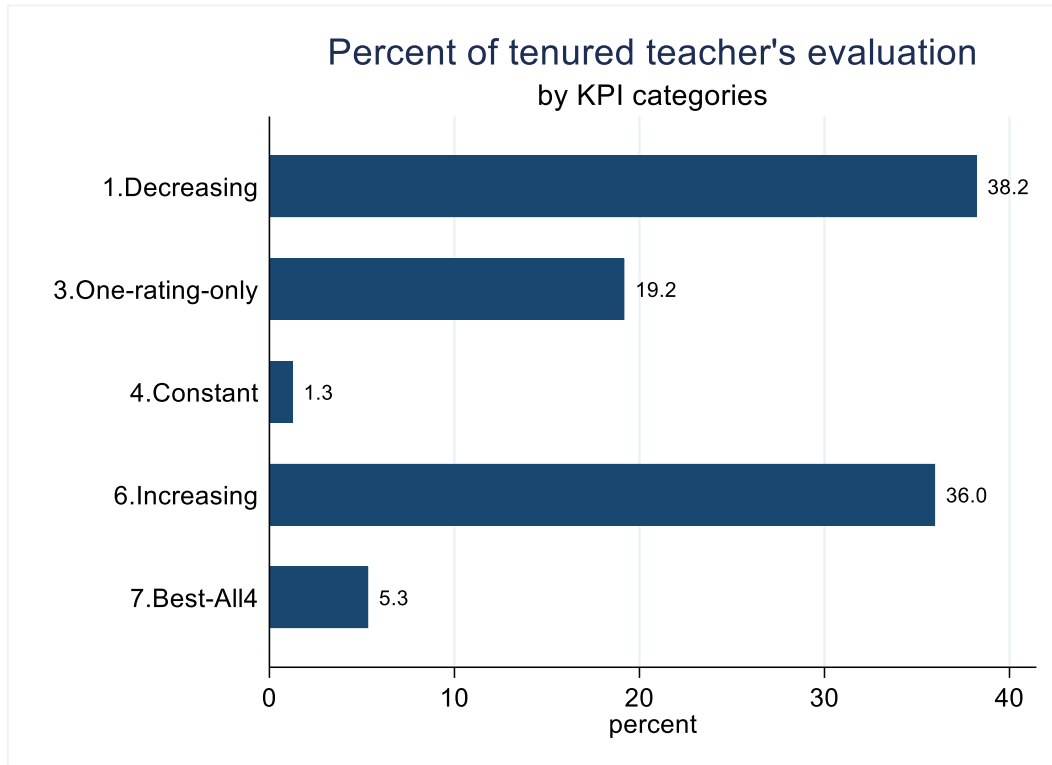
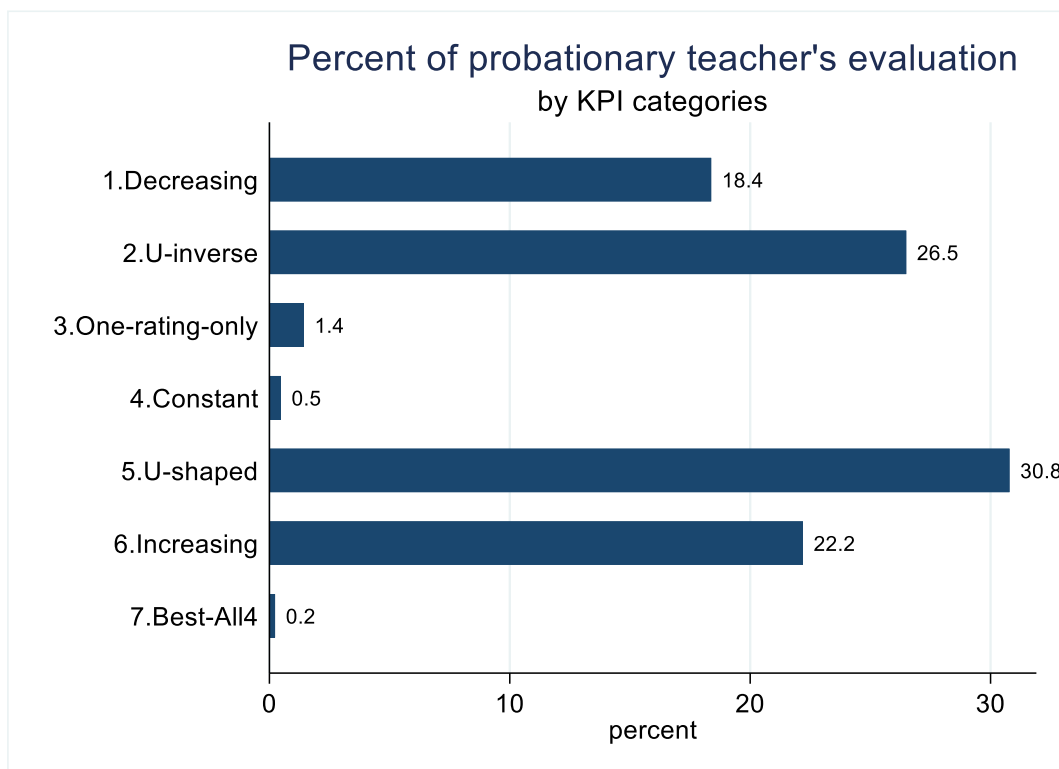


Figure 29: Percent of KPIs for Probationary Teacher



New Teacher Induction Program Impact

Finally, the data was examined to see if teacher evaluation scores were affected by their participation in the new teacher induction program. Table 4-17 shows the regression results of two models presenting how the New Teacher Induction (NTI) program and various factors for teachers' characteristics, school and departments are associated with teacher performance. Model 1 shows the relationship between the NTI program, teacher's performance and other variables including experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects in a linear form considered in a cross-sectional data. Model 2 show the relationship between the NTI program, teacher's resignation and other variables including experience, probationary, gender, school levels, formal evaluation, administration levels, schooling years and teaching subjects in a linear form with random effects panel data models.

Since the data are panel data which varies across teachers and over time, random effects (RE) panel data methods can be used. Since we focus on measuring the impact of the NTI program on teacher's performance, the fixed effects panel data method cannot be used since the fixed effects were eliminated during the estimation. In the random effects model, variation of teacher's performance can be projected using the NTI program, relevant school and department attributes will also be incorporated in the linear multivariate regression besides teachers' characteristics including experience, probationary, gender, and teaching subjects.

Table 4-17: Estimation Results for the Impact of NTI program on Teacher's Evaluation Score

	(1) Pooled OLS	(2) Random Effects
NTI program	0.109*** (0.0271)	0.101* (0.0412)
Experience (Years)	0.00453*** (0.00131)	0.00765*** (0.00196)
Probationary	-0.179*** (0.0292)	-0.114** (0.0351)
Male	0.0109 (0.0211)	-0.0181 (0.0326)
Middle	0.0279 (0.0304)	0.0265 (0.0470)
High	0.0603 (0.0320)	0.0788 (0.0489)
Formal Evaluation	-0.0263 (0.0163)	-0.0208 (0.0142)
Admin Level		
Assist. Principal	-0.0434 (0.103)	0.00643 (0.0952)

Principal	-0.0804 (0.104)	-0.0330 (0.0965)
Director	-0.230* (0.105)	-0.176 (0.0970)
Assistant Superintendent	-0.158 (0.105)	-0.129 (0.0971)
Superintendent	-0.234* (0.113)	-0.230* (0.104)
School year 2020-2021	0.0739** (0.0232)	0.0753*** (0.0207)
School year 2021-2022	0.102*** (0.0238)	0.114*** (0.0218)
School year 2022-2023	0.0780** (0.0237)	0.0861*** (0.0221)
Arts	0.0405 (0.0352)	0.00608 (0.0546)
Elementary	0.0764* (0.0311)	0.0681 (0.0486)
English	0.0747* (0.0300)	0.0807 (0.0469)
Math	0.0462 (0.0351)	0.0502 (0.0561)
Other Languages	-0.0803* (0.0323)	-0.0520 (0.0495)
Others	-0.0435 (0.0523)	-0.0379 (0.0732)
PE	-0.0778 (0.0904)	-0.0905 (0.128)
Science	0.0256 (0.0316)	0.0295 (0.0493)

Social Studies	0.0758* (0.0375)	0.0389 (0.0584)
Constant	3.470*** (0.113)	3.350*** (0.115)
<i>N</i>	2048	2048
<i>R</i> ²	0.1485	0.2273

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The estimation results from Table 4-17 show that the NTI program has a positive impact on teacher's performance: teachers who participated in the NTI program were more likely to have a higher performance compared to teachers who did not participate in the NTI program. The results from the RE model present that the NTI program is associated with 0.101 increase in teacher's composite score on average, holding other things constant. In addition, one more year of experience is associated with 0.0076 higher score in teacher performance on average, holding other things constant. Probationary teachers have 0.114 lower teacher's composite score than tenured teachers on average, holding other things constant. Cohort years are also statistically significant factor that can explain the variation in teacher performance. However, gender, school level, formal evaluation, teaching subjects and some administration levels (except superintendent) are not statistically significant at 5% level.

Summary of Findings

The findings represented in this chapter reflect the varied experiences of the participants in this study and in relation to participation in the *Grow to Great* program. The data that was presented by the participants throughout the study highlighted two overarching areas of supports that are most advantageous to new teachers: a robust professional learning community that is

made up of supportive colleagues at all levels: Mentors, administrators, peers, and Professional Developers, and the importance of clarity and consistency in expectations, responsibilities, and norms. While these professional supports stood out to be the most beneficial to teachers in their pre-tenure years, participants highlighted that the new teacher induction program impacted their experience as professionals in multilayered ways as they transitioned to this new school district. They mentioned that several of the keyways that the program supported their transition was through access to both resources and staff, and the development of knowledge and skills. Participants highlighted how this access and new knowledge helped them feel supported and grow in their first years in this new school district. The data also showed that the relationship between a new teacher induction program and new teacher retention was inconclusive. While 2020 was a year of nationwide teacher resignations, this district demonstrated high levels of resignations beginning in the spring of 2019. As a result, in the fall, this new teacher program was piloted, but a change in teacher resignation numbers has not been demonstrated by the data. On the other hand, participants did report that there was a relationship between the new teacher program and their feelings of both self- efficacy and overall job satisfaction. Additionally, while teacher evaluation scores are quite consistent across all levels, the three factors that did demonstrate a statistically significant impact on your scores were your years of teaching experience, whether you had tenure, and whether you were a participant in the *Grow to Great* program.

In the upcoming chapter, these findings will be utilized to tackle the research questions stated at the onset of this study. This will enable a more comprehensive understanding of these experiences, taking into account the reviewed literature and the educational environment in which this investigation is situated.

Chapter 5 - Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, Implications & Recommendations for Future Research

Summary

The purpose of this case study was to review the existing research on new teacher induction programs, explore the needs of new teachers within the first years of their career, and determine what supports are necessary to develop and retain high-quality teachers. This data would then be used to refine and revise a four-year induction program being implemented in a low-need, high-resource suburban school district. This study aimed to better understand the needs of new teachers throughout their pre-tenure years, how ongoing professional development supported their growth, and if it impacts their efficacy as a teacher and helps to retain them in a highly resourced, low-need suburban school district. As described in Chapter III, four research questions were developed to guide this study. The first of the four pertains to the professional supports that are most advantageous to new teachers as they transition into a new district. The second research question examined the extent to which an on-going, sustained professional development program impacted the experience of new teachers. The third question examined the relationship between the new teacher induction program and teacher retention, job satisfaction, and feelings of self-efficacy. The final question explored the extent to which teacher quality was impacted by the new teacher professional development program as demonstrated by teacher evaluation scores. In Chapter IV, the findings from interviews, surveys, retention data, and teacher evaluation data were thoroughly examined. This chapter will now explore the significance of the findings and make suggestions for best practice and actual practice as

described in this case study. First, however, major findings of the study are summarized and linked to existing, pertinent scholarship that situates participants' experiences within the theoretical framework of adult learning that underscores this study, Andragogy.

Andragogy's model of adult learning considers the needs of adults as they embark on their learning journey; whether professional, or personal (Knowles, 1968; 1973; 1990; 2020). The *Grow to Great* program endeavors to utilize these principles to create an environment of trust, stability, and continuous learning. The consideration of the needs of adult learners, when designing professional development, is paramount to the success of the learners and, in this case, the students that they interact with daily. Knowles et al. (2020) encompassed six learning principles distinct from those of children and adolescent learners. The motivation for adults to learn stems from these six learning principles (Knowles et al., 2020):

1. The learner's need to know
2. Self-concept of the learner
3. Prior experience of the learner
4. Readiness to learn
5. Orientation to learning
6. Motivation to learn

The *Grow to Great* multi-year new teacher induction program, designed around the principles of Andragogy, supported new educators' pedagogical skill development, a robust sense of self-concept, respect for their readiness level, acknowledgment of their past experiences, and assisted them in addressing classroom challenges. This program offered several support structures, including colleagues, mentors, and professional developers, who facilitate teachers' learning, growth and confidence.

However, this new teacher induction program encountered substantial challenges when attempting to transform established educational practices and ways of work by rapidly advancing

instructional structures beyond the comfort zone of veteran teachers, in particular. As demonstrated by the data collected throughout this research, much of what was collected by the participants responses highlighted the importance of the six principles of Andragogy. When the principles of adult learners were followed and implemented throughout the *Grow to Great* program—and in the way they are brought into the school community—the adult learners felt valued. When the principles were not followed, adults are made to feel seemingly less than resulting in a turbulent, volatile and fragile system. Insufficiently communicating changes and new practices to evaluators intensified confusion and introduced uncertainty into expectations, thus eroding the foundation of the teacher evaluation system. In certain instances, new teachers within the program felt compelled to participate and perceived themselves under constant scrutiny that cultivated, a prevailing sense of instability and questions of job security; both of which could contribute to the district’s elevated rates of teacher attrition.

Discussion

Instability and Lack of Job Security

While this study examined the impact of the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program on the experience of new teachers, the participant’s experiences about the program could not be separated from the larger context of the school district in which they work. Despite new teachers citing a higher level of satisfaction and greater efficacy in their classroom after engaging in an extensive new teacher induction program (Delisio, 2017), the experience of the pre-tenure teachers in this district demonstrated, at times, conflicted with the greater context and climate of the school district. Participants expressed sentiments of instability that coincided with questions of job security and satisfaction. Fry (2010) and Knowles (1973; 1995) identified that

providing adult learners, and therefore, new teachers, with a learning environment that was conducive to physical and psychological safety was of utmost importance, aligned to several of the Androgenous principles: the Learner's need to know, self-concept of the learner, motivation, and readiness to learn. While the *Grow to Great* program supported new teachers as adult learners, other contextual factors in the district- comprised of high attrition rates, a high level of fear and lack of clarity around what it means to be a "successful teacher," greatly impacted the overall experience, satisfaction, and joy of many pre-tenure teachers.

The school climate, or in this case the district climate, encompasses various elements, including school rules, objectives, values, interpersonal connections, teaching methods, and organizational setups, all influenced by the experiences of school community members. It results in relatively enduring and consistent environmental aspects that manifest in the behaviors of teachers, reflecting the overall quality and nature of school life (Cohen et al., 2009). The context of stress, anxiety, and burn-out was relevant and reflected in nearly every interview (Hagger et al., 2011). Participants, while grateful for many of the opportunities and structures provided by the program, were in constant "survival mode," as one participant mentioned, throughout their pre-tenure period and at times, felt overburdened. Cohen et al. (2009) found that the extent to which teachers can effectively do their jobs, cultivate meaningful learning opportunities, respond to new government mandates, or collaborate with school leaders to enhance educational quality, all correlate closely with teachers' perceptions of the school climate. Factors such as an administrator's management style, teachers' engagement in school matters, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and the positive relationships between colleagues, teachers, and students are all profoundly contingent on teachers' perceptions of the school climate (Cohen et al., 2009).

We are in a time in history where there is a national teacher shortage (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996; Sutchter et al., 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2023) and historic levels of teacher resignations and retirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Carver-Thomas, 2022). Additionally, compounded by the fact that fewer young people are entering pre-service teacher programs (Bill et al. 2022; Dos Santos, 2021; Ghildal, 2021), one would think that teacher retention would be of utmost importance. As participants discussed, through the narrative shared through this research study, a district's high level of teacher turnover, has a lasting effect on the health of the school community (Carver-Thomas, 2022; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Sutchter et al., 2016). A school's ability to build a sense of community amongst the faculty, comradery, shared purpose, collective vision, and feelings of stability and safety were all compromised when teacher turnover occurs at such frequent and high rates compromising a teacher's "motivation to learn," "readiness to learn" and "self-concept" (Knowles, 1968; 1970; 1975; 1984; 1990). As such, this culture of teacher turnover significantly impacted the working conditions (Murnane & Steele, 2007) for all members of the community, with immense pressure, stress, uncertainty and impact on the pre-tenure teachers vying for their position at the school. Nguyen et al. (2020) outlined part of negative working conditions for teachers to include the lack of teacher support and administrator efficacy. While the *Grow to Great* program tried to divert some of the other, potentially negative conditions by providing robust professional development, mentoring and time for professional collaboration, the instability and lack of job security felt by all pre-tenure teachers stained not only the experience, but the ability for a new teacher to feel confident in their ability, secure in their skills, independent in their decision making and secure within their positions within the community.

Nevertheless, recognizing the research of Farmer (2020) and Darling-Hammond & Orphanos (2009) noting that nothing matters more to improving teacher quality, than robust, ongoing, professional learning; the *Grow to Great* program, sought to counterbalance the culture of teacher turnover with a multi-year induction program that supports the developmental needs of new teachers (Wong, 2005). While it is evident that the program had its flaws, the intention of honoring the adult learners, increasing teacher efficacy with research based instructional practices, building a strong sense of community, and providing clarity for pre-tenure teacher on what it takes to thrive as an educator, was inconsistently accomplished. The program also sought to provide a learning environment where participants felt safe, both physically and psychologically despite the outside stressors. Knowing that, without that safety, adults will not be able to engage productively in learning at any level and that their desire or willingness to take a risk and be vulnerable and open to learning would not be accessible (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Unfortunately, for many of our new teachers in the *Grow to Great* program, the good intentions of the program and its impact on learning rarely counteracted the stress, tension, and perceived lack of safety occupational security of the school district's culture or override amid the tradition pattern of high rates of teacher turnover.

Culture of Instability

When new teachers felt as if their actions, evaluation outcomes and consequently, their futures were not correlated or linked logically, their “motivation to learn” (Knowles, 1984; 1990) and “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968, 1975) began to deteriorate. Throughout the stories shared, there was a clear sentiment that the process of being granted tenure was out of their hands; and while new teachers felt they checked all of the proverbial boxes they thought they needed to

check to get tenure, tenure decisions were made arbitrarily. The culture of attrition and instability established within the district further complicated participants' feelings of empowerment and development of a strong "self-concept" (Knowles, 1968, 1975), which therefore hindered their ability to be self-directed, and placed educators in the role of occupational "dependent" rather than "teacher" (Knowles et al., 2020). Teacher retention and attrition hover on the cusp of influencing not only the individual educators within this district but the district as a whole, underscoring a continually escalating concern. At the same time, tenure, a concept synonymous with job security, but reflects something just out of reach for our new teachers (Ball, 2003). Taken together, these speak to a self-fulfilling prophecy that participants suggest might be of the district's own making. And yet, teachers individually blamed themselves for not obtaining the difficult-to-obtain and somewhat subjective tenure. This lack of teacher/adult agency fuels a culture in which the pre-tenure teachers felt a lack of control over their professional lives and futures. Bandura (1993) believed that feelings of self-efficacy "play a key role in the self-regulation of motivation. . . [People] form beliefs about what they can do. They anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions. They set goals for themselves, and plan courses of action designed to realize valued futures" (p. 128). This fragile "self-concept" of the pre-tenure teachers in this school district is exemplified by the high levels of stress and anxiety exhibited by most of the participants in the program (Knowles, 1990). Additionally, it was illustrated even further by participants' angst placed upon new teachers within the induction program and school community when some pre-tenure teacher-participants were not retained for the following school year in the spring of 2023. In this case, veteran and participant teachers faulted the *Grow to Great* program of not providing accurate or adequate support, which contradicts the data collected, but reflects the culture of anxiety, fear, and uncertainty over their professional futures.

One's "motivation to learn" is highly impacted by both external and internal factors (Knowles, 1984; 1990). External motivators such as job retention, promotions, etc. and internal motivators such as job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life are all key pieces of motivation for adult learners. As the narrative unfolded, the motivation of the teachers became clearer. With the overall context of the school district being such that teacher attrition rates are at 40% within the first three years (Table 4-2), where the national average was 25.5% (Boe et al., 2008, p. 9), the data suggested that the teachers were weighed down with the pressure to perform and keep their job. In a district with the seventh highest median salary in the state, according to the Rockefeller Institute of Government, teachers are highly motivated to retain their job, maintain their quality of life and establish themselves as educators that can maintain that level of stability for themselves and their family (Gais et al., 2019). Job retention, and therefore, teacher motivation was not only a loss of position, but for many participant teachers, it was a loss of wages- where getting a job in a neighboring school district not only meant going through the process of interviewing and being a "new teacher" again, but it many times, resulted in taking a pay cut.

Grow to Great's Impact on New Teachers: Pedagogy, Clarity, & Support

Pedagogy and the 'Need to Know'

Numerous participants' testimonies raised issues central to the adult learning principle of 'need to know' through the participant's expressed desire for clarity around expectations, required and desired pedagogical practices, and evaluation measures; gaps that teachers suggested the *Grow to Great* program attempted to address. As adult learners, these participants showcased the concept of the "need to know" (Knowles, 1990). This principle hinges on the

importance of self-awareness and self-reflection, prompting learners to bridge the gap between their current state of knowledge and their desired level of expertise. It also underscores the idea that adult learners must grasp the purpose and relevance of what they are learning before they can fully engage with the material. Consequently, when adult learners perceive the significance of acquiring specific knowledge or skills, they become deeply engaged in the learning process (Knowles et al., 2020).

At the core of Knowles' (1990) first principle, the learners “need to know” lies the idea that learning is most effective when it is purposeful and relevant. In the new teacher experience, this principle was vividly exemplified as educators participated in the *Grow to Great* induction program designed to stimulate their thinking and fill gaps in their knowledge. This program seemed to serve as a place for new ideas, encouraging new teachers to stretch their understanding of pedagogical practices and grow their teaching identities and “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975). Through collaborative workshops, mentorship, and exposure to innovative educational approaches, new teachers not only expanded their instructional repertoire but also nurtured a sense of purpose in their role and developed their “readiness to learn” (Knowles, 1970; 1984) while honoring their past experience helping them provide a strong foundation and “orientation to learning” (Knowles, 1984; 1990) This alignment with Knowles' principles not only equipped new teachers with valuable tools but also instilled a lasting commitment to lifelong learning, ensuring that they remain motivated to seek knowledge, and refine their skills in order to develop as effective practitioners with strong pedagogical practices.

Establishing a Strong Self-Concept

Participants directly correlated thriving to establishing a strong self-concept as an adult learner. As new colleagues developed a sense of professional efficacy, understanding, and skill; their overall self-concept grew and improved (Knowles, 1968; 1975). Knowles' principle of self-concept of the learner is correlated to the ideas related to self-efficacy presented by Bandura (1993). In general, there are two types of self-efficacy for teachers, 'teaching efficacy' pertains to the idea that teaching has the potential to influence student learning, whereas 'self-efficacy' signifies one's confidence in their capacity to influence student learning. Educators that possess a strong sense of efficacy are more inclined to persevere, invest effort in teaching, remain open to adopting new approaches, and tend to exercise less control over student behavior (Pan & Chen, 2023). Similarly, a "teacher's belief in their personal efficacy to motivate learning and promote learning affects the type of learning environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve" (Bandura, 1993, p. 117). Several factors were identified in the *Grow to Great* program that either helped to build up or cut down the self-concept of the new teachers throughout their pre-tenure experience.

Providing the new teachers with a continuous community of support, in various forms tapped into the adult learner's "self-concept" (Knowles (1968; 1975). The teacher's "self-concept," underscores the profound impact of self-perception on the learning process (Knowles, 1968; 1975). In the new teacher experience, this principle became evident through the *Grow to Great* program when participants engaged in discussions, interactive modeling, and were exposed to research-backed resources. The learner's self-concept grew as instructional practices were shared that provided new teachers with a robust instructional toolkit, empowering them to shape positive classroom cultures and effectively support specific student needs. As Farmer

(2020) demonstrated, intentionality of professional development and an investment in the participating educators pays off in dividends in teacher performance, job satisfaction, and in teacher efficacy. Through the program, new teachers not only gained practical tools but also had the opportunity to reflect on and expand their existing knowledge. It encouraged them to rethink their current practices, fostering a growth mindset that allowed them to explore alternative teaching methods and adapt their approach to best serve their students. An empowering learning environment proved to be able to positively impact a new teacher's self-concept and readiness to excel.

Respecting “Readiness”

As new teachers evolved in their roles, they often experienced a shift in readiness to learn. The learner's “readiness to learn,” (Knowles (1970; 1984) emphasized the importance of a learner's readiness, both emotionally and experientially, to engage in meaningful learning experiences. In the context of the new teacher experience, teachers’ ‘readiness’ emerged as new teachers underwent a transformative journey in their growth, confidence, and understanding of instructional skills and pedagogy over the years of their pre-tenure journey. Early career teachers experience stress and emotional fatigue just from adapting to a new work environment, new colleagues, and learning how to plan and prepare for their students successfully (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Initially, they grappled with feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt, but through the professional development, mentorship, coaching and practical classroom experience, their readiness to learn became more pronounced. As they gained confidence in their instructional abilities and a deeper understanding of effective pedagogy, their readiness to embrace new teaching strategies and methodologies grew.

As Johnson and Kardos (2002) shared, “schools [that] provide new teachers with on-site professional development and make sure new teachers have access to help on short notice” (p.16). As seen in the confidence level of educators that were interviewed over time, as they progressed in the program and gained more skills, their confidence as a teacher and educator grew as well. The quantitative data from the teacher evaluation scores validated this finding. As shown, pre-tenure teachers that were enrolled in the induction program, as compared to those that were not enrolled demonstrated a statistically significant positive difference in their evaluation scores. Research by Pan & Chen (2023) showed that by engaging in the ongoing learning provided, educators are able elevate their expertise and capabilities, enabling them to instruct in a more student-focused manner. To bolster teachers' proficiency, effective professional development is one that connects curriculum, assessment, and standards while being tailored to the specific context (Pan & Chen, 2023). The growth demonstrated by teachers enrolled in the *Grow to Great* program was a testament to the dynamic nature of the teaching profession, the professional development that was being delivered and the profound impact of Knowles' principle of “readiness to learn,” as participants progress in their pedagogical-learning journey.

Supporting and Honoring Past Experiences

However, recognizing the importance and impact of participants’ past experiences was an area in which the *Grow to Great* program struggled to sufficiently incorporate. In the context of a program intended for "new" teachers but delivered to educators often with several years of experience; there was, at times, a notable disconnect in program material and teachers’ levels of experience and familiarity. The *Grow to Great* program missed the mark by failing to

acknowledge the wealth of lived experiences that these educators brought to the district. Teacher education and preparation has a significant impact on the capabilities of teachers (Roberts-Hull et al., 2015). By discounting these educators' past experiences, the program not only undermined their sense of expertise but also neglected an opportunity for valuable peer-to-peer learning. It is known that teachers require professional support through collaboration to create a convenient platform for collegial discussions among peers, enabling the sharing of insights and ideas that enhance their comprehension of challenging subjects, ultimately optimizing the teaching and learning process (Tachie, 2022). In this way, the program would have better aligned with Knowles' principle, “lived experiences of the learner” (Knowles, 1968, 1990), emphasizing that a holistic view of learners' experiences can lead to more meaningful and relevant professional development for all educators.

Learning, as an adult, is a complex and intricate process that needs to be understood and thoughtfully planned for (Knowles, 1968; 1973; 1990; 2020). The needs of an adult learner, different than the needs of a developing child or adolescent learner, are layered with not only years of life experiences, but with competing forces, obligations, and motivations. To design a program that supports adult learners, one must take into account all of these needs. As an adult learner, every individual's identity plays a crucial function by imparting significance and direction to their lives, enabling them to be more actively involved, enthusiastic, and engaged in their daily experiences (Wayne et al., 2006). While the *Grow to Great* program aimed to accommodate all participants' needs, it struggled to individualize the experience to sufficiently differentiate based on each learner's prior level of expertise and honor the “Lived Experience” of the learner (Knowles, 1968; 1990). Tying their past experiences, and therefore their identity as an educator, to their present context through the new knowledge provided by the professional

development in the *Grow to Great* program, all pre-tenure teachers could have made greater gains within this new school district and within their present teaching position. While the content needed to be more differentiated, the need for support for the new hires in navigating the system, creating a professional community and improving their practice was clear and apparent, regardless of the prior years of experience.

Relevance as a Vital Learning Motivator

Among the data-derived themes, the most beneficial professional supports for new teachers were a strong network of stakeholders, consistent professional experiences, and relevant pedagogical knowledge for addressing real-life challenges. A teacher's "orientation to learning" assumes that openness to learn something is contingent upon what would assist them; and is in relevant and pressing in life circumstances (Knowles, 1984;1990). As demonstrated by participants throughout both surveys and interviews, the acquisition of knowledge by new teachers must be rooted in practicality and applicability enhances their capacity for growth and advancement within their present environment.

Participants reflect that much of the learning that was taking place in the courses was relevant and helped them improve in their practice. In this regard, their "orientation to learning" was stimulated by their desire to improve their craft and improve their abilities. The teachers throughout the program consistently spoke of the expansion and reinforcement of their pedagogical knowledge through the content taught in the *Grow to Great* program. Since teaching knowledge is not fixed; but is, rather, a dynamic and ever-changing process influenced by a range of factors, including the teacher's experiences and interactions with colleagues and students. Learning about teaching and improving teaching practices is also an ongoing process

that entails the continual transformation of both the teacher and the knowledge being acquired.

As the teacher learns and acquires new knowledge, their understanding of the subject matter and teaching methods undergo changes (Pan & Chen, 2023). As shared by the participants, the content taught in the *Grow to Great* program simultaneously expanded their repertoire of practices, taught them new strategies, solidified pedagogical structures that they had previously learned, and made teachers feel more confident in their skills as an educator. The skills that the pre-tenured teachers were gaining in the induction program, as well as the confidence in their own ability, resulted in their proven higher performance level on evaluations.

When learners in this program identified ways in which the program was not supporting their needs it was mostly when the program did not help them solve immediate problems that they were facing in their contexts. Personalizing the experience of the new teacher program, for the various types of educators and the different needs of new teachers proved to be a challenge. The learner's "orientation to learning" (Knowles, 1984; 1990) was a key component of this program for the adult learners, but an area in which the program fell short. While it seemed that the needs were met by the topics and strategies presented for general education, content area teachers; our teachers that were specialists, such as special education teachers, psychologists, counselors, etcetera, struggled to generalize and apply the skills being taught into their areas of instruction with as much frequency and fidelity as the content area teachers did. The learners' "orientation to learning" (Knowles, 1984; 1990) played a pivotal role in this program, but the challenge of personalizing the experience for various educators and addressing their unique needs became evident when the program did not adequately assist them in resolving immediate context-specific problems. While general education and content area teachers benefited from the

program's topics and strategies, specialists encountered difficulties in applying these skills to their instructional domains with the same frequency and fidelity.

Support Structures for New Teachers

Mentors, Professional Developers and Administrators

In the context of the new teacher experience; mentors, administrators, and professional developers who actively interacted with new teachers through the *Grow to Great* program were able to unpack the district's values and best practices while also being open to learning from teachers, profoundly impacted the pre tenure teacher's sense of purpose and "need to know" (Knowles, 1990). By sharing valuable insights and best practices, mentors, professional developers, and administrators equipped new teachers with practical knowledge that directly aligns with their day-to-day responsibilities. These relationships provided opportunities for the new teachers to seek advice and engage in learning tasks that helped them close the gap between their current skill level and where they wanted to be. Participants cited these three groups as key players in supporting their growth and helping them not only provide the "why" for what they needed to know, but also the "how." Furthermore, when mentors, administrators and professional developers demonstrated a willingness to learn from and with new teachers, it fostered a collaborative and reciprocal relationship that enhanced the new teacher's sense of value and purpose within the educational ecosystem. Schools where professional cultures embrace mentorship as a valuable resource, and where experienced colleagues both recognize its significance and gain from these mentoring connections (Johnson & Kardos, 2002) fostered environments in which all teachers were better able to meet the needs of their students and provided a working environment in which teachers stayed in the profession for longer. Mentors,

administrators, and professional developers were well positioned to play a pivotal role in motivating and supporting new teachers to thrive, in fulfilling their demonstrated desire and “need to know” (Knowles, 1990).

When Teachers Felt Valued

When participants felt as if their past teaching experiences, were honored and taken into consideration, the new teachers were open to learning; conversely, when this prior lived experience and presumed expertise was dismissed, participants not only felt devalued, but also less open to learning. Knowles’ (1968) third principle of adult learning, “prior experience of the learner” emphasizes the importance of connecting new information and skills to the learner’s prior experiences. This principle emphasizes that adult learners bring a wealth of life experiences and knowledge to the learning process (Knowles, 1968). When we consider this principle in the context of the reciprocal relationship between a new colleague and mentor in a professional culture that is fully integrated, it was evident that many of the mentors leveraged the learner's past experiences and knowledge as a valuable foundation for growth and development (Johnson & Kardos, 2002). Just as adult learners benefit from connecting new knowledge to their existing life experiences, these mentors helped new colleagues integrate their professional aspirations and goals in their current context with their previous experiences. By doing so, the mentor not only accelerated the colleague's learning but also fostered a deeper understanding of how past experiences can inform and enrich their current role, creating a symbiotic learning dynamic that is essential for professional growth and success.

Mentors: Problem Solvers

The combination of the pedagogical tools taught in the *Grow to Great* program with the network of colleagues, participants had access to various resources that intertwined to help solve problems, improve their practice and provide them with tools that could be applied in their environment. Knowles' (1984; 1990) fifth principle, the learner's "orientation to learning," emphasizes the significance of the learner's motivation and readiness to learn. In the context of the new teacher experience, administrators and professional developers who acted as thought partners had a transformative impact on the applied problem-solving skills and development of instructional strategies for pre-tenured teachers. When these educational leaders collaborated closely with new teachers, engaging in constructive dialogues, and facilitating reflective conversations, they fostered a learner-centered orientation to learning. By serving as thought partners, they encouraged new teachers to explore their own educational philosophies, set meaningful goals, and continuously refine their teaching practices. While typically administrators are seen as barriers to collaboration often in supervisory roles, rather than collaborators and instructional leaders (Visone et al, 2022); this approach not only enhanced the new teacher's motivation to learn but also equipped them with the tools and insights needed to excel in their role. With a focus on improving teacher effectiveness, and a collective focus on the learning experience of students, professional developers, and administrators worked collaboratively to ensure that the teachers enrolled in the *Grow to Great* program made a positive impact on student learning (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). The relationship between administrators and professional developers as thought partners aligns perfectly with Knowles' principle (1984; 1990), "orientation to learning," illustrating how a learner-focused approach can profoundly shape the new teacher's journey toward becoming a more effective and motivated educator.

Participants also identified many members of their supportive community as facilitators that helped them solve problems enhancing the principle of “orientation to learning” (Knowles, 1984; 1990). School districts and school leaders that invest in providing professional development to their teachers towards the common goal of student growth and teacher growth, will create a culture of learning that focuses on supporting the needs of students through a collective investment and collaboration (Darling-Hammond, 2009). Between their mentors, professional developers, colleagues and at times, even administrators, new teachers identified the robust professional network as a foundational source that supported their ability to grow. Their mentor partnership turned out to be a low-stakes and supportive relationship that is beneficial to the growth of new teachers. The relationship between mentors and new teachers facilitated an environment in which learning, and growth can take place without the fear of judgement (St. George & Robinson, 2011). New teachers felt safe to be vulnerable, ask questions, and gain feedback from their mentors that proved to improve their practices in order to cultivate their “orientation to learning” (Knowles, 1984; 1990).

Professional Developers: Coaches

Many teachers felt that having access to teacher-level professional developers who were veteran teachers within the school district was a valuable part of the program and were an integral part of the support system that addressed the learner’s “need to know,” “orientation to learning,” and “self- concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975; 1984; 1990). Not only were these professional developers able to help the teachers improve their instructional practices and add to their knowledge base, which enhanced the new teacher’s feelings of self-efficacy, but were also able to convey the expectations of the district in a clear and transparent way, which supported

teachers in understanding what they “need to know” and be able to do. As facilitators of the program, the professional developers were able to add to the instructional and cultural knowledge of the new teachers through both the formal setting of the induction program and through the relationships built and subsequent coaching sessions that stemmed from these relationships. As Borko (2004) highlights, teachers need access to professional development in many different contexts, coaching, workshops, and even within their school communities. Professional developers were able to provide access to professional learning in a variety of contexts throughout the new teacher’s pre-tenure experience. Not only were new teachers able to seek support and coaching from members of the professional development team in various contexts, but as teachers moved through the sequence of years in the program, they had the opportunity to interact with all the members of the professional development team; each with their own unique approaches and expertise, but all with a shared vision and common language for instruction. Providing access to the diverse buckets of resources (Romano & Gibson, 2006) and expertise that the professional developers provided, granted the new teachers the opportunity to seek out the appropriate individual who could support them in solving their most pressing problem at that time, which increased their “orientation to learning” (Knowles, 1984; 1990). Through the *Grow to Great* program, and with the guidance and reinforcement of the professional developers, new teachers were able to develop a consistent and common understanding of what “best practices” looked like within this school district, enhancing their “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) and feelings of self- efficacy. Year after year, a new cohort of teachers gained both experience and understanding of the research-based instructional practices that were being taught and expected by the district. This shared understanding, coupled with the shared experience and growth of relationships between the members of this program,

led many new teachers to demonstrate growth in their skill and ability and embrace the opportunity to do so. There were, of course, some teachers that struggled to move past the mental model of more traditional norms of instruction and implement the strategies taught in the program. This struggle led to an increase in anxiety and frustration for some of the teachers within the program, which was exacerbated by the fact that three out of the four levels of the new teacher program was facilitated by district level administrators, who were also in charge of some of these new teacher's evaluations.

Administrators: Powerful Motivators?

Having a supportive administrator became paramount in the overall experience of new teachers. As Nguyen et al. (2020) pointed out, lack of administrator efficacy or support is often a key factor in an early career teacher's experience and can be a critical determining influence that influences if a teacher stays or leaves the profession. Malcolm Knowles' sixth principle, "Motivation to Learn" (Knowles, 1984; 1990) underscores the importance of intrinsic motivation and how it can significantly impact the learning process. An administrator can either hinder or enhance a new teacher's motivation to learn and excel in their role (Cherian & Daniel, 2008). As the participants demonstrated, a nurturing and encouraging administrator can provide valuable feedback, guidance, and recognition for a new teacher's efforts, fueling their intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, an unsupportive or neglectful administrator can dampen the teacher's enthusiasm, leading to frustration and decreased motivation. By embracing the "motivation to learn" (Knowles, 1984; 1990), administrators played an important role in fostering an environment that empowers new teachers, promotes continuous learning, and ultimately contributes to their success in the classroom.

Furthermore, the influence of school leadership extended to teachers' capacity to comprehend and construe the district's educational vision and the requirements for teacher success. In alignment with an adult learner's intrinsic "motivation to learn" and their "need to know," effective articulation, communication, and leadership stand as crucial elements for new teachers. School leadership has been determined to be the second most important factor in student success, second only to teacher effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2004). School leaders' impact on school staff and structures also play an important role in determining teacher attrition rates as those established structures can highly impact a teacher's "self-concept" and "motivation to learn" (Knowles, 1984; 1990). Consequently, teacher attrition is higher in schools with limited levels of teacher agency and input into decision making and lack of support from school administration, even after controlling for student composition, school level, and school location (Ingersoll, 2001). School leaders play a pivotal role in clearly articulating the vision for teaching and learning while supporting that vision with aligned appropriate professional development. School leaders are also crucial in establishing a school climate that supports teacher agency and fosters an environment in which teachers are valued and heard. For pre-tenured teachers in the *Grow to Great* program, certain school leaders faced challenges in expressing and endorsing the evolving vision for teaching and learning established by the new teacher induction program. This struggle led to confusion, a lack of clarity, and a perceived breakdown in leadership.

Community of Peers

The connections forged with colleagues, some of which evolved into personal and professional relationships, significantly enhanced the daily work experience and stood out as one of the program's greatest strengths. These relationships provided new teachers with a sense of

belonging and comfort in their new professional environment. The community of peers, provided by the members of the cohort group they were hired with and participated in the new teacher program with for the duration of their pre-tenure years, provided each teacher with relationships beyond the walls of their classroom and school building as well as a shared, common experience to other teachers. Pan & Chen (2023) demonstrated that networked learning communities play a crucial role in assisting educators who collaborate across different schools to exchange knowledge, tools, and resources. When educators work together with their peers from other schools within these communities, they can acquire a more extensive viewpoint on teaching and learning, as well as access a wider array of ideas and strategies (Pan & Chen, 2023). New teachers highlighted that no matter where they were in their career, whether they were new to teaching or had several years of experience prior to coming to this school district, the professional network that they formed through this program was a vital part of their experience. The Center for Disease Control (2018) states that the most influential factor in shaping a person's overall sense of well-being is the social aspect, encompassing encounters with positive relationships and positive interactions. The bonds formed with colleagues, both personal and professional, within the program, played a crucial role in enhancing new teachers' everyday work life, offering a supportive community beyond the classroom, and contributing to their overall sense of well-being.

As relationships grew, the new-teacher's place within the social context of the organization became more secure, thus opening them up to be more available to learning based upon the adult learning principle, "readiness to learn" (Knowles, 1970; 1984). Additionally, new colleagues felt as if they had trusted peers that they could lean on for support and rely on for advice and comradery. This shared experience and cross building and level connection between

colleagues built a community within the larger community of the whole school district. The professional network and relationships saved them from the potential isolation that many new teachers feel as they are sequestered in their individual classrooms (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). Breaking down the walls of the classroom and school building allowed for the sharing of ideas and the growing of strategies across disciplines and grade levels. This common experience and comradery allowed new teachers to be vulnerable, to learn, and share together without judgement. With the added support of mentors and professional developers, the new teachers, through the induction program developed relationships with more veteran staff members that acted as guides and resources throughout the four years.

As participants expanded their social network within the new teacher program, their role within the district's social context evolved, enhancing their "readiness to learn" (Knowles, 1970; 1984). This transformation made them more open to learning. Supported by colleagues, mentors, professional developers, and administrators, along with a growing understanding of district best practices, many new teachers began to emerge as leaders within their departments. Professional learning communities, like those in the *Grow to Great* program, proved highly effective in fostering teacher development and improving school quality. These communities emphasized shared values, collective responsibility, reflective inquiry, and both group and individual learning (Pan & Chen, 2023). The program provided a platform for teachers to exchange ideas, instructional practices, routines, and techniques, enhancing their skills. Coupled with research-based tools, the program promoted collective teacher learning and collaboration. The opportunity for teachers with shared experiences to learn and build relationships over time was a key factor in the program's success. This supportive network facilitated new teachers' willingness to

explore, take risks, and consider new perspectives and ideas as they felt more secure and valued within the district's social context.

The Tangible Things: Resources & Job Placement

In the new teacher experience, participants discussed the impact of having access to professional texts, curriculum guides, and resources both within their classrooms and from the *Grow to Great* program on their self-concept as educators. These valuable materials played a crucial role in bolstering a new teacher's "self-concept," (Knowles, 1968; 1975), and therefore, self-confidence and professional identity. By having access to a wealth of professional resources, new teachers developed a deeper understanding of best practices, gained confidence in their instructional abilities, and refined their teaching methodologies. This process not only enhanced their self-concept but also instilled a sense of competence and preparedness in their role. As they integrated these resources into their teaching practices, they became more self-assured and capable educators, aligning with self-concept as a key determinant of effective learning and professional growth (Knowles, 1968; 1975).

New teachers also demonstrated that a key support for their feelings of success, developing their own confidence and "self-concept" (Knowles 1968; 1975) of themselves as successful educators was due to consistency in job placement and assignment. It was shared that when a teacher had the opportunity to teach the same grade or subject more than one year in a row, they gain confidence and ability, thus developing a stronger sense of self. While often times new teachers are the first ones to switch grade level due to their lack of seniority within a department, this hurts their chances to be successful. Many teachers, who had the chance to teach the same subject or grade in concurrent years highlighted that in the first year, they spent the

time learning the curriculum and did their best to focus on instructional “best practices” (Grossman & Thompson, 2008). It was not until a teacher had a solid foundation of both the curriculum materials, pacing and scope and sequence, did they demonstrate an ability to really engage in deep thought about instructional models (Grossman & Thompson, 2008). When a new teacher has the opportunity to develop proficiency with curriculum, their self-confidence improves, as well as their “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) as an effective educator.

Clarity, Competence & Confidence

In the new teacher induction program and throughout the new teacher experience, participants placed emphasis on gaining a comprehensive understanding of their school district's vision, definition of "best practice" in instruction, and their various professional responsibilities aligned to their “need to know” (Knowles, 1990). Recognizing the significance of these elements, new teachers sought clarity and guidance to effectively align their efforts with the broader educational objectives of the district. By understanding the district's vision, they tried to establish a clear purpose and direction for their teaching. As an adult and an educator, it was expressed that the desire to understand the rules, to do what was expected and to learn how to teach the way the district wanted was a pressing desire for participants. Amidst all of this, in this context in which new teachers are searching for clarity of expectations, there exists a significant level of uncertainty. This was characterized by a constant sense of being evaluated through various methods, by different entities, based on different criteria. There was a sense of a continuous stream of evolving demands, expectations, and performance indicators, resulting in perpetual feelings of hyper-accountability (Ball, 2003). Consequently, individuals experienced a fundamental insecurity about their very existence – they were unsure whether they are meeting

the required standards, doing the right things, matching their peers' performance, or consistently seeking improvement and excellence. Participants were motivated to participate in the new teacher induction program because it provided the roadmap for these expectations. Their “readiness to learn” (Knowles, 1970; 1984) and participate was often stimulated by the desire to understand the expectations of the school district and to attempt to understand and then teach at the level and to the standards that were shared in this professional development program.

However, when there was ambiguity regarding the professional responsibilities required of new teachers or what it took to be successful, it hindered their growth and impeded their opportunity to learn and complicated the “need to know” (Knowles, 1990). The uncertainty felt by new teachers, led to frustration and incumbered their ability to approach learning openly and objectively. It was clear that it was essential for school districts to provide clear and transparent guidelines to facilitate the professional development of new teachers, ensuring they had the support and resources needed for success. While the *Grow to Great* program aimed to provide this clarity for new teachers, participants discussed how clarity as a “need to know” dimension held significant importance in the new teacher’s experience and that there was a greater need for clarity than the program could provide. Amidst all these dynamics, the sense of stability for new teachers becomes increasingly difficult to attain, purposes become conflicting, “motivations” (Knowles, 1984; 1990) fade, and one’s “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) wavers. It is challenging for new teachers to discern which aspects of their work hold value and how to prioritize their efforts. They became uncertain about the underlying reasons for their actions, their own beliefs, their motivation, their capabilities, and their own alignment to the district’s mission (Ball, 2003).

Additionally, in the case of new teachers entering the school district with a culture that implies they must strictly "follow the rules" to please administration, a new teacher's "motivation to learn" (Knowles, 1984; 1990) can be significantly impacted. When the new teachers perceived a rigid and rule-bound culture, it can lead to extrinsically driven motivation, where they felt compelled to conform rather than being intrinsically motivated to engage in professional growth. Such a culture stifles creativity and autonomy, potentially hindering a new teacher's enthusiasm for learning. When educators feel valued and supported in their school settings- as demonstrated by having the time and ability to grow, collaborate and share ideas with their colleagues to improve in their instructional practice, they will have the opportunity to be successful. A person's capacity to participate in the learning process is influenced by their general well-being and feelings of being valued, and, concurrently, one's learning encounters can also have an impact on our well-being and feelings of value (Keeling, 2014). Schools have the power to set up systems that can either foster or hinder powerful instruction and, ultimately, a positive student educational experience (Moir, 2009). A more conducive approach, one in which the *Grow to Great* program was striving to instill, was to create a school culture that valued both compliance and innovation- where new teachers were encouraged to follow best practices while also feeling valued and therefore empowered to contribute their unique perspectives to the educational community. Aligning with Knowles' principle, this balanced approach could foster a more intrinsic and sustainable motivation to learn among new teachers.

When Teachers Felt De-Valued

The Obligation of Learning

New teachers perceived there to be an expectation of participation in the *Grow to Great* program. Although it was not the intention, the way the concept of obligation was perceived and its subsequent effects on the community of pre-tenured teachers diminished some of their pedagogical autonomy and independence. At times, the “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) of the adult learners was impeded upon throughout the implementation of the new teacher induction program. The mandatory feeling of the program, taking away the choice of the participants, rubs up against the principles of the learner’s “self-concept” by removing a teacher’s ability to have decision making power and choice. A fundamental factor in the formation of self-efficacy lies in the perception of one’s capability to exert influence or maintain control over their environment (Bandura, 1993). While the participants might have had the opportunity to be exposed to a lot of learning, develop relationships, and build their instructional toolkit, the sense of obligation and lack of independence or choice weighed heavy on the new colleagues and stripped them of their independence, choice and therefore diminished their “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975). New teachers expressed a sense that enrollment in the program was not optional, and that attendance and participation was considered when being evaluated for tenure. This assessment, while there was no documented statement that enrollment in the program was mandatory, tainted the experience as a true learning opportunity as it tampered with the participants “self-concept,” and became, for some more of an obligation than an independent choice. When professional learning becomes an obligation, rather than a choice, it stands to threaten one’s professional orientation to work and their overall identify as a professional, and a valued adult-learner (Day, 2017; Wild et al., 2018). It is something to consider whether this feeling of obligation to participate, at any point, overrode the potential impact of the program and the learning for any of the participants.

Fears of Surveillance

Additionally, in the context of the new teacher experience, participants felt that they operated under constant administrative surveillance- their pedagogical practices and their teacher selves were under consistent scrutiny which threatened the participants “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975). When administrators create an environment, throughout the district that emphasizes evaluation over support, counter to what Garret et al. (2019) and Vanassche and Keltchtermans (2016) stated as the intention of professional development, new teachers may develop self-doubt and anxiety about their abilities, even when the situation is not set up to be evaluative. This sentiment speaks to what Ball et al. (2012) identified a notable characteristic of contemporary education where there is the necessity for certain policies to be visibly implemented, documented, and accounted for. This reflects a prevailing climate of limited trust in the education landscape (Ball et al., 2012). The overarching narrative of new colleagues being evaluated at all times inhibited some new teachers in engaging fully in the learning of the program as it made teachers feel insecure, uncomfortable, and overall hindered their “self-concept” as successful educators (Knowles, 1968; 1975). This ethos of surveillance of new teachers, whether it is real or perceived, hindered their self-confidence and willingness to take risks in their learning and teaching practices.

Knowles’ second principle, the learner’s “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) was fostered in some school environments by supportive and compassionate school leaders. When administrators approach new teachers with empathy, understanding, and a focus on growth rather than immediate proficiency, it proved to foster a positive “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975). New teachers tend to be significantly shaped by the environment and support provided in their

early school placements rather than the pre-service teacher preparation programs they have completed. Many aspiring educators and novice teachers tend to place a high value on practical, on-the-job training as the most crucial component of their preparation (Cherian & Daniel, 2008). The school administrator plays a pivotal role in the development of these pre-tenure teachers, offering guidance in various ways, whether through direct interactions or indirectly by shaping the school's culture (Cherian & Daniel, 2008). This nurturing environment, as demonstrated in some school buildings, allowed new teachers to build their self-esteem, take ownership of their learning, and ultimately become more effective educators. Embracing Knowles' principle of the learner's "self-concept" (Knowles, 1968; 1975) underscores the importance of creating a supportive atmosphere that encourages new teachers to develop a strong and positive self-concept as they navigate the daily challenges that teachers face.

Conclusions

The *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program strove to reimagine new teacher support while impacting teaching and learning within the school district. The new teacher induction program proved to do all that it set out to do: it supported new teachers in developing a community of peers and colleagues, it developed their instructional skill level, it provided them with resources and a support structure that they could rely on, it helped develop their overall feelings of self-efficacy, job satisfaction and even showed an improvement on their teacher evaluations. Even though there was clearly room for more improvement within the program structure and content delivery overall, the *Grow to Great* induction program was a success.

Despite all of these accomplishments, the program could not escape the challenges of the larger context of the school district it was functioning in. With a district culture built upon worry

and fear due to the high rates of teacher turnover and a teaching community being stressed about rapid shifts in instructional expectations because of the learning occurring in this program, the positive changes achieved in the induction program could not withstand the crushing pressure from the outside. The fear of retention and job security impeded participant's ability to fully engage in learning, feel effective in the classroom, and trust some of the program facilitators and administrators. The culture of surveillance and unclear expectations created a culture within the district that stifled the success of many of the new teachers, and of the overall program.

In the wake of this profound transformation, it became clear that the shifts to the current paradigm of teaching practices ignited by the induction program encountered difficulties that rippled through the broader teaching community. A primary challenge lay in the articulation and communication of this new vision and the strategies it entailed. Not only was the vision not effectively shared with the existing staff, but it was also inconsistently conveyed to the larger leadership community within the district. This lack of coherence led to disparities in how the vision was understood and applied, resulting in inconsistency and discrepancies in leadership and evaluations. Furthermore, the pace of change was faster than the teaching community was prepared to embrace, leading to misunderstandings and feelings of instability among the larger teaching community. Despite the program's statistically significant positive impact on teacher evaluation scores and overall teacher quality, the persistent issue of high teacher retention and turnover rates and teacher's individually situated challenges challenged the sustainability and overall impact of *Grow to Great*.

Great Growth for New Teachers

The *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program proved to have a discernable impact on the pre-tenure teachers enrolled in the program. The sustained professional development

program focused on the growth and development of the newly hired teaching staff. Knowing that new teachers have the most room to grow and grow at the fastest rate (Kini, 2016), the *Grow to Great* induction program aimed to support the adults enrolled in the program thoughtfully as adult learners while supporting the instructional development of pre-tenure teachers over the course of their four-year pre-tenure period. While the program struggled to meet the needs of all of the participants, could have addressed some of the principles of adult learning more effectively and could have benefitted from some changes in the structure of the program, overall, it made a substantial positive impact on the participant teachers.

Teachers within the program developed a deep understanding of instruction and how to make intentional decisions between when to utilize various lesson structures: gradual release, workshop, and inquiry-based lessons (See Appendix G). They were also taught methods and strategies to implement small groups, utilize classroom learning environments and design to facilitate different learning opportunities, make intentional choices around the execution of station teaching, and engage all learners in class lessons through active participation techniques (Himmele & Himmele, 2017). Teachers within the program dove deeply in how to establish a learning environment that was both a welcoming and responsive, but one that established high expectations for learning and social engagement. New colleagues established a community of peers and colleagues to learn from and with that became a network of support and trusted advisors. They established relationships with professional developers, administrators and mentors that provided them with a supportive structure that both guided, advised and nurtured their growth throughout their pre-tenure period. They were provided with resources that acted as tools and supports. While the expectations were not always clear within the district, it was clear that the new teachers that participated in the program were supported, developing relationships,

and growing as educators. This growth was even documented on teacher evaluation scores, demonstrating a significant difference in the evaluation score of those pre-tenure teachers that were enrolled in the program against those that were not.

Within the *Grow to Great* program, most of the principles of Andragogy were honored through the implementation and design of the program. The program demonstrated that it was able to successfully honor the new-teachers “need to know” (Knowles, 1990), by helping them to understand not only what they are learning but why the information they are learning will make their classrooms more engaging and effective learning spaces, as well as supporting the new teachers in understanding why the practices were aligned with the district’s vision of “best practices.” The new teacher induction program supported the new teachers in developing their overall “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) by helping them grow and develop as effective educators and providing them with the tools resources and supportive community to grow within. As their “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975) grew, their “readiness to learn” (Knowles, 1970; 1984) also evolved as their role within their grade level, department and team also grew. Shifting from new member to teacher leader, for many of our members insighted their “readiness to learn” (Knowles, 1970; 1984), new and more practical strategies to support their own growth, but that of their colleagues. The community of support and the network provided by the new teacher induction program proved to be a key factor in supporting the new teachers’ “orientation to learning” (Knowles, 1984; 1990). Their ability to solve problems came from not only the material learned within the program, but from the conversations and dialogue with peers, professional developers, mentors and program facilitators about the implementation of those strategies within their own setting. While the program clearly needed to improve on its ability to differentiate for a teacher’s “lived experience” (Knowles, 1968) and leverage that to support

future learning and growth, the *Grow to Great* program, did successfully tap into the pre-tenure teacher's "motivation to learn" (Knowles, 1984; 1990), by providing the teachers with an outlet to learn how to be successful, obtain tenure, and be able to sustain the quality of life they strove to provide for themselves and their families. While not fully perfect, the induction program, absent of the outside factors, securely supported the adult learners within the induction program.

In conclusion, the *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program undeniably left a lasting impact on the pre-tenure teachers it served. By implementing a sustained professional development initiative tailored to the growth and progress of newly hired teaching staff, the program strategically targeted the crucial period of the initial four years of a teacher's tenure, recognizing the potential for substantial development during this phase. Despite encountering challenges in meeting the diverse needs of all participants, the program, on the whole, wielded significant influence on the teachers involved. Participants emerged from the program equipped with a profound understanding of instructional strategies, demonstrating a capacity to make deliberate choices in their instruction to meet the needs of their students. Despite the ambiguous district expectations, the program succeeded in providing clear support, documented not only through the evident development of teachers but also in the notable difference in evaluation scores. The *Grow to Great* induction program stands as a testament to the transformative power of targeted professional development in shaping the trajectory of educators at the crucial outset of their careers.

A Failure for Unforeseen External Factors

While the *Grow to Great* program effectively nurtured the professional growth of adult learners in the realm of instructional practices, its success was hindered by unforeseen and unpredictable external factors that emerged during the course of this research. As mentioned

earlier, the new teacher induction program introduced a transformative vision for instruction, inadvertently causing significant tension and a divide between new and veteran teachers. This shift also resulted in ambiguity regarding how to assess and evaluate the new instructional vision and classroom expectations outlined in the Danielson Rubric during teacher observations. The lack of communication and alignment between district and building-level administrators contributed to inconsistencies in the evaluation process. Furthermore, the pervasive anxiety and job insecurity associated with the district's high teacher turnover rates significantly impacted pre-tenured teachers, hindering their ability to fully engage in the learning process and feel secure during their daily school activities. These unanticipated consequences, influencing both the school district culture and the broader atmosphere characterized by high teacher turnover, ultimately led to the dissolution of the program.

The *Grow to Great* new teacher induction program proved to have a discernable impact on the pre-tenure teachers enrolled in the program. The sustained professional development program that focused on the growth and development of the newly hired teaching staff

The Complexities of a Newly Curated Vision for Teaching

Articulation and Participation

One of the challenges that faced the *Grow to Great* program was its lack of communication and inclusion with stakeholders. Effective new teacher induction initiatives necessitate the engagement of district-wide stakeholders (Moir, 2009). They function as catalysts for educational transformation, fostering leadership development and promoting collaborative efforts. Crucially, these initiatives harness the enthusiasm of new teachers and the wisdom of seasoned educators (Moir, 2009). In the case of the *Grow to Great* program, omitting various

stakeholder groups from the creation, execution, and implementation of the program, most importantly, the veteran teaching staff and building administrators, led to many unforeseen conflicts for new teachers, school leaders, and the overall district culture such as there was a lack of clarity around how these practices translated to teacher evaluations. Therefore, the advice that the new colleagues were being given on how to implement these instructional methods by various stakeholders: district administrators, building administrators, professional developers, mentors, and colleagues, were misaligned and cause overwhelming confusion for the new colleague.

Due to this misalignment in communication, paired with the changing expectations for instruction and how these expectations informed teacher evaluations made it hard for to pre-tenure teachers to clearly know what it looked like to be an effective teacher as well as what were the district-created parameters of employment. As time passed, although the shift of instructional expectations and practices had a transformative impact on the district's culture, the articulation of these expectations also proved to challenge the system in place. An intensive program such as this one, turned out to not only be supporting the skills and development of new teachers, but establishing new norms and expectations for instruction within the broader school community. As more and more teachers moved through the induction program, the greater number of teachers developed a revised vocabulary around instruction, a new vision for best practices and a new understanding of how teaching aligned to the Danielson Rubric (2007). The challenge proved to be how the new understanding of instructional practices sat within the larger community of veteran, already tenured teachers. These shifts were unknowingly seismic as it threatened the infrastructure and practices that were previously established within the teaching community. While this program was part of a larger overall initiative aligned to the district's

strategic plan to improve instructional practice through the use, education, and alignment of research based instructional practices, the program was developed and contained to a confined stakeholder group of new teachers and was not shared across other groups that would have benefitted from understanding the practices (New Teacher Center, 2018). As such, animosity, misunderstanding, and instability was perceived to be felt throughout the rest of the district's, more veteran, teaching community. For the new teacher induction program to achieve a more comprehensive and effective implementation, it was imperative to establish a concurrent framework aimed at educating all administrators serving as evaluators of teacher practice. Furthermore, learning opportunities should have been extended to experienced teaching staff seeking to enhance and refine their classroom practices.

New Expectations and the Rate of Change

Veteran Teachers

While new teachers felt as if their instructional practices were being developed and strengthened by the learning within the program, they also saw their veteran colleagues teaching in more traditional ways. As such, when it came to being evaluated, new teachers suggested that they were being held to an instructional standard that neither veteran colleagues nor the building administration understood or supported. As mentioned earlier, as pre-tenure teachers were being exposed to this newly curated vision for teaching that encompassed intentional planning for various lesson structures: gradual release, workshop and inquiry-based lessons (See Appendix G), methods and strategies to implement small groups, utilize classroom learning environments and design to facilitate different learning opportunities (See Appendix M), etcetera, the majority of the system continued to operate as normal with a more standard lecture based, call and

response model of instruction. Many times, the tenured teachers resented not only what was being asked of the new colleagues, but also that there was an implication that the shifts in instructional practices and norms were going to affect the way they were not only evaluated but shifts that they, themselves were going to be also expected to implement. The “self-concept” of the veteran teaching staff was being threatened by the changes in expectations (Knowles 1968; 1975). Even though many new teachers were embracing the learning they were being exposed to and were implementing the new strategies and methods with great success, tenured teachers, including mentors, began questioning what was being taught, how it was being shared and encouraging the new teachers to stick to more familiar and traditional practices. This articulation led to a lot of confusion for the new colleagues and sometimes tense situations between tenured staff, new teachers, and district administration. Change in culture, as this program was clearly causing, was challenging the norms of the community. As such, it was met with headwinds by those teachers in the district that were looking to slow the pace of change.

Administrators

Relevant to this was the gap in understanding about these new instructional expectations between building and some district level administrators. While the program was facilitated and developed by the district-wide professional developers and district administration in the Office of Curriculum & Instruction, building level administration had minimal participation or understanding of what was being taught in the program, how instruction was changing as a result of program material, and how the expectations for teachers were different from what had always been accepted as “best practice” as a result of the program. As such, there was a lack of clarity around the revised instructional vision, the shift toward modern research-based practices and

how to coach teachers towards proficiency, which impacted the feedback pre-tenure teachers would receive from their building administrators on their teacher evaluations. The participants mentioned that when a building level administrator observed instruction, versus a district level administrator, the feedback would be different, have a different focus, and the goals would not be aligned. This lack of clarity added to the confusion for the new colleagues and veteran staff members. As such, tenured teachers, who are only observed by building administrators, were held to a different standard of instruction than pre-tenured teachers who were observed by both building and district level administrators. While this discrepancy is presented in the teacher evaluation data presented in Chapter IV, its greatest effect shows up in the teacher retention data.

Teacher Quality & Retention

When exploring the question of the relationship between a new teacher induction program and new teacher retention, one would hope that it would show that as teachers skill level improved, more teachers would stay; but this was not necessarily the case. I found that as the expectations for instruction changed, and the district's definition of "best practices" was clarified to include lesson structures that are responsive to the purpose of your instruction using the gradual release, workshop, or inquiry-based lesson format. Teachers were also encouraged to utilize small group instruction and develop cultures within their classrooms that are engaging, welcoming and rigorous. Teachers struggled to meet the new standards of "best practices" as evidenced by the new teacher retention data and the sustaining culture of high teacher turnover.

Additionally, the climate around teaching in these new methods became highly political within the context of a teacher's department, school, and grade level. As instructional expectations evolved, a paradoxical desire for the status quo persisted in the political landscape

of the district. Consequently, numerous new educators found themselves grappling with the intricacies of a school environment marked by tension between traditional practices and the emerging shifts. The challenge for these new educators lay in discerning whether to adhere to the district's newly articulated and evolving expectations or to rely on the guidance of esteemed and perceived highly effective teachers. The evident struggle in the new teacher retention data mirrors the community's endeavor to navigate this intricate phase of change.

Throughout the program, new teachers continually searched for the “rules” and “clarity” around what it meant to be a “successful teacher”- this lack of clarity was partially due to the program’s inability to articulate these expectations at the rate of change in which they were happening. The *Grow to Great* program was changing culture and practice within the school district that had, in the past, hung its hat on their high-test scores as a reason to hesitate in making changes in anything: curriculum, instructional practices, course offerings, etcetera. In this school district, as with many other educational systems, the rate of change brought on by the *Grow to Great* program was too fast for this school community of educators, both administrators and many of the veteran teachers. New instructional standards, ways to teach, expectations for student rigor and participation, as well as teacher preparedness all aimed to redefine the well-established ways of working within the school district. Additionally, and to the fault of ours, the program facilitators, the articulation of the shifts in instructional practices were too insulated from the other veteran staff members. The culture, practices and expectations were changing within the district office and office of Curriculum and Instruction related to how teachers should engage their students in learning thorough advanced instructional practices. However, the articulation of how to implement those practices to the broader teaching community and what practices were shifting, how to do it, what the new research was on instructional practices, and

why these practices better engage students, was not clearly stated, shared and laid out for the larger administrative team and teaching community. As the standards of instructional practice changed, the expectations rose and the rules morphed, but most of the system was still operating on an older version of the paradigm. With this lack of clarity and ever-moving target of expectations, teachers struggled to meet or even understand the new district standards.

As new teachers navigate the nebulous landscape of district expectations regarding instructional practices and the criteria for high effectiveness, they concurrently encountered a unique opportunity for professional and personal growth within a supportive community. This community, comprised of fellow new teachers, not only provided a network for the exchange of ideas and experiences but also fostered a sense of camaraderie that became an essential pillar in navigating the intricacies of their evolving roles and developing their own “self-concept” (Knowles, 1968; 1975). It is widely known that not only do early career teachers have the most room to grow and grow at the fastest rate (Kini et al., 2016) but that induction programs foster and expedite this growth of new teachers by accelerating their gains in knowledge and instructional practices (Moir, 2009). The new teachers identified that not only was this true, but that the new teacher induction program provided access that they would not have otherwise had. This access was both to colleagues that they went through the program with and the professional network that they developed from the relationships built, but also access to mentors, professional developers and administrators in a way that built their standing within the community, developed relationships with district level administrators in a more familiar way that stretched beyond the standard classroom observation, supporting the development of the new teacher’s “readiness to learn,” and “self-concept” (Knowles (1968; 1970; 1975; 1984). Sutchter et

al. (2019) identified that a new teachers need to feel connected to a larger school community, and when they do, they are more likely to stay not only within that school, but within the profession.

Subjectivity and Potential Inaccuracies in Evaluative Practices

Is there Clarity?

The new teacher induction program, *Grow to Great*, seemed to prioritize deepening teachers' understanding of the teacher evaluation process, the expectations during teacher observations, and the nuances of how the Danielson Rubric (2007) was utilized by administrators during teacher observations. Recognizing the paramount importance of these aspects, the program aimed to provide clear explanations and guidance to new teachers. This approach strove to ensure that educators had a solid foundation and clarity regarding the evaluation process, enabling them to align their teaching practices effectively. By embracing Knowles' "need to know" (1990) principle, *Grow to Great* acknowledged that when new teachers comprehended the "need to know" aspects of teacher evaluation, it would ideally empower them to navigate the evaluation process with confidence. In cases where districts are recruiting a significant number of new teachers with elevated expectations, followed by high-stakes evaluations devoid of the necessary support, the roster of expectations for these novice educators has expanded over time, yet they typically do not receive any accompanying assistance (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). While the program attempted to demystify the observation process to new teachers, the use of the teacher evaluation system proved to be consistently *inconsistent*.

Is it Valid?

The teacher evaluation data presented raises many questions in relation to the use and validity of teacher evaluations, which seemed to complicate the adult learners' "need to know" as well as "motivation of the learner" (Knowles, 1968; 1990; 2020). Teacher observations are an example of policy translated into practice, which exhibits a strong systemic power structure within the school district. This power structure secures teachers as lower-status individuals, which should be judged and evaluated by those who have deemed themselves of higher status (Ball et al., 2012). Unable to change the system of observations within schools and rid them of this potential power hierarchies, teacher evaluations are designed to assess a teacher's ability to effectively employ all the pieces of what Charlotte Danielson and her team identified the four domains of effective teaching: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibility, *Teaching Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2007). But with all teachers being rated as negotiated between Effective (2.5-3.5) and Highly Effective (3.5-4) (See Figure 23 & 24), is this evaluation being constructively and accurately employed? It leaves one to ponder if these tools and this evaluation rubric are being properly utilized and if, based on these results, all evaluators are judging instruction in the same way. The utilization of the evaluation rubric in this way, threatens the adult learners' "self-concept" as well as "need to know." When an evaluation system lacks validity, its effectiveness for accountability, professional growth, learning and development, or any other valid objectives becomes greatly undermined (Xu et al., 2016). The data, as shown leaves so many questions as to why, if a district commits to employing the Danielson Rubric in these high-stakes evaluations of teachers, don't they also invest the time in norming the understanding of the administration on what "good instruction" looks like and how to watch for it? Is it really possible for all teachers within this

school district to be “effective” or “highly effective” and if so, why do so many teachers still get let go at the end of each school year?

Implication of invalid evaluations

In analyzing the factors influencing teacher observation scores, it became evident that, among variables such as years of service, tenure status, and participation in the new teacher induction program, only certain elements, notably tenure status, and participation in the new teacher induction program wielded statistically significant influence. As stated earlier, in this school district’s seniority data, previous teaching experience is not factored into one’s seniority status. Any years teaching in a prior school district does not count towards seniority here. As such, a teacher with the label of “tenure” does not necessarily suggest more teaching experience than one that is “probationary,” although they would have more years in this particular school district. The absence of consideration for previous teaching experience in seniority status within the district raises questions about the correlation between tenure and teaching experience. This became particularly intriguing as the data suggests that, despite tenure not necessarily indicating more overall teaching experience, it positively impacts observation scores. Therefore, it is interesting to consider the fact that the status of tenure positively impacts one’s score. It can be concluded that when being evaluated, pre-tenured teachers are held to a higher or different standard and viewed under a more critical lens than tenured teachers. Consequently, a closer examination reveals that pre-tenured teachers face a more critical evaluation compared to their tenured counterparts. Because years of service does also have a positive effect on someone’s observation score, one can deduce that, as much of the research points to, teachers that have been teaching longer are more effective (Jimerson & Haddock, 2015; Chetty et al., 2014; Tymms et

al., 2018). In this school district, it is almost certain that tenured teachers or teachers with extensive teaching experience will receive a high evaluation score. However, it's worth noting that a pre-tenure teacher receiving either an "effective" or "highly effective" evaluation rating did not consistently match the feelings expressed by participating teachers regarding their self-efficacy or job security.

What is Success?

Teacher observations have the potential to be a powerful tool to help teachers grow, create a common understanding around instruction, and provide an avenue for feedback between administrators and teachers and move forward a district's vision. In order to do this, there needs to be a common understanding around what good instruction looks like and what these observations can be used for. A proficient teacher evaluation system should, as a minimum, (1) assess the abilities and actions of teachers that directly influence learning results, (2) enhance instructional quality by establishing accountability for classroom performance, and (3) furnish valuable, data-driven feedback (Hallinger et al., 2014). If used in the way Danielson and her team intended (2007), teacher evaluations can be tools that inspire great growth amongst teachers. Unfortunately, the way they are being utilized in this school district complicates these positive features. Instead, these evaluations are often positioned as high stakes assessments of teachers, used to make high-stakes decisions without additional qualitative evidence of the teacher's pedagogical successes and growth areas. If these observations are not used to effectively assess teacher performance, another tool needs to be utilized that will convey to teachers what their strengths are and what skills they are still developing. In the context of these teacher evaluations, these assessments serve as metrics for their productivity, instructional

quality, and their moments of recognition or scrutiny. These evaluations represent and summarize the perceived value and effectiveness of a teacher within the evaluation system. The key consideration here is not only who holds the authority in the evaluation process, but who is determining what qualifies as a valuable, effective, or satisfactory teacher performance and which criteria or indicators are considered valid (Ball, 2003). The careers and futures of probationary teachers are being decided by these evaluations, and yet so many of them get scores that indicate that they are effective teachers. It calls into question, if so many teachers are “effective” or “highly effective” and are still being let go at the end of the year, what are the criteria for success? If effective teaching is not the criteria, in this district, for employment, what is? How should teachers interpret or perceive their evaluation scores? What are the rules for success? In my research and facilitation of the *Grow to Great* program, the criteria of employment beyond the statement of hire (See Appendix K.) or teacher’s code of conduct, is not written or defined anywhere. These evaluations should serve as effective tools for assessing teachers' skills and, in accordance with employment guidelines, making decisions about their continued employment. To achieve this, current practices in using these tools needs to be improved, or alternative instruments must be sought out that can support teacher growth and assist administrators in discerning and communicating what defines an effective teacher.

Summary: Intention Vs. Impact: Were the Supports—and *Grow to Great*—Enough?

Overall, the *Grow to Great* program, built upon the framework of Malcolm Knowles, and utilizing the research of Wong (2004) and Hiebert et al. (2002) seemed to greatly impact the experience of new teachers. A locally run, multi-year induction program focused on teacher instruction and student learning, combined with mentoring and a strong sense of administrative

support was implemented. While it provided new teachers with strong collegial and congenial relationships that functioned as a support network for them throughout their pre-tenure years and access professional developers that provided resources, coaching, and advice as they navigate the culture and expectations throughout these years. Unfortunately, it was a program intertwined in a larger, imperfect system. While the program attempted to help new teachers understand the community in which they were teaching and the norms and best practices for instruction within the environment, the complexities of the overall district culture often proved difficult to navigate and unclear. As time progressed in a new teacher's career and most of the unwritten rules of the community were more understood, pre-tenure teachers were more likely to be successful with parents, administrators, students, and peers as well as their perceived efficacy in teaching. The program worked to develop a clearer understanding of the community norms as well as developing the instructional skill level and knowledge of the new teachers. All of which provided these new teachers with a common language and common experience upon which to rely on for their future success within the district and their subjectivities as adult learners.

Still, the biggest question that seems to be still lingering as this research concluded is, why are so many teachers being asked to leave this school district? As previously stated in Chapter IV, with teacher evaluation scores within the "Effective" to "Highly Effective" range, and with a professional development program that is supporting them in creating a professional community, enhancing their knowledge and skill, which is, in turn, improving their job satisfaction, and feelings of self-efficacy, why are so many new teachers not making it? I think this is a complicated question that is about change, clarity, culture and about expectations. With the integration of a new District office team in 2018 and many new building administrators at approximately the same time, a new vision for teaching and learning also emerged. As such, the

culture and expectations of the community have been changing since. As evidenced in the new teacher retention data, in 2019, there was a high number of teacher resignations (See Figure 5). The expectations for what the district characterized as “best practices” and professional responsibilities were progressively shifting. The *Grow to Great* program was established in order to be a conduit to articulate these expectations and this vision for instruction to the staff, but the instructional shifts were changing at a faster rate than they could be articulated or sometimes, even captured consistently.

Implications and Considerations for Future Research

In the ever-evolving realm of education, the principles of Andragogy illuminate the critical significance of supporting new teachers and, consequently, retaining them within the profession. Experienced educators, drawing upon their wealth of knowledge and dedication, contribute significantly to the classroom. Fostering an environment that not only attracts but also nurtures and retains these professionals aligns with the core principles of adult learning. It goes beyond recruitment; it involves cultivating an ecosystem that respects, acknowledges, develops, and supports new colleagues, enabling them to make great professional gains, and develop strong pedagogical skills while embodying the principle of the learner's self-concept.

Accurate evaluation of teachers, in accordance with the principles of “readiness to learn” (Knowles, 1970; 1984) and “motivation to learn” (Knowles, 1984; 1990) serves as a linchpin in this endeavor. Effective evaluation, rooted in well-defined standards, can be a powerful catalyst for transformation, allowing educators to pinpoint their strengths and areas of improvement. With precise feedback, teachers can channel their efforts to refine instructional techniques, resulting in a symbiotic relationship between teacher enhancement and student achievement as

highlighted by the principle of the learner's orientation to learning. Creating evaluation systems that inspire rather than intimidate, that highlight strengths while nurturing growth areas, is key to maintaining a healthy teaching force committed to continuous improvement.

However, supporting new educators as they navigate the complex landscape of unfamiliar norms, expectations, and instructional approaches, as encouraged by the principle of the learner's “need to know,” is also paramount (Knowles, 1990). Robust induction programs, mentorship, and comprehensive professional support networks proved to be essential for helping new teachers smoothly transition and develop in their positions. By offering a strong support foundation, school districts can harness the enthusiasm and fresh perspectives of these educators, while simultaneously curating a strong professional community based upon research-based instructional practices, a common language around teaching and learning, and a shared understanding of the district’s vision, reflecting the principle of the learner's experience.

A sustained new teacher induction program, thoughtfully focused on the needs of adult learners throughout their pre-tenure years, sets up new teachers for success. This program, designed with the principles of Andragogy in mind, recognizes that these educators come with a unique set of experiences, self-concepts, and motivations. By providing ongoing support, professional development, and a sense of community, the program not only aligns with Knowles' (1968; 1975; 1984; 1990; 2020) principles but also empowers new teachers to navigate the complex educational landscape with confidence and competence. In the broader canvas of education, these interwoven elements—teacher retention, precise evaluation complemented by actionable feedback, robust support for emerging educators, and a vibrant professional community—combine to create a strong foundation for teachers’ professional growth. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, this intricate system stands as a testament to an

unwavering dedication to their profession and an unyielding pursuit of knowledge, exemplifying the principles of self-concept and motivation to learn, fostering growth, innovation, and a profound and lasting impact on the generations yet to come.

A sustained new teacher induction program designed to cater to the specific needs of pre-tenured teachers holds the potential to effectively nurture and support the growth of new educators. However, the success of such a program hinges significantly on securing buy-in and educational commitment from various stakeholder groups, including mentors, tenured teachers, and administrators at all levels. Without a collective understanding and endorsement from these crucial contributors, the learning and growth of new teachers may encounter challenges in finding alignment within the existing paradigm and contextual framework of the district. Even when changes are rooted in research and aimed at enhancing student support, they are likely to face resistance and apprehension if not embraced within the established district norms. Encouraging change, no matter how well-intentioned, within the educational landscape often sparks resistance and fear, underscoring the importance of fostering a collaborative and informed approach to professional development initiatives.

Considerations for Future Research

An area ripe for future research involves the implementation of a longitudinal study aimed at bridging the learning gap between veteran and pre-tenured staff who have been exposed to and are adopting new research-based best practices. Such a study would provide a comprehensive exploration of the strategies, interventions, and support systems that effectively facilitate the integration of these practices into the instructional methodologies of adult learners at different career stages. By tracking the progress of both veteran and pre-tenured staff over an

extended timeframe, this longitudinal approach would yield insights into the challenges and successes faced by each group in implementing these practices and closing the learning gap. The study could also shed light on the sustainability of these changes over time and the role of ongoing professional development in maintaining improved teaching approaches. Ultimately, this research could guide educational institutions in devising targeted initiatives that empower all educators to maximize their impact on student learning and contribute to the continuous advancement of teaching practices.

Another important direction for future research lies in the development of a teacher evaluation tool or system that not only guarantees inter-rater reliability and transparency but also fosters intrinsic motivation among educators to enhance their instructional practices, allaying concerns about potential job insecurity. This research endeavor would entail creating an evaluation framework that is grounded in well-defined criteria and standards, promoting consistency and fairness in evaluations conducted by various raters. Simultaneously, the system should emphasize constructive feedback that guides teachers towards professional growth rather than invoking apprehension about their job status. By incorporating elements that celebrate achievements, recognize improvements, and offer personalized pathways for development; this envisioned evaluation approach would inspire educators to embrace a continuous improvement mindset. A research-based evaluation system with these attributes could serve as a catalyst for instructional refinement, enhance overall teaching quality, and ultimately contribute to a more empowered and confident teaching workforce.

Finally, examining the impact of school culture on the experience of pre-tenure teachers is an intriguing and vital area for future research. This dimension was recognized by this research as a key determinant in the professional development and overall well-being of the participant

educators. Understanding how school culture, characterized by factors like leadership, support, collaboration, and a safe, inclusive environment, influences the trajectory of pre-tenure teachers' careers is crucial. By delving into this aspect, researchers can uncover valuable insights that help shape policies and practices to foster more favorable conditions for teacher growth and success. This research could provide a deeper understanding of the specific elements of school culture that have the most significant impact on pre-tenure teachers, guiding educational institutions in creating environments that empower educators to thrive and to stay in the profession.

In conclusion, it was evident that sustained professional development is crucial for the growth and development of pre-tenured teachers, nurturing them as effective practitioners. However, it is equally clear that the climate within the school or district plays a pivotal role in this process. A healthy and supportive professional culture is essential for creating an environment where teachers can thrive and reach their full potential. Professional learning or the camaraderie of a community of peers cannot fully offset the adverse impacts of an unhealthy professional culture (Erichsen & Reynolds, 2020). Therefore, the call to action for educational institutions and policymakers is not just to invest in professional development but to prioritize the creation of school and district climates that truly cultivate, nurture, and support teachers. Only then can we ensure that our educators receive the essential conditions required to excel and, in turn, develop into effective educators that spend many years in this very special and essential profession.

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Appendix A - Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL #1

Greetings:

Hello, my name is Ellen Moskowitz, I'm a doctoral student at Kansas State University and a public-school educator. I am here to learn about new teacher induction programs, what the needs of new teachers are as they transition to a new school district and in what ways has the current program that you are participating in met or failed to meet your needs. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel. If it's okay with you, I will tape recording our conversation since it is hard for me to write down everything while simultaneously carrying an attentive conversation with you. Everything you say will remain confidential, meaning that only I will be aware of your answers the purpose of that is only so we know whom to contact should we have further follow-up questions after this interview.

- First off, can you tell me who you are, what you teach and where you teach?
- How long have you been in education?
- How many years have you been teaching before you came to this district?
- What was your new teacher induction experience like in your prior school district?
- Why did you choose to leave your school and come to this district?

Since coming to this district, you have had the experience of New Teacher Orientation, partnering with a mentor, and participating in 1-3 years of Grow to Great. All of these are components of the new teacher induction program. We are going to talk about your experience with each one.

1. The learner's need to know
2. Self-concept of the learner
3. Prior experience of the learner
4. Readiness to learn
5. Orientation to learning
6. Motivation to learn

- When you first came to this district, you had a 3-4 day experience with New Teacher orientation. Can you reflect on that experience?
 - What were some of the key take a ways?
 - What did you leave hoping you had learned, but didn't?
 - What was your overall feeling afterwards?
- During your first year, you were paired with a Mentor teacher. Can you describe for me how the mentor partnership works.
 - How was your relationship with your mentor?
 - What do you believe made it work/not work?
 - What were some of the structures that supported it's success?
 - What structures do you think needed to be in place for it to be more successful?
 - What did you learn from your mentor?
 - What were your greatest points of growth, if any from your mentor partnership?
 - What do you wish your mentor knew or was able to help you with, but couldn't?
- At the same time, you participated in one of our year-long professional development courses. Can you talk about your first year in that program?
 - What was your experience like?
 - What did you learn?
 - What were some of the benefits? Drawbacks?
 - What made this program helpful? Not helpful?
 - Did you feel that the content was relevant and important to your work? Why or why not?
 - Do you feel like you had the opportunity to be self-directed in this course? Why or why not?
 - Did you feel respected as an adult professional during this experience? Why or why not?
 - Did you feel that the content that was being delivered was applicable to your lived, real-life experiences? Why or why not?
 - Did you feel that you had the opportunity to learn things that solved problems or issues that you were facing in your classroom? Can you explain or provide an example?
 - Can you describe your motivation to participate in this year of the new teacher program?
- You participated in the second year of our professional development courses. Can you talk about your first year in that program?
 - What was your experience like?
 - What did you learn?
 - What were some of the benefits? Drawbacks?
 - What made this program helpful? Not helpful?
 - Did you feel that the content was relevant and important to your work? Why or why not?
 - Do you feel like you had the opportunity to be self-directed in this course? Why or why not?

- Did you feel respected as an adult professional during this experience? Why or why not?
- Did you feel that the content that was being delivered was applicable to your lived, real-life experiences? Why or why not?
- Did you feel that you had the opportunity to learn things that solved problems or issues that you were facing in your classroom? Can you explain or provide an example?
- Can you describe your motivation to participate in this year of the new teacher program?
- If you had to make a broad statement, what would you say are the best parts of the new teacher program? What are the parts that need to be improved?

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL #2

Greetings:

Hello! My name is Ellen Moskowitz, I'm a doctoral student at Kansas State University and a public-school educator. I am continuing to learn about new teacher induction programs, what the needs of new teachers are as they transition to a new school district and in what ways has the current program that you are participating in met or failed to meet your needs. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel. If it's okay with you, I will tape recording our conversation since it is hard for me to write down everything while simultaneously carrying an attentive conversation with you. Everything you say will remain confidential, meaning that only I will be aware of your answers the purpose of that is only so we know whom to contact should we have further follow up questions after this interview.

This interview is being recorded for research purposes; do you consent to being recorded? Great. Please know that you can have this recording stopped at any time or have the option to skip a question you don't feel comfortable answering.

- Last time we met, you spoke about your experience in the 21-22 cohort, since then, is there anything that has come to mind that you wanted to add or change about that experience?
- Last time we met, you spoke about _____ does this still hold true? What are your perspectives on this now?
- What resonates with you about teaching? What doesn't? What has shaped the teacher you've become?
- Tell me about your first year teaching?
- Just for clarification, what year is this for you now in this school district?
 - How do you feel differently in this year than in years past?
 - how do you evaluate their teaching experience, thus far?
- How do you see yourself in relation to this school district?
 - Building admin? o District admin?
 - Department or grade level leaders?
- Can you tell me about your teaching responsibilities this year and how they differ from what you were doing last year?

- How have those changes impacted you?
 - What support have you received to assist with the transition to these new roles/responsibilities?
- Talk to me about getting observed. *What is that experience like for you?*
 - How do you make sense of your write ups and evaluations? ○ How would *you* evaluate your own teaching practice? ○ What seem like your biggest successes? Biggest challenges?
- What's the biggest challenge facing teachers in our district? Teachers in general?

Appendix B - Survey

Grow to Great 2021-22 Feedback

Please complete this survey to the greatest extent possible. Your names and emails will be removed from this survey before the results will be shared to preserve your anonymity. Your feedback will be used to enhance and improve the Grow to Great program for the following cohort. This survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and any question that you feel you are not comfortable answering, may be skipped.

* Required

1. Email *

2. Full Name *

3. In the 2021-22 school year, I participated in... *

Mark only one oval.

☐ #year1

☐ #year2

☐ #year3

4. I teach primarily in: *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Elementary

☐ Middle School

☐ High School Other:

☐

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Did not meet my needs

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Exceeded my expectations

5. Overall, my experience in this year's program has been

Course Content

6. Please answer each question related to the course content to the best of your ability.

Honest feedback helps us grow and do better.

Mark only one oval per row.

	I do not agree	I somewhat agree	I agree	I mostly agree	I strongly agree
The content of the course was appropriate for me as a learner	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The delivery of the content was engaging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The content of the course demonstrated instructional practices that are valuable in my classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The content of the course made me consider other ways of doing and thinking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The content presented was backed by research and the research was shared	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I did not feel like the content was relevant for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Please describe what content taught in the course you thought was most impactful and why?

8. Please describe what content taught in the course you thought was least impactful and why?

You as a learner

9. Please answer each question related to how you felt as an adult learner throughout the course. Honest feedback helps us grow and do better.

Mark only one oval per row.

	I do not agree	I somewhat agree	I agree	I mostly agree	I strongly agree
I felt that the course was relevant and important	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt like I had the opportunity to be self-directed in this course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt respected as an adult professional during this experience	☐	☐	☐ ☐	☐	
I felt that the content was applicable to my lived, real-life situation	☐	☐	☐ ☐	☐	
I felt that I had the opportunity to learn things that solved problems. or issues that I	☐	☐	☐ ☐	☐	

was facing in
classroom

I felt motivated to
participate in this
year of the new
teacher program

☐☐☐☐☐

10. Please explain what the experience was like to participate as a learner in this year of professional development.

11. In order to meet my needs better, this year of professional development would have included. . .

Reflections

12. My greatest growth this year was. . .

13. My hope for next year is. . .

14. If I could get support from the professional development team on anything, it would be. . .

15. Questions I still have at the end of this year are. . .

16. If I were to imagine ways to improve this new teacher program, I would suggest. . .

17. Do you plan on participating in next year's Grow to Great course? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe

18. If you chose "no" or "maybe," please explain your thinking.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix C - IRB Research Consent



TO: J. Spencer Clark
Curriculum and Instruction
Manhattan, KS 66506

Proposal Number IRB-11134

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 03/30/2022

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "New Teacher Induction Program: Empirical Research Study."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for three years from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 03/30/2022

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/29/2025

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

No more than minimal risk to subjects

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

Electronically signed by Rick Scheidt on 03/30/2022 10:40 AM ET

Appendix D - IRB Form Template

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

University Research
Compliance Office

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Informed Consent Template Form

comply@k-state.edu | 785-532-3224

PROJECT TITLE:

New Teacher Induction Program: Empirical Research Study

PROJECT APPROVAL
DATE:

4/2022

PROJECT EXPIRATION
DATE:

6/2025

LENGTH OF
STUDY:

3 years

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Dr. J. Spencer Clark

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):

Ellen Moskowitz

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:

785-532-5904

IRB CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION:

DR. RICK SCHEIDT, IRB CHAIR. (785) 532-3224

PROJECT SPONSOR:

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

This study is an empirical research study of a new teacher induction program to examine the effects and impact of a program that is designed to support teachers throughout the duration of their pre-tenure, probationary period of teaching (4 years). The purpose of this research project is to examine the needs of new teachers throughout their pre-tenure period and how school districts can best support these new teachers during this time. Additionally, this study hopes to explore how districts can provide professional development in a way that honors the needs of adult learners while enhancing instructional practices and promoting the values of the district.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:

The study will be conducted through a series of surveys and interviews. All participants in the new teacher program will be invited to participate in the surveys, while a smaller subset will participate in the semi-structured interviews. Surveys will be administered a few times a year throughout the subject's participation in the new teacher program. Interviews will be conducted quarterly and will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. Participants will not be paid and participation in this study is voluntary.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:

Subjects of this study will benefit from a reflective and improved new teacher program that more closely meets their needs as both new teachers and adult learners. New teachers will also benefit from the access to professional development and support throughout their participation in this study.

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED:

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts related to the participation in this study.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:

Participation in this study will enhance the present overall experience of new teachers in the Chappaqua Central School District as well as the experience for future cohorts of new teachers. Professional development methods will be improved, and support will be given to participants in the program to enhance their experience.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

All survey results will be only viewed in their entirety by the researcher. After saving for purposes of later collating, names and any identifiable information will be redacted. Interviews will be stored, and password protected. All names will be redacted and will not appear in any reports. All data will be deleted and destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

The information or biospecimens that will be collected as part of this research will not be shared with any other investigators.

Terms of participation: I understand this project is research, and that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

(Remember that it is a requirement for the P.I. to maintain a signed and dated copy of the same consent form signed and kept by the participant).

PARTICIPANT NAME:

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE:

**WITNESS TO SIGNATURE:
(PROJECT STAFF)**

DATE:

DATE:

Appendix E - Email Template

EMAIL- Initial Outreach (May 2022)

Dear ,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to see if you would be interested in participating in my Doctoral Studies Research as an Interview Participant. My research focuses on new teacher induction and how we support the needs of new teachers through the Grow to Great program. Participation as an interviewee would consist of engaging in two rounds of interviews (winter and spring) during this 2022-23 school year. Please know, you are not obligated to participate. Throughout the process, your communication and your name will be kept confidential and anonymous throughout the process and in the reporting and will be used to collect data and enhance our ability to support teachers new to [District].

I appreciate your consideration.

Let me know if you have any questions. I would be happy to set up a time to meet to discuss this further.

Sincerely,
Ellen Moskowitz
Director of Professional Learning

Email Draft- Round 2 interviews (Interview: January 2023)

Dear ,

I hope you are doing well. I am reaching out to see if we can connect again for the second round of the interview process for the doctoral research. I would like to schedule time to interview you in January, but I am reaching out now as I know schedules are difficult to align! Please let me know what a good time would be to connect. We would probably need a block of time that is approximately an hour or so. Please let me know, also, if you are no longer interested in participating in this research project.

I look forward to meeting up with you again.

Sincerely,
Ellen

Appendix F - Master Curriculum Planning Document: *Grow to Great*

*Master Curriculum Planning Document - Grow to Great

Purpose:

- Every teacher hired is a master teacher in four years

Summary:

The Grow to Great Professional Development Curriculum Map defines what teachers in their probationary period of employment should know and be able to do to be highly effective by the end of their probationary period in the School District. Included are four years of learning goals with essential understandings followed by cross cutting concepts that are aligned to our district's priorities, followed by an outline of the concepts taught each year throughout probation.

Intent:

This guidance document outlines the professional development plan for our probationary teachers through their four-year journey in the School District. This program takes into account the evaluation cycle of teachers, the six district priorities (Equity, SEL, Assessment, Technology, Curriculum, Space), the regular cycle of the school year and important events for teachers, and the overall needs of teachers to improve their practice, increase effectiveness and ensure that our students have the opportunity to engage with rigorous instruction while feel connected, safe and valued. This curriculum will be used by the Professional Development Team, Building and District Administrators and Mentors to help direct the growth of our probationary teachers over a four-year arc of learning.

Teaching is by nature complex, and therefore can and should be continuously studied, practiced, revised, and improved. We owe it to our students to ensure that the teachers that are granted tenure in the School District have the qualities and skills that are aligned with research based best practices and demonstrate the innovative, equitable and responsive culture that we so strongly believe in.

Core Beliefs about Teaching & Teachers:

1. Teacher effectiveness matters as skillful teachers more positively impact student growth than those less skillful
2. Given the right support, all teachers can become skillful teachers
3. Skillful teachers engage in research-based practices that positively and dramatically impact student learning
4. These research-based practices are known, and must be explicitly taught and practiced so they are mastered over time
5. Skillful teachers build a sophisticated mental model as they progress through developmental stages
6. Grow to Great has been designed as a roadmap through these stages

Vision for Teaching & Learning:

VISION: Active student learning

We want students engaged in experiences that involve meaningful inquiry, action, imagination, invention, interaction, hypothesizing, and personal reflection, ²

VISION: Strong student collaboration

We want students to work cooperatively toward a common goal, exchange ideas, and rely on one another to create a product or arrive at a solution that could not be achieved by an individual.

Guiding Principles:

Guiding Principles	Principles Defined	For Teachers	For Students
Connected	Relationships matter	• Welcoming, inclusive and affirming • Support of mentors & leaders to support professional and personal	• Welcoming, inclusive, and affirming • Support of adult advocates to guide academic and personal

		- development - Connected to the school community - Nurture an inspiring local and global PLN	- development - Connected to peers & mentors
Equitable	All teachers & students deserve success	Support structures designed to be equitable	- Support structures designed to be equitable - Student-centered, unbiased and fair policies and practices
Engaging	Relevant, participatory, and motivating	- Learning is active and purposeful - PD is relevant, long-term, job embedded	Learning is active and purposeful
Responsive	Safe and joyful spaces through social and emotional competencies	- Schools are physically, emotionally and academically safe for - Respected, valued and understood	- Schools are physically, emotionally and academically safe - Respected, valued and understood
Rigorous	High expectations for all	- Deeply knowledgeable in content, skills - Rich pedagogy - Understanding of Zone of Proximal Dev.	- Appropriately challenging curriculum - Emphasis of transferable skills
Empowering	Take responsibility for learning and support the learning of others	- Learning is exploratory, inquiry based, and democratic - Empowered to set goals through guided inquiry	- Learning is exploratory, inquiry based, and democratic - Empowered to set goals through guided inquiry

Cross-cutting Concepts

I.	Relationship-Based Community Begin by deeply understanding your students' identities and assets; their current context and needs; and how to best support their social, emotional, and academic development in partnership with families and caregivers (Components 1b and 4c). - Intersecting Identities - Whole Child Development - Ethos & values
II.	Responsive & Rigorous Learning Environments Create a supportive learning environment and establish or adjust systems and supports that prioritize equitable access, easy navigation of learning experiences, and ongoing formative assessment (Components 2a, 2c, and 3d). - Rigor & Growth - Cultural competence / Culturally Responsive - Standards & Curriculum
III.	Engaged & Empowered Students Plan and facilitate engaging and coherent instruction designed to meet students where they are in this moment (Components 1e, 3b, and 3c). - Teaching & Learning Cycle - Physical Space - Technology Integration

Practices: Behaviors of Highly Effective Teachers

	Year 1:	Year 2:	Year 3:	Year 4:
Essential Questions	<i>Connecting, Building and Learning:</i> What does it take to be a successful teacher? What are effective teaching practices, classroom structures and connections that are established within your first year?	<i>Creating a Foundation:</i> What are the foundational instructional structures to facilitate a productive learning environment? What is the research behind instructional structures and practices?	<i>Expanding our Instruction:</i> How can we intentionally redesign learning experiences to create a culture for learning that empowers students to take ownership of their learning process while problem solving, exploring inquiry and genuinely collaborating with their peers? How can we plan for, and ensure that each learner is challenged appropriately and in a way that supports maximum growth?	<i>Empowering our Leaders:</i> How can we develop future teacher leaders? From planning instruction to designing curriculum, how do leaders lead both locally and globally?

Scope and Sequence: At a Glance

Scope and Sequence At a Glance

Y r. 1	Coherent Instruction				Classroom Environment & Routines			Relationships - Culture		
	Research-based teaching practices	Objectives, Activation & Closure	Direct Instruction: Gradual Release	Observation Process and APPR	Predictable & Consistent Classroom Environment	Organization of Materials and Space	Understanding of Goals and Expectations of Behavior	Know your students as people and learners	Connect w/ Colleagues	Understand the Community
Y r. 2	Gradual Release				Master Workshop			Relationships - Learners		
	Predictable Lesson Structure & objectives	Gradual Release: Direct Instruction, Guided & Independent Practice	Assessment of and for Learning		Structure of the Workshop and Mini-Lesson	Conferencing and Formative Assessment	Small-Group Instruction	Using Data to Understand Students	Using Data to Communicate with Others	Using Data to Communicate with your Students
Y r. 3	Classroom Culture & Motivation				Lesson Design 2.0			Dynamic Learning Models		
	Classroom Climate 15 research-based practices	Expectations Students as co-constructors of the learning environment	Space Students as co-constructors of the learning environment		Lesson Components * Gradual Release * Workshop	Mastering Individual Components	The Intersection of the Components & The Space Learning Continuum	Learning models to support discussion and collaboration	Learning models to support questioning and inquiry	Learning models to support problem-solving and critical thinking
	Review "Relationships" from #180 & 360									
Y r. 4	Leading Curriculum Development (Sept-Nov)				Leading Learning Locally (Dec-Feb)			Leading Learning Globally (March-May)		
	History of Curriculum and Where does it come from	Curriculum Cycles- Why does it cycle	Program Evaluation		Planning Learning Outside of the classroom - Book Clubs - Inservice - Conf. Day Sessions	Planning Learning Inside of the classroom Learning Walks & Visits - Co-teaching, Coaching,	Adults Receiving and Getting Feedback	Building Your PLN Continuum - Lurk and Learn to Lead	Publishing Work: - Vlogging - Blogging - Hosting	Leading a Community of Learners -

District Priorities - Grow to Great Crosswalk

	Curriculum	Whole Child/SEL	Physical Space	Technology	Equity	Assessment
Year 1	Accessing & Implementing District Wide Curriculum	Teacher Establishes relationships with students and communicating a community of acceptance and inclusion Teachers build community in the classroom through learning activities, turn and talk and opportunities for peer sharing.	Space is neat & organized Space facilitates relationships, conversation and collaboration Students have access to materials Students know routines and procedures of the class environment Environment is set up for students to have access to each other for sharing and support.	T and S use LMS and device for work and assignments T creates and shares content with students Students complete work and submits assignments digitally Work is mostly text based and/or digital worksheets.	Develop positive social identities Based on their membership in multiple groups in society, express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people recognize how personal bias might play out in classroom practice	Systems IEP DIRECT, Report Card, progress notes Communication with parents and admins Record keeping
Year 2	Curricular Vocab & Research Based Practices	Teacher articulates a positive and safe classroom community by considering classroom norms, environment and culture. Students have opportunities to communicate with each other and the teacher on regular occasions	Students have choice in where they learn Desk configuration is flexible depending on the task.	Teacher uses multi-media sources to convey information with Student. Teacher use programs with students that make Student learning visible & provide opportunities for feedback Student can collaborate with Teacher	Recognize that people's multiple identities interact and create unique and complex individuals. Recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and Injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination). Recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.	Assess to drive lesson design and planning LOOP: PLAN-TEACH-ASSESS
Year 3	Leveled Curriculum Teacher's Choice vs. District Curriculum	Students & teacher co-create classroom norms, meet regularly for community connections and have discussions that build respect and rapport. Teacher and student and student to student collaboration is a natural part of this classroom Connections are made and students, relationships and connections with others are put at the center of all learning experiences	Space has variety of seating options on different planes Flexible configuration of space responsive to activity and Student need Teacher space is dissolved into the rest of the classroom Front of room is difficult to determine Students increasingly take ownership of arrangement, maintenance, etc.	Teacher provides options for content consumption Student have choice in methods of submission Students collaborate with Teacher and other students Students and Teacher share in displaying work	Respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection. Recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics make principled decisions about when and how to take a stand against bias and injustice in their everyday lives.	Assess to dynamically group (Low, Med, High) MAPS, TC, Running Record, to track progress over time
Year 4						

	Semester 1 - Frontline Blurp	Semester 2 - Frontline Blurp
Year 1	This Course is designed to provide first year teachers with targeted support throughout the school year. Sessions will focus on adapting to the district's culture and strategic priorities, communication strategies and technology tools, and strong lesson/unit design planning and implementation. Emphasis will be placed on establishing common definitions and language around instruction and instructional practices, establishing a community of learners within your classroom and understanding who we are as a school, district and community. Sessions will be facilitated by the #ChapPDTTeam.	This Course is designed to provide first year teachers with targeted support throughout the school year. Sessions will focus on adapting to the district's culture and strategic priorities, communication strategies and technology tools, and strong lesson/unit design planning and implementation. Emphasis will be placed on the iLEARNING 2.0 framework with units including (1) COURSE DESIGN, (2) CURRICULUM, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, LEARNING EXPERIENCES, PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. Sessions will be facilitated by the #ChapPDTTeam.
Year 2	This course is designed to support our probationary teachers in year 2 and any teacher that wishes to focus on developing and refining high-impact teaching and learning practices. Emphasis will be placed on dissecting the Science of Teaching and Learning. We will break down and go in-depth with effective lesson planning structures and teaching strategies that support student learning. This Course will provide a safe and supportive environment for teachers of all experience levels to discuss professional practice on highly effective teaching strategies. Participants should come ready each week to be both teacher and student, learning from and teaching others through structured activities and rich conversation. We will model highly effective teaching strategies throughout the course. Priority will be given to teachers in year 2 of probation, however all tenured teachers are invited to participate provided there is available space.	This course is designed to continue to provide support to our probationary teachers in year 2. Sessions will focus on the gradual release and workshop model of lesson planning as well as using multiple forms of data to inform instruction. This course will continue to build a safe and supportive environment for teachers of all experience levels to give and receive feedback on highly effective teaching practices. Participants should come ready to experience this course as a teacher, student, and critical colleague. The course will dive deep into highly effective teaching strategies through structured activities that can be replicated in the classroom.
Year 3	This course builds on Year 2 and is designed to support our probationary teachers in year 3 of their tenure but is open to any teacher that is looking to expand their instructional practices. While Year 2 focused on the foundational skills of lesson planning and instruction, Year 3 will focus on the differentiation that happens within a classroom learning environment to enhance the experience for every student. We will explore the power of small group instruction, formative assessment, stations and	A continuation of Year 3 from Semester 1, this course will continue to challenge our 3rd and 4th year teachers to refine their instructional practice to develop their high expectation classroom environment that enhances the learning experience for all of our unique learners. This semester will continue to focus on designing flexible learning spaces to support multiple learning modalities and will explore how to pair these spaces with different dynamic learning models that will appropriately challenge our students to take ownership of their learning process. The facilitation of our sessions will

	centers, leveled teaching objectives and much more. In this course, you will learn how to make sure that every student in your classroom is feeling safe, valued and heard all while learning, growing, and becoming an empowered learner. Throughout this course, we will model highly effective teaching strategies. All teachers are invited to participate provided there is available space. Meeting dates:	model highly effective teaching strategies that our teachers and counselors will be able to apply in their own practice. Priority will be given to teachers in years 3-4 of probation, however all tenured teachers are invited to participate provided there is available space.
Year 4	Join us in this Course as we widen our view from a focus on instructional strategies and lesson design to leading curriculum development and professional learning. This course will be broken into three major strands: (1) modern curriculum design, (2) leading learning locally, and (3) leading learning globally. Participants will refine their skills to think broadly about courses and programs in order to design a rigorous and engaging curriculum that horizontally and vertically aligns to meet the needs of all of our learners. Participants will also engage in learning how to locally lead learning within their team, grade level or department and then how to share this learning and become a leader on a more global scale. Leadership theory will also be included to prepare participants for future leadership roles within our district and beyond. This course is open to all teachers.	Join us in the second half of this Course as we continue to focus on leading curriculum development and professional learning. This course will be broken into three major strands: (1) modern curriculum design, (2) leading learning locally, and (3) leading learning globally. Participants will continue to think about modern curriculum development, program evaluation, alignment, and the role of teacher leadership in curriculum. Participants will engage in learning how to locally lead learning within their team, grade level or department and then how to share this learning and become a leader on a more global scale. Leadership theory will also be included to prepare participants for future leadership roles within our district and beyond. This course is open to all teachers.

Maps - First Year Teacher Program: Year 1

UNIT	BENDS	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	PRIMARY RESOURCES	LESSON
Coherent Instruction 1c: Selecting Instructional Outcomes 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction Learning activities 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction	Research on Effective Teaching Practices & Lesson Plan Template	How do skillful teachers use research based practices to drive student learning? - Teacher effect size - John Hattie research How do teachers apply effective teaching practices to their lesson planning? - Shifting to more effective strategies - analyze/reflect on current practice	John Hattie Lesson Plan Template	- Looking at John Hattie's Work - Analyzing a lesson plan vs. John Hattie's effective practices
	Observation Process & APPR	How do I prepare for the Observation and APPR process? - Planning for my Pre & Post - Frontline- APPR and Inquiry	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson APPR	
	Objectives, Activation and Closure	How do skillful teachers plan lessons to maximize student learning? - Lesson Objectives - Activation & Closure		
	Direct Instruction: Gradual Release Model	How do teachers build skills and independence in learners? - Modeling- I do - Rehearsal- We do - Independence- You do together, You do alone!		Structure of Direct Instruction- I do, We Timing
ROUTINES 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures 2d: Managing Student Behavior	Predictable & Consistent Classroom Environment 11/22	How do teachers set up classroom routines & environments that facilitate independence and success? - Routines for learning activities & management structures	Proactive Classroom Management in Preschool Edutopia	
	Organization of Materials & Space	How does the classroom environment promote positive student behavior, and academic		

		engagement? - Space set up & organization - Sense of Ownership and responsibility for space		
	Clear understanding of Goals and expectations of behavior	How do classrooms foster positive learning environments? - Classroom norms and expectations - Learning communities and collaborative partners		
RELATIONSHIPS 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students 2a: Creating and Environment of Respect and Rapport 2b: Organizing Physical Space 4c: Communicating with families 4d: Participating in a Professional Community	Knowing your students as learners and people	How do you build and foster safe and trusting relationships with your students?	How to Design a Survey to Better Connect With Middle and High School Students Edutopia	Equity SEL SWD
	Connecting with your colleagues	How can you foster positive collegial relationships?		
	Understanding the community	What does it mean to be a member of the community?		BUS TOUR?

Second Year Teacher Program

UNIT	BENDS	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	PRIMARY RESOURCES	LESSON	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	PRIMARY RESOURCES	LESSON
				21-22			22-23
Gradual Release & Core Teaching Practices 1f. Designing Student Assessments 3b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3d. Using Assessment in Instruction	Clear and predictable lesson structure & objectives	What do I know about the lesson plan template?	Lesson Plan Template	Session 1 & 2: 9/9 & 9/23 - Parts of the lesson plan stations: what do you know, what are questions - Identify mapping - Class charter- creating a course environment where teachers feel see, valued and heard	Norms/Ways of Work - Reflections...Mentor- Critical Friends Shift - Fundamentals - Observation 2.0: APPR tips and traps		
		What makes a lesson plan strong?	ELEM example, HS Example, MS Example(s)	Session 3: 10/7 - Intro to the lesson plan template - Same but different - Inquiry of sample lessons- with choice - Goal setting	Lesson Plan Template Overview, Reflecting on feedback		
		How will a clear, well written objective, guide me during my pre-observation?	Pre Observation Questions	Session 4 10/21 - Intro to objectives - Practice talking about objectives in faux pre observation conference - Goal setting continued	Objective- The WHY! How!		
		How can I create clear objectives that represent high expectations, rigor and are written in the form of student learning?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson	Session 5 & 6 11/4 & 11/8 - Reference Charter for time with critical friends - Bloom's Taxonomy - Revise objectives to include learning, behavior, conditions and performance level - Self Assessment - Objectives - Transfer objective writing into our classroom	Activation/Closure "6 mins that matter most"		
	Gradual release: Direct Instruction, Guided/Independent Practice	How will I apply students' prior knowledge in planning lessons that will encourage students to engage deeply with content, challenge thinking and explore different ways of thinking?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson The 8 minutes that matter most	Session 7 12/18 - Experience an activation followed by a mini lesson captured on chart paper. - The 8 minutes that matter most - Debrief the activation - Examples - Create	Direct Instruction		
		How do I find time to self-assess?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson	Session 8: 1/6 - Mood Meter - Choice - APPR - Activation - Objectives - Critical Colleagues - Lesson plan - Observation	Guided Practice		
		How important is direct instruction?	Enhancing Professional Practice-	Session 9 & 10 1/27 & 2/10 Review Norms	Independent Practice		
		What are the key elements of effective direct instruction?	Danielson John Hattie	- Hattie - Direct Instruction - Mini Lesson on Direct Instruction - Mini lesson modeled - Reflection			
		How will I make thinking explicit during instruction?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson Modeling/Thinking Article	Session 11 10/21 - Read Modeling and Thinking Aloud - Jigsaw	Formative/Summative Assessment: Through Gradual Release (Self/Peer)		
		How will I create meaningful lessons that allow sufficient time for students to engage in meaningful learning that ensures students achieve the identified objective?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson	Session 12 3/17 - Activation - Choice Board - Time with cohort group to debrief	Intro to Workshop-Parts of Lesson (Chunks)		
	Assessment of and for learning (active kids from the beginning)	How can I assess the product and process to plan for student learning?	Enhancing Professional Practice- Danielson 4 Formative Assessment Practices that make a difference in Classrooms	Session 13 3/17 - KWL - Collaborate with random partner at VNPS - Formative vs Summative	Assessment to Pull/Track/Group Kids		
			Danielson	Session 14 4/21 - Activation - Danielson - Differentiated prompts - Ed Camp: Danielson - Who is assessed? - What will I assess? - How will I assess? - When will I look at the assessments? - Gallery Walk	Strategy Groups/Small Groups		
		How can I create an exemplary lesson?	Danielson	Session 15 4/21 - Putting it all together - Compare Danielson & Thrive - Revise your original lesson plan - Discuss with a partner and give feedback	Conferencing With Students		
	Closure and Celebration			Session 16 5/12 - Using the Danielson Rubric, give specific feedback to your partner on their revised lesson plan - Celebrate & Closure	Plan a Workshop		
RELATIONSHIPS 3c. Creating and Environment of	Collecting and using data to	How can I get to know students personally, culturally and as learners	Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain				

<i>Report and Report</i> <i>4c: Communicating with families</i> <i>4d: Participating in a Professional Community</i> November 4 November 18 December 16 January 6	better understand your students strengths, weaknesses and interests. (pre-workshop) ***	while teaching my content? 11/4, 11/18 **Add something for ELEM for PTC				
	Caring data-conversations with - Parents and other professionals	How can I communicate with parents and other professionals in a way that shows my understanding of their child and my content? 12/16	5 As for difficult conversations?			
	Broadening your Community: PLN, Other colleagues	How do I surround myself with colleagues that will inspire me, build me up and give me specific, actionable feedback? 1/4 New Years Resolutions	Twitter, IG (MS/HS)			
WORKSHOP MODEL 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records Semester 2 January 27 February 10 March 3 March 31 March 17 May 5 April 21 May 19	Structure of the Workshop & Mini Lesson Partners	How can I use different student groupings to meet the needs of all students?	WKSP structure		Highlights/Showcase	
	Small Group Instruction				Reflections/Goals- Revisit Lesson Plan	
	Conferencing & Formative **Assessment				PARTYYYYY!!!!!! 🎉🎊	

Third Year Teacher Program: Year 3

UNIT	BENDS	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	OUTLINE OF LEARNING	LESSON BREAKDOWN & NOTES:
LAUNCH & HOUSEKEEPING	Welcome e-mail Recruitment e-mail (missed) e-mail to Admins Syllabus			
CLASSROOM CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT Bends: - CLIMATE - EXPECTATIONS - SPACE <i>The Skillful Teacher (TST)</i> (review - Ch. 15 - Relationships) Ch. 16 - Classroom Climate Ch 14 - Expectations DANIELSON: 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness 2e: Organizing Physical Space	RELATIONSHIPS <i>"The quality of relationships between teachers and students, (and among students), is a deep and constant backdrop to all that is transpiring in classrooms."</i>	In what ways are strong classroom relationships connected to student achievement? What do teachers do to build and strengthen these relationships?	Eight Key Teacher Dispositions & Behaviors: - Acknowledging students - Communicating value - Respecting students - Demonstrating fairness - Exhibiting realness - Being open to humor & having fun - Shaping learning experiences around student interests - Culturally relevant/responsive instruction	REVIEW - Most covered in #Connect & Thrive Use as a lens to critique our start
	CLASSROOM CLIMATE Classroom Climate Defined: <i>"the feeling and beliefs students have and the cumulative patterns of behavior that result from those feelings and beliefs regarding community and mutual support, risk-taking and confidence, and influence and control."</i> (TST)	What is classroom climate & what components does it include? How do master teachers create a classroom where students feel empowered, accepted, and safe to take risks and try things that are hard for them?	Three Major Strands: Community & Mutual Support: - Knowing Others: greeting, listening, responding - Acknowledging, and affirming - Group identity, responsibility and independence - Social Skills & group dynamics - Problem-solving and conflict resolution Risk-taking & Confidence: - Normalizing errors - Care and perseverance versus speed - Getting feedback and help - Effort and ability Five Ways Students Have Influence: - Stop my teaching - Negotiate the rules of the classroom - Teaching students to use principles of learning - Learning style and choices - Using students and their communities as a source of knowledge	

	EXPECTATIONS How can we ensure that we have and <u>thoughtfully</u> communicate high expectations for every student? How do we build a classroom culture where students internalize that "Smart" is something that you become through hard work. What is a classroom "Arena" and how can teachers leverage each to communicate high expectations?	How can we foster a cognitively vibrant classroom culture that leverages the strengths and interests of each individual student while feeling safe for students to self-assess, develop areas of growth and cultivate shared belief in the importance of learning? How can we create a culture for learning that our students are actively engaged while simultaneously empowered to take ownership over their own learning process? - Self-Assessment - Student choice based on assessments & interests How can we <u>engage students as codesigners</u> to intentionally <u>leverage</u> our physical <u>environment</u> to support multiple learning modalities and empower students as <u>partners in learning</u>?	Three Major Strands: 1. What You Expect is What You Get • Four Kinds of Standards - o Quality & quantity of work - o Work habits & procedures - o Business & housekeeping - o Interpersonal relationships • 11 Ways to Communicate Standards - o Direct communication, Specific communication, Repeated communication, Positive expectancy, Modeling, Personal contact, No Excuses, Recognizing superior performance or gains, Logical consequences for poor performance, Tenacity, Feedback 2. Growth Mindset - Effort Based Ability (or Incrementalist Theory) • Smart is not something you are, smart is something you get (incrementally) by working hard and working smart (Jeff Howard). • The Three Critical Messages: - o "This is important" - o "You can do it" - o "I will not give up on you" 3. The Behaviors of High Expectations Teaching • The 10 Arenas of Classroom Life a. Calling on Students b. Responding to Student Answers c. Giving Help d. Challenging Attitude Toward Errors-Persevere and Return e. Giving and Negotiating Tasks and Assignments f. Giving Feedback According to Criteria for Success g. Positive Framing and Reteaching h. Tenacity i. Grades, Retakes, and Redos j. Grouping	
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	Classroom culture is affirming, active, engaging, and inclusive <i>"All are teachers, learners, and leaders..."</i> (Culture 2b)			Day 1:
	Learning Environment reflects activity and is responsive to students (Flexibility & Responsibility 3e)			
	Students as co-constructors of learning environment (Physical Space 2e)		The Space- by Bob Dillion	
DIFFERENTIATION 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c: Engaging Students in Learning 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Workshop Components - Mini-lessons - Strategy Groups - 1-1 Conferencing - Students clubs / project teams			
	<u>Differentiation: 13 Attributes</u>	How do students plan lessons so that there are access points for all students? How do they assess learning to make informed decisions about student instructional goals?	Bloom's Taxonomy	
	Leveled Learning Objectives & Assessment (Formative & Summative)			
	Assessment			
	Workshop 2.0 - As a tool to differentiate - Mini-lessons - Strategy Groups - Conferencing - Students clubs / project teams	How can we facilitate small group instruction in a manner that promotes genuine student collaboration? - Collaboration vs. Parallel Work - Questioning	UDL & Blended Learning: Thriving in Flexible Learning Landscapes - by Katie Novak & Catlin R. Tucker	

DYNAMIC LEARNING MODELS 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3c: Engaging Students in Learning 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Learning models to support discussion and collaboration	What are the learning models teachers can use to promote collaborative classroom discussions and a collaborative learning environment?	
	Learning models to support questioning and inquiry	How do teachers establish classroom models that generate and encourage student inquiry, wondering and exploration?	
	Learning models to support problem solving and critical thinking	What are the learning models teachers can use to promote deep and critical thinking, problem solving and application of skill?	

Fourth Year Teacher Program: Year 4 ([Flushed Out Thinking](#))

UNIT	BENDS	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	PRIMARY RESOURCES	LESSON
Curriculum	What is Curriculum?			
	Where Does Curriculum Come From?			
	Why does curriculum Cycle?			
	How do we evaluate curriculum?			
Leading Locally	How do we lead in curriculum?			
	What is modern curriculum?			
	What is the goldilocks zone of alignment?			
Leading Globally				

Mentor Teacher Program

UNIT	BENDS	ESSENTIAL QUESTION - Skills & Concepts	PRIMARY RESOURCES	LESSON
Relationships and Connections	Being a Marigold & Ambassador	How can I welcome this new colleague, build a relationship, support them in their entrance and help facilitate a successful start to their career?	Marigold Article	Summer Mentor Day
	Connecting with the school and community			
Coaching and Support	Lesson planning and observations	How do we support our new colleagues to prepare for their observation?		Session 1: Preparing for the observation: The APPR Process Frontline Danielson Expectations How we coach
	Communicating with parents and the community	Grades, conferences and Assessments: How do teachers use data to convey information to families about student performance? How do we effectively communicate with parents?		Session 2: Grades, conferences and Assessments Preparing for Parent Conferences Looking at Student work Entering Grades & Communicating Pitfalls and Potholes of grades and conferences
Guiding and Reflecting	Setting Goals, Building and Growing	How can we use Learning walks to improve our instruction, routines and environment?		Session 3: Improving Practices Using Learning walks to improve our instruction, routines and environment How to do learning walks? Pros, Cons What next?
	Reflecting & Improving on Practices	Goal Setting and Creating an Action Plan: How can we collaboratively create an action plan and set goals to provide the level and type of assistance appropriate for a new colleague?		Session 4: Goal Setting and Creating an Action Plan What does my new Colleague need? How Can I support them? What structures can I put in place? What resources do I need to access? What do I see them struggling with?

Appendix G - Lesson Plan Templates

Gradual Release Lesson Plan Template

NAME:	SCHOOL:	GRADE/SUBJECT:
TOPIC/UNIT:		DATE & TIME:
OBJECTIVE:		PLANNING COHERENT INSTRUCTION (1E) ☐ The lesson has a clear structure ☐ All students grapple with content which will challenge them ☐ I have a plan for students who have unique needs ROUTINES & PROCEDURES (2C) ☐ Resources are provided to support the individual needs of all students ☐ Routines and procedures maximize time on task ☐ Routines support student independence QUESTIONING & DISCUSSION (3B) ☐ Questions and discussions are used to deepen thinking and understanding and challenge students to reason and reflect ☐ Students engage one another through questions and dialogue ENGAGING STUDENTS (3C) ☐ Students work together ☐ Students choose how to engage and express their ideas ☐ There are opportunities for students to pause and reflect on their learning ASSESSMENT (3D) ☐ Formative assessment guides instructional choices ☐ Articulated characteristics and criteria of high-quality work ☐ Opportunities for high-quality feedback from teacher and/or students are outlined
ACTIVATION:		
DIRECT INSTRUCTION:		
GUIDED PRACTICE:		
INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:		
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:		
CLOSURE:		
REFLECTION/NEXT STEPS:		

Workshop Lesson Plan Template

NAME:		SCHOOL:	GRADE/SUBJECT:
TOPIC/UNIT:			DATE & TIME:
MINI-LESSON (10 minutes)			PLANNING COHERENT INSTRUCTION (1E) ☐ The lesson has a clear structure ☐ All students grapple with content that will challenge them ☐ I have a plan for students who have unique needs ROUTINES & PROCEDURES (2C) ☐ Resources are provided to support the individual needs of all students ☐ Routines and procedures maximize time on task ☐ Routines support student independence QUESTIONING & DISCUSSION (3B) ☐ Questions and discussions are used to deepen thinking and understanding and challenge students to reason and reflect ☐ Students engage one another through questions and dialogue ENGAGING STUDENTS (3C) ☐ Students work together ☐ Students choose how to engage and express their ideas ☐ There are opportunities for students to pause and reflect on their learning ASSESSMENT (3D) ☐ Formative assessment guides instructional choices
OBJECTIVE (TEACHING POINT):			
ACTIVATION (CONNECTION):			
DIRECT INSTRUCTION:			
GUIDED PRACTICE:			
STRATEGY GROUPS / CONFERENCING	INDEPENDENT PRACTICE/GROUP WORK (Book Clubs, Independent work, partner work, etc.)		
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:			
CLOSURE/SHARE:			
REFLECTION/NEXT STEPS:			

	☐ Articulated characteristics and criteria of high-quality work ☐ Opportunities for high-quality feedback from the teacher and/or students are outlined
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Inquiry Lesson Plan Template

NAME:	SCHOOL:	GRADE/SUBJECT:
TOPIC/UNIT:		DATE & TIME:
ENGAGE		
ACTIVATION:		PLANNING COHERENT INSTRUCTION (1E) ☐ The lesson has a clear structure ☐ All students grapple with content which will challenge them ☐ I have a plan for students who have unique needs ROUTINES & PROCEDURES (2C) ☐ Resources are provided to support the individual needs of all students ☐ Routines and procedures maximize time on task ☐ Routines support student independence QUESTIONING & DISCUSSION (3B) ☐ Questions and discussions are used to deepen thinking and understanding and challenge students to reason and reflect ☐ Students engage one another through questions and dialogue ENGAGING STUDENTS (3C) ☐ Students work together ☐ Students choose how to engage and express their ideas ☐ There are opportunities for students to pause and reflect on their learning ASSESSMENT (3D) ☐ Formative assessment guides instructional choices ☐ Articulated characteristics and criteria of high-quality work ☐ Opportunities for high-quality feedback from teacher and/or students are outlined
EXPLORE / EXPLAIN / ELABORATE		
GUIDED PRACTICE (EXPLORE a phenomenon):		
SHARE/PUBLISH (EXPLAIN):		
GUIDED PRACTICE (ELABORATE):		
SHARE/PUBLISH (ELABORATE):		
EVALUATE / SENSE MAKING		
DIRECT INSTRUCTION (EVALUATE/CONSOLIDATE)		
OBJECTIVE		
CLOSURE:		
REFLECTION/NEXT STEPS:		

Appendix H - Mentor Program Guidelines

Table of Contents:

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- Mentors
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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Context

Student learning and well-being is at the heart of our mission as a school district and community. Teachers are an essential part of the experience that students have in the School District. We know that when students enter a classroom at the beginning of the school year, they are beginning their journey of growth and development for that year. The teacher assigned to that class, whether brand new to the profession or a veteran, has the responsibility to lead the next ten months of learning and development for those students. This responsibility is not to be taken lightly. “Teachers hired today are the teachers for the next generation. Their success will determine the success of an entire generation of students” (Wong, 2004). Investing resources in improving the practice of teachers, is supporting the success of our students. New teachers, with limited experience, not only need support to feel effective in their own practice but require the professional development to properly support the range of learners in their classes. Teacher effectiveness is directly correlated to student achievement. Sanders and Rivers, in 1996 studied the cumulative effect of teacher effectiveness on academic achievement. In their study, they showed that, “regardless of initial achievement level (of students), teachers in the top quintile facilitated desirable academic progress for all students. However, regardless of their entering achievement levels, students under the tutelage of teachers in the bottom quintile made unsatisfactory gains” (Sanders and Rivers, 1996). A school’s main function is to support student achievement; to ensure student achievement, schools need to ensure that every teacher that interacts with students has the skills to support the needs of all students. Mentoring is an essential component of a new teacher’s experience as they enter a school district. A mentor has proven to increase teacher satisfaction, effectiveness, and

retention which are all factors correlated to the teacher's likelihood of staying in the district and in the profession (Johnson and Kardos, 2002). Not only is teacher effectiveness a crucial component of a mentoring program, we also know that mentoring increases teacher retention. "Teacher turnover in schools has a profound effect on the learning community as a whole and disrupts the educational process, thus impacting student learning (St. George, 2011). Mentoring is an essential component of a strong teacher induction program. The commitment of districts to their new teachers is a commitment to both the current students in their classrooms and a pledge to the future success of the district.

Program Vision

The district vision for engaged, active, self-directed learning applies to everyone, students as well as teachers. Professional learning for faculty is research- based and aims to move teachers from "best practice to next practice." Faculty engage in individual and collegial inquiry as they seek to bring the district vision to life for all students. "Best practice" is known and considered, and innovative practice is sought to move best practice to the next level in order to be responsive to particular classroom contexts (Fullan and Hargreaves). **Mentoring, then, is not considered to be merely a transmission of knowledge to new faculty, but rather a collaborative effort that inducts new members into district culture at the same time that it learns from the perspectives, skills, knowledge, and "new eyes" of members joining the community.** Mentoring is a piece of our larger new teacher induction program as mentoring, when paired with sustained and comprehensive professional development, provides a robust support network that meets the needs of new teachers (Wong, 2004).

Research / Knowledge Base

The latest research on teacher induction has been studied as part of revising the mentoring program. Specific references to that research will be cited throughout the document, and research notes are linked to this document. Equally, program design has relied on faculty feedback and ideas, along with analysis of the results of the previous mentoring program.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

The mentoring program, at its heart, seeks to induct new faculty into a culture of lifelong professional learning. Therefore, a key goal of the program is to provide for all the participants in the program, mentors and new faculty, the opportunity to examine, analyze and model both good teaching and evidence-based professional learning. **The program and all its participants are models of professional learning and forward-reaching collegiality.**

Mentoring is not the job of any one person; new faculty will be paired with mentors, and, in addition, many others will join in supporting the learning of new faculty (Ingersoll). **Mentors are teacher leaders.** Mentor leadership is demonstrated by the "variety of ways you facilitate the growth of another teacher and reflect on your own skills as a practicing teacher" (Radford, 2017). **Mentors are coaches.** Mentors build a trusting relationship with new colleagues to coach and guide them in developing their practice.

Mentoring is reflective. Mentoring relies on the reflective practices of both the new colleague and the mentor with a focus on self and collective improvement. **Mentoring is mindful.** Mentoring requires the mindful awareness of the needs of the new colleagues and a keen sense of how to support and facilitate growth through modeling, conversations and actions. **Mentoring is transformational.** Mentoring is a process that results in transformational shifts in both members of the mentoring relationship. Growth and development occurs by the new colleague and the mentor alike. Ultimately, successful mentoring programs “... not only advance the careers of experienced teachers who serve as instructional mentors, but also foster new teacher leadership” (Gless, New Teacher Center).

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

New Faculty

New faculty members come to the district with a wide range of experience, expertise, and mental models about teaching and learning. Creating an effective culture of welcoming new teachers requires a careful look at their entry points: existing skills, expertise, and opportunities for growth. This requires that the mentoring program be very attuned to the individuals for whom it is designed.

Research, using several different lenses, describes the stages new faculty go through in the first year. New faculty typically move through needing mentoring in three areas: logistics / procedures; basic acculturation to the “art and science of teaching” in the district; deeper understanding of student-centered learning. These areas are not necessarily distinct and linear, and differentiation for new faculty induction is necessary (The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education). Another view of the new faculty experience relates to typical phases during the first year: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation again (Moir). Lipton and Wellman further discuss that in each of these six phases, the new teacher needs support, challenge, and help developing professional vision (Lipton and Wellman, *Mentoring Matters*).

New faculty will have these differentiated opportunities for ongoing learning:

- Self-assessment and coaching to identify strengths and opportunities for growth as related to the District vision.
- Regular meetings with mentors, staff developers, instructional coaches, administrators and colleagues for planning, debriefing, and analyzing student work.
- Participation in a variety of professional initiatives both building-based and district-wide.

While implicit in the above areas for learning, it is important to make explicit that the impact of social /emotional factors on all learning is significant, and requires careful attention by participants in the program - for adults and students alike.

New faculty will engage in a four year professional development program entitled Grow to Great. Each year will have its own focus and essential question with the focus of each year to be developing the

capacity of new colleagues as they progress through their probation. Mentoring will be part of the first year of this four year induction program.

	(Year 1)	(Year 2)	(Year 3)	(Year 4)
Essential Questions	<i>Building Community:</i> What does it take to be a successful teacher? What are effective teaching practices, classroom structures and connections that are established within your first year?	<i>Creating a Foundation:</i> What are the foundational instructional structures to facilitate a productive learning environment? What is the research behind instructional structures and practices?	<i>Expanding our Instruction:</i> How can we intentionally redesign our learning spaces to create a culture for learning that empowers students to take ownership of their learning process while problem solving, exploring inquiry and genuinely collaborating with their peers?	<i>Empowering our Leaders:</i> How can we develop future teacher leaders? From planning instruction to designing curriculum, how do leaders lead both locally and globally?

Who Shall Receive a Mentor?

- Any new teacher
- Any teacher new to the district
- Tenured teachers who begin a tenure in another area
- Any leave replacement with an assignment of ½ of a school year or more
- Any probationary teacher assigned to a different school, role, building, or level that will need extensive coaching or support as determined by the building or district administrator

Who shall receive a “Mentor-Light?”

- Any leave replacement teacher with an assignment of less than ½ of a school year.

Mentors

Mentors have three core responsibilities in helping the new faculty member to fully join the District culture. The first is to learn and reflect about the role of the mentor. The second is to open their classrooms to model best teaching practices, inquiry, and innovation. The third is to provide consultation, cognitive coaching, and collaboration for and with the new faculty member; they will consistently seek to support, challenge, and facilitate vision for the new faculty member (Lipton and Wellman, *Making Mentoring Work*).

The mentor-new faculty relationship is intended to engage both educators in thoughtful dialogue about pedagogy and District inquiry. To facilitate this on-going work, certain structures are put in place:

Mentor and partner teacher(s) will:

- meet once a cycle from September through January.
- meet at least twice a month from February through June.
- participate in after school sessions with other mentoring partnerships, 5 per year.
- meet on occasion with program facilitators and instructional coaches.

Mentor Light and partner teacher will:

- meet once a cycle during the time of the partnership outside of contractual hours.
- mentor will log these hours on a district “mentor light” pay form and will submit monthly.
- meet on occasion with the PD Team representative who coordinates the mentoring program and instructional coaches.

Mentor & Mentor Light Requirements and Selection:

Mentors are seen as both learning partners for the new faculty as well as models of professional practice in the district. As a result, the requirements for mentoring are:

- Evidence of effective student-centered teaching and reflective-inquiry based professional learning.
- A one-year commitment to the program (Mentors only).
- Participation in summer mentor training and availability for after school meetings (Mentors only).
- Demonstration of those qualities and capacities that will affect a successful mentor-new teacher relationship:
 - accessibility, confidence, flexibility
 - openness to self-assessment and feedback; willingness to share strengths and struggles alike
 - knowledge and acceptance of a broad range of instructional strategies related to the district vision for empowered student-centered learning
 - understanding and use of differentiation for students
 - understanding and use of a repertoire of assessment approaches

- understanding of / willingness to explore current research
- willingness to question, experiment, and innovate with practice
- knowledge and use of backward planning for lessons, units, and / or courses
- deep knowledge of content and current directions in the discipline
- demonstration of strong professional collegiality and leadership

Selection of mentors will be based on specific district, building and/or department needs, with every effort made to effect appropriate matches between mentors and new teachers. A mentor may work with up to two teachers depending on the specific level of support needed, available mentors, and number of new faculty.

The mentor's ongoing work will require study and reflection about the role of mentoring itself, and will require collaboration with staff developers, administrators, and colleagues.

The principal will select mentors in consultation with the union building representative, as per the teachers' contract. The mentor receives a stipend as per the current year contract, and mentors may work with up to two new faculty.

Mentor Training:

All mentors will participate in training whether or not they have done so previously. There will be training during the summer for all mentors, with new faculty joining in the afternoon. Additional meetings for all mentors will then occur throughout the year to address the ongoing development and needs of mentors, as well as the needs of new teachers.

Summer, 1 day Mentor Training [According to contract, paid curriculum rate]

Main topics:

- Principles and expectations of the mentoring program
- The role of the mentor: mindsets and stances
- Professional inquiry and the District vision
- Feedback and coaching
- Modeling collegiality, openness to feedback and continual learning
- New faculty needs
- Planning the first month

Feedback will be sought on an on-going basis from mentors and with mentors regarding the direction of the program over the course of the year. Mentor as well as new faculty cohort meetings will be guided based on that feedback.

Additional Program Participants

Although specific mentors are assigned to new faculty, the induction process is best supported when it involves relationship building with multiple members of the school and the District. Below are other critical participants in the mentoring process. Mentors and these additional program participants will communicate regularly to provide a cohesive and multi-faceted approach to induction of new faculty. The District and building may also pilot innovative configurations of these participants for collaborative mentoring depending on building, grade level and department needs and opportunities.

Principal, Assistant Principals, Administrators:

Will provide ongoing coaching and feedback to the new teacher. Administrators will participate in new teacher and mentor cohort meetings whenever possible, and will provide ongoing feedback and advice to the program. Administrators will also meet with new faculty in small groups to learn about their entry experience and to increase connectedness.

Although building administrators will serve in the role of new teachers' evaluators, administrators will not ask the mentor for evaluative information concerning the new teacher. Administrators and mentors instead will collaborate about the new faculty member's professional learning goals and areas for support.

Staff Developers:

Will coordinate and support the program on an on-going basis, including: convening mentor and new teacher group meetings; collaborating with faculty and administration to provide professional learning differentiated for new faculty needs; providing support and coaching for peer observation; providing resources; providing instructional coaching and feedback; facilitating small groups of new teachers in collaboration with mentors; implementing on-going program feedback and evaluation.

Instructional Coaches

Both internal and external coaches will support specific needs of new teachers on a regular basis, in collaboration with staff developers, mentors, and administrators. For instance, in departments and grade levels where there are significant numbers of new faculty, instructional coaches might work with a small group of new faculty on areas of specific need and interest.

Department Chairs / Co-facilitators

Both department chairs and co-facilitators will be available for mentors and new teachers to: provide classroom models / materials; address problems; identify potential interdisciplinary learning opportunities; and collaborate with the principal, program facilitators and instructional coaches to foster the learning of new faculty.

Faculty Colleagues

Will share classroom work and inquiry, and may be sought for specific expertise and “consultation.” Counselors in particular will be resources for specific programs, for the social-emotional component of teaching and learning, and for consultation about working successfully with students and parents. All faculty will have opportunities to learn about the revised mentoring program and contribute to it.

Appendix I - Mentor Discussion Topics and Timelines

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND TIMELINE: YEAR ONE

The topics and activities in the table below are suggestions that have come from a variety of sources, especially the logs and feedback from previous mentors and new teachers. Mentors and new faculty partners should consider these topics and focus on those most relevant for immediate and ongoing learning. **In addition some topics will be focal points in new faculty orientation and cohort meetings, depending on identified needs.**

Time Period	"Day to Day"	Instructional
Before school begins:	Get to know each other by... • Calling partner(s) and introducing yourselves. • Seeking partner out on the Superintendent's Conference Day. If possible, spend some time getting to know one another...meet your partner for a cup of coffee, or meet at school for a brief walk around the building. Review / clarify / discuss: • First day of school expectations, schedules, taking attendance, classroom set-up, communication policies (new district policy,) emergency procedures. • Building "manuals" / guidelines • Mentor's role as a trusted advisor, coach, and colleague, NOT an evaluator. • Questions, concerns, needs of new faculty partner.	Consider both "big picture" and weekly planning via: • curriculum maps, course/grade level expectations • the District Vision and Goals • first day, first week, first unit plans • discussion of strengths and areas for Growth (begin self-assessment) • help set up LMS (Canvas, Google Classroom)
As school begins: review / clarify / discuss:	• a regular time to meet, and discuss "norms" for phone calls, texts, "on the fly" questions • building procedures • attendance procedures (changes in class list, absences, reporting) • schedules • Special Education - case managers, IEP's, RTI, test accommodations, etc. • who does what (secretaries, other staff) • extra duties (outside, bus, cafeteria, detention, chaperoning) • record-keeping / gradebook / Canvas • technology review: email, Infinite Campus, etc. • getting supplies and materials • APPR process overview	• continued discussion of strengths and growth areas (complete self-assessment and discuss) • classroom setup for student-centered learning • available curriculum resources: textbooks, materials, etc. • planning processes • Review lesson plan template
During September: review / clarify / discuss:	• schedule for regular meetings, once a cycle, and follow up ways you will track learning together (Google doc, email, hand notes, etc.) • introductions to secretaries, custodians, etc. • support staff-psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers, etc. • important resources: library media specialists and library, staff developers, instructional coaches, etc. • phone calls and emails to parents	• self-reflection and goal-setting, day-to-day and overarching • visitation of another teacher's classroom (mentor - new faculty member together) • effective use of technology for learning • teacher-student interactions, culture

	• open house/community night • APPR steps: self-assessment, inquiry, observation, peer cohort group • substitute teachers plans • case conferences • communicating with other colleagues • in-service courses, learning teams	• classroom policies, tardiness, homework, late assignments, etc. • student behavior issues
By mid-quarter, review / clarify / discuss:	• mid-quarter comments • parent communication • administrative evaluation • school life - clubs, fall events (Halloween, Homecoming, Spirit Week)	• unit design • assessments options; assessment for learning • on-going work on APPR inquiry • informal observations of each other's classes • instructional strategies (group work, classroom talk, providing feedback, etc.)
By the end of 1st quarter, review / clarify / discuss:	• quarter grades/ report cards /end-of-quarter issues	• curriculum design to provide access for all • project based / inquiry based assessments • re-examining grading, classroom policies • observation of each other and other teachers • reflection and goal setting for 2nd quarter • gathering and analyzing evidence for APPR inquiry
By mid-year: review / clarify / discuss:	• logistics related to snow days, field trips, mid-terms, if applicable • ending 1st semester courses, if applicable	• reflection and goal setting for second half of year • review of District vision • gathering and analyzing evidence for APPR inquiry
Second semester: A shift to deepening learning / exploration in specific areas as identified by previous reflection and goal setting	• on-going work on APPR / final conclusions • CSE forms, procedures • end-of-the-year procedures • AP's / end of year assessments, if applicable • placement cards/information • ceremonies, celebrations	• on-going work on APPR / final conclusions • continued peer observation • Instructional /curriculum/ assessment work based on goals set at the end of the first semester • preparation for local assessment • Analysis /reflection about the year: successes, areas for growth • Celebrate!

Appendix J - New Teacher Orientation Schedules

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION: DAY 1	
8:00 to 8:45	<u>Our Mission, Vision & Strategic Plan</u> Join the superintendent as she dives into the district's priorities including our mission, vision, and strategic plan. Get acquainted with the core values of the School District and how we collectively participate in the success of all of our students.
8:45 to 9:00	<u>Breakfast, Meet & Greet</u> Join us to meet your colleagues, have some breakfast. A light breakfast of pastries, coffee and fruit will be served.
9:10 to 9:45	<u>Welcome & Introductions</u> Join us to meet your District Administrative team and professional development team. Meet and greet your new colleagues and begin to get to know the professional developers that will be supporting you throughout the year.
10:00 to 11:00	<u>Organizational Chart</u> Through strategic questioning and collaborative conversations, you and your new colleagues will meet with the Administrative Team to decipher the Organizational Chart. Determine how we are made up as an organization and meet our central office team.
11:15 to 12:00	<u>In-step with Deep Teaching, APPR & Research Based Instructional Practices</u> Develop an understanding of how our New Teacher Induction Program-supports your development of skills, instructional practices and helps you set expectations for teaching and learning throughout the trajectory of your four year tenure. Evaluate how to utilize this learning to support and enhance your APPR and classroom evaluations as you develop deep instructional practices.
12:00-1:00	Get your Device (Rotunda) & Lunch (Patio) <i>Device Pick Up Schedule: ES (12:00) MS (12:15) HS (12:30)</i>
	Technology Cafe: Technology Roll-out, Get Connected & Log-in The Technology Department will distribute devices, get you signed into all of your essential applications. Participants will move through self-paced tutorials to become familiar with district wide services, tools and programs.

1:00 to 2:45	Elementary- Ipad and Mac Basics Come set up your Mac and iPad for efficiency and productivity. Learn how to navigate your device for best productivity for teaching and learning.	Middle & High School- Intro to Canvas - An Introduction to our learning management system, Canvas. During this time, you will be introduced to the overall structure, the expectations of use, and the basic ins & outs of setting up your course.
2:45 to 3:00	Whole Group Wrap up & Frame Tomorrow	

Appendix K - Sample Teacher Appointment Statement

Appointment: Probationary

{Teacher Name}, Teacher of Physical Education, {School Name} Elementary School, to a probationary appointment in the tenure area of Physical Education, effective August 31, 2023 through August 30, 2027, subject to receipt of composite or overall annual professional performance review ratings pursuant to Education law Section 3012-c and/or 3012-d of either effective or highly effective in at least three (3) of the four (4) proceeding years, and if the probationer receives an ineffective composite or overall rating in the final year of the probationary period they shall not be eligible for tenure at that time.