



PRESS RELEASE

October 23, 2007

Contact: Dara Barlin

(718) 643-6135, dbarlin@ucsc.edu

Intensive New Teacher Support Pays Off: A Return on Investment for Educators and Kids

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Investments in high-quality support programs for new educators yield a significant return on investment for teachers, schools, and students, according to a new study released today at a Capitol Hill policy briefing sponsored by the New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The NTC's cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that high-quality induction programs are beneficial both because beginning teachers stay in greater numbers and because those who stay provide more effective instruction.

The NTC's analysis found that **every \$1.00 spent on high-quality teacher induction programs provides a return on investment of \$1.66 after five years. The return on investment is primarily a result of enhanced student learning and reduced teacher turnover costs.** The study underscores how teacher induction programs are critical to helping schools retain their best and brightest educators and develop a highly skilled teaching force. Further, the study adds to the research evidence that only comprehensive, high-quality teacher induction programs produce such desired impacts.

“There is a huge chasm between rigorous, data-driven, high-quality induction and mentoring, and the more traditional ‘buddy systems’ that pervade our nation’s schools,” said Ellen Moir, founder and executive director of the New Teacher Center. “The first provides a return on investment because it produces more effective teachers who stay in schools and remain in the profession. The second focuses on moral support, which is nice, but a pat on the back simply doesn’t lead to better outcomes for teachers or for kids.”

One of the goals of today’s briefing was to help federal policymakers and key educational leaders understand the importance of high-quality induction and its key components. Some of those elements include: a program that supports new teachers for at least two years; rigorous mentor selection and training; and dedicated time for mentors and new teachers to interact.

This briefing falls amidst congressional efforts to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The U.S. Congress is currently grappling with how to ensure that every student has access to highly qualified teachers, and some key congressional leaders feel that comprehensive induction programs are instrumental to achieving that goal.

U.S. Senator Jack Reed (Rhode Island), the opening speaker at today’s event, introduced legislation earlier this year—the School Improvement through Teacher Quality Act (S. 1979)—to amend the No Child Left Behind Act and create a new \$500-million, formula-based program to help schools provide beginning teachers with the key elements of effective induction and experienced teachers with systematic, sustained professional development.

“Improving teacher quality is the single most effective step we can take to increase student achievement and turn around struggling schools,” said Senator Reed. “Research has shown that offering support for new teachers like comprehensive, multi-year mentoring cuts attrition rates in half and helps these teachers become high-quality professionals who improve student learning. I will continue to push for induction programs for new teachers to ensure they have the skills and training to be truly effective in the classroom.”

U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Massachusetts), chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, proposed comprehensive legislation earlier this year—the Teacher Excellence for All Children (TEACH) Act—that includes provisions to establish a \$300-million grant program for states and high-need local educational agencies to develop state-of-the-art teacher induction programs. Co-sponsored by U.S. Congressman George Miller, chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, the TEACH Act was included in the Committee’s NCLB discussion draft released last month.

"We must do more to attract the best and brightest individuals to teach in the schools that need them most—and that begins with treating teachers with the respect they deserve as one of our nation's most valuable resources," said Senator Kennedy. "As this report confirms, one of the most effective and important investments we can make is to provide comprehensive induction programs. Teachers should have the opportunity to learn from expert, experienced practitioners in their field."

A mentor and new teacher from Chicago Public Schools also spoke at today’s event. Their on-the-ground stories about how participation in a high-quality induction changed their experience in public education are critical for helping policymakers to understand the impact such programs can have on teachers—and students.

"I was overwhelmed, under-supported, exhausted, and I wasn't getting through to the kids," said second-year teacher, Jennifer Frish. "Then I connected with my mentor. Amy gave me expert instructional advice in the moment, in my own classroom, when it meant something, when I could do something with it. She is the reason why I'm a better teacher now – and why I'll keep getting better over time."

Amy Treadwell, Jennifer’s mentor, added, “Intensive mentoring is different from anything I’ve seen in schools before. It is serious. It involves data, is based on standards, and is focused on outcomes. I finally have the tools I need to help teachers improve. And now that I know what good mentoring looks like, I’m not going back.”

The findings from the NTC’s cost-benefit analysis will be published in the November 2007 issue of *ERS Spectrum*—a peer-reviewed research journal for researchers and administrators. It represents the first cost-benefit analysis conducted of a teacher induction program.

#####

Policy Brief: http://www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/NTC_Policy_Brief-Hill_Briefing.pdf

Research Brief: http://www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/NTC_Research_Brief-induction_cost_benefit.pdf

Full Research Report: http://www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/Spectrum_Villar-Strong.pdf

Press Release: <http://newteachercenter.org/pdfs/hill-brief-release.pdf>