

Promising Practices and Implementation Tools

1. Names & Positions: Gloria Lemerise, Director of Instruction; Jaime Curley, Lead Mentor; Krissy Breda, Lead Mentor; Carole Depin, Lead Mentor; Melissa O'Reilly, Lead Mentor

2. Emails: lemerisg@dy-regional.k12.ma.us, HYPERLINK "mailto:curleyj@dy-regional.k12.ma.us" curleyj@dy-regional.k12.ma.us,
HYPERLINK "mailto:oreillym@dy-regional.k12.ma.us" oreillym@dy-regional.k12.ma.us,
bredak@dy-regional.k12.ma.us, HYPERLINK "mailto:depinc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us" depinc@dy-regional.k12.ma.us
Phone: 508-398-7630

3. Lever Addressed: Induction

4. Title of Promising Practice: Supporting and Retaining New Teachers at D-Y Regional

5. District(s) Where Implemented: Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

6. Applicable Grade Levels: PK-12

7. How This Practice Reflects District's Mission & Core Values:

D-Y's mission is to "Empower Each Student to Achieve Excellence with Integrity in a Changing World." The district further believes that teachers are key to student learning in that 1.) Teachers are role models, 2) Teachers inspire, motivate, and empower learners and 3.) Teaching is collaborative and involves on-going learning. Therefore, implementing a comprehensive Induction program that nurtures and retains quality educators is vital to accomplishing these core beliefs.

8. Goals of This Practice:

- 1.) Support and develop educators new to the district and to education.
- 2.) Provide differentiated professional development based on experience, level and subject
- 3.) Continue to work collaboratively with administration and teachers union to design and implement a quality Induction Program.

9. Description of This Practice and How it Addresses Criteria for This Lever:

Like most districts who have participated in Project SUCCESS, Dennis-Yarmouth

Regional's Induction Program has become more focused and reenergized as a result of the commitment made by administration and teachers to improve the existing program. Project SUCCESS ("School University Collaboration Committed to the Educational Success of All Students"), involves a State grant funded graduate program offered through UMASS Dartmouth, that trains lead mentors and mentors with the knowledge and skills to effectively support new teachers and eventually train other new mentors in their district.

Three cohorts of teachers have completed Project SUCCESS training, resulting in an expanded leadership model and improvements to D-Y's Induction Program. Teacher leadership is a hallmark of the district, and previously highlighted as a promising practice, so creating additional leadership roles was seamlessly embraced, implemented and supported by teachers and administration.

In terms of the current structure, there are three levels of paid leadership positions that work in collaboration with the Superintendent and Director of Instruction to plan, implement and evaluate all aspects of the program: Lead Mentors- currently there are four lead mentors who represent all K-12 levels, oversee the entire induction program, and communicate with the Superintendent and Director of Instruction regularly. They also meet four times a year with the thirty plus teacher mentors in the district to focus on topics of importance, discuss progress and provide collegial support. These four program leaders also conduct a yearly training for teachers who are interested in becoming future mentors in the district. Using the resource, *Mentoring in Action* as a guide, this interactive training covers areas such as student engagement, parent communication and classroom management. In addition, these Lead Mentors have proposed further improvements to differentiate their program next year, which would create a designated lead mentor at each of the four building levels and involve them in the pairing of new teachers with their mentors.

Mentors- who meet bi-weekly with their mentee to provide ongoing support around the aforementioned topics, as well as other key areas including evaluation, Massachusetts State Frameworks, incorporating the Common Core, licensure, curriculum initiatives etc. These meetings occur both on a one-to-one basis and in small groups, depending on the specific make-up of mentors and mentees in a particular building. Mentors are also expected to meet regularly with the Lead Mentors in grade level or district groups. In addition, mentors may also offer voluntary professional development opportunities for their mentees. For example, at the high school level voluntary sessions on topics such as teacher evaluation and report cards have met with great success.

Building Based Support Mentors- who support newly hired teachers who have attained professional licensure and bring varied levels of experience and expertise to the district.

New teachers and teachers new to the district are welcomed during a two day Orientation that is led by the Superintendent, Director of Instruction and building Principals prior to the start of the school year. During this initial

induction, Lead Mentors provide an overview of the goals and structure of the mentoring process that all new hires will be participating in throughout the coming year. Team leaders and grade level and content area colleagues also play a key role in welcoming new hires into the district during their building based orientation day as well as through the weekly common planning times that are germane to the existing Professional Learning Community structure within the district.

Program evaluation occurs in both formative and summative ways and is accomplished through regular meetings with the mentors, mentor and mentee discussions, discussions with administrators and surveys that are conducted both mid and end of the year.

As detailed below, this promising practice exemplifies many of the criteria necessary for a successful Induction Program that positively influence educator expertise:

The district provides comprehensive, systematic supports to make the transition from novice to accomplished educator more effective and professionally rewarding.

The school district has a comprehensive Induction Plan that includes program elements, roles and responsibilities, implementation processes and time lines, and identifies necessary tools and resources.

All members of the district and school community share collective responsibility for contributing to novice teacher and administrator growth.

Provision for professional growth of novice teachers and administrators is an integral part of the school district's professional development plan for all educators.

The induction process is informed by the Common Core of Professional Knowledge and Skills and is focused on instruction.

Induction programs provide comprehensive support for all teachers and administrators in their first three years of practice.

Professional development for novice teachers and administrators is specialized and developmentally appropriate.

Programs are differentiated to address educators' specific areas of responsibility and levels of experience.

Induction programs are multi-faceted and include training, orientation and networking for beginning teachers, leaders, veteran teachers and administrators.

Induction and mentoring programs are provided with the administrative supports and resources necessary.

The selection, training, responsibilities and rewards for mentors are informed by research and are part of the district Induction Plan.

Time for mentoring of novice teachers and administrators is an integral part of the instructional day and provides opportunities for observation, consultation and reflection.

The district Induction Plan includes a process for collecting program data and conducting ongoing formative evaluation and regular summative evaluation of program effectiveness.

10. How This Practice Was Implemented So It Was More Successful Than Others:

D-Y's Induction Program is more collaborative than in the past, a clearer shared vision exists, and there is more shared responsibility for new teacher support and success.

Lead mentors serve as role models and provide opportunity for additional teachers to be trained, which in turn, has expanded ownership and leadership capacity within the district.

Participation and training of teachers through Project SUCCESS over the past three years has fine-tuned the districts' thinking, and provided the needed elements to build upon and strengthen the existing program.

In addition to the day-to-day support provided by the mentor, there is a structure and network in place to further support new teachers on the specifics of the core curriculum both in their first year and beyond. Team leaders and instructional coaches for literacy, math, and science are available to provide an ongoing thread of support for teachers new to the district both inside and outside of the classroom. Principals are also primary evaluators, so they are directly involved in supporting teacher goals, fostering growth and retaining high quality teachers.

11. How This Practice Changed The District or School:

The culture in D-Y is predicated on collaboration and trust. Efforts made by the district leadership to improve upon their Induction Program, consistently seek input, evaluate induction practices, and adjust programs based on this feedback, has added to the sense of trust and collaborative spirit within the district. Regardless of whether a teacher is new or more experienced, all staff

ultimately see themselves as working as a team to help students succeed and grow as learners.

Prior to participation in Project SUCCESS, experienced teachers have always rallied to support new teachers. Now that there is a more formalized system in place, the process and expectations around induction and mentoring are clearer and more consistent throughout the district.

Although there are ample opportunities to collaborate in teams, the Induction Program has brought the ability for teachers to network and build relationships to a higher level.

Since teacher leadership is a valued component of the district culture, lead mentors and mentors are also compensated for the important work that they do.

Because of the established history of working collaboratively with the Dennis – Yarmouth Teacher's Association, the existing culture promotes an environment where all staff plays a role in the growth and success of new educators in their initial years of teaching.

12. Resources (time, money, materials etc.) Required For Successful Implementation:

Budget allocations/priorities for mentor program stipends and professional development

Grant monies

Time for mentor and mentees and all mentors to meet with lead mentors during the school day

Resource materials from project SUCCESS, First Year Matters and Mentoring In Action, and DVD's produced by Harry Wong.

Administrative support and staff expertise

13. Tools You Used To Implement or Advance This Practice:

Teacher Induction Program (TIP) Team Leader Job Description