



Induction and Mentoring: From Promise to Expert Practice

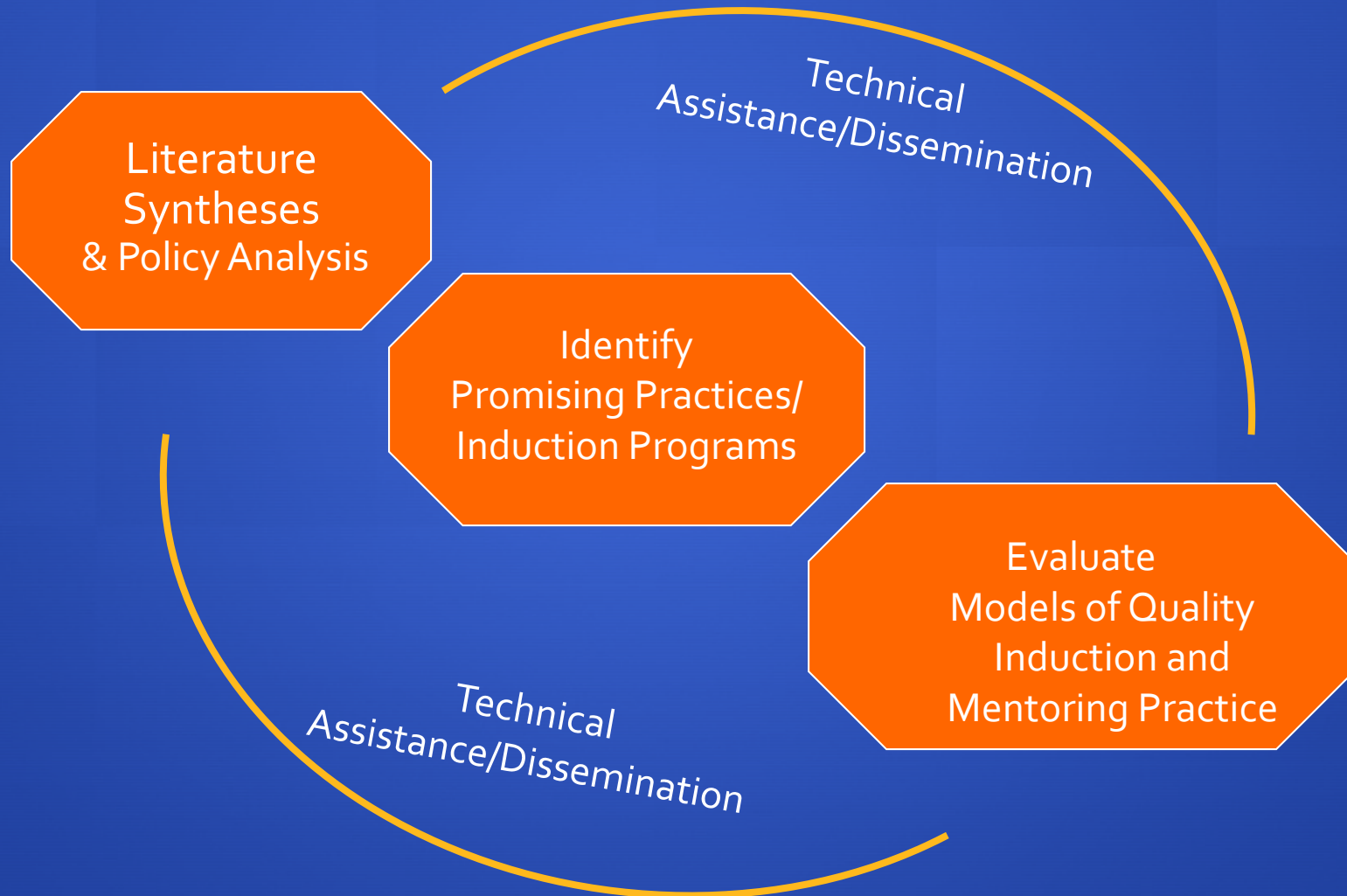
NCIPP
www.ncipp.org

Mary Brownell
Paul Sindelar
Erica McCray
Margaret Kamman

NCIPP National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in
Special Education Professional Development

- To inform special education teacher policy and practice related to beginning teacher mentoring in order to **improve teacher quality and increase commitment to teaching students with disabilities**
- To recommend implementation strategies for policies and practices for beginning teachers to effectively support students with disabilities across educational settings

NCIPP National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development



Promising Practice: Mentor Matching

- Novice special education teachers (SETs) prefer mentors who:
 - Teach students with similar disabilities
 - Teach in the same grade level
- When this occurs, novice SETs tend to:
 - Request assistance often
 - Rate assistance favorably



Promising Practice: Formal and Informal Support

- Formally scheduled meetings with mentors
 - Appeal to novice SETs
 - Help to facilitate collaboration and communication between mentors and mentees
- Novices find informal supports are also beneficial
 - Unscheduled meetings with mentors and colleagues



Promising Practice: Mentor Contact

- Novices need accessible mentors, preferring mentors in close proximity,
- And they need to meet at least once a week for the first year
 - Inadequate to address all of their professional and emotional needs

Promising Practice: Relevant Content

- Content of mentoring sessions should address special education issues
 - Strategies to teach and motivate challenging students
 - Adapting functional materials for instruction
 - Special education paperwork and procedures
- Beginners also find the following helpful
 - Emotional support
 - Materials and resources
 - System information pertaining to the district

Promising Practice: Principal Support

- Principal support strongly influences new teachers' job satisfaction and their decision to remain in teaching
- Principals can help beginners by
 - Providing induction support tailored to beginning SETs' needs
 - Assisting beginners in managing multiple roles
 - Establishing a positive school culture
 - Facilitating their socialization and relationship development

Promising Practice: Professional School Culture

- A positive school culture is associated with beginning teachers' job satisfaction and their intention to remain in teaching
 - Professional Learning Communities can help novice special education teachers acclimate to their role and environment
 - PLCs provide school based supports and facilitate the socialization of SETs
 - Safe environment for debating issues, and solving problems
 - However, we do not know how PLCs have integrated novice SETs successfully

Promising Practice: Collaboration

- **Novice special education teachers need to develop positive relationships with their professional colleagues**
 - **Special education teachers**
 - **General education teachers**
 - **Related service providers**
 - **Paraprofessionals**
- **They report high satisfaction when they collaborate with veteran teachers**

Promising Practice: Co-teaching & Team Teaching

- Collaboration with general education colleagues (e.g., co-teaching and team teaching) ensures that SETs:
 - Are not left to their own devices to learn to teach
 - Are more likely to view general educators as sources of support
 - Are less likely to rely solely on special education teachers
 - Have the opportunity to gain knowledge about the general education curriculum
 - Become recognized as members of the school culture

Promising Practice: E-mentoring

- E-mentoring—the use of technology-based communication formats in which mentors and mentees interact
 - Solution to the challenge of finding suitable building-based mentors who can provide instructional coaching in the new teacher's specialization area
- E-mentoring is not a substitute for school-based mentors who provide socialization support

Promising practice: Partnerships with IHEs

- Initial preparation is the first point at which beginning teachers are inducted into the profession
- Data on partnerships suggest they can be successful in furthering teacher quality and retention
- Leadership and collaboration are essential for supporting partnership work

Promising Practice: Policy

- Allow for local variation in implementation
- State policies should include role delineation for mentors
 - Instructional Coaching
 - Socialization
- Clear links between induction policy and the larger policy framework for teacher development

Models of Expert Practice

- **Four Sites**

- **Identified districts for further evaluation based on one or more of the following:**

- **Provide some unique assistance to beginning special education teachers**
- **Recognized for their work on induction and mentoring**
- **Have a well-articulated program that has been in place for more than two years**
- **Follow parameters of the New Teacher Center, which is considered expert practice in the field more generally**

Site 1

- 100 beginning SETs each year
- Began in 1996, was designed to incorporate best practices in the mentoring and induction of new teachers as set forth by the New Teacher Center
- Targeted to meet the developmental needs of teachers over three years
- Two types of mentors are provided for each beginning SET
 - Instructional facilitator
 - School-based mentor

Site 2

- 250 new SETs each year (part of a larger program)
- Began in 2000 and is developmental in nature, occurring over a 3 year period.
- First year
 - Focus on basic instructional skills and strategies for working in the school and special education context
- Second year
 - Focus on the interface between general and special education
- Third year
 - Focus on creating more reflective teachers and preparing teachers to consider National Board Certification

Site 3

- 40 beginning Special Education Teachers
- One year program includes mentoring and professional development
 - Full time mentors (extremely selective process...can only hold position for 3 years and must be designated at highest level in district),
 - Matched by disability area and content
 - Meet a minimum of once a week, keep logs of meetings,
 - Evaluations:- 2 informal , 2 formal
 - 11 practicum sessions specific to special education
 - Taught by mentors
 - Twice a month in fall and once a month in spring

Site 4

- Award winning two year induction program
- Comprehensive Supports available for novices include
 - Instructional Resource Teachers (IRTs)
 - Building Level Mentors
- IRTs are full-time mentors
 - Mentors are master educators of their field in a similar assignment, preferably at the same location
 - Involved in designing, planning and providing after-school professional development series on topics to support management and effective instruction
 - Meet Weekly with Mentees

Site Study Questions

- **How are quality Induction & Mentoring programs structured?**
 - Mentor selection process
 - Mentoring training and ongoing support
 - Procedures/protocols for mentoring
 - Program evaluation procedures
 - Cost of implementation
- **What are the practices of quality mentors?**
 - Content
 - Processes
 - Parameters/Roles

Sources of Evidence

- Interviews
 - Induction program directors
 - Trainers
 - Mentors
 - Select beginners
- Artifacts
 - Mentor logs
 - Training manuals
 - Protocols for providing feedback /lesson planning
- Observations
 - Mentoring Sessions

Proposed Products

- **May 2010**
 - Descriptions of Programs
 - Readiness Rubric
- **Fall 2010**
 - Training Manual
 - Guidelines for selecting quality mentors
 - Training Protocols
 - Mentoring Manual
 - Guidelines of quality mentoring sessions
 - Video cases of quality mentoring sessions

Discussion

- How credible do you find our products based upon the descriptive validation work we're proposing?
- What products would be most useful to you?
- Is there anything you need that we're not planning to provide?