

A Decade of Policy Support for California's New Teachers: The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program

By Margaret Olebe

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine an unusual occurrence in teacher education, a nexus between teacher education, teacher education research, and state policy. Since 1988 the State of California, through the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) and the California Department of Education (CDE), has sponsored research and built policy and programs based on its findings related to the education of beginning teachers. In an arena historically characterized by a lack of influence of research on either practice or policy (Zeichner, 1999), beginning teacher induction as a field stands in contrast to the more common practices of

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disregarding scholarship and teacher educator perspectives in shaping policy (Zeichner, p. 13). It is a boundary spanning field, connecting initial teacher preparation typically conducted under a university teacher education umbrella, and ongoing teacher professional development, traditionally the purview of local school districts and professional organizations. As such, its place in teacher education has had to be invented rather than housed as an extension of existing work. This accounts in part for its early and

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ongoing attention to a non-traditional array of inputs. This article will demonstrate, through an historical analysis, the nature and extent to which the policy building blocks of induction have been formed by scholarship and practitioner perspectives in California.

It will examine each phase of the development of California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) and its associated policy challenges and outcomes. It will also describe how research and evaluation findings have been used to inform and guide subsequent legislation and implementation policies at critical junctures, and how this intent has sometimes been overtaken, and even thwarted, by external events. Finally it will address challenges to its intents and purposes posed by policies about to be implemented.

Initial Development: The California New Teacher Project

Policymakers in California first became interested in supporting teachers in their first and second years of teaching in 1988. Their interest was spurred by concerns about the lack of retention of new teachers in urban and rural environments, including the especially high turnover of new minority teachers; large increases in the size and diversity of the student population, and the increasing complexity of subject matter to be taught. In 1988, the legislature enacted SB148, The Bergeson Act, to examine alternative models for supporting and assisting the professional induction of first- and second-year teachers, and assessing their competence and performance in the classroom (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 1992).

The California New Teacher Project (CNTP) served thirty seven local pilot programs, more than 3,000 beginning teachers and over 1,500 experienced teachers during the years 1988-92. Its principle components were individualized mentoring support, curriculum and instruction workshops, and teacher self-assessment. The CNTP was a research and development program, and local programs were encouraged to experiment with a variety of implementation designs. Of the \$8.8 million expended during the four years, approximately one quarter of the total amount was earmarked for research and evaluation.

During that time two contractors were retained, one to evaluate the support component of local programs, and the other, to examine existing and alternative forms of new teacher assessment. The outcomes of these studies and policy recommendations are reported in *Success for Beginning Teachers: The California New Teacher Project* (1992). This summary document became the basis for subsequent legislation, SB 1422 (Bergeson, Chapter 1245, Statutes of 1992) which created the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. Significant findings on the impact of support for new teachers were that participating teachers, as compared with other new teachers, more consistently used instructional practices that improve student achievement, more complex, challenging instructional activi-

ties, and a wider range of instructional materials. They were more successful in both motivating and setting high expectations for students from diverse backgrounds. Retention of minority teachers and teachers in hard to staff urban and rural schools was particularly high (p.1).

Other findings were related to teacher education policy and the actual processes for supporting and assessing new teachers. The research confirmed that existing policies on teacher education and professional development did not effectively support the transition from student teacher to classroom practitioner, and called for establishing an integrated system of new teacher support and assessment. The attributes of such a system “would include a gradual introduction to the norms and responsibilities of teaching, advice and assistance from experienced colleagues, and useful information about each teacher’s performance compared to established expectations for what beginning teachers should know and be able to do” (p.3). Recommendations also included expanding support to include all beginning teachers in California, the development of a coherent system for assessing new teachers, including performance assessments by trained assessors, and the integration of support with assessment, all supported by new state funding. A more detailed summary of the findings of the CNTP pilot studies is provided in *Shaping Teacher Induction Policy* (Bartell, 1995).

Success for Beginning Teachers has been a blueprint for statewide teacher education reforms and policies for the last decade. In addition to creating the BTSA program, SB1422 required the Commission to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the requirements for earning and renewing teaching credentials. From 1995 to 1997 a broadly representative advisory panel conducted this review. In its 1997 publication, *California’s Future: Highly Qualified Teachers for All Students*, the panel recommended a new architecture for the award of teaching credentials, including multiple routes to the preliminary credential and the completion of two years of an induction program as a requirement for earning a Professional Clear Credential (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 1997a). These recommendations became provisions of 1998 legislation, SB 2042 (Alpert, Chapter 548, Statutes of 1998) with the caveat that full funding for the BTSA program be in place prior to its taking effect.

Building a Statewide Program from Research Findings: 1992-1997

As set out in SB1422, BTSA is jointly administered by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) and the California Department of Education (CDE). The original legislative purposes of the program were to:

- u Provide an effective transition into teaching for first and second year teachers in California;
- u Improve the educational performance of students through improved training, information and assistance for new teachers;

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- u Enable the professional success and retention of new teachers who show promise of becoming highly effective professionals;
- u Identify teaching novices who need additional feedback, assistance, and training to realize their potential to become excellent teachers;
- u Improve the rigor and consistency of individual teacher performance assessments and the usefulness of assessment results to teachers and decision makers;
- u Establish an effective, coherent system of performance assessments that are based on a broad framework of common expectations regarding the skills, abilities, and knowledge needed by new teachers; and
- u Examine alternative ways in which the general public and the education profession may be assured that new teachers who remain in teaching have attained acceptable levels of professional competence. (Education Code Section 44279.2)

These purposes mirror the findings of the CNTP research, including the recommended mechanisms for building both a program and an infrastructure for educating new teachers. They include the further development of the Draft Framework of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities for Beginning Teachers in California, the Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for New Teacher Support and Assessment Programs, and new formative performance assessments of teaching.

During this period, the BTSA program grew incrementally, affording state and local administrators the luxury of creating policies and sponsoring research on mechanisms for supporting and assessing new teachers that could be piloted and revised before being released for use in the field. Participation in the program was voluntary for both teachers and sponsoring organizations, with funds awarded to local program sponsors through competitive grants. In this phase the statewide budget grew from \$4.9 million to \$7.5 million, with an accompanying increase in participants from 1700 to 2480 served in 33 local programs (BTSA Task Force, 2000). The SB 1422 funding formula, which continues today, calls for a 3:2 ratio of state dollars to locally provided matching funds. Until 2000, the primary source of matching funds for local education agencies was the state funded Mentor Teacher Program (Education Code Sections 44490-44497). Now the Mentor Teacher Program has sunset, and its successor, the Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR), (Education Codes Sections 44500-44508), may be used for the same purpose.

Legislation governing both the Mentor Teacher Program and the Peer Assistance and Review Program provided that program budget and services in each local entity be determined through agreements with the local bargaining agency for teachers. Since its inception, local bargaining agency sign-off has been required on BTSA program applications. The involvement of labor organizations has been critical to the success of BTSA. It has ensured articulation across the two large programs focused on teacher development, so that fiscal resources are effectively allocated, and duplication of efforts or contradictory efforts are avoided. It has also been essential to the ongoing development of formative assessments, ensuring that the distinctions between formative assessment and

formal evaluation of teachers are well understood by teachers and administrators alike.

BTSA has been administered since its inception by a six to eight member task force of professional staff from both agencies. In this phase liaison to the field was carried out by task force members assigned to individual programs, and through quarterly statewide directors' meetings. These meetings became the primary vehicle for creating a statewide community of induction experts. Educating and empowering the local program directors was a major policy accomplishment in itself that led to the further accomplishment of legislative goals. Program directors participated along with teacher education experts in the development of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)* and the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for BTSA Programs*. These two sets of standards were adopted by the CCTC and CDE in 1997 as policy statements on what constitutes good teaching, and what constitutes a quality induction program.

The same approach, that is planned research and evaluation with full participation from teacher educators, staff developers and practitioners in the design, pilot and evaluation phases, was used to develop the hallmark professional development products of BTSA. Support Provider Training, a coaching program for mentor teachers; Diversity Training, a staff development program for both new and experienced teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse children; and Site Administrator Training, for principals and vice-principals of beginning teachers, were created through grants to collaborative partnerships of local education agencies, universities and technical assistance organizations.

New performance-based formative assessments, including classroom observations, and teaching portfolios were shaped and designed by technical assistance contractors and university faculty working in partnership with local program directors and participating teachers. While an array of local formative assessments emerged, primarily in induction programs with strong teacher education faculty leadership, The Pathwise Observation System of Educational Testing Service and the California Teaching Portfolio of WestEd were the most widely used. These very different assessment instruments held in common an overt intention to provoke teacher growth through standards-based examination of classroom generated evidence, breaking new ground in the conceptualization of assessment for the purpose of learning. This notion of formative assessment as distinct from formal evaluation for employment purposes has played an essential role in the acceptance of teacher to teacher peer assessment in BTSA (CCTC, 1997b).

As the BTSA program infrastructure increased, so did the need to attend to accountability measures, both to demonstrate program impact on teacher quality and retention, and to serve as evidence for further expansion of the program. Local program evaluations were required, and peer program evaluations were encouraged. As anecdotal reports of the high value of BTSA to both beginning teachers and their experienced teacher support providers began to emerge in the mid-nineties, it

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became clear that a systematic statewide approach to documenting both program impact and beginning teacher retention was needed. Since 1996 surveys of all participant groups, including site administrators and program staff, have been administered through the California Educational Research Collaborative (CERC). These surveys provide self-report data on the perceived value and frequency of support and assessment services, the impact of the program on beginning teacher confidence and competence in the classroom, and the efficacy of local program designs. Analysis of data collected over three years has yielded new understandings about the importance of the local program environment in fostering a culture for new teacher success, the effectiveness of formative assessments in guiding new teacher growth, and the high confidence of participants about their decision to become a teacher and their ability to acquire the skills associated with being an accomplished professional (Mitchell et al, 1998).

Consistent statewide data on beginning teacher retention has been more difficult to obtain. Working within the constraints of state policy prohibiting the required use of teacher social security numbers for data collection (California Department of Education, 2000), retention data has been gathered by individual local programs using a range of approaches. While local data from this period suggests an overall retention rate of 92 percent statewide (CCTC, 1999) through the third year of teaching, this figure is an approximation. This policy constraint has made it difficult to answer this key question for stakeholders with the greatest need to know, state legislators who fund the program and parents whose students are taught by new teachers. At the time of writing, new efforts are being undertaken at CCTC to examine teacher retention data over the past decade by marrying its data base with those of other statewide institutions.

Through 1996, program sponsorship was open to universities as well as local school districts, providing opportunities for collaboration on teacher education programs that extended into the initial years of teaching. Intended to support findings that described the need for an integrated system of teacher education, this practice was discontinued due to a settlement of civil litigation (CTA vs. Gould, 3 Civil CO 18447). The terms of the settlement limited the distribution of state funds allocated under Proposition 98, California's constitutional guarantee to allocate 40 percent of the state budget to public schools, to local education agencies unless specified in legislation independent of the Budget Act. While colleges and universities have continued to participate in the implementation of local BTSA programs, their contributions have been delimited by the extent to which collaborative partnerships with local school districts represent a sharing of vital roles in the program, or are merely mechanical exchanges of documents and dollars for services (Sandlin & Feigen, 1995). An unintended outcome of this policy shift was that in effect local education agencies, and not universities, became the lead players in the design and delivery of induction for beginning teachers in California.

In summary this period of incremental growth solidified understandings of

effective embedded professional development for beginning teachers through design, research and application of current and emerging professional practices collaboratively developed by researchers and educators.

Rapid Expansion in an Era of Accountability, 1998-2000

The 1997-98 academic and fiscal year marked a watershed for BTSA. A series of events in California, including the implementation of class size reduction in grades 1-3, through a set of statutes collectively known as the California Reading Initiative (State Board of Education, 1999), as well as the publication of *What Matters Most: Teaching for American's Future* by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (1996) and *California's Future: Highly Qualified Teachers for All Students* (1997) signaled a renewed interest by policymakers in both the schools and their teachers. New legislation, AB1266 (Mazzoni, Chapter 937, Statutes of 1997), establishing the BTSA System updated earlier Education Code and included additional purposes for the program, including:

- u Enable beginning teachers to be effective in teaching students who are culturally, linguistically and academically diverse
- u Ensure that a support provider provides intensive individualized support and assistance to each participating beginning teacher
- u Establish an effective, coherent system of performance assessments that are based on the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*.
- u Ensure that an individual induction plan is in place for each participating beginning teacher and is based on ongoing assessment of the development of the beginning teacher
- u Ensure continuous program improvement through ongoing research, development and evaluation.

Existing purposes from SB1422 were reiterated as well. These additions directly reflect both research and field-based learnings on effective induction program practices in California, and align with the recommendations of the NCTAF report.

That same year Governor Pete Wilson proposed in January, and eventually signed a Budget Act in July, that included a \$66 million allocation for BTSA, an increase of \$48.5 million over the previous year. While certainly welcome, the size of the increase posed several policy challenges to the state agencies. Clearly the era of research driven incremental change was about to be replaced with a rapid scaling up of the program. Would the structures nurtured over time be strong enough to sustain program quality? What additional structures would need to be created on a shorter timeline to guide new programs, given that within two years year the number of new programs would exceed the original 30 by two thirds? How should the expansion unfold so that there were equal opportunities to participate for unserved beginning teachers in existing programs as well as for beginning teachers in unserved areas of the state? And would the expansion continue so that all 26,500

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first and second year teachers could be served and the shift into credentialing as provided for in SB2042 would occur? In effect, the statewide BTSA program itself would become an induction program for local implementers.

As illustrated in the table below, the answer to the last question was yes. Increases initiated by Wilson have been sustained by Governor Davis, who has each year allocated significant funds to teacher professional development initiatives that encompass a broad array of activities, including incentives for teachers to gain expertise in various subject matters, seek National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification, and teacher peer review. Peer Review and Assistance (PAR), was one of four bills proposed by Davis during a special session that took place during his first month in office, January 1999.

The two state agencies initiated a multi-pronged action plan to come to grips with the challenges now faced. Given the new funds included no money for additional agency staff, an external infrastructure had to be created to support programs across the state. At first, technical support was provided by a cadre of experienced local BTSA leaders who guided those planning to apply for funds. This process, replicated throughout the administrative structure of the program, mirrors the guided support offered to beginning teachers by their more experienced peers. Within the BTSA culture, the notion “we only ask of beginning teachers what we ask of ourselves,” has been a sustaining philosophy and norm of practice.

With the passage of AB1266, five regional clusters were established across the state, staffed in 1998-99 by a technical assistance expert called a Cluster Consultant, and from 1999-2000 by an additional Professional Development Consultant. These individuals have separate spheres of responsibility within the cluster, with the Cluster Consultant focused on program capacity and accountability, and the Professional Development Consultant working with local trainers to implement the various induction training packages. To supplement and complement their work,

Table 1
BTSA Program Growth 1992–2001

Year	Funding	Programs	Teachers
1992-93	4.9 million	15	1,700
1993-94	5.0 million	30	1,750
1994-95	5.2 million	30	1,800
1995-96	5.5 million	30	1,920
1996-97	7.5 million	33	2,480
1997-98	17.5 million	60	5,200
1998-99	66.0 million	84	15,400
1999-2000	72.0 million	132	23,000
2000–01 (in Budget Act)	87.4 million	145	26,500

Source: CCTC.

professional development for new local program directors, was created in 1997. Collectively known as Leadership Training, the activities and workshops have been a means for disseminating information on program expectations and for transmitting the cultural norms of “high expectations, high accountability, high support” associated with BTSA. This is also sustained through two statewide directors meeting and three regional cluster meetings annually.

Perhaps the weightiest implementation policy challenge for the agencies in 1997 was the quality and nature of formative assessments. Unlike other trainings that had been disseminated for statewide use from the agencies themselves, formative assessments had been locally adopted. As described earlier, agency sponsored development work had produced viable assessments that were valued by beginning teachers and support providers alike. It was also evident that within the existing local programs that the balance between support and assessment varied widely, as did understandings of how assessment is distinct from support, and the quality of the instruments used. It seemed equally clear that among the large number of incoming programs, the normative use of formative assessments for teacher growth would be miniscule at best.

To address this question, the developers of three systems—the California Teaching Portfolio by WestEd, the Pathwise Observation System by Educational Testing Service, and Support Provider Training by University of California, Santa Cruz—were brought together to consider the feasibility of developing an integrated system of formative assessment and support, as called for in AB1266, in time for the use by the anticipated 40 new programs that would begin implementation in July, 1998. In addition to the short timeline, no funds were available from the agencies themselves to support this work due to new policies on the distribution and use of funds in the wake of the Gould decision. Resources would have to come from the developers themselves.

With funding and personnel from Educational Testing Service, a design team of assessment experts and local program directors who had been involved with assessment development was formed. It included personnel from West Ed and UC Santa Cruz. The resulting product, which consists of formative assessment events that combine observation and inquiry, and an accompanying eleven day training for support providers, is the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST). The two agencies also adopted an implementation policy similar to that in place for other BTSA program components. CFASST would be used statewide unless a local program had an existing system in place with the potential to meet the relevant program standard of the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for BTSA Programs*.

While the design team had anticipated piloting the original product with limited numbers of teachers in new programs, the actual award of the additional \$48.5 million in the midst of development curtailed this opportunity. Because the expansion plan called for equal dollars to flow into existing programs as well as to

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new programs, a demand for the new system was created in 'old' programs as well. CFASST Year 1 was moved immediately into field review status, with over 8,000 beginning teachers and 4,000 support providers using the program in 1998-99. By the following year 20,500 beginning teachers and 14,000 support providers were using CFASST. Year 2 was piloted in 1999-2000 with 250 teachers and is currently in a statewide field review with about 4,000 beginning teachers.

Until 1997-98, BTSA encountered almost none of the resistance normally associated with systemic reforms. This is attributable to the fact that no one intuitively opposes assisting novices, the pace of adoption of innovations was slow, and the scope was limited to volunteers. With the simultaneous implementation of SB2042 requiring completion of a two year induction program to obtain a professional clear credential and the firing of the funding trigger that made induction available to all first and second year teachers, the stakes changed. On the individual teacher level, this change has been symbolized through CFASST; on the local program level, it is represented by the introduction of Formal Program Review, an accountability system based on the program standards being phased in over four years through 2003. The impact of formal program reviews will not be known until formal approval is required for approval as a credentialing program.

Evaluation data from CFASST Year 1 (CCTC, 2000a) indicates that the system is highly valued for its unique ability to assist both beginning teachers and support providers to examine practice using evidence against standards and proficiency scales and for its overt encouragement of reflective practice. At the same time there is confusion about the complexity of the processes associated with it. As an integrated system of support and assessment CFASST examines teaching through the lenses of both situated and cognitive learning (Anderson et al, 2000). It utilizes two sets of standards, pedagogy standards and student academic content standards, and a set of scales, the Descriptions of Practice. It requires the collaboration of both support provider and beginning teacher to complete each assessment event. And it focuses directly on teaching practice associated with student learning within the classroom, as opposed to school procedures such as "Where is the supply closet?" or "How do we do fire drills?" or personal needs such as "stress relief."

At the time of writing, the final evaluation report on the CFASST Year 1 field review is not yet available. Based on its findings, Year 1 will be revised by a group that includes both support providers and third year teachers who have completed the CFASST process, in addition to technical staff. Since its introduction, a research and evaluation program dedicated to CFASST that includes researchers from teacher education faculty in California has been in place. Agency staff remain committed and optimistic about the potential for this system to accomplish one of the profession's most elusive goals, making professional development an ongoing part of teachers' daily work (NCTAF, p. 20), at the individual teacher level, and to focus teaching practice on student learning from the outset of a career.

The Visible Future: From BTSA to Induction

The transition from a voluntary professional development and support program to a program of professional development, extended preparation and support leading to professional licensure presents policy challenges within the BTSA program and among its constituent communities. The credentialing reforms invoked by SB2042, coupled with other provisions of the education code on the content of professional licensure programs, will place expectations on local BTSA programs that will fundamentally change not only the content and structure of the program, but the also the perceived importance of induction as a function of local education agencies.

Among the credentialing reforms to be implemented is the alignment of all phases of teacher preparation with the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP) and the State-Adopted Student Content Standards. Another is the introduction of an individual teaching performance assessment for initial certification. The development of the teaching performance assessment has invoked an examination of the statements about what constitutes appropriate teaching now found in the CSTP through a job analysis and validity study that will inevitably recast some of the standards language. This is occurring just after the statewide embrace of the existing standards by teachers and administrators, both through BTSA expansion and the introduction of Peer Assistance and Review.

Since sponsoring organizations of BTSA programs will make credential recommendations in future, the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for BTSA Programs* must be revised from grant program to teacher preparation program standards. Although the new law permits three routes to induction, one set of program standards will apply to all routes. For the first time BTSA programs will need to meet the higher threshold of legal defensibility related to opportunities to learn, advice and assistance to candidates, and decisions on individual program completion. They will need to include in their program instruction in mainstreaming, health, computer technology, and teaching English Language Learners required by existing law. Careful records of teacher progress through the system will have to be maintained. While the phased introduction of formal review for program approval is intended to build this new culture over time, how this shift will impact the perceived value of the experience by teachers themselves must be attended to and studied carefully. Extending accountability in an environment where excellence is perceived as the quality of the teacher to teacher experience will ultimately either compromise its viability, turning the program into a compliance effort (Gitlin & Margonis, 1995), or bolster its effectiveness by rewarding teacher efforts through acknowledgment of extended professional accomplishment.

A second policy challenge related to accountability is the dependent relationship with PAR. Many local negotiations have resulted in BTSA being governed and

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implemented under the PAR umbrella. How a high accountability system will exist within a new program with no built-in accountability measures is not clear. At this time local agencies are only beginning to define how services will be reconfigured, how peer assistance to experienced teachers will differ from assistance to beginning teachers, and how support and assessment will be aligned yet separate from evaluation for employment. Few school districts have begun to consider the practical implications of credentialing as well.

The three routes for induction under SB2042 include BTSA, alternative induction programs sponsored by local education agencies, and university programs. Of these, BTSA will be the principle route for educators in public schools. The impact on local education agencies will be large indeed. In a tight labor market, the ability offer one's own induction program will be an incentive in attracting high quality potential employees. Now, BTSA is a recruiting tool; in the future it will be an essential component of the employment offer. It is unknown how well school districts are prepared to implement large scale licensure programs through their human resources, staff development and curriculum and instruction departments. There are only nine alternative certification (intern) programs sponsored by school districts in California today (CCTC, 2000b), too few to draw inferences about statewide capacity. The true cost of induction must be reexamined in light of the need for additional structural features as well as direct services to teachers.

Credentialing through induction expands the mission of local school districts to include teacher education, opening new doors to collaboration with colleges and universities. While the Gould decision seemed to derail this effort, other aspects of the reform may have the opposite effect. Linkages from preliminary to professional certification program are overtly written in to the proposed program standards at both levels. Collaboration standards have been stated in ways that promote boundary spanning work. Holders of preliminary credentials will enter induction programs with a copy of the results of the teaching performance assessment and a preliminary individual induction plan in hand. But in a more practical sense, local education agencies likely will look to universities for guidance on navigating the credentialing waters and for expertise in curriculum areas and teacher assessment. Universities will want to know more about the environment and programs they are preparing candidates for, and the potential for resource sharing and deep dialogue among support providers, field supervisors, PAR consulting teachers, and cooperating teachers is great.

Is the glass half empty or half full? At a time of anticipated teacher turnover, as many as 30 percent of faculty in a district could be engaged in induction (Humphrey et al, 2000). Statistics of this sort almost always lead to questions about school level capacity, and a shortage of experienced teachers to serve as support providers (Shields et al., 2000). Could they also lead to the creative use of new mechanisms to support change? For example, in a professional development school setting qualified, experienced professionals might receive a core training that

provides the necessary knowledge and skills to work as a field supervisor, cooperating teacher or induction support provider. Implementing a continuum of teacher preparation will require new ways of conceptualizing the organizational structures, professional roles and scope and sequence of curriculum necessary in a two tiered system that will provide three years of situated learning experiences for new teachers.

Conclusion

Issues of scaling up have always plagued reformers and often been the downfall of well-intended policies. BTSA has been built on the principles of sound professional development and educational reform articulated by leaders in the field such as Michael Fullan, Judith Warren Little, Linda Darling-Hammond, Andy Hargreaves, and Richard Elmore in numerous scholarly journals and books during the past decade. We have sought and respected teacher input. We have invoked critical analysis and reflection. We have fostered collegiality and attended to context. We have set high standards for teacher performance, and insisted on attention to student learning. We have forged collegial relationships among schools, universities, and labor organizations. We have sponsored research and tested the findings in the field. And we have continuously held to the belief that school change will come only through attention to teaching.

In 1996 I presented a paper at the American Educational Research Association annual conference entitled *Leveraging Systemic Reform Through Redefined Roles, Norms and Values in Teaching Practice*. In it I asserted that the core beliefs of BTSA were: “All children can learn.” “Teachers learn continuously through and from their practice.” “Dialogue and conversation among professionals is necessary to improve practice.” “Teachers are accountable to each other for their work.” These still appear to be true today. To the extent that they are shared, and can be shared in the wider community we have become, then the underlying promise of BTSA, to transform the profession through teachers themselves, will be obtained.

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