

School District 148 Induction/Mentor Program (IMP)

School District 148 provides support for first and second year teachers through a formal Induction/Mentor Program that was approved by the State of Illinois during the 2003-04 school year based on the Charlotte Danielson framework using the PATHWISE research based program as a model.

This program is being developed by teachers for new teachers, with the support of administrators, in order to improve the quality of instruction for students in the classroom. The veteran teacher is matched with a new teacher and together they explore the current methods and strategies of instruction. This collaborative environment helps our students to receive the best possible education. It also helps the district to retain the teachers it has trained by developing relationships among the new and veteran teachers in a community of professional development.

The program incorporates the framework of the PATHWISE Induction Program. The process of professional growth in the Induction Program centers around the challenging yet realistic standards - the knowledge and skills described in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, by Charlotte Danielson, ASCD, 1996. This program uses concrete and useful evidence provided through inquiries and formative assessment of the beginning teacher's practice. This process provides powerful techniques for using evidence to help the beginning teacher improve teaching, including reflective writing and conversation with knowledgeable and supportive colleagues.

The framework is based on research conducted by Educational Testing Services beginning in 1987 using PRAXIS III data. The line of thinking that developed resulted in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. This program supports beginning teachers in their development, having them learn to focus that development to become autonomous practitioners through a dynamic ongoing process: planning and teaching lessons, reflecting on the results, and making informed adjustments.

Protégés and building mentors in the program attend monthly meetings presented by Mr. Michael Hurst, the District Induction/Mentor Coordinator since the 2004-05 school year. At these monthly meetings, protégés are exposed to educational research concerning best practice for classroom management, planning, and instruction. Protégés are given the opportunity to discuss successes and challenges they are facing in the classroom. During the monthly meetings, building mentors are encouraged to discuss the challenges they are facing with their protégés, report successes, and take information concerning classroom management, planning, and instruction back to their protégés for discussion.

Protégés participate in the observation cycle with their mentor and with the program coordinator. Prior to the observation, mentor and protégé meet in a pre-observation conference to discuss the lesson to be observed. At this time, the protégé will usually suggest a focus for the observation, however the building

mentor may make suggestions as well. The focus may be classroom management, planning, or instruction. During the observation, the observer will concentrate on this area and provide the protégé with formative feedback during a reflective conference. The protégés also observe their mentors as a part of the program requirements. Again, both participate in a pre-observation conference, suggesting a focus. The building mentor will then model this focus during the protégé's observation. A reflective conference is held to discuss the modeling of the focus done by the building mentor. The coordinator observation is a pop-in visit at which time data is gathered around Domain 2 and Domain 3 of the Danielson Framework. The data is shared with the protégé during a reflective conference.

Protégés are asked to participate with their mentor in monthly activities based on the PATHWISE program and the Charlotte Danielson Framework. These activities are designed to support the growth of protégés in the teaching profession. These activities are developed by the Induction/Mentor Coordinator based on the PATHWISE Program with input from other university programs and a SD148 IMP Committee. The activities have been updated as recently as 2016 to match protégé needs. These activities and other program information can be found at www.district148.net/mentor.

The program currently uses a survey developed in cooperation with National-Louis University through the ITEP Program to evaluate the needs of the District Induction/Mentor Program. Improvements are ongoing. Administrators, building mentors and protégés are asked for input to further the development of the program. The survey is conducted at the conclusion of the year. The IMP also uses the workshop evaluation forms, and other meeting data throughout the year to foster improvements.

In 2006, building mentors received formal training in the Danielson Framework and the PATHWISE program. This training was conducted by the Induction/Mentor Coordinator in conjunction with the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) which has provided the materials and another trainer for this professional development. Beginning in 2009, all mentors were trained in the Governors State University Foundational Mentor Training through the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grant. In 2017, mentors continue to be trained in SD148 by the IMP Coordinator using the TQP model

The Induction/Mentor Program in District 148 has evolved over the past thirteen years and will continue to improve upon the progress presently being made.