

CHAPTER 5

“Them That’s Got Shall Get”: Understanding Teacher Recruitment, Induction, and Retention

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In this age of heightened concern about teacher quality, calls for new policies and practices concerning recruitment, induction, and retention are familiar to many. Policymakers legislate new mandates intended to recruit more teachers, and school districts hire consultants who can help them develop marketing strategies, glossy brochures, and recruitment teams. District-sponsored induction programs open new offices and collect data on how their efforts are affecting retention rates in the schools. Experienced teachers learn to become mentors, supporting new teachers so that their entry into the profession is smooth.

In many—if not most—cases, these new policies and programs are inserted into the already functioning educational bureaucracy. The problems with this approach—the gradual accretion of offices and programs that make the educational system alternately unwieldy and fractionalized—have been noted by many scholars (e.g., Cohen & Spillane, 1993; Cusick, 1992; Smith & O’Day, 1991). Numerous coalitions form and reform, pressing for their self-interests. Teachers confront multiple, sometimes conflicting messages about what and how they are to teach. The current enthusiasm for policies to recruit, support, and retain new teachers runs the risk of adding more clash and clang to an already cacophonous policy environment. What would it mean to reimagine policies concerning teachers’ early careers in ways that did not treat them as “add-ons” but rather as part of a larger system of policies and practices? This is our charge in this chapter.

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To inform our inquiry, we looked at recent developments in teacher recruitment, induction, and retention policies and practices in the United States and abroad, at both the state and district levels. We also looked to other fields. All professions struggle with the transition from student to practitioner. Understanding how to help the student of medicine become a doctor or the student of law become an attorney, for example, is a perennial problem faced by those professions. As Turow (1977) writes,

In baseball it's the rookie year. In the navy it is boot camp. In many walks of life there is a similar time in trial and initiation, a period when newcomers are forced to be the victims of their own ineptness and when they must somehow master the basic skills of the profession in order to survive. For someone who wants to be a lawyer, that proving time is the first year of law school. (p. 9)

In our quest to understand more about this transition—and the policies and pedagogies used to enable it—we examined literature on the clergy, medicine, law, the armed forces, and public service (e.g., Bosk, 1979; Breyer, 2000; Carroll, Wheeler, Aleshire, & Marler, 1997; Gawande, 2002; Turow, 1977).

We begin our chapter by briefly describing the factors that have historically influenced entry into teaching. We structure the rest of the chapter around the troika of policies concerning teacher recruitment, induction, and retention, describing current understandings of these phenomena, as well as new developments in both policy and practice. We conclude by exploring the question, “What kind of work are new teachers being recruited and inducted into?” Wrestling with this question is essential to understanding the potential power and pitfalls of those policies.

The Factors That Shape Entry into Teaching

The results of teacher surveys by the National Education Association (NEA, 2003) over the past 30 years replay five themes that Lortie (1975) identified as attracting people to teaching: an interest in interacting with (young) people; making a difference in society; finding ways to remain affiliated with school or subject matters; reaping material benefits, including money, prestige, and employment security; and an attraction to teaching's time demands (the length of school day, say, or summer breaks).¹ For instance, in the most recent NEA (2003) analysis, almost three fourths (73%) of the 2001–2002 survey respondents selected “a desire to work with young people” as one of the three

main reasons they originally decided to become teachers. The next most frequent response was the “value or significance of education in society” (44%), and an “interest in a subject matter field” (36%) was the third. These items were similarly ranked as the three main reasons teachers continued to teach.

The other two themes Lortie identified appear to play an important role in current teachers’ career decisions as well. Although financial rewards were not one of the main attractors to teaching (2.4%) or a primary reason for remaining in teaching (5.5%), “low salary” was the most frequently cited reason for leaving the profession. Another material benefit—job security—seemed to matter to teachers much more than financial rewards, especially over time. Less than one fifth (16.7%) of teachers chose job security as a major reason for becoming a teacher, but more than one fourth (27.3%) selected job security as a main reason they were currently teaching. Finally, a “long summer vacation” was selected by one fifth of the teachers surveyed as a main reason for entering teaching and by about one fourth as a reason for staying.

Several other survey responses indicated differences between what might attract teachers to teaching and what keeps them there. The influence of significant others, especially respondents’ former teachers (32%) or family members (19.5%), was a major reason for entering the profession. About one fifth (19%) also indicated that they entered teaching because they had “never considered anything else.” However, the influence of others and long-held career aspirations appeared much less important (all below 10%) as reasons to remain in teaching. Another response—“too much invested to leave now”—was chosen by almost one third of teachers (30.2%) as a key reason they were currently teaching.

Although it might be easy to assume that what teachers have “invested” is financial—for instance, steps on a salary scale or the time it takes to earn a credential—teachers also refer to very different kinds of investments. NEA survey results and in-depth interviews (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003) continue to document the centrality of intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, rewards as motivating factors for teaching careers. For instance, when Nieto (2003), working closely with a small group of urban high school teachers, raised the question, “What keeps teachers going—in spite of everything?” the answers included commitments to social justice, a love of children, and a belief in the promise of public education as a private and public good. As one teacher put it, “I have spent my work life committed to a just cause: the education of Boston high school students” (p. 18). Another reflected on the matchless value of her relationships with students:

So, despite everything in our way, why do some of us end up staying? Is it because our lives continue to be changed forever, for the better, by our students? What would my life be without Sonie, without Jeramie? It is an addictive thing, teaching. (p. 18)

The sentiments of these present-day teachers are very similar to those Lortie quoted in his earlier work. Yet, although the factors shaping entry into and commitment to the profession show little change over the last few decades and continue to resonate with teachers of today, school districts find themselves scrambling to recruit, support, and retain good teachers. We begin by considering the evolution of the “problem” of recruitment.

Recruitment: Responding to a Distribution Problem

School districts across the country this year received a windfall of applicants. The weakened economy is drawing people to the relative stability of teaching from such battered fields as technology and business management. Other factors include more aggressive recruitment campaigns, pay hikes, and the steep rise of alternative credential programs, which make it easier and faster for people with college degrees to become teachers. (Hayasaki, 2003)

Americans have been worried about who will teach their children since the mid-18th century. In fact, Sedlak (1989) argues that in the history of the American teacher workforce, shortages are the norm. After 1970, however, the problem was reconceptualized as shortages related to a worrisome “brain drain” rather than the previously articulated more general shortages. Specifically, well-qualified, talented people who formerly filled the teaching ranks (especially women and people of color) began taking advantage of new labor market options. The “best and the brightest” found other, more attractive employment opportunities (Schlechty & Vance, 1983; Sedlak, 1989; Sedlak & Schlossman, 1986).

At the turn of the 21st century, the problem has been reconceptualized again, for a number of recent studies indicate that the United States does not currently have a teacher shortage. Instead, the problem is one of distribution (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Ingersoll, 2001; Murphy, DeArmond, & Guin, 2003; NASBE, 1998). On the basis of numbers alone, there are enough certified teachers to staff U.S. public schools (NASBE, 1998). Yet, studies of out-of-field teachers (teachers without a degree and/or certification in the subjects they teach) reveal that the highest proportion of out-of-field teaching occurs in “pockets”—in particular school districts and teaching fields.

Large urban districts serving high numbers of students who are poor, minority, and English language learners (NCES, 1999) tend to have more out-of-field teachers than their suburban counterparts (Ingersoll, 2001; Urban Teacher Collaborative, 2000). These are the same schools required by No Child Left Behind legislation to hire highly qualified teachers for any programs funded through Title I and to ensure that all of their teachers are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. The challenges these urban districts face in attracting qualified teachers are so great that many of them have been labeled “hard-to-staff” and targeted for recruitment assistance (Education Commission of the States, 1999).

Teacher qualification studies document the sharp contrasts in the distribution of certified teachers within states. For instance, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2002) found several key distribution patterns of qualified teachers across New York State: teachers are systematically sorted across schools and districts such that some schools employ substantially more qualified teachers than others do; differences in the qualifications of teachers in New York State occur primarily between schools within districts and between districts within regions, not across regions—with the exception of New York City, which, on average, employs substantial numbers of teachers who do not meet standards for “highly qualified” teachers; and non-White, poor, and low-performing students, particularly those in urban areas, attend schools with less qualified teachers (p. 54).²

Distribution patterns like these echo the sentiments of the song “God Bless the Child”: “Them that’s got shall get, them that’s not shall lose.” In other words, teacher recruitment is a very different (and more formidable) task for an administrator in a large urban district like Chicago than for an administrator in one of the smaller, wealthier suburbs to its north (UPI, 2001). Stretching the extremes, in Chicago (or another urban center) it might appear to be a case of choosing the lesser of two evils (“Is an electrical engineer with no teaching experience a better choice to teach middle school physical science than a second-year certified middle school biology teacher?”), whereas in a northern Illinois suburb (or many other suburbs nationwide) it may feel more like selecting the most desirable alternative (“Is a ‘traditional,’ experienced, certified physics teacher a better choice to teach middle school physical science than an inexperienced, certified physical science teacher who claims to be ‘inquiry oriented?’”).

The unequal distribution patterns in schools and districts are further exacerbated by shortages in particular fields. National shortages

in mathematics, science (especially physical science), and special education teachers and emergent English language specialists (Hirsch, 2001; NCTAF, 2002) create a “buyer’s market” for these positions. Again, wealthy suburban districts have the edge over large urban districts that are not well positioned to offer financial or other incentives (small class sizes, compliant students, or “involved” parents) to attract teachers (NASBE, 1998).

A study by the Philadelphia Education Fund (PEF, 2002) illustrates the problem for large urban districts. Pennsylvania produces a surplus of teachers, and many districts in Pennsylvania do not have teacher shortages. Yet, employment of emergency-certified teachers is on the rise and is especially high in certain subject areas such as special education, science, and mathematics. As Philadelphia well knows, hard-to-staff positions in hard-to-staff schools equals ongoing and troublesome teacher shortages.

In order to enlarge the pool of qualified teacher applicants for hard-to-staff schools, recruitment strategies are being leveraged from both the supply side—through university teacher education and alternative certification programs designed to prepare teachers for hard-to-staff schools—and the demand side—through state, district, and local school recruitment efforts. We explore each.

Strategies on the Supply Side

Supply-side goals concerning the teaching force include increasing the percentage of minority teachers, developing urban teacher preparation programs, attracting graduates with prestigious university credentials, and fostering better subject matter preparation for prospective teachers. One traditional strategy used to recruit new teachers entails increasing salaries to attract teachers, especially those who can earn more in other occupations within their field, as in mathematics and science. An American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 2001) analysis found the average salary offered to college graduates in other occupations was almost \$13,000 more than the average starting salary of teachers. Milanowski (2002) reports that about a 45% increase in average starting salaries for teaching would significantly increase the number of mathematics, science, and technology undergraduates willing to consider teaching as a career.

Another increasingly popular recruitment strategy involves alternative certification. The underlying logic of these programs is that many fine and qualified teaching candidates are out there, deterred only by the rigidly structured, time consuming, or irrelevant curricula

of traditional teacher preparation programs. Many alternative certification programs, or other alternative routes into teaching, find ways to increase the supply of potential teachers by making the route simpler, more obstacle free. Included here are “grow your own” programs (often known as “pipeline” programs) as well as tuition reimbursement and scholarships especially for minority teacher recruitment programs. In some of these programs, prospective teachers are recruited as high school students and supported in their pursuit of undergraduate degrees and teaching credentials (Clewell, Darke, Davis-Googe, Forcier, & Manes, 2000; Hirsch, 2001).

Alternative certification and “grow your own” programs are often pursued in the name of diversifying the workforce—increasing the number of male teachers and teachers from racial minority groups. Recent surveys estimate that about 85% of K-12 teachers are White and approximately 70% are female. In contrast, only about 60% of all U.S. public school students are White; about 50% are female (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). The overrepresentation of White women in teaching has been attributed to an entangled set of social, cultural, and political factors, including expectations that women assume “primary caregiving and homemaking responsibilities” (Bierema, 2001, p. 56). The occupational structure of teaching allows women to move more easily in and out of the workforce as well as match schedules with their children who attend school.

Minority teacher recruitment programs have received more focused attention during the last two decades, especially in response to studies that reveal a growing “disparity between teacher and student populations with regard to race and ethnicity” (Yasin & Albert, 1999, p. 6). Reasons for these disparities include demographics (a region, state, or school district contains few minorities locally available for its teacher pool); burn out and frustration (due to poor working conditions, discipline problems, spreading school violence, or a lack of support from colleagues); inadequate schooling that leaves some minority students ill-prepared and unmotivated for higher education; standardized tests that often have cutoff scores that exclude minority students from higher education, teacher training, and teacher certification programs; licensure tests that disproportionately screen out minorities; salaries that are lower than those for other professionals, which lowers the prestige and social value of a career in teaching for many potential minority teachers; and more career opportunities outside of teaching (NEA, 2001).

Minority recruitment strategies attempt to address many of these concerns with a variety of initiatives, many of which have been privately

funded (NEA, 2001; Yasin & Albert, 1999). These efforts include precollegiate programs (e.g., future teacher clubs, mentoring, teaching internships), as well as collegiate support for minority students interested in teaching (e.g., financial assistance, mentoring, placement services). Some of the most promising minority recruitment programs appear to be those that target students in two-year colleges and paraprofessionals as well as those developed locally to encourage students of color to become teachers and return to teach in their community’s schools.

Meeting the Demand

Recent teacher recruitment analyses (Education Week, 2003; Hare & Heap, 2001; Hirsch, 2001; PEF, 2002) report that states, districts, and local schools are using a variety of strategies to increase teacher supply in underserved schools and content areas, including temporary licensure, aggressive recruiting practices, streamlined hiring practices, financial incentives, and improved working conditions. A survey of Midwest school district superintendents (Hare & Heap), for instance, found temporary licensure to be a common practice to fill vacant positions, especially in large districts and high-poverty districts. As the report indicates, a teacher with a temporary license should not be assumed to be underqualified for the position. For example, teacher credentialing is not necessarily reciprocal across states, so temporary licenses are initially issued to highly qualified teachers who are new to a state until they are able to meet that state’s requirements. To reduce the need for issuing temporary licenses to qualified teachers, some states have revised their policies to allow reciprocal certification across states.

Districts also mount recruiting campaigns. A study by *Education Week* (2003) reports that districts with hard-to-staff schools are trying to increase the number of applicants through campaigns that include hiring public relations specialists, sponsoring job fairs, creating appealing Web sites, and forming partnerships with teacher preparation and alternative certification programs. For example, Montgomery Township, one of the fastest growing townships in New Jersey, sponsors job fairs, participates in college recruiting programs, and aggressively advertises for teachers (Sargent, 2003). Some large urban districts have even started recruiting mathematics and science teachers from Europe. During a panel discussion in Washington on the urban teacher shortage, the Chicago public school district human resources director reported that his district “has been certified as having a shortage of math and science teachers, which has allowed the Immigration and Naturalization Service to issue visas to fill those needs” (UPI, 2001).

The costs—marketing, public relations, and recruiting—are considerable. In 2000-2001, Houston spent \$100,000 on radio, television, billboards, and newspaper advertising to attract new teachers. Louisville spent \$120,000 on classified ads to recruit fully credentialed teachers in 2000-2001. These expenses are miniscule when compared to those faced by large urban districts: Chicago spent \$5.1 million in 1999-2000 to recruit and hire new teachers, whereas New York spent \$8 million for an advertising campaign to hire 10,000 new teachers in 2001-2002 (Price, 2002). Costs, of course, are not simply financial. Many school districts have developed elaborate systems of recruitment and selection, including interview and performance assessments. Montgomery Township, for example, uses a three-interview process: The first, brief interview is conducted by the school principal and screens out all but the most promising candidates. In the second interview, the candidate teaches a demonstration lesson observed by the principal and other teachers in the school, who then question the candidate about instructional practice, discipline, and alternative methods for teaching the same class in the future. Candidates who have a successful second interview proceed to a third interview with the principal and school superintendent (Sargent, 2003).

A third set of strategies involves developing incentives, including flexibility in compensation (differential pay), bonuses, tuition assistance for retraining and certification, loan forgiveness, housing incentives, and tax credits. Price (2002) reports that, although additional longitudinal data are needed before the effectiveness of financial incentive programs can be more fully assessed, “preliminary participation rates indicate that financial incentives are attracting teachers’ attention and are drawing teachers to schools they might not have considered otherwise” (p. 32).

Price (2002) offers some “lessons learned” about financial incentive strategies:

- The incentive has to be large enough to matter and must be targeted to generate the desirable result, or the impact will be diminished (e.g., if the desired result is to increase qualified teachers in high-poverty schools, the incentive should apply only to those schools);
- Imposing a repayment penalty for failing to uphold the terms of agreement will increase the likelihood of retention, as will spreading out the bonus payments over several years (with the biggest payoff awarded last);

- The incentive should be structured so that teachers are not penalized when school performance improves, and it should be renewable;
- More incentives should be designed to attract experienced teachers, rather than new recruits, to high-poverty, low-performing schools;
- Districts cannot do it alone, and substantial reallocation of current resources as well as new money will be necessary for financial incentive strategies to be effective.

Financial incentives targeted at alleviating teacher distribution problems are similar to those used to attract applicants to federally funded occupations perceived to be “high intensity” or “less desirable,” such as air traffic control and the military. The Federal Aviation Administration, for example, provides salary (as well as other incentives) for air traffic controllers willing to staff high-activity, high-stress airports, like Chicago O’Hare (FAA, 1997). Similarly, the U.S. Diplomatic Corps and the U.S. military offer “hazard pay” for staff willing to assume positions in places that may be remote or less friendly to U.S. citizens (United Nations, 2002; United States Government, 2001). Recently, Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) have argued for a new federally organized and supported teacher supply program modeled on similar efforts in medicine that have been used to ease physician shortages in both high-need communities and medical specialties.

But, as Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) note, increasing supply does not guarantee employment. A newly released study by the New Teacher Project (Levin & Quinn, 2003) of four urban districts’ hiring practices has both good and bad news about the success of teacher-recruitment strategies. The researchers found that by implementing “high-impact recruitment strategies,” all four districts received at least five to seven times the number of applications as available teaching positions. However, the researchers also discovered that “despite having hundreds of applicants in high-need areas (mathematics, science, special education, and education for English Language Learners) and many more applicants than vacancies to fill, each district was left scrambling at the 11th hour to fill its openings” (p. 5).

Why? The researchers discovered that the districts could not make contract offers until mid-to-late summer. Consequently, “anywhere from 31 percent to 60 percent of applicants withdrew from the hiring process, often to accept jobs with districts that made offers earlier.” Of those who withdrew, “50 percent to 70 percent cited the late hiring

timeline as a major reason they took other jobs” (p. 5). Even more disturbing from a teacher quality standpoint, the applicants who withdrew were stronger candidates (using indicators like grade point average, educational coursework, and degree) than those who remained in the district pool—some of whom the district eventually hired. The irony is palpable: the very teachers the district worked so hard to recruit were literally at the door and still could not find their way in. Other researchers have noted this “late fill” problem as well (Murphy, DeArmond, & Guin, 2003).

According to Levin and Quinn (2003), three policies typical of most urban districts and outside of the control of human resources departments were primarily responsible for late hiring practices: late vacancy notification policies for resigning and retiring teachers; teacher union transfer policies that give currently employed teachers “first pick” of job openings; and late state budget timelines. The authors conclude with recommendations for revising policies that constrain what an otherwise hefty investment in recruitment might actually accomplish—high-quality teachers for all children.

In South Carolina, some districts contend that the school funding policies in that state place poor rural districts at a disadvantage for attracting teachers, forcing them to hire high numbers of uncertified teachers. Eight of the poorest districts are suing the state for lack of money to hire “first string” teachers (AP, 2003). A state administrator testified during court proceedings: “Students in [poor] districts need the best teachers in South Carolina. Instead they are getting a larger number of new, inexperienced teachers because of money.” The administrator indicated that the majority of new hires in these districts held a bachelor’s degree in a subject area but had no teacher training. “They show up at the school, they’re handed the keys to that room, and they’re told to teach,” she said, “All we know is they have a degree in business, and they were a shoe salesman.” The court decision in the ten-year old lawsuit, which finally went to trial in late summer 2003, is still pending.

Although recruitment efforts and hiring policy changes might seem the most promising routes for attracting teachers to school settings and teaching fields experiencing teacher shortages, Ingersoll (2001) points out that efforts to get teachers in the door are only as good as the efforts to keep them there. His detailed analyses of data from the Schools and Staffing Survey suggest that the unequal distribution of teacher shortages is not a problem of recruitment but rather one of retention—a phenomenon he aptly refers to as the “revolving door” of teaching.

Ingersoll (2001) contends that this “revolving door” operates at an accelerated rate in some locations and teaching fields. In other words, you may be able to get teachers into hard-to-staff locations or teaching fields, but they will leave quickly. Urban teachers leave as soon as they find jobs in the suburbs; science and mathematics specialists find their way back to careers outside of education. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that, above all else, teachers’ decisions to stay depended on whether they believed they could be successful with their students. Working conditions such as “collegial interactions, opportunities for growth, appropriate assignments, adequate resources, and schoolwide structures supporting student learning” were the most important factors which influenced that decision (p. 259).

Findings from Philadelphia (PEF, 2002) resonate with these claims. Philadelphia, like many other large, urban systems, experiences problems with teacher staffing in high-poverty schools. A comparison between high- and low-poverty schools in Philadelphia shows higher teacher turnover and a higher percentage of noncertified teachers in high-poverty schools. High turnover leads to high percentages of new teachers in schools, especially in the highest poverty schools. In six of the highest poverty middle schools, for example, 46% of teachers had taught at the school for two years or less.

This finding is particularly troubling in light of research that points to teacher experience as one of the most consistently verifiable factors in student achievement (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Goldhaber & Brewer, 1997; Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1998; Kain & Singleton, 1996; see also Wilson & Floden, 2002, for a synthesis). We cannot be satisfied to simply find new teachers—we also have to keep them. We now turn our attention to induction programs created to do just that.

Induction

Historically, new teachers were left to their own devices, to “sink or swim.” Recall Ralph, the new schoolmaster in Eggleston’s (1871/1984) *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, who arrives at “Flat Crick” School excited and ready to teach. One of the school’s trustees, “old Jack Means,” assesses his chances:

“WANT to be a school-master, do you? You? Well, what would you do in Flat Crick deestrick, I’d like to know? Why, the boys have driv off the last two, and licked the one afore them like blazes. You might teach a summer school, when nothin’ but children come. But I ’low it takes a right smart man to be schoolmaster

in Flat Crick in the winter. They'd pitch you out of doors, sonny, neck and heels, afore Christmas."

The young man, who had walked ten miles to get to the school in this district, and who had been mentally reviewing his learning at every step he took, trembling lest the committee should find that he did not know enough, was not a little taken aback at this greeting from "old Jack Means," who was the first trustee that he lighted on. The impression made by these ominous remarks was emphasized by the glances which he received from Jack Means' two sons. The older one eyed him from the top of his brawny shoulders with that amiable look which a big dog turns on a little one before shaking him. Ralph Hartsook had never thought of being measured by the standard of muscle. This notion of beating education into young savages in spite of themselves dashed his ardor. (p. 2)

We've come a long way from those "survival of the fittest" days. And today's educators understand that recruitment is not a "one-shot deal." That is, a school district might successfully recruit new teachers, but the investment (both in terms of time and financial resources) is considerable. Making good on that investment means finding ways to support the ongoing development of new teachers once they arrive in their classrooms and schools.

Programs for beginning teachers—variously termed "induction," "new teacher orientation," or "novice teacher institutes"—may be administered by university-based teacher education programs, school district staff development offices, local schools, or others outside of the formal educational system. Indeed, induction does not "belong" to any one organizational entity. Nor does induction happen only within the context of formal programs. School-level staff development efforts, informal teacher exchanges, classroom experiences, a school's curriculum—all of these and still other factors contribute to the formal and informal, intentional and unintentional, induction of new teachers.

Induction, which occurs at the crossroads of preparation and practice, interests diverse stakeholders for quite different reasons. At the extremes, supporters of induction include both members of the educational establishment and its staunchest critics. To critics, induction is a welcome substitute for university-based teacher preparation. They contend that formal programs of teacher preparation are little more than barriers to entry for smart applicants who would otherwise enter teaching (Ballou & Podgursky, 1998). Although these criticisms often originate from outside of the public K-12 system, the underlying sentiments are not foreign to insiders. In fact, teacher education graduates often attribute their own knowledge and skill in the classroom to

their knowledge of the subject (especially at the secondary level) or to their practical experience. Historically, they have attributed little value to their formal teacher preparation (Lanier & Little, 1986; Lortie, 1975).

Supporters, including many (but not all) teacher educators and educational researchers, point out that, at best, a novice teacher is but a well-launched beginner. They see induction as a place along a continuum of professional education that begins in preparation and carries a teacher through his or her career (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, & Yusko, 1999). From this perspective, induction is a bridge between preparation and practice that builds on teacher preparation and extends through the early phase of professional teaching (Tickle, 2000).

Given this broad support, induction programs are proliferating internationally and nationally, at both state and local levels. One recent study described induction practices within 11 nations (Moskowitz & Stephens, 1997; see also Britton, Paine, Pimm, & Raizen, 2003, for another international study of induction). Domestic surveys document that 22 states currently fund induction programs at some level and that 11 other states require, but do not fund, induction (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; NCTAF, 2003).

Purposes

The purposes of these programs vary. First, there is the issue of new teachers acquiring knowledge of their new schools and communities. Teacher preparation programs prepare new teachers for schools across their home states and, in many cases, across the country. Thus, teacher preparation programs cannot prepare new teachers with knowledge of the particular needs and character of the school district where they will eventually be employed. This has increasingly become the case as entrepreneurial urban school districts recruit new teachers from across the country and, in some cases, the world. Orientation sessions (often held near the beginning of the year) provide new teachers with much local knowledge, be it bureaucratic paperwork and routines, union rules, community expectations, or the diverse needs of the local student population.

Another purpose of induction programs is associated with the perennial problem in learning to teach: bridging the gap between theory and practice, or the university and the schools. Some argue that teacher preparation programs simply are not in touch with the realities of schools or are not practical enough. And indeed, there is much

room for improvement in teacher preparation. But some challenges associated with learning to teach are unavoidable, for learning how to put ideas into practice requires practice. This is a problem all professions face. Gawande's (2002) description of learning to become a surgeon is a poignant reminder of how hard—and unavoidable—this process is. "Mine were not experienced hands," he notes (p. 12). "In surgery, as in anything else, skill and confidence are learned through experience—haltingly and humiliatingly" (p. 18). Teacher induction is no different, although it is often less dramatic than learning to make an incision in a living person. And many induction programs are designed to help new teachers make this difficult transition—with the support of more experienced colleagues—from novice to proficient practitioner, from someone who might "know" what to do but cannot yet enact that vision to someone who has skill and can make responsible, appropriate judgments on the spot.

A third purpose of induction programs is retention. Many urban school districts that suffer from high attrition have designed induction programs with the express purpose of keeping teachers rather than lose them to their more affluent neighbors. This attention to district or school retention is related to but separate from retention in the profession, an issue that is of concern to all schools. As we have already noted, the literature on teacher quality suggests that experience matters. Retention, then, becomes critical if teachers are to have the time they need in order to develop into highly qualified practitioners.

Multiple Actors: Who Staffs Induction?

In addition to having multiple purposes, induction programs also involve multiple actors. Staff members typically include central office personnel who have some responsibility for professional development, principals, and mentor teachers or coaches. There is considerable variation in how mentors are selected, whether they participate in professional development designed to help them enact the role of mentor or coach, whether they are full-time teachers or have been released from all or part of their teaching, and how they are matched with new teachers. There is also considerable variation in how much opportunity principals have had to learn how to support new teachers, as well as in the common procedures mentors and principals use for providing feedback and support.

Recently, additional actors have entered the induction game. The new Carnegie Corporation of New York initiative, Teachers for a New Era, explicitly requires that the participating teacher education programs

create induction supports for their graduates.³ In 1998, in response to an increasing enrollment of new teachers in its Teacher Institute (TI), the Exploratorium—a hands-on museum in San Francisco—created a two-year Teacher Induction Program (TIP) to support novice middle and high school science teachers in the San Francisco Bay area with funding from the National Science Foundation.⁴ During the academic year, TIP offers participants support-group meetings, content and pedagogy workshops (called Saturday workshops), and classroom coaching and mentoring assistance. Mentors and coaches are selected from TI/TIP staff and TI alumni.

During the summer between participants’ first and second years in the program, TIP participants join TI participants in a four-week summer institute. During the institute, participants attend discipline- and grade level-specific workshops, work with their mentors to develop a science curriculum unit, and share demonstration lessons. Because the institute takes place at the Exploratorium, workshop leaders use the museum’s exhibits to demonstrate and explain phenomena, providing time for teachers to build similar classroom-size models in the Exploratorium workshop. The Exploratorium also houses an extensive library of curriculum materials.

In addition to supporting novices, TIP provides support for the experienced teachers who work with the novices as mentors or coaches. TIP mentors participate in a four-week leadership institute that takes place during the summer and overlaps for three weeks with the new teachers’ summer institute. During the weeks of overlap, mentors have 90 minutes each day to work with new teachers in developing curriculum materials (Shouse, Galosy, & Wilson, 2003).

This program is just one example of a growing number of programs that are developing outside of the educational establishment. The New England Aquarium also offers a program designed to provide ongoing learning opportunities for new teachers. The National Science Foundation has awarded grants to numerous partnerships to create similar programs. In addition, there are consultants and organizations like Harry Wong (Breux & Wong, 2003; Wong & Wong, 2001), Charlotte Danielson (1996), Susan Villani (2001), and the Educational Testing Service (makers of the PRAXIS III classroom performance assessments) that offer materials and support for the creation of induction programs. Indeed, when facing mandates to provide induction to their new teachers, districts often seek out these existing materials and make use of them as best they can.

Who Is the “New” Teacher?

We should also note that there is variation in the teachers who are being served by the induction programs. Programs begin and end at different times, and so there is variation in how “new” the new teachers are: Some participants are experienced teachers who have recently moved to a new school district; others are experienced teachers who have recently changed assignments (moving to a new grade level or subject area, for example). Some participants are newly certified first-year teachers, others have been teaching for two, perhaps three years. Some programs require certification as a prerequisite, whereas others open their doors to anyone who has teaching responsibilities, including those who are teaching with partial certificates or emergency credentials, or are participants in alternative certification processes.

The Content and Pedagogy of Induction

Finally, there is considerable variation in what teachers are expected to learn in induction (the content), as well as in expectations of how new teachers learn (the pedagogy). In one recent study of induction programs in Michigan (Wilson, Bell, Galosy, Harris, & Shouse, 2002), we found that induction programs across the state of Michigan included information on special education requirements and student aggression, assessment strategies and survival skills, cooperative learning and trust building, laws and legislation, CPR, how to be a good mentee, working with diverse learners and classroom management, preparing for state and local standardized tests, back-to-school night and standards, instructional strategies and how to work with parents, legal issues, and writing across the curriculum. They were also offered content-specific professional development (how to teach writing or reading, mathematics or social studies) and were given a range of resources such as books by Harry Wong and Charlotte Danielson.

In addition to this wide array of topics, the pedagogy of induction—the opportunities to learn that new teachers are offered—also varies. The mainstay of most induction programs is some form of mentoring or coaching, although (as we noted earlier) what it means to coach or mentor a new teacher varies considerably across programs. Other structures are used as well. Orientation sessions, workshops, summer institutes, lesson study groups, and book groups are just a few of the pedagogical alternatives that are used to support new teacher learning.

In sum, there is considerable activity brewing in the name of induction in the United States, and new teachers interact with a variety of

stakeholders in a variety of settings and learn a variety of things. Despite this increased interest in and commitment to teacher induction programs, we know little about the impact of these various programs, or about which program features are tied to improved teaching practice or increased student learning. Some research is beginning to emerge. For example, Smith and Ingersoll (2003) found that beginning teachers who were provided with mentors from the same content area and who participated in collective induction activities (such as co-planning) were less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave teaching after their first year. Other forms of assistance—for instance, having a reduced teaching load—did not appear to have the same effects. Schwille and Feiman-Nemser (2001) found that mentors—or “advisors,” as they are called in the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project—helped new teachers learn to create effective environments for student learning; to engage and support the learning of all students; to understand and organize the subject matter for the purposes of teaching; to plan and design instruction; and to grow as a professional. Much more research is needed to shed light on questions around which supports have the most impact in the induction phase of a teacher’s career. Currently, one major proxy used for assessing an induction program’s success is teacher retention, and it is to policies concerning retention that we now turn.

Retention: The Problem of the “Revolving Door”

The common perception, widely reported in the press, is that we just don’t have enough teachers, especially good ones, to go around. But as often happens, the conventional wisdom turns out to be too conventional and too little wisdom. Our inability to support high-quality teaching in many of our schools is driven not by too few teachers coming in, but by too many going out, that is, by a staggering teacher turnover and attrition rate. (NCTAF, 2002, p. 3)

Finally, there is the issue of retention: If teacher quality depends, to some extent, on experience, then schools need to keep their teachers well after the early years of their career. This is no small feat, for less than 50% of the teaching supply in any given year can be made up of returning teachers (Boe, 1997). The teaching force churns.⁵ As John Merrow explained: “The pool keeps losing water because no one is paying attention to the leak. That is, we’re diagnosing the problem as recruitment, when it’s really retention. Simply put, we train teachers poorly and then treat them badly—so they leave in droves” (as quoted in Claycomb, 2000, p. 18).⁶

Teachers leave their teaching assignments for many reasons: They retire, they take new jobs in education that do not involve teaching, they leave to raise children, or they leave to take jobs outside of education. Popular wisdom suggests that urban and high-poverty schools have higher rates of teacher turnover, and that teacher retirements account for much of the loss of the teaching force. But recent research suggests otherwise. Ingersoll (2001), for example, found that small private schools have higher rates of teacher turnover than suburban or urban schools. After controlling for characteristics of both teachers and schools, Ingersoll (2001) found that four factors—low salaries, student discipline problems, limited administrative support, and limited input into school decision making—all contributed to higher rates of turnover. Although many teachers retire, research suggests that the combined number of new entrants into teaching and reentrants far exceeds the retirement rate (NCTAF, 2002). Other research suggests that many teachers become “voluntary movers”: they opt to search out new jobs where the work environment fosters both satisfaction and teaching success (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001). This finding, too, is not new, for Becker (1952) found a similar pattern of “lateral moves” for Chicago public school teachers who were in search of less stressful, more comfortable school settings in which to teach.

Induction programs are seen as part of the solution to this problem. But other factors need to be addressed if one is to conceptualize retention systemically. Other critical factors include salaries (e.g., Brewer, 1996; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1998; Murnane & Olsen, 1989; Murnane, Singer, & Willett, 1989; see also Kelley & Finnigan, this volume, chapter 8), working conditions (Corcoran, Walker, & White, 1988; Firestone, 1994; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, forthcoming), and teacher preparation (NCTAF, 2002).

To counteract these forces, schools and school districts have experimented with new policies. Some programs focus on the pipeline problem—how to get teachers interested in and committed to working in a district’s schools. The St. Paul Schools, Minneapolis, and the University of St. Thomas, for example, have worked together to create a 13-month, highly competitive program to prepare urban teachers from underrepresented groups. Upon graduation from the program, the teachers teach in the city’s elementary schools. Over twice as many applicants are turned away as accepted (Claycomb & Hawley, 2000). Some policies focus on hiring practices: In 1998, New York

City gave its schools their budgets in April so that the schools would know how many teachers they would need to hire and could afford to hire in the spring. This allowed the district to make job offers early enough to compete with other districts.

Other strategies have involved changing the assignments of new teachers. Renard (2003), for example, suggests that schools ought not require new teachers to team teach, assign new teachers outside extracurricular responsibilities like coaching or editing the yearbook, or assign new teachers to the most difficult classes in the school. Other recommendations include giving new teachers fewer preparations, arranging for mentors and new teachers to have the same planning period, and keeping new teachers in the same grade levels or courses for the first two years of their assignments.

Many incentives for retention, however, remain compensatory: signing bonuses, low-interest home mortgages, and extra years of service toward retirement. These compensatory practices, however, do not touch the core problem: changing the nature of the work and workplace. As Claycomb (2000) notes, this would require

such things as rebuilding crumbling buildings, raising teachers’ salaries, and reconfiguring management structures to allow teachers to share in decision-making. Ultimately, it may mean investing in whole-school and community renewal efforts that reinvigorate families, curb violence, beautify neighborhoods, and build a sense of community. (p. 20)

Consider an example of how one school changed other policies to increase teacher retention and satisfaction. The Timber Lane Elementary School in Virginia fought this revolving door syndrome by changing to a year-round calendar. This allows teachers more flexibility in their work schedules, as well as reducing stress with more frequent, albeit shorter, breaks. The year-round schedule also allows for more professional planning time; teachers can receive stipends for meeting during their intersessions to reflect on their teaching and plan for the coming term (Haser & Nasser, 2003). By changing the ways in which teachers experienced their normal workday, Timber Lane built an environment more conducive to teaching and learning to teach.

Conceptualized as a reform that would affect the work of all teachers, this shift in working conditions also has direct implications for the support and retention of new teachers. It is a point that Willard Waller (1932/1967) brought home poignantly in his classic, *The Sociology of Teaching*: “Their daily work will write upon them; what will it write?”

(p. 380). In the final section of this paper we turn to this question by considering the multiple conceptions of “teaching” that these policies concerning recruitment, induction, and retention embody and promote.

What Work Are Teachers Being Inducted Into?

How Policies Shape and Are Shaped by Conceptions of Teaching

Faced with the need to attract, support, and keep good teachers, the educational system is doing what it always does when faced with a new challenge: busily trying to develop policies and practices to increase the recruitment of good teachers, smooth their entry into the profession during the early stages of their careers, and ensure their retention. Some of these policies are developed independent of one another. In other cases, school districts or states conceptualize recruitment, induction, and retention as a package of policies that must be aligned.

But what does it mean to “align” such policies? And how broadly ought we cast our net across the relevant policies? To answer these questions, we must first consider, What is the nature of the work that teachers are being recruited and inducted into?

Educators and the American public answer this question in many different ways. Some argue that teachers are civil servants; others, that teachers are professionals. Some argue that teaching is moral work; others, that it is technical. Teaching is alternately seen as an art or a science. Although some might say that these discussions are the stuff that academic conversations are made of, we argue that presumptions about what teaching is—as work—are inextricably woven into our decisions about what policies and practices will best attract, support, and keep new teachers. Offering a higher salary as an incentive is qualitatively different than changing the conditions of one’s workplace or teaching assignment. Both can act as incentives, and both can send implicit messages about how the work of teaching is valued and understood. Let us briefly consider a few alternative conceptualizations of teaching before reflecting on the implications for policies that support teacher quality: teaching as professional work, teaching as labor, and teaching as vocation.

Teaching as Professional Work

Much has been written about teaching as professional work. Scholars have alternately argued that teaching is professional or quasi-professional work that requires specialized knowledge not available to the ordinary citizen on the street (e.g., Lortie, 1969; Shulman, 1983, 1986,

1987; Sykes, 1983). In the larger discourse on professionalism, there are several different approaches to defining what one actually means by “profession.” One dominant paradigm has conceptualized professions as “organized bodies of experts who applied esoteric knowledge to particular cases. They had elaborate systems of instruction and training, together with entry by examination and other formal prerequisites. They normally possessed and enforced a code of ethics or behavior” (Abbott, 1988, p. 4).

Within this paradigm, the commonplaces of professional work include a knowledge base, specialized training, entry and certification by examination, a code of ethics, and a community obligation to police practice within its ranks. Professions, such as medicine and law, also exhibit other features, including professional associations with regular meetings and journals that publish new knowledge.⁷

Professions also have particular ways of recruiting and inducting new members. Consider medicine. New doctors are not expected to know everything they need to or have all of the requisite skills upon graduation from medical school. And so they participate in residencies. The profession exercises social control through rounds—work, chart, attending, grand—and through mortality and morbidity conferences. These structures serve both to monitor the quality of care offered to patients and as learning communities in which less-experienced physicians gradually enter the profession and take on more and more responsibility (Bosk, 1979).

A recent and prominent example of the conception of teaching as professional work can be seen in the development and evolution of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The NBPTS has created standards for the knowledge base of teachers (across different content domains and developmental stages of students) and a certification process by which candidates for NBPTS certification are judged by other teachers. The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) offers another example. NCTAF argues for the creation of professional standards boards in every state; rigorous accreditation for all schools of education (and the closure of all inadequate schools of education); licensing teachers based on demonstrated performance (including tests of subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skill); and the use of NBPTS standards for judging accomplished teaching (NCTAF, 1996).

Recruitment, induction, and retention policies within a framework of “teacher as professional” would focus on controlling access to students, assessing and enhancing a novice teacher’s knowledge and skill,

and increasing autonomy. Novice teachers, for instance, might participate in sheltered experiences with students, perhaps even in apprenticeships with their more experienced and knowledgeable colleagues. At our own university, all teaching candidates must participate in an internship year after they receive an undergraduate degree. During that year, they gradually take on the responsibilities of full-time teaching, as well as participate in seminars designed to support their capacities to critically reflect on and learn from experience. Induction into a profession might include mechanisms like this, designed to extend one's professional knowledge and skill. Induction might also include rigorous and challenging assessments of competence such as portfolios or performance assessments like those used in the state of Connecticut (Wilson, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 2001; Youngs, 2002). Similarly, the assessments and standards developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, including tests of teacher content knowledge and portfolios, presume that teaching is professional work and that induction ought to include policies that assess new teachers' professional capacities.⁸

Teaching as Labor

Another, very different way to think of teaching is as "labor" or "civil service." In fact, in many countries, teachers are civil servants. Because education is a local enterprise in the United States, and participation of all—parents, local community members, industry officials—is accepted and expected, teachers are seen by some as civil servants, employees of the local school board—labor, if you will (Lipsky, 1980).

Mitchell and Kerchner (1983) argue that laboring work is not distinguished by being a "low-level" occupation, "but rather by the rationalized and preplanned character of tasks and direct inspection of how those tasks are performed" (p. 217):

Loyalty and insubordination are the most important concepts in evaluating laboring work. It is very important for laborers to give allegiance to the organization for which they work and to respond energetically and promptly to directions given by superiors. (p. 217)

Policies that support the recruitment, induction, or retention of civil servants might be quite different from those formulated within a teacher-as-professional framework. And, indeed, when state school boards of education have considered whether teachers ought to sit for NBPTS certification, debates have included discussions of whether or

not teachers are professionals and therefore have the right to exercise control within their ranks, or are civil servants and are thus controlled by their superiors. This is not surprising, because the public remains skeptical as to whether teaching requires specialized knowledge (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Incentives like signing bonuses, loan forgiveness, housing incentives, and tax credits might reinforce a conception of teaching as labor. Programs that deemphasize the need for professional knowledge—for instance, alternative routes that do not prepare new teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed—might send explicit or implicit messages to new teachers that the work they will do does not require specialized knowledge but rather “energetic and prompt” response to mandates from above.

Teaching as Vocation

A third conception of teaching is as a vocation. Vocation, Buechner claims, is “the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet” (cited in Palmer, 1998, p. 30). Some people become teachers for reasons less related to labor or professionalism and more related to “life work” (Hall, 1993). The women in Casey’s (1993) *I Answer With My Life*—Catholic nuns in social justice ministry, Jewish women in inner-city schools, and black women working for the promotion of racial minorities—all reflect such commitment. Others have focused on teaching as moral, ethical work (e.g., Green, 1971; Hansen, 1995; Noddings, 1988; Tom, 1984). As Bryk (1988) has argued, “good teaching is also an intensely personal activity.” This “personalism” that Bryk describes “vitalizes the concept of the teacher as an agent of personal transformation and not just a subject matter specialist. . . . It is a teacher’s sense of agape that can unite the academic and moral aims of education and engage students in an education of intellect and will” (pp. 278-279).

Perhaps the most prominent contemporary voice for this “teaching as vocation” perspective is Parker Palmer. Palmer’s focus is on both recognizing and integrating the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. He explains that he uses the heart in the “ancient sense,” as the place where intellect, emotions, and spirit join together. He argues that the heart of teachers is critical to good teaching and that “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique . . . [it] comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher” (p. 10).

For Palmer, the heart, not simply the mind, is the source of good teaching. He argues that we must nurture both the minds and hearts of teachers in order to have excellent teaching. If book sales and

speaking engagements are any indication, Palmer's perspective has resonated with thousands of teachers, in both K-12 schools and higher education. Perhaps unsurprisingly, similar concerns exist in other professions, including medicine, where there is a need to educate doctors for both moral and technical work (Bosk, 1979), and the clergy, where formation—human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral—is a critical aspect of both a new minister's preparation and what the minister does for parishioners. Recruitment, in this context, takes on a very different meaning. Breyer (2000) describes her yearlong process of "discernment," during which her denomination assessed and tested her "call to ministry." The process begins with an orientation:

Each applicant brings an entourage and carries copious documentation. We have psychological assessments, medical and financial records, a stack of required reading, commentary forms for the Parish Committees on Ministry to fill out, and a schedule for interviews with both bishops in Washington. Our rectors and parish committee representatives are in tow, a group with whom we will continue to discuss our callings regularly over the next four months. Finally, a lay mentor—a person who, though not a member of the clergy, is very active in his or her church as well as in some community ministry—is assigned to each aspirant. (p. 5)

The implications for policies are quite different if one conceptualizes teaching as vocation. For these teachers, the work of teaching is that of connecting, of interacting with students through subject matter and ideas, through personal passions, through what Schwab (1978) named the teacher's and student's Eros. Recruiting teachers, from this perspective, might bear a resemblance to the discernment process for the clergy. Teachers might need to undergo psychological assessments and collect attestations from local sponsors, as well as attest to their commitment and calling.

The rewards of the work within this view are one's sense of personal connection with students as people and learners. The very ability to enter a classroom and teach, interact, listen, and learn is a reward. Retention within such a model would require helping teachers find ways to connect with their students, feel personally renewed, be valued as human beings, and work in conditions that allow them to act out their beliefs about personal connection.

Teaching, of course, is not simply any one of these things—it is part labor, part profession, part vocation. Teachers are recruited and inducted into all of these versions of teaching. They need to know about the district's paperwork and they need to know how to relate to children.

They want higher salaries and they need to have professional knowledge. The tensions inherent in understanding that teaching is a moral enterprise that requires professional expertise and exists within a public bureaucracy resonate with tensions experienced by other workers, including professionals like doctors and lawyers. Ingersoll (2003) describes the tension as such:

On the one side is a rationalistic viewpoint that stresses the importance of workplace coordination, predictability, and accountability for the success of collective enterprises. On the other side is the humanistic viewpoint that stresses the need for workplace democracy, worker autonomy, and employee well-being for organizational success. These counterarguments are central to a larger discussion among social scientists of the character of middle-class employment as a whole—is it proletarianized or professionalized? Are essential white-collar occupations like teaching more akin to professional vocations, based on expertise, training, and skill, or are they closer to factory-like jobs, which underutilize human resources and alienate employees? And what should they be? (p. 15)

Our aim here is not to claim that one paradigm deserves pride of place. Rather, we want to reiterate Mitchell and Kerchner’s (1983) argument: underlying assumptions about the nature of teaching—that is, the kind of work that new teachers are recruited to and inducted into—fundamentally shape our understanding of both policy and practice. We decide how to recruit, induct, and retain teachers based on our assumptions about the nature of the work. Reflexively, through our recruitment, induction, and retention practices, we shape how new teachers conceptualize and enact the work of teaching. The current mix of policies and practices—ranging from signing bonuses to restructured school years, from school loan forgiveness to performance assessments for new hires, from induction as training for the district’s standardized test to induction as seminars devoted to learning more about electricity—are an eclectic mix. This variability can be understood in part as rooted in different conceptions of the work of teaching. As Mitchell and Kerchner argue, this mix is to be expected, but “care must be taken to ensure that policies do not become mutually contradictory and self-destructive” (p. 237). This is easier said than done.

Conclusion: Situating Recruitment, Induction, and Retention in the Larger Policy Landscape

We end by taking Mitchell and Kerner’s argument one step further. Teacher quality policies exist in a system of other policies—policies

about school finance, labor relations, curriculum, student accountability, and the like. Even though these policies appear unrelated to teacher quality policies, they too send messages about the nature of the work. For example, when a school district mandates a “teacher-proof” curriculum—that is, a curriculum that teachers are required to work with as a script—it sends an explicit message about the nature of teaching: it is labor, not professional work. A professional would need to critically evaluate and adapt the materials; laborers need to demonstrate loyalty by doing what they are told. As Ingersoll (2003) and others have pointed out, policies like this de-skill teaching:

Teacher-proof curricula reserve the conceptual portion of the complex craft of teaching—for a small number of highly trained, highly skilled, highly paid outside experts. Reducing the need for skill, knowledge, and training for the majority of inside employees, the teachers, reduces their value and the level at which they should be paid. Moreover, by reducing the need for skill, knowledge, and training, these mechanisms ease the replacement of teachers and can thus reduce the threat of teacher turnover and strikes. (p. 158)

Policies that mandate particular curricula or pedagogies can directly or indirectly shape how policies and practices of recruitment, induction, and retention are interpreted, received, and implemented. Policies concerning student accountability, labor relations, and the like can have a similar effect. If, for example, a teacher is inducted into a professional view of teaching through association with scientists and science teachers at the Exploratorium in summer institutes and then is hired in a school where she is directed to teach a particular curriculum in a specific way, there is the possibility that these mixed messages of who she is as a teacher—professional or civil servant—will, as Mitchell and Kerchner (1983) suggest, be self-destructive. Conversely, if a district strictly mandates a curriculum, that mandate might attract teachers who are passive and willing to be imprisoned in what Weber (cited in Krause, 1996, p. 2) called the “iron cage of bureaucratization.” The same policy might very well discourage new teachers in alternative routes who come from prestigious undergraduate institutions (like those attracted to teaching through programs like Teach for America) and want to proactively create and teach intellectually rigorous curricula.

Consider *Distar* and *Direct Instruction (DI)* (Adams & Engelmann, 1996), two curricula that include scripted lesson plans. For some teachers, such clear structure and direction is reassuring; others find it off-putting. Or consider the New York City public schools, where recently

adopted “teacher quality” policies are meant to emphasize professional expertise and to “inspire effective educators to teach in [New York] City’s schools” (New York City Department of Education, 2003). At the same time, curriculum mandates handed to teachers in the fall of 2003, like those regulating mathematics and reading instruction in the “famously fractious and diffusely organized” New York City schools (Traub, 2003), had a “totalitarian” feel for some teachers and parents. Policies dictated that “every single literacy and math class must hew to the same topics and utilize the same teaching methods . . . each literacy and math class [must also] be the exact same length and be given at the same time in every school in the city” (Stern, 2003, p. 2). As New York City schoolteachers received memos that included strict specifications (subject to “disciplinary action”) for seating arrangements and checklists of what must be visible in every classroom (Williams, 2003), conformity and compliance moved center stage as markers of a “good” teacher. This vision directly contradicts that of the teacher as a professional who is autonomous and trusted to make wise decisions about the curriculum and instruction.

Of particular importance is an understanding of how state and federal mandates are playing an increasingly dominant role, and the consequences of that encroachment. Historically, the state has always been antagonistic toward what Krause (1996) calls “guilds”—associations (including professions) and “institutions created by groups of workers around their work, their skill or craft” (p. 3). Guilds exercise power through association by controlling both the workplace and the market. The state sees this guild power as “the enemy and limitation of production as a plot against the consumer” (p. 6). In the case of teacher quality policies, conceptions of teaching as profession or vocation resonate with the notion of guilds, or associations. In the current political climate, marked as it is with a procapitalist, free-market ideology, such associations are seen as the “enemy” of the state. Krause argues that

Guild power . . . is declining as state power and capitalist power encroach upon it. Where state and capitalist power have won out, they and not the profession control the aspects of professional life that we call “the workplace” and “the market” and determine to a large extent how much associational group power the profession has left vis-à-vis the state and capitalism. (p. 22)

Ingersoll’s (2003) analysis and Johnson and Birkeland’s (2003) descriptions clearly demonstrate how little control teachers have over their workplace, the schools. As the “state,” in the form of both state policies and federal legislation like No Child Left Behind, increasingly

encroaches on the market and workplace, teachers are pressed more and more into civil service and labor orientations toward teaching in their daily work. Teacher recruitment, induction, or retention policies that either presume a different orientation toward teaching (teaching as vocation or profession, for instance) or ignore the other messages new teachers receive about the nature of their work run the risk of being thwarted from the start. As Carroll and his colleagues (Carroll, Wheeler, Aleshire, & Marler, 1997) noted in their study of theology schools: "Powerful educational cultures, often unacknowledged, play a very big part in the formation of students' characters and capacities" (p. 279). This is no less true of teachers. In fact, those cultures come into sharp focus (and sometimes conflict) for teachers in schools. Recent scholarship suggests that critical leverage points in recruitment, induction, and retention are the nature and structure of the workplace. Whatever version of teaching teachers is being bought into, if we are to change the status quo we must improve workplace features such as salaries, class sizes, pupil loads, teacher input into decision making, opportunities for intellectual engagement, the appropriateness of teaching assignments, basic support, and the accessibility of school-level leadership (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Ingersoll; Johnson & Birkeland).

The larger educational and political context of the steady advance of the state into the direct governance of a broad array of issues concerning teaching, learning, and the schools promises to have significant implications for how any recruitment, induction, and retention policies are implemented and received. We close by returning to Waller (1932/1967):

These recruits who face teaching as a life work are ready to learn to teach, and they are ready, though they know it not, to be formed by teaching. When teaching has formed them, what shape will it give them? Their daily work will write upon them; what will it write? (p. 380)

As policymakers and practitioners, we need to consider the messages about teaching that are both embodied in and created by the policies we use to recruit, support, and retain good teachers. Individual policies may presume teachers to be, alternatively, laborers, professionals, or people with a calling. Furthermore, because these policies are woven into a complex web of other policies concerning curriculum and assessment, teacher quality, school finance, and workplace conditions, we must also strive to understand how the messages sent by this eclectic mix of policies resonate with or contradict one another. As Waller

notes, policies shape and are shaped by teachers. As such, they will “write” important lessons on the hearts and minds of the next generation of teachers. It behooves us all to understand what those lessons are.

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NOTES

1. Lortie analyzed data collected from 94 intensive teacher interviews in the Boston metropolitan area and several surveys conducted by the National Education Association during the mid-1960s to early 1970s.

2. Lankford and his colleagues went beyond out-of-field teaching in their study, employing multiple measures of teacher quality in addition to certification (e.g., experience, degree, etc.). However, because their measures were highly correlated, we use their work as an “out-of field” study from which teacher shortages can be inferred.

3. See <http://www.carnegie.org/sub/program/teachers.html>

4. See <http://www.exploratorium.edu/ti/programs/index.html#new>

5. We note, however, that Harris and Adams (2003) found that the turnover rates for teaching do not differ dramatically from similar fields, including nursing, social work, and accounting.

6. Of course, retention is not an unequivocal good. A program’s capacity to weed out underprepared or less-than-highly qualified teachers is also important. Thus, retention needs to be understood as the retention of good teachers.

7. Scholars interested in the sociology of the professions have taken multiple perspectives on the domain. Some approach the study of professions by considering the workplace; others, by considering the “traits” of the profession (as we do here) (e.g., Krause, 1996; Larsen, 1977). Another paradigm focuses instead on jurisdiction—that is, how groups of professionals compete for control over certain domains and how they establish relationships with other groups, including other groups of professionals. For example, although the mentally ill were originally the jurisdiction of the law, gradually the medical profession—specifically the arm that emerged as psychiatry—claimed that jurisdiction and redefined the problem as one not of maintaining order but of treating disease (Abbott, 1988). Although we do not delve into these issues here, questions of jurisdictional competition are particularly helpful in considering arguments over what constitutes preparation for teachers, and whether and who (schools of education, K-12 schools, or the state) should certify teachers’ competence.

8. See http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Interstate_New_Teacher_Assessment_and_Support_Consortium/

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