

Booklet 1: Facilitator's Guide



Ontario
College of
Teachers
AND
Brock University
Learning from
Experience:
Supporting Beginning
Teachers and Mentors

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Ontario College of Teachers Brock University

This resource was developed through a collaborative research partnership between the Ontario College of Teachers and the Faculty of Education, Brock University.

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Learning from Experience: Supporting Beginning Teachers and Mentors

Booklet 1: Facilitator's Guide

Introduction

Jerry's words created a sudden silence in the classroom. It was obvious to everyone that Jerry had broken and stepped on a dozen sacred rules. The rest of the class sat there, 21 pairs of wide, expectant eyes suddenly bright with eager anticipation. They were waiting to see what I would do. My authority had been openly challenged. – BEGINNING TEACHER

These words, written by a beginning teacher, speak to the challenges that teachers new to the profession face. Aware of the need to support and address many issues of identity, isolation, leadership and instructional practice, the Ontario College of Teachers and the Faculty of Education at Brock University designed an innovative project that involved six district school boards: Grand Erie DSB, Halton DSB, Halton Catholic DSB, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB, the DSB of Niagara and Niagara Catholic DSB.

The project took the form of a series of professional learning sessions held at Brock University with staff of the district school boards during one school year. The purpose of the sessions was to understand the experiences of beginning and mentor teachers and to model collaborative approaches to induction that could be replicated in school communities across the province.

The Ontario College of Teachers participates in many partnerships in the education sector. This project partnered the College with Brock University's Faculty of Education and six district school boards to support and contribute to practices of induction that will be relevant to all new teachers.

Induction Resource Kit

Learning from Experience: Supporting Beginning Teachers and Mentors is a resource kit designed to enhance teacher induction. The series of five booklets has been developed to support inquiry-based teacher induction. Each booklet presents approaches for supporting the professional practice of both beginning and mentor teachers.

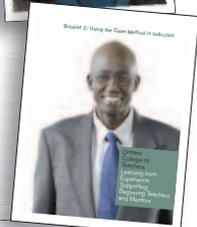
The insights and experiences of the beginning and mentor teachers who took part in the pilot induction project have deeply informed the development of this resource kit. Professional learning activities were identified and proved effective for both induction and teacher education. These activities reflect both the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*.

The five-booklet resource kit is designed for use in sessions with beginning teachers, with mentors or in joint sessions. The inquiry-based booklets can also be used for self-reflection. These resources convey the authentic experiences, perspectives and insights of both beginning and mentor teachers.



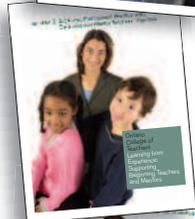
Booklet 1: Facilitator's Guide

This booklet looks at the background and objectives of the pilot induction project undertaken by the Ontario College of Teachers and Brock University in conjunction with six district school boards. It describes the role of the standards and the benefits of using the case method for induction.



Booklet 2: Using the Case Method in Induction

This booklet features The Sharing Circle, a sample case written by a new teacher. Case methodology is set out along with useful charts.



Booklet 3: Exploring Professional Practice with Beginning and Mentor Teachers: Vignettes

This booklet presents vignettes written by beginning teachers and mentors. It outlines a narrative inquiry approach to professional learning.



Booklet 4: Implementing a New Teacher Induction Workshop

This booklet provides a step-by-step approach to creating a professional learning session focused on induction and based on the standards. It includes probing questions and discussion of community builders and case protocol.



Booklet 5: Research Summary

This booklet provides a synopsis of key insights garnered during the collaborative induction project.

The five booklets provide the components of a professional learning model designed to support beginning teachers and mentor teachers. They reflect the pedagogies, methodologies, results and significance of a collaborative approach to supporting teacher induction. Readers can decide for themselves if all or several or just one booklet will serve their purposes in supporting professional practice.

A Partnership Approach

In 2003, the Ontario College of Teachers submitted a paper titled *New Teacher Induction: Growing into the Profession* to the Ontario Ministry of Education. The paper, created through extensive consultation with new teachers, mentors, education partners and teacher educators, recommended induction practices informed by research, based on the framework of the ethical standards and standards of practice for the teaching profession and enacted through partnerships.

Likewise, the Faculty of Education at Brock University has engaged in the focused development of beginning teachers. For some time now, Brock University has encouraged opportunities for partnerships to enhance ongoing teacher education. This approach of shared responsibility has underpinned and strengthened those partnerships, with attention to enhancing the induction of new teachers into the profession. By continuing to study the experiences of beginning teachers during their induction, Brock's Faculty of Education is increasingly able to reinforce shared efforts to support new teachers more effectively.

The Faculty of Education at Brock University, in order to continue research on effective teaching and learning, and the Ontario College of Teachers, committed to integrating the standards into professional practice, concurred that a partnership approach to induction would be an effective means of supporting beginning teachers. They, together with the six district school boards, embarked on a partnership designed to foster standards-based teacher induction.

The objectives of the collaboration were:

- to enhance teacher induction and mentorship practices in Ontario
- to model a partnership approach to induction with district school boards
- to support the induction of beginning teachers by using professional learning activities outlined in the standard of practice Ongoing Professional Learning: dialogue, reflection, inquiry and collaboration
- to collaboratively develop an induction resource based on the ethical and practice standards of the Ontario College of Teachers
- to contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning through the joint dissemination of the results of the induction research project.

The induction project that emerged from the collaboration comprised a series of inquiry-based learning sessions. The sessions modelled an approach to induction designed to engage beginning teachers and mentors in Ontario.



Inquiry-Based Sessions

The collaborative induction project, consisting of a series of professional learning sessions held at Brock University, was designed to support teacher practice, build confidence, and expand knowledge through the use of narrative inquiry. Case studies and written vignettes were identified as narrative strategies that would enable educators to inquire into the lived experiences of beginning and mentor teachers. The narratives selected for the project were personal, useful and engaging.

Importantly, a community builder with questions directly linked to the needs of new teachers created a friendly and respectful milieu. Working in small and large groups in a comfortable setting encouraged participants to relax, promoting an environment where they could speak honestly and openly. Since every teacher has a story to tell and that story is the repository of lived experience, story sharing became a vehicle to exchange and discuss teaching information.

The College's own research (Goldblatt & Smith, 2005; Allard et al, 2007; Shulman, Whittaker & Lew, 2002; Richert, 2002; Sykes & Bird, 1992) has led to the development of institutes in which case studies are used as catalysts for discussing issues pertinent to teaching. Full-day institutes involve educators working with teacher-written case studies that focus on conundrums educators have experienced. Pivotal to each case is a challenge or dilemma resurrected from a real teaching practice. In a step-by-step process (Ontario College of Teachers, 2006c, 2008) participants look at the facts of the case, consider the issues and assume the perspectives of different players. Participants are encouraged to engage in dialogue with their colleagues, who may hold divergent views about the cause of a dilemma or identify a different primary issue. Participants learn that a teaching case is "a case of many things" (Shulman, 1992). Like an unfolding accordion, a good case study involves teacher identity, collegial relations, balances of power, communication, political decision making and much more.

Working with the Standards

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* (Appendices I and II) address the question: What does it mean to be a teacher in Ontario? The standards support a philosophical stance, professional and practical knowledge, collaborative work, leadership and ongoing learning. They speak to the life of a committed educator. They convey a collective vision of teacher professionalism.

The concepts of inquiry, dialogue and reflection permeate all of the standards. Since the lived experiences of educators are reflected in the standards, it's important for beginning teachers and teacher mentors to recognize that they are already living the standards and that the standards are aspirational in nature; understanding of them increases as teachers grow in their professional lives. Case studies and vignettes written by teachers act as catalysts to connect personal/professional contexts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) with the actual language of the standards.

Through reflection and discussion, participants in the collaborative induction project were able to make connections between the standards and their own professional practice. As they realized that the standards were already embedded in their daily context, they became increasingly aware of a vision of professionalism, one they could continue to strive for and maintain.

Participants in the induction project working with a given case study identified the roles played by the ethical standards and standards of practice. Narrative-based professional learning involves returning to the standards in order to identify how they play out in a specific situation and where they might function as guidelines to enhance professional practice. As every case concerns principles or elements of effective teaching, the first-person narration of a case naturally unfolds into the nine domains of the standards.

The ethical standards and standards of practice provided the foundational underpinnings for the collaborative induction project. The standards play a vital role in initial and continuing teacher education. The professional learning methods presented in this resource are all standards based, inviting educators to review a particular standard and locate it in the professional practice depicted in a case study.

Benefits of Inquiry-Based Learning

Highlighted throughout the collaborative induction project was the significance of using an inquiry-based approach for induction – one that elicits the experiences of both beginning and mentor teachers. Also stressed was the importance of educators’ inside knowledge in supporting the induction process. Data was collected from both beginning teachers and mentors on an ongoing basis. The data provided insights into the value of narrative-based professional learning. Implications for partnership approaches to induction were also revealed. The following chart identifies the benefits of using case studies for both beginning teachers and mentors.

Inquiry-Based Professional Learning	
Benefits for Beginning Teachers	Benefits for Mentors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Validated teacher knowledge through conversations and collaboration with colleagues and mentors ◆ Validated new teachers' leadership capacities ◆ Highlighted the role of critical reflection as it applies to professional practice ◆ Heightened self-awareness of teaching capacity for personal and professional growth ◆ Reduced the isolation felt by new teachers ◆ Broadened awareness of the ethical standards and standards of practice ◆ Fostered an appreciation of critical inquiry and genuine conversation ◆ Provided an opportunity to network with colleagues ◆ Provided an opportunity for inquiry, reflection and dialogue ◆ Reinforced the importance of perspective taking ◆ Provided meaningful professional learning that focused on participants' needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Facilitated a constructivist approach to professional learning. ◆ Fostered greater appreciation for strengthening the lines of communication between new and mentor teachers ◆ Validated the leadership capacities of mentor teachers ◆ Increased confidence to address the needs that are most relevant to new teachers ◆ Underscored the role of critical reflection as it applies to professional practice ◆ Broadened awareness of the ethical standards and standards of practice ◆ Deepened commitment and enthusiasm for teachers and mentors ◆ Nurtured appreciation of critical inquiry and genuine conversation ◆ Increased awareness of the challenges of new teachers ◆ Provided opportunities for personal and professional inquiry, reflection and dialogue

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The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* represent a vision of professional practice. At the heart of a strong and effective teaching profession is a commitment to students and their learning. Members of the Ontario College of Teachers, in their position of trust, demonstrate responsibility in their relationships with students, parents, guardians, colleagues, educational partners, other professionals, the environment and the public.

The Purposes of the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession are:

- to inspire members to reflect and uphold the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- to identify the ethical responsibilities and commitments in the teaching profession
- to guide ethical decisions and actions in the teaching profession
- to promote public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

The Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession are:

Care

The ethical standard of *Care* includes compassion, acceptance, interest and insight for developing students' potential. Members express their commitment to students' well-being and learning through positive influence, professional judgment and empathy in practice.

Respect

Intrinsic to the ethical standard of *Respect* are trust and fair-mindedness. Members honour human dignity, emotional wellness and cognitive development. In their professional practice, they model respect for spiritual and cultural values, social justice, confidentiality, freedom, democracy and the environment.

Trust

The ethical standard of *Trust* embodies fairness, openness and honesty. Members' professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, guardians and the public are based on trust.

Integrity

Honesty, reliability and moral action are embodied in the ethical standard of *Integrity*. Continual reflection assists members in exercising integrity in their professional commitments and responsibilities.

Appendix II

The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession

The *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* provide a framework of principles that describes the knowledge, skills, and values inherent in Ontario's teaching profession. These standards articulate the goals and aspirations of the profession. These standards convey a collective vision of professionalism that guides the daily practices of members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

The Purposes of the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are:

- to inspire a shared vision for the teaching profession
- to identify the values, knowledge and skills that are distinctive to the teaching profession
- to guide the professional judgment and actions of the teaching profession
- to promote a common language that fosters an understanding of what it means to be a member of the teaching profession.

The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession are:

Commitment to Students and Student Learning

Members are dedicated in their care and commitment to students. They treat students equitably and with respect and are sensitive to factors that influence individual student learning. Members facilitate the development of students as contributing citizens of Canadian society.

Professional Knowledge

Members strive to be current in their professional knowledge and recognize its relationship to practice. They understand and reflect on student development, learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum, ethics, educational research and related policies and legislation to inform professional judgment in practice.

Professional Practice

Members apply professional knowledge and experience to promote student learning. They use appropriate pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, resources and technology in planning for and responding to the needs of individual students and learning communities. Members refine their professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection.

Leadership in Learning Communities

Members promote and participate in the creation of collaborative, safe and supportive learning communities. They recognize their shared responsibilities and their leadership roles in order to facilitate student success. Members maintain and uphold the principles of the ethical standards in these learning communities.

Ongoing Professional Learning

Members recognize that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration and knowledge.

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