



# Culture of Care: A Chronology of New Zealand Teacher Induction Policy

*New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work, Volume 4, Issue 2, 117-126, 2007*

---

SQUIRREL MAIN AND MARY HILL

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past four decades, New Zealand has had highly developed patterns of self-evaluation and improvement in initiating its beginning teachers into schools. In particular, this evolution includes a formalization in the role of the tutor teacher – the on-site veteran teacher responsible for coaching a beginning teacher (BT). This paper provides an overview of induction highlights for each decade, and concludes by highlighting current practices in exemplar schools. The argument is that induction has moved from an individualistic outlook in the 1970's to a humanistic stance in the mid-1980's, and New Zealand stands poised to adopt a vanguard pedagogical viewpoint from a current wave of induction reform.

## THE 1970'S: 'SINK OR SWIM'

Before the present system of beginning teacher support was formalized, the 1970's were characterized by an individualistic approach to induction. Although there were some tutor teachers in the 1970's, for the most part, BTs were left to their own devices to survive. Campbell (1977) interviewed over six hundred beginning teachers and reported that they showed no significant signs of growth during their first two years. Campbell cited little in-service advice and guidance as the underlying problem. Support was relegated to biannual visits from a distant Inspectorate. In 1978, Ross reported that 'entry into the teaching service was the weakest area of teacher training' (*The Dominion*, August 9, 1978). Likewise, a survey of 214 first, second, and third year teachers reported that, of the teachers who did not achieve to their expected level, two-thirds cited a lack of support from senior colleagues (Murdoch, 1979a) Surveying 265 primary BTs, Murdoch found 51% did not have advisor assistance, 38% rarely/never saw their mentor, and 23% wanted more help within their school. His report for the Christchurch College of Education mused that 'Even the year one teacher is viewed as a fully prepared professional, perhaps with a few rough edges to tidy up, rather than an intern requiring considerable further help and support' (Murdoch, 1978: 1).

## Recommendations from the 1970's: Building the Lifeboat

After assessing the situation of beginning teachers in the late 1970's, Murdoch offered three points to improve the quality and quantity of BT support. First, a concerted effort was needed to focus on improving BT support. Second, noting that 56% of the interviewed teachers did not have any in-service course, Murdoch delivered a strong call for the teachers' colleges to offer curriculum

courses to BTs and cultivate working partnerships with the national inspectorate. Third, there needed to be a cohesive inter-agency plan to include consultancy teams and counselling from the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI), the primary teacher's union (Murdoch, 1979b). The overall tenor of Murdoch's recommendations was a call for 'positive attitudes toward the high quality of our young teachers, many of whom are better qualified in certain areas than their senior colleagues' (Murdoch, 1979b). Young teachers, he argued, must feel accepted as full, albeit junior, professional colleagues whose individuality and interests must be respected and their strengths used.

### **1980'S: PHOENIX IS BORN**

The combined efforts of Murdoch and his contemporaries led to a paradigm shift from individualistic to humanistic theories of learning, which are value-driven and emphasise the natural desire to learn. Ideally, individual learners are empowered and coached to meet their fullest potential in a nurturing environment (Atherton, 2005). On November 14, 1984 a new system of induction was commenced. Beginning teachers were appointed to a certificating position for two years during which time they were required to receive a programme of advice and guidance. This system, commencing in February 1985, included a 0.2 staffing supplement to the school for first year teachers in exchange for fully documented use of the allowance, with a monthly report on beginning teachers' progress, plus two formal inspectorate visits during their first year. Note, there was no requirement that this allowance would go solely to the beginning teacher, as assistance could take a myriad of different formats. At the end of their two-year provisional appointment, BTs were guaranteed permanent appointments.

Battersby (1989b) reported several advantages to the new system, including: standardizing the 0.2 allowance; documenting advice and guidance programmes; and, ensuring BTs a permanent position upon full registration. Innovations occurred; for example, some schools used the funding for BTs to undertake full-day visits to other schools, while some schools used the allowance for reducing BT class size.

### **Recommendations from the 1980's: Refining the Phoenix**

As with any system, the advent of the 0.2 allowance was not without its shortcomings. Ambiguities in the legislation led to inconsistencies in its implementation. Some boards provided formatted templates for their teachers' monthly report, others did not; some BTs co-wrote their reports, some saw reports, others did not. Beginning teachers themselves reported varied levels of satisfaction, and 66% cited receiving less than three hours per week release per term, although some of this time may have been used by tutor teachers. BTs cited quality of supervision as a significant variable in their satisfaction. Moreover, inspectorate turnover was high (50%), leading to gaps in the support programme (Battersby, 1981; Battersby, 1989a; Kingston, 1983). In response to these shortcomings, Battersby (1989a) recommended that there be national guidelines for the 0.2 allowance, the allowance be extended to include second year teachers, the tutor teachers should be trained, and that the role of inspectors be split between evaluative and pastoral roles.

## **1990'S: STEADY IMPROVEMENT UNDER SELF-MANAGING SCHOOLS**

Based on recommendations from a 1988 Task Force to Review Education, New Zealand dissolved the entire national education system and shifted to self-governing schools. During this shift, the 0.2 allowance to schools per BT remained intact. Despite drastic changes in the overall system, a patchwork implementation of Battersby's recommendations surfaced. Additionally, the Teacher Registration Board (TRB), a Crown Entity established under the Education Act 1989, acted as a teacher quality assurance agent. Eventually, the TRB would transform into the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC), the entity that receives BT registration applications, and, later portfolios, which included records of observations, reflections, and attestations of satisfactory work.

In the 1990's, there were two national research projects surrounding New Zealand induction programmes. First, Mansell (1996) surveyed first and second year primary and secondary BTs about their advice and guidance programmes and use of the 0.2 time. While the response rate was just 41 percent, beginning teachers were positive about their advice and guidance programme, and most reported having a tutor teacher as a component of their support.

The second national study by Renwick (2001) drew a random sample of BTs who were entitled to the 0.2 allowance. There was a response rate of 79% (229) primary BTs and 86% (208) secondary BTs. The questionnaire asked beginning teachers a series of questions designed to determine the amount and kind of support beginning teachers received. Almost all of the primary beginning teachers said they had a tutor/supervising teacher (N= 225), and 71% of primary beginning teachers compared with 53% of secondary said they received an hour or more support each week. A higher proportion of primary (65%) than secondary (43%) beginning teachers considered their tutor/supervising teacher to be 'effective'. More than 50% of primary teachers rated 9 of the possible 12 professional development activities as being 'effective', while 'observing other teachers and students in another school' was the least likely activity to be ranked as 'effective' by both primary and secondary beginning teachers. Furthermore, this study supported the findings of Mansell and highlighted the need for greater understanding of the personal and professional skills required to support beginning teachers, and for providers of initial teacher education and schools to develop a shared understanding of their roles.

## **2000'S: THE EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE GIVES INDUCTION THE 'GO'**

With self-governing schools in place, researchers appealed to solidify induction programmes and evaluations (Renwick, 2001). Although most BTs were receiving support, researchers recommended more uniform consistency. Dewar *et al.*, (2003) interviewed staff in 20 NZ secondary schools and found beginning teachers in those schools reported that apart from an initial orientation to the school, their advice and guidance programmes appeared rather ad hoc. While school personnel acknowledged the importance of mentoring beginning teachers, they lamented they were seldom able to provide the support entitled to BTs.

Partially in response to these findings, the Education Review Office (ERO) – the national, independent evaluative branch that replaced the Inspectorate – used its own *Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews in Schools* to survey second year teachers. The evaluation found that most second year BTs are ‘doing well’. Most notably, ERO found that the quality of the school’s support arrangements is a significant factor in the effectiveness of the Year 2 BT’s teaching. The strength of the relationship between the quality of support and BT (Year 2) effectiveness was rather highly correlated ( $r = .46$  for primary and  $r = .56$  for secondary;  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, confirming the findings of Murdoch (1979b), by examining trends in highly effective BTs, ERO found that a strong tutor teacher/Year 2 beginning teacher relationship was a common theme among effective BTs. Specifically, effective BTs cited a balance of mentoring, encouragement and challenge coupled with collaboration and shared inquiry. Additionally, ERO found that these tutor teachers possessed the pedagogical skills and knowledge for carrying out the role effectively (Education Review Office, 2004).

ERO also found that most primary and secondary schools’ support arrangements for beginning teachers met expectations of effectiveness. Schools generally valued their beginning teachers and had policies, plans, and systems to ensure they received the individual support and development required during the first years of teaching. Proof of this can be found in the portfolios submitted for teacher registration to the NZ Teachers Council (NZTC), which replaced the Teacher Registration Board on the February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. Most beginning teachers readily testified to this support, even under the decentralised school system. Thus, despite decentralisation, NZ emerged as a global frontrunner in creating systems to support BTs.

The Education Review Office (2004), recognizing that continuous improvement is desirable in any programme, recommended the following modifications: strengthening the tutor teacher’s role and status as a step on the senior teacher’s career path; providing more targeted professional development for tutor teachers; increasing time allowances for tutor teachers and BTs during the BT’s second year of teaching; increasing professional development opportunities for beginning teachers; facilitating the establishment of, and access to, support groups for all beginning teachers; and the practice of some schools to employ beginning teachers on a temporary basis as de facto probationers.

## **THE CURRENT SITUATION: EXCEPTIONAL EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

Given the academic orientation of these recommendations, coupled with the 30-year history of refining advice and guidance programmes, NZ stands poised to shift from a humanistic to a pedagogic approach to teacher induction. As a result of this Education Review Office (2004) report, the allowance was expanded to include all second year BTs (0.2 for first year teachers, 0.1 for second year teachers), and external professional developers began offering more training courses for tutor teachers.

The ERO report found approximately three dozen primary schools (32 out of 119 sampled) exceeding induction expectations. At these schools, ERO noted the following factors were likely to be present: a ‘team’ of beginning

teachers in the one school; the tutor teacher played a positive role in the beginning teacher's development; and particularly strong school support arrangements for beginning teachers.

The report does not elaborate on 'strong school support arrangements'. To answer this question, the New Zealand Teachers Council is in the midst of a two-year multi-phase study of induction programmes in Aotearoa. As part of this study, Cameron, Dingle and Brooking (2007) released a literature review which defines effective induction practice, examines international best practices, and reports on the beginnings of several induction research projects. As part of my research regarding support for beginning teachers in low decile primary schools, a number of informal visits to schools have been completed. Based on input from teachers and school support personnel, a tentative conceptualization of 'strong support arrangements' is emerging. Specifically, this includes: (1) documentation of an advice and guidance programme; (2) dedicated personnel; (3) focused funding on professional development; and, (4) pastoral care for beginning teachers. Below are illustrations of each of these categories.

### **1. Documentation of induction**

A first year teacher at a large Auckland decile 2 primary school proudly displays her binder including staff photos, syndicate long-term planning, her own short-term planning, her video appraisal, a standard BT report, a classroom environment report, and interviews with her students. The folder also includes her feedback from an observation of a veteran teacher, part of a school-wide reading initiative. These forms, as well as all the school policy documents, are available in electronic and hard copy format. 'You don't have to re-invent the wheel for anything', she remarks.

Across South Auckland, beginning and tutor teachers in a decile 3 primary school refer to their 'binder' daily. What makes it special? It is located on a network server so teachers can download and type directly onto the documents. The network folder contains observation forms, release timetables, orientation information, and a plethora of other induction-related documents. The senior teachers recently emailed these documents to several other schools.

### **2. Dedicated personnel**

In Northland, a middle-sized decile 1 primary school places a clear priority on BT development by appointing a fourth year teacher as a full-time tutor teacher for the five BTs on staff. She has consolidated the forms, coordinated the 0.2 time, and arranged for BT professional development. Commenting on the increased number of observations, co-planning sessions, and resources assistance, a second year BT remarked, 'This year I am receiving so much better support with [our mentor] around'.

Similarly, a new tutor teacher at a south Auckland primary school is able to refer to her copy of the school's networked attestation folder. During a regular hour-long after-school meeting with her BT, she creates a 'facts, response, action' worksheet to scaffold an observation debriefing. Later in the week, the tutor teacher shares her worksheet at a local support services meeting, and is visibly empowered by her contribution to the group.

### 3. Focused funding supports professional growth

Arrive at one small decile 1 primary school in industrial Auckland on a Friday morning and you will find the BT hard at work on the staff laptop. Six of the eight teachers on staff attend a university course, half of which is funded by the school, and an essay is due next week. 'We try and base our PD where everybody's still learning, we're all in the same boat'. Other courses – NZEI, workshops with cluster schools – are also funded, and teachers are given release time but held accountable for completing and evaluating these courses. 'Our BTs bring learning skills', remarks the principal, 'it's a real asset to our team'.

### 4. Pastoral care

All of the above pedagogical components of an induction programme may be in place, but without a pastoral aspect (Dangel, 2006), bureaucratic improvements would amount to little. At all of the above schools, BTs glow with praise for the support they are receiving. This compassion was evident in the simple notes in BT folders, 'Take care and use your sick days', or administrative comments such as 'You have to look after your younger teachers', or the musings of a 20-year veteran teacher, 'It is all about developing relationships'.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CURRENT SITUATION: FILLING IN THE CHECKERBOARD

As New Zealand integrates a pedagogical outlook into its humanistic induction framework, the above practices promise much for future improvements. The following principles parallel the four 'strong support' categories:

- *Hold schools accountable.* When visiting, ERO should look for a documented advice and guidance programme that substantiates, at the very least, schools' use of the 0.2 allowance. To facilitate the spread of best practices, the Ministry of Education could establish a page on its website dedicated to induction forms. Beginning with pre-service, BTs, University staff, tutor teachers, and administration could upload and download innovative forms, documents and ideas.
- *Esteem tutor teachers.* Elevate the prestige of the tutor teacher position via increased pay, and, ideally, an application process for the position. In the United States, one Teachers College created a tutor teacher nomination form with parameters for attitude and character, communication skills, professional competency/experience, and interpersonal skills. Most promising was the active role of the college in screening and training applicants. However, in endeavouring to elevate the tutor teacher role, New Zealand should bear in mind the reciprocal relationship between BTs and tutor teachers. One creative solution involves forming triads (tutor teacher + year one BT + year two BT). Researchers found that year two BTs in this programme showed increased efficacy when helping to mentor year one BTs (Hayes, in Dangel, 2006).

- *Prepare administrators.* Murdoch hypothesized that the number of external connections was a strong indicator of the strength of a school's BT scheme. It takes a dedicated administrator to create these connections. Preparation for administrators should contain components around induction practices, with opportunities for periodic updates.
- *Shift in BT paradigm.* BTs need to be viewed as assets, and every school's policy ought to reflect this view. Involving beginning teachers in reflective action research, vanguard pedagogy, and creative school innovations will help create a professional culture that values BTs as full professionals, even as they hone classroom management and instructional skills.
- *Survey BTs.* The NZTC has recently released the results of its first nationwide survey of BTs (Cameron, Dingle & Brooking, 2007). Annually, all BTs should be asked about their support and guidance. An online forum could be the most cost-effective and efficient method of accomplishing this task.
- *Document induction effects on student achievement.* The ERO report provided an excellent first look at the link between student achievement and induction programmes. ERO and the Ministry of Education should follow up on this report in order to continue to locate and quantify the effects of exemplar induction programmes and their impact on first year teaching and their students' learning.

## CONCLUSION

New Zealand's induction practices have developed in a contextual and reflective progression. Perhaps most telling is a quote from the 1951 *Report of the Consultative Committee*, 'No training college courses can be expected to turn out young teachers fully prepared to cope with all the difficulties that will arise in their first years of service. Indeed, the very process of giving them professional vision ... may add to their difficulties by making them critical, or sometimes over-critical, both of their own performance and of much that they find going on around them in schools' (pp.164-5). Fortunately, based on field observations thus far, New Zealand culture values such critical reflection and collaborative evaluation. As the New Zealand Teachers Council (Cameron, Dingle & Brooking, 2007) and other researchers (e.g., Grudnoff, 2006; Langdon, 2006; Smales, 2002; Trevethan, 2006) continue their investigation of our induction practices, perhaps this culture will enable New Zealand to provide an international model of pedagogically-oriented induction reforms that maintain an ethos of humanistic care.

Thank you to all of the teachers, administrators, and school support staff who took the time to share their insights informally with me.

## REFERENCES

- Atherton, J. S. (2005). *Learning and teaching: Humanistic approaches to learning*. Retrieved July 24, 2006, from <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/humanist.htm>
- Battersby, D. (1981). *The first year of teaching : A grounded theory study*. Unpublished thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton.
- Battersby, D. (1989a). *The Beginning Teacher Scheme: An evaluation. Final report*. Wellington: Department of Education.
- Battersby, D. (1989b). Requirements for certification. *National Education*, 71(3), 95-97.
- Cameron, M. (2006). *Induction literature review*. Wellington: New Zealand Teachers Council.
- Cameron, M., Dingle, R., & Brooking, K. (2007). *Learning to teach: A survey of provisionally registered teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Wellington: New Zealand Teachers Council.
- Campbell, W. (1977). *Realities of teacher development*. Wellington: Department of Education.
- Dangel, J. R. (Ed.). (2006). *Research on teacher induction: Teacher education yearbook XIV*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Dewar, S., Kennedy, S., Staig, C., & Cox, L. (2003). *Recruitment and retention in New Zealand secondary schools. Information from a series of interviews, with a focus on beginning teachers, returning teachers, and heads of departments*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Education Review Office. (2004). *The quality of year two beginning teachers*. Wellington: Education Review Office.
- Grudnoff, L. (2006). Personal communication/ interview with author. Auckland.
- Kingston, C. C. (1983). *The induction of beginning teachers : A ready model. An investigation of beginning teachers' entry to the Otara Schools' District, 1982*. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland.
- Langdon, F. (2006). Personal communication/ interview with author. Auckland.
- Mansell, R. (1996). *A satisfactory teacher. How are year 1 and 2 teachers being supported in their schools to make progress toward this standard?* Paper presented at the Teacher Education to Standards Conference, Dunedin.
- Murdoch, R. T. (1978). *Professional development : The induction and education of beginning teachers*. Christchurch: Christchurch Teachers College.
- Murdoch, R. T. (1979a). *Induction to teaching and the role of the teachers colleges*. Discussion paper prepared for the Teachers Colleges Principals Conference, March 27, 1979, Christchurch.



- Murdoch, R. T. (1979b). *Teacher induction: The current situation*. Paper presented at a one-day seminar of school principals, June 12, 1979, Palmerston North.
- Renwick, M. (2001). *Support for beginning teachers: Final report*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Report of the Consultative Committee set up by the Hon. Minister of Education in November 1948. (1951). *Recruitment, education and training of teachers* (the McCombs Report). Wellington: Department of Education.
- Smales, J. (2002). *Help or hindrance: The image of 'self as teacher' held by New Zealand first year teachers*. Unpublished master's thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North.
- Trevethan, H. (2006). *Beginning teaching*. Paper presented at TEFANZ, Dunedin.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



*Squirrel Main* is currently a PhD student at the University of Auckland under supervisors Mary Hill and John Hattie. Previously, she was a primary school teacher for six years. Prior to that, she earned her Masters' degree from Stanford University in Education Administration, Evaluation and Policy Analysis. Her interests are support for beginning teachers and school reform in low-decile areas.



*Mary Hill* is Associate Dean: Research in the Faculty of Education at The University of Auckland. Following 18 years as a primary teacher, Mary joined the School of Education at Waikato University where her research and teaching interests centred around teaching, learning and assessment as well as the professional lives and work of teachers. Currently, in addition to her research leadership role which includes building research capability in the Faculty, she is supervising students undertaking postgraduate research, and investigating the effects of teacher education programmes on student teachers' thinking about teaching and learning.