

Preparing Quality Teachers: A Comparison of Traditional
and Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

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This paper was presented at the 2005 AACTE Annual Meeting.

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The nation is experiencing teacher shortages, especially in specialized areas such as special and secondary education (Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Colleges of Education provide numerous undergraduate and graduate degrees that offer quality training and, in the case of state-approved programs, traditional certification. Yet, existing teachers leave the profession at a rate similar to new ones entering (Ingersoll, 2001).

Some states, in response to the shortage, are addressing teacher recruitment, teacher education reform, and certification rule changes (Darling-Hammond, 1999). In light of these state responses, Colleges of Education can choose to maintain only traditional approved preparation programs; or they can, in addition, enter collaborative efforts with districts and state agencies to provide innovative teacher preparation programs. The college represented in this paper has chosen to provide both traditional and alternative programs.

The purpose of this study is to compare a college of education's traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs. The research questions include:

- 1) How are these candidates prepared for the necessary content and professional knowledge?
- 2) What are the retention rates for each program after one year of full-time teaching?
- 3) What are the programmatic similarities and differences? How do these affect candidate performance as a classroom teacher?

A Review of the Literature

Each year teacher shortages in selected geographical regions and certification areas are escalating. The National Center for Education Statistics reported in 1997 that nationwide more than one fifth of public school teachers leave their positions within three years (Luekens, Lyter, Fox, & Chandler, 2004). Watlington, Shockley, Earley, Huie, Morris, and Lieberman (2004), in a study of 2,129 teachers from four South Florida school districts, found that at the end of the third year only 72% were still teaching in the districts where they began their careers.

While it is true that more new teachers are entering the workforce, existing teachers are leaving the profession at a parallel rate (Ingersoll, 2001). Various groups in education and government are working to identify reasons for the early departure of teachers (Holmes Group, 1990; National Education Association, 1992; National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1996; National Education Goals Panel, 1995; U.S. Department of Education, 1997). In addition to creating personnel shortages, the loss of teachers can be financially costly for school districts as well. Using industry models to estimate cost, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2003) found that the financial impact of teachers departing ranged from \$3,367 to \$13,122 or approximately 20% of each leaving teacher's salary. Also, a number of studies have found that overall turnover rates are higher in urban districts than in other public school systems (Youngs, 2002).

The looming teacher shortage has resulted in the growth of alternative paths to certification. More and more attention is being paid to attracting career-changing adults into teaching through these alternative paths. One study (Koneci, Pottorff, King, Lin, Armstrong, Pryor, Reinken, Collins, Melin, Shroyer, and Eikenberry, 2002) found that problems faced by career changers when they began teaching included: confusion about their roles as teachers;

unfamiliar school environments; the need for cohort support and help in becoming a practitioner; and the impact of tiredness, stress, and financial sacrifices on their personal lives.

Findings of links between teacher certification (emergency or regular) and retention have been inconsistent. Lutz and Hutton (as cited in Education Commission of the States (ECS), 2003) found that far more traditionally prepared teachers anticipated staying in teaching 10 years or longer than did alternatively prepared teachers. Billingsley (as cited in Boe, Bobbit, and Cook, 1997) reports that evidence illustrates that inexperienced teachers are more likely to leave than experienced teachers. Billingsley, Darling-Hammond, and Sclan (as cited in Boe et al., 1997) suggest that associations between teacher education variables like degree level, degree field, type of teacher training, and retention are also inconsistent.

School districts implement various models of induction programs to retain both traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers. A national study reported that in 1999, 27 states had initiated legislation regarding induction (Serpell, 2000). In 1998, Forgione reported that 34% of full-time public school teachers had participated in an induction program when they began teaching (as cited in Serpell, 2000). Youngs (2002) found that district induction policies resulted in higher teacher retention for the first three years of teaching. Watlington et al. (2004) showed that retention may be enhanced by an effective induction program, but the data is significant for only one district in the study. Many other studies have shown that many induction programs offer inadequate support for beginning teachers, inadequate professional development, and inadequate protection against school cultures that foster failure rather than success (Yopp & Young, 1999; Sargent, 2003).

Shelfbine and Hollingsworth (as cited in ESC, 2003) found that the lack of coordination between cooperating teachers and university supervisors was a limited factor in student teachers'

effectiveness. Serpell (2000) reports that the difficulties involved in school and university collaboration in induction of new teachers are caused by factors such as: the differences in views of effective teaching between university faculty and schools; the need for university faculty under tenure pressure to realize a pay-off for their involvement in public schools; and the perception that induction programs are designed to compensate for inadequately prepared beginning teachers.

Some induction programs have proven to be effective. Yopp and Young (1999) report that new teachers stated that the induction programs in their first year of teaching had positively influenced their desire to stay in the profession because, in part, of the on-going support they received in the program. ESC (2003) suggests that successful preparation for alternative route teachers should include strong partnerships between teacher preparation programs and school districts, strong participant screening policies, strong supervision and mentoring for participants during their teaching, a curriculum strong in classroom basics and teaching methods, and training completed prior to full-time teaching.

Induction programs with trained mentors appear to be effective in both teacher induction and retention. Burk, Ford, and Mann (1996) found that interns in a mentored program received higher ratings from their principals and appeared to be better prepared to face the realities of teaching than a control group. Other research reports that beginning teachers who have mentors in their first year of teaching feel more prepared and are more likely to be retained (Serpell, 2000). Schaffer, Stringfield, and Wolf (1992) found that participants in a well-structured two year induction program significantly decreased inefficient use of time, reduced time required for organization, and freed time for instruction. Rowley (1999) found that good mentors possess six traits. They are: committed to the role, accepting of the beginning teacher, skilled in providing

instructional support, flexible and able to adapt to different situations, learning continuously themselves, and able to communicate confidence in their mentees.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to compare the retention rates and classroom performance of two sets of participants during their first semester of teaching. One set of participants was in the Accelerated Induction into Teaching (AIT) program – an alternative internship program for selected students in their final semester of the traditional teacher preparation program. The other participants were in the Intensive Teacher Education and Development program (ITED) - a program designed to assist the career-changer's move into classroom teaching.

Participants

The sample for the study was composed of 14 AIT teachers and 14 ITED teachers (N = 28). All 14 of the AIT participants were undergraduate elementary education majors in the final semester of their programs. Thirteen of them were female and 13 were teaching in elementary schools.

ITED participants were four females and ten males. Thirteen had at least a baccalaureate degree in areas such as computer science, engineering, or accounting. One had a bachelor's degree in biology. Six of the participants accepted middle school positions and eight accepted positions in high school. None of the ITED participants had attended a traditional teacher preparation program, although many of them had informal experience working with young people outside of school settings.

Accelerated Induction into Teaching Program

The AIT Program was developed and implemented in January 2002 in reaction to a local district's pressing teacher shortage. AIT, an alternative student teaching model, places teacher preparation students who have completed all their classes, passed all their state tests, and been screened into unfilled positions as substitute classroom teachers. The AIT students receive a stipend for their AIT semester which is slightly less than the amount a per diem substitute teacher would receive. The AIT teachers are teachers of record for their classes and understand that if the semester goes well, they will become the regular teachers in those classrooms upon graduation.

One strength of the AIT Program is the daily presence of a Master Mentor, identified, trained, and paid by the college. The Master Mentor spends on average one to one and a half hours per day in the AIT teacher's room providing whatever assistance is necessary to help the AIT teacher become an effective classroom teacher.

Another strength of the AIT Program is the weekly seminar, which all AIT teachers and their mentors attend. These seminars address the issues critical to beginning teachers—classroom management, lesson planning, coping with paperwork, having 'a life'—and provide an opportunity for networking and group problem solving. The success of AIT spawned the ITED program.

Intensive Teacher Education and Development Program

The ITED Program is designed to help career-changers with Bachelor's degrees who are interested in teaching in critical teacher shortage areas such as mathematics and science at middle or high school. The program consists of three phases. Phase One is the recruitment and screening of potential candidates in cooperation with the participating school district. Phase Two

is the Intensive Institute, during which participants are introduced to research and practices in effective teaching and given guidance in reading instruction in the content areas. Participants also are engaged in highly structured, short-term observation and practicum experiences. Phase Three is an internship built on the AIT model including the stipend, a Master Mentor, and weekly seminars.

Design and Data Collection

Four types of data were collected and analyzed for this study.

Educator Accomplished Practices Evaluation. Florida State Board of Education Administrative Rule 6A-5.065 defines 12 Educator Accomplished Practices (EAPs) intended for pre- and in-service teachers. The 12 EAPs are: Assessment; Communication; Continuous Improvement; Critical and Creative Thinking; Diversity; Ethics and Professionalism; Human Development and Learning; Knowledge of Subject Matter; Learning Environment; Planning; Role of the Teacher; and Technology. Each EAP is further defined by behavioral indicators. During student teaching, each candidate is evaluated on each EAP behavioral indicator for his/her Midterm and Final Evaluation.

These assessments also were used with AIT and ITED teachers. This data collection method yielded information on teaching behaviors for each participant. The evaluations were completed by the University Supervisor, a third party observer not affiliated with either program. The University Supervisors were trained on the use of the evaluation instrument by the Director of Student Teaching. The results of each participant's midterm and final evaluation were analyzed to determine similarities and differences between the two programs.

Efficacy Scale. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Schmitz, 1999) was given to all participants at the beginning, middle, and end of their semester. The instrument uses a

Likert-type scale and results were analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. This data was used to obtain an indication of the participants' feelings of their own effectiveness as classroom teachers.

Journals. As a requirement of each program, participants and mentors communicated daily through the use of a journal. Qualitative data was gathered from these dialogue journals. This data was analyzed to identify themes both groups had in common and themes unique to each group.

Data Analysis

Data gathered in this study were analyzed in several ways. Qualitative data was analyzed for themes. The three researchers independently read the journals and determined themes. Then the themes were compared to determine patterns. Descriptive analyses were utilized for ratings on the EAP evaluations and responses on the efficacy scale. In addition, data from EAP evaluations and efficacy scales were examined with a Chi-Square analysis in an effort to determine if any significant differences occurred between the two programs. An a priori alpha level of .05 was used for all inferential analyses. Since the total number of participants was small ($N < 30$), the analyses and subsequent findings are not intended to be generalized to any other population but limited to the participants in these two programs. Thus, the chi-square results are used only in the context of this case study.

Findings

Findings from this study are presented in two categories: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative results are based on data collected from the EAP evaluations, seminar surveys, and efficacy scales. The qualitative results are based on journal entries.

Quantitative Findings

Retention Rates. The AIT program had a higher retention rate than the ITED program. The AIT group began the semester with a total of 14 participants. All 14 participants successfully completed the internship semester (100% retention). At the end of one year of full-time teaching, the AIT program maintained 100% retention.

The ITED group began the semester with a total of 14 participants. Only eight successfully completed the internship semester (57% retention). Reasons for not completing the internship included: teaching behaviors well below expectations, even with mentor and school support; unprofessional behaviors resulting in the principal requesting the ITED teacher be removed from the classroom; and voluntary participant withdrawal during the first two weeks of the semester. The six that were not successful withdrew from ITED before all data could be collected; thus, the EAP Evaluations, Efficacy Scale, and journal data presented in this paper represent only the successful ITED participants. This aspect skews the findings in a positive direction for the ITED group, since potentially negative findings were not collected. By the end of one year of full-time teaching, the ITED program retention rate dropped to 43%.

EAP Midterm and Final Evaluations. The same instrument was used for both Midterm and Final Evaluations. The University Supervisor rated the participant on specific behavioral indicators for each EAP. The rating scale was: 1 = unsatisfactory; 2 = below expectations; 3 = meets expectations; and 4 = exceeds expectations. An analysis of the overall performance for each EAP was conducted by finding the mean for specific indicator ratings corresponding to each EAP. For example, EAP 1: Assessment has six behavioral indicators and the mean rating was used as an overall rating for EAP 1.

On the Midterm evaluation, AIT participant overall EAP ratings ranged from 3.0 – 4.0 while the ITED participant overall EAP ratings were from 2.8 – 4.0. By the Final evaluation, though, all participants were rated at least a “3 – meets expectations” on every indicator. Table 1 illustrates the mean ratings for both programs.

Table 1: AIT and ITED Mean Ratings per EAP

Educator Accomplished Practice	Midterm Mean Rating		Final Mean Rating	
	AIT	ITED	AIT	ITED
Assessment	3.5	3.2	3.9	3.6
Communication	3.8	3.3	4.0	3.6
Continuous Improvement	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.7
Critical and Creative Thinking	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.5
Diversity	3.9	3.5	4.0	3.7
Ethics and Professionalism	3.9	3.5	4.0	3.7
Human Development and Learning	3.7	3.2	3.9	3.4
Knowledge of Subject Matter	3.8	3.5	3.9	3.8
Learning Environment	3.8	3.3	3.9	3.6
Planning	3.9	3.3	4.0	3.7
Role of the Teacher	3.7	3.2	4.0	3.4
Technology	3.7	3.4	4.0	3.7
Overall Performance	3.6	3.0	3.9	3.8

Results of chi-square analysis revealed a significant difference between AIT and ITED participants by the end of the semester. On the Final Evaluation, the mean ratings of AIT participants were significantly higher than the mean ratings of ITED participants on 9 of the 12

EAPs (see Table 2). Also, the mean rating for EAP 10: Planning was consistently different, with AIT participants rated significantly higher than ITED participants on both the midterm ($\chi^2 (6) = 14, p < .05$) and the final ($\chi^2 (3) = 12.44, p < .01$) evaluations.

In addition to the EAP ratings, the University Supervisor determined an Overall rating, using the same scale as the EAP ratings. On the Midterm, AIT were rated significantly higher than ITED on their Overall performance ($\chi^2 (2) = 9, p < .05$). However, by the Final evaluation there was no significant difference between AIT and ITED overall ratings.

Table 2: Overall Educator Accomplished Practice Ratings: Final Evaluation

Rating Comparison by Program	Educator Accomplished Practice
AIT mean ratings were significantly higher than ITED mean ratings	Assessment ($\chi^2 (4) = 14, p < .01$) Communication ($\chi^2 (4) = 16, p < .01$) Critical & Creative Thinking ($\chi^2 (3) = 12.5, p < .01$) Diversity ($\chi^2 (3) = 12.44, p < .01$) Ethics & Professionalism ($\chi^2 (4) = 12.44, p < .05$) Human Development & Learning ($\chi^2 (3) = 9.5, p < .05$) Planning ($\chi^2 (3) = 12.44, p < .01$) Role of the Teacher ($\chi^2 (4) = 16, p < .01$) Technology ($\chi^2 (4) = 12.44, p < .05$)
No significant difference in mean ratings for AIT and ITED	Continuous Improvement Knowledge of Subject Matter Learning Environment

Efficacy Results. The Teacher Self-Efficacy instrument uses a Likert-type rating scale: (1) not at all true; (2) barely true; (3) moderately true, and (4) exactly true. A larger number indicates stronger efficacy. As a total group, participants grew more confident over the semester; with 91-100% reporting strong overall feelings of efficacy by the end of the semester (see Table 3).

Chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences between AIT participants' and ITED participants' feelings of efficacy at the beginning of the semester. By the middle of the

semester, one item revealed a significant difference. AIT participants reported feeling more confident that they could maintain their composure and continue to teach well, even if disrupted while teaching ($\chi^2 (2) = 11.21, p < .01$). By the end of the semester, there were no significant differences in reported feelings of efficacy between the participants in the two programs.

Table 3: Percent of AIT and ITED (Combined) Participant Efficacy

Efficacy Item	% at Beginning			% at Middle			% at End		
	E/M	B	N	E/M	B	N	E/M	B	N
Convinced of ability to successfully teach all relevant subject matter content to even the most difficult students	57	17	26	83	13	4	95	5	0
Can maintain a positive relationship with parents even when tensions arise	83	17	0	92	8	0	95	5	0
Able to reach even the most difficult students	70	30	0	71	25	4	91	9	0
Convinced that I will continue to become more capable of addressing students' needs	91	9	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
Confident that I can maintain composure and continue to teach well, even if disrupted	65	30	5	88*	12	0	100	0	0
Confident of ability to respond to students' needs, even if I am having a bad day	74	22	4	83	17	0	100	0	0
Can exert a positive influence on both the personal and academic development of students	83	13	4	88	12	0	95	5	0
Can develop creative ways to cope with system constraints and continue to teach well	61	30	9	79	17	4	95	5	0
Can motivate students to participate in innovative projects	65	26	9	71	29	0	91	9	0
Can carry out innovative projects even when opposed by skeptical colleagues	43	52	4	75	25	0	95	5	0

Legend: E/M = Exactly or Moderately True B = Barely True N = Not at all True

Note: Totals might not equal 100 due to rounding.

*Chi-square analysis revealed a significant difference between the programs (AIT more confident than ITED)

Qualitative Findings

Dialogue journals were used by participants in both groups and their mentors to share thoughts about the activities of the day. Each mentor and AIT/ITED participant pair was expected to write in a journal daily in a conversational format.

Review of the journals by the program directors revealed that the ITED participants and their mentors wrote far less than the AIT participants and their mentors. ITED/Mentor journal dialogues tended to be terse and directed toward classroom instruction and problems. One ITEDer commented, “Lost control of block 4 for almost the entire period.” Another ITED participant teaching in a middle school where a teacher had been shot and killed two years earlier wrote, “There were 4 fights on campus today. I have had nightmares about being shot by a student.”

AIT/Mentor entries showed more encouragement on the mentors’ parts and more discussions of the AIT participants’ feelings, health, and personal issues. Examples include: “Can’t wait to taste these delicious cookies; it was so nice of your mother to bake for us,” and “I hope you thoroughly made use of the extra day and did some thing nice for yourself.”

Whatever the differences in journal writing style and focus, the encouragement of the mentors and participants’ gratitude for their mentors’ support was a strong theme in both AIT and ITED journals. Although in most cases the “AIT’s” and “ITEDers” also had support at their school sites, the daily presence of the mentor was the element that kept the participants coming back to school every day. One ITED participant declared, “Your encouragement has pulled me through some really low spots; when I do something right you cheer me on.” Their weekly seminars also provided support in both programs. Repeatedly, the participants wrote comments

such as, “I felt better yesterday after our AIT meeting”; and “It’s really nice to get together with people in the same boat as you are.”

Common themes that arose in journal entries at the beginning of the semester tended primarily to be affective. The participants complained about high levels of stress, doubt, impatience with themselves, loss of personal time and “riding an emotional roller coaster.” One participant wondered, “Why can’t I forget about school for one day and relax,” while another commented, “I felt [I] had school on the brain 24/7.”

As the weeks progressed both ITED and AIT participants became more comfortable with instruction and discipline, acquired organizational and time management skills, and developed perspectives on their students and more objective perspectives on themselves. Typical journal entries by mid-September included: “We are really settling into a routine”; “Things are getting easier [even though] I still feel like a visitor here”; “I’m starting to step back and look at how far I’ve come.”

By the midterm, the AIT and ITED journals had become both self-evaluative and full of frustration. While the participants were beginning to differentiate instruction, they also were frustrated with their delivery of instruction. One AIT participant commented, “I need to work on how to adapt lessons to serve those who learn differently,” while one ITED participant mused, “...I need to find alternate ways of explaining concepts when many are just not getting it.” All participants tried to meet the needs of all their children while expressing frustration from school/district policies and paperwork. Their vision of being able to focus on the needs of their students clashed with the reality of today’s classroom. Typical complaints were: “I don’t have time to accomplish everything”; “My biggest challenge is all these meetings that are always coming up”; and “Dealing with some parents is stressful.”

Conclusions

The findings suggest several directions for the planning of teacher induction programs. Conclusions can be drawn about candidate preparation, retention rates, and program influences on performance. These conclusions together with policy implications are presented here.

Candidate Preparation Regarding Content and Professional Knowledge

By the end of the semester, all candidates from both programs received a satisfactory rating of their teaching performance from their university supervisors. In spite of the fact that the mean rating for ITED participants was satisfactory by midterm, analysis of individual evaluations revealed some participants scoring below expectations on some EAPs. These were improved upon by the final evaluation. On the other hand, all AIT participants met or exceeded expectations by midterm. In this case study, both preparation programs produced satisfactory performance for all candidates who completed the semester.

Retention Rates for Each Program

There was a significant difference in retention rates between the two programs. Students from the traditional preparation program stayed in teaching at a much higher rate than the non-traditional students. By the end of one year of full-time teaching, the ITED program retention rate dropped to 43%. Darling-Hammond found that nationally about 60% of participants in alternative certification programs left the profession by the end of their third year (as cited in Berry, 2000), so with only one year of data, the effectiveness of ITED as a viable preparation and induction program follows the national trend. Several conclusions were drawn from this finding of the case study.

First, recruitment and screening are important aspects of the programs. The AIT program recruits the best-of-the-best from the current pool of student teachers. Selection criteria include

grade point average, classroom evaluations from courses with field experiences, and professional references. For the ITED program, participants were dislocated workers currently eligible for unemployment. This was a criterion of the Workforce Development grant that funded the program. Some participants had previous teaching experience; all expressed an interest in teaching. Selection criteria included confirmation of at least a bachelor's degree, sufficient content area coursework, and other district hiring procedures. A wider recruitment pool and the addition of screening interviews may have boosted the ITED retention rate. This conclusion confirms findings from ESC (2003) that suggest successful alternative route preparation programs should include strong participant screening policies.

Another conclusion from this case study is that adults who come to teaching at a different stage in their lives may be more inclined to leave the profession earlier. This study supports findings from previous studies. Koneci et al., (2002) found problems facing career changers- confusion about the role of teachers, tiredness, and personal sacrifices- are factors in those career-changers leaving their positions. The ITED participants came into the program after long professional careers in the business community and the shift into teaching proved to be more difficult for them than for the AIT participants. Retention of career-changing adults rests, in part, on supporting them through stresses that come with teaching.

Programmatic Similarities and Differences and Their Effect on Performance

Similarities in the two programs produced positive effects on participant performance. The similarities include the use of experienced mentors, development of a cohort group, journal communication, and self efficacy ratings. As entries in the dialogue journals showed, the mentors were a key part of the effectiveness of the participants in both programs. Echoing what Rowley (1999) found, good mentors must adapt to their mentees' needs and situations, communicate

confidence in their mentees, provide instructional support, and accept their beginning teacher if they are to be effective. In addition, the mentors in this study were able to help their mentees face the realities of teaching in the classroom, a necessity in retaining teachers.

The cohort group developed out of the weekly seminars also provided support and impacted the performance of each group. Corroborating the findings of Koneci et al. (2002), these seminars provided support as the participants became teachers and mitigated the impact of other variables such as tiredness, stress, and financial concerns. The cohort group developed a network that extended beyond the weekly seminars and included opportunities for social interaction. Participants began e-mailing or meeting outside of scheduled weekly seminars to discuss issues relevant to their unique situations. Eventually personal relationships developed, adding to the support of the cohort group.

Journal themes and the results of the efficacy scales demonstrate that learning to teach effectively is a process that both traditionally prepared and alternatively prepared teachers experience. As the semester progressed, both the journals and the efficacy scales showed that the participants became more comfortable with instruction, acquired improved organizational and time management skills, and developed more accurate perspectives of their students' and their own abilities. Programs designed to assist new teachers in the classroom should recognize the developmental nature of the early teaching experience and plan for the changes that happen in the first semester. Some teachers may need support longer than others – but they all need support in order to become effective teachers and to understand their jobs.

The two programs differed mainly in the amount of time the participants spent in preparation for teaching before their internships. The alternatively prepared ITED participants took all their required courses in the span of an intense six-week summer program with less than

20 hours of field experience in schools; whereas the AIT participants had over 180 hours of field experience during the regular school year. These differences were reflected in the findings of the study, particularly in the evaluation of EAP 11: Role of the Teacher, and support findings from other studies about career-changers' confusion about their roles as teachers and problems with unfamiliar school environments (Koneci et al., 2002). The opportunity for extensive observation of and interaction with experienced teachers had a positive impact on teaching performance.

Another conclusion arising from the program differences is the level of satisfactory teaching performance. While all participants were rated as "meeting expectations" by the final evaluation, the AIT participants were more likely to be rated as "exceeding expectations." The AIT evaluations indicated a higher level of teaching performance than the ITED evaluations. One possible explanation for this conclusion is that AIT participants adjusted to the demands of the classroom at a quicker rate than ITED participants.

Implications for Teacher Induction Programs

This case study offers insight into the role of traditional and alternative preparation programs. A number of implications can be drawn for developers and administrators of such programs. First, recruitment and screening procedures must be comprehensive enough to determine applicants' knowledge of teaching and expectations of the profession. Second, preparation prior to internship should include sufficient time in courses and extensive field experience.

Other implications revolve around successful elements for an alternative internship. Effective mentoring is an absolute necessity. The mentor's sole job is to support the mentee and the mentor is not the primary evaluator of the mentee. Mentors need experience at the school

level at which they are mentoring. The mentor must have a strong desire to help the beginning teacher be successful right from the beginning of the semester. Problems will arise and the mentor's commitment makes the difference in resolving them. Additionally, the combination of mentor/mentee dialogue journals, cohort groups, and networking provide an outlet for the stresses of a beginning teacher.

With continuing teacher shortages, colleges of education may increasingly need to develop innovative collaborative programs with districts experiencing these shortages. This study offers many insights into successful practices for such partnerships. The lessons learned regarding mentors and other support systems provide a foundation for building creative internship programs.

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