

mentor's introduction

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Most of us who have taught in the public school, remember our first year. For some it was exciting and rewarding, but for many it was frustrating and disappointing. If one reviews the various reports on education written during the past decade, all directly or indirectly indicate a concern for the beginning teacher. A number of states have now mandated various types of induction programs.

Most would not argue the value of an induction plan, but valid questions should be raised in regard to the structure, implementations and on-going assessment of such programs. Certainly such initial concerns as to the criteria and design of a plan, and the personnel involved need to be addressed. It is then important that various forms of assessment follow. Among the important questions that should be considered would be: How do the beginning art teachers perceive what was being done to and for them by their professional development committees; and what is their perception of the value of the program during their first year?

Bonnie Black taught art in the public schools in Missouri for nine years prior to entering the doctoral program at the University of Missouri. She worked with student teachers for the past three years. She served as a member of their professional development committee, representing the university, for several beginning art teachers in the state. In this capacity she became aware of some of the perceptions and problems of beginning teachers concerning their induction into the teaching profession.

She conducted a joint workshop with Dr. John Voth, of the College of Education, for beginning teachers, mentors, and administrators to help school districts develop state mandated induction programs. This provided her an additional opportunity to better understand the perceptions and goals of the various members of the professional development committees. Such activities and experiences provided her a basis and interest in assessing the impact of outside influences such as government intervention into the professional lives of art teachers and how school districts are implementing the newly mandated law. It is her intent to better understand what the beginning art teachers were experiencing and how they felt about their induction into the teaching profession. Her study is designed to evaluate the

state mandated beginning teacher assistance program as it is being experienced by the beginning art teachers in the state of Missouri.