Building Bridges from Pre-Service to In-Service Teaching: Lessons Learned from the Field

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Agenda

• Introductions
• Project STAY at a Glance
• Focus Groups on Induction Programs
• Advice and Possible Solutions for Induction
• Observations of New Teachers
• Advice for Teacher Educators
Project STAY Team

Kristi Morin
Principal Investigator

Lee Kern
Primary Mentor

Melinda Leko
Mixed Methods Mentor

Jessaca Spybrook
Statistical Mentor

Alyssa Blasko
Past Project Coordinator

Grace Murphy
Project Coordinator
Let’s Get to Know You

- Name
- Where are you from?
- Your role
  (teacher, administrator, faculty member)
- Your experience with induction programs for new teachers?
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Project STAY at a Glance
Purpose

To develop an induction model that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers of children with autism who work in high needs schools or districts.
Rationale

High needs schools have a much higher rate of turnover, with less resources and support for beginning teachers.

Beginning teachers of children with autism are less likely to feel prepared to teach and more likely to experience stress or burnout.

An effective induction model can help beginning teachers feel supported and increase retention.
Project STAY Timeline

YEAR 1
2021-2022
• Classroom observations
• Focus groups with beginning teachers, experienced teachers, administrators, and district specialists

YEAR 2
2022-2023
• Develop initial draft of Project STAY induction program

YEAR 3
2023-2024
• Implement STAY with 5 mentor/novice teacher dyads

YEAR 4
2024-2025
• Implement STAY with 11 mentor/novice teacher dyads (RCT)
Project STAY
Components

1. Mentor support
2. Initial and ongoing training
3. Observation of exemplary teaching
4. Formative assessment of teaching practice
5. Participation in a network
What About Your Experience?

● Would you rate your experience with any of the five components as positive or negative? Why?

● What component(s) did you find the most useful?

● What component(s) do you wish were a part of your induction program?
Our Focus Today

Focus Groups

Classroom Observations
Focus Groups

- Described their induction programming experience
- Identified challenges to induction programming that was unique to working in a high-needs school
- Discussed feasibility of Project STAY induction program components
All participants had some form of mentor support. Activities completed with a mentor were mostly logistical in nature.

Initial and Ongoing Training

**Experience**
- All participants had some form of initial and ongoing training
- Topics: VB-MAPP, Extended School Year, and general education curriculum updates

**Challenges**
- Lack of autism specific trainings
- Lack of autonomy and choice
- Misalignment of training schedule
- Missed trainings
Observation of Exemplary Teaching

Experience
- Frequency: 1 out of 7 focus group participants
- Documentation: double entry journal
- Debrief: within a few days

Challenges
- Different locations
- Lack of qualified staff
- Lack of time and coverage
Formative Assessment of Teaching

**Experience**
- Frequency: 2 out of 7 focus group participants
- Documentation: aligned with state documentation requirements
- Debrief: immediate

**Challenges**
- Different locations
- Formal vs informal
- Lack of time and coverage
Participation in a Network

Experience

- Frequency: 2 out of 7 teachers participated in a work-related meeting with other teachers
- No teachers participated in an informal network

Suggestions

- Formal vs informal
- Time and commitment
- Platforms: GroupMe, text
- Have a moderator
What About Your Experience?

- Do any of these experiences spark a new memory you haven’t shared?
- Do any of these challenges ring true for you and your school/district?
- What adaptations have you made to make these components feasible in your schools/districts?
Advice and Possible Solutions

**Build Into Contract Hours**
- Mentor meetings
- Time to observe mentors/mentees
- Time for debriefing meetings after observations
- Network activities
- Trainings on how to be a mentor

**Professional Development**
- Build choice into training selections
- Record sessions for mid-year hires
- Teach skills that educators can implement in the classroom immediately

**Develop Buy-In and Incentives**
- Recognition systems for excellent mentors and mentees who meet goals
- Financial incentive equivalent to the time commitment of being a mentor

**Proximity and Accessibility**
- Use Zoom for regular mentor meetings when needed
- Plan for at least one in-person mentor meeting per month
- Use video recordings or Zoom sessions for observations
Have you tried any of these solutions?

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Classroom Observations

| 7 Special educators in their first 3 years of teaching and with at least one student with autism |
| Minimum of 5 hours long |
| One on one interviews with teachers |
| All classrooms were located in high needs schools |
| Evaluated behavior management, evidence based practices, classroom environment, relationship with paraprofessionals, data collection, and classroom layout/setup |
Behavior Management

Effective Teaching Practices

- Rapport building
- General praise
- Provision of choice

Areas for Growth

- Proactively stating behavioral expectations
- De-escalating aggressive behavior
- Providing a variety of behavior specific praise
- Remaining consistent with reinforcement systems
**Classroom Rules**

- Follow the directions
- Work quietly and do not disturb others
- Be respectful to your classmates and teachers
- Listen when others are speaking
- Raise your hand before you speak
- Hand up
- Hands down
- Quiet
- Listen
- Wait
- Work
- Raise hand for help
- Listen

**BUY WITH YOUR BEEZ BUCKS**

1. Replace your pencil
2. Hand Piece of candy
3. 1 snack a day (level 1)
4. 5 minutes extra break
5. Chance at Lucky Beez Jar
6. 5 minutes in a teacher's chair
7. 5 minutes on balance ball
8. Use a colored pencil for 1 subject
9. Use an erasable pen for 1 subject
10. Replace your pencil sheet
11. 15 minutes on teacher's chair (while working)
12. 15 minutes on balance ball (while working)
13. 5 minutes free choice break (no video games)
14. 10 minutes on Computer (level 3 or 4)
15. 10 minutes in Sensory Station
16. 10 minutes with Sensory Fidget
17. 10 minutes free choice break (no video games)
18. Use an erasable pen for the day
19. Use a colored pencil for the day

**Coping Skills Choice Board**

- Deep breaths
- Drink water
-wall push-ups
- fidget
- Listen to music
- count to 10
- Jumping jacks
- Go for a walk
- Yoga poses

**Expectations**

1. Be Ready
2. Be Respectful
3. Be Safe
4. Follow Directions

**STAY**

Supporting Teachers of Autism in Years 1-3
Evidence Based Practices

Effective Teaching Practices

● Provided multiple opportunities to respond
● Used advanced warning for transitions

Areas for Growth

● Incorporating visual supports and schedules
● Using error correction procedures correctly
● Implementing a prompting hierarchy
● Remaining consistent with wait time
● Modeling appropriate responses
My Schedule

Day 1

Reading

Writing

\( \frac{5 \times 2}{3} = \frac{10}{3} \)

Math

All Done:

Morning Work

I am working for...

First Then Chart

FIRST

THEN

FIRST

Then
Classroom Environment and Paraprofessionals

Effective Teaching Practices

- Warm and welcoming environment
- Demonstrated respect for students and staff
- Enthusiastic interactions with students

Areas for Growth

- Implementing a team schedule to effectively manage inclusion, related service providers, and paraprofessionals
- Develop routine communication with staff
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Kelly</th>
<th>Jenn</th>
<th>Kathy</th>
<th>Lisa</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Services</th>
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<td>8:05-8:45</td>
<td>Staff Arrival</td>
<td>Prep</td>
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<td>Student Arrival</td>
<td>Busses</td>
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<td>Breakfast &amp; MW</td>
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<td>MB</td>
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<td>Calendar</td>
<td>RR &amp; MB</td>
<td>Specials</td>
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<td>BS</td>
<td>GB</td>
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<td>ITT #1</td>
<td>MB &amp; RR</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>GB</td>
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<td>S Lunch</td>
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<td>Prep</td>
<td>S Lunch</td>
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<td>ITT #2</td>
<td>DD &amp; GB</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>S Lunch</td>
<td>BS</td>
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<td>12:50-1:20</td>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>DD &amp; RR</td>
<td>MB &amp; GB</td>
<td>BS</td>
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<td>1:20-1:50</td>
<td>ITT #3</td>
<td>GB &amp; DD</td>
<td>JG &amp; RR</td>
<td>MB &amp; DD &amp; GB</td>
<td>BS</td>
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- **Monday**
  - Speech: 9:30-10:00, 10:30-11:00
  - T.A.: 9:00-10:00
  - A.I.T.: 10:30-11:00
  - A.I.T.: 11:00-12:00

- **Tuesday**
  - Speech: 9:00-10:00, 10:00-11:00
  - A.I.T.: 11:00-12:00

- **Wednesday**
  - Speech: 9:00-10:00, 10:00-11:00

- **Thursday**
  - Speech: 9:00-10:00, 11:00-12:00

- **Friday**
  - Speech: 9:00-10:00, 10:00-11:00
Collected data related to IEP goals and data collection methods were appropriate.

Materials were organized and accessible by staff members.

Reinforcers were organized and out of reach from students.
Sometimes, it's just hard to say them...
Sometimes, it's hard to find the right words...
Can you use one of these? (Bring one to a teacher)

I want to try again
I'm sorry
May I have a minute?
I feel upset
I'm okay
I feel frustrated
It's loud
I feel confused

May I have a break
Advice for Teacher Educators

Pre-Service Educators

- Explicitly model and role play to teach evidence-based practices
- Provide training on how to manage and instruct staff

School Administrators

- Provide authentic professional development
- Build in time for planning and collaborating with staff
- Provide training opportunities for staff
- Structure schedules for mentor/mentee work time
What Advice Can You Share?

Pre-Service Educators

School Administrators
Questions?

Contact
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610-758-6223
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For more information about Project STAY, visit the website at https://ed.lehigh.edu/center-for-promoting-research-to-practice/stay