INDUCTION

Organization of Work

This team meets bi-weekly for two hours. Membership includes UWM faculty, MPS Central Services Staff (including representatives from leadership, professional development, human resources, technology), MPS teachers, and an MPS parent. The team meets as part of the Milwaukee Partnership Academy’s Implementation Team (workgroup on Teacher and Principal Quality).

Fundamental Issues/Topics Being Addressed

The initial work of the team was to complete a document that was initially drafted as part of a retreat in spring of 2004 (facilitated by TNE) titled Characteristics of a High Performing Urban Classroom. The purpose of this document is to create a common language of practice for teaching and learning in MPS as a way to frame induction support. The work on this document entailed meetings of the team, meetings with the superintendent to clarify his view of the purpose of the document, and discussions by the entire MPA Implementation Team. Pilot discussions of this document are being conducted in the schools; the leadership of the induction design team provided training to the literacy and mathematics specialists to lead the pilot.

Currently the team is creating a comprehensive induction plan. This began with cataloguing exactly what happens from the time a new teacher contacts the district to the time he or she reaches a school. Clarification of the status quo has led to a common understanding of the need for induction to be intentional, strategic, and systematic. Each major stakeholder’s role in this strategic, comprehensive plan will be explicitly defined in the next few weeks. This includes the role of the IHEs, cutting across content and pedagogy. The development of a comprehensive plan is the major agenda for this team for the remainder of this academic year. These plans will be presented to Learning Teams at the district meetings in June.

The team has also sponsored focus groups of new teachers to discuss their induction experiences. These discussions are being transcribed for analysis. Preliminary results suggest that new teachers generally do not feel supported.

Milwaukee has been approached as a possible participant in an IES study of high intensity mentoring being conducted by Mathematica. The team joined the research and assessment staff of MPS to meet with representatives of Mathematica and the New Teacher Center to discuss this project and has expressed interest in participating.