

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM
ISLIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
ISLIP, NEW YORK
by Linda Lippman

The Islip School District supports a three-year new teacher induction program. Prior to the beginning of the school year, all probationary teachers are required to attend a three day orientation program.

Orientation - First year teachers attend workshops that address school business, instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, team building activities, and community. The orientation goal of belonging to the Islip ‘family’ is enhanced by a bus tour of the community coupled with a luncheon with administrators. Orientation for first year teachers is dedicated to the pedagogy provided by *The Effective Teacher* DVD series and the book, *The First Days of School*, by Harry and Rosemary Wong. Their materials are the catalyst for communication where effective teaching and classroom management ideas and concerns are shared and discussed as the first year professional learning community emerges. Procedures and routines are defined and plans established for implementation. Teachers know that their first days of school are devoted to teaching procedures and routines to affect a well-managed classroom. The result—the new teacher can then be successful from the very first minute of the very first day!

Orientation for second and third year cohorts, jumpstart their curriculum goals for the upcoming school year. Second year teachers study Marzano’s work on instructional strategies and third year teachers are engaged with *Understanding by Design*.

Induction - Assistant Superintendent, Director of Human Resources, and Coordinator of the New Teacher Induction Program Linda Lippman facilitates the induction program and meets monthly with each of the groups. Themes are evident throughout each year and focus on skills to augment teacher and student performance. Each year is curriculum based with meaningful and purposeful professional development. It is the district expectation that the skills set offered through induction meetings is implemented and evidenced in the classroom of each teacher. The school year engages each cohort of probationary teachers in after school induction meetings. When possible the teachers are grouped within their first, second, or third year by elementary and secondary assignments.

First year teachers are immersed in *Cooperative Discipline* by Linda Albert, an approach for creating solutions to disruptions and motivating students. Information is presented at each monthly meeting affording teachers the opportunity to acquire the additional skills necessary for growth within their profession and within the district.

Teachers learn that *discipline* means to teach and they learn to teach intervention strategies for dealing with students who chose to misbehave. *Cooperative Discipline* strategies identify goals of misbehavior and provide intervention techniques to minimize disruptions and maximize student engagement. Teachers learn how to engage students in settings that make them feel capable, connected, and contributory.

The First Days of School provides the classroom management infrastructure and *Cooperative Discipline* compliments with interventions for misbehavior and disruptions. They both support student engagement and achievement and provide for a respectful and risk-free environment.

Second year teachers learn to apply the research on instruction using *Classroom Instruction that Works* by Robert Marzano. Teachers define instructional strategies and within their professional learning community, engage in conversations, debates, and presentations that support Marzano's work. The instructional strategies foster student learning, growth, and achievement.

Third year teachers work with essential questions and the BIG IDEA from *Understanding by Design* by McTighe and Wiggins. Teachers learn how to plan with the end in mind and how lessons are driven by essential questions. The third year cohort also works with Spencer Johnson's, *Who Moved My Cheese?* affording teachers the understanding that the only constant in education is change. Workshops on multiple intelligences, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, positive expectations and more are incorporated into the third year induction program to offer teachers the opportunity for continued professional growth. Focus groups and collegial circles represent the core of the goals established for the third year teachers.

Teachers successful in our three-year program are recommended for tenure. It is the belief that teachers 'earn' tenure; therefore they are required to prepare a portfolio that represents their three year journey. The portfolio is the culmination of their learning and growth. It is reviewed with the assistant superintendent. Achieving tenure is celebrated in a multi media celebration on the opening day of school. Members of the Board of Education, administrators, and staff applaud the accomplishments of newly tenured teachers and their commitment and ability to make a difference in the lives of students. Each newly tenured teacher is showcased and receives a copy of the poster "That Noble Title Teacher" and each becomes a valued member of the Islip family.

Islip's program continues to grow. It is essential that the district continues to provide our teachers with continued education that maximizes learning, cultivates talent, and fosters growth.