Supporting new teachers has been a long standing tradition for local universities and a definite need for schools and districts. Data reveals that providing support to new teachers positively impacts their satisfaction, performance, and retention. Oftentimes, however, this level of support is divided as pre-service teachers are traditionally supervised and supported by teacher education programs with much of the support and supervision transitioned to schools and districts once they graduate. In addition, pre-service teacher are sometimes supported in colleges and universities which differ from the models used in districts. The session will describe how a beginning teacher support model piloted in a teacher education program with pre-service teachers and in-service graduate students was developed into a state-wide model that was used to support novice math teachers within the first two years of teaching.

During the pilot study elementary teachers in a math methods course were paired with veteran classroom teachers, who were also graduate students, (in addition to their cooperating teacher) and provided an infrastructure for support and mentoring in mathematics. During the mentoring process, mentors reviewed lesson plans, provided feedback, and coached mentees through instructional challenges. Mentors were also available to engage in discourse with their mentees about general teaching information such as collaborating with colleagues, school improvement initiatives, and first year challenges. Since mentors and mentees had completely different work/school schedules mentees and mentors communicated virtually using email and Skype.

Similarities and differences between the pilot program and the full scale model will be discussed with particular distinctions between the mentee and mentor relationships and their feelings towards the use of technology at each level. Results from both the pilot and scaled-up version indicated that mentors and mentees grew professionally. At the beginning teacher level, participants reported increased confidence in teaching mathematics and obtained more resources and a better perspective about teaching. Guidance and information about how this pilot model can be transitioned into a university-based induction model will also be provided.