
Stability and Change of Mentoring Practices in a Capricious Policy Environment: Opening the “Black Box of Institutionalization”

VIRGINIE MÄRZ

University of Amsterdam

GEERT KELCHTERMANS

KU Leuven

XAVIER DUMAY

Université Catholique de Louvain

This article addresses how institutional logics are translated, maintained, or disrupted by actors and their (inter)actions within schools. The changing policy environment for mentoring beginning teachers in Flanders (Belgium) provides a fertile context for answering this question. Combining neoinstitutional and sensemaking lenses and analyzing the mentoring practices in one school, we investigated the role of mentors' sensemaking in shaping responses to changes in the broader institutional environment. Based on semistructured interviews, observations, and document analyses, the study identifies how the introduction, and later withdrawal, of direct financial support for mentoring installed a new logic of mentoring as a professionalized job and how mentors creatively employed elements of this new logic in their daily interactions. The study contributes to the recent research on inhabited institutionalism by demonstrating that organizations are not only the instantiation of institutional logics, but are sites where people and groups make sense of and creatively use institutional logics.

Problem Statement and Research Context

In educational research on organizational change, a duality can be determined between theorists who emphasize the role of broad cultural norms, structural

Electronically published March 16, 2016

American Journal of Education 122 (May 2016)

© 2016 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.

0195-6744/2016/12203-0002\$10.00

aspects, and institutional rules in schooling and those who focus on the ability of local actors to “make a difference in the flow of events” (Scott 2013, 92; see also Weber and Glynn 2006). From a macrolevel perspective, for instance, the environment’s rules, norms, routines, and logics structure teachers and their classroom practices (Bridwell-Mitchell 2013; Russell 2011; Spillane and Burch 2006; Woulfin 2015). At the microlevel, local actors’ actions, interactions, and sensemaking filter or impact change (Coburn 2001, 2006; Spillane et al. 2002). This duality between the macrolevel of broader institutional logics and the microlevel of human action has in particular been a hot topic within the neo-institutional research tradition. Although institutional scholars have contributed much to the study of organizational and institutional change, more recently they have increasingly been criticized for being somewhat one-sided: they emphasize structure while downplaying the role of human agency and focus on macrolines of analysis while ignoring the microfoundations of institutionalization (Lawrence et al. 2009; Powell and Colyvas 2008). This article intends to open this “black box of institutionalization” (Hallett 2010; Zucker 1991) by empirically analyzing how local actors engage with policy change and shifting institutional logics in their day-to-day organizational practices. It asks, How are institutional logics translated, maintained, or disrupted by actors and their (inter)actions at the organizational level? In other words, we aim at acquiring an in-depth understanding of how individual actors make sense of and position themselves in their institutionally shaped context.

In particular, we do so by looking into the recent Flemish (Belgian) policy on mentoring support for beginning teachers (induction). The transition from

VIRGINIE MÄRZ is an assistant professor at the Department of Child Development and Education, University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands). Her research and teaching interests include planned and unplanned change processes in school organizations. Her recent studies combine sensemaking theory, neoinstitutional theory, social network theory, and qualitative research methodology to understand the implementation of educational reforms and the professional development of beginning and senior teachers. GEERT KELCHTERMANS is a professor in education at the KU Leuven in Belgium, where he chairs the Center for Educational Policy, Innovation, and Teacher Education. His research interests are teacher development, leadership, and innovation in schools; pedagogy of teacher education; and qualitative research methodology. XAVIER DUMAY is a professor in education at GIRSEF (Groupe Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur la Socialisation, l’Éducation et la Formation), Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium). His research interest lies in educational policies, educational administration, and research methodology.

teacher education (student of teaching) to the actual professional practice (teacher of students) has been widely portrayed in the literature as a challenging career phase (e.g., Huberman 1989; Ingersoll and Strong 2011; Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002). Once beginning teachers enter the classroom, they find themselves confronted with the full complexity and full responsibility of the teaching profession. Since the late 1980s, the need to provide specific support for beginning teachers has become widely acknowledged in educational research, policy, and practice. In many countries, mentoring practices—as one form of teacher induction—were established as a way to help beginning teachers overcome the difficulties during the first years of their careers and to keep them in the profession (Feiman-Nemser 2001; Hobson et al. 2009; Ingersoll and Strong 2011; Little 1990). Following Aspfors and Fransson (2015), we define mentoring as “an activity, a process and a long-term relationship between an experienced teacher (mentor) and a less experienced NQT [newly qualified teacher] that is primarily designed to support the NQT’s learning, professional development and well-being and to facilitate their induction into the culture of teaching and the local school context” (76).

The Flemish (Belgian) educational policy echoes the international awareness of the need for support during teacher induction and the choice for mentoring practices. In the 1980s and ’90s a variety of mentoring practices emerged in Flemish schools in which more experienced teachers voluntarily provided support to their beginning colleagues. With the 1996 Decree on Teacher Education and in-Service Training, the importance of induction support, against a perspective of career-long professionalization for teachers, was for the first time recognized and supported by a legal initiative (see Devos and Vanderheyden 2002).¹ This decree stressed the importance of appropriate monitoring of and professional development for beginning teachers and encouraged schools to take responsibility for the organization of the support for beginning teachers. Furthermore, the government provided extra financial resources for schools to require their mentors participate in specific in-service training programs to deepen or develop their mentoring skills. Furthermore, the decree launched “lump-sum” funding, providing schools with extra funding to develop a local policy on professionalization tailored to their particular needs.

In September 2006, teacher induction was even further institutionalized by a new decree on teacher education. This decree defined the professional profile, funding procedure, and job description for mentors. Since that year, schools not only received additional funding for their local policies on professionalization but also received earmarked funding for organizing mentoring depending on the number of preservice, in-service, and new beginning teachers starting in the school. So-called *mentoring hours* were introduced to partly release experienced teachers from teaching duties and make them available to support new teach-

ers. However, as part of budget cuts, in September 2010, the mentoring hours were withdrawn by the (new) minister of education. Despite these cuts, several school clusters and individual schools continued to provide mentor support by shifting part of their general funding to mentoring (at the expense of other aspects of the local school policy; see also Snoeck and Struyf 2012). In its discourse, the ministry continued to stress the value and importance of mentoring (and in-service training in general), but that was in a way contradicted by the actual policy actions (budget cuts). We take this capricious policy environment and its impact on local school practices (particularly the support for beginning teachers) as a point of departure to analyze and disentangle the complex relationship between macrolevel institutional logics and microlevel human sensemaking in understanding processes of change and stability in school organizations.

More specifically, this article wants to contribute both to the emerging literature and to the growing qualitative scholarship on inhabited institutions (Dumay et al. 2013; Everitt 2013; Lounsbury and Boxenbaum 2013; Powell and Colyvas 2008). To address the recent call for more empirical microlevel research into the way actors talk back to institutional pressures, this article reports on an in-depth longitudinal case study of one secondary school. In using a case-study approach, we seek to understand how shifting institutional logics of mentoring and its materialization through incentives (the introduction and later withdrawal of direct financial support for mentoring) play a role in the school's actual setup of mentoring practices through the organizational actors' enactment of institutional logics in their day-to-day sensemaking and (inter) actions. The article unravels how mentor teachers actively construct meaning within a shifting policy context and how such constructions affect the coupling of institutional demands and local mentoring practices. By highlighting how local actors, specifically mentor teachers, engage with shifting policies, drawing on their own sensemaking, engaging in negotiations with other teachers, and using policy resources, this study demonstrates how individuals are not only exposed to particular logics that enable and constrain their beliefs and actions. This study exemplifies how individual agents (i.e., mentor teachers) still have "considerable degrees of agency" within the broader context of institutional structures and processes (Bévort and Suddaby 2016, 18). From a theoretical perspective, this article also advances emerging theory on inhabited institutions by combining neoinstitutional theory with sensemaking theory. Following Weber and Glynn (2006), we state that both theoretical approaches allow for meaningful integration when studying organizational behavior. Interestingly enough, both developed alongside each other on very different trajectories. It is precisely this gap between neoinstitutional theory and sensemaking theory that provides an opportunity for theoretical development and empirical insight on processes of local institutionalization.

Conceptual Framework: Recoupling Institutional Logics and Sensemaking in Understanding Organizational Change

Shifts or changes in the policy environment of schools have been a central focus for scholars working in the institutional theory tradition (see, e.g., Burch 2007; Coburn 2004; Huerta and Zuckerman 2009; Rigby 2014; Russell 2011; Spillane and Burch 2006; Woulfin 2015). In their empirical research on a changing policy context, researchers working from neoinstitutional theory have developed a particular conceptualization of the interdependency between schools and their environments. School policy, organizational processes within schools, and instructional practices are seen as inextricably related to external institutional forces, or to powerful patterns of social action that influence or control how actors ought to think and act (Scott 2013). The concept of *institutional logics* provides a relevant analytical tool to capture how institutions influence organizational behavior (Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Thornton et al. 2012).

Institutional logics are “the socially constructed patterns of symbols and material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality” (Thornton and Ocasio 1999, 804). As broader belief systems that dominate in a given organizational field, logics define legitimate goals and values, present appropriate structures and organizational behavior, constitute identities, provide meaning, and call for particular actions.² According to Scott (2013), institutional logics not only influence societal processes or interorganizational interactions at the macro-level but also have an impact on what is happening inside school organizations. As such, the notion of institutional logics helps to bridge different levels of social analysis that often remain unconnected (macro-, meso-, and microlevels) by explaining how broader institutions also become meaningful for individual and organizational behavior (see also Bridwell-Mitchell 2013; Thornton et al. 2012). Nevertheless, to date most research using an institutional perspective is still mainly associated with macrolevel analyses and studies of the organizational field focusing on what institutional logics do to organizations and its actors. For instance, institutional scholars have consistently demonstrated how organizations often comply with regulative, normative, and mimetic institutional pressures in an attempt to secure organizational legitimacy (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977). Complying with these institutional expectations enhances the legitimacy of the school organization but may also create a conflict between the goals and requirements of teaching and learning processes (the technical core of the school) and the broader institutional requirements (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Scott 2013). Because of this conflict, organizational change sometimes remains merely ceremonial, thus hiding that existing practices actu-

ally continue. This “ceremonial conformity” decouples innovations from actual practices and enacted norms, resulting in different forms of implementation (see, e.g., Coburn 2004). This “macro-evolutionary drift” (Hallett 2010, 55), however, eventually kept portraying organizations and their actors as merely passively adapting to the rules imposed by the institutional environment (Delbridge and Edwards 2013; Suddaby 2010).

Over the past decade, institutional scholars have started to challenge this dominant idea of institutional conformity, bringing back in the role of agency by exploring issues of power and conflict, interactions between local practices and the wider institutional environment, and institutional processes rather than merely institutional effects. The developing scholarship on inhabited institutions is situated within these developments (Bechky 2011; Binder 2007; Dumay et al. 2013; Everitt 2013; Hallett and Ventresca 2006; Lounsbury and Boxenbaum 2013; Powell and Colyvas 2008). These authors do not conceive of school organizations as only the instantiation of institutional logics but acknowledge that they are also filled with (groups of) people who inhabit, occupy, or produce institutions through processes of negotiation and sensemaking. Although a lot of this work was “heavily theoretical, providing critiques, typologies, and concepts” (Aurini 2012, 376), there is a growing number of empirical microlevel research into the way actors talk back to institutional pressures. In other words, these authors attempt to recouple institutional logics with social interactions and sensemaking that both construct and carry institutions forward.

Hallett’s (2010) ethnographic study of accountability practices within an urban elementary school, for instance, showed how teachers made sense of (and reconstructed) the accountability logic imposed on them through environmental pressures. In particular, they interpreted and negotiated the meaning of the institutional logic through their daily practices. The arrival of a new principal resulted in an authoritative recoupling (as contrary to the previously rather loose coupling) of institutional mandates of accountability policies with teachers’ classroom practices. Hallett’s results illustrate that the enforcement of this recoupling process created a situation in which accountability mandates became redefined in terms of creating “turmoil” and chaos instead of uniformity and clarity, as such questioning its very legitimacy.

Studying the professional socialization of new teachers, Everitt’s (2013) study, on the other hand, illustrated how inhabited institutionalism also offers a conceptually powerful lens for understanding the persistence of institutions. This study showed how teacher candidates’ sensemaking and interactions reproduced the legitimacy of particular institutional logics as they were socialized to perform in ways that were tightly coupled with institutional mandates of public schools.

Similarly, and using a mixed-methods approach to examine public school teachers’ decisions to adopt instructional practices that were prescribed by re-

form, Bridwell-Mitchell (2013) demonstrated how teachers rationalized their instructional practices by drawing on certain institutional logics while actually enacting them in doing so. In particular, the study showed how institutional pressures were not only imposed from the outside but also emerged inside schools as teachers relied on the logics to rationalize and to make decisions about the practices they used in their classrooms.

Hence, the research perspective of inhabited institutionalism hasn't dismissed institutional logic as an analytical concept but has rather shifted the focus to examining how institutional logics are mediated, enacted, interpreted, and negotiated by actors going about their work (McPherson and Sauder 2013). The challenge, then, is to develop an understanding of "*what* people do, *how* they do it, and *why* they do it, while simultaneously attending to the institutional structures at various levels of the system that enable and constrain that activity" (Spillane and Burch 2006, 97). For this purpose—and in line with other institutional scholars—our conceptual lens integrates notions from adjacent theoretical perspectives to study how the meanings of institutional logics are constructed through interpretation, negotiation, and social interaction (see Bechky 2011; Bévort and Suddaby 2016; Everitt 2013; Weber and Glynn 2006). In particular, sensemaking theory as a microcognitive approach (Coburn 2001) enables us to study the manifestation of institutional logics within organizations by illuminating the multiple ways actors come to interpret and respond to pressures emanating from the environment.

Conceptualizing this sensemaking, we draw upon the notion of *personal interpretative framework*, as it was developed by Kelchtermans (2009). Based on their experiences in the profession, teachers, principals, and other school actors develop a personal system of knowledge and beliefs that acts as a cognitive and affective lens through which they look at their job situation, give meaning to it, and act in it. Within this personal interpretative framework, Kelchtermans (2009) distinguishes between two central interconnected domains: *professional self-understanding* and *subjective educational theory*. The first domain refers to school actors' representations of themselves as teachers, principals, mentors, and so on. The professional self-understanding develops over time through social interactions and comprises five components: self-image, self-esteem, task perception, job motivation, and future perspective. The self-image is the descriptive component: the way people typify themselves. This image is based on self-perception but also on what others mirror back (e.g., comments from pupils, colleagues, the school principal). Self-esteem refers to one's personal evaluation and appreciation of his or her actual job performance. Closely linked to self-esteem is task perception. This reflects the personal understanding of what one has to do to have a justified feeling of doing a good job. In task perception, it becomes clear that teaching is never a neutral endeavor but encompasses deeply held beliefs on the values and norms that make up good teaching. When these deeply held

beliefs are questioned, teachers feel that they themselves as people are called into question. Next, job motivation refers to the motives that make people choose to do their jobs, to stay in their jobs, or to give them up for other careers. Finally, future perspective reveals one's expectations about one's future in the job. Actors' subjective educational theories are the personal systems of knowledge and beliefs about education that they use when performing their jobs. They encompass professional know-how, as derived from preservice training and in-service training, and the beliefs they have built throughout their careers. At the individual level, this personal interpretative framework operates as the sensemaking filter for actors through which they observe, interpret, and evaluate calls for change and innovation (Kelchtermans 2009).

Combining sensemaking theory and neoinstitutional theory enables us to study how shifting institutional logics pervade the activities of actors and how actors make sense of and use the organizing principles that are available to them. Whereas neoinstitutional theory illuminates the embeddedness of school organizations in a broader institutional environment and the role of extra-subjective, macrolevel structures in shaping organizational structure and behavior, sensemaking theory helps us to study the role of local and (inter)subjective microlevel processes by focusing on processes of interpretation and meaning-making as a basis for actors' behavior in schools (Weber and Glynn 2006). Through the lens of this conceptual framework, our study sought to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1: Which institutional logics of mentoring can be distinguished as enacted in mentoring practices in the school?

RQ 2: How do institutional logics pervade and become used in actors' sensemaking and social (inter)actions at the microlevel?

Method

This study was part of a larger research project on the evaluation of mentoring practices in Flemish schools, including a quantitative and a qualitative part. Based on data of a survey study in a sample of Flemish schools ($N = 137$; see Ballet et al. 2010), we used theoretical sampling (Strauss and Corbin 1990) to select six schools as sites for further in-depth longitudinal case-study research. In particular, these schools had already established voluntary mentoring practices before the mentoring hours were implemented. The case-study approach allowed for an in-depth account of the coupling between the changing policy environment and local schools' mentoring practices (Bryman 2008). In this

article, we draw on the findings from one school, which we call St. John secondary school (the school's and all participants' names are pseudonyms). The focus on one single case enabled us—within the word limit of an article—to argue in enough detail using contextualized descriptions and understandings of how mentor teachers meaningfully operated with and within the changing organizing principles regarding mentoring. Furthermore, it allowed a sufficiently in-depth inquiry to capture the subtle processes through which institutional logics (i.e., mentoring logics) were mediated, enacted, interpreted, and negotiated by local actors (Binder 2007; Yin 1994).

Setting

St. John is a relatively small school in an urbanized region in Flanders, enrolling 677 students, of which only a small number came from ethnic or racial minority backgrounds. The school provides the second and third stages of general secondary education and is part of a small school federation (including six secondary schools). Teacher interactions and their working relationships with the school principal could be labeled as respectful, open, and appreciative. The principal enacted a democratic leadership style, was open to feedback, actively informed teachers about new initiatives, and purposefully involved teachers in the preparation and implementation of upcoming educational changes. The school culture was collaborative, characterized by mutual support and explicit advocacy and establishment of a caring ethos toward students' needs and—by extension—toward beginning teachers. Providing appropriate support and advice to beginning colleagues had been an important value in St. John—reflected in several practices—long before the introduction of the mentoring hours. However, although several other schools decreased, adapted, or even abolished their mentoring activities after the budget cut, St. John did the opposite. It kept and developed its mentoring practices, more tightly coupling them with the broader institutional expectations. In particular, the school even expanded its mentoring and induction program after the mentoring hours were cut. As such, this school demonstrated the dynamics of organizational stability and change in relation to a capricious policy context, making it an interesting case to illuminate the interplay between shifting institutional logics and local actors' sensemaking, actions, and interactions.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred in three periods over 4 years: (1) school year 2009–10 (after granting the mentoring hours), (2) school year 2011–12 (after the

budget cut), and (3) school year 2012–13. Data were collected during 20 whole-day school visits. During each visit, the first author interviewed the respondents and observed mentoring activities taking place that day. As the primary data collection strategy, semistructured interviews were conducted with participants involved in the induction process: the school principal, mentor teachers, beginning teachers, and more experienced teachers (Kvale 1996; see table 1).

Interviews focused on the mentor teachers' beliefs and practices of mentoring and interactions with other colleagues regarding mentoring. In particular, the interview protocol covered a range of topics depending on the respondent's role in the school, exploring both former and current mentoring practices in St. John to examine how the changing policy context had shaped mentoring: (a) specific mentoring procedures in the school, (b) the respondent's and others' involvement in the mentoring activities, (c) local mentoring policy in the school, (d) structural and cultural working conditions (e.g., financial resources, external support from other organizations), and (e) the respondent's beliefs regarding teaching, his or her induction, and mentoring more generally. We conducted 25 interviews, lasting between 1.5 and 2 hours. All were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Additionally, we observed actual mentoring practices in the school: supervision and information sessions for beginning teachers, one-on-one meetings between the mentor and beginning teachers, and between the school principal and beginning teachers (a total of 20 observations). The observations were guided by a semistructured protocol focusing on talk, actions, and interactions. After each observation, the respondents were informally interviewed to clarify questions and check preliminary interpretations that had emerged during the observations.

Finally, we collected relevant school documents related to mentoring practices in the school and analyzed them through content analysis (focusing on the way each defined and conceptualized mentoring): the school website, school plan, mentoring brochure, school vision of mentoring, function profiles, teacher evaluation formats, and the classroom observation format. These different data sources permitted data triangulation because each source of data complemented the limitations of other sources and, as such, served as the methodological validation of our developing interpretations.

Data Analysis

Verbatim transcription protocols were divided in text fragments and coded using descriptive and interpretative codes. First, we used coding to identify the categories of broad ideas, principles, and ways of thinking and acting

that shaped mentoring practices at St. John. Inspired by Coburn's (2001) and Thornton et al.'s (2012) specification of institutional logics and based on iterative reading and coding of the text fragments, we identified the elements (or principles) of the institutional logics. The six constitutive elements we distinguished were the goals of mentoring, the relationship between the mentor(s) and beginning teachers, the conception of the mentor role, the scripts that organize mentoring, the mentoring procedures, and the mentoring materials that gained legitimacy in the school. Second, we searched the data for the ways in which mentoring practices enacted or instantiated institutional logics. We identified changes in mentors' professional self-understanding and subjective educational theory, which in turn revealed three sources of legitimacy used in mentors' interactions: internal, external, and internalized sources of legitimacy.

The analysis involved two levels (Miles and Huberman 1994). First—in the vertical, or within-case, analysis—the transcript or text (e.g., school document) was taken as the unit of analysis. Rigorous transcription and interpretative coding eventually resulted in a structured case report for each respondent or document, containing the results of the analysis and illustrative quotations. The fixed structure in the reports was taken as the starting point for the second step in the interpretative analysis—the horizontal, or cross-case, analysis—in which we looked for systematic differences, similarities, and patterns across the respondents and documents. We used the technique of constant comparative analysis during both the vertical and the horizontal analyses, as we constantly checked preliminary interpretations with the other data sources in the case study (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

Results

Organizational Change and Stability in Mentoring Practices at St. John

The support for beginning teachers had always been an important issue at St. John and continued to be so after the mentoring hours had gone. Nevertheless, although there seemed to be primarily simple continuity in the local mentoring practices of the school, both receiving and losing the mentoring hours did meaningfully and pervasively impact and change them. Based on our analysis, we argue that the mentoring hours not only introduced extra financial support in the school but also accompanied the arrival of a new institutional logic of mentoring (defining what is right, good, or taken for granted with regard to mentoring). While mentoring was originally legitimized by a logic of mentoring as a vocation, the introduction and withdrawal of the

TABLE 1

Overview of the Respondents

Name	Qualification	Position	Years of Experience*	Data Collection 1	Data Collection 2	Data Collection 3
Pauline	Master's in physical education, teaching qualification	Principal	4 as principal, 5 as vice principal, 19 as teacher	X	X	X
Melissa	Master's in economics, teaching qualification, postgraduate certificate mentoring	Mentor and teacher	4 as mentor, 6 as teacher	X		
Megan	Master's of industrial sciences, teaching qualification	Mentor and teacher	3 as mentor, 9 as teacher	X	X	X
Mary	Master's in veterinary medicine, teaching qualification, postgraduate certificate mentoring	Mentor and teacher	4 as mentor, 13 as teacher	X	X	X
Melanie	Master's in linguistics and literature, teaching qualification	Mentor and teacher	1 as mentor, 10 as teacher			X
Tom	Master's in statistics, teaching qualification	Teacher	12	X	X	
Teresa	Master's in biology, teaching qualification	Teacher	15	X		

Tara	Master's in language, teaching qualification	Teacher	20	X
Bella	Master's in history, teaching qualification	Beginning teacher	2 (1 in St. John)	X
Brenda	Master's in linguistics and literature, teaching qualification	Beginning teacher	3 (1 in St. John)	X
Bridget	Master's in communication sciences, teaching qualification	Beginning teacher	3 (1 in St. John)	X
Bea	Master's in engineering; computer sciences, teaching qualification	Beginning teacher	3	X
Becky	Master's in linguistics and literature, teaching qualification	Beginning teacher	1	X

NOTE.—Anonymity of the participants was secured by using a pseudonym. The first letter of a name indicates the respondent's function in the school (principal, mentor, teacher, or beginning teacher).

* Years of experience at the moment of the first interview.

mentoring hours reflected a transition to the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job. Both logics encompassed conflicting principles about appropriate and effective ways to mentor beginning teachers, about the expertise and positioning of mentor teachers within the school organization, and about the teaching profession in general (see table 2). We elaborate on each of them below.

Mentoring as a vocation.—At St. John, mentorship was an established practice even before the government decided to financially stimulate the implementation of mentoring through mentoring hours. Two years before the introduction of the mentoring hours, the principal decided to use 2 hours for special educational tasks (SET hours) to appoint two experienced teachers as a mentor for 1 hour each per week.³ The dominant logic could be labeled as a vocation logic, as the focus was on promoting an overall love for the teaching job and not a particular list of competencies—and how to develop them—as necessary for being a good teacher: “It is not our responsibility or task to train the beginning teachers in any kind of way. They already had a formal education. It is our purpose to support them” (Mary). Mentoring was framed as a deliberate, conscious, and voluntary relational commitment and a normal part of senior teachers’ responsibility and collegiality. This was reflected in the mentoring activities, in the sensemaking of the school actors, and in the material practices. No formal selection procedure was used or specific criteria adopted for appointing the mentors: “The principal asked who wanted to become a mentor, there was no real selection, it was just voluntary” (Mary). Mentors believed that they were needed and that it was their collegial responsibility to support beginning teachers (task perception). Motivated by their own (often negative) experiences and struggles as beginning teachers in the past, the mentors engaged in personal support relationships with their beginning colleagues. Melissa explained: “My main motivation to become a mentor? Well that is simple, my negative experiences as a beginning teacher. Not in the class, but in the school. I was not feeling at home, I felt insecure. Never knowing when I was doing well. I never received any kind of feedback. . . . So that was my most important motivation. Those days I often wondered why nobody with more teaching experience was helping me out.”

The mentoring activities remained rather ad hoc and occasional. Mentors were available but waited for their beginning colleagues to come to them with questions and needs (demand-driven mentoring). Further, the relation between the mentor and the beginning teachers was also framed as a rather informal one with a focus on one-on-one guidance. Melissa added: “We help them when they have questions. They have to come to us. Based on their needs, I will offer support.” Furthermore, the actual mentorship practices showed large autonomy for the mentors because there were no formal procedures, local mission statements, scripts, or other materials to structure mentoring: “The principal

TABLE 2

Shift in Institutional Logics of Mentoring

	Mentoring as a Vocation	Mentoring as a Professionalized Job
Goals of mentoring	Providing demand-oriented informal support of beginning teachers	Providing expert professional development of beginning teachers
Relationship between mentor and (beginning) teachers	Collegial relations with a focus on transmitting the love of the teaching profession	Professionally framed relations with a focus on professionalizing beginning teachers
Role of mentor	• Informal mentorship • Expertise from experience and commitment • A lot of autonomy for mentors in supporting beginning teachers • No task division	• Formal mentorship • Expertise from professional background (e.g., mentor preparation program) • Less autonomy for mentors in supporting beginning teachers; expectation for mentors to follow the school mentoring policy • Task division among mentors based on their expertise
Scripts for mentoring	• Demand-driven, ad hoc mentoring approach • No scripts for mentoring	• Demand- and supply-driven mentoring approach • Formalized and procedural mentoring scripts
Mentoring procedures	• One-on-one guidance • Information sessions	• One-on-one guidance and collective meetings • Information and supervision sessions
Mentoring materials	• Classroom observations • No specific materials	• Classroom observations • Formal mentoring policy • Mentoring file for beginning teachers • Protocol for classroom observations

gave us a lot of freedom, we can decide what we do and how we organize this mentoring” (Mary).

This principle was also visible in the absence of both clear expectations for the mentor-mentee relationship in the school’s policy documents and of a shared knowledge base for professional mentoring. The mentor role was defined as a self-evident extension of being a good colleague and a committed teacher. The principal’s investment of the SET hours was explicitly meant to be a social recognition of the mentors’ collegial efforts: “I always supported mentoring; before the mentoring hours, the mentors received each one SET hour, it was a way to recognize their efforts” (Pauline).

Hence, enacting the mentor role was guided and defined by the collective understanding (of the attitudinal attributes, commitment, and normative beliefs) of what made somebody a senior professional and an experienced, responsible colleague. Mentoring activities were not seen as reflecting particular professional expertise (or something one needed to develop the expertise for). The often informal mentoring support was considered to be simply part of what a professional (senior) teacher does (or needs to do).

Mentoring as a professionalized job.—Gradually, a new institutional logic emerged that we have labeled as a logic of mentoring as a professionalized job. The new logic moved the organization of mentorship away from informally organized practices to a more professionalized and partly bureaucratized system of mentoring. Under this new logic, the main objective shifted from transmitting the love and passion for teaching to emphasizing and planning the different steps that are necessary to become a proficient teacher. For instance, Megan reported: “Our program is based on the challenges beginning teachers will encounter during the first school year. So, we organize information sessions about classroom management, examination, communicating with parents. We observe the beginning teachers three times a year, using a specific observation form. We offer the beginning teachers a specific support program.”

The new logic highlighted a new meaning system with specific normative ideas of what school organizations could or should do to support beginning teachers, specifying the nature of mentoring practices, suggesting appropriate ways to conceptualize the mentoring process, and even characterizing the role of mentors in beginning teachers’ socialization into the school organization. The fact that there were specific financial resources for mentoring—in addition to the funding for in-service training—stimulated, and even required, the school to develop an explicit mentoring policy next to the school’s in-service training policy. The mentoring hours materialized, and as such externalized, specific expectations that in turn manifested a new identity of a formally professionalized, or trained, mentor and the requirements to develop a specific school policy in which the optimal funding and organization of mentoring were major issues. In a context of formalized mentoring practices, the mentor moved

into a more co-reflective and professionalized practice. The previously informal and demand-driven approach was complemented by a supply-driven approach and the establishment of new procedures and instruments to direct the actual mentoring practices (e.g., the mentoring brochure and a protocol for the classroom observations).

According to the principal, Pauline, the introduction of the mentoring hours stimulated the mentors to more systematically perform classroom observations and collegial visits. In particular, a formal supply-oriented mentoring program offering individual support parallel to collective meetings was instated. Mentors still had one-on-one meetings with the beginning teachers, in addition to a system of collective meetings, including information sessions (e.g., regarding student evaluation, parental meetings), supervision moments, and informal gatherings during a weekly moment together. Pauline clarified: "The supervision moments are something new in our mentoring program. Previously, we had focused more on informing the beginning teachers during information sessions. Their own mentor-training program inspired the mentors to start with supervision sessions. That's why we have a weekly collective free hour, so that mentors and beginning teachers can sit together on a regular basis."

The systematic character of these activities was very much appreciated by the new teachers. Bella, for example, emphasized how the mentoring program in St. John had increased her self-confidence and made her feel at ease in the school: "I already had some teaching experience in a center for adult education. My colleagues there had given me lots of information, but in a very unsystematic way. Consequently, a lot of information was lost. In St. John, the mentoring program is much more structured." During the supervision sessions, mentors and beginning teachers introduced and reflected upon specific topics and cases answering the following questions: "How would you respond in this situation? How do you think the pupil would feel in this situation?" (Mary). Apart from the mentors, each beginning teacher was also assigned to a buddy teacher (named godfather/godmother or subject mentor) who participated in daily problem solving, was available for discussions, and shared resources with the beginning teacher. All these activities were documented in the mentoring brochure. This document got a central role in the induction process: "At the beginning of the school year, we received a mentoring brochure. This brochure includes necessary information to start working in this school. So, everything you need to know is written down in this brochure" (Bridget).

The new logic also represented a shift in the definition of the mentor role. By developing formal job descriptions, an explicit division of tasks and responsibilities, and by introducing a formal selection procedure (source: mentoring brochure and school plan), the mentor role became formalized in the school. The decree of 2006 stipulated clear expectations (criteria): principals were expected to select mentors based on their experience as effective practitioners,

their interest in supporting beginning teachers, and their willingness to further develop their professional expertise in mentoring. Mentoring was no longer defined in terms of voluntary practices and self-evident collegiality; instead, the mentor became a (trained) professional and expert in supporting beginning teachers. This formalization and the need for further professional development to be a mentor was, for example, echoed in the way the mentors talked about themselves and about the mentor role (i.e., self-image, self-esteem, and subjective educational theory). They perceived themselves as “beginning” mentors and emphasized the importance of taking an official (accredited) mentor-training program, an extensive in-service training covering both content and process issues related to mentoring. Melissa explained, “We applied for this function,” and Mary offered, “Not only the beginning teachers are ‘new.’ We, as mentors, are also new in this function. Therefore, we really need to prepare ourselves for this function . . . In the mentor preparation program, we really learned how to approach this role and how to overcome difficulties. . . . We learned about the challenges of beginning teachers, about different communication strategies, and about the role of the mentor within the school. We were trained to become a mentor.”

Hence, as being “new” in this role, the mentors emphasized the need to continue their own professionalization: “It is important to keep on networking with other mentors, to share experiences. Participating in supervision sessions with other mentors keeps us alert as mentors” (Mary). Inspired by the knowledge and beliefs developed during the mentor preparation program, the mentors stressed the importance of having received the right (appropriate) training. This was, for instance, reflected in the task division among the mentors. Megan noted: “Mary and Melissa took a specific mentor preparation program; I only attended some training sessions organized by the school cluster. So, since they are more specifically trained for this job, it is their task to do the actual supervision of the beginning teachers; I take on the logistic and practical stuff, like contacting the beginning teachers, providing them with administrative and instructional materials, organizing the internships.” Furthermore, the task perception of the mentors began to include more collective and shared elements (apart from the individual sense of self). Mentoring was no longer defined in terms of an individual relation between a novice teacher and a senior teacher who acted as mentor as part of his or her professional teacher identity; it became the responsibility of a mentor team: “There are three of us, and we all have our own perspectives and responsibilities. The fact that we are a mentor team is a good thing, especially for the beginning teachers” (Mary).

Parallel to the mentoring practices, schools were expected to develop an explicit local policy, which resulted in mission statements on mentoring and the introduction of specific job descriptions. As a consequence, it not only

became more transparent to other team members what the mentors' job actually entailed, but at the same time it also became much more explicitly prescribed how mentors were supposed to operate. In sum, mentoring activities and roles became formally organized and professionalized, and as such, mentoring was no longer regarded as an informal commitment of one's professionalism as a senior teacher.

Mentoring as an instrument for local policy.—With the withdrawal of the mentoring hours, one could have expected that St. John would reduce or even abolish its mentoring practices, as happened in some of the schools involved in the larger study. Our data, however, showed that mentoring was further elaborated and formalized at the school. Since the school year 2010–11, the principal funded mentoring using SET hours (similar to phase 1 of institutionalization). This was immediately communicated to the mentors to reassure them after the budget cuts: “We will not receive mentoring hours any more, but I will keep on giving them hours, because they do more than they are supposed to do. So, I have to find new financial resources; I will use the SET hours again” (Pauline). So, although the mentoring hours—as a form of external regulative pressure—disappeared, the school continued to operate within the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job.

First, the selection of staff members to take on the mentor role was modified and a clear job description was written. The school's mentoring policy read: “The mentor and its school level responsibilities: The mentor has to introduce beginning teachers in the daily functioning of the school (infrastructure and organization). The mentor is responsible for the integration of new teachers in the school team, as such stimulating collaboration between teachers. The mentor is a key partner in the development of the school as a learning organization. The mentor has to develop a vision and program for supporting beginning teachers, the mentor coordinates the buddy teachers.”

When one of the mentors left the school for another job, a formal procedure was established to replace her, with explicit selection criteria. Pauline said, “We now have seven candidates for the new mentor position. . . . It is important that a mentor has at least eight years of teaching experience and that the new mentor attends a mentor preparation program.” Although the withdrawal of the mentoring hours did not affect the formal appointment of the mentors, the use of SET hours to finance them did change and broaden the mentors' actual task description and self-image. In particular, the mentors became key actors in the local school's policy on professionalization. As such, the mentors' role expanded beyond supporting beginning teachers, as they became responsible for stimulating in-service training and school development in general. Because the mentors had been formally trained for their role, they were considered a resource for the establishment and formalization of broader professionalization support for all staff members. Pauline emphasized: “Mentoring is closely re-

lated to professional development more generally. We as a school are not only expected to professionalize mentoring but also to generally professionalize our teaching staff and establish a professional development policy which focuses on teacher and school development. We now use the SET hours to appoint three mentors who are not only responsible for mentoring but will also play an important role in the school's professional development policy." According to the principal, mentors were in an ideal position to also provide learning opportunities to staff members (beyond the beginning colleagues) and to offer guidance and support to the buddy teachers.

Within this changing local policy, the task perception of the mentors broadened from mentoring to coordinating the induction process. Pauline explained: "In attending the preparation program, Megan and Mary have developed their coaching skills. In the future, we should use them to coach other teachers, not just the beginning ones. They can take over part of my role, stimulate teachers to attend professional development activities. The mentors are the perfect people to take on those tasks in the future." Megan confirmed this: "Mary and I will be involved in selecting the buddy teachers, and in developing the buddy-teacher system. So that they [buddy teachers] know that they have to talk about examination, so that they know what they have to do. At the end of next school year, we will see how it went and evaluate this." These citations further illustrate that the buddy-teacher system became formalized.

In addition, buddy teachers were no longer volunteers; they received a credit for their work. And by assigning the buddy teacher's role to the head of the subject department, Pauline expected that providing this kind of guidance would be taken on more seriously as a professional job: "By compensating for their time, we make a statement about the importance of this job. This recognition increases the chance that buddy teachers will become really committed to the role and the responsibilities associated with being a godfather or godmother." As such, the formalization and professionalization of the mentoring practices not only continued after the funding through the mentoring hours ended but actually expanded in aim and scope: "Pauline would like to give the buddy teachers credits for doing this job, so that it becomes a real commitment and not just something one could do. One has to provide some rewarding" (Megan).

Also, the mentoring policy, which had already been developed in phase 2, was explicitly related to the local policy on professionalization of the school. Whereas in phases 1 and 2 mentoring and in-service training (professionalization) were treated as two separate domains in the school policy (e.g., they were visible in separate vision statements), this changed in phase 3. Mentoring became part of—and justified by—a broader school policy on professionalization. Pauline said, "For me the mentors fulfill a policy role. They are very alert for what is going on in the school. They are not just teachers." Hence, men-

toring was considered to be part of a school policy seeking to provide continuous support for the professional development of all teachers and for the improvement of the school organization itself. In phase 3, normative and regulative calls or pressures for professionalization that were present in other policy domains of the school (e.g., with regard to in-service training) legitimized (investing in) mentoring. A way of thinking emerged that defined mentoring as a means or policy instrument for cultivating professional development and school development more generally. So, although there clearly is similarity and continuity with the former phase, in phase 3 mentoring was no longer mainly motivated by the governmental regulations to organize professionalized mentoring practices (phase 2) but by the normative expectations to play a role in the overall ambition to professionally develop the school and its teaching staff. As such, our findings illustrate the earlier observation by Little (1990) that mentoring for beginning teachers can contribute to multiple agendas and goals, not only for the support of beginning teachers' induction but also for the professional development of mentor teachers themselves and for school improvement.

Pursuit of Legitimacy: From Being a Teacher (Mentor) to Being a Local Policy Actor

By taking into account mentors' sensemaking, we are able to explain how the institutionalization of mentoring as a professionalized job not only resulted through coercion by institutional pressures (the decree, mentor training programs, mentoring hours, etc.), forms of commitment, or organizational actors' inability to protect core activities but also operated through the very agency of individuals themselves. Although the mentors acted within a specific context in which particular institutional logics prevailed, the results show how (elements of) institutional logics were interpreted and used creatively at the microlevel and how this contributed to the further reproduction of the new logic. The analysis of the data showed how mentors' personal interpretative framework was being reshaped and how one particular element dominated mentors' positioning in social interactions: their pursuit of legitimacy.

In phase 1, mentors had obtained their legitimacy and authority from intrinsic motivation and their own professional experience. Yet over time this shifted to external (phase 2) and finally internalized (phase 3) sources of legitimacy. The results further demonstrate a parallel between the kind of legitimacy involved in local interpretation and negotiation processes (sensemaking) and the kind of driving forces shaping actors' conceptions and practices from a field perspective (regulative and normative pressure mechanisms). The argumentative resources available to local actors for positioning themselves as

mentor teachers mostly depended on the phase of institutionalization and on the kind of (institutional) pressure mechanism that was dominant during this phase. For instance, the structural dispositions that were put in place during phase 2, accompanying the emergence of mentoring as a professionalized job, came to have a different meaning in phase 3 because they justified a (partly) new local practice (mentors as local policy actors) and because formalization, proceduralization, and professionalization became argumentative resources for negotiating the legitimacy of the mentor role.

Intrinsic sources of legitimacy.—Before the introduction of the mentoring hours at St. John, mentors' job motivation for and willingness to take up their function was primarily intrinsic: it was part of the commitment of being a "professional" teacher. A strong feeling of responsibility rooted in their own experiences as beginning teachers stimulated the mentors to offer collegial support to their novice colleagues (i.e., job motivation). Mary, for instance, reflected on her first days as a beginning teacher: "When I started as a beginning teacher, there was no kind of support. I was thrown into a class." Megan added: "I remember how great it would have been if there was someone in the school who takes care of you, who you can contact when you have questions." The use of the SET hours already gave the mentors a more formal mandate and position in the school. Nevertheless, the mentors described themselves as autonomous actors engaged in quasi-voluntary activities with minimal collective or formal identifications (self-image). In line with these self-descriptions and relying on these internal sources of legitimacy, they enacted the institutional logic of mentoring as a vocation: "I am a teacher in the first place, and inspired by this teaching job, I support beginning teachers. You cannot be a mentor without being a teacher" (Mary). Moreover, when it came to their mentoring activities, they avoided being labeled as experts because they wanted to both reinforce their position as a peer (colleague) and resist the perception of having been assigned a hierarchically superior position in relation to other teachers. The importance of being a teacher, instead of being only a mentor, became especially visible when mentors were confronted with resistance from other teachers. In such moments, mentors could claim legitimacy because they were not just mentors but also colleagues, and they could argue that their mentoring was a self-evident part of their being committed colleagues. To remain a teacher among other teachers, combined with one's own experiences as a beginning teacher, operated as intrinsic sources of legitimacy mobilized in local, social interactions and clearly showed how mentoring as a vocation was being enacted.

External sources of legitimacy.—With the introduction of the mentoring hours, mentors no longer primarily referred to their commitment as being a professional teacher. Melissa commented, "One can be good in supporting beginning teachers, without having an official title. But, if there isn't a personal connection between the teacher and the novice teacher, supervision is not always guar-

anteed. Therefore, I believe it is important that there are official mentors, with mentoring hours, who are professionals, and that all that is not just based on personal connections.”

The formalization and proceduralization of mentoring could be regarded as related to a shift from intrinsic to external sources of legitimacy for mentoring: references to selections and job descriptions became valid sources of legitimacy. In particular, the mentors experienced the mentoring hours as a public and formal recognition of their professionalism as mentors, as they felt that their skills and competencies were recognized, valued, and respected by the government (because of the earmarked funding) and foremost by the principal and their colleagues in the school (i.e., self-esteem). In particular, the mentoring hours made the mentors and their efforts (enacted professionalism) visible in the school. During the interviews, the mentors frequently mentioned visibility as a central issue in their professional relationships: “Finally it became visible what we were doing. The hours really emphasized the relevance of our efforts so that colleagues would know that what we do is really necessary and important” (Melissa). The fact that the mentors received specific resources (time) for mentoring and that they had followed an official mentor-training program further strengthened the image of their professional expertise as mentors and offered them a new source of legitimacy: “I think most colleagues recognize our role. Especially, since they know we have taken a preparation program. And, the fact that it was communicated to them, about the training, the amount of hours we participated in this course. They knew it was something serious” (Melissa). The mentoring hours—as carriers of the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job—became an important means of establishing the mentors’ legitimacy in the eyes of their colleagues and affected their professional (and collegial) relationships with teacher colleagues in the school.

A clear indication of this shift was how the outsiders’ validation of their professional identity as mentors (and not just as teachers) became a source to strengthen the mentors’ internal sense of who they were (i.e., self-image): “Our role became more clear for the other teachers in the school. They knew what our function was and why, for example, we would ask them to let us perform classroom visits. As such, teachers were less reluctant” (Megan). Moreover, that the mentoring hours functioned as an external source of legitimacy putting professionalism (and related expertise) and ongoing professionalization center stage was also related to new ways for mentors to look at themselves and to position themselves in relation to their fellow teachers. The mentors no longer saw themselves as being only committed teachers but also as professional mentors (i.e., self-image and task perception). As a consequence they struggled to obtain social recognition for both roles. Despite mentors’ receiving specific recognition in their role as expert mentors, they still wanted to be also explicitly recognized as fellow teachers by their former teacher colleagues.

In sum, the social interactions in phase 2 indicated that internal sources of legitimacy were less prevalent while there was an increased reference to external sources. Mentoring hours and related funding had put visibility, training, and formal procedures center stage. Expertise and mentoring as a professional activity could be mobilized as major resources to legitimize the mentoring activities.

Internalized sources of legitimacy.—With the budget cut, not only did St. John lose the specific financial resources for mentoring, but mentoring also lost its external source of legitimacy. Turning to the SET hours to fund mentoring did not immediately solve this legitimacy problem. On the contrary, this shift in funding actually triggered discussions among the members of the school: the specific funding for mentors was gone, and as such, the school's decision to continue with mentoring and to use the SET funds was not self-evident and needed justification. The use of the SET hours for mentoring—which could also have been used for other purposes in the school, such as reducing the number of pupils in a class—required the principal as the formal leader (and the mentors) to justify this policy decision. This discussion (tension) was reflected in the social interactions of the mentors with their colleagues. Whereas the earmarked funding of the mentoring hours had provided public justification of the mentors' work, making it visible and acting as financial appreciation for its value and importance, the withdrawal of the mentoring hours and the use of non earmarked funding forced the mentors to find other ways to justify their existence. To do so they had to argue that their professional expertise and practice were important and even necessary. Their concern was no longer with becoming publicly visible and recognized but with making themselves visible and needed. Megan stated: "Back again we have SET hours, instead of mentoring hours. If it has changed anything? Yes, now we really need to write down how many hours we invest in mentoring. Since apparently some colleagues question the amount of work." Visibility and recognition were replaced by accountability. Megan reflected on this shift very lucidly: "We really want to be transparent about our job. What we do, how much time we invest in supporting new teachers. We receive out-of-class time for this, and for teachers this is really a sensitive issue. So we want to be open about the amount of time we spent on mentoring."

Our analysis shows that the mentors were actively engaged in finding legitimacy for their mentoring (and for the money invested in it). They found those sources of legitimacy in the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job: with formalization and proceduralization, that is, in measuring their time, documenting and making visible what they did, etc. In addition to these formal activities of documentation and making time investment transparent, the mentors legitimized their function by referring to their specific mentoring ex-

expertise or professionalism and to the efforts they had made to professionalize themselves when they had become mentors. All these references, however, became part of an accountability discourse, and one could say that as a result of that, the external, expert-related sources of legitimacy became incarnated or internally used by the mentors. The funding through mentoring hours was no longer a recognition of professionalism, but mentors' professionalism became mobilized as a source for defending and claiming legitimacy for the school's choice to invest in them. In phase 3, therefore, mentors actively used elements of the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job to legitimize their actions and safeguard a position that had become questioned in the school.

Conclusion and Discussion

The objective of this article was to open up—both conceptually and empirically—the black box of institutionalization by studying the impact of a changing policy environment on the actual mentoring practices in one school. Drawing on neoinstitutional theory and sensemaking theory, we investigated changing mentoring practices from the interplay of different levels of analysis: from the broader organizational field to the individual actors in schools. Although combining both is rather uncommon, we believed we had good reasons to do so. First, both theoretical approaches highlight the role of cognitive processes in understanding organizational behavior. Whereas sensemaking theory focuses on the role of social actors and their meaning-making processes (or microcognitive processes), neoinstitutional theory studies the embeddedness of school organizations in a broader organizational field in which institutional processes structure organizational behavior (or macrocognitive processes). In other words, sensemaking theory explains how individuals make sense, and neoinstitutional theory explains how this sensemaking is institutionally framed and constrained or enabled within institutional structures.

Moreover, both theoretical approaches also analytically complement each other. Both perspectives offer explanations for the disconnection between changes at the policy level and local practices, but from different levels of analysis. Neoinstitutional theory focuses on how the broader environment may affect or influence organizational behavior (and individual behavior). More specifically, change and stability in school organizations are explained by the mechanisms from the organizational field in which schools are embedded. Empirical research inspired by a sensemaking approach tries to understand what happens with reform at the microlevel of analysis: the role of actors (and their sensemaking) in understanding school organizational processes and how those who enact the policies come to implement them differently. Viewed

through this perspective, individuals are autonomous actors who take action based on decisions made through contextualized interpretation and negotiation, thereby affecting how a given reform or policy is implemented (Weber and Glynn 2006).

Finally, using both perspectives is also an answer to an overrationalized view on organizational and individual behavior, illuminating how organizational behavior cannot fully be explained by the pursuit of efficiency or effectiveness. The sensemaking perspective has been developed as a response to the overestimation of rational choice as a way to explain human action (see Spillane et al. 2002). According to neoinstitutional theory, the structure and behavior of organizations are determined by various macrocognitive structures (such as institutional logics) that put pressure on school organizations and prescribe what they should do (regulative pressure), what is expected of them (normative pressure), and what are the most successful practices (mimetic pressure; Scott 2013). In deciding whether to implement an innovation, the pursuit of organizational legitimacy sometimes overrules rational considerations (Meyer and Rowan 1977).

Combining the notion of institutional logics and personal interpretative framework particularly allowed us to study the role of mentors' sensemaking in shaping responses to changes in the broader institutional environment. By analyzing how mentors creatively employed (elements of) institutional logics in their daily interactions, the study answered recent calls to examine the micro-foundations of institutionalization. Specifically, we were able to reveal a picture of apparent continuity. Despite the fact that St. John already voluntarily organized support for beginning teachers before the introduction of the mentoring hours and the fact that the mentoring practices continued to exist after the budget cut, we could identify changes in the way mentoring was conceptualized, (partly) organized, and legitimized in St. John. The design and implementation of mentoring policies, the expansion of formal mentoring arrangements, the increasing focus on professionalization of the mentor role, and the popularity of mentor training or preparation programs reflect the formalization of a long existing informal process (see also Aspfors and Fransson 2015; Bullough 2012; Schwille 2008; Smith and Ingersoll 2004; Tang 2012).

In particular, we identified a shift from a logic of mentoring as a vocation toward a logic of mentoring as a professionalized job. Mentoring hours were not a neutral policy instrument. Instead, they provided legitimacy for some mentoring practices and not others. At a more general level, the use of mentoring hours as a policy instrument also created a specific relationship between the government and the educational field. In the past, mentoring was mainly seen as the voluntary responsibility of an individual teacher, as part of his or her commitment in the job. With the introduction of the mentoring hours, the

government intervened more explicitly in the school's local mentoring policy. After the budget cut, the school itself again became responsible for organizing mentoring (e.g., using SET hours) without specific funding. With the withdrawal of the mentoring hours, the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job continued to operate, but it became part of and justified by local policy on in-service training and professionalization of the staff more generally. The data showed how institutional logics and associated practices emerged that went beyond supporting beginning teachers in their particular needs to also living up to external regulative and normative expectations and eventually to becoming included as a strategy for local policy.

Reflecting on the contributions and limitations of our study, we want to mention four issues that need to be taken into account in future research and (policy) practice. First, the study of mentors' sensemaking in understanding how organizations experience and respond to macroinstitutional pressures constituted a valuable complement to the field-level factors (see Aurini 2012; Greenwood et al. 2011). Institutional logics do indeed constrain human and organizational action, but our findings indicate that this relationship involves more than actors being passive recipients of institutions. The introduction of a new position (a formal mentor position) forced members of the school staff to reposition themselves toward each other and influenced those mentors' personal interpretative framework as they searched for recognition for both professional tasks (teaching and mentoring; see also Struyve and Kelchtermans 2013).

By shedding light on mentors' internal manifestation of the new mentoring logic, this study hopefully enriches—both conceptually and empirically—the understanding of local institutionalization as operating through the agency exercised by local actors. Specifically, we illuminated how the logic of mentoring as a professionalized job was reproduced by the everyday sensemaking and (inter)actions of the mentor teachers. In addition, the important role of legitimacy in mentor teachers' social interactions shows how social-professional relations can be defined as an important working condition for teachers in schools (see also Kelchtermans 2006). We can refer here, in particular, to research using a micropolitical perspective in which those social-professional relations are defined in terms of professional interests (Kelchtermans and Ballet 2002; Struyve and Kelchtermans 2013). According to micropolitical theory, local actors will develop micropolitical action to establish or restore the conditions in which they prefer to perform their jobs. On the one hand, mentor teachers want to safeguard their professional self-understanding as teachers, but on the other, they want to be recognized for their expertise and new responsibilities as mentors. It is exactly the latter recognition that gave them the legitimacy needed to perform their tasks. More research into mentor teachers'

positioning is necessary to further illuminate how agency in terms of micro-political activity helps to explain not only resistance to change but also the reproduction of certain institutional logics, thereby enabling change.

Second, although we focused on the role and activities of mentors, our findings also indicate a clear shift in the teaching conception more generally and what it is to be a teacher given a particular school context and policy. In a context of increased professionalization of mentoring, a tension seems to emerge between a conception of the teacher as an autonomous professional (who does not need to always justify his or her *raison d'être* and efficiency) and the teacher as someone with specific functions and tasks whose performances can be professionalized (which is a much more managerial definition of the profession and is often regarded even as an indication of “de-professionalization” [Hargreaves 2000]). It seems as if the growing professionalization of mentoring (phase 2), and especially the inclusion of mentoring as part of an integrated school policy toward ongoing teacher professional development (phase 3), cannot be disconnected from new conceptions of what it is to be a (beginning) teacher and what professionalism means when being a teacher.

Furthermore, in line with current debates and contemporary studies of professionalism (see Evans 2008; Muzio et al. 2013; Sachs 2001), the policy shift and the associated changes in working conditions and professional expectations for mentoring studied here illuminate some tensions and even paradoxes about the nature of the teaching profession, the issue of mentoring as a part of the teaching profession (see also Aspfors and Fransson 2015), and the professional identity of both mentor teachers and teachers. Despite the fact that mentoring constitutes a critical factor in processes of workplace socialization of novice teachers, still little emphasis has been placed on mentors’ positioning in school organizations and the construction of their professional identities (Aspfors and Fransson 2015; Bullough 2012; Hobson et al. 2009). Future research on mentor teachers’ professional role identity in the context of institutional change is necessary to further explore why some institutional logics are embraced while others are contested and why (competing) institutional logics might be sometimes intertwined in daily practices (see also Arjaliès et al. 2013; Lok 2010; Noordegraaf 2015).

Third, this study gives us some methodological tasks for future research. To analyze the broad scope of microlevel and macrolevel actors in processes of educational change, we advocate a more detailed relational approach in which the complex network of social interactions of organizations, intermediaries, and the institutional field is more systematically mapped (Dumay et al. 2013). Whereas observations can obtain data on the ways in which actors learn about and discuss logics and interviews can gather data on people’s experiences with logics, social network analysis provides a very useful approach to uncover ties, interactions, and positioning between the macro-, meso-, and microlevels

of analysis (Daly 2010; Moolenaar 2012). The possible value of this approach is that it allows for a systematic analysis of the emergence of new organizational realities and professional role identities and the role of formal and informal networks in fore- or backgrounding messages in the broader organizational field. As such, social network analysis might help to illuminate how interactions with external actors not only enable or constrain action but are also “invoked to ‘justify’ it and reinforce the way institutional change is theorized and responded to” (Arjaliès et al. 2013, 22).

Additionally, to analyze how macrocognitive processes (e.g., institutional logics) influence microcognitive processes, observations and interviews could be complemented with discourse analysis or conversational analysis (see Strong and Baron 2004). This might provide a useful framework for further unraveling the process of institutionalization by explicitly focusing on processes of social construction of institutions.

Furthermore, guided by our theoretical ambition, we focused on analyzing the impact of this capricious policy environment on local mentoring practices in one school. To further unravel the coupling of changing policy and practices, it is necessary to replicate this study using multiple and contrasting cases. By including schools in which mentoring was not always part the local policy or schools in which the induction program was cancelled after the budget cut, we would be able to also analyze the particular role of school culture (a school’s logic) in this (re)coupling process, thereby explaining how institutional logics become meaningful for both individual and organizational behavior.

Finally, the insights of this study may translate into the design and implementation of professional development and policy measures. Our findings clearly show that the relation between change and stability is a complex one: behind the veneer of stability one can find change, and change can hide stability. We explained this by emphasizing organizational actors’ search for legitimacy. These insights might help policymakers understand that implementing educational reform involves way more than rational considerations and that apparently small changes can have pervasive symbolic consequences for schools’ actual practices. Furthermore, our view on school organizations could contribute to supporting and developing the role of school leaders. Following other research (see, e.g., Coburn 2005), we see school leaders as mediators between their schools and the broader organizational field. However, to mediate the messages from the broader educational institution and the specific context of their school organization, school leaders are in need of a solid framework or lens. We hope that our research offers theoretical and empirical support for further developing the lens of school leaders—and other practitioners who have an interest in policy, change, and organization—by adding new dimensions, proposing specific concepts, and providing telling illustrations.

Notes

1. In Belgium, the laws made by the Flemish Parliament are known as decrees and cannot be confused with the federal laws.
2. According to institutional theory, a school organization should be seen as an element in a web of interactive relationships with the wider environment. This web is also referred to as the *organizational field*, consisting of “those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, 148).
3. In Flanders, schools receive (lesson) hours for special educational tasks (SET hours) from the government and can autonomously use these non earmarked resources for nonpupil-related educational activities. A maximum of 3% of allocated lesson periods and hours at a school level can be set aside for special educational tasks.

References

- Arjaliès, Diane-Laure, Farah Kodeih, and Mia Raynard. 2013. “Professional Role Identity as a Filter for Institutional Change: The Case of Responsible Investment.” Paper presented at the Inaugural Paul R. Lawrence Conference: Connecting Rigor and Relevance in Institutional Analysis, Harvard Business School, Boston, June 2–4.
- Aspfors, Jessica, and Göran Fransson. 2015. “Research on Mentor Education for Mentors of Newly Qualified Teachers: A Qualitative Meta-synthesis.” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 48 (May): 75–86.
- Aurini, Janice D. 2012. “Patterns of Tight and Loose Coupling in a Competitive Marketplace: The Case of Learning Center Franchises.” *Sociology of Education* 85 (4): 373–87.
- Ballet, Katrijn, Hilde Colpin, Virginie März, Chara Baeyens, Hannelore De Greve, and Eline Vanassche. 2010. “Evaluatie van het Professionaliseringsbeleid van Basis—en Secundaire Scholen” [The local policy on professionalization in primary and secondary education: An evaluation study]. OBPWO 07.01. KU Leuven, Center for Educational Policy and Innovation.
- Bechky, Beth A. 2011. “Making Organizational Theory Work: Institutions, Occupations, and Negotiated Orders.” *Organization Science* 22 (5): 1157–67.
- Bévort, Frans, and Roy Suddaby. 2016. “Scripting Professional Identities: How Individuals Make Sense of Contradictory Institutional Logics.” *Journal of Professions and Organization* 3:17–38.
- Binder, Amy. 2007. “For Love and Money: Organizations’ Creative Responses to Multiple Environmental Logics.” *Theory and Society* 36 (6): 547–71.
- Bridwell-Mitchell, Ebony N. 2013. “The Rationalizing Logics of Public School Reform: How Cultural Institutions Matter for Classroom Instruction.” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 7 (2): 173–96.
- Bryman, Alan. 2008. *Social Research Methods*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bullough, Robert V., Jr. 2012. “Mentoring and New Teacher Induction in the United States: A Review and Analysis of Current Practices.” *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 20 (1): 57–74.

- Burch, Patricia. 2007. "Educational Policy and Practice from the Perspective of Institutional Theory: Crafting a Wider Lens." *Educational Researcher* 36 (2): 84–95.
- Coburn, Cynthia E. 2001. "Collective Sensemaking about Reading: How Teachers Mediate Reading Policy in their Professional Communities." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 23 (2): 145–70.
- Coburn, Cynthia E. 2004. "Beyond Decoupling: Rethinking the Relationship between the Institutional Environment and the Classroom." *Sociology of Education* 77 (3): 211–44.
- Coburn, Cynthia E. 2005. "The Role of Nonsystem Actors in the Relationship between Policy and Practice: The Case of Reading Instruction in California." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 27 (1): 23–52.
- Coburn, Cynthia E. 2006. "Framing the Problem of Reading Instruction: Using Frame Analysis to Uncover the Microprocesses of Policy Implementation." *American Educational Research Journal* 43 (3): 343–79.
- Daly, Alan J., ed. 2010. *Social Network Theory and Educational Change*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education.
- Delbridge, Rick, and Tim Edwards. 2013. "Inhabiting Institutions: Critical Realist Refinements to Understanding Institutional Complexity and Change." *Organization Studies* 34 (7): 927–47.
- Devos, Geert, and Karlien Vanderheyden. 2002. "Attracting, Developing and Retaining Teachers: Background Report Flanders." OECD, <http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/2404904.pdf>.
- DiMaggio, Paul J., and Walter W. Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." *American Sociological Review* 48 (2): 147–60.
- Dumay, Xavier, Branka Cattonar, Christian Maroy, and Catherine Mangez. 2013. "The Local Institutionalization of Accountability in Education: Network and Bureaucratic Modes of Implementation." *International Journal of Sociology of Education* 2 (2): 99–141.
- Evans, Linda. 2008. "Professionalism, Professionality and the Development of Education Professionalism." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 56 (1): 20–38.
- Everitt, Judson G. 2013. "Inhabitants Moving In: Prospective Sense-Making and the Reproduction of Inhabited Institutions in Teacher Education." *Symbolic Interaction* 36 (2): 177–96.
- Feiman-Nemser, Sharon. 2001. "Helping Novices Learn to Teach: Lessons from an Exemplary Support Teacher." *Journal of Teacher Education* 52 (1): 17–30.
- Greenwood, Royston, Mia Raynard, Farah Kodeih, Evelyn R. Micelotta, and Michael Lounsbury. 2011. "Institutional Complexity and Organizational Responses." *Academy of Management Annals* 5 (1): 317–71.
- Hallett, Tim. 2010. "The Myth Incarnate: Recoupling Processes, Turmoil, and Inhabited Institutions in an Urban Elementary School." *American Sociological Review* 75 (1): 52–74.
- Hallett, Tim, and Marc J. Ventresca. 2006. "Inhabited Institutions: Social Interactions and Organizational Forms in Gouldner's Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy." *Theory and Society* 35 (2): 213–36.
- Hargreaves, Andy. 2000. "Four Ages of Professionalism and Professional Learning." *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 6 (2): 151–82.
- Hobson, Andrew J., Patricia Ashby, Angi Malderez, and Peter D. Tomlinson. 2009. "Mentoring Beginning Teachers: What We Know and What We Don't." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 25 (1): 207–16.

- Huberman, Michael. 1989. "The Professional Life Cycle of Teachers." *Teachers College Record* 91 (1): 31–57.
- Huerta, Luis A., and Andrew Zuckerman. 2009. "An Institutional Theory Analysis of Charter Schools: Addressing Institutional Challenges to Scale." *Peabody Journal of Education* 84 (3): 414–31.
- Ingersoll, Richard, and Michael Strong. 2011. "The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programs for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research." *Review of Educational Research* 81 (2): 201–33.
- Kelchtermans, Geert. 2006. "Teacher Collaboration and Collegiality as Workplace Conditions: A Review." *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* 52 (2): 220–37.
- Kelchtermans, Geert. 2009. "Who I Am in How I Teach Is the Message: Self-Understanding, Vulnerability and Reflection." *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 15 (2): 257–72.
- Kelchtermans, Geert, and Katrijn Ballet. 2002. "The Micropolitics of Teacher Induction. A Narrative-Biographical Study on Teacher Socialisation." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 18 (1): 105–20.
- Kvale, Steiner. 1996. *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lawrence, Thomas B., Roy Suddaby, and Bernard Leca. 2009. *Institutional Work: Actors and Agency in Institutional Studies of Organization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Little, Judith W. 1990. "The Mentor Phenomenon and the Social Organization of Teaching." In *Review of Research in Education*, vol. 16, ed. Courtney Cazden. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Lok, Jaco. 2010. "Institutional Logics as Identity Projects." *Academy of Management Journal* 53 (6): 1305–35.
- Lounsbury, Michael, and Eva Boxenbaum, eds. 2013. *Institutional Logics in Action: Research in the Sociology of Organizations*. Vol. 39, pts. A and B. Bingley: Emerald.
- McPherson, Chad M., and Michael Sauder. 2013. "Logics in Action: Managing Institutional Complexity in a Drug Court." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 58 (2): 165–96.
- Meyer, John W., and Brian Rowan. 1977. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." *American Journal of Sociology* 83 (2): 340–63.
- Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Moolenaar, Nienke. 2012. "A Social Network Perspective on Teacher Collaboration in Schools: Theory, Methodology, and Applications." *American Journal of Education* 119 (1): 7–39.
- Muzio, Daniel, David M. Brock, and Roy Suddaby. 2013. "Professions and Institutional Change: Towards an Institutional Sociology of the Professions." *Journal of Management Studies* 50 (5): 699–721.
- Noordegraaf, Mirko. 2015. "Hybrid Professionalism and Beyond: (New) Forms of Public Professionalism in Changing Organizational and Societal Contexts." *Journal of Professions and Organization* 2 (2): 187–206.
- Powell, Walter W., and Jeannette Colyvas. 2008. "Microfoundations of Institutional Theory." In *The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, ed. Royston Greenwood, Christine Oliver, Kerstin Sahlin, and Roy Suddaby. London: Sage.
- Rigby, Jessica G. 2014. "Three Logics of Instructional Leadership." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 50 (4): 610–44.

- Russell, Jennifer L. 2011. "From Child's Garden to Academic Press: The Role of Shifting Institutional Logics in Redefining Kindergarten Education." *American Educational Research Journal* 48 (2): 236–67.
- Sachs, Judyth. 2001. "Teacher Professional Identity: Competing Discourses, Competing Outcomes." *Journal of Education Policy* 16 (2): 149–61.
- Schwille, Sharon A. 2008. "The Professional Practice of Mentoring." *American Journal of Education* 115 (1): 139–67.
- Scott, W. Richard. 2013. *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Smith, Thomas M., and Richard Ingersoll. 2004. "What Are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?" *American Educational Research Journal* 41 (3): 681–714.
- Snock, Iris, and Elke Struyf. 2012. "The Inservice-Teacher-Training in Flemish Schools: Does Practice Make a (More) Perfect Teacher? A Perspective on Coaching and Evaluating." *Journal of Workplace Learning* 24 (4): 286–98.
- Spillane, James P., and Patricia Burch. 2006. "The Institutional Environment and Instructional Practice: Changing Patterns of Guidance and Control in Public Education." In *The New Institutionalism in Education*, ed. Heinz-Dieter Meyer and Brian Rowan. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Spillane, James P., Brian J. Reiser, and Todd Reimer. 2002. "Policy Implementation and Cognition: Reframing and Refocusing Implementation Research." *Review of Educational Research* 72 (3): 387–431.
- Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet M. Corbin. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Strong, Michael, and Wendy Baron. 2004. "An Analysis of Mentoring Conversations with Beginning Teachers: Suggestions and Responses." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 20 (1): 47–57.
- Struyve, Charlotte, and Geert Kelchtermans. 2013. "Organisational Position and Social-Professional Relationships in Schools: An Exploratory Study of Teacher Leaders' Work Life in Flanders." In *Emotion and School: Understanding How the Hidden Curriculum Influences Relationships, Leadership, Teaching, and Learning*, ed. Melissa Newberry, Andrea Gallant, and Philip Riley. Bingley: Emerald.
- Suddaby, Roy. 2010. "Challenges for Institutional Theory." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 19 (1): 14–20.
- Tang, Sylvia Y. F. 2012. "Knowledge Base of Mentoring and Mentor Preparation." In *The SAGE Handbook of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, ed. Sarah J. Fletcher and Carol A. Mullen. London: Sage.
- Thornton, Patricia H., and William Ocasio. 1999. "Institutional Logics and the Historical Contingency of Power in Organizations: Executive Succession in the Higher Education Publishing Industry, 1958–1990." *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (3): 801–43.
- Thornton, Patricia H., and William Ocasio. 2008. "Institutional Logics." In *The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, ed. Royston Greenwood, Christine Oliver, Roy Suddaby, and Kerstin Sahlin. London: Sage.
- Thornton, Patricia H., William Ocasio, and Michael Lounsbury. 2012. *The Institutional Logics Perspective: A New Approach to Culture, Structure, and Process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Weber, Klaus, and Mary Ann Glynn. 2006. "Making Sense with Institutions: Context, Thought and Action in Karl Weick's Theory." *Organization Studies* 27 (11): 1639–60.

- Woulfin, Sarah L. 2015. "Catalysts of Change: An Examination of Coaches' Leadership Practices in Framing a Reading Reform." *Journal of School Leadership* 25 (3): 526–57.
- Yin, Robert K. 1994. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zucker, Lynne G. 1991. "Postscript: Microfoundations of Institutional Thought." In *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.