MENTOR HANDBOOK

Students

Teachers

Administrators
developing

Reflective Practices

STAR
Initiative

Created as a cooperative endeavor between Professional Development Services, Special Education Services, Human Resource Services and Salt Lake Teachers Association

Welcome

"In any practically, intellectually or emotionally complex occupation, new entrants to it need someone who can show them the ropes, develop their competence and understanding, help them fit in. Even experienced practitioners can benefit from having the advice, support and role modeling of wiser, more senior colleagues. Teaching is no exception... there is increasing commitment to the idea and the evidence that all teachers are more effective when they can learn from and are supported by a strong community of colleagues, and that new teachers can benefit greatly from having a mentor who will be a guide and coach for them. At the same time, mentors can gain as much from their protégés as their protégés do from them – developing new insights into their own and others' teaching, new relationships, and a renewal of commitment and enthusiasm to their craft and career."

-Hargreaves and Fullan

    Districts across the country today are struggling to recruit and retain special and general education teachers. First year teachers are especially at risk as they face the challenge of putting into practice the theories and strategies which have been presented in teacher education programs. First year teachers enrolled in an alternative certification program face an even greater challenge in that they begin the education program at the same time they start a new teaching position.

    Mentor programs have been developed to support first year teachers. Research has shown that mentoring first year teachers, "increases teacher retention, increases beginning and mentor job satisfaction, orients the beginning teacher to the school climate in a positive manner, and increases teacher effectiveness...[and] may also assist in learning and applying advanced knowledge and skills, and in the reduction of stress" (White 17). You have, this year, a wonderful opportunity to positively impact the lives of new teachers and their students. Thank you for your commitment to support our new teachers.

We are pleased you are a part
of
our STAR Initiative

To mentor is to teach --
To teach is to learn

As mentors gain experience and perspective
on the craft of mentoring, they gain
new insights into themselves as
teachers and as learners.
This learning occurs on multiple levels.
On one level mentors develop richer
understandings about the craft of teaching.
While engaging in personal reflection and
articulating their own knowledge base to novices,
they deepen and integrate personal
knowledge about professional practice.
On another level, mentors revisit their own
history as teachers as they monitor the growth of
their [new teachers] and come to see the parallel
between this journey and the journey all
learners take in any new field of endeavor.
On yet another level, the mentor is
learning about the art of supporting novice teachers.
This too becomes a voyage of
discovery in the passage from
novice to expert mentoring.

From Lipton, Wellman & Humbard
<u>Mentoring Matters</u>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MENTORING INFORMATION

THE PURPOSE OF MENTORING

The old equation "LESS = MORE" can be altered slightly here.
In this case, it is clear that

MORE = LESS = MORE:

MORE qualified, caring mentors = IMPROVED support for new teachers

IMPROVED support for new teachers = MORE successful new teaching experiences

MORE successful new teaching experiences = LESS teacher turnover

LESS teacher turnover = MORE capable, well-trained, effective teachers

MORE capable, well-trained, effective teachers =

IMPROVED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT!

There is nothing more important than to develop the potential of people. Thus, mentors must be more than just buddies; they must be trained to bring out the best in people.

A well planned, structured mentoring component
will enhance the success of the overall induction process.
But it is the induction process that fosters
a culture of effective teaching,
ensuring the high-quality education
our children so deserve.

MENTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Though the role and responsibilities of mentors will vary somewhat from school to school, district to district, or state to state, the conventional beliefs about mentoring roles and responsibilities are as follows:

A MENTOR IS

- ✓ A teacher
- ✓ A friend
- ✓ A guide
- ✓ A coach
- ✓ A role model

A MENTOR IS NOT

- ✓ An administrator
- ✓ A supervisor
- ✓ An evaluator
- ✓ A "spy" for the principal

A MENTOR PROVIDES

- ✓ Support
- ✓ Encouragement
- ✓ A listening ear
- ✓ A welcoming shoulder
- ✓ Constructive feedback
- ✓ Suggestions for improvement

A MENTOR MUST EXHIBIT

- ✓ Professionalism
- ✓ A positive attitude
- ✓ The ability to plan & organize
- ✓ A love of children & teaching
- ✓ Good communication skills
- ✓ Good coaching skills
- ✓ Good conferencing skills

A MENTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR

- ✓ Maintaining confidentiality
- ✓ Sharing knowledge, skills, and information
- ✓ Meeting frequently with the new teacher
- ✓ Observing the new teacher
- ✓ Providing demonstration lessons
- ✓ Familiarizing the new teacher with school
- ✓ Participating in ongoing mentor-training activities

A MENTOR MUST BE

- ✓ Understanding
- ✓ Supportive
- ✓ Trustworthy
- ✓ Empathetic
- ✓ Innovative
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Open-minded
- ✓ Reform-minded
- ✓ committed

NORMS OF COLLABORATION

Directions: Before your first meeting with your mentee, rate yourself on each of the norms and their descriptions. Use your data to set goals, to practice the skills in the context of your mentoring relationship. After future meetings, assess your progress in adopting the Norms. Rate yourself again in the spring. Reflect throughout the year on your own professional growth in developing effective mentoring skills.

Fall Date: _____ Spring Date: _____

NORM	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently
PAUSING			
• Listens attentively to others' ideas with mind and body			
• Allows time for thought after asking a question or making a response			
• Rewords in own mind what others are saying to further understand their communications			
• Waits until others have finished before entering the conversation			
PARAPHRASING			
• Uses paraphrases that acknowledge and clarify content and emotions			
• Uses paraphrases that summarize and organize			
• Uses paraphrases that shift a conversation to different levels of abstraction			
• Uses nonverbal communication in paraphrasing			
CLARIFYING			
• Seeks agreement on what words mean			
• Asks questions to clarify facts, ideas, and stories			
• Asks questions to clarify explanations, implications, and consequences			
• Asks questions to surface assumptions, points of view, beliefs, and values			

PUTTING IDEAS ON THE TABLE & PULLING THEM OFF			
• States intention of communication			
• Reveals all relevant information			
• Considers intended communication for relevance and appropriateness before speaking			
• Provides facts, inferences, ideas, opinions, and suggestions			
• Explains reasons behind statements, questions, and actions			
• Removes, or announces the modification of, own ideas, opinions, and points of view			
PAYING ATTENTION TO SELF & OTHERS			
• Maintains awareness of own thoughts and feelings while having them			
• Maintains awareness of others' voice patterns, nonverbal communications, and use of physical space			
• Maintains awareness of groups' tasks, mood, and relevance of own and others' contributions			
PRESUMING POSITIVE INTENTIONS			
• Acts as if others mean well			
• Restrains impulsivity triggered by own emotional responses			
• Uses positive presuppositions when responding to and inquiring of others			
PURSUING BALANCE BETWEEN ADVOCACY & INQUIRY			
• Advocates for own ideas and inquires into the ideas of others			
• Acts to provide equitable opportunities for participation			
• Presents rationale for positions, including assumption, facts, and feelings			
• Disagrees respectfully and openly with ideas and offers rationale for disagreement			
• Inquires of others about their reasons for reaching and occupying a position			

A Mentoring Conversation

A Protocol

Assess the Beginning Teacher's Needs by:
- Making connections and building trust
- Identifying successes and challenges

Establish a Focus for Work by:
- Paraphrasing
- Clarifying

Support the teacher's Movement Forward by:
- Direct teaching
- Collaborative problem-solving/work
- Reflective questioning

Promote Accountability by:
- Identifying specific next steps
- Agreeing to follow-up

New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing communicates that the listener has...

> HEARD what the speaker said,
> UNDERSTOOD what was said, and
> CARES

Paraphrasing involves either:

> RESTATING in your own words, or
> SUMMARIZING

Some possible paraphrasing stems include the following:

> *So,...*
> *In other words,...*
> *What I'm hearing then,...*
> *What I hear you saying,...*
> *From what I hear you say,...*
> *I'm hearing many things,...*
> *As I listen to you I'm hearing,...*

New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz

Clarifying

Clarifying communicates that the listener has...

HEARD what the speaker said,
BUT does
NOT fully UNDERSTAND what was said.

Clarifying involves ASKING A QUESTION [direct or implied] to

1. Gather more information
2. Discover the meaning of the language used
3. Get clarity about the speaker's reasoning
4. Seek connections between ideas
5. Develop or maintain a focus

Some possible clarifying stems include the following:

Would you tell me a little more about...?
Let me see if I understand...
I'd be interested in hearing more about...
It'd help me understand if you'd give me an example of...
So, are you saying/suggesting...?
Tell me what you mean when you...
Tell me how that idea is like (different from)...
To what extent...?
I'm curious to know more about...
I'm intrigued by.../I'm interested in.../ I wonder...

NOTE: "Why" tends to elicit a defensive response.

Mediational Questions

Mediational questions help the colleague

 HYPOTHESIZE what might happen,

 ANALYZE what worked or didn't

 IMAGINE possibilities

 COMPARE & CONTRAST what was planned with what ensued

Some meditational question stems include...

 What's another way you might...?

 What would it look like if...?

 What do you think would happen if...?

 How was...different from (like)...?

 What's another way you might...?

 What sort of an impact do you think...?

 What criteria do you use to...?

 When have you done something like...before?

 What do you think...?

 How did you decide (come to that conclusion)...?

 What might you see happening in your classroom if...?

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Teachable Moments

- ◘ Teachable moments are spontaneous opportunities that offer the mentor a chance to:
    - — fill in instructional gaps
    - — help the new teacher make good choices
    - — take the new teacher to take "the next step"
- ◘ When taking advantage of a teachable moment it's important to:
    - — share in the spirit of support
    - — be brief – focus on the essential
    - — be strategic
    - — avoid using jargon sounding pedantic
- ◘ Some possible stems include the following:

    One thing to keep in mind is...

    If you're interested in ___, it's important to...

    What I know about ___ is...

    It's sometimes/usually helpful to ___ when...

New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz

Suggestions

"OPEN" suggestions...

- are expressed with invitational, positive language and voice tone

- offer choices to encourage ownership

- are often expressed as a question [or include a "tag question"] to invite further thinking

- are achievable – enough to encourage, but not to overwhelm

- may provide information about the mentor's thinking and decision-making

New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz

Suggestions

SOME EXAMPLES

✓ **raise a possibility** *[include words such as perhaps, maybe, might, could, wonder]*
What I was thinking was that maybe if you had the vocabulary words...

✓ **pose a question**
Will you record those on the board, or are you going to...?
Is there something you could do to assess individual understanding of a plot or story line?

✓ **recount an anecdote or idea seen, or read or heard about elsewhere** *[testimonial or anecdote]*
I've seen people do sequencing, so they would have the steps...
What I've learned from my experience...

✓ **reformulate or paraphrase the BT's idea or techniques and ask a question**
So, you're going to use that as the model for the parts of the myth and they'll do the rough draft. Are they also going to do some peer editing?

✓ **Offer a direct suggestion with a rationale**
If you are going to do literature circles, it's important to...

Based upon the work of W. Baron & M. Strong, 2003

New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz

Activity: Promoting Reflective Thought
MENTORING CONVERSATION SCENARIOS

#1

As a mentor, you witness *physical harm* being done to students (i.e., leaving students unattended). How do you handle communication to the principal?

#2

As a mentor, you witness *educational harm* being done to students (i.e., little instruction occurring and lots of free time). How do you handle communication to the principal?

#3

A new teacher indicates to you that they don't need any help from you because the principal says "Everything is fine." How do you build a relationship with the new teacher and principal?

#4

The principal asks you, "How is the teacher doing?"
How do you respond?

#5

You see big issues in the new teacher's classroom and believe the principal has not been visiting the classroom. How do you communicate these issues to the principal?

#6

The new teacher assigned to you is refusing assistance. How do you deal with this situation and should there be principal interaction?

MENTORING SELF-ASSESSMENT

What things, based upon my philosophy of teaching, are "near and dear to my heart?"

What things, based upon my philosophy of teaching, do I disagree with?

How do I see my role as a mentor/mentee?

What are my goals as a mentor/mentee?

What strategies/formats would I like to use in working with my mentor/mentee?

What is my style of relating to others (e.g., "I like to take time to think about new ideas before I debate them with others," "I get quiet when I am upset.")?

MENTOR JOURNEY MAP

This is a celebratory event to reflect on your professional career. You are going to create a Journey Map that visually depicts the stages of your professional career.

The Journey Map should include the following:

- ✦ greatest success (high point)
- ✦ greatest struggle (low point)
- ✦ two or three banner points
- ✦ other key events, as needed
- ✦ intended destination/goal
- ✦ milestones along the way
- ✦ forests of uncertainty, obstacles encountered
- ✦ contextual factors that support and challenge along the way

Use of visual symbols:

- ✦ hills and valley
- ✦ sun and clouds
- ✦ boulders
- ✦ flags and banners
- ✦ forests
- ✦ sign posts

You will individually develop posters/charts that describe your "journeys" and your intended/planned hoped for itineraries for the upcoming school year. When you are finished, you will share in small groups or, voluntarily, with the whole group.

Mentors can support and coach the new teachers through their creations by reminding them of happenings along the first-year teaching journey.

Activity: Promoting Reflective Thought
ROLE MODEL PROFILE

Directions: This activity asks you to think about teachers you had when you were a student, or colleagues with whom you have worked. Answer and share your responses with your partner.

1. Think about the teachers you have known. Which ones best represent what a teacher should be? How did their teaching affect you?

2. What characteristics did you observe that make you feel that they were quality teachers?

3. How did other students respond to those teachers?

4. Which of those teachers' abilities would you most like to be able to borrow and integrate into your own teaching?

SU Source: *The Mentoring Year* by Udelhofen & Larson, Corwin Press

NEW TEACHER DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

She Left as Abruptly as She Came

For Helga, who was called into service the week school began, the introduction to her school was abrupt. **No one noticed her when she entered the office, and no one offered to assist her.** When she asked to speak to the principal, the secretary spoke to her sharply.

"After a few minutes," Helga explains, "Mr. Smith (the principal), whom I'd met on one other occasion when I came to see the school, came flying out of his office like a whirlwind. The scene that followed was almost comical. Everyone was vying for his attention. Children were calling to him to tell of the wrongs they'd suffered at the hands of some 'unjust' teacher, teachers were questioning or complaining about scheduling of children and even about the time of the assembly on Friday. One secretary was trying to relay phone messages, while another secretary was traipsing along behind Mr. Smith trying to remind him of the combination for the safe. All the while, Mr. Smith barked out instructions on things the secretaries needed to do so he could get certain things accomplished that day. Chaos."

Helga called to Mr. Smith, but it was obvious that he did not know who she was. After Helga introduced herself, the principal introduced her to the secretaries, gave her the key to her room, and wished her luck. **She experienced instant immersion into her teaching assignment, with no orientation to the school, the students, or the community.**

"I walked to the other building in a daze," she says. "Wasn't somebody going to walk over with me and tell me a little bit about what to expect? Wasn't anyone going to show me where the bathroom was or tell me what the other teachers do for lunch? Wasn't I going to get a few words of encouragement, or, for heaven's sake, an idea of what time the first period started? I felt very alone. I kept mentally patting myself on the back for having come the week before so I'd know where my room was."
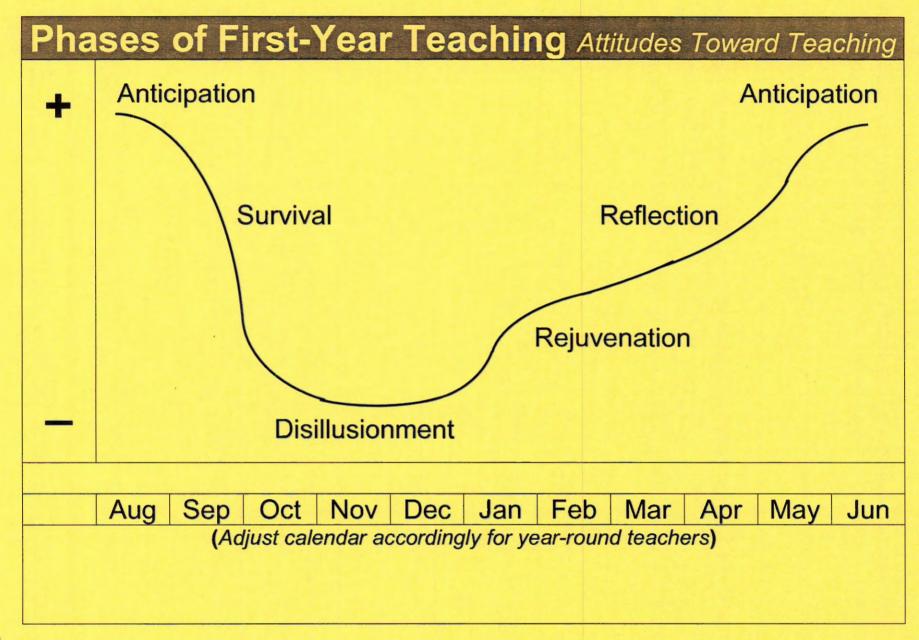
"I started to really understand that I was totally on my own. I started using my lunches and prep periods to walk around to the other teachers and get acquainted and find out where to get materials and who I needed to 'get in good with'. One day during the second week, a man came down and introduced himself as my new mentor. He told me to see him if I had any questions. That was of some comfort but a little too open-ended. The seeming lack of structure made me uncomfortable."

Part of Helga's discomfort and problem stemmed directly from starting so abruptly, with no induction process. Within a few weeks, Helga says, she was beginning to feel overwhelmed: "I was feeling so overwhelmed, and I had no time. I couldn't get everything done. I still had no reading books. 'Getting behind' is what I felt like I had been doing. If I stayed one day ahead I felt prepared. There wasn't even any time for me to prepare my classroom before the kids arrived."

"It is like realizing you are asleep and having a nightmare, knowing that you can stop the dream or wake up, and yet you continue on with the horror because this is a TEACHING JOB. This is what you've supposedly been trained for. You ask yourself – why am I not happy? It wounds (you) deeply when you step into a job that is supposed to be rewarding and fulfilling, and it turns out to be a nightmare filled with horror and despair."

The experience began taking its toll on Helga. She lost weight, began having nightmares, had difficulty sleeping, and her mental health was in jeopardy. She felt a sense of isolation from the other teachers. Helga felt as though she had failed. **After three months, Helga left as abruptly as she had come.**

Helga could have been saved if her district had offered an induction program.

Phases of First-Year Teaching *Attitudes Toward Teaching*

+

Anticipation

Survival

Reflection

Anticipation

Rejuvenation

–

Disillusionment

| Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |

(Adjust calendar accordingly for year-round teachers)

Phases of First-Year Teaching

By Ellen Moir

First-year teaching is a difficult challenge. Equally challenging is figuring out ways to support and assist beginning teachers as they enter the profession. Since 1988 the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project has been working to support the efforts of new teachers. After supporting nearly 1,500 new teachers, a number of developmental phases have been noted. While not every new teacher goes through this exact sequence, these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved – administrators, other support personnel, and teacher education faculty – in the process of supporting new teachers. These teachers move through several phases from anticipation, to survival, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection; then back to anticipation. Here's a look at the stages through which new teachers move during that crucial first year. New teacher quotations are taken from journal entries and end-of-the-year program evaluation.

Anticipation Phase

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of preservice preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. "I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge." This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

Survival Phase

The first month of school is very overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching. "I thought I'd be busy, something like student teaching, but this is crazy. I'm feeling like I'm constantly running. It's hard to focus on other aspects of my life."

During the survival phase, most new teachers struggle to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. It is not uncommon for new teachers to spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork.

Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Veteran teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. New teachers, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop their lessons for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

"I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It's like working three jobs: 7:30-2:30, 2:30-6:00, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends." Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase, harboring hope that soon the turmoil will subside.

Disillusionment Phase

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work and stress, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that are most likely still unclear in the new teacher's mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is

just beginning and many times pose questions or make demands that intimidate a new teacher. Parent conferences require new teachers to be highly organized, articulate, tactful, and prepared to confer with parents about each student's progress. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin with the ideas that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parents' concerns or criticisms. These criticisms hit new teachers at a time of waning self-esteem.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part, uncertain about the process itself and anxious about their own competence and ability to perform. Developing and presenting a "showpiece" lesson is time-consuming and stressful.

During the disillusionment phase classroom management is a major source of distress. "I thought I'd be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I'm stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open."

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-time teacher, coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching, often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

Rejuvenation
The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher's attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle, with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope.

They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they have made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning and teaching strategies.

"I'm really excited about my story writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely revived my journals." The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers. "I'm fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don't know enough about them to know what I haven't taught, and I'm sure it's a lot."

Reflection
The reflection phase beginning in May is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The end is in sight, and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation. "I think that for next year I'd like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters."

It is critical that we assist new teachers and ease the transition from student teacher to full-time professional. Recognizing the phases new teachers go through gives us a framework within which we can begin to design support programs to make the first year of teaching a more positive experience for our new colleagues.

5 Stages of Teacher Development

Novice	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Proficient	Expert
* Follows context free rules * Gains initial classroom experience * Behaves relatively inflexibly * Acquires formal pedagogical training * Learns objective facts and features of situations	* Melds book knowledge with on-the-job experience * Builds up case or episodic knowledge * Behaves in a relatively inflexible manner (rule-based) * Strategic knowledge begins to guide behavior	* Articulates goals * Makes conscious choices & can explain rationale for behaviors * Sets priorities (determines what is & is not important) * Employs various, sensible means to achieve ends * Develops sense of "personal agency"	* Develops heightened & intuitive sense of pattern recognition * Has holistic understanding of processes involved * Recognizes similarities among events * Action guided by analysis & deliberation	* Develops automaticity around routines * Adjusts classroom practice according to multiple contexts * Acts in a more opportunistic and flexible manner * Represents problems multi-dimensionally

MENTOR
NEW TEACHER
TEAMING
IDEAS

50 Ways to Love Your Mentee

1. Teach your mentee's class during prep time to allow him/her to see other classes.
2. Share great teacher web sites.
3. When they've completed their first open house, report cards, etc. Celebrate!
4. Put a weekly meeting on the calendar – plan to meet together.
5. Develop a game plan for how you deal with confrontation.
6. Help your mentee learn staff and faculty members – especially those who can help them accomplish various tasks or maybe another teacher they can observe.
7. Send a Happy-Gram.
8. Leave a candy bar message for your mentee, such as "Don't let the *crunch* of paperwork get to you! You're doing great!" or "You're worth a *$100,000* to us!"
9. Give your mentee a jar filled with strips of paper with positive affirmations written on them.
10. Give your mentee a small spiral notebook to write down any questions he/she might have. Then answer those when you meet with your mentee.
11. Help your mentee grade papers.
12. Tell your mentee all the compliments you hear about him/her.
13. Show your mentee how to set up a gradebook.
14. Give your mentee a list of games/activities for rainy day schedules.
15. Give your mentee a list of games/activities with a monthly theme.
16. Meet weekly.
17. Stop by your mentee's room every day to check on his/her well-being.
18. Listen, Listen, Listen!!!
19. Give the unspoken rules.
20. Copy files and give ideas to your mentee.
21. Give a basket of teaching supplies – pencils, stationary, stickers, etc.
22. Help your mentee set realistic goals and take "small" steps – one at a time.
23. Suggest music CD's to work by.
24. Give your mentee a photo album to use throughout his/her career to show milestones, classroom experiences, etc.
25. Go over teaching strategies.
26. Walk through to ask a question and make a positive remark before leaving.
27. Give your mentee a book on "theory" and one on "practice." Both should serve to inspire your mentee with his/her chosen profession. (e.g., _A Boy I Once Knew: What a Teacher Learned from Her Student_ by Elizabeth Stone)

28. Provide a copy of a favorite inspirational poster (suitable for framing) for his/her classroom.
29. Make an effort to introduce your mentee personally to one "important" person in the district that you have met along the way in your career.
30. Provide a one-year subscription to a professional journal or teaching-related magazine like *Teacher Magazine*.
31. Give your mentee a Happy-Gram of encouragement with movie tickets enclosed.
32. Give your mentee a call on the weekend commenting on what a great job he/she is doing.
33. Cover one of your mentee's duties to give him/her "relief time."
34. Make a necklace with cards containing songs and chants to use during transition times.
35. Avoid the temptation to solve a problem your mentee could solve if given a listening ear.
36. Install "Easy Grade-Pro" and enter classes and students.
37. Provide a carafe of coffee, tea or juice to get your mentee through the day.
38. Donate the "free" books from book clubs such as Troll or give redeemable points for your mentee to choose his/her own titles.
39. Make a welcome brochure that contains pictures and information about all the teachers on staff because there isn't an opportunity to get to know everyone in a short time.
40. Share recent educational methodologies with your mentee.
41. Share lessons on a timely basis.
42. Observe your mentee's classroom before his/her first evaluation – give honest and specific feedback.
43. Attend a conference together. Discuss each other's opinions about the conference.
44. Share your weekly lesson plans with your mentee.
45. Share "mess-ups" so your mentee realizes we all make mistakes.
46. Send an email or good luck note on day of principal observation and/or parent conference.
47. Tour the school with your mentee.
48. Give reassurance that frustration or feeling overwhelmed is normal.
49. Help your mentee with ways to speak with parents (broken record, repeating what you understand them to be saying, asking for their suggestions and help, etc.)
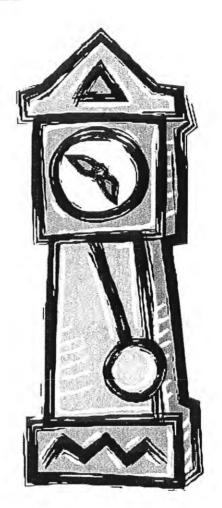50. Give your mentee a school T-shirt for Spirit Days!

Hot Tip: Promoting a Positive Mentor/Mentee Relationship
WAYS MENTORS CAN SUPPORT NEW TEACHERS

1. Demonstrate a lesson plan.
2. Provide a one-day lesson plan.
3. Co-observe another teacher and discuss afterward.
4. Attend a workshop together.
5. Role-play a parent conference.
6. Assist the new teacher in filling out school forms.
7. Explain school procedure regarding field trips.
8. Make materials together.
9. Provide materials for a curriculum unit.
10. Assist the new teacher in developing a professional growth plan.
11. Develop a thematic unit together.
12. Suggest options for dealing with unruly student behavior.
13. Model a class meeting.
14. Assist with room arrangement.
15. Discuss school protocol and traditions with the new teacher.
16. Examine examples of student work together.
17. Listen as the new teacher discusses his/her assessment of examples of student work.
18. Encourage the new teacher to share a successful lesson at a grade level meeting.
19. Ask questions that clarify and deepen the new teacher's thinking around his/her self-assessment.
20. Provide samples of classroom discipline policies.
21. Ask questions that help the new teacher prioritize issues/concerns related to instruction.
22. Listen to the new teacher's reflections upon an item to be included in his/her professional portfolio.
23. Brainstorm together possible ways for the new teacher to introduce a curriculum unit.
24. Share an effective strategy for grading papers.
25. Collect classroom observation data related to the new teacher's practice.
26. Ask the new teacher to identify areas of strength and an area for professional growth.
27. Help the new teacher select portfolio artifacts that demonstrate the teacher's growth.
28. Ask the new teacher how a new strategy might impact student learning.
29. Suggest a cooperative learning strategy for reviewing literature.
30. Identify the strong points in a lesson design.
31. Present observation data that illustrates equity of student participation issues.
32. Tell the new teacher about a racial comment you heard one student make to another.

MAKING TIME TO WORK
WITH YOUR MENTEE

1. Meet in the morning before school

2. Lunch

3. TGIF

4. E-mail

5. Holiday party

6. Go for ice cream sundaes on Friday
   afternoon

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

"It is vital to accept the fact that, in most schools,

increased results cannot be attained without

increased commitment of time and resources."

-Barry Sweeney, Leading the Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program, 2001

WHAT COULD YOU PUT INTO A MENTEE'S WELCOME BASKET?

- ◘ Your phone number
- ◘ Gift certificate to a teacher's store
- ◘ Sponge activities
- ◘ "Lunch on me" coupon
- ◘ Welcome card
- ◘ Map of school and district
- ◘ List of staff names and room numbers
- ◘ School calendar
- ◘ School disciplinary policy
- ◘ Student handbook
- ◘ Cushion for chair
- ◘ Attendance policies
- ◘ Lunch count slips
- ◘ Chocolate
- ◘ Subscription to professional magazine
- ◘ Phone numbers for local lunch delivery
- ◘ "Victory" journal
- ◘ Inspirational books or quotes
- ◘ Children's book
- ◘ Relaxation tapes
- ◘ Lotion
- ◘ Plant
- ◘ Bulletin board materials
- ◘ Lesson ideas
- ◘ Copy of grade level long-range plans for the year
- ◘ First aid kit from the health office
- ◘ List of good substitute teachers
- ◘ Motivational poster
- ◘ "Warm fuzzy" stuffed animal
- ◘ Invitation to visit your classroom
- ◘ Invitation to "happy hour" or other staff social event

Activity: Promoting Reflective Thought
NEW TEACHER JOURNEY MAP

This is a celebratory event to conclude the first year of teaching. The Mentor and the New Teacher develop posters/charts that describe their "journeys" this past year and the intended/planned/hoped for itineraries for the rest of the school year or for next year.

The Journey Map should include the following:

- greatest success (high point)
- greatest struggle (low point)
- two or three banner points
- other key events, as needed
- intended destination/goal
- milestones along the way
- forests of uncertainty, obstacles encountered
- contextual factors that support and challenge along the way

Use of visual symbols:

- hills and valley
- sun and clouds
- boulders
- flags and banners
- forests
- sign posts

Mentor might want to share their own Journey Map as a way of demonstrating the activity. Mentors can support and coach the new teachers through their creations by reminding them of happenings along the first-year teaching journey.

MENTORING

JOURNAL

ARTICLES

THOUGHTS ON TEACHING

My Mother's Gravy
BOBBY ANN STARNES

Last Thanksgiving, I tried to make my mother's gravy. As always, I failed miserably. Standing at the stove stirring the mixture, getting it wrong yet again, I had a vivid image of the day I asked my mother to teach me.

She seemed puzzled, as though she thought the ability to make gravy should have been transmitted genetically. She could not recall anyone teaching her. Almost reluctantly, she agreed. So I stood by her side at the old Kelvinator range in our small kitchen, pencil and paper in hand, ready to record every detail.

She began with the same cast-iron skillet she had used every morning for as long as I could remember. "You put the drippings in the pan," she said, turning the burner to medium high. I quickly wrote "medium high" on my paper. My mother looked at me with a measure of disbelief.

"How much?" I asked, anxious to get down every step and detail.

"Oh, just some," she replied, spreading the goo evenly over the skillet surface. Just some, I thought. Just some!

"Now, mix the flour in," she said, pulling her cup out of the Gold Medal bag.

"How much?"

"Enough," she said in an impatient tone. "You put enough flour in to get the right thickness."

Well, yes, I thought. You'd certainly want to use *enough*. It wouldn't make sense to use too much or too little. But how much is enough? I was still trying to figure out what to write, when, at what seemed a completely arbitrary moment, she said, "Now a pinch of salt...a dash of pepper." I wondered how to convert "a pinch" into teaspoons and what the difference between a pinch and a dash might be.

She mixed the ingredients until the paste reached the right consistency – a consistency only she seemed able to detect. Then she added milk, whipped the spoon around a little, and voila, perfect gravy.

Mother never used a recipe, and she laughed lightly when I suggested she write one out for me. My mother understood gravy. She just knew how much of this or that she needed – salt, pepper, milk, butter in quantities of a pinch, a dash, a handful. She knew how to thicken or thin, how to get it just brown enough. She knew how the ingredients interacted. And by watching carefully, she knew when to add each. She could see a problem before it occurred, and she knew how to head it off. She paid attention, and, even when she seemed distracted by the potatoes or the bread or crying children, she kept it all in her head and even responded to each situation at just the right moment. I don't remember things ever burning or a time when all the food didn't reach the table at the same time – hot foods, hot; cold foods, cold. No matter how complex the meal or how numerous the distractions, she could focus on everything at once and pick up the signals that prompted her to act.

After last Thanksgiving's failure, I finally gave up on ever being able to make my mother's gravy. Instead, I decided to make my own. Dumping the goop into the sink, I smiled as I remembered myself anxiously trying to copy her every movement exactly. I can't make hers, I thought, but she taught me a lot about gravy. As a result, I learned to make *my* gravy. And it is good.

Good teachers understand teaching the way my mother understands gravy. And they come to be teachers the way my mother and I came to make gravy – in our own ways and through our own experiences. Watching, reading, trying new things – it all goes into the mix, but each teacher *must* become a teacher through her own process and in her own way. She can't be like the teacher across the hall, or like her mentor, or like me. And good teachers become good by taking what they can learn from others, by trying again and again, by learning to watch and listen and notice, and by coming to understand as much as they can about the ingredients – the children, the way people learn, the content, the context.

There are always hundreds of things for teachers to attend to, and their attention is constantly pulled this way and that by concerns as diverse as new curriculum and PTA meetings, a holiday play and standardized testing, contract negotiations and bus duty, football games and grades, parent conferences

and permissions for field trips. And, of course, the students – the student who needs more guidance and the one who needs less, the one for whom everything comes too easily and the one who struggles far too much for each small gain, the one who gives up and the one who perseveres long after hope seems gone, the one who wants to please and the one who can't be pleased, the one consumed with fear and the one who fears nothing.

All of this and more constantly stir in a teacher's mind. And in the complicated places that classrooms and schools are, teachers watch and worry, reflect and reinvent, all while dealing with multiple demands, juggling everyone's needs, seeking balance.

Some time back, I drove narrow, winding roads across two mountains and into a narrow hollow to a school that time seemed to have forgotten. Parking my car in the lot across from the old building, I noticed cardboard covering broken window panes. I pulled the heavy, unpainted door open and walked up the stairs, placing my feet in a spot on each step that had been worn into the cement by the generations of children who had walked those stairs before me. I had seen schools from the area on the news just days before as part of still another report about "hopelessness and poverty in Appalachia."

I checked in at the office, followed the narrow corridor to the science room, and was greeted by 30 sixth-graders and their teacher.

"Okay, who would like to bring our guest up to date on our work?" the teacher asked.

Hands shot up, and the story unfolded. I listened as they discussed the state's highest peak and plans to strip-mine it. One student explained the implications for the dusty salamander, an endangered species. Another talked about jobs the mine would create. Still another spoke about the environmental impact. As soon as one stopped to take a breath, another chimed in with more facts, more possibilities, more points of view. I was completely amazed by their discussion, by their knowledge, and by their understanding of the complexity of the issue. And nowhere in their discussion did I sense hopelessness or a poverty of ideas.

"And why are we learning about this?" the teacher asked. Without hesitating, the students began to explain how they were meeting state curriculum mandates and preparing for state proficiency tests.

Too soon, the bell rang. Still talking about habitats and fossils, the students gathered their books and entered the crowded hallways to get to their next 45-minute class period.

Pencil and paper in hand, I prepared to write the teacher's story. "How did you do that?" I asked. She looked puzzled. "Oh, I didn't do anything. The kids did it. It just happened."

I knew better than that. Students don't learn about mandates by themselves, any more than my mother's gravy cooked itself. It was something she did, something she understood about the ingredients, steps she took to get them ready, moments she decided to push harder or to slow down.

I pressed for details. As we talked, the complexity and purpose of her work began to emerge – the ways she helped students learn to make good choices, provided them opportunities to assess their work, created a learning community, set high standards and expectations, and made curriculum mandates explicit. And I could begin to see the ways she was always watching, listening, stirring the pot, waiting for just the right moment to raise the stakes, keeping her eye on each child – each of her 180 children.

Listening to her, I though how great it would be if young teachers could learn at her elbow, as I learned at my mother's much could be understood about great teaching by watching her make decisions, solve problems, encourage students, help them reach higher than they can yet imagine going. And still more could be learned from questioning her and trying to understand her thinking and the kinds of meaning she makes.

To be sure, learning from her and with her would be helpful. But trying to *replicate* her teaching style, her art, or her skill would be a mistake. Becoming a good teacher isn't – indeed, can't be – about replication any more than making my mother's gravy is about knowing how many pinches equal a teaspoon. Teaching requires more. It requires us to *know* teaching – to make it our own, to nurture deep understandings out of years of thoughtful practice and careful refinement. To know teaching, we must all learn in our own way and through our own experiences. And when we come to know teaching in this way, we understand all the knowledge, experience, thoughtfulness, and expertise that goes into a simple direction like "use enough" and all the work, attention, and planning that goes into "it just happened."

Maintaining a Life

BY MARGART METZER

To teach well, teachers need to be fair to themselves and help students take responsibility for their own learning, Ms. Metzger explains in a series of letters to a student teacher.

I. CALLING IN THE COSMOS

Dear Christine Greenhow,

You have asked one of the hardest questions about teaching or perhaps about any profession. You have asked how a teacher moves from competence to excellence. I could postpone an answer by saying that your question is premature; you have been a student teacher for only a few weeks, and your task now is to learn the basic skills of teaching. But I admire your thinking about the larger questions. You are not getting mired in the panic of inexperience. So let me try to answer as best I can.

How does a teacher move from competence to excellence? Partially it's just experience. If you expect excellence immediately, you degrade the craft of teaching. You would not expect to do brain surgery during your first month in medical school.

My advice is to be gentle with yourself. Teaching is an art form. All art, done with integrity, is excruciatingly difficult. You are just learning. As my mother, a gifted math teacher, bluntly told me during my first year of teaching. "For the first three

MARGARET METZGER has been a teacher at Brookline (Mass.) High School for 25 years.

years of teaching, new teachers should pay the schools for the privilege of practicing on the children. If you struggle enough, you'll get better."

You are struggling to improve. I watch you searching for the perfect assignment, the perfect classroom activity, the perfect lesson plan. Perhaps you are looking for answers in the wrong places. Instead of seeking just the right tidbit of knowledge or pedagogy, I suggest that you look at the larger picture. Think about what it means to be educated.

It seems to me that the missing ingredient in the lessons you teach is the subtle and explicit message that education is important. Students must

be dedicated to their own growth, enthusiastic about academic work, and willing to take intellectual risks.

You must convince adolescents that being educated will enhance their lives. Students need to know, believe, and accept the idea that what they are doing is important. They are becoming educated adults; they are not just playing school. Christine, I know that you value your own education. You enjoy your intellectual life. You are in this profession because you believe that education matters. Now you must convey those values to the students.

My colleague Liz Kean teases me about how I convey the importance of education to my students. "Kids think

your class is the most important event since the discovery of ice cream," she says. "You insist that what they are doing is important, that it matters in the great scheme of the universe. Even during routine work, you call in the cosmos."

I have never seen the concept of "calling in the cosmos" addressed in the research literature on teaching. Perhaps the ideal is too lofty or too unquantifiable to be included in teaching theory. Still, all the outstanding teachers I have known at Brookline High School, at Harvard, and at Brown University regularly "call in the cosmos," even if they would never use this silly term.

Strong teachers convey to their students a passion for a particular discipline, theory, or idea. But these teachers go beyond their own enthusiasm for the subject: they convince their students that learning has intrinsic value. When you are in their classes, you believe that the material matters.

Let me give you a concrete example of calling in the cosmos. Please remember that I developed this lesson after a decade of teaching. I want you to think about calling in the cosmos as an ideal, not as a requirement for a new teacher. When you first begin to teach, you can barely think about yourself, the students, and the material simultaneously, much less the cosmos. This sample is meant only to clarify the concept not to intimidate you.

On the first day of some literature classes, I hand out a copy of Plato's "Parable of the Cave" (sometimes called "The Allegory of the Cave"). We read it, diagram it on the board so that everyone understands where the characters are standing in relation to one another, and then act it out (complete with bicycle chains and a candle on a desk to represent the fire). This makes for a dramatic beginning, but the most important part of the lesson is my introduction.

I say to the class, "I am giving you this reading as an intellectual gift, in honor of the work that we will do together this year. I first read Plato when I was your age, more than 35 years ago. As a high school sophomore, I wrote a paper on 'The Parable' – and received, to my delight, an A. So when my college professor passed out 'The Parable,' I smugly assumed that I understood it. Yet when I reread Plato's work, I realized that I had changed my mind in three years and now understood it in a new way. I wrote another paper and again did well.

"I have been reading 'The Parable,' every year of my life, and I keep changing my mind about its meaning. It has become a benchmark of my own intellectual growth, at different times. I identify with different characters in the story. More important, I understand that the tale contains a great truth about the world. Things happen in my life, and I say to myself, "Ah, here it is again – a Parable-of-the-Cave experience." I hope that you will think about this reading for years and years and that it will help you understand the world. We will also look for Parable-of-the-Cave experiences in the literature we read this semester. I teach you this work by Plato not as I now understand it, but as an introduction – a first exposure, I hope you receive this reading as a gift."

Sometimes I follow Plato's "Parable" with Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are.* Particularly when I am dealing with stuffy advanced classes, we sit on the floor and I hold the book up as kindergarten teachers do. Then we talk about archetypes and language and imagination. I tell them to watch for Sendak's and Plato's ideas in Homer, Twain, Dante, and Shakespeare.

That first-day introduction contains many elements that I use to "call in the cosmos." Authentic materials in any discipline moves beyond schoolwork to a larger context. I show my students that other authors and ordinary people like me think about literature. I include students in the society of educated people throughout history. Finally, I try for an almost-liturgical tone because I believe that education is a sacred act.

High school teaching requires energy and drama. But flash without substance is mere gimmickry. Therefore, teach what is important. Don't claim that something is important if it isn't. Be truthful with students about whether you are required to teach particular material or whether that material will lead to more interesting ideas.

You can always call in the cosmos simply by telling students the "big reasons" for learning. Why do we learn to write? To gain personal and academic power. We need to be able to write a college essay, to complete an insurance form, to compose a love letter. Why do we learn to read literature? To enlarge our puny vistas. Literature shows us other people, other cultures, other times and ideas. Why should we educate ourselves? Tell your students about Seneca, who believed that education should produce a free people who are responsible for their own thinking and can examine their own world critically.

Emphasize *how* to learn, rather than *what* to learn. Students may never need to know a particular fact, but they will always need to know how to learn. Teach students how to read with genuine comprehension, how to shape an idea, how to master difficult materials, how to use writing to clarify their thinking. A former student, Anastasia Koniaris, wrote to me: "Your class was like a hardware store. All the tools were there. Years later I'm still using that hardware store that's up there in my head. At Harvard they just tell us to learn stuff, they never stop and explain how to learn anything." Empower your students to learn.

Empowering students is not just a faddish notion. Include students in the process of teaching and learning. Every day ask such basic questions as: What did you think of this homework? Did it help you learn the material? Was the assignment too long or too short? How can we make the next assignment more interesting? What should the criteria for assessment be? Remember that you want students to take ownership of their learning.

For every assignment, explain the larger purpose. Students are entitled to know why they should do the work, even when it comes to something as insignificant as studying a spelling list. "You must know how to spell correctly because people who can spell make judgments about those who can't. Spellers think correct spelling is an indication of intelligence and character. I don't want anyone else to assume you aren't intelligent just because you can't spell. So, let's learn these blasted words. Not all learning is fun or even interesting; sometimes we just have to memorize."

Explain common knowledge. High school students need guidance regarding academic and cultural conventions. For example, they need to know that it is not appropriate to call Thoreau "Henry," that educated people recognize the name Hamlet, that footnotes are done in a certain fashion, that in the U.S. it is a sign of respect to look the teacher in the eye.

Although the curriculum is important, students are most fascinated with one another. Instead of deploring peer pressure, try to establish a community of learners. Despite the high school's emphasis on individual learning, much success in adulthood depends on the ability to work with others. Students must respect one another's intellectual and cultural differences. Students must learn to work collaboratively, to accept editing from peers, to discuss various ways of solving a problem, to share both their knowledge and their confusion. Adolescents, like all of us, hunger for exciting work within a community.

You, too, are a member of the community of learners. Do your own assignments. Talk to students, about the things you've been reading. Show students drafts of your writing. Promise not to bore your students by giving them busywork or by wasting class time; in return, expect students to teach you by writing interesting papers, and giving you new insights into life and literature.

Students want to be part of a classroom community, but they also want to be part of the larger community. Much of high school seems disconnected from real life and thus irrelevant to them. Whenever possible – and I hope you're able to do this far more frequently than I have ever managed – connect classroom learning to the outside world.

During my first semester of teaching, a particularly recalcitrant student refused to learn any grammar or mechanics, and his writing was unreadable. At the end of the course, I asked my students to write to their elementary school principals to arrange visits to their former schools. The boy demanded that I proofread and fix his letter. "Why?" I asked. "You've never cared about correctness."

"I know," he replied, "but if it's full of mistakes my old principal will think

that I'm dumb, and maybe he won't let me visit."

"Okay," I said. "Now you're ready to learn mechanics." He did.

> *Like parenting, teaching makes us humble. There is only so much a teacher can do.*

Despite all your best intentions and hardest work, Christine, in the end the students must decide whether they are ready to give up ignorance and take the scary step into knowledge. Like parenting, teaching makes us humble. There is only so much a teacher can do. A teacher can present learning experiences, but each student must ultimately take responsibility for becoming educated.

A former student, Chris Hummel, told me that when he read Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail,* he decided to become educated. Chris described his thinking in this way: "So this is what it means to be well-educated. King sat in a jail, and all those references and quotes were right at his fingertips. He could see his predicament in larger terms because he had read all those authors. I want to have a mind like that."

Keep providing opportunities to think and good role models. Challenge students to think carefully about their assumptions by giving them interesting materials, questions, and alternatives. Don't just call in the cosmos, but question it.

Useful research has been conducted lately on learning styles and frames of intelligence. Read that research. The basic axiom to keep in mind is that students should think for themselves. Your job is to teach them how to think and to give them the necessary tools. Your students will be endlessly amazed at how intelligent they are; you do not need to show them how intelligent you are.

Calling in the cosmos means asking the big questions. Be careful though, not to stereotype students' lives. Adolescents are prickly about condescension. Do not ask them

questions that you would not ask an adult: What was the most embarrassing moment? How do you deal with family problems? Instead, ask students about issues that arise out of literature: When is it necessary to surrender? What is the use of solitude? How does language reveal character? What is the difference between forgiving and forgetting?

Even your least academic students want to discuss big ideas; you just need to explain the ideas more simply. Do not water down material for less academic students. They need more rigorous teaching, not less, because they are behind.

Every day, make thorough and precise lesson plans. But remember that you can always abandon your plans to take advantage of the teachable moment. Once my class was reading *King Lear,* and a thunderstorm crashed down just as we encountered the lines: "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks. Rage, blow." I took the students outside, and we screamed Lear's lines into the storm. I love moments like that!

For the final calling in of the cosmos, I help students envision their own futures. During the last week in all my classes, my students write letters to themselves that I mail to them 10 years later. They can write about whatever they wish; predictions for the future, accounts of daily life, a list of friends. I suggest that they write down the most important knowledge that they possess. "What do you know that, if you didn't know it, would make you someone else?" Then I read a few letters that former students have written to me after they have received their 10-year-old letters.

This assignment affirms that students have important things to say at this stage of their lives – things that they will want to know 10 years from now. I am affirming the importance of the examined life.

Christine, as a beginning teacher you cannot reach all these goals right away. Even my most benign suggestions are fraught with dangers. For example, it sounds easy enough to explain to students why they ought to do something. But brand-new teachers often have no idea why they are doing something – beyond the fact that they have 180 days to fill. It takes a long time for teachers to develop the

philosophical underpinnings for everything they do in the classroom.

Teaching thinking, creating communities, and engaging students in their own education are standards I have set for myself. But I teach. I keep raising my standards. Joseph McDonald, a professor at Brown University, helped me to clarify my thinking of standards as ultimate goals; he suggested that I think of them as the banners held by the standard bearers at the head of an army. You never quite reach them, but they tell you where you are going, and they lead you forward.

You are not going into battle (though on some days teaching seems so). You are going into joy. For when you teach well, when classes sing, you will feel great jubilation. Treat your students as adults, walk beside them as they educate themselves, and they will respond with respect – even joy. They will lead you. I wish you a good journey.

Sincerely,
Margaret Metzger

II. CONTROLLING THE WORKLOAD

Dear Christine,

I am a little worried about you. As we enter your seventh week of student teaching, you seem overwhelmed with all the things you have to do; study for three academic courses, send out resumes, write lesson plans for two classes, keep track of overdue assignments from 50 freshmen, phone parents, prepare for the next unit (*on The Odyssey*), reschedule for snow days, and correct all the study guides from *Twelfth Night*.

No wonder you feel exhausted. You are not doing anything wrong; the problem is with the task of teaching, not with you. You are working with 25 adolescents each hour. When people imply that teaching is easy, I ask them whether they have ever lived with one or two teenagers – and then to imagine more than a hundred a day!

I need to talk to you about establishing good teaching habits so that you can get the workload under control. Of course, in the early years of teaching you must expect to put in hours and hours of time. You would

invest similarly long hours if you were an intern in medical school or an associate in a law firm. Like other professionals, teachers work much longer hours than outsiders know.

Kathy Brott, a former teacher who decided to go to law school, once told me. "Margaret, I'm going to let you in on one of the great secrets of this society. Take a vacation; go to law school. After teaching public high school, it's a breeze." I'm sure she exaggerated, but her sentiment echoed comments from other teacher who have left the profession, made lots of money doing something else, and sworn they would never return to the classroom because teaching and its working conditions are just too demanding. The truth is that most good teachers feel exhausted most of the time.

For an English teacher, a major cause of exhaustion is the paperwork. You must control the time you spend on grading papers. You are now spending 40 minutes on each essay. That is too much time, even during student teaching when you are dealing with only 50 students. You can't spend that kind of time when you teach a full load in a public school. I have seen too many excellent English teachers leave the profession because they could not control the paperwork.

I was lucky. During my first semester of teaching, I took a course with Donald Murray, one of the gurus of the teaching of writing. I must have looked very young and very frazzled, because he called me to his desk after the second class and said, "I assume you are a new teacher. Are you working too hard?" Almost in tears, I admitted that I was working 90-hour weeks. He glanced at my shiny new wedding ring and commented, "I bet you don't spend enough time with your new husband. When was the last time you took a walk or went to the movies?" I confessed that we hadn't done either since school started; all I did was grade papers for my 140 students. He said, "I'll bet you are covering the papers with red ink. Come back next week, and I'll show you how to grade papers quickly. You need to maintain a life."

Donald Murray was a man of his word. He taught me to diagnose one problem at a time in students' papers. I'm sure he does not remember me, but

I will be grateful for the rest of my life for his generosity and practical advice. I suggest that you read *A Writer Teaches Writing* for his suggestions about how to comment on papers. They are words from a master.

Though I started with Murray's advice, I eventually developed my own techniques. Now I can grade almost any paper in less than five minutes, a performance that my colleagues either disdain or envy. Many teachers write long, eloquent responses to student paper, I admit that. But I cannot tolerate stacks of papers cluttering my desk. So I write only one long paragraph of response and evaluation per paper, and I return all papers the day after I have collected them. Students appreciate the quick feedback, but that is not the reason I do this. I do it for myself.

During my first year of teaching, my department chair, Kib Culley, repeatedly muttered one phrase to me: "You work too hard: you work too hard." Late one afternoon he found me in the school library looking up background information on Hawthorne. He began his conversation with the usual refrain. "You work too hard," and then he added. "Who should b doing this work? Who needs practice presenting information in front of a group? You already know how to gather, synthesize, and present material. Your students don't. Make them do the work. You work too hard."

Although I knew Mr. Culley was right. I found it difficult to turn over to my students the responsibility for learning. Then I noticed a disturbing pattern at the end of each of my classes. I would slump at my desk, exhausted from disciplining and teaching for 50 minutes. But my teenage charges would leap up from their seats full of energy, shouting and laughing as they tumbled into the hallway. They had just spent the hour watching me do the work. The dynamic had to change.

What could the students do? They could do research in the library. They could teach one another grammar and mechanics; they could write their own academic deficiency reports to their parents; they could make up study guides based on my samples; they could be far more active during class.

The inevitable happened. As I gave students more control and responsibility in the classroom, they responded with enthusiasm and cooperation. They were tire of just sitting and watching me work. They wanted to put all that adolescent energy to use. At first I just switched the work of the classroom from me to my students. Later I moved the responsibility for thinking from me to them. And the classroom became more intellectually dynamic, full of questions and challenges.

Take elementary teachers as your role models. They keep whole classes engaged, while focusing on how individual students learn. High school and college teachers too often get distracted by content.

Christine, I strongly suggest that you evaluate your lesson plans each night by asking yourself these questions: What could the students do for themselves? Who is doing most of the thinking in this lesson? Who needs practice doing this work?
"You work too hard. You work too hard. Make your students work harder."

Sincerely,
Margaret

III. PLANNING LESSONS

Dear Christine,

Let's go back to the idea of getting the workload under control.

Every day you are creating a whole set of new lessons. Figuring out each night what you are going to do the next day will exhaust you, and the lessons won't hold together very well. Moreover, the effort will eat np all your Sunday afternoons. You don't have to do that. Instead, you can make use of patterns.

Predictable schedules create patterns. For example, in a writing workshop you can have a weekly schedule. On Monday the class refines an assignment you have given them. For Monday's homework, students find a topic. On Tuesday you discuss shaping material, and you give a mini-lesson on some aspect of drafting. That night the students write their first drafts. And so on, until they read their papers aloud on Friday. You return papers on Monday. In reality, the

schedule is never this rigid. But having a general pattern may reduce your planning time.

In a literature class you can always talk about why the book under discussion is difficult to understand. Then you can help students practice appropriate reading comprehension techniques. You can repeat classroom strategies that you and the students find useful. For example, students might regularly write something using a given author's style, or they might regularly hold a Socratic discussion on a short passage from a book. Your organizing concepts, sometimes called the "essential questions," should help shape the discussions.

Remember that we learn through repetition. No one would expect to learn to ski by going down the mountain only once. No one learns to swim by practicing a given stroke only once. Coaches break a skill down into its parts and then demand that athletes practice those parts over and over. Go watch the coaches – or think about your own athletic training.

> *You can control your workload and increase learning by making students more responsible.*

Students should get multiple opportunities to try the same skill or assignment. If students write papers and you respond to them with suggestions for improvement, they should have an opportunity to apply those suggestions. In other words, give every assignment at least twice. If it's a really great assignment you can use it several times with the same group of students.

Develop writing assignments that you can use with more than one class. Most students like to write about a meaningful photograph or an unfair event. And be sure to create some generic assignments that will apply to many different pieces of literature.

You should also begin to create "trump cards" – short, reliable lessons that can be plugged in anywhere. These fail-proof mini-lessons are useful before vacation or between big

units. However, you cannot build an entire curriculum from trump cards. They are only pieces, not the whole game. Teachers steal trumps from one another, from conferences, from the media, from old files, and from publishing companies.

You should start writing your own trump cards as well. But you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel. Diagnose a problem, figure out a solution, and use it next year. Some years ago I made up lists of wordy sentences and of problems with parallelism, which I took from grammar texts and student papers. I still use the same exercises. I have similar trump cards on grammar, spelling, style, and mechanics.

Whole activities can be trump cards. Every month students should do outside reading. Like most teachers, I don't have time to grade an extra 1,000 papers (that's 100 students reading one book each per month for 10 months). My goal is for students to read more, not for me to grade more – so I devised a simple system. On the first day of each month, the students and I walk in pairs around a local reservoir and talk with each other about the books we've read. Sure, students could cheat and claim they read books when they didn't. I do some checking against cheating, but I don't check much. Almost all students take the opportunity to read whatever they like, and that's good enough for me.

Again, students should be responsible for their own learning. Just as I wrote in my last letter, you can control your own workload and increase student learning by making students more responsible.

You have to keep pushing students out of passivity and into thoughtful responses to assignments. For example, students nag teachers for topics so that they can just fill in the blanks, like following a recipe. You should adamantly refuse all such requests. You can respond, "How should I know what you should write about? I haven't lived your life. I don't know what is in your mind. A big part of writing is figuring out what you have to say and what is worth saying."

Students usually receive lists of suggested topics for papers about literature. Notice how difficult it is for you, Christine, the adult with a

Dartmouth degree, to create a good list. That mental work of finding a topic should be done by the student, not by you. After years of slowly stepping back from assigning topics about literature, I have finally reduced my directions to: "Write something intelligent about this book. Do not summarize the plot, the ideas, or the characters, because your classmates and I have already read the book, and you will bore us. Write your own ideas. Say something intelligent." At first some students fmd the "say something intelligent" assignment intimidating. By the end of the year, however, they often refuse to do any other kind of assignment.

My most successful instruction for revision is also deceptively simple. Eudora Welty once said, "The trouble with bad student writing is the trouble with all bad writing. It does not tell the truth." So I tell students, "Find the paper that meant the most to you so far. Now revise the paper by telling more of the truth. Get as close to the truth as you dare."

Notice that these assignments put the burden of thinking where it belongs – on the student. Remember the overarching concept: students should be working more. Good luck.

With respect,
Margaret

IV. TAKING CARE OF
YOURSELF

Dear Christine,

As you have begun to notice, some problems repeat themselves endlessly. This is probably true in all fields of work. As Annie Dillard observed about a bumbling church service, "You would think after 2,000 years, we could work the kinks out." We've been doing schools for centuries, and we still haven't worked out the kinks.

As soon as you see a repeating problem, think of a policy that is fair both to you and to the student. Just to help you along, here are a few inevitable problems: absenteeism, late papers, careless proofreading, missing homework, cheating, record-keeping. What happens when one group finishes group work before the other? How can you maintain discipline while you hold individual conferences?

You will exhaust yourself if you try to think of a solution to each problem individually. Your first year of teaching will be such a whirlwind that you won't be able to step aside and calmly write policy statements. You will barely survive. But notice what bothers you most or what is most easily solved, and write the polices covering those problems over the summer. Knock off the problems one at a time. Don't spend a lifetime complaining about the same issues.

Consider your own needs when you make the rules. As a new teacher, you should not make too many rules, because you don't know which ones you can actually enforce. Enforcing rules is a lot harder than it sounds. It takes consistency and time – which you don't have, remember?

Consider your own limitations as you write curriculum. Exactly how much can you manage at once? You should read Grant Wiggins' article, "The Futility of Trying to Teach Everything of Importance," in the November 1989 *Educational Leadership.* Just the title is helpful. Every class doesn't have to do everything. Keep yourself focused. You want substance, not gimmickry; depth, not breadth.

Christine, no teacher can implement every educationally solid idea in his or her classroom. I admire every teacher who assigns and evaluates reading response journals or portfolios. But I just can't do it, I grade 50 major essays every week of my life; if I do more than that, I get cranky. Only in August am I the perfect teacher. After that, it's one failure after another.

Insist on your own rights in the classroom. What do you need in order to maintain your own life and sanity? Although I hate dealing with late papers, my students may turn in one paper per quarter that is two school days late. I don't even want to hear the excuse, unless it is hysterically funny. My students receive no penalty for the first late paper. However, in exchange for the extra time that they get for the writing, I must get extra time as well. Otherwise, I will resent late papers. Thus I do not write a comment on any late paper; I merely give the paper a holistic letter grade. Late students get extra time, and so do I.

Here are four final bits of advice. I've failed at all of them for years –

except the last one, which has kept me sane. When I follow my own advice, my teaching life feels happier.

1. Sign up for season tickets to cultural events: otherwise you'll think you are too tired to attend anything. Schedule regular social events with friends, even if it's only lunch in the cafeteria every week with your two favorite colleagues in the school.

2. Hunt for a place to work. Some schools spill over with technology, while others have no telephones or copying machines for teachers. Many schools don't provide desk space for teachers. Beg for some space in the school for yourself, even if it's an old closet. Try to get your own classroom. Moving all your belongings every 50 minutes will make you crazy. Imagine any office worker changing desks every hour!

3. Try to stay out of petty politics. There is more squabbling in schools than you can imagine. You'll learn self-preservation after you get burned a few times. I made every mistake possible in this area.

4. Find a friend with a sense of humor. Schools are full of chaos and drama, and not much of it makes sense. You need at least one friend who can laugh with you about the absurdity of schools – particularly faculty meetings.

You have done admirable work as a student teacher, and you have the potential to become an excellent teacher. My only concern is that you will exhaust yourself before you begin. Naturally, you will work very hard as you learn the craft. As always, your primary goal is teaching well – but a secondary goal is controlling the workload. You deserve a life of your own.

As Donald Murray told me, you cannot be a good teacher unless you are reading books, going to the movies, spending time alone, and maintaining a life. In order to give to others you must take care of yourself. Teachers who generously support other people's growth also need to nurture themselves. Take care of yourself.

Love,
Margaret

Keeping New Teachers in Mind

Susan Moore Johnson and Susan M. Kardos

Research from the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers reveals the importance of site-based, ongoing, rich teacher collaboration across experience levels for effective new teacher induction.

The beginning was awful, Laura recalled, describing her first days of teaching science in an inner-city middle school. She hadn't begun with high expectations for professional support:

I assumed that the teachers would be unsupportive, sort of that sink-or-swim mentality... I assumed that I was all on my own, and that it was me or nothing.

Yet she was still surprised by the lack of organized induction. When she attended the district's orientation meeting for all new teachers, she found nothing there to help her begin her work as a classroom teacher. A day had been set aside when "we were supposed to come to our schools and get oriented," but Laura's principal "didn't do anything." In fact, Laura only learned which classes she would teach when she received the schedule at a faculty meeting the day before school started.

In an effort to understand new teachers' experiences and determine best practices in teacher recruitment, support, and retention, the Project on the Next Generation of teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education is conducting a five-year, qualitative study of 50 new Massachusetts teachers.[1] Results from the first phase of the study, in which Project staff interviewed first- and second-year teachers in diverse school settings, indicate that, unfortunately, Laura's experience is not unusual.

Esther, a former engineer in the space industry, came to teaching through an alternative certification program. She described her district's orientation program for new teachers as "an indoctrination to the district, to the union. We got all that stuff. They talked about benefits and health care." But at her school site – where she would succeed or fail with her students – there was nothing: "Here it's pretty much, 'There's your classroom. Here's your book. Good luck.'"

Robert was similarly dismayed as he prepared for the opening of school and his first day as a new teacher. He had come to teaching after 30 years as a lawyer, having recently earned a master's degree and teaching certificate from a traditional teacher education program. When he was informed about the school's formal orientation meetings, he thought, "Wonderful. They'll introduce me to everything. I'll know what's going on." He had hoped to learn about the school, his colleagues, the school's technology, and anything else he might need to know to do his job well. Instead, he said he got "none of that," only a series of meetings about general topics, without any focus on "the way [this school] actually does things." He said flatly that it was "a joke."

Some new teachers were warmly welcomed in their schools, introduced to their colleagues, and provided with information about the classes that they would teach. Very few, however, were engaged in discussions about the pressing, school-specific questions of curriculum, instruction, and classroom management that most concern new teachers: What is expected of them at this school? What can they expect from their students?

Which teaching strategies work? Which don't? What curriculum and books should they use? How should they organize their classrooms or their grade books? How will they know if their students are learning what they're trying to teach? Laura was assigned a mentor who might have helped her answer such questions over time. He taught a different grade and subject, however, and they met "zero time." Many new teachers in our study went through their first months of school believing that they should already know how their schools work, what their students need, and how to teach well. When they had questions about their schools and their students, they eavesdropped on lunchroom conversations and peered through classroom doors seeking clues to expert practice. Having no access to clear answers or alternative models compromised the quality of their teaching, challenged their sense of professional competence, and ultimately caused them to question their choice of teaching as a career.

Wanted: School-Based Professional Development
Unfortunately, the mismatch between the needs of these new teachers and the support they received reflects the experiences of countless new teachers across the United States. The questions and uncertainty that new teachers bring to school require far more than orientation meetings, a mentor in the building, directions to the supply closet, and a written copy of the school's discipline policy. What new teachers want in their induction is experienced colleagues who will take their daily dilemmas seriously, watch them teach and provide feedback, help them develop instructional strategies, model skilled teaching, and share insights about students' work ad lives. What new teachers need is sustained, school-based professional development – guided by expert colleagues, responsive to their teaching, and continual throughout their early years in the classroom. Principals and teacher leaders have the largest roles to play in fostering such experiences.

Diverse Paths to Teaching
The variety in backgrounds of today's new teachers increases the importance of providing useful and sustained professional development at the school site. The current teacher shortage and changes in certification requirements in many states have led schools to hire teachers with varying degrees of preparation. Many novices have completed traditional teacher education programs that include extensive coursework and student teaching. Some have completed full-year internships with master teachers in professional development schools. Still others are entering teaching through alternative certification programs that have only a summer component, which includes both coursework and practice teaching. Finally, an increasing number of entrants with no preparation at all take on full-time teaching assignments with emergency certificates.
The new teachers in our study who attended only summer preparation components reported feeling unprepared to teach, but they were not alone in their expressed need for ongoing school-site induction and support. We found that the daily, complicated demands of teaching left even those teachers who had extensive preservice training wanting more. They yearned for school-site support and professional development as they chose and adapted curriculums, planned and implemented lessons, and managed classrooms.
New teachers also enter the field at different points in their professional careers. The current cohort of new teachers includes the 22-year-olds entering teaching as a first career and the mid-career switchers who have left what they found to be unfulfilling work in such careers as sales, law, or engineering. Our survey of a random sample of new teachers in New Jersey indicated that 46 percent were career changers who were, on average, 35 years old. We also found that, in New Jersey, more mid-career entrants then first-career teachers came to teaching through such abbreviated routes as alternative certification programs. These mid-career switchers often bring to the classroom strong subject-matter competence and mature job skills, but they lack knowledge about and experience with students, curriculum, pedagogy, and the daily routines of schools.

The Importance of a School's Professional Culture
Most of the new teachers we interviewed hoped to find support and guidance in their schools, but some were

more fortunate than others in entering environments that addressed their needs. To learn about the assistance they receive, we asked teachers about their interactions with their colleagues and their principals. When did they meet? What did they talk about? Where did they go for help or ideas about what to teach? Did they have a mentor? If so, how often did they interact, and what did they discuss with the mentor? Had someone observed them teach, and did they receive helpful feedback? As our respondents described their interactions with colleagues in their schools, clusters, departments, or teams, three types of professional culture emerged.

Veteran-Oriented Professional Cultures

Some teachers found themselves in what we called *veteran-oriented professional cultures,* where the modes and norms of professional practice are determined by and aimed to serve veteran faculty members. According to the new teachers, these schools, or subunits within schools, typically had a high proportion of veteran teachers with well-established, independent patterns of work. Sometimes collegial inter-actions were cordial in such settings; sometimes they were cold.

Regardless of the type of teacher interaction, these schools were not organized to engage new teachers or to acquaint them with expert practice. New teachers who experienced veteran-oriented cultures in their schools generally remained on the margins, without induction into the professional life of the school. Respondents often said that veteran teachers were highly skilled, but new teachers, who might work across the hall from those veterans, had no access to that expertise.

Such was 22-year-old Katie's experience in her new elementary school. She was clear about what she thought would be "the best kind of support for a first-year teacher":

Someone to meet with regularly to just talk about anything and everything, what's going on in your room; someone who can come in and observe you and make practical suggestions.

Katie found herself isolated from her veteran colleagues, who seemed to know how to teach. Despite the high skill and good intentions of her first mentor, Katie did not get what she knew she needed:

I'm very isolated from her... I met with her a few times and I was always welcome to go in her room and take a look at her materials and borrow anything that she had. But she just didn't have the time to come in and observe me and really talk with me practically about the things that I could do in here.

Novice-Oriented Professional Cultures

Other new teachers described working in what we labeled *novice-oriented professional cultures,* where youth, inexperience, and idealism prevailed. These school sites generally included two types of schools: start-up charter schools staffed largely with new recruits, many of whom had no formal preparation as teachers, and urban schools that were poorly organized or in disrepair and, thus, repeatedly experienced high turnover as teachers left for better work settings. In these schools, with so many new teachers, there existed an abundance of energy and vigorous commitment – but little professional guidance about how to teach. Gwen, a 23-year-old novice, taught in an urban school where, in her first year, most of her colleagues were close to her age and also new teachers:

So it was really difficult last year. And there was no set way of doing things. Everything was just kind of up in the air. It was chaos.

She and her colleagues had no access to experienced teachers to guide them in their difficult work. Although she acknowledged that things began to get better in her second year, she explained that, in her first year, "we felt like we were just kind of drifting along in our own little boat."

Integrated Professional Cultures

Finally, there were teachers who were fortunate to begin their teaching careers in what we called *integrated professional cultures.* These schools, or subunits within schools, encourage ongoing professional exchange across experience levels and sustained support and development for all teachers. Such schools did not endorse separate camps of veterans and novices; rather, teamwork and camaraderie distinguished these work settings. New teachers in schools with integrated professional cultures believed that their expert colleagues not only understood the importance of mentoring but also benefitted from the mentoring relationship. New teachers who found themselves in such schools seemed to be better served – and, thus, more able to serve their students. In addition, initial evidence from our longitudinal study suggests that new teachers working in settings with integrated professional cultures remained in their schools and in public school teaching in higher proportions than did their counter-parts in veteran-oriented or novice-oriented professional cultures. In other words, the professional culture of schools may well affect teacher retention over the long term.

Laura had been assigned to work with a cluster of 7th grade teachers who served 110 students. Working together, that cluster of teachers developed an integrated professional culture. The school schedule provided a daily block of time when they could meet to discuss their students and coordinate what they would teach and how they would teach it. Laura's new colleagues in the cluster had 4-14 years of experience, and, fortunately for her, they were eager to share what they knew. After the second week of school, when two of her colleagues saw Laura in tears after she had walked students out at the end of the day,

They circled me and brought me up [to the classroom]... They said, "OK, this is what you have to do." And that's when [my cluster leader] taught two of my classes... They took me under their wings and just said, "OK, here are some very specific things you can do."

The cluster leader, who taught in the room next to Laura's, had just been certified as an accomplished teacher by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. When she realized that Laura's mentoring experience was inadequate, she stepped in, meeting with Laura daily at lunch, watching her teach, and modeling effective classroom management strategies.

Laura credits her colleagues in the cluster with helping her gain the skills and confidence to continue teaching:

Without them, I wouldn't be here. There is no way. I wouldn't have survived... After the first three days of school, I couldn't see how it could ever work.
At the end of the first semester, she reported, "I feel supported, and I feel like people listen to my ideas."

The Importance of Organized Support

Neither conventional inservice training, with its intermittent after-school sessions dealing with such generic issues as student services or assessment policies, nor the periodic visits of the school district's curriculum coordinators or academic coaches to new teachers' classrooms are enough to meet teachers' ongoing needs. Laura received more than just moral support from her colleagues: Structures were in place that enabled the teachers in her cluster to plan lessons and discuss students together, to visit one another's classes, and to hone their teaching skills together.

On-Site and On-Time Professional Development

Schools must provide new teachers with on-site professional development and make sure that new teachers have access to help on short notice when a lesson goes awry, a student is not responding to the new teacher's repertoire of teaching strategies, or a parent requires an immediate conference. New teachers need mentors who have time to observe and offer advice or a small team of colleagues that they can convene for help on short notice.

Effective Principals
New teachers who found themselves in integrated professional cultures described their principals as visibly engaged in both the daily life of the school and the professional work of the teachers. These principals focused on the improvement of teaching and learning, visited classrooms, and provided feedback. They arranged school schedules so that expert teachers could teach model lessons or meet with new teachers one-on-one or in small groups. They helped teachers prioritize professional goals, recommended conferences or institutes that teachers might attend, and cultivated a professional culture in which teachers were collectively responsible for student and teacher learning.

Teacher Leaders
The practical, ongoing support that new teachers received from experienced colleagues in integrated cultures indicates that teacher leaders also have crucial roles to play. For example, veteran teachers might serve as mentoring coordinators, model teachers, team leaders, and in-class coaches. Schools can draw on the expertise and leadership of teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as Laura's school did.

New teachers flourish in an integrated professional culture that encourages teacher collaboration across experience levels, but veteran teachers also benefit from such professional exchange. In addition to the obvious rewards of mentoring for both parties, new teachers often possess skills – such as integrating technology into the curriculum or interpreting data from standards-based assessments – that veteran teachers need. Schools that gear professional development to both the ongoing induction of new teachers and the continual renewal of veteran teachers serve all educators well – thus enabling them to serve all their students well.

Endnote

1 The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at the Harvard graduate School of Education addresses issues related to attracting, supporting, and retaining new teachers. Directed by Susan Moore Johnson and funded by the Spencer Foundation, the Project team also includes Sarah Birkeland, Susan M. Kardos, David Kauffman, Edward Liu, and Heather G. Peske. For more information about the Project, please visit www.gse.harvard,edu/~ngt. For a full account of the Project study, see S. M. Kardos, S. M. Johnson, H. G. Peske, D. Kauffman, and E. Liu, "Counting on Colleagues: New Teachers Encounter the Professional Culture of Their Schools" (*Educational Administration Quarterly,* April 2001).

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Forming and Benefiting from Educator Study Groups

Leah M. Herner • Kyle Higgins

- **On-site experts**
- **Change process**
- **Collegiality**
- **Ownership**
- **Small groups**
- **Synergy**
- **Leadership**
- **Voice**
- **Collaboration**
- **Improvement**
- **Dialogue**

Teachers, librarians, principals, and other educators are increasingly enjoying the benefits of small-group professional development, as the preceding terms suggest. And students are benefiting, including exceptional students. The idea of forming study groups is not new (see box, "What Does the Literature Say"); what is new is the direct link to professional development and school improvement. What people have called "collegial collaboration," "action research," "mentoring," and "leadership development" comes together in ways that count for students.

This article examiners educator study groups from many angles and provides guidelines and illuminating examples. First, examining the benefits of study groups – and concerns surrounding them – can help teachers find their way in forming such groups.

Formation of Educator Study Groups

Members create groups around common interests.
Groups decide what they will study and assign tasks within the group.
The leader acquires materials and helps the group gather information.
Members set up meeting times.
Members hold meetings and share with the group.
Members share information with those not in the group.
Members report progress to the administrator.
Final products are presented.
Group evaluates the study group process and the group product.

Benefits of Study Groups

Before participants embark on the process of forming educator study groups, they need to have a clear picture of the benefits surrounding the process. If those involved do not perceive the benefits of the educator study group, there will be no "ownership" and thus little, if any, participation in the group (Murphy, 1992).

Schools and professionals experience many intertwining benefits when they form educator study groups. The most obvious of these is the enhancement of a collegial environment (Ellis, 1993). Staff members have an opportunity to share in the discovery and use of research-based information. A dialogue

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In schools with study groups, educators become less dependent on professionals outside of the school and begin to rely on their own staff for expert opinions.

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develops that is specific to techniques and practices and will extend and expand the general sharing that occurs in the teachers' lounge or in the hallways of a school. As the group gains confidence in their work, they come to realize that what they learn is important and begin to share it with others outside the group or school (McDonald, 1986). Thus, members become less dependent professionals outside of the school and begin to rely on their own staff for expert opinion (Kincheloe, 1991). Educators become the on-site experts in their school that results in professional mentoring on a daily basis rather than just occasionally at school inservices or in university coursework. Walking down the hall to ask for information or advice is much easier than making a phone call and waiting for the call to be returned.

When discussing successful teacher study groups, Birchak et

al. (1998) described their experiences with setting goals and running study groups in Montana. The members of the groups showed a well-organized plan and were pleased with the results. Educators also become active readers of research-based information. McDonald (1986) described the results of a group of high school teachers who formed a collegial study group. These teachers reflected on many benefits of educator study groups, including the finding that their voices were important to the school and university researchers. As Brennan and Simpson (1993) found, research-based interventions may help an educator to achieve success in problem areas of difficulty in the classroom. From research, the teacher can learn how to structure instruction, discipline, or the environment. Rather than isolating themselves and trying to reinvent the wheel, individual teachers can see how other teachers and schools effected change, as illustrated in the literature (Griffin, 1983).

Concerns About Study Groups

Educators who explore establishing study groups should be aware of problems that might impede the functioning of the groups. These problems should not stop the formation of study groups, but should be considered in the early stages of group formation to enable a group to function at its full potential. Organizers need to be aware of conditions that may inhibit participation. Sometimes administrators view the study group as a method of staff evaluation (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). School administrators must understand that the use of

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Educators need to feel "ownership" of study groups if their work is to be effective.

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groups in this manner leads to a lack of collegiality and may result in a less effective group (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). Administrative support is imperative to the success of study groups. Without support, group members may feel that their work is not valued; and they may disband. All educators in the school also must understand the role and function of the study group. The concept of study groups and the role the group plays in schoolwide professional development must be supported by all at the school level. A vocal group of teachers in opposition to the process may jeopardize the entire program (Dana, 1995).

The success of study groups in one area (e.g., behavior management) may allow other areas or problems that need to be addressed by the school to surface (Glickman, 1990). All involved should be aware that study groups may not be a one-time activity, but may become an integral factor in school improvement and staff development.

Types of Educator Groups

Although study groups do not have to encompass the entire school to be successful, this is often the most beneficial approach. A schoolwide series of study groups can address many issues simultaneously and provide educators an opportunity to particpate in areas of individual interest or need. The three most common types of study groups are face-to-face groups run by an individual school, professional development groups run in cooperation with a university, and online gorups that can include people from many schools and communitites. Professionals in each school district should choose

the type of study group that meets their specific needs.

Face-to-Face Groups

In a face-to-face study group, members break into groups and help each other find access to research materials and information sources regarding their topic. The members study this area collaboratively for a set number of weeks and then present their findings to the entire staff. Six weeks is the optimal time period for a group to work together to ensure continued interest in the selected topic (Murphy, 1992). Expansion beyond 6 weeks may increase the chance of participants' losing interest in the topic. Members of these groups often become the on-site experts in the area studied and continue to

serve as sources of information and mentors for other educators and each other even after the study group disbands. When faculty members participate in these groups, schools benefit by having continuing resources that other staff members can easily access as they become interested in the topic studied or need the information collected by the group.

Professional Development Schools

Another type of educator study group is the Professional Development School. This program works in cooperation with nearby universities and seeks to create a team approach to learning and implementing current research in the school setting (Brenna & Simpson, 1993). The

What Does the Literature Say About Study Groups?

Professional development is an important tool for the improvement of the skills and attitudes of those who work within the educational setting (Murphy, 1991). The most effective types of professional development provide educators with a voice in their growth and the improvement of their school (Sanacore, 1993). Educator study groups are one method employed to involve educators in shaping their professional development, as well as facilitating the improvement of their school (Anders & Richardson, 1991; Kincheloe, 1991).

Research Plus. Educator study groups involve independent personal study paired with group study in areas of professional interest. This sharing of research and information results in a team of educators who are knowledgeable in many facets of the studied areas. Members of the study groups become the on-site experts in those outside the group as they attempt to incorporate new ideas into practice. This collaborative effort creates an environment that is rich in a variety of research-based knowledge specific to the needs and goals of a school (Brennan & Simpson, 1993). Such efforts also transform tbe school environment into one of teambuilding and mentoring, two effective means of facilitating professional development (Anders & Richardson, 1991; Kincheloe, 1991; Sanacore, 1993).

Definition. Sanacore (1993) defined study groups as a group of educators concerned with a specific idea or issue. Murphy (1991) defined educator study groups as a group that bands together to examine current teaching practices, curriculum development, or academic content. Other researchers view study groups as people working to restructure the workplace, promote collegiality, and become powerful learners (Calkins, 1996; Joyce, Murphy, Showers, & Murphy, 1989; McDonald, 1986).

Collaboration, Not Isolation. The important element of a study group appears to be that a group of educators have the opportunity to unite to research different educational theories, read about how teaching styles affect student learning, or explore effective inclusion practices. Dana (1995) indicated that schoolwide change is often the result of a small group of educators forming a collaborative research study group. This sense of collaboration decreases the sense of isolation that educators often experience (Rosenholtz, 1987). The study group is a venue in which individual educators have a voice in the improvement of the educational experience within their school. Such collaborative efforts help educators feel that they do not have to face the challenges of the change process alone (Ellis, 1993).

program provides more than a one-day, one-shot workshop to the participating school. In a Professional Development School, the university provides a facilitator to help develop and lead the study groups. The Professional Development School often invites parents and community members to be a part of the study group process (Brennan & Simpson, 1993).

Online Groups

Campbell and Tierney (1996) suggest that staff members may use technology such as the Internet to expand the study group beyond one school or community. E-mail and educational listservs can be in incorporated into study groups to facilitate communication among members or expand the group beyond the school boundaries. Listservs provide a forum through which members of the study group have the opportunity to pose questions to others concerned with the same topic and receive a reply. This allows the group to gather reactions from other educators and use the new information to enhance group meetings. Dialogue with professionals outside the school – both general and special educators – provides a fresh perspective and facilitates the formulation of questions that might otherwise never be addressed (see box, "Listserv Software, Sites, and Internet Tools"). Electronic journals and discussion groups help increase the amount of specified information that a person receives. A teacher may choose to subscribe to several electronic journals, read them while online, and then join a discussion group concerned with the same topics. Other members of the same study group can choose to meet in this manner.

Conferences and continuing education classes are also offered online and save the time and expense of traveling and release

Listserv Software, Sites, and Internet Tools
Free and easy listserv set-up.
http://www.makelist.com
Software needed to create an electronic bulletin board.
http://oak.oakland.edu
Freeware program to create listservs.
http://Macjbeta:Macj@leuca.med. cornell.edu/Macjordomo
$400.00 "Letterip" program to create listservs.
http://www.fogcity.com
E-mail list creation.
http://www.findmail.com/index.html
ERIC – a guide to educational research.
http://www.askeric.org
CARL – a corporation created by the Colorado Library System that provides public access to research data-bases.
http://www.carl.org
AREA – The American Educational Research Association, which includes an online registry for educators.
http://www.aera.net/lists/aera-d/old/97-07/0007.html
CEC – The Council for Exceptional Children's Web site, which includes access to publications and research.
http://www.cec.sped.org
discussions concerning gifted and talented programs.
mailto:listserv@listserv.novak.edu
Services to secondary students with disabilities.
mailto:listserv@listserv.acsu.buffalo .edu
Discussions concerned with education of people with disabilities.
mailto:listproc@schoolnet.ca
Internet use in the classroom.
mailto:listproc@ecnet.net
Elementary education.
http://leuca.med.cornell.edu/ macjoromo

time from work. The conferences are also not limited to a set number of days, so participants can continue to review a presentation days after it was originally posted. Study group participants can choose lectures that fit their topic, review them at a convenient time, and then discuss their salient points online.

Forming Educator Study Groups

Before implementing study groups in the school environment, faculties should consider who will be involved, who will serve as facilitators, and what resources and funding will be available. Addressing these issues early in the process will result in an organized approach to group formation and increase the probability of group success.

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Administrative support is imperative to the success of study groups.

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People Involved

One of the most important components of the study group process is the support of the school administration. The best way the administrator can facilitate the process is to become an equal and active member of the group. For example, the administrator may be interested in joining a group concerned with inclusion practices. Administrators working with other educators on the latest research concerned with inclusion may facilitate creation of a program collaboratively within the school that benefits all involved. Administrators are like any staff member during the process of forming a study group; that is, they may have an opportunity to be part of the leadership team but they also must participate as a member of the study group.

Figure 1. Needs Assessment

1. In what school do you work? _____

2. What is your current position? _____

3. How many years have you worked at this school? _____

4. How many years have you been an educator? _____

5. Please list the 4 most recent experiences you have had with professional development and evaluate them by circling the word that most closely resembles your feelings.

Type of training	Person/Group in charge	Evaluation of the training			
_____	_____	very useful	somewhat useful	slightly useful	not useful
_____	_____	very useful	somewhat useful	slightly useful	not useful
_____	_____	very useful	somewhat useful	slightly useful	not useful
_____	_____	very useful	somewhat useful	slightly useful	not useful

6. Professional organizations you belong to: _____

   _____

7. How many educational conferences have you attended in the last year?   0   1   2   3   4   more

8. What areas of education do you consider to be your areas of expertise? _____

   _____

9. What areas of education do you wish to learn more about? _____

   _____

10. Professional journals you receive: _____

    _____

11. What do you consider your main areas of concern for the school? _____

    _____

12. What do you consider your main areas of concern for your classroom? _____

    _____

School librarians and local university faculty are other important people to enlist in support of study groups. School librarians can help access professional books and journals and provide training in the use of Internet research tools to help gather current information on a topic. University librarians may also be useful for educator study groups in that they have access to a library that is more extensive than the school library. University access may be limited in some districts; but if time and distance allow, a university mentor can be a valuable asset to the study group. The university mentor can provide educators an opportunity to voice their opinions

(Gitlin, 1990), as well as provide invaluable advice concerning the most recent research and information.

Leadership

The people who lead the study group program at each school may vary. In some schools, a staff developer may be responsible for facilitating the organization of the study groups, acquiring materials, monitoring progress, and helping to evaluate the final product. In other schools, the leadership may be rotated among the educators in the school so that all have the opportunity to lead.

The leader of a particular study group may be a teacher who has a strong interest in the topic, one who has the most expertise in the area to be studied, or someone who is motivated to volunteer. A group leader who is motivated and who can motivate others in the group to do their work is an asset to any study group. Staff will feel a real sense of empowerment if they feel they have control at all times (Rosenholtz, 1987).

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In online study groups, dialogue with professionals outside the school – both general and special educators – provides a fresh perspective.

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Needs Assessment

Educators in the school must be involved in the process of topic selection. If the goal is to work in areas of interest or areas of perceived need, then the school needs to conduct a careful examination of needs before the program starts (Allen, 1994). Study groups should be developed in response to a problem or area of interest identified by the educators involved (Griffin, 1983). Figure 1 shows an example of a needs assessment used by an elementary school staff.

Participating faculty, staff, and school administrators work together throughout this process.

If the process is to be successful, and findings of the group are to be considered as potential solutions, everyone involved must take an equal role in the group development and implementation.

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The best way the administrator can facilitate the process is to become an equal and active member of the groups.

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Creation of the Study Groups

Probably the most important first step in forming educator study groups is the actual creation of the groups. Groups function best at six or less participants (Murphy, 1992). Grouping by grade level, subject matter taught, disability area or heterogeneous grouping will depend on personal areas of interest or need and meeting time availability (Murphy, 1992). The needs assessment completed by the faculty will help participants decide on the areas they want to study. Faculty also could brainstorm areas of interest during a group meeting. The group could then post these topics in a place where teachers can see the different ideas and sign up under the topic they prefer. Whatever method used, participants must be in groups investigating areas in which individuals are interested or areas in which they voiced a perceived need. Random assignment to study groups may lead to poorly functioning or a poorly motivated group (Murphy, 1992).

Materials

Acquisition of appropriate materials is important to the success of the groups' work. The need for materials or information may lead members to the school librarian for help in finding professional journals or books. It will facilitate the search for information if the school librarian creates a list of educational journals contained in the school

library, as well as in the local university and public libraries. Lists of materials contained in the district curriculum library also will be beneficial to any groups located in a district.

As the school begins to set up educator study groups, each group will need resource to purchase materials. A variety of sources of funding exist to purchase materials or to subscribe to needed journals. For example, school parent-teacher organizations or the school administrator might provide assistance in locating funding sources.

Creating Organization

To be as effective as possible, group members initially should spend some time planning their agenda. They must consider the location of meetings, the best meeting time for all participants, and the most efficient means of communication among group members. Scheduling meeting times and deadlines for the entire 6 weeks during the first meeting frees discussion time at future meetings. Once the members have decided on logistics, meetings can proceed. Group members need to communicate on a regular, consistent basis. Weekly meetings are best to ensure that all group members are making progress with assigned tasks. Once the groups are settled, members may choose to meet by e-mail or in their electronic chat rooms more than once a week.

Study group members must come prepared to share thoughts and ideas on the research that they are perusing. A few written comments may facilitate sharing of important points during the group's discussion and brainstorming sessions (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). Figure 2 shows a weekly log sheet to be used by an individual group member to keep an ongoing account of his or her work each week. This also may become part of the final product or serve as documentation of

group activities. The leader should help the whole group compile a weekly log of their meeting that contains information from all individual members. Figure 3 shows a weekly log that a group could use. Weekly group logs provide a paper trail of progress being made by the study group. Logs also provide members an opportunity to summarize findings on a weekly basis, making formulation of the final product more efficient process.

The Study Group Leader

The role of the leader/facilitator of the study group is to organize and motivate. In this capacity, the facilitator must communicate on a regular basis with each member of the group, as well as with leaders of other study groups. Members need to feel that the leader is available to help and not to judge. If group members feel threatened by the leader, they will isolate themselves and disguise their real thoughts and feelings, defeating the original purpose of the study group (Ellis, 1993). The leader functions as a facilitator and needs to ascertain why a group may not be proceeding smoothly and what supports are needed to aid the functioning of the group.

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Grouping by grade level, subject matter taught, disability area, or heterogeneous grouping will depend on personal areas of interest or need and meeting time availability.

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Final Product

The final product of a group may not always be as important as the group process experienced by members. Understanding and interpreting educational research can transform the ideas to become useful in daily classroom practice and school administration, such gains in understanding often lead

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Figure 2. Individual Study Group Progress Report

Study group topic _____

Member name _____

Title of the article, book, or material I am reading or reviewing:

_____

My ideas or thoughts about this research: _____

_____

Points I want to present: _____

_____

My level of knowledge has/has not increased due to this source of information. _____

_____

This information could be used in the classroom or school in the following manner: _____

_____

Other thoughts or concerns:_____

Figure 3. Educator Study Group Weekly Report

Group members: _____

Study group topic: _____

Research information we gathered this week: _____

_____

Does the group feel that the information should be shared with the staff? If so, what parts? _____

_____

How would you utilize this information in the classroom or in school?

_____

_____

Thoughts or concerns from group members: _____

_____

to school improvement (Murphy, 1991). Group members should agree on what products will result from their study (e.g., a report, an article, a video), and they should develop the product as they gather information.

Presentation of the final product may occur in many different ways. Members of the group may decide to present their findings at a school or district workshop. They may present findings at an educational conference or publish a school newsletter dedicated to presenting the information gathered by the group. A video demonstrating instructional interventions also may provide staff members with the opportunity to view someone translating information into classroom techniques. If the study group uses the Internet, an appropriate product would be a synthesis of the research they have done, with findings displayed in the listserv or on a Web page. Groups that have worked with a university mentor to gather information could contribute to a presentation given to a university class.

Evaluation

The ultimate goals of a study group are to increase the capacity of the members to communicate on a high level concerning school reform, and to affect what occurs in the school (Forrest, 1991). Through ongoing evaluation of the study group process, the school and group participants have an opportunity to chart the progress of the groups, as well as respond quickly to the needs of groups or individual members.

One method to chart the progress of the study groups is to use a periodic survey. Figure 4 shows a survey used in one school to document the participants' satisfaction with study groups. Study group members are responsible for their weekly logs and self-evaluation logs, but an anonymous survey provides participants the opportunity to

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Figure 4. Staff Survey

Grade Level or Department _____

Study Group Topic: _____

Please circle the number that most closely resembles your feelings.

1. My level of knowledge of my study group's topic is high.   1 2 3 4 5

2. My level of understanding about my topic has increased.   1 2 3 4 5

3. I support the ideas of study groups.   1 2 3 4 5

4. Study groups give me more control over my professional growth.   1 2 3 4 5

5. How many times has your group met this school year?   1 2 3 4 5   other_____

6. How could study groups better meet your needs as a teacher and as a learner? _____

_____

_____

7. What other thoughts and concerns might you like to share?

_____

_____

_____

1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral;

4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

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express concerns they may not want to express to the group as a whole. The survey also provides participants an opportunity to express opinions about all aspects of the study group and to make suggestions for improvement.

Although members initially may be intimidated by the accountability aspects a study group (Murphy, 1991), evaluation affords the opportunity to fix problems as soon as they arise. Accountability efforts also allow participants to be responsible for their group and to show that they have made progress. The evaluation also provides documented results for the leader,

for the administrator, and for group participants.

Final Thoughts

Study groups provide an opportunity for educators to become active seekers of information that is specific to their individual needs and the needs of their students. Thus, study group members are no longer passive recipients of information, but active seekers of knowledge. Now educators have the opportunity to find and share current research and literature within their study group and mentor others within their school, they create a schoolwide synergy that benefits the whole school.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RESOURCES

A Sampling of Recent Resources on Mentoring

Advisor, Teacher, Role Model, Friend (1997) summarizes features common to successful mentoring relationships and habits that are in the best interests of involved parties. Developed for mentoring students in science and engineering, it is widely applicable to mentoring in any field. National Academy Press (NAP). Phone: 888.624.8373; Fax: 202.334.2451, online at: http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=5789

A Better Beginning: Supporting and Mentoring New Teachers (1997) lays out the fundamentals for helping new teachers succeed and includes chapters from educational leaders on identifying what new teachers need, creating induction programs, establishing mentoring relationships, and planning comprehensive teacher support. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Phone: 800.933.2723; Fax: 703.575.5400; Web: http://shop.ascd.org/productdisplay.cfm?productid=199236

Creating A Teacher Mentoring Program (1999) presents issues that policy makers and educators should consider in creating or sustaining mentoring programs. National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE). Phone: 202.822.7840; Fax: 202.822.7779; Web: http://www.nfie.org/publications/mentoring.htm

From Students of Teaching to Teachers of Students: Teacher Induction Around the Pacific Rim (1997) examines teacher induction programs in the 18 economies that border the Pacific Ocean and highlights changing concept and characteristics of mentoring within varying cultures. Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Email: http://books.google.com/books?id=-eWcAAAAMAAJ&q=apec+From+Students+of+Teaching+to+Teachers+of+Students

A Guide to Prepare Support Providers for Work With Beginning Teachers (1996) is a 300+ page training module that addresses the needs of new teachers, and provides profiles of an effective support provides and strategies for supporting new teachers. Prepared by the California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program. Contact National Staff Development Council (NSDC). Phone: 800.727.7288; Fax: 513.523.0638; Web: www.nsdc.org

A Handbook for Reflective Teaching: Designed for the New and Student Teacher (1997) offers support to the beginning teacher by helping teachers critically reflect upon and analyze their own classroom teaching. This handbook is available online at: www.iloveteaching.com/mentor/index.htm

Helping Novices Learn to Teach: Lessons From an Experienced Support Teacher (1992) follows the work of one exemplary support teacher and details how he defines and enacts his role with beginning teachers. This report is available online at: ncrtl.msu.edu/http/reports/html

Learning the Ropes: Urban Teacher Induction Programs and Practices in the United States (1999) is a national study of induction programs and details programs in ten urban school districts. The document describes the many successes of helping new teachers become masters of their craft and provides a comprehensive review of induction literature from 1980 to the present. Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. Phone: 617.489.6000; Fax: 617.489.6005; Web: www.rnt.org

The Mentor Teacher Casebook (1987) is a collection of real-life vignettes useful for role playing and case study activities for training mentor teachers. WestEd Regional Educational Laboratory. Phone: 415.565.3000; Fax: 415.565.3012; Web: www.wested.org

Mentor Teacher's Handbook (1996) gives mentors and those wishing to serve as mentors a comprehensive overview of the subject, how it can be practiced effectively, and criteria for selecting mentors and establishing productive relationships. This handbook is available online at: olympia.gse.uci.edu/doehome/EdResource/Publications/MentorTeachers/Contents/html

Mentoring and Supervision for Teacher Development (1998) synthesizes the fields of instructional supervision, adult development, teacher education and mentoring, and ongoing professional development, and provides a framework based on case studies and research to engage educators in reflective and collaborative professional growth experiences. Addison Wesley Longman, Inc. Phone: 800.922.0579; Web: www.awl.com

Peer Support: Teachers Mentoring Teachers (1998) provides real-life stories which address a variety of mentoring situations from how to set up mentoring programs to creating effective collegial partnerships. National Education Association (NEA). Phone: 200.822.7906; Fax: 202.822.7206 or 202.822.7482: Web: www.nea.org

Take This Job and Love It? Making the Mid-Career Move to Teaching (1998) is a guide for mid-career adults entering into teaching and contains directories and resources for teacher preparation, licensing, and support programs, Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. Phone: 617.489.6000; Fax: 617.489.6005; Web: www.rnt.org

AUDIO | VIDEO

Helping New Teachers Succeed (video and booklet) explores the myths and Realities of the new teacher and mentor roles, and offers strategies for helping new teachers succeed, such as collegial support, coaching, and workshops and seminars. Kappa Delta Pi. Phone: 800.284.3167; Fax: 317.704.2323; Web: www.kdp.org

Issues of Supply and demand: Recruiting and Retaining Quality Teachers (audiotapes and booklet) presents perspectives on issues of teacher recruitment, selection, and induction from personal stories, examples of research and current practices, and comments from nationally-known experts. North Central Regional Educational Laboratories (NCREL). Phone: 800.356.2735; Fax: 630.571.4716; Web: www.ncrel.org

Mentoring to Improve Schools (videos and facilitator's guide) examines the characteristics of mentoring programs, and shows the kinds of mentoring strategies and practices that help ensure a successful mentoring relationship. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASDC). Phone: 800.933.2723; Fax: 703.575.5400; Web: www.ascd.org

Principles for Principals (videos and workshop materials) is an eight-part series exploring issues affecting K-12 education including implementing effective models of professional development for teachers and principals, such as mentoring. The Annenberg/CPB Channel. Phone: 800.532.7637; Web: www.learner.org/channel/workshops/principals

School Stories: The Drive to Teach (video) shows how the Savannah, Georgia, school district – in partnership with local universities – offers busdirvers, custodians, para-professionals, and other school staff the chance to become teachers through its Pathways To Teaching initiative, and explains how mentoring relationships build professsinalism among these new teachers. National Education Association (NEA). Phone: 202.822.7350; Fax: 202.822.7206; Web: www.nea.org

Teacher Shortage: False Alarm? (video) looks at the reported crisis in our public schools and the preparation and support of new teachers, including those receiving alternative certification. Teaching Matters, Inc. Phone: 877.263.7769; Fax: 212.725.2433; Web: www.pbs.org

ARTICLES

& PERIODICALS

Educational Leadership: Supporting New Teachers examines initiatives that benefit both new and experienced teachers, including successful mentoring programs, efforts for recruiting new teachers, and characteristics of good mentors. *Educational Leadership, Vol. 56, No 8, May, 1999.* Published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Web: www.asdc.org

Mentoring the Mentor: A Challenge for Staff Development looks at the essential elements of creating successful mentoring environment. Janas, Monica. *Journal of Staff Development, Vol. 17, No 4, 1996, p. 2-5.* Published by the National Staff Development Council. Web: www.nsdc.org

Preparing Mentors of Beginning Teachers: An Overview for Staff Developers provides an overview of the common goals of successful mentoring programs and outlines the basic knowledge and skills necessary for effective mentoring. Ganser, Tom. *Journal of Staff Development, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1996, p. 8-11.* Published by the National Staff Development Council. Web: www.nsdec.org

The Role of Teacher Mentoring in Educational Reform provides an overview of Hawaii's new teacher mentoring program, discusses how schools can start their own mentoring programs, and describes critical program components. Koki, Stan. Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) Briefing Paper,1997. Available online at: www.prel.org/products/roel-mentor.pdf

Teacher Mentoring: A Critical Review summarizes what we now know about mentoring through a literature review and addresses what issues lie ahead for supporting new teachers. Feiman-Neemser, Sharon. *ERIC Digest, No. 194, 1998.* This digest is available online at: www.edgov/databases/ERIC_Digest/ed397060.html

Teaching and Change: Mentoring Beginning Teachers examines a variety of new teacher induction programs and addresses issues such as establishing and evaluating programs. *Teaching and Change, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1999.* Published by the National Education Association (NEA). Web: www.nea.org

Telementoring: An Examination of the Potential for an Educational Network looks at online and email mentoring (i.e. telementoring) and how they fit with existing models of mentoring. Wighton, David J. USWest Academic Development and Technology Center at Creighton University, 1993. Available online at: mentor.creighton.edu/htm/telement.htm

Best Practice Resources provides excellent resources on the mentoring of new teachers, peer coaching, mentoring events, as well as numerous articles and publications. Web: www.teachermentors.com

Inspiring Teachers assimilates a wide variety of tools, links, and resources for the benefit of beginning teachers. The site provides "Ask a Mentor" where questions about teaching may be emailed to experienced teachers. Web: www.inspiringteachers.com

Mighty Mentors connects teachers via email who want to improve their teaching techniques, troubleshoot problems, and address other classroom issues. Web: www.mightymedia.com/mentors

WEB SITES

Teacher Mentoring is a "mentorship training" module for mentors of beginning teachers, and includes resources to establish and build effective mentoring relationships. Web: www.coled.mankato.msus.edu/dept/labdist/mentor/index.stm

Teacher Quality includes classroom resources, research, and information for people interested in becoming teachers and offers information on recruiting and preparing teachers, professional development opportunities, raising teaching standards, and other issues. Web: www.ed.gov/inits/teacher/teach.html

Teachers Helping Teachers provides classroom strategies to beginning teachers,, lesson plans, teacher chatroom, book reviews, and a registry of mentor teachers. Web: www.pacificnet.net/-mandel

Teachers.Net provides chat centers, lesson plan exchanges, and regularly scheduled meetings for beginning and experienced teachers in all subject areas and grade levels. Web: www.teachers.net

Teachrs.org provides classroom resources and teacher discussion areas such as New Teachers On-Line. Fifteen web mentors guide and inform discussions. Web: www.teachnet.org

Telementoring Over the Net introduces Telementoring as a learning strategy and provides examples of Telementoring projects, design issues in creating telementoring programs, and telementoring resources. Web: www.learn.org/circles/mentors.html

ORGANIZATIONS

Industry Initiatives for Science and Math Education (IISME). Santa Clara, CA, supports teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area. Program provides teachers with mentored paid summer jobs, and assist them as they translate their experiences into classroom instruction. Phone: 408.496.5343; Email: skebreab@iisme.ucsc.edu; Web: www.iisme.ucsc.edu

International Telementor Center, Fort Collins, CO, was born out of the successful Hewlett-Packard Telementoring program and recruits teachers, students, and professionals who want to begin an email-based mentoring relationship; Phone and Fax: 888.453.0635; Email: davidn@telementor.org; Web: www.tlementor.org

Mentoring Leadership and Resource Network, Washington, DC, promotes the mentoring and induction of new teachers with newsletters, reports, projects, and mentoring conferences. Contact: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Phone: 800.933.2723; Fax: 703.575.5400; Web: www.mentors.net

Multicultural Alliance, Ross, CA, provides fellowships to address the critical shortage of people of color in our nation's teaching force. This effort provides an opportunity for post-secondary students to examine the teaching profession through hands-on classroom experience with support from an accomplished mentor. Phone: 415.454.3614, ext. 234; Fax: 415.256.8127; Web: www.mcateachers.org

Peer Resources, British Columbia, Canada, provides training resources, and consultation to establish peer support and mentor programs in schools, universities, communities, and corporations. Phone: 250.595.3503; Fax: 250.595.3504; Email: rcan@islandnet.com; Web: www.peer.ca

Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (RNT), Belmont, MA, aims to raise esteem for teaching, expand the pool of prospective teachers, and improve the nation's teacher recruitment and development policies and practices through public service outreach, research and publications, local, state and national advocacy, and convening national conferences. Phone: 617.489.6000; Fax: 617.489.6005; Email: rnt@rnt.org ; Web: www.rnt.ort/index.html