



TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM

Mentor Handbook

2019-2020

NAZARETH AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

One Education Plaza

Nazareth, PA 18064

Being a mentor keeps me current. When I have to answer my inductee's questions, it makes me ask, *why am I doing what I'm doing?* In discussing philosophy, problems, or techniques with this new teacher, I find out what I really believe. That makes me a stronger person and a better teacher." – A mentor (quoted in Gordon & Maxey, 2000)

What is the definition of Teacher-Mentors?

Teacher-Mentors are experienced teachers who are highly skilled practitioners, who are life-long learners, who are dedicated to promoting excellence in the teaching profession and who are trusted professionals willing to take a personal and direct interest in the development of a colleague.

Qualities of Effective Mentors*

The qualities of effective mentors---as identified by participants in mentoring programs nationwide---may be organized into four general categories: *attitude and character*; *professional competence*; *communication skills*; and *interpersonal skills*. Together with a willingness to serve and a vote of confidence by colleagues, these characteristics comprise guidelines for selecting mentors.

Attitude and Character	Communication Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to be a role model for other teachers • Exhibits strong commitment to the teaching profession • Believes mentoring improves instructional practice • Willing to advocate on behalf of colleagues • Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning • Is reflective and able to learn from mistakes • Is eager to share information and ideas with colleagues • Is resilient, flexible, and open-minded • Exhibits good humor and resourcefulness • Enjoys new challenges and solving problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is able to articulate effective instructional strategies • Listens attentively • Asks questions that prompt reflection and understanding • Offers critiques in positive and productive ways • Is efficient with the use of time • Conveys enthusiasm and passion for teaching • Is discreet and maintains confidentiality
Professional Competence	Interpersonal Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is regarded by colleagues as an outstanding teacher • Has excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter • Has confidence in his/her own instructional skills • Demonstrates excellent classroom-management skills • Feels comfortable being observed by other teachers • Maintains a network of professional contacts • Understands the policies and procedures of the school, district, and teacher association • Is a meticulous observer of classroom practice • Collaborates well with other teachers and administrators • Is willing to learn new teaching strategies from Inductees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is able to maintain a trusting professional relationship • Knows how to express care for Inductees' emotional and professional needs • Is attentive to sensitive political issues • Works well with individuals from different cultures • Is approachable; easily establishes rapport with others • Is patient and nonjudgmental

*The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education-Establishing High-Quality Professional Development, Fall 1999 No. 1

NASD Teacher Induction Program (TIP)

The goals of the Nazareth Area School District Teacher Induction Program (TIP) are to provide each inductee with a general orientation to the Nazareth Area School District and to increase his/her knowledge and improve his/her teaching skills.

The **objectives** of the program are to:

- a. Familiarize the inductee with school district policies and practices and to integrate inductees into the social system of the school and community.
- b. To provide an opportunity for the inductees to analyze and reflect on their teaching with coaching from veteran teachers.
- c. To support the development of the inductee's professional knowledge and skills.
- d. To provide continued assistance to face the challenges of the new teacher.
- e. To cultivate a professional attitude toward teaching and learning, and working with others such as students, parents and colleagues.

Mentor Selection and Criteria

Teachers who are selected to serve as mentors must be excellent teachers and administrators who are certified with at least three years of experience, and are actively teaching in the district. Mentors will receive a stipend.

Teachers who are selected to be a mentor are advised to pay close attention to the *Qualities of Effective Mentors* stated in this document as well as to the criteria listed below:

- A commitment to the goals of the district mentoring plan.
- Teaching expertise that reflects excellent content knowledge of the state curriculum frameworks.
- An awareness of the merits of different teaching styles and pedagogical strategies/methods.
- An ability to teach to the diverse learning styles of students.
- Is knowledgeable about the resources and opportunities in the district and is able to act as a referral source to the novice teacher.
- Is willing and able to invest time to develop mentoring skills and participate in the program for the duration of the year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The mentor-inductee relationship is essential to the success of a new teacher as he or she enters the education profession in the Nazareth Area School District. The formal and informal activities associated with a successful induction program are based upon the positive relationship built between experienced and novice teachers. The following guidelines are established to assist the mentor and inductee in addressing the needs and concerns of the inductee:

Inductees:

- **Attend all scheduled mentoring sessions.**
- **Play an active role in the mentoring relationship.** An inductee can do this by offering critical reflections on his/her own practice and by identifying areas in which assistance is needed.

- **Seek out help.** The inductee must understand that he or she must seek out support from team members, be forthright in communicating classroom issues, and remain open to feedback in order to develop professionally.
- **Observe experienced teachers at work.** The inductee with the help of his/her mentor will participate in a scheduled observation of experienced teacher(s). Release time for a minimum of one full-day peer observation opportunity in the district with the approval of the building administrator will be provided.
- **Participate regularly in programs organized for inductees.** These include, but are not limited to the summer orientation and regular meetings.
- **Maintain Induction/Mentoring Forms.**
 - Documentation of the induction process must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent's Office **electronically through Schoology** by established deadlines.
 - Final **Induction Completion Document** and the inductee's **Evidence of Professional Growth Documentation** must be **posted in Schoology** no later than **May 1, 2020**.
 - Evidence of Professional Growth Documentation Includes:
 - All Addendums
 - Teacher Induction Reports
 - Peer Observation Reflection
 - Teacher/Video Observation Reflection
- **Participate in a support process for maintaining a mentor/inductee relationship.** If an unresolvable issue arises in the mentor/inductee relationship, the inductee or mentor can request a meeting with the Building Principal and/or the Assistant Superintendent to help to reach a resolution.

Mentor:

- **Participate in assigned activities during the NASD Teacher Induction Program.**
- **Ensure a strong start to the year.** Mentors can help inductees launch into a productive year by making sure they know where to obtain all needed materials and by explaining the pertinent routines and schedules.
- **Meeting frequently during the school year.** Meet at least once a week during the months of September through January. Meet at least once every other week from February through May.
- **Provide instructional support.** This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Providing regular opportunities for inductee(s) to observe mentor teaching.
 - Participating in discussions following lessons that draw upon reflective thinking strategies.
 - Maintaining open communication with inductee either face to face or electronically.
 - Supporting teaching and learning standards of the state curriculum frameworks.
 - Refining various teaching strategies.
 - Addressing issues such as classroom management and communicating effectively with parents.
 - Recognizing and addressing multiple learning styles and individual student needs.
- **Provide professional support.** Inductees need to be informed of school policies and procedures, particularly regarding standards and procedures for teacher evaluation. Principals and Directors as well as Mentors should be a resource for information on evaluation and professional practice.

- **Provide guidance and assistance at all transition points** - throughout the year (i.e.: beginning of school year; end of marking periods/semesters; before and after breaks).
- **Provide personal support.** Mentors can help relieve the stress on inductees by introducing them to other faculty members and providing support and encouragement to help the inductee put problems in perspective.
- **Maintain a confidential relationship with the inductee.** It is important that inductees are confident that the dialogue they have with their mentor is safe and secure and that they will get nurturing and supportive feedback from their mentor.
- **Serve as a liaison.** The mentor should have the knowledge and skills to refer the inductee to other teachers and educational resources, so that the inductee is exposed to a variety of perspectives and instructional practices.
- **Serve as a resource.** Inform the inductee of opportunities and supports provided by various professional associations.
- Ensure that all aspects and documentation of the induction process have been completed and submitted to the Assistant Superintendent's Office **electronically through Schoology** by established deadlines.
- Ensure that the inductee's **Evidence of Professional Growth Documentation** is **posted in Schoology** no later than **May 1, 2020** and the final **Induction Completion Document** is **posted in Schoology by May 1, 2020.**
 - Evidence of Professional Growth Documentation Includes:
 - All Addendums
 - Teacher Induction Reports
 - Peer Observation Reflection
 - Teacher/Video Observation Reflection
- **Participate in a support process for maintaining a mentor/inductee relationship.** If an unresolvable issue arises in the mentor/inductee relationship, the inductee or mentor will request to meet with the Building Principal and/or the Assistant Superintendent and the mentor to reach a resolution to the issue.

Principal, Assistant Principal, Education Program Directors:

The responsibilities of the administrator will include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Meet with new teacher no less than once/month** separate from building meetings to review timely topics and to answer related questions. Topics may include but are not limited to:
 - Open House procedures
 - Progress reports
 - Assessment deadlines
 - Evaluation of teachers
 - Conferences with parents
 - Professional development opportunities

- o Collegial practices
 - o Program issues
- **Establish a school culture** that is built on collegiality and supports collaboration among new and veteran teachers.
- **Ensure reasonable working conditions** for the inductee that will promote a successful first year, that might include assigning the inductee to few extra-curricular duties, and a schedule that is compatible with the mentor's schedule.
- **Promote and encourage** opportunities for the inductee to observe exemplary teachers in the building and across the district.
- **Provide support and encouragement** to all new staff by listening and remaining open to new teacher ideas and suggestions regarding school policy, scheduling, personnel, student concerns, and curriculum issues.
- **Engage in periodic check-ins** with the new staff and/or mentors in their buildings regarding the mentoring progress with full understanding and respect for the confidentiality between mentor and inductee.
- **Participate in a support process for maintaining a mentor/inductee relationship.** If an unresolvable issue arises in the mentor/inductee relationship, the inductee or mentor will request to meet with the Building Principal and/or the Assistant Superintendent and the mentor to reach a resolution to the issue.

Timeline of Activities/Requirements

Activity / Requirement	Date(s)
<i>Summer Induction Program</i>	<i>August 12-15, 2019</i>
Meeting: Topics in Student Services (WLP Board Room)	October 15, 2019
<i>Teacher Induction Reports Due (Addendum #2) in Schoology</i>	<i>October 15, 2019</i>
Meeting: Parent Teacher Conferences: Training with Building Principals	November 6, 2019
<i>Meeting: Special Topics in Teaching and Learning “The Main Events” (WLP Board Room)</i>	<i>December 4, 2019</i>
Teacher Induction Reports Due (Addendum #2) in Schoology	December 4, 2019
<i>Meeting: Special Topics in Teaching and Learning “Peer Observation” (WLP Board Room)</i>	<i>February 12, 2020</i>
Teacher Induction Reports Due (Addendum #2) in Schoology	February 12, 2020
<i>Peer Observation Reflection Due (Addendum #6) in Schoology</i>	<i>February 12, 2020</i>
Meeting: Special Topics in Teaching and Learning “Video Reflection” (WLP Board Room)	April 15, 2020
<i>Teacher Induction Reports Due (Addendum #2) in Schoology</i>	<i>April 15, 2020</i>
Teacher/Video Observation Reflection Due (Addendum #7) in Schoology	April 15, 2020
<i>EOY Review with Building Principal (Addendum #5) Due</i>	<i>May 1, 2020</i>
Completion of NASD Professional Development Requirements	May 1, 2020
<i>Completion of Induction Completion Document (Addendum #3) and Evaluation of TIP (Addendum #4) Due</i>	<i>May 1, 2020</i>
TIP Reception/Board Recognition (District Office/WLP Board Room)	May 2020 (day TBD)

Requirements of TIP

- All Induction documents must be completed and uploaded to the Induction Schoology group.
- Attend district-level Induction meetings August through May.
- Attend weekly meetings of Inductee/Mentor September through January and then bi-weekly meetings of Inductee/Mentor from February through May.
- One peer classroom observation (Addendum #6), in the district, by February 12.
- Completion of Needs Assessment for Teacher Inductees (Addendum #1) during summer induction program.
- Completion of Teacher Induction Reports (Addendum #2) due October 15, December 4, February 12, and April 15.
- Teacher/Video Reflection (addendum #7) by April 15.
- EOY Review with Building Principal (Addendum #5) by May 1.
- Completion of the Evaluation of TIP Document (Addendum #4) by May 1.
- Mentor completion of Induction Completion Document (Addendum #3) by May 1.

****To document participation in the TIP, a copy of the Checklist of Induction Discussions document together with a copy of the Induction Completion Document will be placed in each inductee's permanent file in the Superintendent's office. The original Induction Completion Document along with a Certificate of Completion will be given to each inductee for their records.***

Required Documents

*The following pages list the required documents required for the Teacher Induction Program. Copies of these documents will be placed in the current year's folder under **N:/District Office/Professional Development/Teacher Induction Program** and can be used as "fill in" forms. These forms are also posted in **Schoology** in the **Induction group**.*

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR TEACHER INDUCTEES*(To be completed at Teacher Induction Program)*

Inductee's Name: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

Inductee's Signature _____

Mentor's Signature _____

Building _____

Date _____

The following will assist you, as an Inductee, to inventory your experiences and areas of need. The information provided will assist your mentor in supporting your professional growth. Please complete this form and give it to your assigned mentor.

1. Previous educator experience, including student teaching and internship**2. List your three strongest assets as an educator.****3. List your three areas of concern for the year.**

The NASD Teacher Induction Program is designed to support your professional growth. To help us do so, please rate your current level of concern for the following topics.

	No concern		Somewhat concerned		Very concerned
Expectations					
2. Grade/Subject area standards for student learning	1	2	3	4	5
3. School/district policies & expectations	1	2	3	4	5
4. Using technology as a tool for learning	1	2	3	4	5
5. Evaluation of teacher performance	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching					
7. Effective use of teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
8. Differentiating for individual student differences	1	2	3	4	5
9. Unit and lesson plan design	1	2	3	4	5
10. Effective use of textbooks and curriculum guides	1	2	3	4	5
Classroom Management					
12. Preparation time	1	2	3	4	5
13. Assessing/grading student work	1	2	3	4	5
14. Organization of the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
15. Management of paperwork and reports	1	2	3	4	5
16. Accessing materials, supplies, equipment	1	2	3	4	5
17. The budget for instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5
Relationships					
19. Principals, administrators, Board of Education	1	2	3	4	5
20. Colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
21. Motivating & rapport with students	1	2	3	4	5
22. Cultural diversity of students	1	2	3	4	5
23. Your number of years of teaching experience _____					
Other Concerns?					
24. _____	1	2	3	4	5
25. _____	1	2	3	4	5
26. _____	1	2	3	4	5

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TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Inductees: Some of these activities may not apply. Please read through the list carefully.

August/September			
Orientation Program	Student Handbook	Copy Machines /Copying Parameters	Field Trip Procedure
Inductee Needs Assessment	Technology as a learning tool	Curriculum, Standards/Benchmarks	Fire Drills
Attendance and First Week Attendance	Text Books	Discipline Code	Guidance Counselor/Psychologist
Faculty Handbook	Safe Schools Plan	Duty Schedules	Seating Arrangements
Emergency Procedures	Remediation and Enrichment Periods	Faculty Meetings	Lunch Count
Field Trip Procedure	1st Week Lesson Plans	Grade Book/Grading Procedures	Substitute Plans
Grading Software	Student Progress Reports	I.E.P.'s/Inclusion	Specialist Schedule
Lesson Plan Requirements	Resource Materials	Room Preparation	Specialists Roles
Student Assemblies	Student Publications/Pictures	Instructional Pacing	Back-to-school night
Medical Alert Lists	Meeting Schedule	Parent Communications	Report Cards
Grading Procedures	Purchase Orders	Fund Raisers	Professional Development Plan
Teacher Mailboxes	Policy for students leaving prior to dismissal	Teaming	Professional Portfolios
District Standardized Testing Schedule (STAR, CDT, etc)	Common assessments	Final Exams	Safety & Security
October/November			
Snow Days/Delays	Professional Development Plan	Cycle of Supervision	Sponsored Events for Families and Students
Mid-Terms/Finals	Parent-Teacher Conferences	Report cards / Student Progress reports	RtII Process, Referrals, SAP, Child Study
Lesson Planning	Instructional Practices	Technology Integration	Holiday Activities
Classroom Management	Parent Volunteers	Curriculum Pacing	Safety & Security
December/January			
Finals	Keystone Exams	Curriculum Pacing	Cycle of Supervision
Sponsored Events for Families and Students	Holiday Activities	District Standardized Testing Schedule (STAR, CDT, etc)	Mid-year Evaluation
Technology Integration/Instructional Practice	RtII Process, Referrals, SAP, Child Study	Student Progress/Report Cards	Safety & Security
February/March			
District Standardized Testing Schedule (STAR, CDT, etc)	PSSA Testing	Cycle of Supervision	Instructional Practices
RtII Process, Referrals, SAP, Child Study	Classroom Management	Parent-Teacher Conferences	Safety & Security
April/May/June			
Final Grades	Parent Communications	Report Cards	Cycle of Supervision
End-Of-Year Procedures	Award Assemblies	Final Exams/Keystone Exams/ACT/SAT/AP	Collecting Fines
Field Trip Procedures	End-of-year Evaluation	Safety & Security	Other Topics

Nazareth Area School District
INDUCTION COMPLETION DOCUMENT

(To be completed by the Mentor on behalf of Inductee)

(Upload into Schoology and submit original document signed by Mentor only to the Assistant Superintendents Office, Attn: Jennifer Allen for final review prior to Superintendent's signature); Due May 1, 2020)

Inductee's Name: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

<u>ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>DATES OF PARTICIPATION</u>		
I. District Orientation Sessions			_____
II. Special Topics in Student Services			_____
III. Special Topics in Teaching and Learning			_____
IV. Conferencing with Parents Workshop			_____
V. Mandated Reporting Training (certificate)			_____
VI. Suicide Prevention and Awareness Training (certificate)			_____
VII. Evaluation of TIP (Addendum #4)			_____
VIII. Completion of Teacher Induction reports signed by Principal (Addendum #2)			
	Oct _____	Dec _____	
	Feb _____	Apr _____	
IX. Peer Observation in NASD			
<u>Teacher's Name</u>	<u>School/Building</u>	<u>Date</u>	
1. _____	_____	_____	
X. Teacher/Video Observation Reflection Form			Date _____
XI. Teacher End-of-Year Review with Building Principal (Addendum #5)			Date _____

This certifies that the above named inductee participated in and successfully completed the requirements of the Teacher Induction Program during the 2019-2020 school year.

Superintendent's Signature

Mentor's Signature

Date _____

Date _____

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM

(To be completed by Inductee; Upload into Schoology; Due May 1, 2020)

1. Did this program provide the support that you needed to make the transition to the Nazareth Area School District? Explain.

2. What things would you suggest be added to aid a new teacher at the Nazareth Area School District?

3. What changes in the program would you recommend? [Click here to enter text.](#)

4. To what extent were the following objectives met by the program?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>
▪ Improvement of teaching skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Adjustment to district and building standards and methods of operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Adjustment to student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Assessment of professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inductee's Signature

Date

Teacher End-of-the-Year Review with Building Principal

(To be completed by Inductee and Principal; Upload into Schoology; Due May 1, 2020)

Teacher's Reflection on the School Year:

Principal's Comments:

Principal Signature / Date _____

Teacher Signature / Date _____

Things I can't wait to use in my class tomorrow:	Things to Ponder (or things about which I'm pondering):
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

REFLECTION: (Provide a one page reflection of your peer reflection experience)

Click here to enter text.

N.B: All notes are strictly confidential; the brief summary does not go beyond the observer-Assistant Superintendent.

Observer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

TEACHER/VIDEO OBSERVATION REFLECTION FORM
(Upload into Schoology; Due April 15, 2020)

Teacher: [Click here to enter text.](#) **Date:** _____

Content: [Click here to enter text.](#)

What I'm observing for today (connected to Danielson Framework Domain 2 and 3):

- [Click here to enter text.](#)

- [Click here to enter text.](#)

- [Click here to enter text.](#)

Write down the core actions or language you observed. Be specific!

[Click here to enter text.](#)

- Summarize the 3 strengths of the lesson (be specific).
 1. [Click here to enter text.](#)

 2. [Click here to enter text.](#)

 3. [Click here to enter text.](#)

- Apply the Danielson Framework Domain 2 and 3. What areas are you currently struggling with (be specific)?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

- What are the Key Actionable Changes you will implement to grow?
[Click here to enter text.](#)

Appendix A: Mentor Articles

Rowley, J. B. (May 1999). The good mentor. *Educational Leadership*, 56(8), 20-22.

The Good Mentor

James B. Rowley

As formal mentoring programs gain popularity, the need for identifying and preparing good mentors grows.

Can you name a person who had a positive and enduring impact on your personal or professional life, someone worthy of being called your mentor? Had he or she been trained to serve in such a role or been formally assigned to help you? I frequently ask veteran teachers these questions. As you might guess, most teachers with 10 or more years of experience were typically not assigned a mentor, but instead found informal support from a caring colleague. Unfortunately, not all teachers found this support. In fact, many veterans remember their first year in the classroom as a difficult and lonely time during which no one came to their aid.

Much has changed in the past decade, however, because many school districts have established entry-year programs that pair beginning teachers with veteran, mentor teachers. In the majority of such cases, the matching occurs before they meet and establish a personal relationship. This prevalent aspect of school-based mentoring programs presents special challenges that are further exacerbated when mentor teachers receive no or inadequate training and only token support for their work.

Qualities of a Good Mentor

During the past decade, I have helped school districts design mentor-based, entry-year programs. In that capacity, I have learned much by carefully listening to mentor and beginning teachers and by systematically observing what seems to work, and not to work, in formal mentoring programs. As a result of these experiences, I have identified six basic but essential qualities of the *good mentor* and the implications the qualities have for entry-year program design and mentor teacher training.

The good mentor is committed to the role of mentoring. The good mentor is highly committed to the task of helping beginning teachers find success and gratification in their new work. Committed mentors show up for, and stay on, the job. Committed mentors understand that persistence is as important in mentoring as it is in classroom teaching. Such commitment flows naturally from a resolute belief that mentors are capable of making a significant and positive impact on the life of another. This belief is not grounded in naive conceptions of what it means to be a mentor. Rather, it is anchored in the knowledge that mentoring can be a challenging endeavor requiring significant investments of time and energy.

What can be done to increase the odds that mentor teachers possess the commitment fundamental to delivering effective support? First, good programs require formal mentor training as a prerequisite to mentoring. Veteran teachers unwilling to participate in a quality training program are often indicating their lack of dedication to the role. Second, because it is unreasonable to expect a teacher to commit to a role that has not been clearly defined, the best mentoring programs provide specific descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers.

Third, good mentoring programs require mentors to maintain simple logs or journals that document conferences and other professional development activities involving the mentor and inductee. But such record-keeping devices should keep paperwork to a minimum and protect the confidentiality of the mentor-inductee relationship.

Finally, although the majority of mentor teachers would do this important work without compensation, we must not overlook the relationship between compensation and commitment. Programs that provide mentors with a stipend, release time from extra duties, or additional opportunities for professional growth make important statements about the value of the work and its significance in the school community.

The good mentor is accepting of the beginning teacher. At the foundation of any effective helping relationship is empathy. As Carl Rogers (1958) pointed out, empathy means accepting another person without making judgments. It means setting aside, at least temporarily, personal beliefs and values. The good mentor teacher recognizes the power of accepting the beginning teacher as a developing person and professional. Accepting mentors do not judge or reject inductees as being poorly prepared, overconfident, naive, or defensive. Rather, should new teachers exhibit such characteristics, good mentors simply view these traits as challenges to overcome in their efforts to deliver meaningful support.

How can we encourage mentor teachers to be more accepting of new teachers? A training program that engages prospective mentors in reflecting on the qualities of effective helpers is an excellent place to begin. Reading and discussing passages from the works of Rogers (1958) and Combs, Avila, and Purkey (1971), for example, can raise levels of consciousness about this important attribute. Equally important in the training protocol is helping prospective mentors understand the problems and concerns of beginning teachers (Veenman, 1984; Fuller & Bown, 1975) as well as stage and age theories of adult development (Loevinger, 1976; Sprinthall & Theis-Sprinthall, 1980). Training exercises that cause mentors to thoughtfully revisit their own first years of teaching in light of such research-based and theoretical perspectives can help engender a more accepting disposition toward beginning teachers regardless of their age or prior life experiences.

The good mentor is skilled at providing instructional support. Beginning teachers enter their careers with varying degrees of skill in instructional design and delivery. Good mentors are willing to coach beginning teachers to improve their performance wherever their skill level. Although this seems obvious, many mentor teachers stop short of providing quality instructional support. Among the factors contributing to this problem is a school culture that does not encourage teachers to observe one another in their classrooms. I often ask mentors-in-training whether they could imagine helping someone improve a tennis serve or golf swing without seeing the athlete play and with only the person's description of what he or she thought was wrong.

Lacking opportunities for shared experience, mentors often limit instructional support to workroom conversations. Although such dialogue can be helpful, discussions based on shared experience are more powerful. Such shared experiences can take different forms: mentors and inductees can engage in team teaching or team planning, inductees can observe mentors, mentors can observe inductees, or both can observe other teachers. Regardless of the nature of the experience, the purpose is to promote collegial dialogue focused on enhancing teacher performance and student learning.

What can we do to prepare mentors to provide instructional support? The quality of instructional support that mentor teachers offer is largely influenced by the degree of value an entry-year program places on such support. The mentor training program should equip mentors with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions prerequisite to effective coaching. Such training helps mentors value description over interpretation in the coaching process; develop multiple methods of classroom observation; employ research-based frameworks as the basis for reflection; and refine their conferencing and feedback skills. Finally, we need to give mentors and inductees time and opportunity to participate in the pre conferences, classroom observations, and post conferences that lead to quality clinical support.

The good mentor is effective in different interpersonal contexts. All beginning teachers are not created equal, nor are all mentor teachers. This simple fact, when overlooked or ignored by a mentor teacher, often leads to relationship difficulties and diminished support for the beginning teacher. Good mentor teachers recognize that each mentoring relationship occurs in a unique, interpersonal context. Beginning teachers can display widely different attitudes toward the help offered by a mentor. One year, a mentor may work with a beginning teacher hungry for advice and the next year be assigned a beginning teacher who reacts defensively to thoughtfully offered suggestions.

Just as good teachers adjust their teaching behaviors and communications to meet the needs of individual students, good mentors adjust their mentoring communications to meet the needs of individual inductees. To make such adjustments, good mentors must possess deep understanding of their own communication styles and a willingness to objectively observe the behavior of the inductee.

How can we help mentors acquire such self-knowledge and adopt a positive disposition toward adjusting their mentoring behaviors? Mentor training programs that engage mentors in completing and reflecting on self-inventories that provide insight into their leadership or supervisory styles are particularly helpful.

The Supervisory Beliefs Inventory (Glickman, 1985) offers an excellent vehicle for introducing mentors to the challenges of interpersonal communication. In similar fashion, *The Leadership Adaptability and Style Inventory* (Hersey & Blanchard, 1974) can provoke mentors to reflect on the appropriateness of their mentoring behavior given the maturity and commitment of their inductees. In my own mentor training, I follow discussions of such theoretical perspectives with the analysis of videotaped conversations between mentors and inductees from the *Mentoring the New Teacher* series (Rowley & Hart, 1993).

The good mentor is a model of a continuous learner. Beginning teachers rarely appreciate mentors who have *right* answers to every question and *best* solutions for every problem. Good mentor teachers are transparent about their own search for *better* answers and *more effective* solutions to their own problems. They model this commitment by their openness to learn from colleagues, including beginning teachers, and by their willingness to pursue professional growth through a variety of means. They lead and attend workshops. They teach and enroll in graduate classes. They develop and experiment with new practices. They write and read articles in professional journals. Most important, they share new knowledge and perplexing questions with their beginning teachers in a collegial manner.

How can we ensure that mentors continue their own professional growth and development? Quality entry-year programs establish clear criteria for mentor selection that include a commitment to initial and ongoing mentor training. In addition, program leaders work hard to give veteran mentors frequent opportunities to participate in high-quality professional-growth experiences that can enhance their work as a mentor teacher. Some programs, for example, reward mentors by giving them additional professional development days or extra support to attend professional conferences related to their work.

The good mentor communicates hope and optimism. In "Mentors: They Simply Believe," Lasley (1996) argues that the crucial characteristic of mentors is the ability to communicate their belief that a person is capable of transcending present challenges and of accomplishing great things in the future. For mentor teachers working in school-based programs, such a quality is no less important. Good mentor teachers capitalize on opportunities to affirm the human potential of their inductees. They do so in private conversations and in public settings. Good mentors share their own struggles and frustrations and how they overcame them. And always, they do so in a genuine and caring way that engenders trust.

What can we do to ensure that beginning teachers are supported by mentors capable of communicating hope and optimism? Quality programs take the necessary precautions to avoid using veteran teachers who have lost their positive outlook. If teachers and administrators value mentoring highly and take it seriously, mentoring will attract caring and committed teachers who recognize the complex and challenging nature of classroom teaching. It will attract teachers who demonstrate their hope and optimism for the future by their willingness to help a new teacher discover the same joys and satisfactions that they have found in their own career.

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Lifesaving 101: How a Veteran Teacher Can Help a Beginner

Mary Delgado

Veteran teachers don't need to be official mentors to help their new colleagues. Experienced educators can be lifesavers for isolated novices simply by reaching out informally and being compassionate critics.

As an experienced teacher of 30 years, I am disheartened when I hear a new teacher say, "I'm a failure." Sadly, I hear this all too often from new teachers in my 850-student urban middle school. First-year teachers are at risk no matter where they teach, but after a few months, some actually declare failure—even after entering the profession full of enthusiasm. They may have had quality academic training and a successful student-teaching experience. But statistics show that one-third of all new teachers nationwide leave the profession within five years. Some pundits go as far as to say that "education is a profession that eats its young."

What happens in such a short time to shatter goals, diminish spirits, and destroy self-confidence? In a word: Isolation. New teachers are left alone in a classroom, often for the first time, with no significant support. We should not underrate the shock they experience. It's real, and we need to deal with it. When I say *we*, I mean all competent, experienced teachers who work in the same building with beginning teachers.

Many districts have instituted official mentoring programs to motivate new teachers and keep them from leaving the profession. These endeavors are laudable, but in urban districts such as mine, there aren't enough mentors to support all new teachers. Veteran teachers must pick up the slack. The two most practical ways experienced teachers can help new teachers are through chance meetings in the hallways and through scheduled discussions during common preparation times.

In the Hallways

Some of us, particularly in middle school settings, may be unit partners with new teachers. Some of us simply latch on to new teachers at the first few faculty meetings, or they reach out to us as we're walking down the hallway. Even a friendly "Good morning" from an experienced teacher can elicit an anxious "Could you please come into my room for a minute? I need help arranging my seating chart" or "I had trouble with a student last period and don't know how to handle it."

We know that we need to get to our own rooms in two minutes. The problem then becomes one of time. Everyone in the building has a full teaching load. But what happens on the spur of the moment in the hallways can provide new teachers with the immediate input they may need. These meetings of new and experienced teachers are crucial and must be honored, not ignored. As unstructured as they may seem, these hallway meetings are effective and productive—if the experienced teachers are considerate of the new teachers' needs. Experienced teachers may be hesitant to initiate a conversation with new teachers for fear of sounding patronizing. The fear is natural, but it is usually overcome when we realize that new teachers really do need our support.

Chance meetings in the hallway break down communication barriers because new teachers are soliciting the help. The responsibility then rests upon experienced teachers to accept the challenge to mentor new teachers—or to walk away.

During Preparation Times

Once experienced teachers have made a commitment to be helpful, they should be attentive to the feelings that new teachers experience when totally responsible for a classroom for the first time. Focusing on their feelings can take place during quiet moments, such as preparation periods. Shared preparation periods enable productive discussions to take place. Issues that cause chance meetings in the hallway can be discussed calmly and at length.

New teachers experience a kind of culture shock that can express itself in nervousness and anxiety. They can get to the point of not being able to make decisions about even small matters. They may ask, for example, "How can I get my students to the cafeteria quietly?" or "Should I put these questions on the overhead or the chalkboard?" Most of us would respond with "whatever works best." But when new teachers are distraught over some small matter, we need to focus on their reasons for asking the question, not on a glib answer. Veteran teachers can guide new teachers in two important ways: tuning in to their goals and asking the right questions.

Tuning In to the Goals of New Teachers

New teachers usually know their teaching goals. Sometimes, however, they simply cannot (for whatever reason) articulate these goals at a certain time. They may also be too new to a situation to be able to see their goals clearly until they take the time to discuss them with a colleague.

The only way new teachers will succeed is by tapping into their own talents—which may or may not be visible in the very beginning of their career. Early on, they focus on how to get through the next hour, to the end of the day, and then through the next day all over again.

During calm moments, experienced teachers can draw out of new teachers what their goals are—both for themselves and for their students. New educators need to articulate at this juncture why they wanted to be teachers in the first place. Their reasons for teaching may become lost in the flurry of a new, challenging, and, in many cases, rocky beginning.

Asking the Right Questions

What new teachers need is someone they can trust not only to "tell it like it is," but also to guide them to their own solutions to problems. Experienced teachers need to ask the right questions to start new teachers on their own quest. After the new teachers have experienced some successes with the students, however small, the experienced teachers can point out the abilities of the new teachers that allowed them to be successful. This kind of mentoring takes perception and patience. It also takes the constant presence of experienced teachers on whom the new teacher can lean.

Alice (a fictitious name) entered my school four years ago with the vim and vigor of a first-year teacher. I passed her room one day after school at the end of September and saw her sitting at her desk, head in hands, crying. I had some rapport with Alice because we had conversed casually in the halls on several occasions, so I ventured a question: "Are you all right?" Immediately she looked up and wiped her tears away, embarrassed that I had caught her crying. She apologized for her unprofessional behavior and blurted out that she felt that she was a failure with these students. "Nothing I do is accepted. I keep trying and trying. I prepare my lessons well, but nothing works."

A long conversation ensued. Alice described her classroom management approaches, her daily lesson plans, and her rapport with students. I listened and gave advice whenever it fit. We started out by discussing a new seating arrangement. One of Alice's problems was that students would act up whenever her back was turned. I suggested arranging her class in a U-shape so that she could attend to any student in the room and not turn her back on the rest. Another suggestion was to use the overhead projector more effectively, allowing her to teach, write, and watch the class all at the same time.

Alice had experienced a successful student-teaching assignment and had gotten As in her college education courses. But being the sole person in charge of her own classroom was overwhelming. The new seating arrangement and the proficient use of the overhead projector were revelations to her. She decided to give them a chance and agreed to meet again in one week.

At our second meeting, Alice felt more at ease. She said that she felt "less a failure. Things were better, not perfect, but better." This time we concentrated on her lessons and how she delivered them, including the difficulties encountered in each approach.

We met once a week for about four weeks. With each meeting, Alice showed more confidence. Many days were rocky, but she felt as though she was making headway. After four weeks, we decided that we didn't need weekly meetings anymore, but that we would continue our short discussions in the halls between classes.

At the end of the year, Alice and I went out for coffee. She thanked me for my help and said that she had made a decision. My first thought was, "Oh, no. She's going to quit." What she said was, "I'm switching to elementary. I've discovered that what I want to do as a teacher will work much better with younger children." Alice is now in her third year of teaching elementary students. It took only a few chance hallway encounters and four weekly meetings to get this new teacher on track—and on the road to a lifelong teaching career.

Building Confidence

Once new teachers understand their abilities and strengths, they begin to build confidence through their practice. Concrete suggestions from an experienced teacher can pave the way. For example, new teachers often have difficulty beginning a class lesson. Experienced teachers can suggest a simple, but successful, procedure to start a class—putting pertinent information on an overhead transparency for students to follow while giving a 5- to 10-minute introduction to the lesson for the day. If the teacher follows this procedure regularly, the students are engaged because they realize that they will need this information to accomplish the lesson; the teacher is relaxed because the students are listening attentively. This sounds like simplistic advice to an experienced teacher, but it's a revelation for a new teacher.

Once new teachers establish comfortable procedures, they have the confidence to branch out and try new techniques. It is crucial that experienced teachers be available at this time to listen to the ideas of new teachers and to guide them in their implementation. Again, this can and does take place in the hallways and during common preparation periods. What happens next is trial and error, but because the new teachers have already experienced a sense of accomplishment, they won't feel that they have failed when something they try doesn't work.

A new teacher may still utter, "I'm a failure" after a long and frustrating day. But perhaps the experienced teacher in the building who has helped and guided the new teacher for a few months will step in and say, "What happened? If it has to do with a lesson, you didn't fail. The lesson did. Let's talk about what went wrong, why, and what you can do the next time to make it work." This timely kind of mentoring can happen only when experienced teachers take it upon themselves to encourage new teachers. An outside mentor may not be in the building at the crucial time to discuss this matter with the new teacher.

Compassion with a Critical Eye

"Compassion with a critical eye" is a motto I have used when I mentor new teachers in my school. *Compassion* because we are working with human beings who are fledglings in a new profession—people who have a strong commitment to teaching but may be having a difficult time starting out. *A critical eye* because we have the knowledge and expertise to point out issues and to ask the right questions to guide new teachers through the first difficult years.

Whether through chance meetings in hallways or scheduled discussions during planning periods, as experienced teachers we must do all we can to stop the feeling of failure that new teachers inevitably experience. By helping new teachers build a strong foundation, we are giving back to a profession that has nourished us intellectually, psychologically, and emotionally. By mentoring new teachers, we are brought back to our own first years of teaching when someone may have guided us through the rough times. We will remember our failures, but we will also remember our successes. T. S. Eliot in his *Four Quartets*, expressed this feeling best: "We shall not cease from exploration/And the end of all our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time."

