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Learning From the Past—Building for the Future

Tom Ganser

Establishing a mentoring program for beginning teachers is not a new idea; it is an idea that has gained considerable momentum in recent years. The results of a survey of 5,253 teachers in the fifty states and the District of Columbia published by the National Center for Educational Statistics (2001) reveal that 26 percent of the respondents had served as a mentor and 23 percent of the respondents had been mentored by another teacher. Most states now recommend or require induction programs for beginning teachers. A recent report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003) indicates that the number of state induction programs has increased from seven states in 1996–1997 to thirty–three states in 2002; however, not all of these programs call for on-site mentors.

Formally organized mentoring programs for beginning teachers in the United States have existed for more than a generation of teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996). Accordingly, mentoring programs already have a history that can be assumed to offset the need to "reinvent the wheel" in creating new programs or enhancing existing programs. Another advantage of this history is that more and more school leaders readily support mentoring

programs because they themselves have experienced the benefits of mentoring as beginning teachers or as mentors. For example, as a new teacher in 1993, Tracy Hein participated in the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater Beginning Teacher Assistance Program, a mentoring program organized for local school districts. Today, Tracy is principal of Prairie View Elementary School in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, and she reflects,

> My experience as a beginning teacher cements in my mind the importance of mentoring. I would have been lost if I didn't have a mentor. My mentor was a safe person for me. I didn't worry about being judged and had open communication with her. I think sometimes beginning teachers don't ask the questions they should because they are afraid of looking unqualified. The mentor opens up the venue for these conversations. I believe that because I experienced such a solid network of support and guidance, I make a conscious effort to offer that to our beginning teachers at Prairie View Elementary School.

As a result of her experience as a teacher, Tracy is now a strong advocate for the school district's own mentoring program for beginning teachers (and, as Tracy reminds me, even those teachers that aren't so "beginningish").

CURRENT AND EMERGING TRENDS

The history of mentoring programs sets traps for limiting the design, implementation, and evaluation of a mentoring program to what worked in the past. Leading mentoring programs today calls for the ability to understand basic principles of good mentoring that continue to form the bedrock of strong mentoring programs. But leadership also requires expertise at expanding the vision of effective programs beyond enduring principles by taking into account current trends, some evident and others just starting to emerge, that must influence the look and feel of today's mentoring programs to maximize their effectiveness. The purpose of this chapter is to explore these trends in answer to seven critical questions about mentoring programs for beginning teachers:

- Who provides the leadership for the program?
- On what principles or standards is the program based?
- What are the characteristics of the beginning teachers that the program serves?
- Who serves as the mentors in the program?
- How long does the program last?
- How is the program evaluated?
- Where does the program fit into teaching as a profession?

Who Provides the Leadership for the Program?

Early on in the history of organized mentoring programs for beginning teachers, typically the director of instruction, curriculum supervisor, manager of staff development, or someone serving in a similar capacity was solely responsible for designing and overseeing the program. Moreover, a working knowledge of the program, including its intended goals and activities, may have been shared by relatively few members of the school community beyond the program's director and participants. School administrators (e.g., superintendents, principals), teacher leaders (e.g., grade level team leaders, department chairpersons), other teachers, student support professionals (e.g., counselors, social workers, psychologists), and clerical and building maintenance staff may have had scant knowledge about the mentoring program and its relationship to them as members of the school community.

Today, it is still probable that a director of instruction, curriculum supervisor, or manager of staff development is administratively responsible for the operation of a mentoring program. However, it has become increasingly common for these individuals to assemble a steering committee for support in designing the program and in carrying out critical functions such as

- Selecting, training, and supporting mentors
- Pairing mentors and mentees
- Specifying mentoring activities (e.g., conferences, classroom visits, development)
- Professional development plans
- Organizing the various types of meetings typically associated with mentoring programs (e.g., orientation/welcoming meetings, periodic topical meetings, end-of-year celebrations)
- Addressing interpersonal conflicts
- Designing strategies for program evaluation, interpreting results, and using results for program improvement

The members of the steering committee, appropriately described by Portner (2001) as "*partners* in building and maintaining an exemplary mentoring program" (p. 18, emphasis added), can represent a wide variety of interested parties from within the school (e.g., nonmentoring veteran teachers), within the school district (e.g., members of the board of education), and outside the school and school district (e.g., service organizations such as the Rotary Club).

An important aspect of this trend is to include as members of the steering committee representatives of the local teachers' union and faculty from nearby colleges and universities. The two largest teachers' unions in the United States, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, have become very active in supporting mentoring

programs for their members (American Federation of Teachers, 2001; National Education Association [NEA] Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1999). Since 2001, the NEA-Saturn-UAW Partnership Award has recognized 'best practices' mentoring programs that are created and sustained through the joint efforts of both the school district and the union, and have resulted in substantially assisting new teachers in their education careers (National Education Association, 2004). At the local level, memoranda of understanding and labor agreements articulate important features of mentoring programs, including qualifications and selection of mentors and clarifying the nonevaluative role of mentors.

Efforts to include representatives of higher education on steering committees are fitting since changes in state licensing requirements for teachers can include a mentoring component, as well as the participation of representatives of higher education in meeting continuing licensing requirements, such as the development of a professional development plan. More important, linking K–12 schools with colleges and universities responsible for preparing teachers with mentoring programs during their early years of teaching acknowledges the permeability of institutional boundaries and the "seamless" connection between preservice education and the professional development of teachers.

Expanding the leadership of a mentoring program beyond an individual to a variety of program stakeholders shares program ownership among many people who might otherwise feel like outsiders. It also multiplies the number of perspectives and ideas that can address the challenges of program implementation that are sure to arise. However, involving different groups in this way also calls for skill at building consensus.

On What Principles or Standards Is the Program Based?

Although formally organized mentoring programs for beginning teachers are relatively new, as long as there have been schools and teachers working in them, at least some portion of beginning teachers have benefited by being mentored by their veteran colleagues. With the opportunity and backing to overcome the isolation among teachers that the structure of schools all too often promotes, many experienced teachers are predisposed to offer emotional support and encouragement to their new colleagues as they make the transition from "student of teaching" to "teacher of students" at the start of their careers. Clarifying policies and procedures for teachers new to a school, and offering insights into the subtleties of the local school culture, also come naturally to teachers who find themselves serving as mentors with or without the formal title.

As formally organized mentoring programs began to emerge in the 1960s and 1970s, they reflected such intuitive dimensions of mentoring as (1) support and encouragement, especially for young beginning teachers experiencing the day-to-day survival phase of teaching, and (2) assistance

in negotiating the uncertain terrain of school policies and procedures. However, without program goals laying out expectations for mentoring directly related to effective instruction, mentors tended to construct a definition of mentoring that was largely personal in nature and limited in scope.

In recent years, the approach to designing mentoring programs has been significantly influenced by the emergence of professional standards for teaching. Examples include the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium [INTASC] core standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1992), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989), Educational Testing Service's Praxis III PATHWISE assessment system (Pathwise Formative Observation Form, 1995), and Danielson's (1996) framework for teaching. In some instances, these principles have been modified in the creation of state standards, as is the case with the Wisconsin Teacher Standards (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2004) that are variations of the INTASC core standards.

The relationship of mentoring programs to teaching standards is evident in many ways. For example, the roles, responsibilities, and training of mentors; the topics presented at program meetings; and the logging of discussions or planning sessions between mentors and their mentees can be linked to specific standards. Since teaching standards are generally comprehensive, there is little danger that any important aspect of teaching cannot be related to an appropriate standard. Used appropriately, teaching standards provide a foundation for mentoring programs that extends mentoring beyond emotional support, encouragement, and help with routines to address the knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with effective teaching and improved student learning. Using teaching standards as a template for mentoring takes much of the guesswork out of where mentors and mentees should focus their efforts.

What Are the Characteristics of the Beginning Teachers That the Program Serves?

The image of beginning teachers as young adults, typically female, white, and middle class, trained in a four-year baccalaureate degree program, and at the start of a lifetime career in teaching, has always predominated, and justifiably so, even today. However, since the emergence of formal mentoring programs a generation of teachers ago, the percentage of beginning teachers who do not share these characteristics has grown tremendously. Increasing numbers of beginning teachers are older adults who are changing careers, sometimes in dramatic fashion. There is also evidence that some young beginning teachers do not intend to make teaching their career for life. Perhaps even more important, a growing proportion of new teachers have been prepared in alternative route certification programs rather than in traditional undergraduate four-year programs.

In 1984, only 3 percent of teachers began their career after finishing a post-baccalaureate preparation program. By 1999, that number had increased ninefold to 27 percent. As a group, these teachers were about eight years older than undergraduate-program completers. They were also nearly five times more likely to be transitioning into teaching from an occupation outside the field of education. Finally, over a third of them had taught in some capacity previously, compared with about 14 percent of other beginning teachers (Feistritzer, 1999). All in all, their characteristics are quite different when compared with their younger counterparts, and they are increasing in number. These older beginning teachers tend to be more proactive than younger beginning teachers in taking advantage of induction assistance available to them, including mentoring, but they often can feel more scrutinized by family and friends as they make a middle-age move from one line of work to another. And the intensity of their experiences as older beginning teachers can be very powerful indeed.

> I've waited thirteen years to teach school, and it's finally time to begin the school year. It scares me to death! Will I be able to discipline students who need it? Can I gain respect in and out of the classroom from my peers? These are just a few of the questions I keep asking myself. After thirteen years of working outside as a carpenter, I wonder if I will get the "itch" to go back outside and swing a hammer.

Another emerging trend suggests that greater numbers of beginning teachers may not enter teaching for the long haul. In *The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* (http://www.gse.Harvard.edu/~ngt/), Susan Moore Johnson (2004) and a team of six Harvard researchers have found that some young, beginning teachers consciously plan on testing the waters of teaching for two or three years before making a commitment. Others approach teaching from the start as a limited-term public service, similar to serving in the Peace Corps, and never plan on teaching for more than a few years before moving on to another occupation.

Alternative Route Preparation Programs

Regardless of age, career stage, and career objectives, more and more beginning teachers come to teaching via alternative route preparation programs rather than through traditional four- or five-year programs, a growing phenomenon highlighted by keynote speakers at the First Annual Conference (February 1–3, 2004, San Antonio, Texas) on Alternative Certification sponsored by the National Center for Alternative Certification. The structure and quality of alternative certification programs varies considerably from programs that essentially are traditional programs redesigned to meet the needs of working, nontraditional students to programs that are

based almost exclusively on on-the-job training. Alternative certification programs often aim at supplying teachers to urban school districts where staffing demands outstrip the pool of traditionally prepared teachers and at preparing teachers in hard-to-staff areas like mathematics, science, and special education.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2004) supports alternative route programs by funding two programs offering "Innovative and Alternative Routes to Licensure": (1) Troops to Teaching and (2) Transition to Teaching. The Transition to Teaching program also includes "teacher mentoring" among funded "pre- and post-placement induction or support activities that have proven effective in recruiting and retaining teachers" (Sec. 2313 (g)(2)(B)(i)).

Finally, in order to assist states in meeting the "highly qualified" teacher requirement of No Child Left Behind, the U.S. Department of Education permits teachers in some rural districts who are highly qualified in at least one subject to have three years to become highly qualified in the additional subjects that they teach if they are provided with relevant professional development, intense supervision, or structured mentoring.

Variety of Characteristics Requires Flexibility in Mentoring Programs

The primary target of teacher mentoring programs today continues to be the young adult, trained in a traditional fashion and embarking on a career intended for a lifetime, as was the case thirty years ago. However, the continuing and increasing influx of beginning teachers with significantly different characteristics—older, changing careers, not intending to teach for more than a few years, and prepared in nontraditional ways—suggests that one-size-fits-all teacher mentoring programs cannot be viable in the long run. The need for flexibility in mentoring programs is even more critical if they are also intended to serve the large number of experienced teachers who migrate from one school district to another and who are yet another kind of beginning teacher.

Who Serves as the Mentors in the Program?

In the early years of formally organized teacher mentoring programs, the teachers sought out to serve as mentors were hoped to have about eight to fifteen years of teaching experience, to be in a teaching assignment identical in grade level or content area to their mentees, and to teach in a nearby classroom. Having a shared lunch or preparation period was an added bonus. Each mentor was assigned to a single mentee, and mentoring was conceptualized as a one-on-one, face-to-face relationship.

Although these conditions remain desirable today, changes in the pool of prospective mentors and improvements in communications technology

have resulted in a more expansive notion of what works in teacher mentoring programs when it comes to mentors and the nature of the mentor-mentee relationship. For example, one of the trends that has resulted in the need for new teachers—the retirement wave of teachers hired in the 1960s and 1970s—also means that there are fewer veteran teachers available to serve as mentors. Moreover, the same teachers likely to be courted to become mentors are also in high demand to serve in other leadership roles in their schools, school districts, local teachers' associations, and professional organizations and as cooperating teachers for preservice teachers participating in early field experiences, student teaching, and internships. Not surprisingly and as a result, increasing numbers of mentors have either relatively few years of teaching experience or many years of experience compared with their counterparts twenty or thirty years ago. It is also more and more common today that mentors may have different teaching assignments than their mentees, work in different schools—or even be recently retired from teaching.

Mentoring Configurations

It is ironic that just as the expectations for mentoring links are rising, the number of desirable prospective mentors who can both articulate how they conduct their work and guide beginning teachers in mastering rigorous teaching standards and qualifying for more strenuous licensing requirements is getting smaller. In response to this situation, teacher mentoring programs are often organized around a "mentoring team" or "mentoring mosaic" rather than exclusively on a one-on-one relationship between one mentor and one beginning teacher. When a team approach is used, typically one teacher serves as a primary mentor while one or more other teachers step in as secondary mentors. In those cases where the primary mentor's teaching assignment (and possibly teaching experience in general) differs greatly from that of the mentee, another teacher may serve as the grade level or content area mentor. Similarly, if the primary mentor works in a different school, another teacher working in the mentee's school may function as a local mentor. Another variation is that one teacher serves as a mentor for two or more beginning teachers. Naturally, these variations on one-on-one mentoring require clearly described and understood differences in roles and responsibilities.

Impact of Communications Technology

Advances in communications technology have reduced the dependency of mentoring on a face-to-face relationship. Futurist Michael Zey (2001) predicts the emergence of "virtual" mentoring. In Allen, Texas, the Collin County Community College offers the Teacher Certification Program Mentoring Program to support new teachers. "Telementoring" is included

to "enhance face-to-face mentor support though electronic means." This is typically done through computer-mediated communications such as e-mail, videoconferencing, or Internet discussion or chat. Via Internet discussion, mentors provide intern teachers with tested models of support, guidance, and encouragement (Collin County Community College, 2002).

It is possible to combine multiple mentors and communications technology. For instance, a teacher with expertise in some area of teaching, assessment for example, might be asked to host an electronic chat room for beginning teachers for a week or two, focusing on issues related to student assessment. Over the course of the year, other teachers who are not official mentors might interact with new teachers in the school or the entire school district in this way on a variety of topics, for a limited period of time and at a relevant point in the school year.

As necessary and useful as these variations on one-on-one, face-to-face mentoring may be in the context of today's schools, a close professional relationship between mentees and their (primary) mentors continues to be the sign of an effective and successful teacher mentoring program.

How Long Does the Program Last?

In the early days, mentoring programs for beginning teachers were almost always a year in length, starting in August or September and lasting until the end of the academic year. This schedule continues to be the most common format today. Viewing this as the appropriate length of a mentoring program fits with the notion that after a year of experience, a novice teacher is no longer a beginner. Practically speaking, the financial cost associated with mentoring programs can also be an obvious reason for limiting them to a year.

When it comes to program length, the trend in recent years is to extend teacher mentoring programs beyond one year to the second or even third year of a new teacher's employment. Less frequently, the period of time is extended backward by initiating formalized mentoring during preservice preparation in a traditional or alternative certification program. The wisdom of viewing beginning teachers' need for mentoring beyond their first year of work is obvious when experienced teachers are asked, "When did you stop feeling like a beginning teacher?" They usually answer, "After about three or four years."

Multiyear Mentoring

That beginning teachers can derive tremendous benefit from working with a mentor beyond their first year is supported with evidence that new teachers, along with beginners in virtually all other professions, go through predictable stages of professional development over their career (Fessler, 1995; Piland & Anglin, 1993). Most novice teachers move from an

early survival and discovery phase as they adjust their preconceptions of teaching based on biography and limited preservice classroom experiences, through a period of experimentation and consolidation of skills, and into a phase of mastery and stabilization characterizing midcareer.

After an initial period of time developing a working knowledge of day-to-day policies, procedures, and routines; becoming somewhat familiar with the characteristics of the students; and learning more about the curriculum, beginning teachers are ready to focus their energies on developing their capacity to be good teachers. While they may start to reach this stage during their first year of teaching, it is more likely to emerge during the next year. It also can be disappointing to mentors who are eager to guide their mentees in becoming more effective teachers to find that they may not be fully ready for this during their first year on the job.

Extending a teacher mentoring program into a second year or beyond requires modifications of goals, appropriate mentoring activities, and the relationship between mentors and their mentees to maximize effectiveness. In short, more of the same may result in little net gain. For example, the required contact between mentors and mentees may be reduced during the second year and occur at a more subtle level; mentees are likely to be more proactive in determining the direction that mentoring takes. Certainly, the quality of what can be expected during a second or third year is directly related to the quality of the program's foundation as built during the first year.

How Is the Program Evaluated?

The expectations for monitoring formal mentoring programs have changed over time. From the beginning, most mentoring programs included strategies for capturing the perspectives of program participants regarding various dimensions of the program. At a minimum, surveys were conducted near the end of the year to determine participants' satisfaction regarding a host of program elements, ranging from appropriateness of mentor-mentee pairings to the value of guest speakers at program meetings, and even to the quality of the snacks provided at meetings. Less frequently, surveys with similar or identical items were administered at the beginning and midpoint of the year in order to capture changes in participants' perceptions over time. The objective of these efforts was program improvement, but seldom to document the impact of the program on program participants. In some cases, program evaluation was little more than an afterthought.

Since the 1990s, more sophisticated—and useful—evaluation techniques have become a critical part of teacher mentoring programs (and staff development in general, as articulated by Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). Those responsible for developing mentoring programs now aim at systematic program evaluation that extends beyond the reactions of mentors

and mentees to what they learn as a result of participating in the program, to how they are applying what they learn to their work, and to the impact of the program on mentors, mentees, their students, and even the broader school community.

Planning for Evaluation

Planning for program evaluation occurs early on as an integral part of program design and in response to several critical questions:

- What is the purpose of each element of the evaluation plan?
  - To improve the program?
  - To increase program effectiveness?
  - To judge the value of the program?
  - To communicate the value of the program?
  - To show how the program and its activities are related to school priorities and professional teaching standards?

- What sources of information are most important for each purpose?
  - Surveys?
  - Individual or group interviews?
  - Journals or anecdotal records?
  - Self-assessments linked to rubrics?
  - Audiotapes or videotapes (e.g., meetings between mentors and their mentees)?
  - Employment data (related to teacher retention)?
  - Electronic data (e.g., frequency and duration of e-mail communications or visits to a chat room)?
  - Student data (e.g., attendance, achievement)?

- When will the information be collected?
  - At the beginning of the year? Midpoint? End of year?
  - Across the years (for comparison)?

- Who is responsible for collecting and analyzing the information?
  - The program coordinator?
  - An outsider (e.g., a retired teacher or administrator, or a faculty person from a local college or university)?

- Who will assure that the results of program evaluation are actually used?
- How will the program evaluation plan be evaluated?

Today's greater emphasis on the careful evaluation of teacher mentoring programs is understandable, although, ironically, in other parts of the

world the value of a mentoring program for beginning teachers is believed to be so self-evident as to preclude the need for very much in the way of program evaluation (Britton, Paine, Pimm, & Raizen, 2003). Limited resources for mentoring as one of many worthwhile staff development activities force hard decisions as to which activities to support; typically the decision to support a program is based on evidence of its probable or actual effectiveness. It is reasonable to expect sound evidence that a staff development program like mentoring works, even though it is probably impossible to produce the incontrovertible proof that some look for (Guskey, 2000). However, the lack of absolute proof that mentoring works should never dampen the spirit of educators who know the value of mentoring and who are committed to developing mentoring programs as an essential component of high-quality teacher induction.

Where Does the Program Fit Into Teaching as a Profession?

For most of their history, organized teacher mentoring programs have been a nicety for beginning teachers. School districts have supported mentoring programs voluntarily, assuming the availability of at least minimum resources and knowing that it is difficult to make a case against the value of connecting novice teachers with their experienced colleagues. Mentoring programs were viewed as a part of staff development but certainly not a top priority. However, during the past fifteen years, the significance of mentoring programs as part of the profession of teaching has grown exponentially.

As a Requirement for Teacher Licensure

Perhaps the most important change regarding formalized beginning teacher mentoring is that mentoring is increasingly linked to the administrative codes and state statutes as a requirement for teaching licenses. The state of Ohio provides an example. Since July 1, 2002, new teachers and principals in Ohio have been issued a provisional license and have been required to "successfully complete an entry year program with guidelines provided by the Ohio Department of Education" (3301-24-04(A)(2)) (Ohio Department of Education, 2004). In addition, "school districts, chartered community schools, and chartered nonpublic schools, are required to provide a formal structured program of support, including mentoring, to all entry year teachers and principals" (3301-24-04(B)(2)).

A significant change of teacher licensure in Wisconsin, effective August 31, 2004, also requires school districts to provide a mentor for at least one year for teachers, administrators, and other student services personnel (e.g., guidance counselors) who are issued a nonrenewable "initial educator" license (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2005). Qualifying for the next step, the "professional educator" license,

requires the successful design, implementation, and completion of a "professional development plan." This plan must be approved by a three-person team (teacher, administrator, representative of higher education), submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction at the start of the initial educator's second year of employment, and successfully completed within two to four years. In some instances, mentors are likely to serve as the teacher on the three-person team. However, even if mentors are not on the team, they will certainly be called upon to support their mentees during their first year as they formulate their professional development plan.

When mentoring of beginning teachers is tied to licensure, as it is in Ohio, Wisconsin, and thirty other states today (Hall, Chapter 11, this volume), it is no longer just one element of beginning teacher induction support, available if possible and entered into voluntarily, but a high-stakes venture upon which continuing licensure (and, in turn, employability) depends. This context provides a compelling argument for taking great care in the design and implementation of organized teacher mentoring programs with respect to such elements as mentor selection, mentor training, and mentoring activities.

Mentoring Programs as Incentive

Today's mentoring programs differ from programs thirty years ago in yet another very different way. Competition among school districts for hiring teachers, particularly in difficult-to-staff areas, has resulted in the emergence of incentives unimagined in the past, including signing bonuses, forgivable loans, and subsidized housing. Not surprisingly, the availability and quality of a mentoring program also can be an important factor for candidates as they consider applying for or accepting a teaching position, especially if licensure in the state is tied to mentoring. Given comparable opportunities, candidates are even willing to accept a somewhat lower salary if they believe that the available mentoring program will be superior. In effect, the program becomes a recruitment device.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Mentoring programs for beginning teachers have matured since their emergence a generation of teachers ago. They have reached an important stage in their growing status and acceptance as a critical professional development activity that can positively impact the career trajectory of new teachers for a lifetime. Accordingly, it is not surprising that mentoring and mentoring programs are common topics at the annual conferences of influential educational organizations such as the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, American Educational Research Association, Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, Association of

Teacher Educators, International Mentoring Association, and National Staff Development Council.

High-quality mentoring is readily identified today as the heart of effective teacher induction, complemented by a variety of other strategies (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). For example, *Tapping the Potential: Retaining and Developing High-Quality New Teachers,* a recent report by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2004), recommends providing beginning teachers with common planning time and opportunities for collaboration, ongoing professional development, participation in external networks of teachers, and standards-based evaluation, in addition to mentoring. Indeed, when it comes to preventing an inhumane "sink or swim" introduction to teaching that serves neither beginning teachers nor the children they teach, Harry Wong (2001) is accurate in cautioning that "mentoring can't do it all."

There is something remarkable about mentoring that underscores its lasting value for the profession of teaching. Beginning teachers who have benefited from mentoring readily seek opportunities to give back to their profession, often by becoming mentors themselves. And as they enter into leadership roles at the local, state, or national level, they carry an experience-based vision of the powerful bond among teachers that inevitably results whenever mentoring is a supported priority. In this regard, there is no better form of professional development for teachers than a thoughtfully designed and carefully implemented mentoring program.

REFLECTIONS AND APPLICATIONS

This chapter advocates expanding the vision of effective mentoring programs for beginning teachers beyond established principles by taking into account current trends in seven critical areas. Exercise 1.1 asks you to assess how your program currently addresses each of these critical issues and how each might be enhanced based on material in the chapter.

Exercise 1.1 Seven Critical Issues

Directions: In the first column following each critical issue, describe the current status of that issue in your mentoring program and reflect on its effectiveness. In the next column, speculate how applying material from Chapter 1 might enhance the effectiveness of that issue in your program.

Critical Issue	Current Status	Potential Enhancement
Who provides the leadership for the program?		
On what principles or standards is the program based?		
What kinds of beginning teachers does the mentoring program serve?		
Who serves as the mentors in the program?		
How long does the program last?		
How is the program evaluated?		
Where does the program fit into teaching as a profession?		

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