1

Defining the Mentoring Relationship

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

Today, the word *mentor* pops up in many conversations. Famous athletes speak of their coaches as mentors. Business leaders talk about mentoring a newly hired person in the operations of a company (Barrett, 2000). High schools and colleges often place students in apprenticeships with a mentor who is doing the job they hope to have some day. All of these descriptions are appropriate and are based on a trusting relationship between two people.

The term comes from Homer. In the *Odyssey,* Mentor, a wise and learned man, was given the task of educating the son of Odysseus. Mentoring is an intentional pairing of an inexperienced person with an experienced partner to guide and nurture his or her development. The goal for mentor-teachers is not to create clones of themselves but to help their mentees develop into the best teachers they can be. A mentor serves as a guide, a supporter, a friend, an advocate, and a role model (Chapel, 2003; Tatum et al., 1999).

WHY WE NEED MENTORS

School districts often require that novice teachers attend training sessions, expecting immediate implementation of a new idea or concept from

participation in a workshop or a class. Professional development, however, does not happen that quickly, and teachers must practice, evaluate, and adjust new skills before applying them in the classroom. As with any new learning, the opportunity to hear different perspectives, reflect, and rethink is the key to true understanding. Research has shown that when educators have the opportunity to share their teaching experiences or their approaches to new ideas with other teachers, what they have learned in the training moves beyond a mechanical approach and becomes an embedded, effortless skill (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999). As teachers converse about their efforts to use a new idea, an integrated, personalized approach emerges as they make connections between what they already know and do and the idea they are introducing. Reflective, systematic thinking about teaching and learning helps novices become problem solvers who can monitor and adjust their teaching to support their students' learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Gilbert, 2005). Talking to other teachers, hearing differing ideas, and reflecting on their own approaches are vital to educators' continued learning and to putting any skill into practice (Schon, 1990).

The success of new teachers is critically linked to their first teaching experiences and the opportunities they are given to talk through issues they face in the classroom. Linda Darling-Hammond (2003) has identified the first year as the time that often determines whether a person will stay in teaching. The initial experience also shapes what methods and strategies the person will use (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Storms, Wing, Jinks, Banks, & Cavazos, 2000). Those who successfully complete the first year of teaching usually do so because they have connected with another teacher. Gold (1992) developed a process for providing psychological support for beginning teachers and mentors. Her work suggests that "before any assistance can be accepted by the beginning teacher . . . a relationship must be developed between the two individuals" (Gold, p. 30). First-year teachers will often identify a critical friend whom they turn to for support in the classroom and whom they view as a role model. Wise educational leaders will identify and train mentors in practices that foster this support rather than leave this critical component to chance (Hicks, Glasgow, & McNary, 2004).

Educators have also identified the cooperating teacher as the most influential individual in a student teaching program (Pitton, 1994). Since interactions with the cooperating teacher will definitively shape the preservice teacher's future, cooperating teachers need to develop and implement the same practices used by mentors of 1st-year teachers.

WHY WE NEED MENTOR TRAINING

Teaching is one of the few professions that require newly trained individuals to be given immediate and full responsibility; novice teachers are accountable for the learning that does or does not occur in their classrooms. Practicing teaching in the abstract, without students, does not provide novices with the context they need to develop and hone their skills. That is why, before being licensed, student teachers must demonstrate

their competence. Because novices are expected to be accountable for student learning in the same way that experienced teachers are, many states have enacted a probationary status for 1st-year teachers, along with testing and provisions for support. These programs and licensing requirements ensure that beginning teachers continue to learn and grow as they interact with students and the school community (Portner, 2005).

Student teaching and the first year of teaching are critical for supporting a novice's learning. Many scholars have written about the need to support beginning teachers in order to retain them and enhance their knowledge and skills (Cobb, Stephens, & Watson, 2001; Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; Hobson, 2002; Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2003; Moir, Gless, & Baron, 1999; Odell & Huling, 2000). Although mentoring is a key method for providing this help, individuals who assume the task of supporting developing teachers through the mentoring process are themselves not given enough direction or guidance (Giebelhaus & Bowman, 2000; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2000).

A mentor is a guide for novice teachers' journey through their first classroom experience. As mentors move into this new role, their training is critical for success. The learning process for mentor development needs to involve more than just knowledge acquisition; mentors need a range of skills to be effective. Garvey and Alred (2000) state that experiential learning is one of the most effective processes for mentor training. They suggest that because mentoring is a social interaction; learning to be a mentor needs to take place within a social learning context. Active learning, focused on dialogue and conversation, therefore is a necessary and powerful tool that should be the basis for effective mentor training.

WHY BE A MENTOR?

Supportive, nonjudgmental relationships greatly benefit new teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Evertson & Smithey, 2000). Many newly hired teachers often find themselves overwhelmed by the demands of a new job and isolated in a classroom with little time to talk to their colleagues. They may wonder if they are doing things "the right way," and they may feel frustrated when lessons and assignments do not work out as they had planned. Novice teachers often struggle as they work to apply their knowledge in the ever-changing world of their classroom, and many leave the teaching profession after their first year, frustrated and discouraged. The multiple tasks of adjusting to a new environment, dealing with the varying needs of their students, and developing their own confidence while preparing for daily lessons and schoolwide expectations can overwhelm beginning teachers. A number of researchers (Gilbert, 2005; Gold, 1992; Hicks, Glasgow, & McNary, 2004; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000) suggest that novice teachers need support to develop coping skills so they can handle these demands and develop self-reliance. Since 22 percent of all new teachers leave teaching within the first three years (U.S. Department of Education, 1999), it is vital that professional educators develop the capabilities to support beginning teachers (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). New teachers who get the support they need to develop stronger skills can

positively impact hundreds of children in a district. When they leave, the school system must go through the process of finding and developing yet another new teacher, and children lose another potential advocate. By working with student teachers or 1st-year faculty members, mentors can help strengthen the teaching profession and minimize the number of new teachers who leave the classroom for other kinds of work.

Mentoring benefits experienced teachers as well. They often find that assisting other teachers with their careers and goals develops their own potential and brings about a new level of job satisfaction. The mentor's professional growth is enhanced through the collaborative focus of a mentoring relationship (Moir & Bloom, 2003). In effective mentoring, the mentor and the mentee take time to talk together about educational issues, and these intellectual interactions, based on the context of teaching, are vital to the continued development of both teachers (Brock & Grady, 2005; Wolfe, 1992). Thus, a mentoring relationship provides experienced teachers with an opportunity to expand their own learning and to use their teaching expertise in a new way.

A PERSONAL VISION OF TEACHING

Hayes (1999) points out the importance of a mentor's willingness to take on this role and suggests that before experienced teachers consider becoming mentors they need to fully understand what this work entails. Mentors need to know how to use their personal vision of teaching in mentoring, how to support and aid novice teachers, and what is expected of them as mentors. Reflection on these issues can help them provide the best support possible.

There are as many different styles of teaching as there are teachers, and it is important that mentors find a way to describe their personal view of the profession to begin a dialogue with their mentees. When mentors define their vision of teaching explicitly, it becomes easier for them to articulate their educational perspectives and philosophies (Garvey & Alred, 2000). Participants in the mentoring relationship can then come to a shared understanding of what teaching is all about. Having such a dialogue allows mentors to more readily assist novice teachers as they develop their own teaching style.

A simple yet powerful way to describe teaching is through the use of metaphor (Marshall, 1990). By using a literary device to synthesize their view of their work, teachers can visualize their approach to the classroom and share it with others. For example, one high school teacher uses the metaphor of an orchestra conductor to illustrate her vision of what she does. This metaphor represents her need to direct the learning of many different groups. Each group of players or students plays from the same score, but they all play different parts. When all of the parts are added together, they create a whole, beautiful, musical piece. This teacher works to meet the needs of a variety of learners while striving to help them all be successful. Thus, the metaphor of an orchestra conductor works well as a descriptor of her teaching and helps her articulate her vision of teaching.

Metaphors provide opportunities for mentors to begin sharing their visions of teaching without preaching or lecturing. The following activity

can help mentors determine their vision of teaching through a metaphor that can later be shared with a mentee.

Dialogue: A Metaphor for Teaching

1. Compare the experienced teacher's metaphor of a conductor with the following two metaphors given by beginning teachers:
   A. "I see teaching as mountain climbing. As the teacher, I lead the climbers. I struggle to move up the mountain of learning step by step; and after I have made it, I turn and grasp the hands of my students, pulling them up behind me."
   B. "As the teacher, I am like a big fountain showering my students with all they need to know to be successful in my class."

   What does each metaphor say about the beginning teacher? What insights might each description give you about each novice teacher if you were his or her mentor?

2. Develop a metaphor for your own teaching. Brainstorm about the various aspects of your work and take notice of what images come to mind when you think about teaching. Avoid using examples you have heard and develop one that identifies a unique vision of your own teaching.

Once mentors have developed their metaphor, they can extend their personal vision of teaching by sharing the metaphor with a colleague and refining it to meet their vision. Mentors can use Figure 1.1 to clarify their metaphor.

Before sharing their metaphors, mentors should ask mentees to write their own. They can engage in the activity in Figure 1.2 together to begin developing a shared understanding of each other's view of teaching. Mentors who lack a mentor partner can write their answers to these questions and come back to them at a later time to reflect on their answers.

The sharing exercise in Figure 1.2 provides mentors with a process that enables them to define their own vision of teaching as well as to come to a shared understanding of individual visions of teaching with their mentees. The sharing of this understanding is an important first step in the

Figure 1.1 Developing a Personal Metaphor for Teaching

Mentor: State your metaphor for teaching and describe what the metaphor says about your vision of teaching.

Colleague mentor: State your understanding of your fellow mentor's metaphor.

Mentor: Clarify any misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the metaphor by rewording it.

Now reverse roles so both participants have the opportunity to explain and clarify their metaphor.

Figure 1.2 Metaphor Chart

Directions: Make a copy of this chart so each person has one to use. Complete each step, following the directions provided.

STEP ONE

Mentee:

Describe your metaphor for teaching. (i.e., "Teaching is . . ." or "Teaching is like . . .")*

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentor.

Mentor:

Describe your metaphor for teaching. (i.e., "Teaching is . . ." or "Teaching is like . . .")*

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentee.

STEP TWO

Mentee:

Describe what your mentor's metaphor tells you about his or her view of teaching. Write your description below.

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentor.

Mentor:

Describe what your mentee's metaphor tells you about his or her view of teaching. Write your description below.

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentee.

STEP THREE

Mentee:

Add to your description or clarify it if you feel that your mentor's understanding is incomplete or inaccurate.

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentor.

Mentor:

Add to your description or clarify it if you feel that your mentee's understanding is incomplete or inaccurate.

_____

_____

_____

Exchange this with your mentee.

STEP FOUR

Mentor and mentee:

A. Discuss how your revised metaphor reflects your vision of teaching.

B. Answer these questions:

What is unique about each perspective?

What is similar?

How might your unique visions of teaching influence your work together?

_____

_____

*This process applies to developing either metaphors or similes.

mentoring relationship. Without such a dialogue, mentors might view what is going on in their mentees' classrooms only through their own vision. Dialogue about personal views on teaching enables novice teachers to have an opportunity to compare their own vision of teaching with a seasoned teacher's, thus helping them gain insight and perspective. Likewise, it is important that mentors understand their mentees' visions and how they influence their classroom practices and interactions. With this understanding, mentors can support the kind of learning that helps the mentee achieve that vision. Mentors also can help foster a new understanding of what teaching should be.

Unless mentors and mentees are both very clear on how they view teaching and learning, miscommunication and misunderstanding can occur. Though she might not share it, the mentor should remember that the mentee's view is his or her reality and must be considered in all conversations about teaching. Mentors can provide another way for beginning teachers to see teaching by modeling classroom interactions that demonstrate how their visions differ. Then they can ask the novice to reflect on how he or she views the mentor's methods. Through this modeling-reflection process, a novice educator's vision can be shaped to reflect new understanding of the development of teaching and learning.

After the partnership has been in place for a while, mentors should reintroduce the metaphor chart (Figure 1.2) and ask their mentees to make any necessary changes to the description of their metaphors. A good time to do this is either at the midpoint of student teaching or at the end of the semester for 1st-year teachers. This is an opportunity to discuss how mentees are working to actualize the metaphors they created. If they want to rewrite their metaphors at this point, mentors can discuss how mentees might focus their learning to support their visions of teaching. If they modify their original metaphors in a negative way, possibly reflecting frustration or stress, it is important that mentors address those underlying stresses so novices do not base their vision of teaching solely on limited experiences. Mentors can help reaffirm original metaphors or develop new metaphors that reflect newly discovered, but positive, visions of teaching.

Mentors themselves may adjust their own visions of teaching after working with a novice. Gilles and Wilson (2004) have written about mentor-teachers who described the profound effect their novice teachers had on their own teaching. Signals should be checked now and then to make sure each other's perspective is understood. If a vision is renewed or rewritten, the steps that can be taken to support this vision of teaching should be discussed.

ROLES IN MENTORING

Mentoring as a concept varies from one school district to the next. No matter the district, however, it is important that all individuals involved in mentoring know and understand their roles. Lack of clarity regarding mentoring roles can lead to confusion and ineffective support for novice teachers (Brooks, 2000; Chapel, 2003). Whether the process of support is for a student teacher or a 1st-year teacher, the roles of mentors, mentees,

and supervisors comprise the integral triad of the mentoring relationship and must be clearly defined.

To develop mentoring skills, it is important that mentors be given the opportunity to collaborate with other mentors (Garvey & Alred, 2000). The dialogue and reflection components of mentor development need to be provided—either through a formal process or by a group of mentors-to-be who are working together to enhance their skills. To that end, it is highly beneficial if educators working on their mentoring skills find another teacher with whom to share and reflect.

The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (Johnson, 2004) identified the concerns and issues that determine the success of a novice educator. It is important that mentors fully understand the needs, the areas of concern, and the mind-sets of their mentees before beginning mentoring relationships with them. This is not that difficult, since all veteran teachers were once novices themselves. The dialogue on page 9 allows mentors to recall that experience and to hear the experiences of others in order to better understand their mentees.

By examining roles in their mentoring relationships, as well as potential stressful moments and their own early experiences, mentors can identify situations that might arise and brainstorm positive ways to handle them.

Role Descriptions

The relationship that develops between mentor and mentee is vital to the effectiveness of their work together. When all parties know what is expected of them, the mentorship develops into an effective and supportive process (Stanulis, Fallona, & Pearson, 2002). The following role descriptions clarify the roles of each person in the mentoring relationship.

The Mentee

The role of the mentee is to be open to the process, to commit to the relationship, and to continue learning.

Novice teachers benefit from interaction with and support from someone who has been successful teaching in the classroom (Allen, Cobb, & Danger, 2003; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2003). Thus, it is imperative that mentees be open to the idea of receiving input. Although this may seem like a minor point, if mentees believe that they have the necessary skills to be successful in the classroom, they may feel uncomfortable or even threatened by the idea of a process that provides them with support. Many people believe that they need to do it on their own for their success to be real. Some approach their first teaching experience with the belief that it is a sign of weakness or failure to accept help. They must be open to the suggestions and support of their mentors and must view their role as that of a partner with the mentor in strengthening the teaching profession. This is easier for some than for others, but it is critical that mentees recognize this aspect of their role. Mentors can help by discussing the mentee's perception of the process and acknowledging that it is often hard for people to admit they need help. If mentees can identify their concerns about the idea of mentorship, they open the door to the process. Novice teachers who do not feel they need any help and thus do not value the mentoring relationship can be a

Dialogue: Remembering Experiences

Look over the following questions and think about your answers. Share your experiences with another teacher or other mentors and listen to their experiences.

To Start the Conversation

Think back to when you were beginning your teaching career and found yourself in a new classroom on the first day of student teaching.

- What did you expect your classroom-cooperating teacher to do for you?
- How did your cooperating teacher fulfill that role?
- What did your college supervisor do to support you during that time?
- What did you do to make the experience successful?

Then, try to recall your first day as a classroom teacher.

- What kind of support did the district offer you as a newly hired teacher?
- Did you have the opportunity to talk with colleagues before you started?
- Did you find someone with whom you could share your concerns as the school year progressed?
- Did you feel isolated?
- Did you consider quitting?
- If you did consider quitting, what kept you going so that you persevered to become the teacher you are today?

To Extend the Conversation

After you have shared your beginning teaching experiences and listened to the experiences of others in your group, think about how each of the members of the student teaching triad played a role in the outcome of your student teaching experience and answer the questions below. Share your answers with a colleague.

- What might have been different if the mentor had approached his or her role differently?
- What might have been different if the supervisor had approached his or her role differently?
- What might have been different if you, as the mentee, had approached your role differently?

Think about your first job in a school district and try to remember what might have made those first days and weeks less stressful. Try to recall an actual event that was problematic for you during those first days and weeks. Visualize this event and assess the support that was offered. Then, share your answers with a colleague.

- Do you remember how you handled the problematic event?
- Do you think you might have responded differently if you had been able to talk about your ideas and plans with another teacher?
- Did anyone offer you advice that you felt was not helpful?
- Did your principal or another administrator provide you with help?
- If so, how did this feel to you as a beginner?

challenge to mentors who will need to continue to seek informal opportunities to spend time with them. By focusing on developing a comfortable relationship, mentors create situations for developing a deeper exchange.

Beginning teachers also must be willing to commit to the time it takes to work with someone else. Since many pressures and expectations are placed on them, they often consider it easier to work alone than to carve out a few minutes to meet with someone on a regular basis. Mentees' commitment to the process—their willingness to join in all of the mentoring activities and to spend time with their mentors—is a necessary aspect of a positive relationship (Tatum et al., 1999).

It is also important that the mentee sees his or her role as that of a learner. Becoming a successful teacher is an ongoing process. Most college preparation programs focus on the concept of lifelong learning, and this idea should be internalized. Knowledge brought to the mentor-mentee relationship must be used as a basis for discussion. It is important that mentor teachers stress that new understandings do not devalue what has been learned but rather extend knowledge in new directions to help meet the needs of students. If mentees see themselves as lifelong learners, they will be able to weigh new ideas and consider how these ideas fit with their own teaching philosophies. They will conduct action research to find answers to their questions. They will stretch themselves in new directions. Those who want only to perfect the tools they bring to the classroom and not venture in any new directions do not fulfill their role in the mentoring relationship (Maynard, 2000).

The Mentor

The role of the mentor is that of guide, supporter, friend, advocate, and role model.

As a guide, the mentor needs to help the novice teacher negotiate the challenges of the first year in the classroom, whether the beginner is new to teaching or just to a particular setting. Like Socrates, mentors need to provide ideas and encouragement to broaden the repertoire of new teachers so they do more than just survive, but actually extend their skills (Smith, 2005).

In the role of supporter, mentors champion their mentee's development by being accepting and always willing to seek ways to assist, despite differing views or challenging situations. They must resist the desire to create a teacher "like themselves" (Cowne & Little, 1999). Valuing differences and supporting mentees as they learn to develop their own skills and talents are critical aspects of the mentor role.

Mentors do not engage in direct instruction with a novice teacher or make specific demands. They do not impose their knowledge and skills but rather help mentees view things from different perspectives. Mentors do not evaluate novice teachers. If they are asked to evaluate or direct behavior, they are no longer serving as a mentor. A friend, a guide, a supporter, or an advocate cannot provide unbiased information to a superior. If mentors are asked to step into the role of evaluator, the relationship will be irrevocably altered. The evaluation process must be totally separate from the mentoring relationship. Confidentiality must also be ensured, and supervisors need to refrain from questioning mentors about a novice teacher's performance (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

The stress of student teaching or of being a 1st-year teacher can be overwhelming. However, mentors and mentees accept each other the way they are and work through the difficult times, just as in any friendship. Mentors support new teachers by offering ideas and suggestions or lending sympathetic ears as mentees struggle with the complexities of teaching. A nonjudgmental, accepting approach creates a supportive environment that helps mentees manage stress. This professional friendship, which provides unconditional emotional support and understanding for the roller coaster of emotions that novice teachers experience during their initial teaching experience, is an important component of mentoring. (Tatum et al., 1999).

Complex issues and challenges can add to the stress of the first year of teaching. When mentees exercise poor judgment or are questioned by parents or administrators about the quality of their work, mentors may need to step into the role of advocate (Renard, 2003). As advocates, they may be the only people who can speak knowledgeably on behalf of a new teacher, and this may be a difficult and uncomfortable role. But if they have developed a good relationship mentors often feel compelled to step in.

It is most important that mentors also be role models. In all learning situations, hearing about how to do something is never as effective as watching it being done. As Tatum et al. (1999) point out, novice teachers watch everything their mentors do. As most school cultures are quite complex, it is imperative that mentors model the types of behaviors and interactions that are expected. Respect for peers, a student-centered focus, and a collaborative approach to teaching and learning are just a few of these behaviors. Mentors who lead conversations about effective teaching strategies and professionalism but fail to exhibit these qualities themselves are not providing their protégés with complete mentoring.

Above all, mentoring is a social relationship (Garvey & Alred, 2000). Mentors need to be willing to spend time with their mentees so that they can get to know one another. The value of the mentoring process depends on the strength of this relationship.

The Administrative Supervisor/College Supervisor

The role of the supervisor is primarily that of evaluator, although he or she may also serve as an advocate and a supporter.

A principal or a college supervisor has the duty of assigning a grade or writing an evaluation for the novice teacher. The supervisors' observations are tempered by their obligation to document the effectiveness of the beginning teacher for purposes of licensure, continued employment, or tenure. These decisions make it imperative that supervisors not be privy to all of the tribulations of mentees.

The supervisor's role often requires a more direct approach than the mentor's supportive role. Although some supervisors can temper their observations, suggestions, and comments with an air of support, the very nature of their role as an evaluator can create angst for mentees (Feiman-Nemser, Carver, Schwille, & Yusko, 1999). However, supervisors can be of great help to mentors when a mentee is failing to heed comments and guidance. A supervisor's comments can add weight and importance to a mentor's previously discounted suggestions. If mentees are not attempting

to incorporate suggestions from their mentors, supervisors can point out these same issues to heighten awareness. This may be an unplanned occurrence, or mentors may solicit a supervisor's help in focusing the novice on areas where more learning is needed.

Supervisors may also be able to stand up for mentees when questions about their performance arise. Supervisors carry more influence than mentors; if they see potential and effort in a mentee, they can communicate effectively and with authority to those questioning his or her skills. Supervisors may not prefer this role, but it is an option. In taking it on, they can shield beginning educators from undue outside scrutiny that might weaken their progress.

Flexibility of Roles

The roles of supervisor and mentor may be reversed in some cases. During student teaching, the classroom teacher may become more of an evaluator than a mentor, making directive statements to the beginner and offering little emotional support. This shift may occur when the classroom teacher is asked to grade the student teacher (Hobson, 2002). If the mentor or cooperating teacher has evaluative power, the relationship will be adversely affected. In these cases, the college supervisor or school administrator may need to take on the role of mentor to provide an empathetic ear for the mentee.

At other times, the college supervisor, in addition to the classroom teacher, may take on the role of mentor. This creates an extremely supportive environment, but at some point the quality of the student teacher's work needs to be discussed. The college supervisor or the classroom teacher then needs to shift roles to evaluate; when he does so, it is important that he clearly identifies his role as evaluator at that time, so the mentee is aware of the focus of the conversation.

Roles in mentorships are usually more clearly established with 1st-year teachers than with student teachers. A principal who serves as the administrative supervisor and who evaluates all beginning teachers should not ask the mentor for evaluative information. Although principals are interested in the development of beginning teachers and may ask general questions about how things are going, mentors and supervisors should never exchange information about evaluation.

The key to fostering a positive mentoring process is communicating and understanding roles and role expectations (Geen, Bassett, & Douglas, 1999). Mentors can use the prioritizing checklists in Figures 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 to develop a shared understanding of roles in their mentoring triad. These checklists can serve as starting points for a discussion of what mentors and mentees expect from the relationship. They were compiled by experienced mentors from various school districts and reflect the activities that correspond to each role. Each participant in the mentoring relationship should fill out the checklists for all roles, then discuss with the others in the triad why he or she considers an item to be a valid expectation for each role. In this way, perceptions about the roles and responsibilities for all participants in the mentoring experience can be identified and discussed. Participants should explain their priority rankings to each other to clarify

their personal vision of the mentoring process. This type of dialogue clearly defines the roles and expectations of everyone involved and helps create a strong start to the mentoring experience.

Dialogue: Mentoring Roles

- Complete the following checklists (Figures 1.3–1.5) on the mentoring experience on your own before using them with your mentee. Then compare your responses with a colleague—either other teachers who are developing their mentoring skills or a fellow mentor. Are your priorities for mentoring similar or different from your colleagues? How does your vision of these roles impact your approach to the task of mentoring? (If you are working independently, it is important to consider other perspectives and think about how an alternative view would impact a mentoring relationship.) Give yourself sufficient time to reflect on these expectations and identify your level of concern for each item. When you are comfortable with using the checklists, after having reviewed them with a colleague, you can use them with your mentee.
- After all participants in the mentoring relationship (mentee, mentor, and supervisor) have completed all of the forms, share your answers with each other. Discuss any variances in fellow participants' ratings. Address any major differences or misunderstandings. Discuss why particular components of the roles may matter more to one individual than another. Discuss how each individual can adapt and/or compromise his or her vision of these roles to reflect the needs of the others in the triad.
- Although you may find that you want to add items to these lists or move expectations from one list to another based on your particular program, please use the list as it is or create new site-based lists so that all members of your mentoring group have the same items to prioritize and discuss. Be sure to rank each item according to your own values. There is no right answer; this is simply a way to capture ideas about expectations from each member of the triad so these views can be explored in future dialogues.

Figure 1.3 Expectations for the Mentee

The following list identifies the expectations for mentees.

Please prioritize the list by giving each item only one number. Give a score of 1 to the most important expectation, of 2 to the next most important expectation, and so on, through 22.

The mentee will

____ come to the student-teaching semester/first year of teaching exhibiting enthusiasm, a love for learning, and a genuine liking for young people

____ be open to developing a relationship with the mentor

____ be willing to try new ideas and suggestions offered by the mentor

____ bring to the experience ideas for topics and subjects that he or she would like to incorporate in his or her teaching

____ bring to the experience a solid knowledge base, including an awareness of district, state, and national standards

____ bring to the experience a willingness to work hard

____ get to know the facilities, personnel, environment, and political structure of the school

____ be willing to create an interactive classroom via discussion groups, cooperative learning lessons, and by engaging students in higher-order questions, projects, and activities

____ develop lesson plans that reflect varying formats

____ develop and articulate a classroom management plan

____ develop flexible lesson plans that can change when schedules and student needs dictate

____ develop lesson plans that break down a concept and create a process for teaching it

____ identify objectives for the day and lesson (on the board, verbally, or in lesson plan) and share objectives with students

____ implement a variety of assessment strategies

____ commit to teach a unit that he or she develops without relying on a text

____ identify his or her own learning style and explore how this learning style impacts his or her teaching

____ observe teachers from a variety of subject areas and varying grade levels

____ plan lessons that engage students of varying degrees of ability

____ get involved in the total school experience, via extracurricular activities and all teacher duties, meetings, etc.

____ communicate with the mentor-teacher daily

____ exhibit a strong presence—the ability to communicate positively and professionally in the classroom

____ address the various learning styles and multicultural identities of his or her students

Figure 1.4 Expectations for the Mentor-Teacher

The following list identifies expectations for mentor-teachers. Please prioritize the list by giving each item only one number. Give a score of 1 to the most important expectation, of 2 to the next most important expectation, and so on, through 30.

The mentor-teacher will

____ communicate his or her expectations and objectives for the student teacher/1st-year teacher at the start of the mentoring relationship

____ allow the mentee to develop his or her own teaching style

____ (for student teachers) assist the mentee in developing a schedule that identifies the gradual induction process (i.e., one class one week, adding a class and prep on a weekly basis; or two classes of the same prep that can be repeated later in the day, allowing for the mentor-teacher to model a class that will be taught by the student teacher)

____ review the mentee's management plan and inform the mentee of school and district discipline policies

____ provide information about the school and district

____ arrange for release time to team-teach with the mentee early in the semester or year

____ arrange for introductions to other staff members, administrators, and school personnel

____ maintain confidentiality

____ arrange and encourage observations in other classes, levels of ability, and grade levels

____ arrange for the principal to observe the mentee in a nonevaluative mode

____ arrange for social interactions with the mentee

____ identify his or her own learning style and discuss with the mentee how this style impacts his or her teaching

____ provide an opportunity for the mentee to videotape his or her teaching both early and late in the semester or year

____ encourage the mentee to implement a variety of curricular, teaching, and assessment strategies

(Continued)

Figure 1.4 (Continued)

____ model infusion of multiculturalism on a daily basis (beyond the curriculum, as a part of life in the school)

____ model instruction that is differentiated for students with varying needs

____ create a schedule than ensures communication with the mentee on a *daily* basis

____ model effective interpersonal communication skills (in parent conferences, with administration and other faculty, and with students)

____ talk with the mentee about career paths; discuss his or her goals and plans for the future

____ discuss the legal issues of education with the mentee

____ provide the mentee with information on state requirements and mandates and describe processes in place for meeting these expectations in the classroom

____ be aware of what is going on in the mentee's classroom by observing on a regular basis

____ provide evidence of the mentee's classroom interactions and teaching strategies to the mentee following observations

____ review lesson plans for alignment with standards (check written plan and/or have mentee rehearse, discuss, or visualize)

____ provide the mentee with the opportunity to develop and teach his or her own curricular materials

____ review the observational tool (the lens) that will be used

____ offer suggestions in areas requested by the mentee

____ share curricular materials

____ confer with the supervisor as needed

____ serve as advocate when issues or concerns become problematic

Figure 1.5 Expectations for the Supervisor

The following list identifies expectations for the supervisor in the mentoring relationship. Please prioritize the list by giving each item only one number. Give a score of 1 to the most important expectation, of 2 to the next most important expectation, and so on, through 15.

The school administrator or the college or university supervisor will

____ provide regular contact and observation of the mentee during the student-teaching experience or first year of teaching

____ communicate with the classroom teacher on a regular basis (without seeking evaluative information)

____ assist the mentee in addressing future goals and career paths

____ provide seminars during the mentoring experience to discuss relevant issues and provide time for reflection

____ require all student teachers to attend the fall or spring workshop at the site where they will be student teaching

____ make sure 1st-year teachers and student teachers are aware of state and district mandates and requirements

____ expect a broad range of instructional strategies to be implemented and provide staff development/coursework to support this expectation

____ expect a broad range of curricular activities and assessment strategies to be implemented and provide staff development/coursework to support this expectation

____ provide and encourage a selection process in which mentor-teachers are chosen according to their qualifications to serve as master teachers

____ communicate expectations to the mentor-teacher and the mentee

____ address the legal issues associated with teaching prior to the mentee's work in the classroom

____ refrain from using the mentoring process as a means of gathering evaluative information

____ implement a mentoring program that provides support for the mentor (in the areas of time, resources, and training)

____ serve as advocate for the novice teacher when others question the methods or processes they are using

____ when evaluating, provide opportunities for the mentees to discuss observations before forming opinions and generating conclusions about their teaching