



## “Making Mentoring Accessible: Innovation and Technology in Teacher Induction”

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**“Making Mentoring Accessible:  
Innovation and Technology in Teacher Induction”**

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Opening Credits . . . . .	2:30 pm (all times Eastern)
Introduction and Overview . . . . .	2:31 pm
Video and Discussion on Teacher Attrition . . . . .	2:36 pm
New Teacher Center Online Mentoring Dave Herz . . . . .	2:41 pm
BEST Induction and Mentoring with Technology Sharon Kortman, Ed.D. . . . .	2:56 pm
Q and A: Audience and Panelists . . . . .	3:11 pm
Phone Calls and Faxes	
Professional Learning Communities: A Model of Online Mentoring and Induction Christopher Whitbeck, Ed.D. . . . .	3:16 pm
An Innovative Model for Mentoring Teachers in Multiple School Districts Shelby Bivins, M.Ed.D . . . . .	3:31 pm
Q and A: Audience and Panelists . . . . .	3:46 pm
Program Summary and Conclusion . . . . .	3:56 pm
Closing Credits . . . . .	3:58 pm

*\*Subject to change*

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## Participating by Phone, Fax and E-Mail

**YOU** can be a participant, not just a passive viewer, in this videoconference by interacting with the panelists in the studio. Your participation will enrich the videoconference for you and for others throughout the nation who have similar concerns and interests.

There are three ways to interact with the presenter: Call-in, Fax, and E-Mail.

**CALL IN:** The toll-free telephone number for call-in questions is: 1-800-745-0371.  
(If the line is busy when you call, please try again.)

**How It Works:** Your call will be answered by a member of our staff, who will ask for your name and site location. You will then be put on hold. While you are on hold, you will be able to hear the videoconference through the telephone. Stay on the line so we can communicate with you if necessary. If your call should be accidentally disconnected, call again and tell the operator you were disconnected while waiting to ask a question.

Calls will be put on the air "live." When prompted or introduced by the program host, give your name and site location, and state your question(s) as clearly and succinctly as you can. Please be aware that while you are asking your question, you will be "on the air."

**Avoid Confusion:** There most likely will be a time delay between what you hear over the telephone and what you may hear over the audio speakers at your site. This is normal, and you should concentrate on and be guided by what you hear over the telephone. Ignore what you might hear over the audio speakers at your site.

**Better Audio:** To minimize the possibility of any technical or program difficulties that may be caused by audio feedback, we suggest you locate the telephone away from the audio speaker at your site.

**FAX:** You can send your question or comment ANY TIME from now until the end of the videoconference at 3:00 p.m. central time (4:00 p.m. ET) on the day of the live event. The sooner we receive messages via FAX, the better we can respond effectively. Include your name, telephone and FAX numbers, and your viewing site/institution.

Before April 20: (972) 669-6699

**On April 20: (972) 669-6633**

**E-MAIL:** Send your questions or comments to the panelists to [teleconferences@dcccd.edu](mailto:teleconferences@dcccd.edu)

***PLEASE put "Mentoring" in the subject line.***



### The PANELISTS:

**Shelby Bivins, M.Ed.** is the Mentor Coordinator and teaches for the Teacher Certification Program (TCP) at Collin County Community College District (CCCCD), Allen, Texas. In addition to coordinating the mentoring program, Ms. Bivins mentors teaching interns for the TCP. She is a certified PDAS trainer, certified Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) trainer and a certified Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) trainer. Prior to coming to CCCCCD, Ms. Bivins mentored teachers integrating technology into their teaching. She also served as a media specialist and special educator in the Kyrene School District in Tempe, Arizona. Ms. Bivins holds a Masters Degree in Educational Media and Computers from Arizona State University and a Bachelors Degree in Education. Ms. Bivins has been published in Knowledge Quest, the American Association for School Librarians (AASL) professional journal. She is a member of the National Association for Community College Teacher Education Programs. Ms. Bivins has presented at state and national conferences on the topics related to information literacy and mentoring and teacher induction.

**Dave Herz** has fulfilled a variety of roles in his 15 years in elementary education. Currently an Outreach Coordinator for the New Teacher Center, he previously served for three years as a New Teacher Mentor for the Franklin-McKinley New Teacher Project, supporting first and second-year teachers. As an experienced mentor, Dave trains other mentors on both the local and national levels. For the past two years, he has worked to develop NTC-ONLINE, an online resource for new teachers and their mentors. His efforts are aimed at building the capacity of mentors in their use of technology and their ability to model it for their mentees. He also has a role in developing online modules that support new teachers' ability to plan lessons integrating technology. Before leaving the classroom to become a mentor, Dave taught first grade for ten years. He served as a technology lead teacher at his school sites, developing and overseeing three websites and developing strategies for integrating technology into planning, assessment, and delivery of instruction. He also teamed with other mentors to provide professional development for new teachers.

**Sharon A. Kortman, Ed.D.** is a Lecturer in the College of Education at Arizona State University. She is the Director of Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST), a partnership between university and school districts providing comprehensive support and training in the areas of teacher induction, mentoring and preparation for aligning practice to the teaching standards. She has served in var-

ious capacities at all educational levels. She currently teaches Managing the Classroom Culture, Assessment and Supervision of Instruction and trains in all BEST courses for beginning teachers, mentors and professionals evolving in their practice. She is co-author and co-editor of the BEST Beginning Teacher Experience: Program Facilitator Guide, the BEST Beginning Teacher Experience: A Framework for Professional Development, the BEST Mentoring Experience: Program Facilitator Guide, the BEST Mentoring Experience: A Framework for Professional Development, Trade Secrets for Primary and Elementary Teachers and Trade Secrets for Middle and Secondary Teachers. She is also co-author and co-editor of all BEST Standards in Teaching and Visitation Coach curriculum. Currently her research emphasis is in the areas of attracting and retaining quality teachers and strengthening effective teaching practices. In addition, she consults in the areas of personality and interaction styles, which along with support to the education profession, positively affects student achievement.

**Christopher Whitbeck, Ed.D.** is the K-8 Science Coordinator for the Brookline Massachusetts Public Schools. A Graduate of Boston College and The Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Chris combines an interest in Conceptual Microdevelopment theory with computer and video technology to create and facilitate online communities of teachers who work on improving teaching practice and student learning. Chris is the former Science Producer for the WGBH children's television show ZOOM, and contributing author to Teacher to Teacher by Eleanor Duckworth. Chris lives in New Hampshire with his wife and son.

### The Moderator:

**Leticia "Lety" Magaña** has an extensive background as a television moderator and host. Ms. Magana was the host for Dallas TeleLearning's February 20, 2003 teleconference "Copyright Issues Online" and for the "Journey to Health - Mind, Body, Spirit" preview teleconference also in February of 2003. She also served as moderator for two recent STARlink network teleconferences: "Does Your Online Course Need Extra Credit To Pass?" and "Are We Testing What We are Teaching?" And, she has been the moderator for numerous corporate communication productions for clients such as the American Heart Association, Bank ONE, JCPenney, Mary Kay Cosmetics, the Southland Corporation, and Southwestern Bell.

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Dallas County Community College District

# New Teacher Center

University of California, Santa Cruz

Dave Herz

## The New Teacher Center

is a national resource for new teacher and new administrator professional development. The New Teacher Center (NTC) supports essential research, well-informed policy, and thoughtful practices that encourage teacher development from preservice throughout the teaching career. We are dedicated to promoting excellence in the U.S. teaching force and social justice and equitable learning for all students.

▣ **New Teacher Support.** The NTC, in partnership with the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, directs the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project, a California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program. The project serves over 800 beginning teachers in thirty school districts. Our research findings show positive impacts on student learning and long-term teacher retention rates approaching 95%.

▣ **New Administrator Support.** The New Administrator Project (NAP) supports the professional development of beginning site administrators. It offers one-on-one coaching from experienced school leaders who possess strong mentoring skills and have the time and training for the mentor role. NAP also offers a New Administrator Institute and training workshops for new administrator coaches.

▣ **NTC National Formative Assessment System (NTC FAS).** NTC FAS is a teacher development program that allows mentors to systematically set professional goals, analyze student data to inform instruction, and monitor and reflect on professional growth. NTC FAS

can be adapted to state professional teaching standards.

### ▣ **Partnerships.**

Our outreach staff provides training, consultation, and program evaluation related to induction and standards-based teacher and principal development to more than 100 district partners in 22 states.

### ▣ **State and National**

**Dissemination.** Our broad outreach activities include presentations, hosted events, and consultations. The national New Teacher Center Symposium on Teacher Induction attracts more than 800 educators and policy makers from thirty states and four countries. NTC staff regularly present at state and national educational conferences.

▣ **Training.** We offer several statewide and national trainings related to induction program design and implementation. We have trained new teachers mentors and new administrator coaches nationwide. We host an annual Induction Institute and yearlong Mentor Academy series for leadership teams and mentors from across the nation.

▣ **Publications.** We produce and disseminate publications and videos to support teacher development. Our *Reflections* newsletter, with a national circulation of 7,000, focuses on teacher induction and educational reform. Products include training manuals, research papers, the Peer Assistance and Review Reader, and an array of videos to support mentor and beginning teacher development.

▣ **Website.** The NTC website provides comprehensive information about our mission,

staff, services, trainings events, and research ([www.newteachercenter.org](http://www.newteachercenter.org)).

▣ **Research.** NTC researchers study teacher retention and the effects of mentoring on new teacher development, new administrator development, and student achievement. The research team has developed an Online Induction Program Survey for use with new teachers, mentors, and administrators. Researchers also carry out evaluation studies.

▣ **Funding.** The NTC has received funding from the following organizations: Avi Chai Foundation, California Postsecondary Education Commission, Carnegie Corporation of New York, S.H. Cowell Foundation, Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, Flora Family Foundation, Glikberg Foundation, Goldman Sachs Foundation, Walter and Elise Haas Fund, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, Morgan Family Foundation, Noyce Science Foundation, Noyce Foundation, Payne Family Foundation, W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Family Foundation, Stapski Family Foundation, University of California, and Washington Mutual Foundation.



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Dave Herz

**NTC-Online** is an online program designed to complement the existing coaching model utilized by the New Teacher Center. In this model, advisors trained by the New Teacher Center mentor a case load of advisees, who are pre-service or first/second year teachers. NTC-Online builds flexibility into a coaching program and offers advisees multiple avenues for learning, communicating and accessing resources.

**NTC-Online** is a portal that facilitates online coaching by providing group announcements, discussion forums, chat rooms, resource sharing, online messaging, e-mail notifications and calendaring for user groups. Each advisor has a user group of his/her advisees. Additional user groups include all advisors and all users. Broader user groups are also available.

**NTC-Online** also includes online professional development programs that deepen learning and provide real life examples and activities to enrich the coaching experience. The first program, Building an Engaging Learning Community: Classroom Management, draws from the California Standards for the Teaching Profession Standard Two: Creating an Effective Environment. It consists of 12 modules – 6 for elementary and 6 for secondary. Each module features direct instruction, interactive learning activities, online resources, and 3 major example topics, with multiple clips of video for each example. Video clips provide teacher reflections and classroom examples.



### Building an Engaging Learning Community: Classroom Management Module Topics

Building a Classroom: Creating an Effective Physical Environment

Building Appreciation for Others: Promoting Fairness and Respect

Building Collaboration: Promoting Social Development and Group Responsibility

Building Responsibility: Establishing and Maintaining Behavior Standards

Building an Organized Community: Planning and Implementing Routines and Procedures

Building Efficiency: Using Instructional Time Effectively

## Reflection 2

Dave Herz

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Write your thoughts below on the following questions. After you have finished, make sure to save your work with a new file name and submit it to your advisor.

- What are some of the main things you need to consider in setting up student access to materials, supplies and resources?
- What systems did you see that you could apply to your classroom(s)?
- How will you arrange materials in your classroom to promote student access?

Your Name:



## Teacher Induction, Mentoring and More...

Sharon Kortman, Ed.D.

### What is BEST?

BEST is a quality comprehensive teacher induction and mentoring program partnering with school districts and educational agencies to promote professional growth and development for the ultimate support of student learning. BEST includes four program components:

- 1.) BEST for Beginning Educators
- 2.) BEST Visitation Coaching
- 3.) BEST Standards in Teaching
- 4.) BEST for Mentor Teachers

Support is provided for beginning teachers and mentors by developmentally aligned seminars throughout the school year, one-to-one beginning teacher/mentor interactions and choice activities that relate to the context of their teaching and school community. The Visitation Component provides district visitation coach support through personalized need assessments, classroom observations, conferences, model lessons, co-teaching opportunities, data collection and professional growth goal-setting. The Standards Component provides learning opportunities to increase competence in teaching through reflection, goal setting, assessment, documentation of practice aligned to teaching standards, portfolio development and video analysis. The comprehensive program differentiates professional development for teachers throughout their lifecycle of teaching. In every program component an emphasis is placed on the assessment of aligning teaching practice to the outcomes of student standards.

### Why BEST?

Every school should have competent teachers in every classroom for students (A National Forum: Attracting and Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century, 1997). High standards for reflection and ongoing professional growth of teacher practice will assist in retaining those quality educators.

The major reasons for high attrition rates of teachers include skill development, working conditions, retirement, inadequate compensation, and inadequate induction support and mentoring programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Research in the BEST Program has affirmed the need for induction and mentoring support for retention of teachers and for development of excellence in teaching. BEST is responding by addressing the variables that influence teacher development and, therefore, impact the positive professional development and retention of quality educators and the success of students. Students do not just need teachers; they need "great" teachers.

BEST is a nationally recognized model program. All BEST program components have been field-tested in diverse setting, researched for ongoing program development, analyzed for effectiveness and aligned with developmentally appropriate teacher needs. BEST curriculum with embedded assessments provides district specific feedback for continuous program effectiveness.

## Who is benefiting from BEST?

- Students: By providing opportunities for teachers to increase competence, student achievement is positively impacted.
- Teachers: Educators grow professionally in their teaching practice.
- School Administrators: Teachers develop to meet teaching expectations; visitation coaches individually support new teachers; mentors through training and the mentoring process are rejuvenated and refined in their own practice; by teachers working together, increased collaboration benefits the school community.
- Districts: BEST positively impacts students, teachers and administrators. BEST support enhances recruitment and increases retention of teachers. Through effective staff development, classroom teachers evolve into district embedded teacher leaders.
- Communities and States: As a designated researched-based high intensity induction and mentoring program, BEST can be immediately implemented to meet mandated initiatives. Program facilitator guides, accompanying workbooks and additional resources are available. BEST assures quality as well as equality for all educators.

## How can BEST help make you the BEST?

*The MISSION of BEST is to provide a quality comprehensive teacher induction and mentoring program to promote professional growth and development for the ultimate support of student learning.*

BEST can provide a positive impact on teaching and learning for districts, school communities, teachers and students. We cannot afford to have less than the BEST!

Dr. Sharon A. Kortman  
BEST Director

Connie J. Honaker  
BEST Consultant



[www.best-educators.com](http://www.best-educators.com)

<http://courses.ed.asu.edu/best>

[best@au.edu](mailto:best@au.edu)

(480) 965-4339

BEST

Beginning Educator  
Support Team

# the BEST Times

Sharon Kortman, Ed.D.

Volume 6, Issue 6

February 2004

## Understanding Standards for Teachers

Standards for teachers serve as guidelines for effective teacher preparation, professional development and certification. Standards-based teaching includes what teachers know and evidence of competency in identified teaching areas. Ask yourself the following questions in areas of teacher expectations:

### *Do I:*

- ✓ develop clear plans for instruction?
- ✓ implement engaging teaching strategies?
- ✓ routinely assess student learning?
- ✓ effectively manage my classroom environment and student behaviors?
- ✓ positively participate in my professional growth?
- ✓ team with peers?
- ✓ stay current in content?
- ✓ know professional expectations?

Obtain a copy of your state teaching standards for specific criteria.



## Tips for Success

Teachers in standards-based systems teach skillfully:

- Defining their mission
- Organizing curriculum
- Teaching individuals
- Providing sense, relevancy and application to learning
- Actively engaging students
- Caring

The challenge is to integrate standards into effective instruction.

Adapted from *Standards and the art of teaching: crafting high-quality classrooms*. Tomlinson, G. (2001, February). *NASSP Bulletin*, 622. 38-47.

## BEST Highlights

Understand the connection between teaching standards and student performance. Effectively applying the teaching standards in your practice increases student achievement of the academic standards.

BEST Cadre Instructor, Roxanne Creaser, suggests the following tips for connecting teaching standards to student academic standards.

- **Keep a copy of the academic standards that you are expected to teach inside your lesson plan book.** When you are making your weekly/monthly plans you will have them at your fingertips. Study the standards. Ask yourself, "How do my expectations for students compare with the standards?"
- **Highlight the academic standards covered during your lessons.** When you make next year's plans you will already know what standards are covered. Also, identify related teaching standard(s). Many standards offer ideas for lesson plans.
- **Keep copies of your lesson plans.** Use in portfolio documentation of teaching and academic standards for future reference.
- **Note the strength of each lesson in terms of addressing the academic and teaching standards.** This will encourage you to reflect and help in future planning.

## Celebration

"Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another."

—John Dewey

## Mentor Bookmarks

Using the teaching standards:

- **Reinforce** mentee strengths.
- **Dialogue** to set goals in identified areas for refinement.
- **Practice** learned mentor skills.
- **Intentionally** continue contacts.
- **Collaborate** for continued growth.

## Reflections

### Reflective Teaching Practices

Experience is only one aspect of being a good teacher. Masterful teachers *reflect* on their teaching to improve their practice. It is highly rewarding for teachers to take the time to pause and consider their work. The very act of *reflection* is a productive vehicle for professional learning. It enables description of present practice and gives direction to future planning and implementation.

### Questions for Individual Reflection

#### What happened?

For example: It is helpful to note your professional experiences, either as they occur or at the end of the day.

#### Why did it happen?

For example: Examine a lesson and reflect on teacher and student outcomes.

#### What might it mean?

For example: Consider the possible cause and effect relationships between what was planned and what occurred.

#### What are the implications for practice?

For example: Use reflection to plan for future refinements.



## Resources

*A License to Teach: Raising Standards for Teaching.* Darling-Hammond, L., et al (1999). A blueprint for developing a system of teacher licensing based on standards and performance assessments found in other professions. Chapter two, "What Teachers Need to Know and Be Able to Do," provides research and sources that highlight the necessity for strong professional standards.

*Deciding What to Teach and Test.* English, F. W. (1993). Corwin Press (SAGE), Newbury Park, CA.

*Handbook on Research on Improving Student Achievement.* Cawelti, Gordon, Editor. (1995). Educational Research Service. Arlington, Virginia.

*National Curriculum Standards.* About National Curriculum Standards...A listing of Standards for Curricular Areas...Other Sites With Information on National Curriculum Standards...[www.ash.udel.edu/ash/teacher/standards.html](http://www.ash.udel.edu/ash/teacher/standards.html) - 13k

## Administrator Corner

-Connie J. Honaker

### Teaching Standards Provide Focus:

- **Standards provide educators with a common vocabulary.** When teaching standards are stated, all educators have the same expectations of performance when working with students. Teachers can identify their strengths and focus on their areas of need when developing and implementing their yearly professional goals.
- **Standards create an organized method to gather effective practices.** By department, by school, techniques and strategies can be documented and shared aligned with each standard.
- **Standards build teams.** Educators can collaborate for specific best practices in each area. They can document their work—what could possibly be more empowering? If decided, teachers could either collaborate or write for change with supporting data; how powerful!
- **Standards implementation needs to be communicated.** If all educators have the same mission, think where student achievement could go! Priority time needs to be given to explain purpose, develop, understand and practice teaching to the standards. A thorough understanding of their benefits, and then a plan for support, including time and staff development, are essential.
- **Standards performance needs to be modified.** All educators will be inspired not only by common goals, but also by the ability to demonstrate for each other their strengths (another educator's area of need), and impact what the professional skills look and sound like to the benefit of students.
  - Standards provide focus.
  - Leadership provides vision with support.
  - Faculty provides common process.
  - Students achieve!

Administrative support is vital to the promotion and working of the teaching standards. They are an effective frame for the instruction process of a successful school.

### Editorial Staff

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## "BEST Interactive Courseware"

Sharon Kortman, Ed.D.

"Quality mentoring is a critical investment in the development, retention and competence of new teachers—resulting in priceless benefits to school communities and students' achievements. Through the interactive curriculum of The Best Mentoring Experience, veteran educators learn and apply specific mentoring processes, including:

- Behaviors of effective mentoring
- Personality profiling
- Written feedback
- Standards-based mentoring
- Reflective questioning
- Observation techniques
- Mentoring cycle
- Application of systemic support

Computer-based activities reinforce learning by involving the mentor in tutorials, role-playing and simulations that mirror classroom and mentoring scenarios. Mentors provide needs assessments, engage their mentee in competencies, and aid in setting goals and documenting professional growth. Mentor Teachers comment that the BEST program has rejuvenated their teaching practices! Here's to celebrating teaching and learning through the BEST to Mentor Teachers."

Sharon Kortman, Ed.D., Content Specialist  
Executive Director, BEST  
Arizona State University

### Content and Courseware Description

The BEST Mentoring Experience – asynchronous courseware, delivered via CD-ROM to the mentor's desktop, includes video seminars, mentoring interactions and content related reflections.

- Computer mediated learning activities reinforce content by utilizing tutorials and role-play simulations that mirror classroom scenarios
- Course templates enable teachers to create working documents, prepare for classroom implementation and alignment of teaching practice to student outcome standards

### Publisher Info

Textbooks for BEST programs are published by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., Dubuque, Iowa, 2002.  
[www.best-educators.com](http://www.best-educators.com).

- *The Mentor Teacher: Guiding You Through the Mentoring Process* (with Interactive CD-ROM)  
Order info <http://www.kendallhunt.com/cgi-bin/detail.cmd?product=general+isbn=0-7575-0679-8>

The BEST mentoring courseware provides convenient asynchronous desktop delivery via CD-ROM, and is produced by Dallas TeleLearning and distributed by Kendall Hunt. For complete details email [tlearn@dcccd.edu](mailto:tlearn@dcccd.edu) or call 972-669-6650.

To DEMO COURSEWARE, visit our website at <http://telelearning.dcccd.edu>

## **"EMentoring: Professional Learning Communities for Improving Classroom Practice"**

**By Christopher Whitbeck Ed.D.**

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*"Not only do advances in technology influence how teaching and learning occur for students,  
they may influence how educators learn as well."*

*NSDC (2001)*

### **Online Professional Learning Communities**

Incoming teachers and their mentors work in classrooms of students with a wide range of skill levels. Some students have profound learning disabilities, others are profoundly gifted. Students may be under tremendous pressure from their peers not to excel, or they might come with adolescent identity issues or stolen voices. Addressing the needs of all students is difficult. And yet, none of these issues can overcome the determination of a dedicated team of talented teachers who are working collaboratively, who create safe learning environments, and who take responsibility for the improvement of all students.

Successful schools produce students who continually improve their achievement. But this success is built on the work of teachers who hold shared values, work collaboratively, make their practice public, focus on student learning and have built a culture that values reflection, inquiry and analysis of practice. This is the culture of the professional learning community (Kruse, Seashore Louis, & Bryk, 1994).

Many current school structures do not provide the time or support for teachers to meet and struggle with these challenges. However, "Teachers with access to a computer and network service can access expertise, resources, and peers whenever they need or wish." Harasim (1995 p. 12). Using new computer communication technologies such as email, teachers can form collaborative, reflective communities of practitioners that share common dilemmas and goals for learning, and are committed to supporting one another. This is what mentoring is all about.

Online, electronic mentoring provides a forum for incoming teachers and experienced teachers to collaborate with one another, deprivatize their practice, and focus on the improvement of student learning. The challenge is to understand how to structure online professional development to build these high quality collaborations.

### **Three Examples of Online Learning Communities**

The Brookline Public Schools have been investigating online teacher collaboration for the past fifteen years. In 1999 Science OnLine (SOL) (Koufman-Frederick,1999) was established as an email-based project to provide fifth and sixth grade teachers with the support, time, and resources for thinking deeply about new science curriculum units. Moderated by online teacher facilitators, SOL provided a forum to share resources and ideas about developing curriculum units and lessons, and improving student outcomes on activities and assignments.

In 2002 a second project, Electronic Video Case Studies, (eVCS) (Whitbeck, 2003) was designed to create a professional learning community of first through fourth grade teachers working with revised science curriculum. eVCS added a video case study component to the online environment. Teachers videotaped their classes, chose a two-minute segment that was intriguing or puzzling, developed a focus question about the video segment, and then working with an online facilitator, shared the video case study online to begin discussion about student learning and teacher pedagogy. This collaborative community of educators used eVCS as a forum to discuss student understanding and analyze changes in practice designed to affect higher levels of understanding. Over time, eVCS teachers moved beyond sharing resources and engaged in what Manouchehri (2001) describes as "Cognitive Collaboration." This is a type of collegial interaction that focuses on improving aspects of teaching based on evidence from classroom experiences.

The third online community was organized in 2003 to support the face-to-face work of mentors and incoming teachers. It reproduced all of the structural aspects of eVCS - email threaded discussions, video case studies, a trained facilitator moderating discussions, and grade level groupings. It also added a third aspect – structured conversations using protocols from the Nation School reform Faculty (NSRF). Protocols provide organized frameworks designed for specific purposes usually related to the collective examination of teacher/student work. A teacher (mentor or incoming teacher) posts a video with a focusing question. The protocol structure used online was divided into two day segments and took place over two weeks. Following the posting of the video, participants spent two days asking clarifying questions; another two days providing warm and cool feedback to the presenter; two days with participants engaging in a probing discussion – what had they seen, what hadn't they seen, what did they wonder about, what implications did this have for practice – and the presenter was silent and just observed during these two days. Finally, the presenter wrote a reflective email summarizing what they read and what they were thinking.

### **eMentoring: What We've Learned**

The work of the eMentoring project reveals that effective electronic collaboration is contingent upon six important ingredients: 1) institutional support - principals and supervisors have to encourage participation, provide time for video tape training, and access to computers; 2) computer-literate participants and user-friendly technology – the technology must be available and reliable; 3) a defined goal for the online community and an articulated set of rules or norms – teachers needed to know that participation in this community meant that they were making a commitment to changing their practice. They also needed to know what the expectations were for their participation and how they would be expected to interact online; 4) skillful moderation – teachers repeated report that a skilled facilitator is important to the success of the community; 5) a classroom-embedded focus - teachers need to be familiar with the work. They show the most change in practice if they are involved in a community of like stu-

dents or familiar curriculum; and, 6) the use of protocols increases participation and focuses conversation so that participants use time, questions, and comments to effectively analyze and improve student achievement.

While online courses from colleges and universities provide needed training and teacher in-service, true cognitive collaboration (Manouchehri, 2001) requires that professional development be designed in a context specifically relevant to the participants. Because the work of students is a product of teaching, sharing student work with colleagues is analogous to sharing practice. eMentoring has provided a forum to produce a professional learning community in which both the mentors and the incoming teachers grow. This forum has helped to establish a true reciprocal relationship that provides learning opportunities for all involved.

### **References**

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## **"An Innovative Model for Mentoring Teachers in Multiple School Districts"**

**By Shelby Bivins, M.Ed.**

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As new teachers try to make sense of what is going on in their classrooms, the explanations and advice they encounter, especially from more experienced colleagues, affect their attitudes (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

In 2000 the Teacher Certification Program (TCP) at Collin County Community College made the decision to develop a model for teacher mentoring and support that would develop students into effective teachers and retain them in the profession. Since we are an alternative certification program our students are different than traditional education students. Knowing that the classroom environment and student needs have changed dramatically since our students were in secondary school, we wanted a model that addressed the issues that face career changers as well as provide the tools to help these teaching candidates become effective teachers.

Hence the TCP wanted the following components to be present for our teaching candidates.

- 1) Blended delivery of mentoring services with school mentors
- 2) Intensive mentoring services provided by former classroom teachers and/or administrators.
- 3) Formative tools to assist teachers in assessing learners across a continuum
- 4) Professional development that addressed the needs of beginning teachers throughout their first year of teaching.

### **A Variety of Approaches**

The TCP Mentoring Program chose to draw primarily from three models. We used the data collection and beginning teacher self-reflection from the Texas Beginning Educator Support System Model (TxBESS) The mentor collects objective data through classroom observation and provides collegial coaching related to planning and delivering instruction in a learner-centered classroom, promoting equity and diversity in the classroom environment, parent communication and professionalism.

We chose the formative piece used by the New Teacher Center (NTC) – University of California, Santa Cruz because it placed importance on formative assessment as it relates to increasing student achievement. To meet this requirement we incorporated the use of a Student Outcomes Plan (SOP). Interns complete this plan during their first year of teaching. They collect data from a classroom of students, analyze the data and reflect on changes that will promote higher student achievement.

Finally, we wanted our mentor program model to emphasize the importance of an experienced, supportive teaching mentor. The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) Model (Honaker and Kortman) is based on "The Phases of a First Year Teacher" (Ellen Moir-NTC). This self-paced learning model provides the flexibility required for developing effective mentors in multiple school districts.

### **Telementor Support**

Sharing concerns, ideas, and questions with novices and veterans can provide the kind of on-the-spot support that helps teachers meet the challenges they face (Perkins-Gough, 2003).

The TCP chose to incorporate the BEST Model because it provided blended delivery and met the need to train school mentors in multiple school districts. After initial face-to-face training, school mentors used the CDROM and companion print materials for additional self-paced training. An online discussion that aligned with the content of the BEST learning modules served as a forum for continued development. Discussion revolved around common questions asked by new teachers, issues related to time and classroom management and the use of reflective questioning with teaching interns. The discussions also provided a forum for school mentors to enter journal reflections about their overall experiences of mentoring first year teachers.

### **Findings and Future Plans**

Early findings show the following:

- 1) Ongoing training and support are essential to maintain a vested interest in the use of technology driven delivery
- 2) Desire to mentor beginning teachers is essential to a positive collegial working relationship
- 3) "User friendly" technology promotes a higher comfort level in an asynchronous environment
- 4) Higher comfort level in the online environment elicits increased posting to the discussion board
- 5) Delivering mentoring services in multiple school districts is complex

Future plans include

- 1) A pilot of the BEST Beginning Teacher Experience: A Framework for Professional Development (Honaker and Kortman). This is the beginning teacher portion of the BEST model. It closely reflects the professional development component currently offered by the mentor program at CCCCD.
- 2) Implementation of online learning communities among school mentors and CCCCD beginning teachers. Emphasis of these communities would be for data collection, analysis and reflection leading to the goal of retaining effective teachers.

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## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

APRIL 21, 2004      TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE  
1:30 - 3:00 PM CT

JULY 28, 2004      DISTANCE LEARNING NURSING RE-ENTRY PROJECT  
1:30 - 2:30 PM CT

Programs to be streamed and available via the Internet include:

APRIL 2004	CRITICAL THINKING: REQUIRED LEARNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
MAY 2004	CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM USING THE INTERNET
JUNE 2004	ETHICAL DECISION MAKING IN THE PROFESSIONAL SETTING --a special three hour in-service program for professional counselors and heathcare providers
JULY 2004	DOES YOUR ONLINE COURSE NEED EXTRA CREDIT TO PASS?
AUG. 2004	RETIREMENT PLANNING FOR EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES

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