

Mentoring Program for Novice Teachers in Private Catholic School.

by

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CERTIFICATION OF PROJECT CAPSTONE WORK

We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled MENTORING PROGRAM FOR NOVICE TEACHERS IN PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL by CANDICE SULLIVAN, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, Curriculum and Instruction, is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.



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Mentoring Program for Novice Teachers

MENTORING PROGRAM FOR NOVICE TEACHERS IN PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ABSTRACT

We invest in our children and young generation, as they will one day lead this country. Yet, we do not invest in our teachers. Through research it was concluded that mentoring programs for novice teachers can have a major impact on the result of high quality teachers. I report on the features of, challenges, and highlights that emerged during research and formation of the mentoring program for novice teachers. These findings conclude the vital significance of mentoring novice teachers. With the concluding points, a detailed guide was created to assist with mentoring in districts with no mentoring in place for novice teachers. There is a desperate need to provide active mentoring for novice teachers to develop into a high quality educator.

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Introduction

The lack of mentoring programs for first year educators in school districts greatly impacts the quality of educators and the teacher retention crisis. Brenneman 2015 noted: “Among members of the original cohort, 86 percent with first-year mentors were still teaching, with 71 percent without mentors” (p. 8) Novice teachers that receive high-quality support perform better and continue working in the teaching profession. Issues such as stress, work overload, and lack of support from superiors were three recurring red flags in the lack of mentoring (Dais-Lacy & Guirguis 2017).

Research shows that first year teachers who participate in mentorships with other teachers are less likely to change schools or leave teaching early in their careers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Rideout & Windle, 2010). The importance of providing first year teachers with support throughout the first year of service is crucial when considering the quality of an educator and the teacher retention rates. Although funding may be low, or programs may not be put into place, first year teachers should have the opportunity to develop their skills in order to become high quality teachers. Bang and Luft (2014) described working with professional teachers in a mentoring program resulting with the capabilities of efficiently interacting with students and becoming mature in their knowledge of students, teaching practices, beliefs, and content knowledge. Although many opportunities for preservice teachers are in place such as observations, field placements, and student teaching, one would need to consider the support for novice educators. In the following essay, I will provide supporting research that looks at different approaches in relation to mentoring novice teachers. The research will highlight common themes and ideas among mentoring programs for novice teachers. Then I will provide an outline shaping my mentoring program.

In recent years, an enormous amount of research revolving around the importance of mentoring programs for novice educators has increased. Many researchers have studied the impact of mentoring programs in place in order to understand the benefits and structure of a high-quality mentoring program for novice educators (da Rocha, K. 2014). Although teaching opportunities such as student teaching may have occurred, there are school and teaching situations that cannot be imitated in order to produce situations that will arise. Feiman-Nemser (2003) argued that, “[...] beginning teachers have legitimate learning needs that cannot be grasped in advance or outside the context of teaching” (p. 26). In broad terms, the focus of giving novice educators tools to efficiently complete the school year and many years to follow became the priority in all research encompassing mentoring programs.

Experts in mentoring novice teachers, a field with a wide-range of perspectives concerning the importance of implementation of mentoring programs, have generally concluded that creating mentoring programs will not only benefit teachers but students and the community as a whole. For example, the concepts such as relationships between mentor and mentee, mentor policies, effective teaching strategies, habits, and assessments provide criteria that will outline a positive guide on the criteria and implementation of mentoring.

A critical question to consider when considering mentor programs is what exactly is mentoring? Indeed, mentoring can be described in many ways but the ultimate goal is for the mentee to gain knowledge and support from the mentor. Mentoring is a powerful tool that can be beneficial in many ways. In order to make use of a high-quality mentoring program a careful look of research needs to be considered. One study conducted by Bradley-Levine, Lee, and Mosier (2016) explored perceptions of mentoring support. Structured interviews with mathematics and science teachers, their mentors, and the mentoring program were included in

the study. The interview data concluded the following themes: Instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, colleague support, meaningful feedback. The themes are the components of mentoring support that made a difference for novice teachers. Bradley-Levine, Lee, and Mosier bring important research to light. Da Rocha (2014) conducted a qualitative investigation focusing on supporting factors of educative mentoring and communication processes. This investigation was done through questionnaires, expert interviews and group discussions. The article dived deeply into the role, challenges and duties of a mentor. The study concluded with the importance of having necessary components in place in order to make mentoring work. The necessary components in this investigation are the principals' willingness to establish the program and to support the mentors' activities, the mentors' official appointment and voluntary participation, sufficient time slots, and a relationship based on mutual trust between mentor and mentee. I particularly liked how Da Rocha looked at not only the excellent curricular, pedagogical and organizational knowledge but also at social and communicative skills. These qualities are important when considering the attributes of a high-quality mentor. Both the study and project concluded with some important information that allowed me to consider and take shape to my Curriculum Project. The research provided will allow one to create a well-rounded plan to implement for a mentoring program.

My interest in studying mentoring programs for novice teachers stemmed from working at a school without any program in place for novice teachers. I had not considered the concept of a mentor program having a positive impact on all until researching mentoring programs for novice teachers. The teaching position I have at a private low enrolled school includes multiple factors that contribute to the difficulty of not having the needed support. My school does not have the needed resources, funding, same grade level teachers, and so on to support a high-

quality mentoring program. The level of frustration and inability to reach out for help can be stressful. This piqued my interest in high-quality mentoring programs and the implementation of mentoring program.

The purpose for this study is to gather information on high-quality mentoring programs for novice teachers. My curriculum project consisted of an entire mentoring program that can be implemented in a school setting for first year teachers. This curriculum provided alternative routes when considering private or public schools. The information gathered outlined a curriculum project for the creation of a high-quality mentoring program. The high-quality mentoring program included concepts such as providing an array of support, management techniques in the classroom, instructional coaching, personal support, and meaningful feedback. The formation of the mentoring program included a survey that both the mentor and mentee completed for compatibility. The mentoring program also included an agreement and contract focusing on a two-way learning path. An informal and formal feedback process will occur for both the mentee and mentor during the process. Teaching strategies and good habits will expose participants to an array of strategies and positive classroom behaviors. Content that should be covered in the classroom will be included in the mentor program. The content will include curriculum examples, implementation and progress monitoring. It is my hope that my curricular work on a high-quality mentoring program will provide districts with a mentoring program that is easily accessible. In the next chapter, I will review the relevant literature in mentoring novice teachers.

Literature Review

In the previous chapter, I introduced the problem of whether first year teachers without a mentor are effective without the support. My curriculum project created a mentoring program for novice teachers. The mentoring program is easily accessible and can be modified to fit the need of the school, mentor or mentee. This chapter is intended to review the literature on this topic and to see what kind of research has already been done.

The Effects of Mentoring on First Year Educators

A rise within the past decade shows an enormous shift in the ways that critical mentoring programs for first year educators can impact teachers, mentors and the entire school. According to Stansbury and Zimmerman (2002), many novice teachers are ill-prepared to handle the rigorous school day, challenging students, academically, and behaviorally. Novice teachers who exit education in the first year is due to the lack of leadership support (Stansbury & Zimmerman; Inman & Marlow, 2004). The data provided demonstrates the much needed support for novice teachers through the use of a mentoring program. According to Sutch, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2016), public schools employ a higher percentage of novice teachers, yet in the first five years or less, 40% leave the profession. The lack of mentoring programs for first year educators in school districts greatly impacts the quality of educators and the teacher retention crisis. Bowen (1985) noted: "Mentoring can be said to occur when a senior person (the mentor in terms of age and experience) provides information, advice, and emotional support to a junior person (i.e., the mentee) in a relationship lasting over an extended period of time and marked by a substantial emotional commitment by both parties" (p. 12). School districts with low funding and limited numbers of educators have been particularly affected by the lack of mentoring opportunities with first year educators. In the last decade, induction programs for new teachers

have been springing up across the United States to help retain and support new teachers working in high poverty, high-need schools (United States Department of Education, 2004). The importance of providing first year teachers with support throughout the first year is crucial when considering the quality of an educator and the teacher retention rate. Davis (2008) remarked that, “Implementation of effective teacher mentor programs is vitally important to a teacher's professional success and can have positive impacts on student achievement and staff morale” (p. 87). Although funding may be low, or programs may not be put into place, first year teachers should have the opportunity to develop their skills to become high quality teachers. Bang and Luft (2014) described working with professional teachers in a mentoring program resulting with the capabilities of efficiently interacting with students and becoming mature in their knowledge of students, teaching practices, beliefs, and content knowledge. Although many opportunities for preservice teachers are in place, such as observations, field placements, and student teaching, one would need to consider the support for novice educators.

Creation of a High Quality Mentoring Program

Many researchers have investigated the effects of novice teachers when provided with high-quality mentoring programs. Moir (2009) noted: “When districts and schools organize to accelerate new teacher development, they break the cycle of inequity and provide children who are most in need of a quality education with teachers capable of helping them” (p. 15). One major focus was on the creation of the mentoring program. Mentoring programs that are in place may need to try a different approach to have the outcome of a high-quality mentoring program. Bradley-Levine, Lee and Mosier (2016) studied perceptions of mentoring support through structured interviews with mathematics and science teachers. The study followed a three-year mentoring program. The 12 novice teachers received mentoring. 6 of the 12 novice teachers

received mentoring from mentors in the school, while the other 6 received mentoring from mentors through a university partner. The study consisted of structured interviews from science and mathematics teachers, mentors, and program administrators. The study found an array of perceptions of the mentoring program as a whole: “Support structures available to novice math and science teachers across schools vary, the (Teaching Fellowship) TF has had to be adequately flexible to meet the needs of each novice teacher” (p. 80). Based on this research, a high-quality mentoring program could include instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, college support, meaningful feedback, etc.

Online Mentoring Alternative

An alternative method discussed in the literature was the use of online mentoring. Bang and Luft (2014) interestingly researched an online mentoring program for two first-year secondary science teachers. This case study was explored using examination of their dialogue within the program and data. This resulted in an effective dialogical tool used in order to transfer the knowledge of experts to new teachers. Bang (2013) found that elementary science teachers who participated in three different computer-mediated hybrid mentoring programs developed unique ways of professionally interacting with their mentors, which resulted in an increase in their pedagogical content knowledge, as well as an increase in their confidence teaching science. This study provides a different approach when considering mentoring. Anthony and Kritsonis (2006) found that the online mentoring model is critical for beginning, alternatively-certified teachers who are likely to be teaching in mentor-free environments with low-performing students, compared with the environments and students of their experienced colleagues. Educators that do not have the luxury of having a mentor in the area can have access through online sources.

Two-way Learning Path

Another major focus found throughout research regarding high-quality mentoring programs for novice teachers was the importance of a two-way learning path. Kupila, Ukkonen-Mikkola, and Rantala (2017) conducted a thematic content analysis of qualitative narrative data. The narrative data was from narrative writing on the mentor training program. The study looked at the interpretations of trainee mentors and the change over the course of a mentoring program. Before the study, mentees viewed mentoring as a one-way learning path. That ideal slowly evolved into a two-way learning path between mentor and mentee. Another author that demonstrated the two-way learning path commented: “It is considered a valuable means of facilitating learning through reflection on personal experience, developing confidence and skills, and dealing with problems in professional relationships” (Aubrey, 2011, p. 10). The mentor and mentee need to reflect on their own experiences in order to discuss and assess possible goals and accomplishments. The two-way concept of mentoring creates a relationship between the mentor and mentee. When working closely with someone, having a positive relationship can help mentors and mentees work as a team. As educators we should constantly have the initiative to look for new ways to educate. Through the two-way learning path both the mentor and mentee benefit from the mentoring program.

In conclusion, this literature suggests that there is an enormous amount of research representing the importance of mentoring during the first years of teaching. Research indicated that a high percentage of schools that implement mentoring programs for novice teachers demonstrated high quality curricular, pedagogical and organizational knowledge but also social and communicative skills. These skills resulted in benefiting the novice teacher, mentor and entire school. Bang and Luft (2014) remarked that, “The induction of new teachers into their craft is one of the most

critical parts of this improvement process” (p. 26). Improvement in teacher’s performance will always result in a better successful classroom environment.

Therefore, the purpose of the curriculum project is to complete an entire mentoring program that can be implemented in a school setting for first year teachers. This program will have a focus on providing a low income private catholic school with a mentoring program. This curriculum will also provide alternative routes when considering private or public schools. The primary goal for this project is: Implementing a mentoring project for novice teachers. The next chapter will describe how the mentoring program was created and what the program will look like in a school setting.

Method

Introduction

The purpose of this curriculum project was to create a mentoring program for novice teachers that outlines and guides the mentee, mentor, and district. The completed curriculum addresses the problem that novice teachers without mentors are more likely to lack professional development, emotional and psychological support and a higher chance of leaving the profession. This curriculum was specifically created for a Catholic school, Western Chautauqua Catholic School (WCCS), located in Western New York but can easily transfer to any other private or public setting, as discussed in the Validity section below. When considering the teacher attrition rate last year at WCS, 8 out of the 16 teachers have left the field.

This type of curriculum is thus essential for many reasons. According to Will (2017), 12% of all public-school teachers are in their first or second year of school (p. 12). This makes the need for creating a mentor program. Some of the mentor programs that are created are not high-quality. These mentor programs may lack some very important components that create a high-quality program. The high turnover rate for teachers is at a constant factor for private and public schools in New York. According to Ingersoll (2001), nearly 40% of teachers leave the profession within their first 5 years on the job (p. 505). Nine percent of public school teachers nationwide leave before they complete their 1st year in the classroom, and over a fifth of public school teachers leave their positions within the first 3 years after entry; the attrition rates are even higher in the more disadvantaged schools (Delgado, 1999, National Center for Education Statistics, 1998). Mentoring first year teachers is a vital component for creating lifelong successful educators. Creating a well-rounded mentoring program that considers mentee, mentor, and the district allows novice teachers to grow, gain a wide variety of experience, and become the best educator they can possibly be. Dr. Sharif Shakrani (2007) stated that, “Improving

beginning teachers' work environments, providing more professional development in areas that new teachers find most challenging and increasing support such as induction and mentoring are bound to have a positive effect on new teacher retention rates in Michigan and across the nation (p. 4)." Ultimately, novice teachers can become lifelong, successful educators, which will benefit the students, district, and even the community. Although the author understands the challenges that may arise when presenting and implementing the mentor program, the benefits outweigh these challenges. This includes considering other mentor programs used in both private and public schools, as well as making novice educators feel more comfortable in their profession. In the following essay, I will detail the methods conceptual frameworks, audience, procedure, scope and sequence, validity and conclusion.

Conceptual Frameworks

Novice teachers

For the purpose of this thesis, novice teachers are defined as beginning educators; that is, starting to develop personal philosophies and developing teaching skills. Typically, novice teachers are considered new to the profession with less than 5 years of teaching experience. Throughout this study, the author refers to a new and less experienced teacher as a "novice teacher." The term novice teacher was also termed in many studies as a beginning teacher, pre-service teachers and neophytes. Sawchuk and Rehora (2019) stated that, "Nationally, 12 percent of all public-school teachers are in their first or second year, according to an *Education Week* analysis of new data from the U.S. Department of Education's office for civil rights. And in some states, that figure is more than 15 percent" (p. 8). Novice teachers make up a significant number of educators, so it is important to consider the ways that their districts are supporting them.

A mentor is classified as an individual who is experienced and able to train and advise someone who is new to the position. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) defined mentoring as the personal guidance provided by seasoned veterans to beginning teachers in schools, for purposes of planning, application, and evaluation. One of the most important skills needed to have is communication so that the mentor and mentee can establish a professional relationship.

Richardson and Richardson (2018) commented: “Communication competence on the part of both the mentor and the mentee was the one single skill most needed for a successful partnership” (p. 4). The need of mentors has increased significantly in the teaching field. Elfers, Plecki and Wunderlich (2017) noted that, “On average, approximately 10 percent of beginning teachers working in all other districts are predicted to exit the teaching workforce one year later, compared to approximately 6 percent of their peers working in BEST-funded districts with full-fledged induction programs” (p. 16). It is critical for the success of the mentor program to provide a high-quality program in order to keep teachers from leaving the profession. Using mentoring programs, novice teachers become high-quality educators.

Audience

The curriculum created for this project was intended for a school of 16 educators and one administrator. Eight out of the 16 educators were considered novice teachers, while 5 were not considered novice educators but were new to the school. The remaining three teachers were considered experienced with 20 plus years of teaching experience. The classrooms can use this curriculum project for districts such as Dunkirk, New York. The average class size ranges from 5-12 students. WCCS has a small student body with a total of 98 students from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

The location of the school is in Dunkirk, New York. Dunkirk is a city with a population of 11,848 (United States Census Bureau, 2017). The city's racial make-up included 87.9 % White/Caucasian, 30.9% Latin/Hispanic, 4.2% African American, 0.5% Native American, 0.4% Asian American, 1.8% from other races and 3.3% from two or more races. The median income for a household in the city was 34,707. Most WCCS teachers reside in the surrounding area. The curriculum is intended for WCCS, which has no current mentoring program for novice teachers. The mentoring program is specifically created for a small school that only has one teacher per grade level; for example, there would only be one fourth grade teacher.

Procedure

During the development of this curriculum, the author took the following steps:

Step 1: Step One: Author's Background

The researcher was born and raised in Dunkirk, NY, the setting for this curriculum project. She attended and graduated Dunkirk High School in 2010. Following her graduation from high school, she attended Jamestown Community College North located in Dunkirk. The author truly has a love for her community and will always contribute in a positive way.

Step Two: Choosing a Topic

Initially the author had intended to conduct research; however, seeing that the problem was a local problem, she opted to create a curriculum project. Her first idea was to investigate the impact of afterschool programs and the impact of the students' choices after graduation. She felt that, although this topic was important, her interest weighed more toward novice teachers in the teaching field. She had hope for attempting some type of benefit for the community to increase its graduation rates. The author reflected on her own experiences and decided to look

further and found that the impact of educators in the field contributes greatly to the success of students in the area.

Step Three: Conducting a Needs Assessment

The researcher was interested in working at WCCS) as a teacher specifically in Dunkirk, New York. In order to establish the ways to implement a mentoring program in her community and to help generate her curriculum topic, she conducted a needs assessment in order to determine the types of programs that were already being implemented. She searched via the Internet, conversed with colleagues, and called various community organizations to ask about local availability to novice educators. Through her investigation, she discovered that there were programs available for teachers in the Dunkirk City public school district. She also found that there were online mentoring programs that can be utilized by any school. Although the Dunkirk City public school district had mentoring programs in place, there was still room to enhance the program. With the focus of WCCS as a school with no mentor program in place, the need to focus on the creation of a mentor program was established.

Step Four: Identify the Audience

Throughout the author's years of education through SUNY Fredonia, she was well-informed about the high attrition rate among teaching professionals. The author determined that there was a significant need to offer WCCS novice educators that did not attend a public school district's professional development programs with a mentoring program. The majority of the WCCS is made up of novice educators, as defined above. With the researcher's own history of studying the impact of educators on students, she determined that focusing her curriculum on working with novice educators would be the most applicable approach for her hometown. It

would allow her to use her skills and to implement the instructional strategies from her academic background, while benefiting a vast number of novice educators in the area. According to

Step Five: Determine Mentor Course Requirements

It was necessary to reach out to a reputable agency that would be able to support the development of this project. The author contacted her local school district schools in Dunkirk, NY and a local program (Chautauqua Striders) in order to inquire about curriculum and instruction criteria for mentoring programs and other related requirements. With the consideration of the policies in place and the connections related to the school, the author was able to conduct a higher quality outlook of the mentor program. Upon communicating with Dunkirk district instructors as well as the Dunkirk principal, it was discovered that Dunkirk does have specifications for mentoring novice educators. This gave the researcher the liberty to use and design the program around the guidelines that were already in place within the community of Dunkirk, New York. This also gave me an opportunity to provide a purpose to enhance the local district's mentor program.

Step Six: Conduct Literature

The author began her research with the use of the SUNY Fredonia library's online database. The Educational Resources Informational Center (ERIC) database was the primary source for obtaining information. The researcher began by searching terms such as *mentor*, *attrition*, *novice*, and *educator* as well as others in a variety of combinations in order to find empirical articles about her topic. She made certain that a core number of articles and resources came from reputable sources and were peer-reviewed. After weeks of finding a great number of articles and information relevant to her topic, the author then decided to reach out to local schools in order to learn more about their programs and online mentoring options. After

successfully finding significant research on her topic, the author began to synthesize the literature and to organize it based on apparent themes.

Step Seven: Use the Local District's Framework to Plan and Design a Mentor Program.

The author conducted research and gathered examples from local districts. The examples from a local district provided an outline of items to include within a mentoring program.

Through research the author was able to decide upon the details that were missing from the program provided and the ways in which to recreate the program while considering the need of the school and to adjust it to a high-quality mentoring program. She also considered multiple online mentoring programs. This option is an accessible one considering that there is no money in the budget to implement a mentoring program within the school of WCCS. These seven steps provided a clear procedure for the author to follow.

Scope and Sequence

The curricular process began with informally interviewing mentor programs that are already in place as well as schools without mentoring programs. The interviews included questions regarding the support provided in order to help novice teachers. The findings demonstrated the need for improvement in instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, meaningful feedback and online mentoring programs. The items below explain the outcomes that are expected during the mentor and mentee interactions. These considerations should be a growing opportunity professionally for both the mentor and mentee.

Instructional coaching

Instructional coaching provides the mentee and mentor with opportunities to discuss the curriculum. The mentor will be able to discuss the curriculum completely because they have taught the curriculum for many years. Instructional coaching should be seen as providing suggestions and not a prescriptive approach in which the mentee tells the mentor how to teach. The mentor will provide examples and suggestions of the methods that have worked in their classrooms with their students.

Differentiated instructional support

Providing support in differentiated instructional methods should be included with the mentoring program. This demonstrates the different ways that a mentee would go about educating all students. The mentee should stress the importance of meeting all students' needs through differentiated instruction. This can be a challenging concept and the mentor may need to provide emotional support with a positive attitude. In the studies reviewed, novice teachers emphasized the stress related to meeting every student need. Based on the literature, first year teachers leave the field of education due to the lack of administrative support, inability to manage personal and professional expectations, limited teaching resources, lack of professional development, and difficulty handling behavioral problems in the classroom. There is an increased rate of attrition by as much as 50% of teachers leave teaching within the first three to five years (Le Maistre & Paré, 2008, p. 560). The mentor can provide examples of the strategies that worked well in his or her classroom along with suggestions based on the mentee's specific classroom.

Classroom Management Support

Classroom management support can be a challenging yet a rewarding piece of mentoring. This will be one of the most hotly discussed points during meetings between mentors and mentees. The mentor will be responsible for providing professional and emotional support to the mentee. If the mentor cannot seem to assist with a situation that has arisen, then it would be the mentor's responsibility to direct the mentee to someone who can. This can be a valuable time for both mentees and mentors to grow professionally.

Personal support

Along with academics and ways to approach classroom management, personal support is another piece that mentors and mentees should consider. When a novice teacher enters the field, it can be tough to balance work and home life. Most educators have after school obligations such as children, and a second job. Finding a healthy balance can be critical to everyone's mental health. Having a friendly and welcoming person to talk to can help relieve stress. Teaching is an enormous responsibility. Most educators bring work home and spend hours grading and planning. The mentor can assist with management techniques in order to help alleviate some of that stress.

Meaningful feedback

Meaningful feedback is critical for the success of both mentors and mentees. The ways in which the mentor responds to the mentee can be the difference between developing a positive outlook on the problem the mentee faces or continuing with a negative outlook. The goal for the mentor is to empower the mentee and to bring the mentee up to their highest professional ability and performance.

Online programs

Online programs can be a tool used for both mentors and mentees.. If for some reason the mentee is not able to work with a mentor from the school due to incompatibility or unavailability a mentor from online would be assigned. This can become a valuable tool because there will be no connection to the school that will eliminate any negative connotation regarding the school.

The first step is to have both mentors and mentees complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire is in place in order to pair up mentor and mentee. The questionnaire includes questions related to their backgrounds, needs and preferences. Once the mentors and mentees complete the questionnaire, the mentor administrator looks over all questionnaires and pairs the mentors and mentees based on their backgrounds, needs and preferences.

The second step is to have checkpoints in place. These will be times when the mentor supervisor checks in with both the mentors and mentees. The supervisor will sit in on one of the planned meetings on a monthly basis in order to observe and to make suggestions. The supervisor will attend professional development sessions twice a year, which will enable them to provide high-quality feedback. Supervisors will be well-experienced educators that are willing to grow and work with a variety of teachers. The supervisor as well as the mentor will be provided with a stipend of \$100 for completing the two-year program with the mentee and mentor. The formal planned meetings between mentor and mentee will follow an outline provided by the supervisor. The outline will include discussion points in relation to instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, and meaningful feedback. The formal planned meetings will be conducted once a month. The formal planned meetings should not be the only point of contact between mentors and mentees. The mentor should be available within reasonable hours in order to guide and to relieve the novice teacher.

There should be less informal meetings and points of contact as the two years of the mentoring program period come to an end.

The program will cover all elements of the creation of a mentor program for novice teachers and the consideration of not only the mentee but mentor and district. The program will be in place throughout two years starting in July through June. This will end with a gradual end to the program, releasing less assistance toward the last three months of the program during the second year. It is important not to rush through the mentoring program in order to enable the program to work to its fullest potential. The author intends novice educators immersed fully in the program with checkpoints throughout both years. This will act as an assessment for the program and will allow both the creator of the program, mentee, mentor and district to reflect.

Validity

One of the limitations faced by this curriculum is that the curriculum is catered to a private Catholic school. Public schools may find that some steps or examples will not apply. This will be regarding any religious events or examples. Depending on other districts and their policies the mentoring program can easily carry over to other schools. The framework could always be modified to fit the district. Mentors can also have an idea of what to expect from novice teachers and how to best accommodate their needs.

In addition to the religion component, the information regarding the online mentoring may not be the most suitable situation. Some districts may have low funding or a small amount of technology, which could ultimately hinder the option of using online mentoring.

Although the writer of the curriculum intends to adjust the program to fit the needs of the school, the school may decide on an alternative way to approach the curriculum. With the

hesitation of whether the curriculum is beneficial, the districts may feel as though there is a better mentoring program available.

Conclusions

Through the creation and implementation of a mentoring program for novice teachers, I have high hopes to increase the support of novice educators. I hope to decrease the turnover rate with novice educators. I hope to create a program that will better prepare first year teachers for the vigorous yet rewarding year ahead of them. The program will also aim to create an experience in which mentors and the district gain education and prepared for new mentees. The following chapter will present the results of the mentoring program project. This will include the full scope and sequence of my project, including any materials that would be used with the target audience.

Results

In the previous chapters of this thesis, I have introduced the mentoring program that I have developed for novice teachers. I have researched mentoring programs and the importance behind mentoring novice teachers. I have concluded that there is need for improvement in the following areas: improvement in instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, meaningful feedback and online mentoring programs.

The purpose of this curriculum project was to create a mentoring program designed specifically for a private Catholic school. The following section contains the layout of the mentor program that forms the center of my curriculum project. Items mentioned in the layout are included for use and may be modified in order to fit the need of the school, mentor and mentee. Following additional resources are provided as alternatives.

The curricular process began with informally interviewing mentor programs that are already in place as well as schools without mentoring programs. The interviews included questions regarding the support provided in order to help novice teachers (See Appendix A).

The findings in various research demonstrated the need for improvement in instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, meaningful feedback and online mentoring programs. The items below explain the outcomes that are expected during the mentor and mentee interactions. These considerations should be a growing opportunity professionally for the mentor, mentee and school.

Instructional coaching

Instructional coaching provides the mentee and mentor with opportunities to discuss the curriculum. The mentor will be able to discuss the curriculum completely because they have taught the curriculum for many years. Instructional coaching should provide suggestions and not

a prescriptive approach in which the mentee tells the mentor how to teach. The mentor will provide examples and suggestions of the methods that have worked in their classrooms with their students.

Name:

Date:

Session #

Instructional Coaching

Instruction Topic	Possible Strategies and Goals	Additional comments

Differentiated instructional support

Providing support in differentiated instructional methods should be included with the mentoring program. This demonstrates the different ways that a mentee would go about educating all students. The mentee should stress the importance of meeting all students' needs through differentiated instruction. This can be a challenging concept and the mentor may need to provide emotional support with a positive attitude. In the studies reviewed, novice teachers emphasized the stress related to meeting every student need. The mentor can provide examples

of the strategies that worked well in his or her classroom along with suggestions based on the mentee’s specific classroom.

Name:

Date:

Session #

Instructional Coaching

Topic	Techniques and goals for differentiated instruction	Additional Comments

Classroom Management Support

Classroom management support can be a challenging yet a rewarding piece of mentoring. This will be one of the most hotly discussed points during meetings between mentors and mentees. The mentor will be responsible for providing professional and emotional support to the mentee. If the mentor cannot seem to assist with a situation that has arisen, then it would be the mentor’s responsibility to direct the mentee to someone who can. This can be a valuable time for both mentees and mentors to grow professionally.

Classroom management problem	Classroom management intervention suggestion/goal	Additional comments

Personal support

Along with academics and ways to approach classroom management, personal support is another piece that mentors and mentees should consider. When a novice teacher enters the field, it can be tough to balance work and home life. Most educators have after school obligations such as children and a second job. Finding a healthy balance can be critical to everyone's mental health. Having a friendly and welcoming person to talk to can help relieve stress. Teaching is an enormous responsibility. Most educators bring work home and spend hours grading and planning. The mentor can assist with management techniques in order to help alleviate some of that stress. Personal Support may include the following items: Improving the ability to cope with stressful situations, Alleviating the effects of emotional distress, promoting lifelong good mental health, enhancing self-esteem, promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors, etc. The variety of personal support can be endless. The mentee is not a professional counselor but should be able to provide personal support for different situations.

Meaningful feedback

Meaningful feedback is critical for the success of both mentors and mentees. The ways in which the mentor responds to the mentee can be the difference between developing a positive outlook on the problem the mentee faces or continuing with a negative outlook. The goal for the mentor is to empower the mentee and to bring the mentee up to their highest professional ability and performance. Meaningful feedback can be delivered in many ways. For example, the mentee can visit the mentor's classroom while a lesson is taking place. Through the lesson, the mentor can stop and make comments. These comments could range from delivery techniques or how behavior management was handled. For example, a sentence might sound like "Did you see how I did that lesson? I taught social studies but I also managed to turn the assignment into a writing piece. I was able to focus on two subjects instead of one." This is a form of meaningful feedback because the mentor was modeling an area that the mentee was struggling with. Another sentence that might sound like meaningful feedback is "Did you see how I handled Jonny with the behavior problem? Proximity control is one form of classroom behavior but I could also use daily conferences or check-ins. Depending on the severity and how often the behavior occurs you can use one or multiple interventions. This is a form of meaningful feedback because the mentor provided multiple approaches and provided a positive attitude toward handling difficult behaviors. Video modeling is another approach to giving meaningful feedback. This can be a recording of the mentor, mentee or an example found online. Meaningful feedback should be done in a variety of ways. Modeling, providing examples etc. there is no one way solution to providing meaningful feedback but rather an abundance of strategies.

Online programs

Online programs can be a tool used for both mentors and mentees. If the school lacked experienced teachers or the willingness to mentor, the use of online mentoring could be put into place. If for some reason the mentee is not able to work with a mentor from the school due to incompatibility or unavailability a mentor from an online source would be assigned. This can become a valuable tool because there will be no connection to the school that will eliminate any negative connotation regarding the school.

The first step is to have both mentors and mentees complete a questionnaire (see Appendix A). The questionnaire is in place in order to pair up mentor and mentee. The questionnaire includes questions related to their backgrounds, needs and preferences. Once the mentors and mentees complete the questionnaire, the mentor administrator looks over all questionnaires and pairs the mentors and mentees based on their backgrounds, needs and preferences.

The second step is to have checkpoints in place. These will be times when the mentor supervisor checks in with both the mentors and mentees. The supervisor will sit in on one of the planned meetings on a monthly basis in order to observe and to make suggestions. The supervisor will attend professional development sessions twice a year, which will enable them to provide high-quality feedback. Supervisors will be well-experienced educators that are willing to grow and work with a variety of teachers. The supervisor and mentor will be provided with a stipend of \$100 for completing the two-year program with the mentee and mentor. The formal planned meetings between mentor and mentee will follow an outline provided by the supervisor. The outline will include discussion points in relation to instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, and meaningful feedback. The formal

planned meetings will be conducted once a month. The formal planned meetings should not be the only point of contact between mentors and mentees. The mentor should be available within reasonable hours in order to guide and to relieve the novice teacher. There should be fewer informal meetings and points of contact as the two years of the mentoring program period come to an end.

The program will cover all elements of the creation of a mentor program for novice teachers and the consideration of not only the mentee but mentor and district. The program will be in place throughout two years starting in July through June. This will end with a gradual end to the program, releasing less assistance toward the last three months of the program during the second year. It is important not to rush through the mentoring program in order to enable the program to work to its fullest potential. The author intends novice educators to be immersed fully in the program with checkpoints throughout both years. This will act as an assessment for the program and will allow the creator of the program, mentee, mentor and district to reflect.

Conclusions

The purpose of this curriculum project was to create a mentoring program designed specifically for a private catholic school. The completed curriculum addressed the problem that among teachers the high turnover rate is correlated to a lack of mentoring for first year teachers. I hope to decrease the turnover rate with novice educators. I hope to create a program that will better prepare first year teachers for the vigorous yet rewarding year ahead of them. The program will also aim to create an experience in which mentors and the district gain education and prepared for new mentees. The curriculum intends to completely outline a mentoring program so that a school can utilize the material with a low stress and low prep concepts. This is the only

Catholic private school in the area and the author is from the area, do to the personal connection the author would love to see the teaching field flourish!

Discussion

Introduction

This curriculum project was developed by gathering the current data regarding high quality mentor programs. The curriculum described above will provide a district with the opportunity to welcome and nourish novice educators into the field of education. The guidance provided throughout the mentoring program will help assist districts, mentors and mentees in understanding the expectations and protocols to follow. The alarming teacher turnover rate demonstrates a need for programs in place to guide and reduce stress related to novice educators. Dembytska (2016) noted: “High teacher turnover in American public schools, particularly in low-income and high-minority urban public schools, puts psychosocial function of mentoring at the forefront of induction programs” (p. 6). As a novice educator with no mentor program in place, I perceived the necessity of having this organized, easily accessible mentor program. For more than decades, mentoring has gained its popularity and has been recognized to be an effective way in helping novice teachers to deal with challenges facing them in their first years. Not only beneficial in reducing teachers’ retention, many studies found that mentoring can help create a supporting climate for enhancing novice teachers’ knowledge and for personality development as well as career advancement. Bond (1999) argued that mentoring is claimed to be “triple win situation” in that all parties involved benefit from it in different ways” (p. 19). Thus, the rationale for this curriculum project was two-fold: to enhance novice teachers’ abilities when implementing the program, as well as, to unify the quality of the school including the mentor, principal and district. In the final chapter of my thesis, I will discuss the significance, limitations and future investigations in relation to the mentoring program for novice teachers.

Significance

This curriculum project matched the initial design to give an overview of a high-quality mentoring program; in addition, this project went into each component of the mentoring program. Notwithstanding, it gave a wide range approach for the implementation and usage of a mentoring program. Furthermore, this program addressed the issue of teacher retention rates, high quality teachers and networking among professionals. Simply described, this curriculum provides mentors, mentees and supervisors with a specific role in order to guide their part in the mentoring program. Wherefore, upon reading this program, mentors, mentees and supervisors will have a better understanding of the intent of the mentoring program; they will learn that, for example, there are multiple components and checks in order to maintain that healthy relationship between mentor, mentee and supervisor. The key components include conferences that will provide a two-way learning path, forms that guide discussion and lead to connections, and the additional piece of a supervisor to make sure both parties are satisfied. features. However, even though this program investigated a variety of approaches, components and features, this project would further benefit from a future expansion on private mentoring or, expansion on each section of the program. For example, a deeper explanation as to how classroom management support would assist a novice teacher. Hence, even if this curriculum project did not provide models, it did repeatedly provide consistent areas to the mentoring program such as Instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, colleague support, meaningful feedback. This project demonstrates a two-way learning path with the consideration that everyone will grow professionally and academically. Aubrey (2011) demonstrated the two-way learning path, commenting: “It is considered a valuable means of facilitating learning through reflection on personal experience, developing confidence and skills,

and dealing with problems in professional relationships” (p. 10). The mentor program allows for the mentor and mentee to work together with a semi-structured outline. The outline is a guide that assists with the overall experience. Bang and Luft (2014) described working with professional teachers in a mentoring program resulting with the capabilities of efficiently interacting with students and becoming mature in their knowledge of students, teaching practices, beliefs, and content knowledge. Through the use of this program and the research behind the program the mentee, mentor and supervisor will become well rounded in the professional field of teaching. The well rounded aspect is demonstrated from the use of the program and is significant because everyone will grow positively. The curriculum conforms with the recommendations provided throughout the research.

Limitations

Constructively, upon developing this mentoring program, there were limitations in this curriculum project; additionally, there are limitations in the field of research in relation to private Catholic schools and the information regarding the best strategies available for mentoring. The amount of research regarding private Catholic schools provided a limited amount of data which altered the research. A larger portion of the studies focused on public schools. Another limited component to the research was the lack of information on how to implement a mentoring program with a small school. The lack of information on how to reach out to other districts and online sources was not provided thoroughly. Although the mentoring program can be altered and utilized for different schools both private and public the research had a focus on public school districts.

There are also limitations with a lack of research available in relation to each area of the mentor program. The different areas in the mentoring program such as instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, colleague support, meaningful feedback are not heavily explained as well as provided with examples. Across the different types of research, in the areas are emphasized as important components in mentoring programs, there is a huge lack of information. In conclusion, this mentoring program is limited to public school mentor program rather than information on the ways to provide a high-quality program for public schools.

Future Investigations

If given another attempt to approach this research project, it would be best to include examples of discussion templates filled out. I would provide a variety in order to see the ways in which a conversation could occur while completing the discussion template. This would include case studies of mentors, mentees and supervisors with their stories and background information on teaching. The reason for the need of case studies is not to program conversations but to demonstrate the depth and different viewpoints that a discussion can produce between mentor, mentee or supervisor.

This program investigated a variety of approaches, components and features, this project would further benefit from a future expansion on private mentoring or, expansion on each section of the program. For example, a deeper explanation as to how classroom management support would assist a novice teacher. This mentoring program project is unique in that it breaks down the different areas of the program. The program takes you through the process and is clear in its approach. I would eventually like to expand on the different areas providing multiple templates and pathways when participating in the two-year mentoring program.

Another consideration is the fact that, like students, adults learn in different ways. I would like to investigate expanding the different ways to educate adults as this is critical when creating a program for adults. Cercone (2008) also reminded us about the challenges facing adult learners today such as “multiple careers, fewer stable, social structures to rely on, living longer, and dealing with aging parents” (p. 14). We know that learning is not a one-way path and can be done in many forms. This mentor program could be used in the future for in-service trainings for teachers in the local areas. This would be a form of modeling the program for the local school districts. Principals, teachers etc. will be able to see examples of forms and other documents used during the previous year. This will be a great opportunity to expand the program while assisting other districts.

Conclusions

This curriculum project set out to implement a mentoring program. As Hartsuyker (2007) has noted: “The first year of teaching can be fraught with difficulties for even the most capable graduates; and for many beginning teachers (BTs), in both Australia and abroad, a negative first-year experience results in them leaving the profession” (p.). The stakes are high when considering the lifelong impact of a teacher’s first year of experience. It is critical that this topic is addressed and correctly handled. Although there were limitations in the constructive research, providing research on private mentoring or, expansion on each section, this project was successful in providing a detailed outline regarding the ways in which to implement and use a mentoring program for a district/school without one. Indeed, there are many other aspects to consider in the further creation of helpful projects for mentoring novice educators, this curriculum project was made as a program that could be easily altered to fit any school setting. When our teachers are well supported, education becomes quality and the environment

demonstrates a community atmosphere. Through the use of this mentor program I am confident that the teachers will perform at a quality rate providing the best education for our youngest generations to come.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Compatibility Questionnaire

Name: _____

Directions: Please circle Yes or No & complete the two short answer questions.

Have you participated in a discussion on the curriculum? This includes suggestions and ideas on how to teach the curriculum.	Yes or No
Have you discussed different classroom management techniques? Do you feel comfortable with knowledgeable with discussing classroom management?	Yes or No
Do you discuss personal obligations and coping techniques that provide a connection with the mentee?	Yes or No
Do you provide meaningful feedback? Do you give examples, demonstrations and assistance on lessons, planning and other items related to teaching?	Yes or No
Do you offer online mentoring or other forms of mentoring outside of the school?	Yes or No

Please provide a detailed summary of the positive elements of your mentor program in the space below.

Please provide a list of how you would want to improve your mentoring program. Think about your first teaching years and what would have benefited you as a teacher.

Appendix B:

Questionnaire:

Name: _____

Directions: Please circle Yes or No & complete the two short answer questions.

Have you participated in a discussion on the curriculum? This includes suggestions and ideas on how to teach the curriculum.	Yes or No
Have you discussed different classroom management techniques? Do you feel comfortable with knowledgeable with discussing classroom management?	Yes or No
Do you discuss personal obligations and coping techniques that provide a connection with the mentee?	Yes or No
Do you provide meaningful feedback? Do you give examples, demonstrations and assistance on lessons, planning and other items related to teaching?	Yes or No

Do you offer online mentoring or other forms of mentoring outside of the school?	Yes or No
<p>Please provide a detailed summary of the positive elements of your mentor program in the space below.</p> <p>Please provide a list of how you would want to improve your mentoring program. Think about your first teaching years and what would have benefited you as a teacher.</p>	

Appendix C:

Supervisor Check-in

Supervisor Check-in

Mentor and Mentee Name: _____

Check-in # _____

Date: _____

Purpose: _____

Topic (instructional coaching, differentiated support, classroom management support, personal support, meaningful feedback and online mentoring programs etc)	What was discussed during the meeting?	What was concluded? What specific goal was set?

Appendix D: CITI Human Subjects Training

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)**COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS***

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Candice Sullivan (ID: 6626524)
- **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)
- **Institution Email:** Sull4888@fredonia.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Education
- **Phone:** 7164678710

- **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Group 1.
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Record ID:** 24619425
- **Completion Date:** 27-Sep-2017
- **Expiration Date:** 27-Sep-2019
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score*:** 94

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14080)	27-Sep-2017	3/3 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	27-Sep-2017	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 587)	27-Sep-2017	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

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COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Candice Sullivan (ID: 6626524)
- **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)
- **Institution Email:** Sul4888@fredonia.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Education
- **Phone:** 7164678710

- **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Group 1.
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Record ID:** 24619425
- **Report Date:** 27-Sep-2017
- **Current Score**:** 94

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 587)	27-Sep-2017	No Quiz
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)	27-Sep-2017	4/5 (80%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	27-Sep-2017	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	27-Sep-2017	5/5 (100%)
Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14080)	27-Sep-2017	3/3 (100%)

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