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An Evaluation of Novice Teachers' Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience in Knox County Schools.

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An Evaluation of Novice Teachers' Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience in Knox County Schools

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by

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ABSTRACT

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Teacher retention is a growing problem in the 21st century. Many veterans teachers are reaching retirement age and there are increasing numbers of new teachers entering school systems.

School administrators across the state of Tennessee realize that there is a significant number of beginning teachers who are leaving the teaching profession within the first 3 to 5 years of their teaching careers. Beginning teachers are being surveyed to determine why many leave the profession. After gathering input from beginning teachers across Tennessee, school officials began to develop teacher mentoring programs designed to retain beginning teachers.

The purpose of this quantitative study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Knox County Schools system's teacher mentoring program, New Teacher Induction (NTI), for beginning teachers.

The participants in this study were novice teachers (with 1 to 3 years of teaching experience). Two hundred novice teachers were invited to participate. Thirty-eight (19%) participants responded to the first survey. Efforts were made to increase the response rate through reminder emails. Reminders emails were sent 3 times. Hard copies of the participant letter and survey instrument were mailed to the novice teacher group during the 2nd data collection to increase the

participant responses. Thirty-one responses were collected during the second data collection. Sixty-nine (34%) teachers participated in this study.

Findings of the study are congruent with the literature in terms of perceptions of beginning teachers regarding the effectiveness of their mentoring experience and recommendations for enhancing mentoring programs. Most of the novice teachers indicated that their mentoring experience was successful. Many of the novice teachers also said that they attribute their decision to return to their school the following year to their successful mentoring experience.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the people who supported me throughout the process of achieving my doctorate degree.

To my parents who prayed many prayers for me to complete this dissertation.

To my father, Lysander S. Waters, for giving me the leadership skills and the guidance that helped mold me into the lady that I am today.

To my brother, Sebastian Waters, who always gives me a word of encouragement.

To my grandmother, Estella W. Brown, who always believes in me and loves me unconditionally.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teacher retention is a growing problem in the 21st century. Many veteran teachers are reaching retirement age and there are an increasing numbers of new teachers entering school systems. According to Kronowitz (1992), 15% of teachers left within the 1st year of teaching. With the demands increasing consistently upon educators, higher education administrators have found it difficult to attract college students into their education programs (Kronowitz). Teachers today are being asked to teach technological and analytical skills to students from a broad range of backgrounds, prepare them to read and write at sophisticated levels, think critically, and to apply their knowledge to solving real-world problems (Kronowitz).

Today, statewide experiences with teacher shortages and high attrition in the early teaching years have heightened the concerns of legislators and state education officials across the nation. The present shortage of kindergarten through 12th-grade public school teachers has been caused by multiple factors that are playing out differently in every state. Historically, fewer and fewer college students have been entering the field of kindergarten through 12th-grade education.

Perhaps the most concerning trend, however, is over the large numbers of prepared teachers who are leaving the field. Researchers on teacher attrition in the late 1970s and early 1980s reported that 25% of prepared teachers either never taught or left the profession within a few years (Croasmun, Hampton, & Herrmann, 1997). More recent data indicated that only about 60% of teacher education graduates entered the profession. According to Darling-Hammond (2000), among graduating teachers 22% left in their first 3 years in the classroom, and nearly 30% left the profession by the 5-year mark. A recent study from the Texas Center for Educational Research (1999) showed that 19% of new teachers left after only 1 year in the profession, "primarily because they fail to get badly needed professional support" (p. 2).

According to the NEA Foundation (1999), demographic and policy trends now lend greater importance to mentoring programs, perhaps more than at any other time in education's history.

Increasing student enrollments, an escalation of teacher retirements, and the popularity of class-size reduction efforts in many states have presented serious challenges to school districts seeking to ensure the quality of classroom instruction (NEA, 1999). Concerted action must be taken to assist the anticipated two million new teachers who will enter the profession within the next decade and uncounted numbers of experienced teachers who will assume new assignments. Ingersoll (2001) found that many of the teachers who despaired over job dissatisfaction and unsupportive working conditions left the profession early. High turnover among new teachers—up to 50% quit within the first 5 years—had kept schools staffed with untried novices who lacked the skills needed to help students reach higher academic standards (Ingersoll).

> Novice teachers often feel the pressure to maintain high student achievement as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is providing parents, educators, and the public with historic levels of information about how schools in the United States are performing. Because of this law, we have data to show whether schools are meeting state benchmarks for student achievement in math and reading, whether they are holding students of all races and income levels to the same standard, and whether students are being taught by highly qualified teachers. In addition, when students and schools fall behind, the law provides families with options such as free tutoring and the ability to transfer their child to a better-performing school (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

The NCLB Act under Title I establishes performance goals for each school. The goal of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is for all students to be proficient in the English-Language Arts and Mathematics by 2014. Annually, about 16% of teachers have left the schools in which they worked; however, they were almost twice as likely to leave high-poverty schools (Ingersoll, 2001). Such high turnover rates within schools have created considerable costs in terms of both

the financial impact and the overall effect on student learning. Even by conservative estimates, it costs a minimum of $12,000 to replace a teacher who leaves a classroom (Ingersoll, 2001).

Today, among all college graduates, six percent enter into the teaching profession. Ballinger (2000) indicated that that even if a large number of teachers could be trained, the probability of retaining more than half of them was low because it was estimated that 30% to 50% of new teachers left the profession in their first 3 to 5 years.

The National Education Association (2006) said that mentoring and professional development was among the solutions to the problem of retaining teachers. The National Education Association reported predictions that 2,000,000 new teachers would be needed in the next decade.

This high turnover rate leaves a negative impact on school systems and imposes a financial burden to find quality replacements. School systems are left with the responsibility of hiring competent education professionals as well as being able to absorb the cost associated with preparing beginning teachers.

In order to reverse the attrition rate among beginning teachers, many school systems have created teacher-mentoring programs. It has been suggested that developing mentor-novice relationships helps to create a shared vision of educational beliefs and ultimately contributes to the retention of educators in the teaching profession. Mentoring has been explored as a potential mode for professional development, as an avenue for improving practice, as a strategy for retaining teachers, and as a catalyst for social change in schools (Feiman-Nemser &Parker, 1993; Griffin, Winn, Otis-Wilborn, & Kilgore, 2002; Odell & Huling, 2000; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wang & Odell, 2001; Whitaker, 2000). Teacher mentoring programs are developed with the goal in mind to help retain good beginning teachers. Mentoring programs serve as a support system to help beginning teachers with the many job duties and responsibilities that are placed on the beginning teacher in the 21st century.

Statement of the Problem

Significant numbers of beginning teachers have been leaving the teaching profession in Tennessee within the first 3 to 5 years of their teaching careers. Tennessee state and local public school officials have developed teacher-mentoring programs to increase the teacher retention rates.

The purpose of this quantitative study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Knox County school system's teacher mentoring program, New Teacher Induction (NTI), for beginning teachers.

The 2007-2008, novice teacher group will be surveyed using the Novice Teacher Perception Mentoring Evaluation (NTPME). The survey instrument was developed and tested by the University of Tennessee-Knoxville for Knox County Schools and utilized a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). In this study, additional demographic information was used to conduct a quantitative analysis of the data.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the Novice Teacher Perception Mentoring Evaluation (NTPME) survey between male and female novice teachers?

$Ho1_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers?

$Ho2_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

Research Question 3

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers?

$Ho3_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

Research Question 4

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers?

$Ho4_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho4_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimensions of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers

Research Question 5

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad?

$Ho5_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

Research Question 6

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or not meeting AYP?

$Ho6_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

Significance of the Study

A 2005 poll released by The Hart-Harris Polling Results revealed that the majority of Americans said that they wanted to improve teaching quality by investing heavily in teachers—in their training, mentoring, and salaries—even if such investments resulted in higher taxes (Hart-Harris Polling). This information could be useful to administrators, lead teachers, lead mentors, and core mentoring teams in terms of results. The format includes an interview design that allows the teachers to provide information about the perceived effectiveness of their mentoring experiences.

Knox County Schools has invested in the New Teacher Induction program because the school system has credited the mentoring program as the best way to share knowledge, experience, and expertise throughout the school system. Effective mentoring programs involve matching talented, experienced teachers (mentors) with promising, less experienced teachers

(novice teachers). Over time, working one-on-one, the mentor, novice teacher, school system, and the students will reap the benefits.

The results of the study could be used to help school systems, mentors, and mentoring teams to determine the level of support that is needed by beginning teachers. This study could create open relationships between mentors and novice teachers to help reduce the attrition rate. This study will address the perceptions of the novice teachers involved in the mentoring program in Knox County Schools.

Definitions of Terms

1. *Mentor* - a wise and trusted counselor or teacher (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006).
2. *Beginning teacher (novice):* The definition of "novice" according to Merriam-Webster is "one who is inexperienced or untrained." Knox County Schools school system has defined a novice teacher as any teacher having fewer than 3 years of classroom teaching experience.
3. *Mentor teacher:* Mentor Teacher means any teacher holding a standard certificate who is employed in a school district to serve as a teacher and who has been trained to provide guidance and assistance to a novice teacher employed by Knox County schools. A mentor teacher shall be a classroom teacher and have a minimum of 3 years of classroom teaching experience as a certified teacher and has been granted tenure in Knox County Schools (Knox County Schools, New Teacher Induction Program, 2007). Mentor-a wise and trusted counselor or teacher (Random House Unabridged Dictionary).
4. *Adequate Yearly Progress* (AYP): is a series of annual academic performance goals established for each school, local educational agency (LEA), and the state as a whole. AYP is required under Title I of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. States commit to the goals of NCLB by participating in Title I, a program under

NCLB that provides funding to help educate low-income children. The primary goal of Title I is for all students to be proficient in English-language arts and mathematics, as determined by state assessments by 2014 (Department of Education State of California, 2007).

5. *Project Grad*: Project GRAD is founded on the belief that there is a relationship between a student's family life, discipline problems, math achievement, reading achievement, and future goals. Project GRAD seeks to simultaneously address the numerous factors hindering a student's performance in kindergarten through college (Project Grad Knoxville, 2008).
6. *New Teacher Induction Program:* The new teacher induction program is both a county-wide and school-based effort to support the induction of all beginning teachers in the Knox County school system. Researchers clearly indicate that the effectiveness of the classroom teacher is the greatest indicator of student success and that high teacher turnover clearly impedes the ability of a school to research its improvements goals. Researchers also strongly recommend that all school systems establish and build induction programs specifically designed to help teachers meet the challenges of their context and to enable and enhance their sustainability over time. The new teacher induction program has three components: (Knox County Schools, New Teacher Induction Program, 2007).
    a. *Welcome and overview*: At the beginning of the school year there is an intensive training and overview focusing on essential information all teachers need to know. Novice teachers meet the central office personnel and receive an overview of the policies and procedures of the Knox County Schools (Knox County Schools, New Teacher Induction Program, 2007).
    b. *School-based mentoring*: Each novice teacher has the opportunity to work with a peer mentor in his or her school. Peer mentors are trained, professional role models who support novice teachers with academic coaching, relationship building, and

instructional leadership (Knox County Schools, New Teacher Induction Program, 2007).

c. *New Teacher Academy:* Teachers new to Knox County schools and in Title 1 and Project Grad schools are given the opportunity to participate in the New Teacher Academy. Cohorts meet bimonthly from September to February. The Academy provides an opportunity for collegial collaboration and support with a focus on learning the ropes (discipline, routines, field trips, curriculum guides, standardized testing, professional development, and end-of-year management), developing partnerships with parents, effective lesson planning, differentiated learning, organizing the classroom for learning, teaching in the diverse classroom, and using technology in instruction. Effective teaching can make the difference in how well students learn and how they are to meet the highest standards of mastery. The goal of New Teacher Academy is to ensure that teachers experience success in the classroom by receiving the support and assistance needed, and thus, ensuring higher achievement for all students (Knox County Schools, New Teacher Induction Program, 2007).

Limitations and Delimitations

Delimitations

This study is limited to novice teachers in the Knox County Schools school system in Knoxville, Tennessee. This study may not be generalized to any other population.

Limitations

Novice teachers may have feared reprisals for a negative assessment of the mentoring program and, therefore, they may have under-reported criticisms or declined to respond to the

voluntary survey. Novice teachers who are African American or nonwhite, did not participate in the survey. The nonwhite novice teachers may have pressures of testing accountability and school related responsibilities that caused them to choose not to participate in the voluntary study.

The mentoring teacher may provide too little or too much support for the beginning teachers. This may cause the beginning teacher to have a negative perception of the mentoring program. If the mentoring program has novice teachers who have had a negative mentoring experience, this may have a negative effect on the results.

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, research questions and hypotheses, the significance of the study, definitions of terms used in the study, and limitations.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature on mentoring. Furthermore, the chapter presents pertinent information concerning the historical background of mentoring, qualities of mentoring, and a description of mentoring in Knox County Schools.

Chapter 3 presents the statistical methods and techniques used to evaluate the novice teachers perceptions of the mentoring experience in Knox County Schools.

Chapter 4 includes the statistical outcomes of the quantitative analysis of the data collected with the survey instrument.

Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings related to the novice teachers perceptions of the mentoring experience in Knox County Schools. This chapter also provides conclusions of research with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Mentoring Defined

A mentor "is [a] wise and trusted teacher, guide, and friend" (Websters, 2003, p. 453). The task of preparing and supporting teachers for work with diverse youth has generated wide-spread interest in induction and mentoring programs (Wang & Odell, 2001). Mentoring typically pairs the novice with an expert veteran teacher who attends to the professional development of newcomers. Mentoring programs often are linked to standards for addressing needs of diverse students (e.g., interstate new teacher assessment and support consortium).

Impact of Mentoring

It has long been recognized that teachers need more support, more resources, and a more supportive environment (Breeding & Whitworth, 1999; Fuller & Brown, 1975; Hirst, 2000; Prosise & Heller, 1993). Researchers have identified a number of recurring needs common to many new teachers such as the need for better classroom management skills, better understanding of the workings of the specific building, and help in communicating with parents (Fuller & Brown; Hirst).

Supporting new teachers can improve student performance, teacher success, morale, and retention (Hirst, 2000; Million, 1998; Prosise & Heller, 1993). This can be particularly important in areas such as science and mathematics for which nationwide teacher shortages are common (Shortage of Teachers to Grow, 1998).

Mentoring programs differ depending on the school system and the needs of the educators within each individual school. The relationship between mentor and protégé is complex and will vary to some extent according to the design and structure of the particular program in which the participants are enrolled (Tauer, 1996).

Historical Background of Mentoring

The concept of mentoring has been classified by some as the oldest known form of teaching (Bell, 2002; Cole, 2004; Johnson & Ridley, 2004; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Shea, 1995; Stone, 2004). The actual term *mentor* is said to have emerged in 800 B.C. from Homer's epic, *The Odyssey* (Conway, 1995; Roche, 1979). In *The Odyssey*, the leading character, Odysseus, leaves his son, Telemachus, in the hands of a trusted friend while he goes off to war. Odysseus's friend, Athena, disguises herself as the character Mentor. Mentor acts as a teacher, counselor, guide, and friend to Telemachus as he searches for his father who has become lost in battle.

Daloz (1999) contended that the roots of the practice of mentoring somehow had been lost in antiquity. He encourages his readers to "recognize that the term in its original form holds a kind of sacred archetype, a capacity to illuminate a role of often-hidden yet rare power in the drama of human development" (p. 272) . In antiquity, mentorship seemed seems to have been revered as an honored position for one to be tutored under the watchful care of a masterful artisan.

Consider historical mentoring relationships such as Merlin to King Arthur, the Biblical characters Paul of Tarsus to Timothy, philosophers such as Socrates to Plato, Aristotle to Alexander the Great, and George Wythe to Thomas Jefferson. In China, a master mentor was considered as a sage, or "Tzu" who guided followers in the way of "Tao," or truth. Hindus and Sikhs had their form of gurus who taught and guided, Jews followed Rabbis, and Sufi learned from sheikhs (Daloz, 1999).

The activity of mentoring and the labels identifying mentors and protégés have been known by many names such as "master", "alchemist", "guild", "artisans", "craftsman", and "apprenticeship". Recently we might have heard a protégé called a "mentee." In any case, this historic method of teaching and leading falls under the medieval guild system of teaching and

learning. In most mentoring-type relationships, people didn't attend formal schools, but were tutored by their masters. There was an economic necessity for such relationships. Artisans who were the primary craftsmen before the industrial revolution formed into guilds that controlled all aspects of production and distribution to ensure quality and to prevent competition from outside markets (Conway, 1995; Roche, 1979).

Although there have been different distinctions for guilds with various religious and economic purposes, they were typically people of the same trade or industrial pursuits who formed relationships with new up-and-coming artisans to protect mutual interests and maintain standards of morality and conduct (Seligman, 1885). If someone learned a particular trade, he or she would be apprenticed to a guild who was not compensated for his or her efforts. After time the apprentice would become a journeyman who then received compensation for his labor. The guild would then oversee the new tradesman. These historic understandings reflect the common activities and beliefs about mentoring today: to guide, counsel, coach, and provide hands-on experiences to advance the protégé's career interests.

Even though the practice of mentoring is ancient, it did not attract scholarly research on the subject until the mid 1970s (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hazlet, 2003). The purpose of the research began because of its apparent benefits for organizational growth and leadership development (Kanter, 1977; Phillips, 1977; Roche, 1979). Roche published his seminal study wherein mentoring became recognized as a valuable teaching strategy for up-and-coming leaders. Roche wrote, "Only recently have business people and researchers recognized the vital role mentors play in the development of corporate executives" (p. 14). Researcher and author Phillips wrote one of the first formal dissertations on the topic of mentoring in 1977. At that time she cited

authors who recognized and used the concept of mentoring without always using the term. More commonly the term used was apprenticeship.

In the 1980s, Kram (1980, 1983, 1985) presented her research on mentoring, which became a basis for many studies that followed. She focused her research on the career development of employees other than those in leadership positions. Her focus was on how the relationship developed over time. She offered a four-phase model of mentoring: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. Kram's (1983, 1985) work on the psychosocial benefits of mentoring opened a floodgate of continual research on this teaching method. Her research along with subsequent studies on mentoring has brought the importance and benefits of mentoring into the minds of leaders of schools and universities, government entities, hospitals, and other medical organizations to implement this as a strategy for leadership development, knowledge management, and recruiting and retaining talent (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004; Phillips-Jones, 1983).

Within the past 30 years or so, mentoring has burgeoned into a thriving industry. Eddy et al. (2001) state, "Many major U.S. companies, such as Bank of America, Marriott International, and Charles Schwab, have formal mentoring programs in place to help them attract, retain, and develop high performers" (p. 64).

In the medical profession, mentoring has been credited with helping new employees sharpen their skills and the mentor also receives satisfaction from the relationship.

According to the Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal (Allen, 2006), "Mentoring is the linchpin of recruitment and retention where everyone is guaranteed to benefit. The mentee builds self-esteem and learns diverse skills. Within organizations that employ a clinical ladder or advancement opportunity one can achieve professional advancement. From the mentor's point of

view they can sharpen their skills and achieve a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. They can also experience career rejuvenation. Healthcare systems' outcomes are numerous because the system will foster leadership development, teamwork and retention" (p. 49).

> There is a dynamic interaction between the gardener and the garden. These two distinct living entities have a unique relationship. The garden has a dependency on the gardener, and the gardener must consider the unique properties of each plant as well as the forces of nature. The following are some tips for the gardener: don't over-water or over-feed, don't crowd: prune and weed, allow to grow at own pace, appreciate garden and each plant, and share with others. These same tips could be applied to the mentoring relationship. In your garden remember to plant three rows of peas: peace of mind, peace of heart, peace of soul. Plant four rows of squash: squash gossip, squash indifference, squash grumbling, and squash selfishness. Plant four rows of lettuce: lettuce be faithful, lettuce be kind, lettuce be obedient, and lettuce love one another. No garden is complete without turnips: turnip for meetings, turnip for service, turnip to help one another. With a bit of "thyme" you will reap what you sow. Our future is in the faces of the young and new to our profession. Mentoring is a magic partnership that awakens our confidence in our abilities. It goes beyond teaching knowledge or skills or the mere passing on of information. It is a complex nurturing, developing and empowering relationship that requires mutual sharing, growing and learning. (Allen, 2006, p. 52)

According to Nemanick (2000), "Over a third of the major U.S. corporations have established formal mentoring programs, and the number appears to be growing" (p. 137). The practice of mentoring beginning teachers emerged in the 1980s as a professional development strategy for achieving a variety of goals. One goal focused solely on teachers who were just entering the profession, whereas two others extended the benefits of mentoring to other educators in the school and district community. According to Little (1990), mentorship promised potential benefits in at least the following three areas:

1. New teacher induction-to help transition beginning teachers into the classroom and acculturate them to the specific school and district setting in which they will work.

2. Career enhancement-to provide an avenue for leadership, public recognition, and reward for skilled veteran teachers who serve their schools and districts as mentors, professional developers, or contributors to curriculum and instructional improvement.
3. Professional development and program innovation-to build capacity for school and district program innovation and to guide local education reform.

According to Little (1990) a positive effect of teacher mentoring on the third goal, building capacity for local professional development and program innovation, was less readily apparent in school practice. Theoretically, the development of new and more effective classroom and collegial practices by teachers involved in a mentoring relationship can be diffused throughout their schools and beyond. That is, through mentoring activities, both the novice teacher and the mentor gain understandings and concrete skills that could benefit students and could be shared with colleagues (Little).

Expertise in specific areas of curriculum and instruction could, for example, enable teachers to help grade-level team members implement a district-adopted early reading program more effectively or improve an academic department's practice of using cooperative learning. Recently, however, researchers have shown that few mentoring programs exhibit the mission or devote resources necessary to connect the program to these broader purposes of ongoing professional development and school improvement (Feiman-Nemser, Carver, Schwille, & Yusko, 1999).

Little (1990) suggested that ideally the twin aims of a formal mentoring program were "to reward and inspire experienced teachers, while tapping their accumulated wisdom in the service of teachers and schools" (p. 297). If this were the stated purpose of most mentoring programs, we would likely see more evidence in the literature of research on how such programs contribute to career enhancement and school improvement. We would also likely see veteran teachers--not beginning teachers--at the center of mentoring discussions, because it is their experience and expertise that leverages productive change in professional practice.

The beginning teacher, however, has received greatest attention in both research and policy. Most mentoring policies and practices are designed to provide induction support that will encourage their retention in the profession. The remainder of this discussion thus focuses on what we know about mentoring as a strategy aimed at effectively inducting beginning teachers.

Mentoring has been employed in many occupational fields, including the medical field (Ramanan, Phillips, Davis, Silen, & Reede, 2002); social services (Kelly, 2001); city management (Wallace, 2001); industry (Bernard, 2001); banking (Delobbe & Vandenberghe, 2001); the military (Johnson et al., 2001); prison managements (Wittenberg, 1998); performing arts (Patrick, 2002); and sports (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999).

Qualities of Mentoring

The qualities of effective mentors, as identified by participants in mentoring programs nationwide, may be organized into four general categories: attitude and character; professional competence and experience, communication skills, and interpersonal skills. Together with a willingness to serve and a vote of confidence by colleagues, these characteristics comprise guidelines for selecting mentors. Table 1 shows these categories along with characteristics that serve as guidelines (NEA Foundation, 1999).

Table 1
Qualities of Effective Mentors, Source: NEA Foundation (1999)

Attitude and Character	**Professional Competence and Experience**
Willing to be a role model for other teachers	Is regarded by colleagues as an outstanding teacher
Exhibits strong commitment to the teaching profession	Has excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter
Believes mentoring improves instructional practice	Has confidence in his/her own instructional skills
Willing to advocate on behalf of colleagues	Demonstrates excellent classroom-management skills
Willing to receive training to improve mentoring skills	Feels comfortable being observed by other teachers
Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning	Maintains a network of professional contacts
Is reflective and able to learn from mistakes	Understands the policies and procedures of the school, district, and teachers' association
Is eager to share information and ideas with colleagues	Is a meticulous observer of classroom practice
Is resilient, flexible, persistent, and open-minded	Collaborates well with other teachers and administrators
Exhibits good humor and resourcefulness	Is willing to learn new teaching strategies from protégés
Enjoys new challenges and solving problems	
Communication Skills	**Interpersonal Skills**
Is able to articulate effective instructional strategies	Is able to maintain a trusting professional relationship
Listens attentively	Knows how to express care for a protégé's emotional and professional needs
Asks questions that prompt reflection and understanding	Is attentive to sensitive political issues
Offers critiques in positive and productive ways	Works well with individuals from different cultures
Uses email effectively	Is approachable; easily establishes rapport with others
Is efficient with the use of time	Is patient
Conveys enthusiasm, passion for teaching	
Is discreet and maintains confidentiality	

Comprehensive, high quality induction and mentoring programs have recently gained attention as effective strategies for improving new teacher retention rates and skills. According to Ingersoll (2001), the critical elements of high quality new teacher induction programs were:

1. pairing new teachers with trained mentors in similar grades and subjects areas;
2. reducing novices' workloads and structuring teaching schedules to provide common planning time and frequent face-to-face interaction among mentors and novices;
3. providing release time for both the mentor and the novice for observations and analysis;
4. offering ongoing professional development relevant to the needs of novice teachers and giving them access to an external network of beginning teachers; and
5. developing a standards-based formal assessment of beginning teachers and the induction program itself.

The Grad Project

Project GRAD Knoxville provides comprehensive support to help equip inner-city students for academic success through partnership with Knox County Schools. The goal of this project begins at kindergarten and continues through higher education. Their "goal is high school graduation and success in college or other post-secondary training. The district's 100/90/90/90 mission is the target for all schools, including schools supported by Project GRAD" (Project Grad Knoxville, 2008, p. 1).

The Grad Project includes the following sections:

The GRAD Approach
- GRAD (Graduation Really Achieves Dreams) is a comprehensive national reform initiative that takes a 'feeder schools' approach and works through the following components.

College Access
- Campus Family Support Services
- Classroom and School Climate Support
- Math Support.

College Access (9-16)*:*

- $4,000 that can be used at any college or accredited technical school of choice (first awards to Class of 2005)
- 2 summer experiences on college campuses with stipend earned
- full time on-site College Access staff ; after-school tutoring; computerized Scholarship Research Centers
- A PGK College Support Coach provides continuing support to scholarship recipients during their higher education experience

Campus Family Support Services (K-12):

- Full-time on site Campus Managers and Student Advocates
- social services for students/family
- self-confidence and self-concept building
- social/life skills instruction; rewards, recognition, incentives
- families engaged at high levels; community support and involvement as mentors/tutors/volunteers; gifts from business partners; annual Education Rally, Walk For Success, College/Career Day
- tardy/absence initiatives
- A full-time Family & Volunteer Engagement Coordinator works with the CFS Director to support all 14 sites.

Classroom and School Climate Support (K-8):

- Discipline (Consistency Management & Cooperative Discipline); Promotes responsibility for classroom and school; self-discipline; student leadership; pride in work; school-wide consistency.

Math Support/Project GRAD Math (K-8):

- Fun/hands-on way to learn math at deep level
- Algebraic reasoning and terminology introduced as early as kindergarten
- 90 minutes dedicated math time school-wide.

GRAD teachers/principals:

- GRAD teachers and principals receive continuous professional development, materials, on-going support, implementation assistance, and recognition.

GRAD Knoxville provides resources and people using a coaching model:

- National GRAD USA support team and national trainers/consultants; National network of GRAD sites that routinely share 'best practices'
- Campus-based GRAD Knoxville staff (scholarship coordinators, campus managers and CFS teams); GRAD Knoxville field staff that serve as consultants to all GRAD schools (parent/community involvement, family support services, discipline/math/reading coaches)
- Advisors in each building (who are teachers) receive a stipend to be an on-site mentor for implementing GRAD curricula

GRAD is systemic, systematic, and comprehensive:

- Every student in a GRAD Knoxville school is a GRAD scholar. All 7500 of them! (Project Grad Knoxville, 2008, p. 1)

Mentoring in the Knox County School System

Knox County Schools school system's Teacher Induction Program (2007) has 79 participating schools that are part of the mentoring program. There are 849 mentors in Knox County Schools. During the 2007-2008 school year, there were 511 assigned mentors with 14 New Teacher Academy facilitators serving highest need populations. There were 611 novice teachers.

The 2006-2007 school year reflected a positive impact on novice teachers. Over 90% chose to stay at their respective schools, 9 teachers transferred within Knox County Schools, 7 were in interns positions that were eliminated at the end of the school year, 2 teachers went on maternity leave, and 7 were not offered new contracts. Fourteen teachers chose to leave the school system; 7 moved out of the city of Knoxville, 2 left Knox county Schools to pursue further educational opportunities, 2 teachers went to neighboring school systems, and 3 left the teaching profession.

When evaluating the teacher retention rate, 563 teachers chose to remain in Knox County Schools. Of the teachers who received mentoring, 82% reported that the New Teacher Induction Academy and mentoring program had played a significant role in their decisions to stay at their schools.

The Knox County school system has reported consistent improvement over the past three years (2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007). Urban schools have significantly lowered the number of teachers leaving their schools. During the 2004-2005 (base line year), Knox County school system lost 373 teachers. This loss was not because of retirement but from teachers leaving the system. During the 2006-2007 school year, there were only 204 teachers who left the system. The comparison between the two academic school years represents a 45% reduction in attrition (Assuming that the total number of teachers did not change).

In the Knox County school system, there are large costs associated with mentoring. During the 2007-2008 school year, the cost of the New Teacher Academy was $88,000. The cost of the mentoring program during the 2007-2008 school was $312,000. The difference in the

costs of the New Teacher Academy and the mentoring program was $224,000. Combined, the cost of these programs was $400,000. The individual cost per novice teacher in the Knox County school system was $654.00. When evaluating the cost of replacing a teacher, the Knox County school administrators began to look at the following systems: Memphis = $6,000, New York City = $10,000, and the state of California= $6,000 (Knox County Schools, NTI, 2007).

Some of the key components of the Knox County school system's new teacher mentor and induction program are:

1. administrator support,
2. New Teacher Academy,
3. lead mentor,
4. mentor core teams, and
5. mentors

Expectations of lead mentors:

1. leading planning in the mentor core team induction process with the principal or other administrator team members,
2. Holding regular meetings (one every 6-9 weeks) with mentor core team,
3. Encouraging total faculty buy in for mentoring and induction, and
4. developing and facilitating a calendar of events

Mentor requirements are:

1. documenting 25 hours of mentor core team meetings, staff development sessions with novice teachers, e-mail-text messaging, or face-to-face coaching;
2. attending the Mentoring Institute;
3. completing accountability forms;
4. observing novice teachers teaching; and
5. modeling tools of the trade for the novice teachers

(Russell, 2007)

The Knox County school system has implemented the following changes in the mentoring program as shown in Table 2:

1. Increased documentation: Document all mentoring hours instead of the minimum requirement and
2. Only 1st- and 2nd-year teachers may be mentored on a one-to-one ratio; 3rd-year teachers who still need support may be mentored on a one-to-two ratio.

Table 2
Teacher Retention Rates (in percentages)

Knox County Schools	State of Tennessee	National (U.S)
2007-2008 school year	2003	2003
95% of novice teachers remained in the school system and returned to their same school the following year.	20% of Tennessee teachers left the teaching profession.	Beginning teachers have an attrition rate of 14%. Fourteen percent of first year teachers leave after 1 year of teaching.
2008, NTPME survey	(Ingersoll, 2003)	(NCTAF, 2003)

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of novice teachers in the Knox County school system's teacher mentoring program. This study addresses the effectiveness of the mentoring program and the needs of beginning teachers.

Design of the Study

The design of the study was quantitative. The researcher used a nonexperimental research design. The study includes pre-existing survey data collected by the Knox County school system. The University of Tennessee at Knoxville designed the survey instrument for Knox County Schools to provide the data about the mentoring program. The survey information was collected from the participants by using a Likert scale and written interview responses. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the information from the survey.

Participants

The participants in this study were beginning teachers (1-3 years of experience) from the Knox County school system. Each veteran mentor teacher was required to have met the state of Tennessee tenure requirements to be an instructional leader, have a desire to be a mentor, and receive an administrator's recommendation to serve as a mentor. The novice teachers were teachers who have had 1-3 years teaching experience. The Knox County school system's mentoring program is in 77 schools. In those schools, 406 teachers serve as mentors. The mentors work with 558 protégés (200 novices, 298 new to the building, and 160 not in their 1st year).

Mentors

Mentors were given information about the needs of novice teachers and how they could supply support in meaningful ways. They were trained about how to observe in a classroom and ways to give feedback without taking on the role as an evaluator. They were also provided with information concerning how best to work with adult learners. Mentors were offered the opportunity to obtain unscheduled in-service credit by completing their mentoring experience. Many have chosen to create handbooks and plan regularly mentoring scheduled activities for new teachers in their buildings.

Novice Teachers

Topics for novice teachers included many of the topics research as identified as particular problems for new teachers. Sessions were provided on classroom management, assessment (including statewide mandated testing), and individual school specific for teachers. Teachers were provided with copies of *The First Days of School* (Wong & Wong, 1991) along with many valuable resources for their loose-leaf notebooks.

Research Questions

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers?

$Ho1_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

$Ho1_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers?

$Ho2_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

$Ho2_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

Research Question 3

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers?

$Ho3_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho3_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

Research Question 4

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers?

$Ho4_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

$Ho4_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimensions of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

Research Question 5

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad?

$Ho5_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

$Ho5_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

Research Question 6

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or not meeting AYP?

$Ho6_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

$Ho6_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

The survey results were analyzed using the statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 15. Data from the surveys were used to analyze the 6 research questions and 24 null associated null hypotheses. Research question 1 and 5 were analyzed using independent sample t-test and research questions 2, 3, and 6 were analyzed using an ANOVA; however, research question 4 could not accurately be tested because of the lack of variability with regards to race of the novice teachers; because all of the participants who responded to the survey were white.

All participants had the opportunity to review the research information gathered from the surveys and comments to ensure the accuracy of their statements. After analyzing the participants' responses, conclusions were drawn to answer the six research questions that addressed the perceptions of the novice teachers about the mentoring program.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of novice teachers about the Knox County Schools novice teacher mentoring program. An online survey was used to collect Knox County novice teachers' perceptions of the mentoring program using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The participants in this study were beginning teachers (1-3 years of experience). Two hundred novice teachers were invited to participate. Thirty-eight (19%) responded. Efforts were made to increase the response rate through reminder emails. Reminders emails were sent 3 times. A paper version of the survey was eventually distributed to all novice teachers to improve the response rate. During the 2007-2008 academic school year in Knox County Schools, 30 of the novice teachers (15%) were African American and 10 novice teachers were nonwhite (other) (15%).

Demographic Characteristics

The results of novice teacher demographic characteristics are as follows: School Level: Elementary School (33%), Middle School (35%), High School (32%). Years of Experience: One year of experience (60%), 2 years of experience (32%), 3 years of experience (7%). Gender: Male (19%), female (81%). Ethnicity: White (100%). All of the respondents were white. Project Grad participation: Yes (21%), No (79%). 2007-2008 AYP Status: Yes (62%), No (38%). The demographic characteristics are reported in Table 3.

Table 3
Participants' Demographics

Demographics		N	%
School Level	Elementary School	23	33.3
	High School	22	31.9
	Middle School	24	34.8
Years of Experience	1 Year	41	59.4
	2 Years	22	31.9
	3 Years	5	7.2
	No Response	1	1.4
Gender	Female	56	81.2
	Male	13	18.8
Ethnicity	White	69	100
Participate in Project Grad School	NO	54	78.3
	YES	14	20.3
	No Response	1	1.4
Made AYP in 2007-2008	NO	25	36.2
	YES	41	59.4
	No Response	3	4.3
Total Participants		69	100

Mean scores were computed for four mentoring dimensions: working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, and professional development. The mean score for working with my mentor was obtained by computing the mean of responses to question 8, the mentor activities mean score was computed from responses to question 16, professional relationships mean score was computed from responses to question 15, and professional development mean score was computed from responses to question 17 on the survey instrument." The scale for questions 8, 15, 16, and 17 was strongly disagree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Male and female participants responded that they had similar perceptions of their mentoring experience in Knox County Schools.

Questions 8, 15, 16, and 17 were composite questions with subquestions embedded within the survey instrument. Each of the embedded subquestions asked specific information pertaining to the novice teachers individual mentoring experience. Question 8 and the embedded subquestions asked the novice teachers questions about how they felt while working with their mentor. Questions 15 and the embedded subquestions asked the novice teachers how their mentor helped them to maintain and establish effective professional relationships. Question 16 and the embedded subquestions asked the novice teachers about the specific mentoring activities that helped develop them as an educator. Question 17 and the embedded subquestions asked the novice teachers how their mentor impacted their professional development.

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for the scores.

Table 4
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentoring Dimensions

Mentoring Dimension	N	M	SD
Working with Mentor	69	3.45	.48
Mentor Activities	68	3.27	.63
Professional Relationships	67	3.25	.66
Professional Development	68	3.32	.62

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers?

Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for mentoring dimensions in terms of gender.

Table 5
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentoring Dimensions by Gender

Mentoring Dimension	Gender	N	M	SD
Working with Mentor	Male	13	3.34	.45
	Female	56	3.46	.49
Mentor Activities	Male	13	3.33	.45
	Female	55	3.26	.67
Professional Relationships	Male	12	3.13	.57
	Female	55	3.28	.68
Professional Development	Male	13	3.25	.50
	Female	55	3.33	.64

$Ho1_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any gender differences in how novice teachers perceived their experiences with working with their mentors. The dependent variable was the working with my mentor mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(67) = 81$, $p = .42$, $\eta^2 = .01$, therefore, $Ho1_1$ was retained. It appears that male novice teachers had similar perceptions of their experiences working with mentors ($M = 3.35$, $SD = .45$) compared to those of female novice teachers ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .49$). Both males and females tended to agree that they had positive experiences with working with their mentors. Figure 1 shows the distribution of working with mentor dimension by gender means.

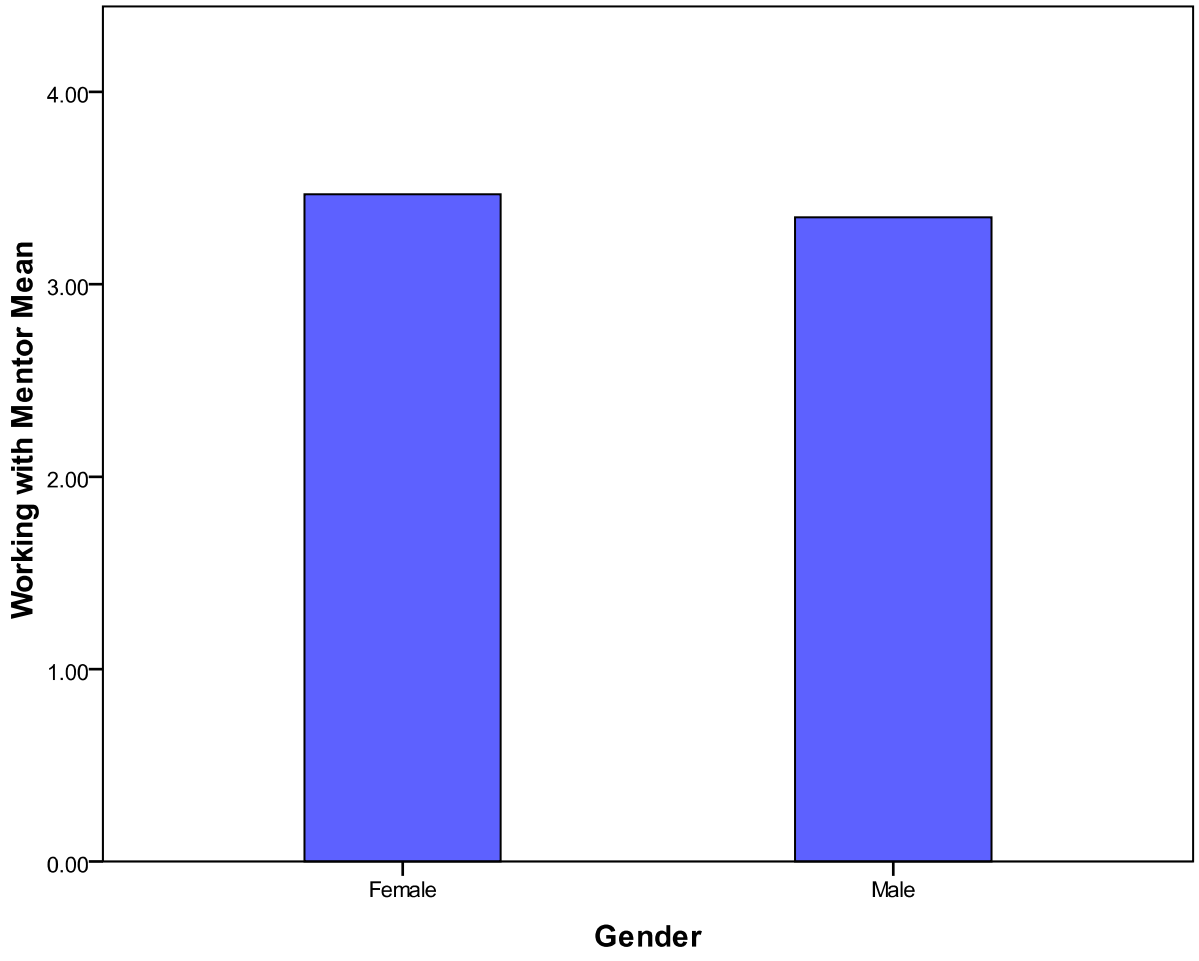

Figure 1. Working with Mentor Dimension by Gender

$Ho1_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any gender differences in evaluation of usefulness of mentor activities by novice teachers. The dependent variable was the mentor activities mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(66) = 34$, $p = .73$, $\eta^2 < .01$, therefore, $Ho1_2$ was retained. Both male novice teachers ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .45$) and female novice teachers ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .67$) tended to agree that the mentor activities were useful in their development as an educator. The distribution of mentor activities by gender means is shown in Figure 2.

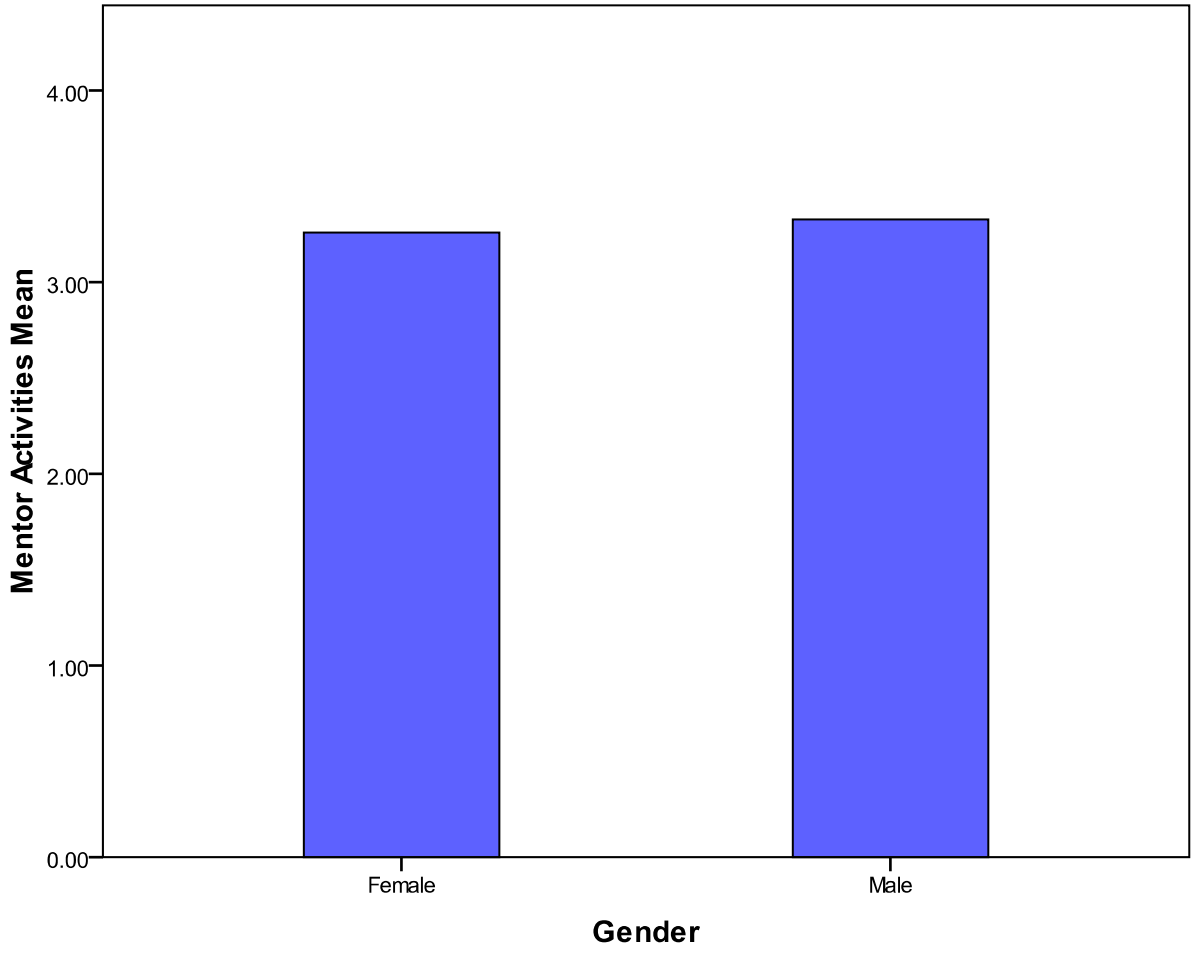

Figure 2. Mentor Activities Dimension by Gender

$Ho1_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any gender differences in how novice teachers found their mentors helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships. The dependent variable was the professional relationships mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(65) = .68$, $p = .50$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, $Ho1_3$ was retained. Male novice teachers perceived mentors as helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .58$) as female novice teachers did ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .68$). The distribution of professional activities by gender means is shown in Figure 3.

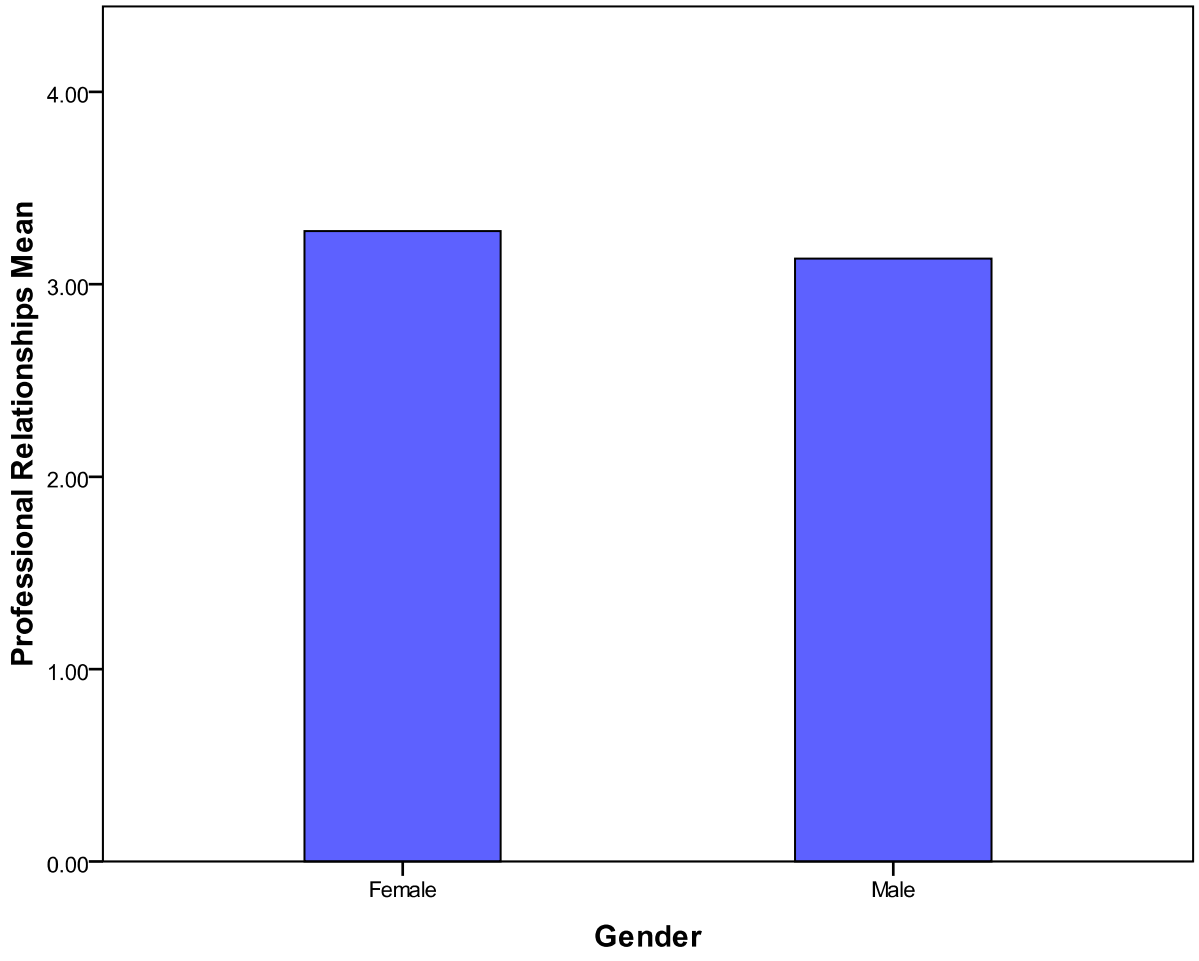

Figure 3. Professional Relationships Dimension by Gender

$Ho1_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any gender differences in how novice teachers perceived the impact of mentors on their professional development. The dependent variable was the professional development mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(66) = .45$, $p = .65$, $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho1_4$ was retained. Male novice teachers agreed that mentors impacted their professional development ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .50$), and female novice teachers had a similar perception ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .64$). The distribution of professional development by gender means is shown in Figure 4.

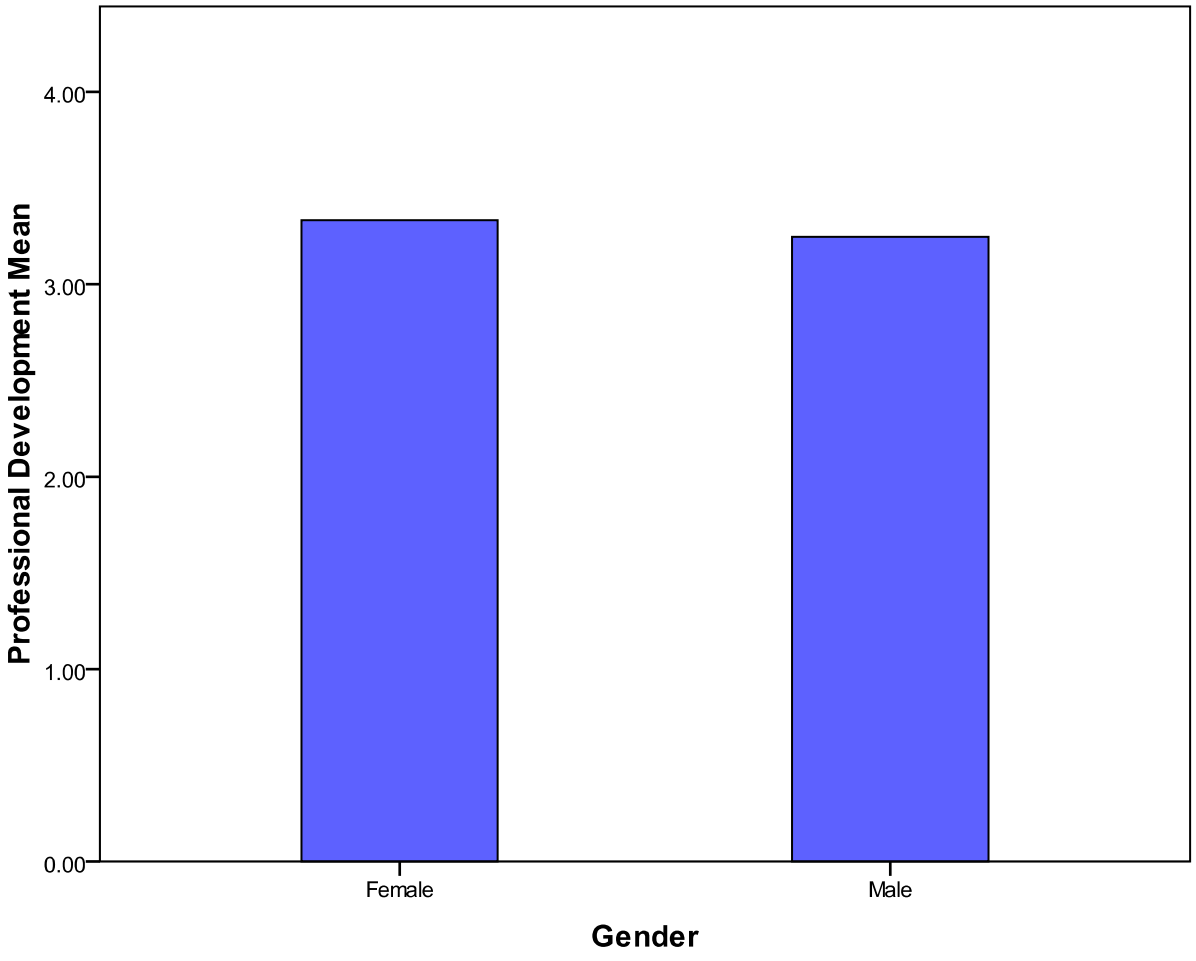

Figure 4. Professional Development Dimension by Gender

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers?

The means and standard deviations for mentoring dimensions are in terms of school type are shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentoring Dimensions by School Type

Mentoring Dimension	School Type	N	M	SD
Working with a Mentor	Elementary	23	3.49	.50
	Middle	24	3.40	.52
	High	22	3.44	.43
Mentor Activities	Elementary	23	3.38	.54
	Middle	23	3.29	.62
	High	22	3.14	.74
Professional Relationships	Elementary	22	3.37	.62
	Middle	23	3.25	.52
	High	22	3.13	.82
Professional Development	Elementary	23	3.34	.62
	Middle	23	3.37	.49
	High	22	3.23	.74

$Ho2_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of experiences working with a mentor among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 66) = .16$, $p =$

.86, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, $Ho2_1$ was retained. Experiences working with a mentor were similarly positive for Elementary School novice teachers ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .50$), Middle School novice teachers ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .52$), and High School novice teachers ($M = 3.44$, $SD = .43$). The distribution of working with mentor by school level means is shown in Figure 5.

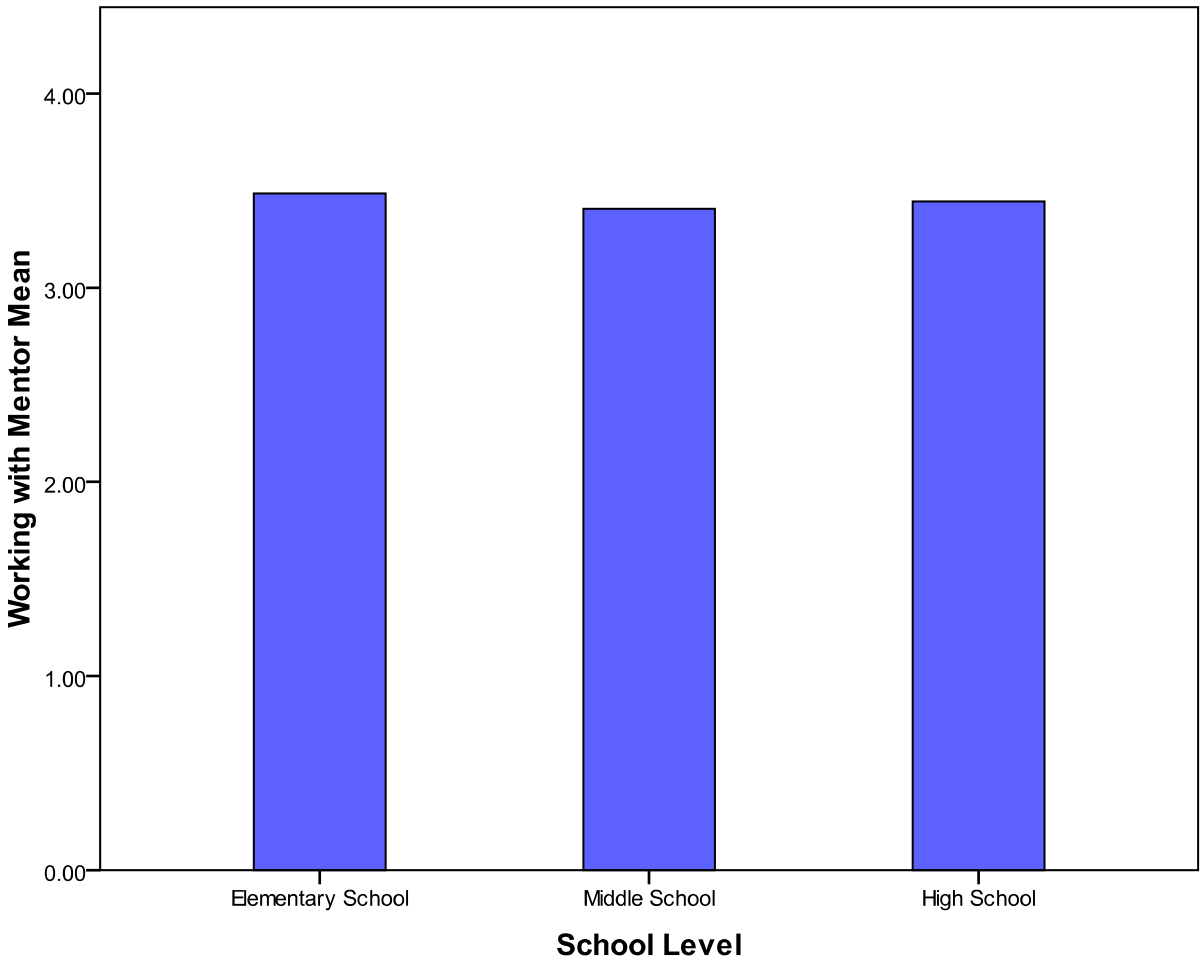

Figure 5. Working with Mentor Dimension by School Level

$Ho2_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of usefulness of mentor activities among Elementary, Middle

School, and High School novice teachers. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 65) = .77$, $p = .47$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, $Ho2_2$ was retained. Elementary School novice teachers ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .54$), Middle School novice teachers ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .62$), and High School novice teachers ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .73$) agreed that mentor activities were helped them develop as an educator. The distribution of mentor activities by school level means is shown in Figure 6.

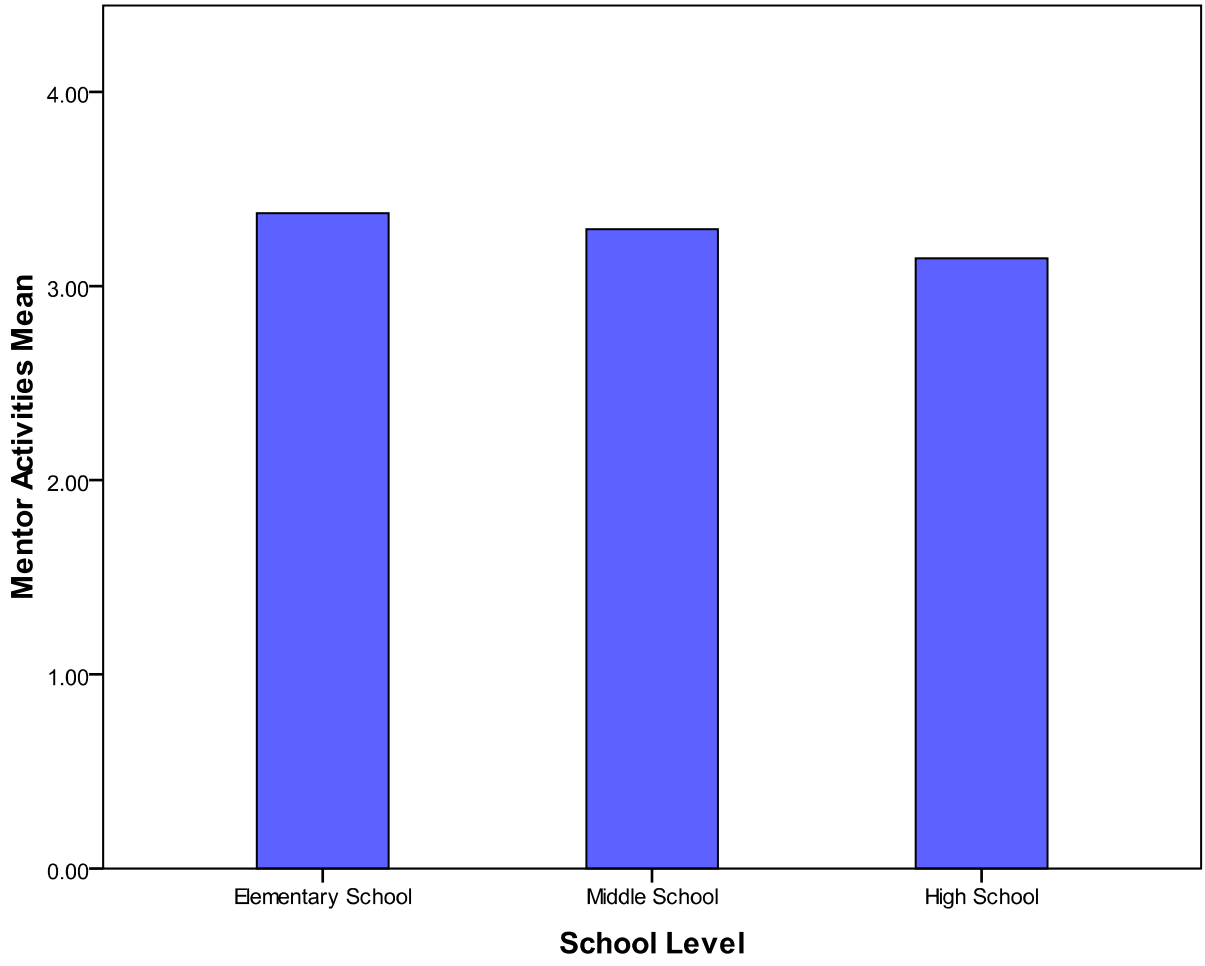

Figure 6. Mentor Activities Dimension by School Level

$Ho2_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of usefulness of mentor in developing and maintaining professional relationships among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 64) = .75$, $p = .48$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, $Ho2_3$ was retained. Elementary School novice teachers ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .62$), Middle School novice teachers ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .52$), and High School novice teachers ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .82$) agreed that mentors helped them develop and maintain professional relationships. The distribution of professional relationships by school level means is shown in Figure 7.

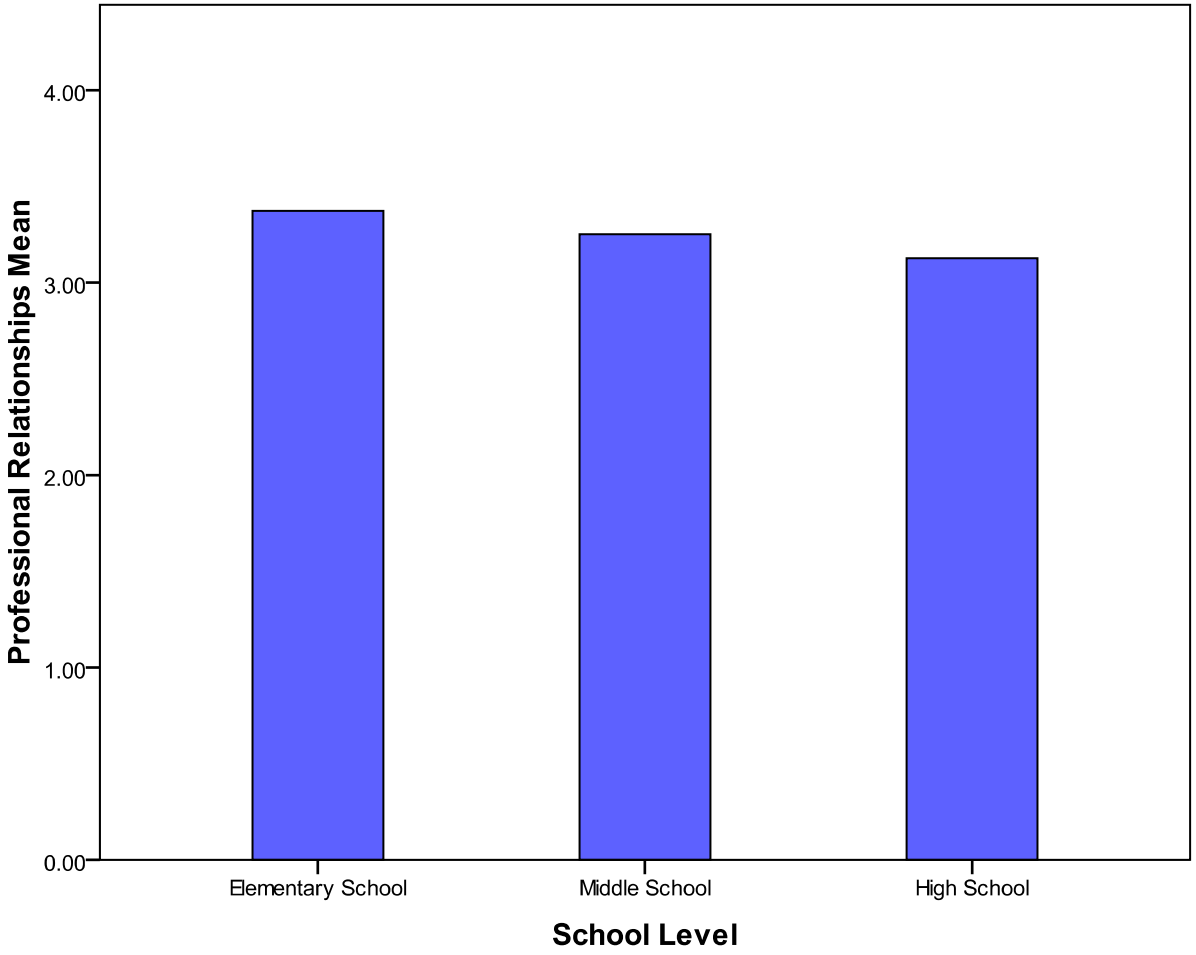

Figure 7. Professional Relationships Dimension by School Level

$Ho2_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in perceptions of mentor's impact on the professional development of Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 65) = .27$, $p = .76$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, $Ho2_4$ was retained. Elementary School novice teachers ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .62$), Middle School novice teachers ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .49$), and High School novice teachers ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .74$) agreed that mentors had a positive impact on their professional development. The distribution of professional development by school level means is shown in Figure 8.

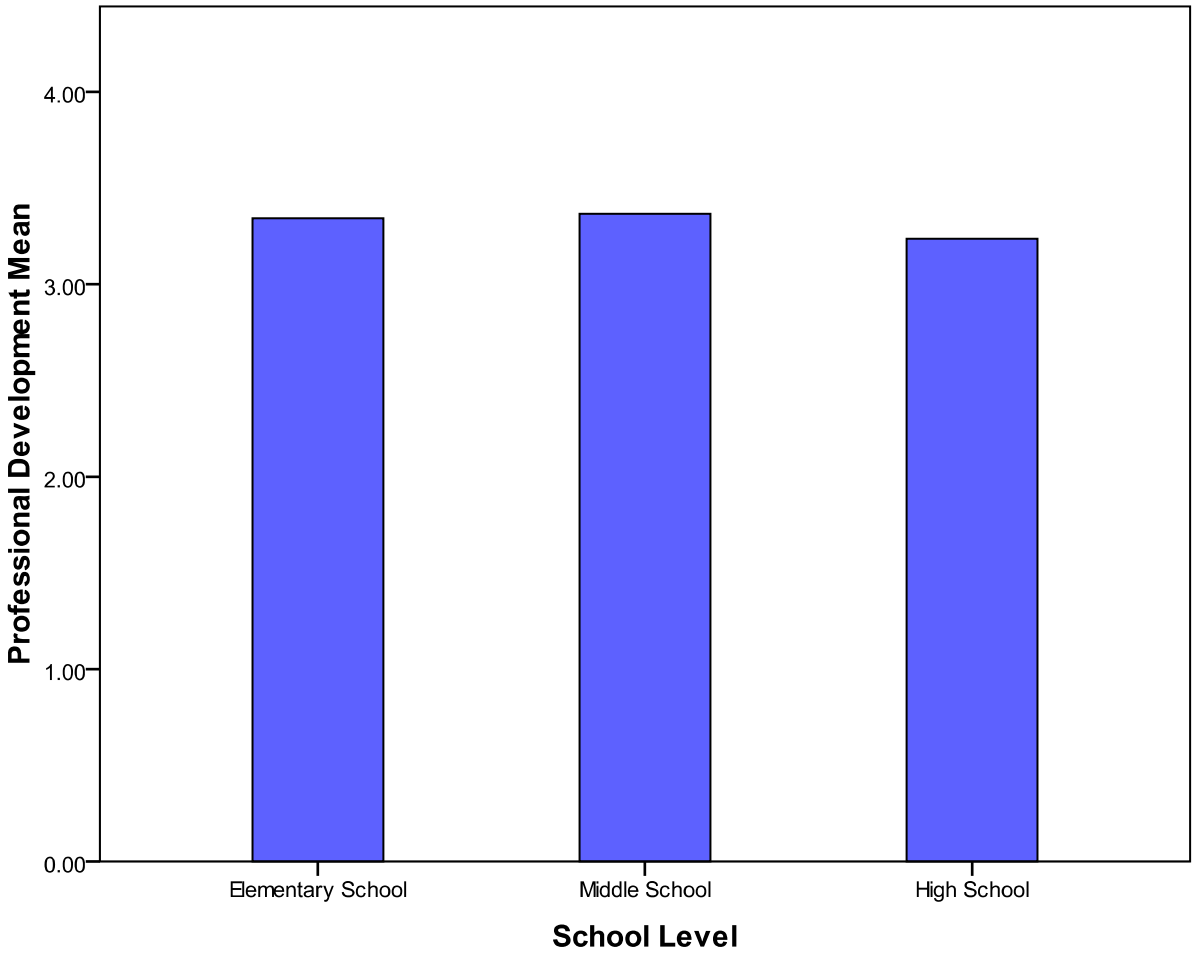

Figure 8. Professional Development Dimension by School Level

Research Question 3

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers?

The means and standard deviations for the mentor dimensions in relation to years of experience are shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentor Dimensions by Years of Experience

Mentoring Dimension	Years of Experience	N	M	SD
Working with a Mentor	1 Year	41	3.52	.45
	2 Years	22	3.32	.51
	3 Years	5	3.38	.62
Mentor Activities	1 Year	41	3.39	.57
	2 Years	21	3.13	.75
	3 Years	5	2.93	.49
Professional Relationships	1 Year	40	3.35	.58
	2 Years	21	3.13	.79
	3 Years	5	2.96	.71
Professional Development	1 Year	41	3.46	.50
	2 Years	21	3.17	.77
	3 Years	5	2.84	.47

$Ho3_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of experiences working with a mentor among novice teachers with 1, 2, or 3 years of experience. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 65) = 1.25$, $p = .29$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$.

Therefore, $Ho3_1$ was retained. Experiences working with a mentor were similarly positive for novice teachers with 1 year of experience (M = 3.52, SD = .45), 2 years of experience (M = 3.33, SD = .51), and 3 years of experience (M = 3.38, SD = .62). The distribution of working with mentor by years of experience means is shown in Figure 9.

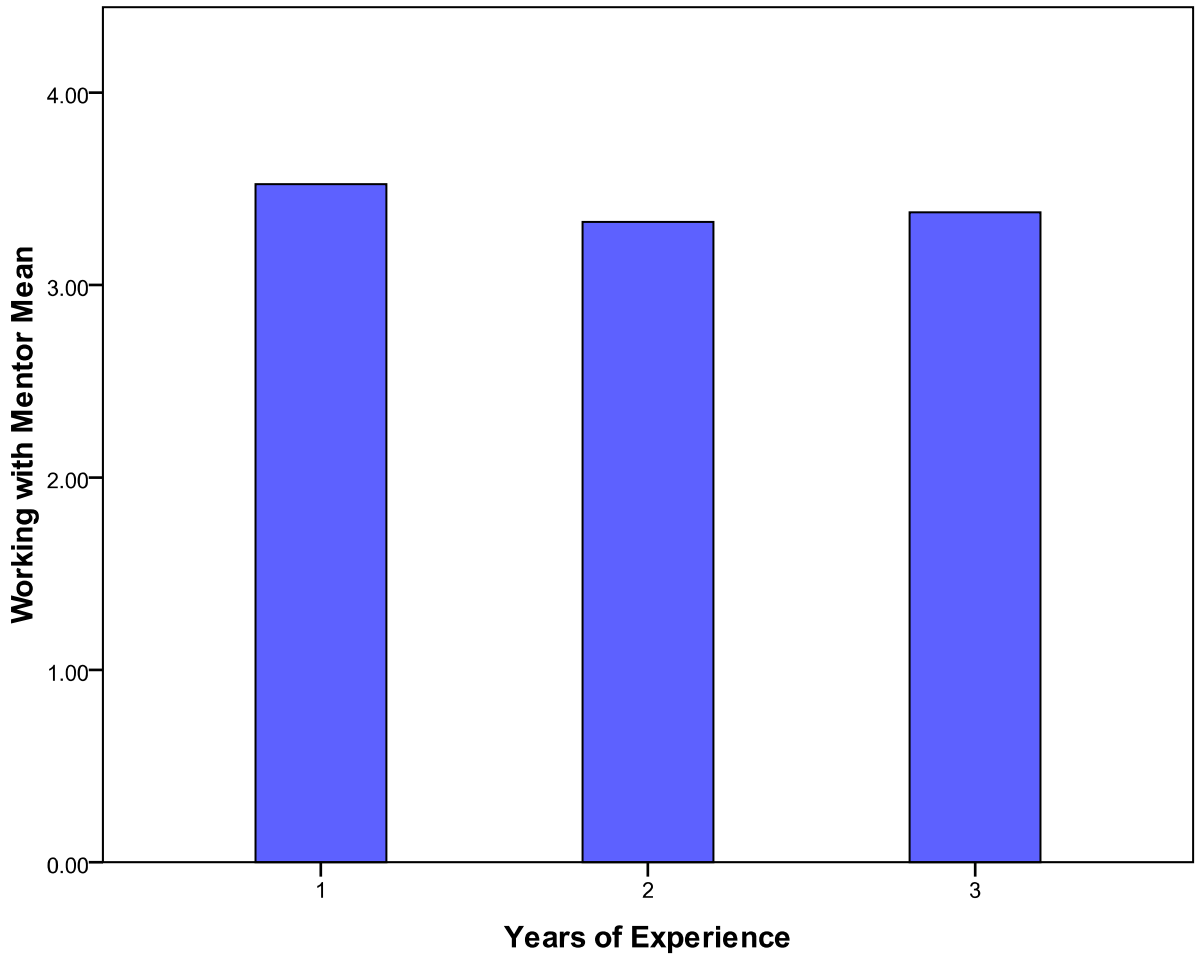

Figure 9. Working with Mentor Dimension by Years of Experience

$Ho3_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of usefulness of mentoring activities among novice teachers with 1, 2, or 3 years of

experience. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 64) = 2.05$, $p = .14$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$. Therefore, $Ho3_2$ was retained. Novice teachers with 1 year of experience ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .57$), 2 years of experience ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .75$), and 3 years of experience ($M = 2.93$, $SD = .50$) agreed that mentoring activities were useful. The distribution of mentor activities by years of experience means is shown in Figure 10.

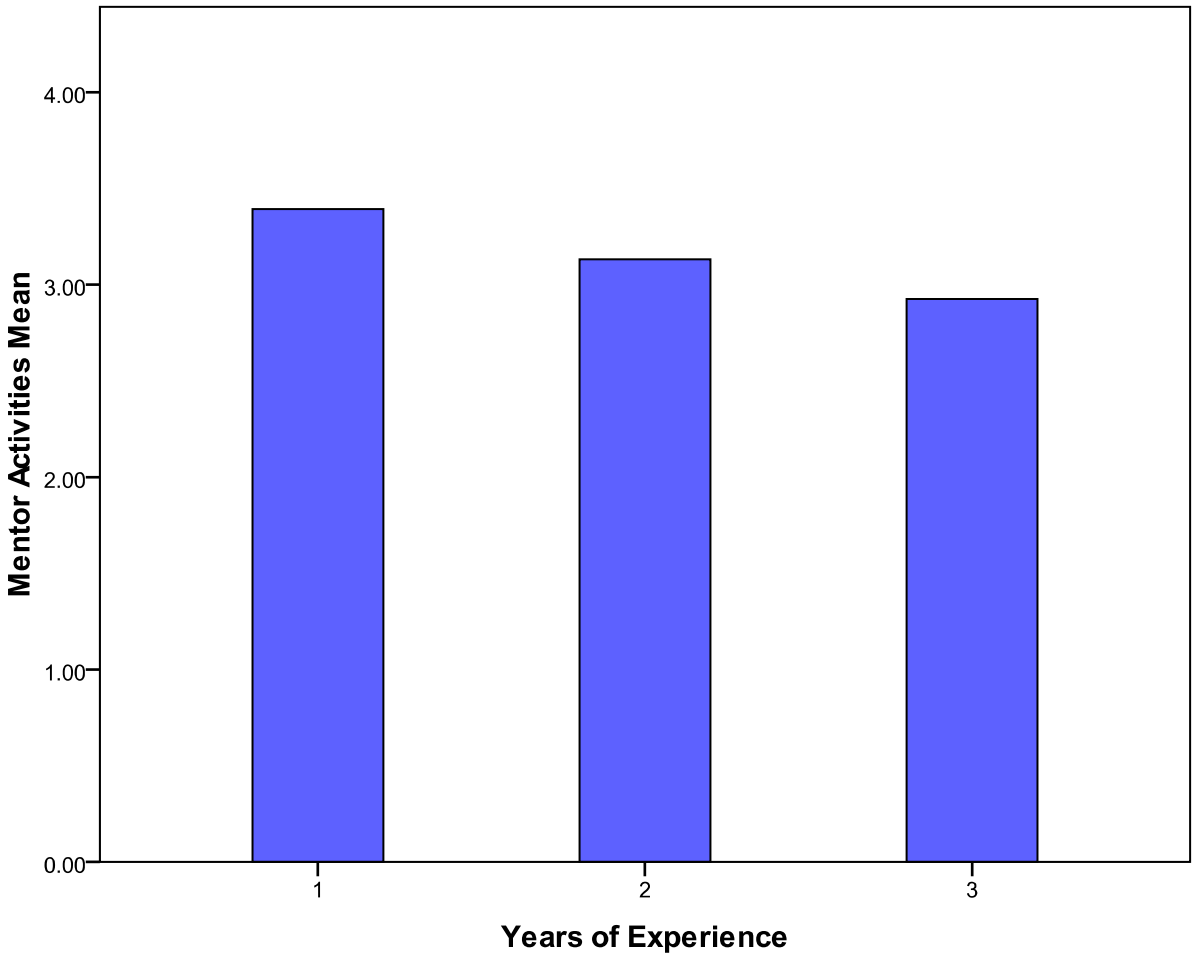

Figure 10. Mentor Activities Dimension by Years of Experience

$Ho3_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of usefulness of mentors in developing and maintaining professional relationships among novice teachers with 1, 2, or 3 years of experience. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2, 63) = 1.30$, $p = .28$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. Therefore, $Ho3_3$ was retained. Novice teachers with 1 year of experience ($M = 3.36$, $SD = .58$), 2 years of experience ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .79$), and 3 years of experience ($M = 2.96$, $SD = .71$) agreed that their mentors helped them develop and maintain professional relationships. The distribution of professional relationships by years of experience means is shown in Figure 11.

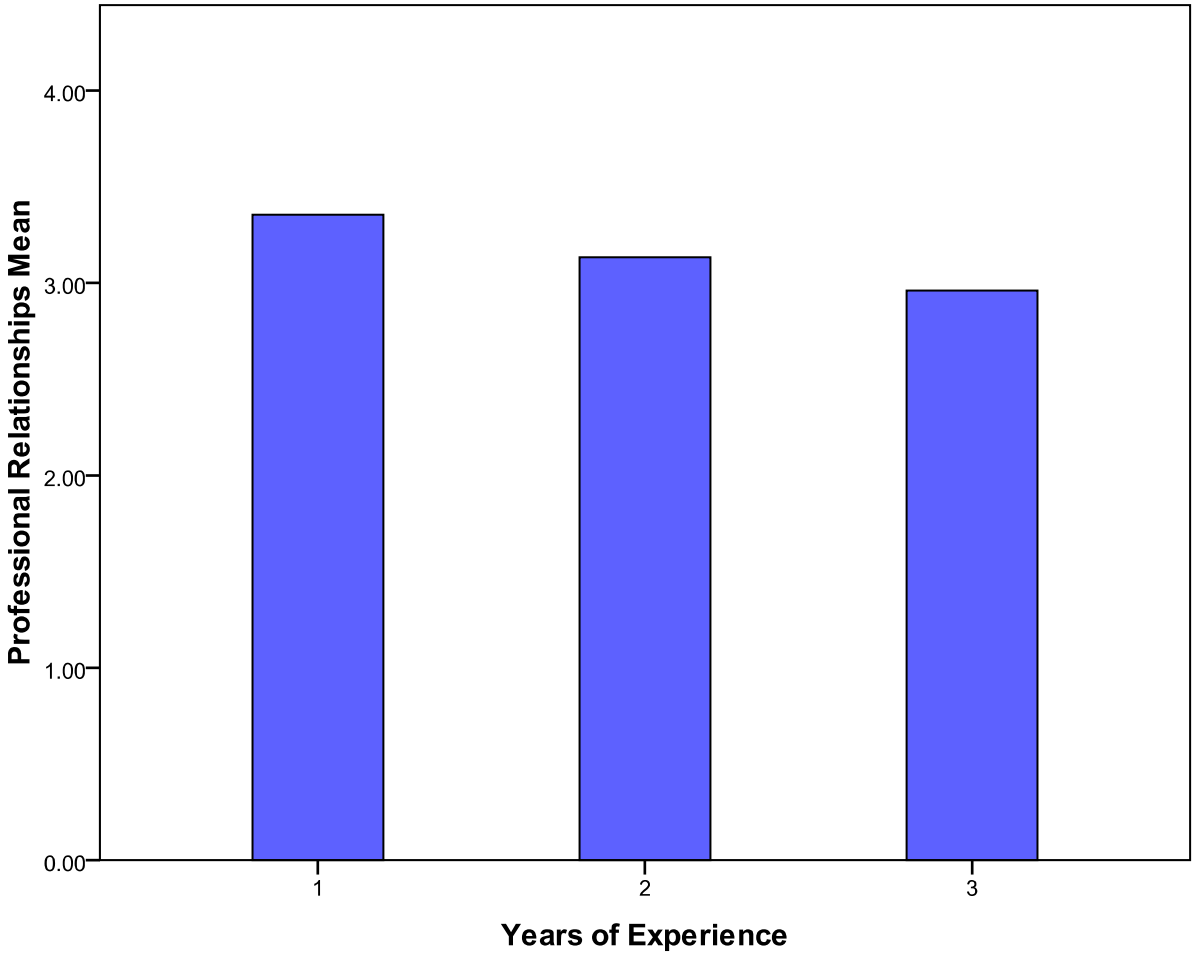

Figure 11. Professional Relationships Dimension by Years of Experience

$Ho3_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether there were any differences in perceptions of how mentors impacted the professional development of novice teachers with 1, 2, or 3 years of experience. The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 64) = 1.17$, $p = .04$, partial $\eta^2 = .93$. Therefore, $Ho3_4$ was rejected.

Because the overall *F* was significant, follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among means of the three groups. The LSD procedure was used for multiple comparisons because equal variances were assumed. The results indicated a significant difference in perceptions of how mentors impacted the professional development of novice teachers with 1 year experience and those with 3 years of experience. Mentors had more professional development impact on novice teachers with 1 year of experience ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .50$) compared to novice teachers with 3 years of experience ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .62$). The 95% confidence intervals, as well as means and standard deviations for the professional development dimension as a function of years of experience, are shown in Table 8.

Table 8
Means and Standard Deviations With 95% Confidence Intervals of Professional Development Pairwise Differences

Years of Experience	N	*M*	*SD*	1 Year	2 Years
1 Year	41	3.46	.50		
2 Years	21	3.17	.77	-.60 to .04	
3 Years	5	2.84	.47	-1.18 to -.05*	-.93 to .26

Note. * The mean difference is significant at the .05 level using the LSD procedure

The distribution of professional development by years of experience means is shown in Figure 12.

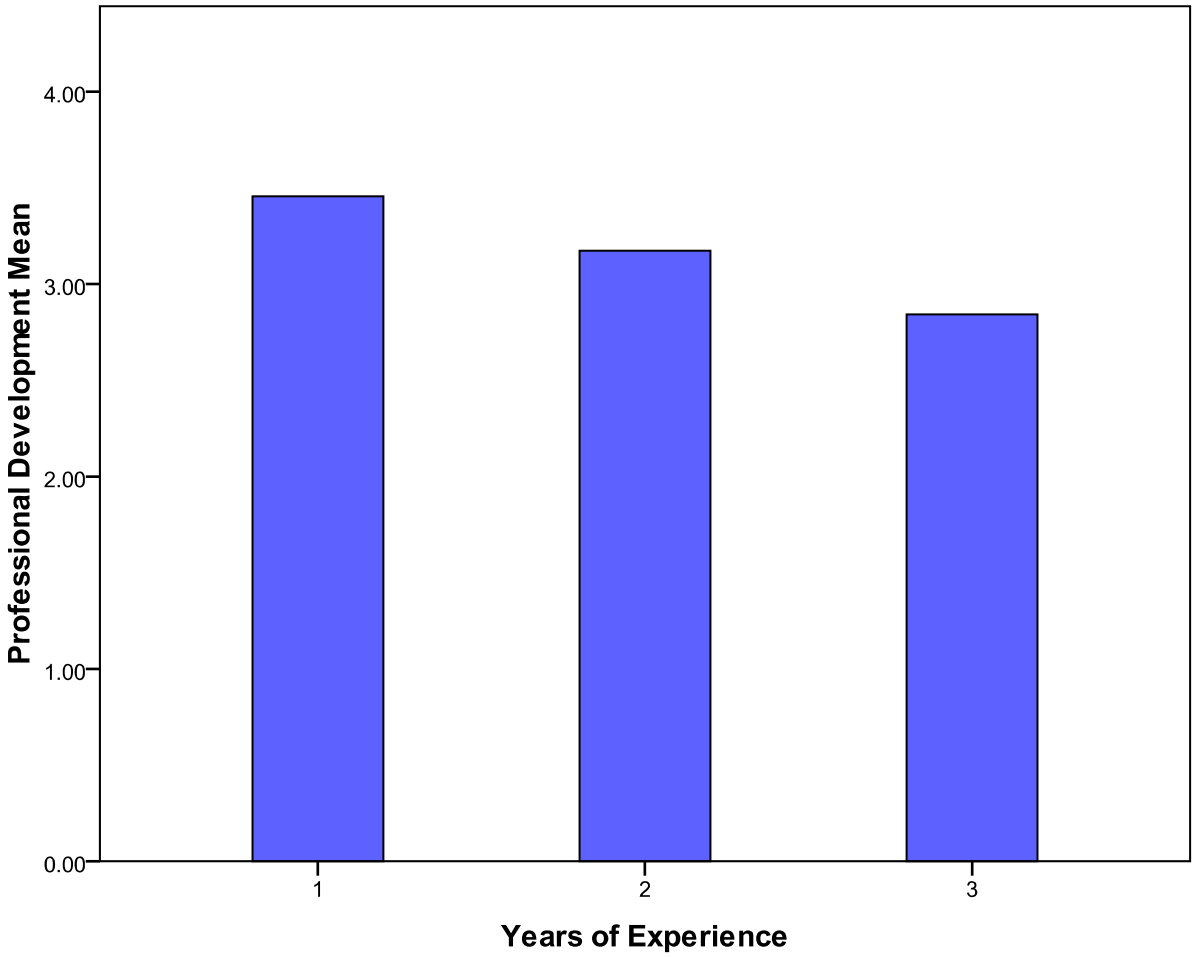

Figure 12. Professional Development Dimension by Years of Experience

Research Question 4

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers?

$Ho4_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers.

$Ho4_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) among novice teachers.

$Ho4_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimensions of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) among novice teachers.

None of the hypothesis for question 4 could be tested because all of the respondents were white.

Research Question 5

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad?

Table 9 shows the means and standard deviations for mentoring dimensions in relation to whether or not the novice teachers work at a project grad school.

Table 9
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentor Dimensions by Project Grad School

Mentoring Dimension	Project Grad School	N	M	SD
Working with Mentor	Yes	14	3.55	.40
	No	54	3.41	.50
Mentor Activities	Yes	14	3.44	.45
	No	52	3.22	.67
Professional Relationships	Yes	14	3.43	.61
	No	53	3.20	.68
Professional Development	Yes	14	3.48	.50
	No	53	3.27	.64

$Ho5_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in perception of experiences with working with mentors among novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad and not participating in Project Grad. The dependent variable was working with my mentor mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(66) = .96$, $p = .34$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, $Ho5_1$ was retained. It appears that project grad school novice teachers had similar perceptions of their experiences working with mentors ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .40$) to that of the other novice teachers ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .50$). The distribution of working with mentor by Project Grad School means is shown in Figure 13.

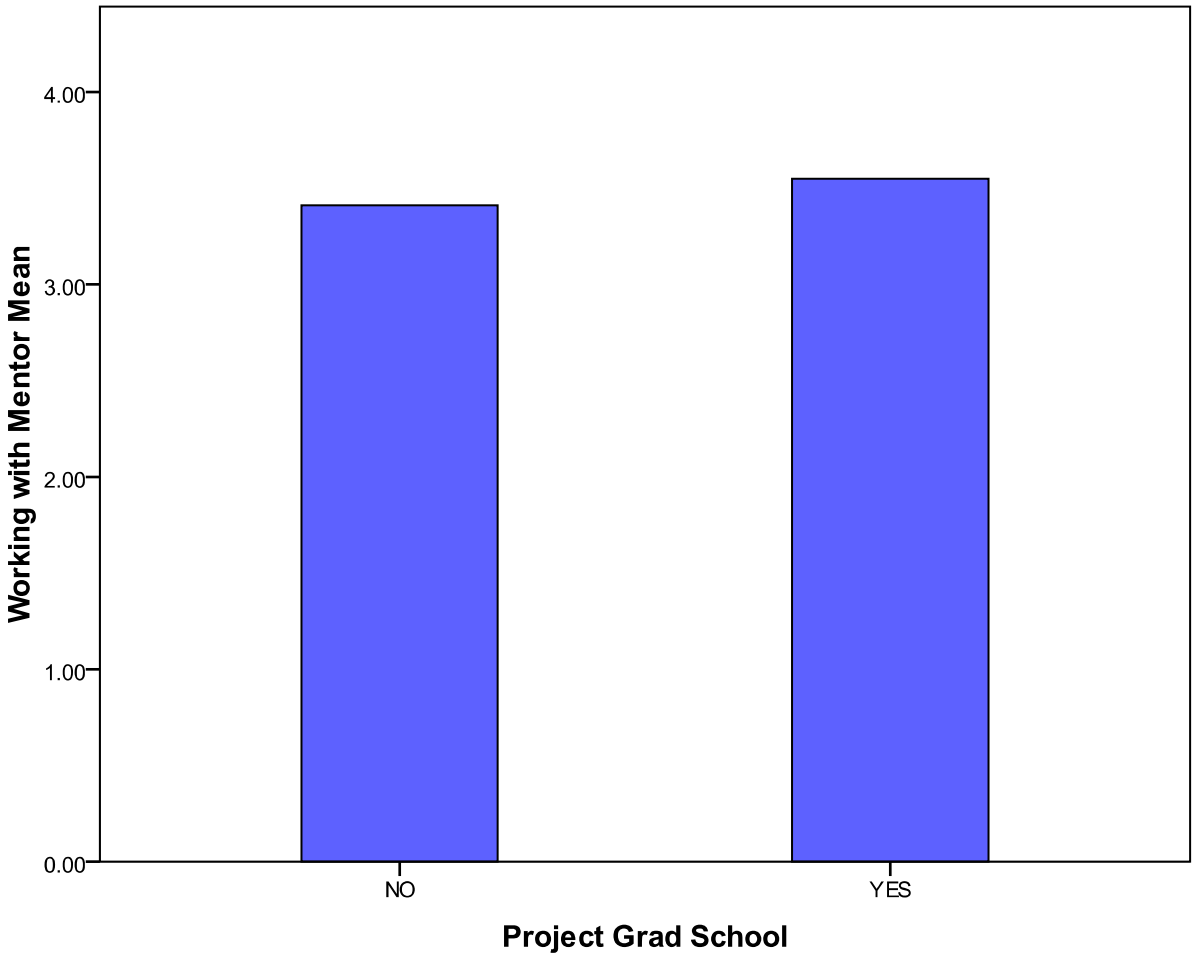

Figure 13. Working with Mentor Dimension by Project Grad School Participation

$Ho5_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in evaluation of usefulness of mentor activities by Project Grad novice teachers compared to non-Project Grad novice teachers. The dependent variable was the mentor activities mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(65) = 1.14$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, $Ho5_2$ was retained. Both Project Grad novice teachers ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .45$) and non-Project Grad novice teachers ($M = 3.22$, $SD = .67$) tended to agree that the mentor activities were useful in their development as an

educator. The distribution of mentor activities by Project Grad School means is shown in Figure 14.

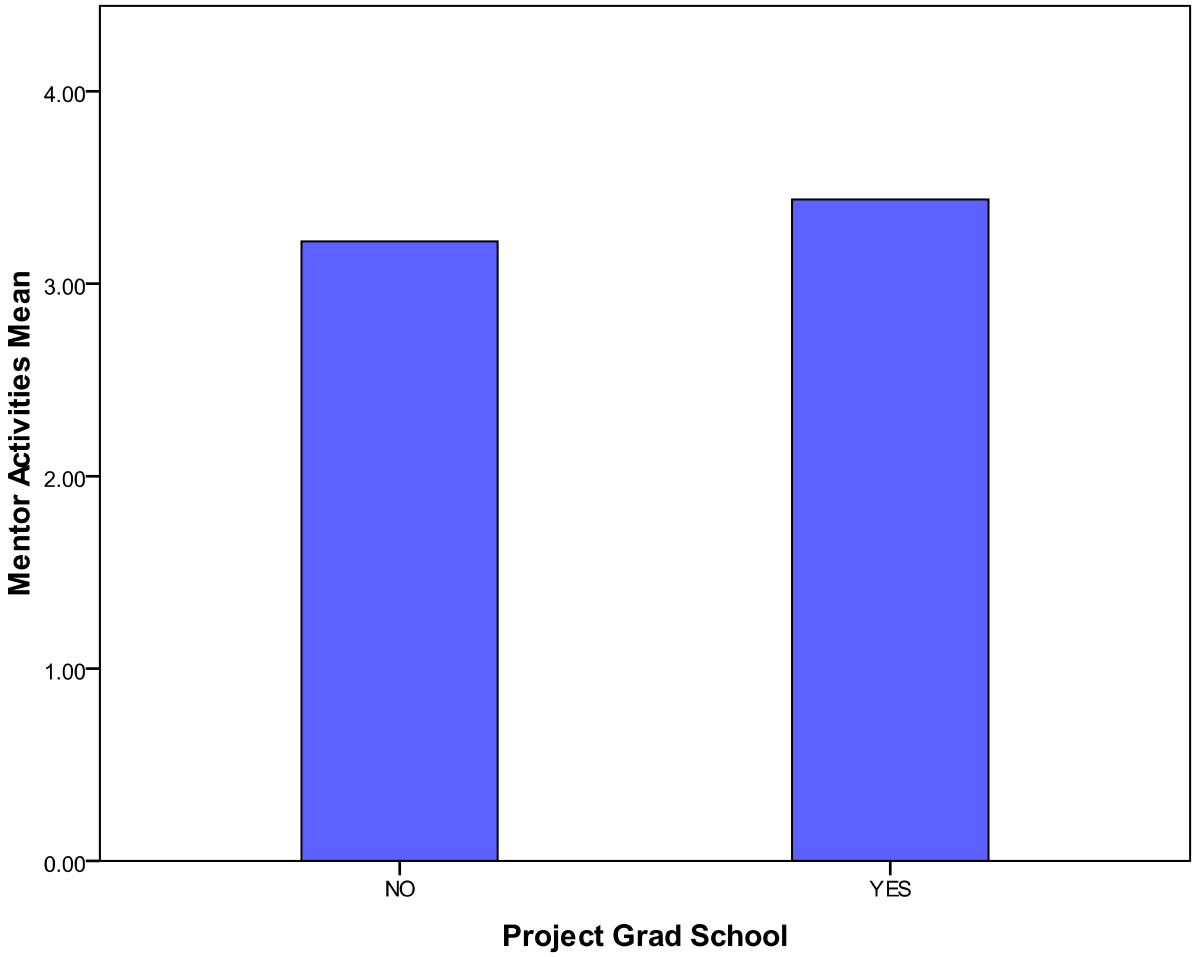

Figure 14. Mentor Activities Dimension by Project Grad School Participation

$Ho5_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in how novice teachers found their mentors helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships among novice teachers at Project Grad schools and novice teachers at non-Project

Grad schools. The dependent variable was the professional relationships mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(64) = 1.14$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, $Ho5_3$ was retained. There was no significant difference in how Project Grad novice teachers perceived mentors as helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .61$) compared to non-Project Grad novice teachers ($M = 3.20$, $SD = .68$). Both groups agreed that mentors were helpful in helping them develop and maintain professional relationships. The distribution of professional relationships by Project Grad School means is shown in Figure 15.

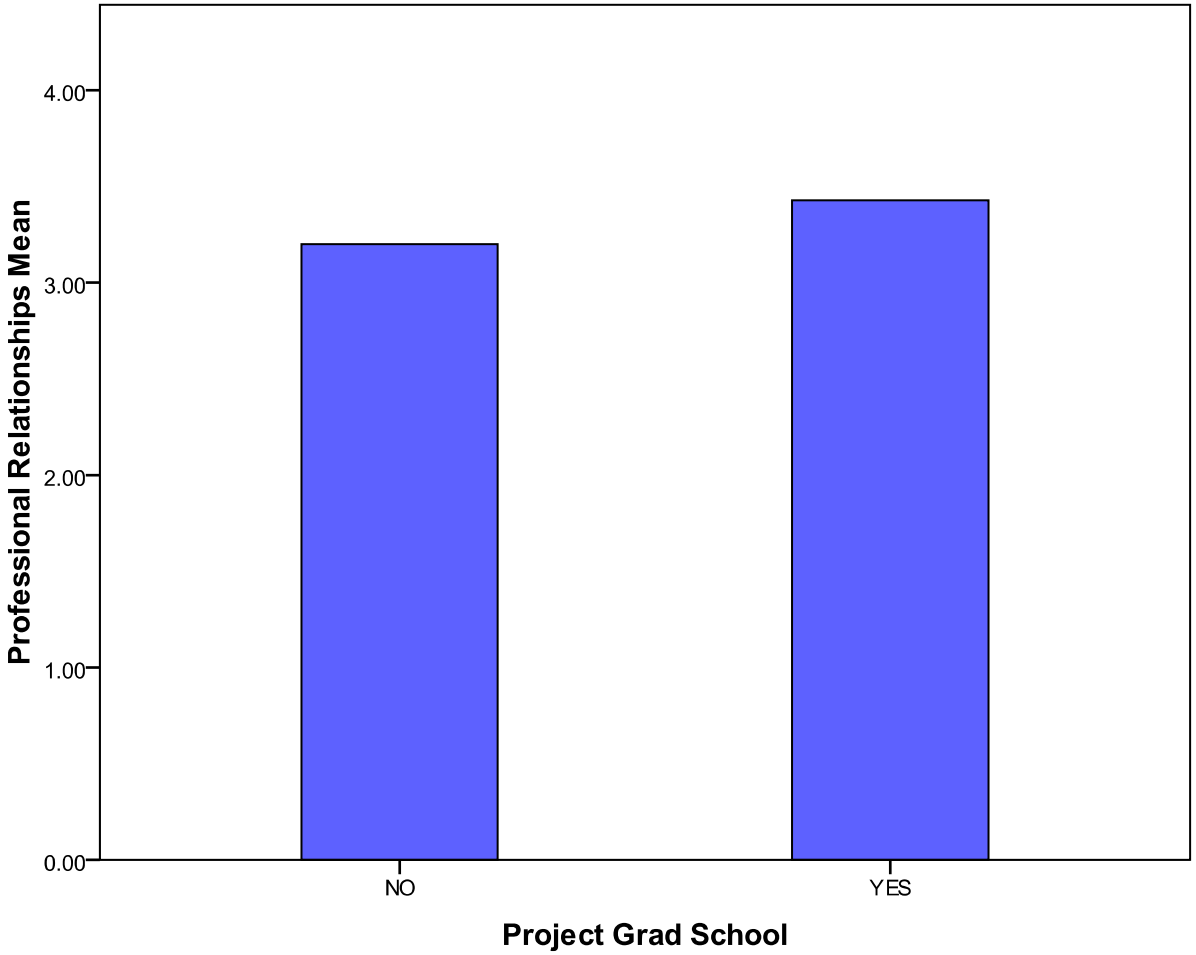

Figure 15. Professional Relationships Dimension by Project Grad School Participation

$Ho5_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in how novice teachers at Project Grad schools perceived the impact of mentors on their professional development compared to novice teachers at non-Project Grad schools. The dependent variable was the professional development mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(65) = 1.13$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, $Ho5_4$ was retained. Project Grad novice teachers agreed that mentors impacted their professional development ($M = 3.48$, $SD = .50$), and non-Project Grad novice teachers had a similar perception ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .64$). The distribution of professional development by Project Grad School means is shown in Figure 16.

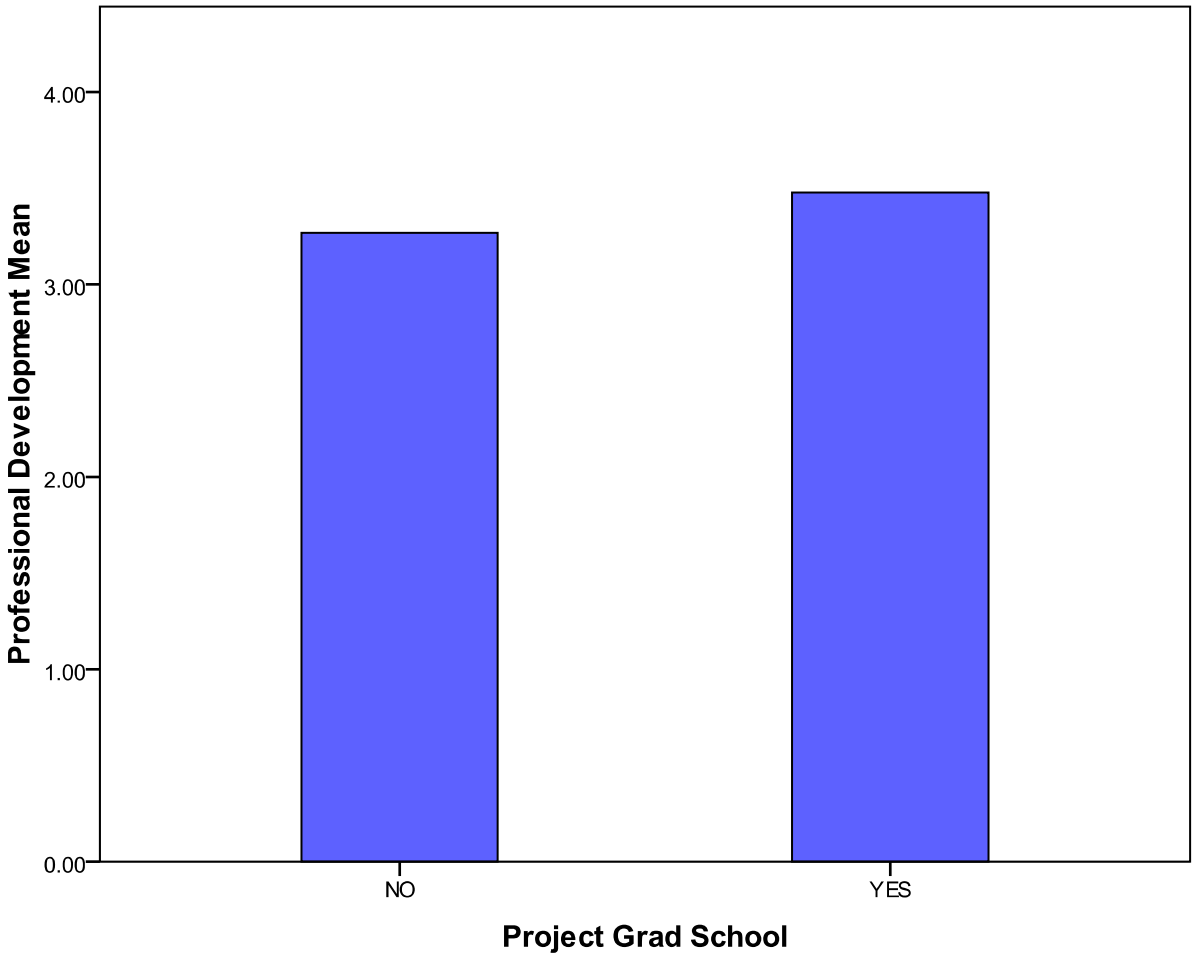

Figure 16. Professional Development Dimension by Project Grad School Participation

Research Question 6

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or not meeting AYP?

Table 10 shows the means and standard deviations for mentoring dimensions in relation to whether or not the novice teachers work at a school that made AYP in 2007-2008.

Table 10
Means and Standard Deviations for Mentor Dimensions by 2007-2008 AYP

Mentoring Dimension	Made AYP in 2007-2008	N	M	SD
Working with Mentor	Yes	41	3.45	.49
	No	25	3.38	.47
Mentor Activities	Yes	41	3.28	.61
	No	24	3.21	.68
Professional Relationships	Yes	40	3.31	.59
	No	24	3.09	.77
Professional Development	Yes	41	3.34	.58
	No	24	3.24	.68

$Ho6_1$: There is no difference in the mean score on the working with my mentor dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in perception of experiences with working with mentors among novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad and not participating in Project Grad. The dependent variable was working with my mentor mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(64) = .55$, $p = .58$, $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho6_1$ was retained. It appears that novice teachers at school that made AYP in 2007-2008 had similar perceptions of their experiences working with mentors ($M = 3.35$, $SD = .50$) to those of the novice teachers at schools that did not make AYP in 2007-2008 ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .48$). Both groups agreed that they had positive experiences working with their mentors. The distribution of working with mentor by Made AYP means is shown in Figure 17.

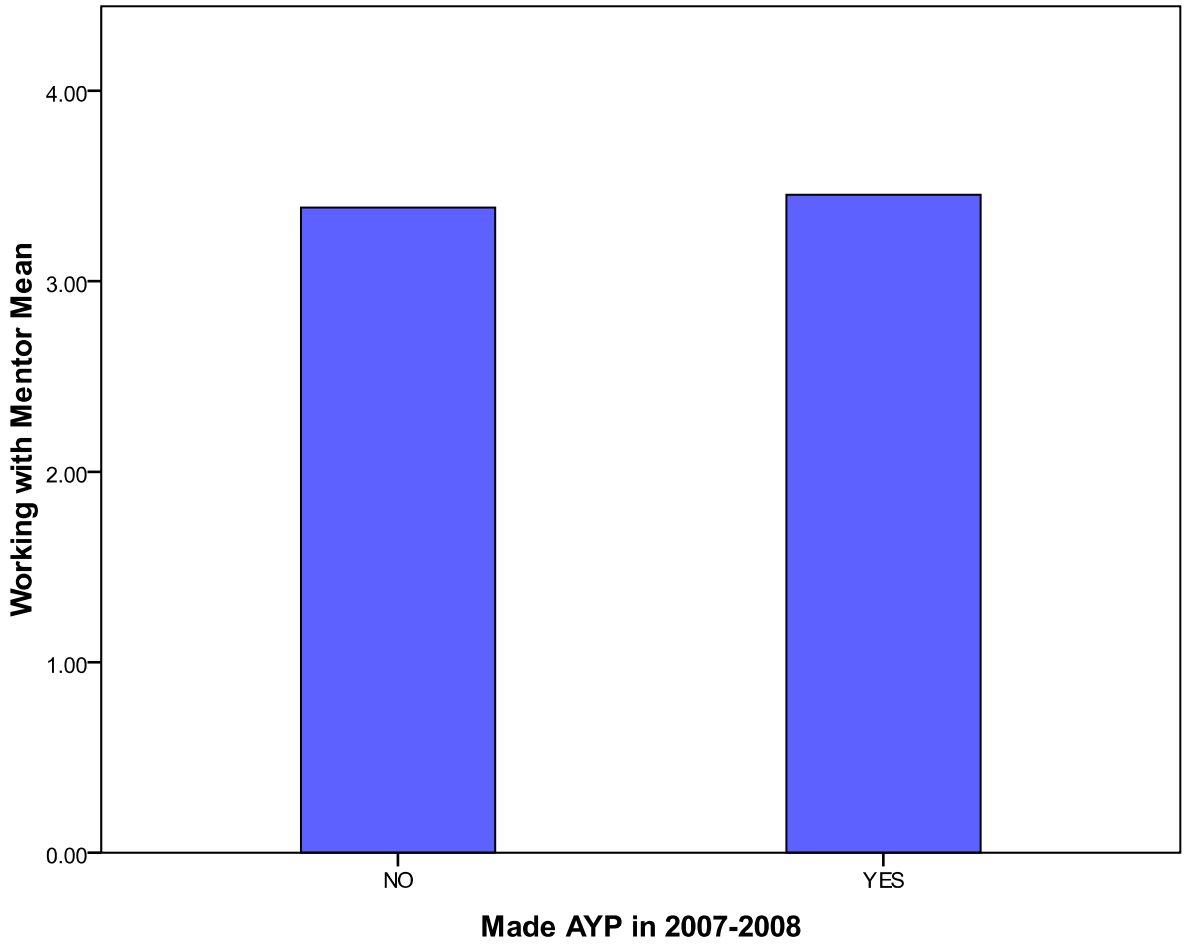

Figure 17: Working with Mentor Dimension by 2007-2008 AYP Success

$Ho6_2$: There is no difference in the mean score on the mentoring activities dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in evaluation of usefulness of mentor activities by project grad novice teachers compared to non-project grad novice teachers. The dependent variable was the mentor activities mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(63) = .44$, $p = .66$, $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho6_2$ was retained. Both novice teachers at schools that made AYP in 2007-2008 ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .62$) and novice teachers at schools that did not ($M = 3.21$, $SD = .68$) tended to agree that the mentor activities

were useful in their development as an educator. The distribution of mentor activities by Made AYP means is shown in Figure 18.

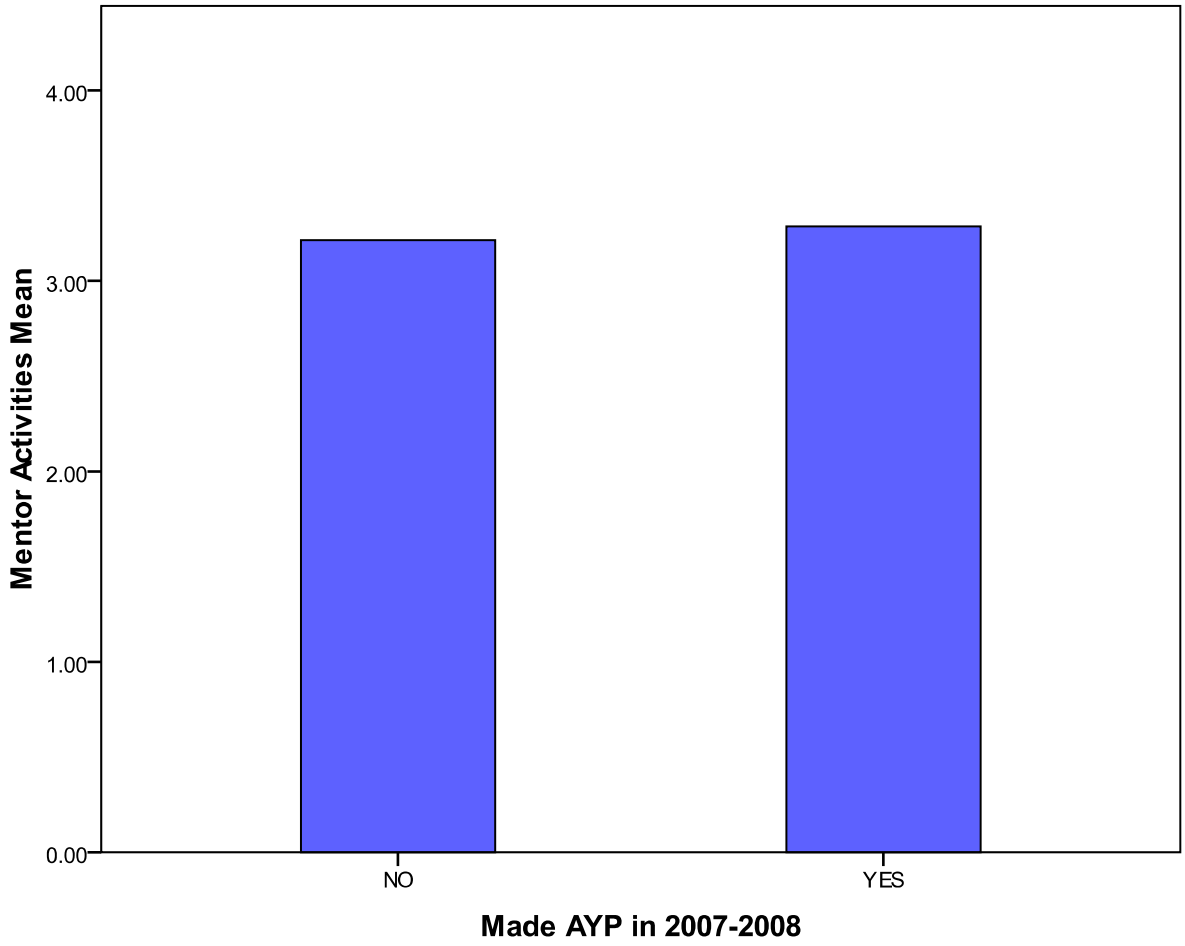

Figure 18: Mentor Activities Dimension by 2007-2008 AYP Success

$Ho6_3$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional relationships dimension of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in how novice teachers found their mentors helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships among novice teachers at schools that made 2007-2008 AYP and novice teachers at schools that did not. The dependent variable was the professional relationships mean score. The

t-test was not significant, $t(62) = 1.31$, $p = .20$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Therefore, $Ho6_3$ was retained. There was no significant difference in how novice teachers at schools that made AYP in 2007-2008 perceived mentors as helpful in developing and maintaining professional relationships ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .58$) compared to novice teachers at schools that did not make 2007-2008 AYP ($M = 3.09$, $SD = .77$). Both groups agreed that mentors were helpful in helping them develop and maintain professional relationships. The distribution of professional relationships by Made AYP means is shown in Figure 19.

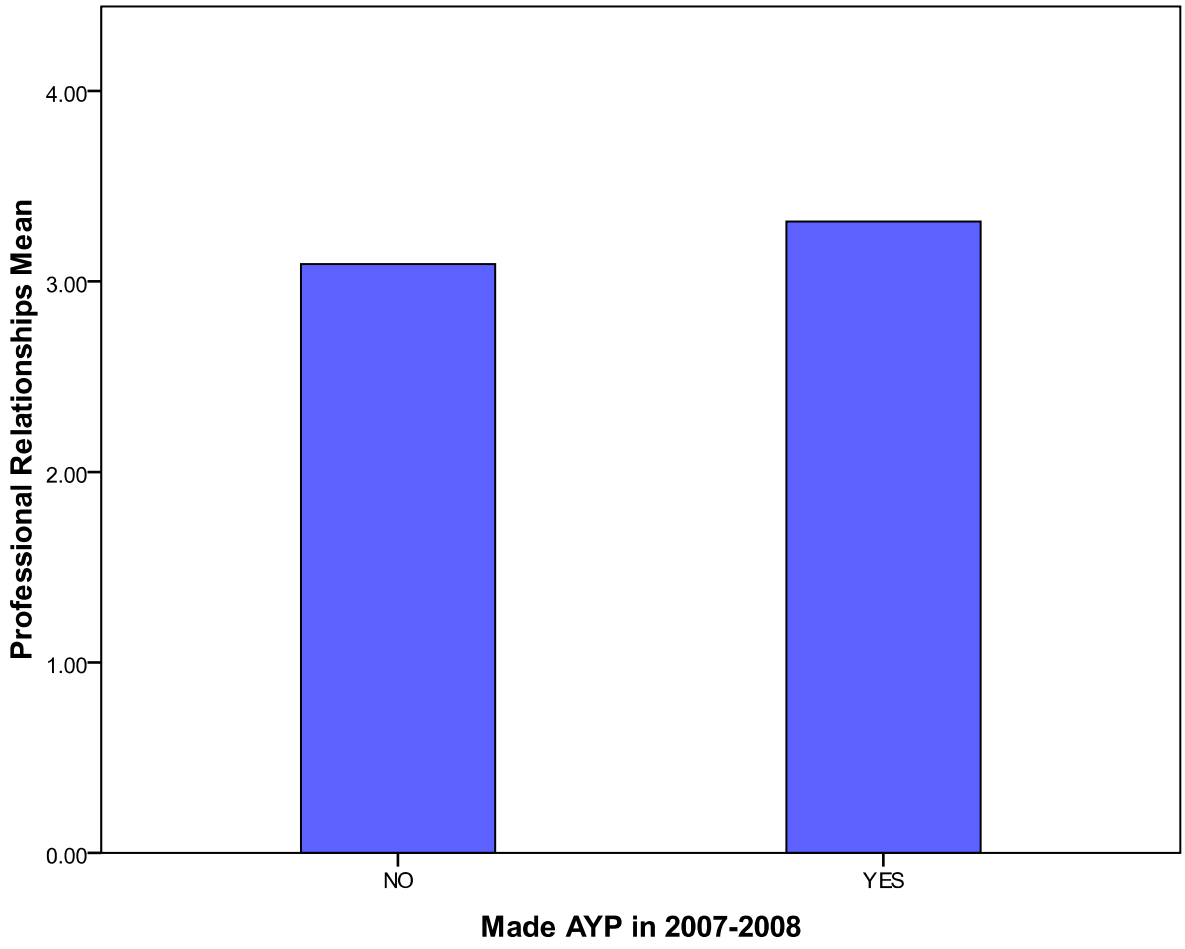

Figure 19: Professional Relationships Dimension by 2007-2008 AYP Success

$Ho6_4$: There is no difference in the mean score on the professional development dimension of the NTPME between novice teachers working at schools meeting AYP or not meeting AYP.

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there were any differences in how novice teachers at schools that made AYP in 2007-2008 perceived the impact of mentors on their professional development compared to novice teachers at schools that did not make 2007-2008 AYP. The dependent variable was the professional development mean score. The t-test was not significant, $t(63) = .67$, $p = .50$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, $Ho6_4$ was retained. Novice teachers at school that made AYP in 2007-2008 agreed that mentors impacted their professional development ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .58$), and novice teachers at schools that did not meet AYP in 2007-2008 had a similar perception ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .68$). The distribution of professional development by Made AYP means is shown in Figure 20.

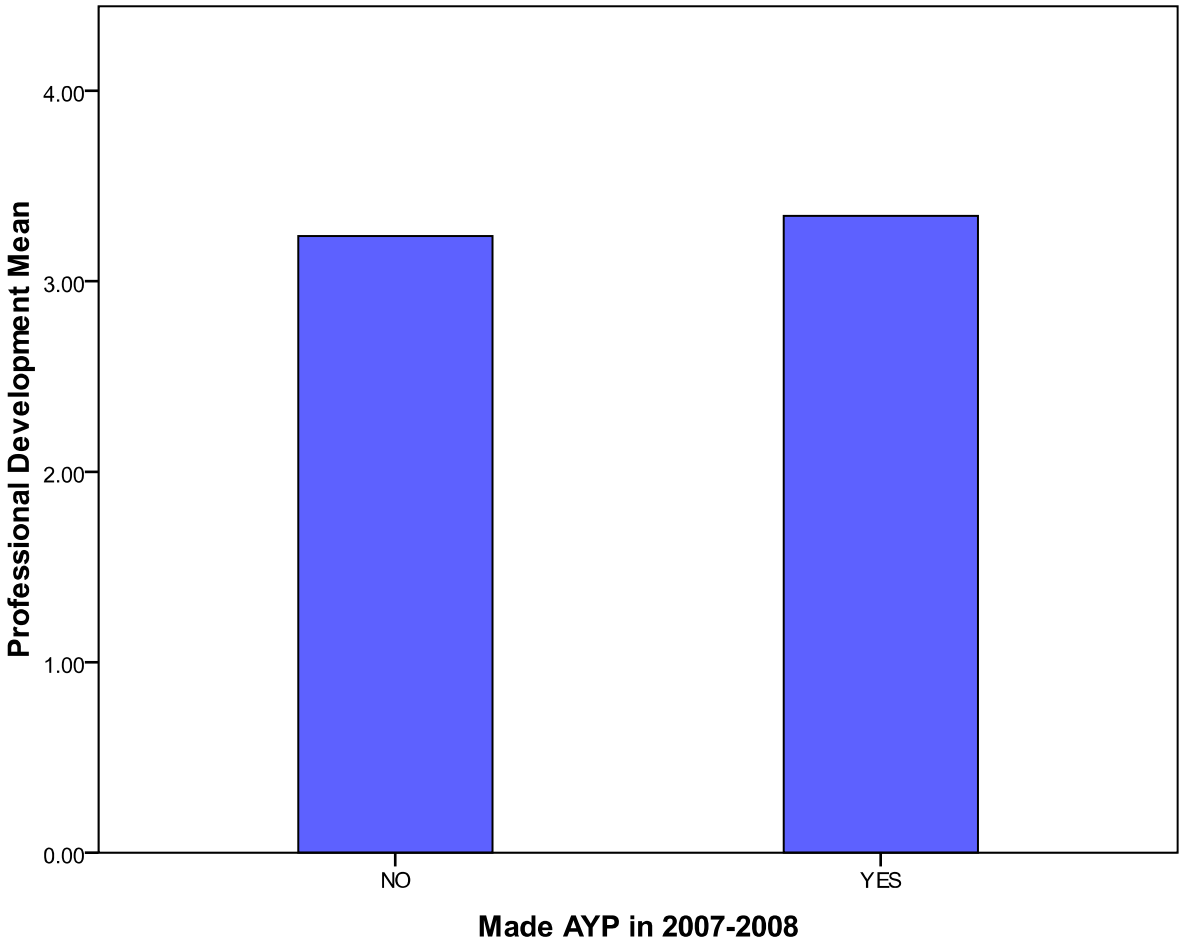

Figure 20: Professional Development Dimension by 2007-2008 AYP Success

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The purpose of this quantitative study was to evaluate the perceptions of novice teachers in the Knox County Schools teacher mentoring program. The study analyzed data collected from an online survey, a paper copy of the survey, and comments. The data were used to analyze the novice teachers' perceptions of their mentoring experience. This chapter concludes the research. It summarizes findings and conclusions, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

Overall, all of the participants tended to agree that the mentoring program was effective. The participants indicated that they had positive experiences with the mentoring program on all four mentoring dimensions. The participants commented positively when describing the working relationship with their mentor. Many of the participants commented that they felt like their mentor was helpful and provided them with a positive experience. The novice teachers offered suggestions on how to improve the mentoring program for other new teachers. The novice teachers overall commented that they were appreciative for their mentoring experience and that their mentoring needs were met in the program.

It is also noteworthy that they did not strongly agree on the effectiveness of the mentoring program. The working with a mentor dimension had the highest mean rating (M = 3.37) on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). They lowest was the building and maintaining professional relationships dimension (M = 3.22). Mentoring activities dimension had a mean score of 3.25 and professional development had a mean of 3.28.

Ninety-seven percent of the 2007-2008 novice teachers indicated they would recommend the program to other teachers. Three percent of the novice teacher group reported that they would not recommend the mentoring program to other teachers. Ninety-five percent of the novice teachers responded that they returned to the same school the year following their mentoring experience. Five percent of the novice teachers responded that they did not return to the same school the following school year after their 2007-2008, mentoring experience.

The results indicated that the novice teachers had positive relationships with their mentors and that they found the mentoring activities helpful in their development as an educator. The novice teachers also indicated that they attribute their mentoring experience to developing professional relationships. Six research questions where explored and the findings are discussed in the following passages.

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between male and female novice teachers?

There was no significant difference perception of the effectiveness of the mentoring program on the four dimensions between male and female novice teachers. Both groups tended to agree that they had a positive relationship with their mentors. Both groups agreed that the mentor activities were useful in their development as educators. They both indicated that their mentors helped them in developing and maintaining professional relationships.

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers?

Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers had similar perceptions about the effectiveness of the mentoring program on the four dimensions. The novice teachers tended to agree that they had a positive relationship with their mentors. They all agreed that the mentor activities were useful in their development as educators. They all indicated that their mentors helped them in developing and maintaining professional relationships. There were no significant differences in perception among the Elementary, Middle School, and High School novice teachers.

Research Question 3

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three levels of experience (1, 2, or 3 years) among novice teachers?

The novice teachers tended to agree that the mentoring program was effective. The novice teachers agreed that the relationship with their mentors was positive. They agreed that the mentor activities were useful in their development as educators. They also indicated that their mentors helped them in developing and maintaining professional relationships. However, novice teachers with 1 year of experience indicated that their mentors had a stronger impact on their professional development compared to those with 3 years of experience.

Research Question 4

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey among the three ethnic groups (white, black, other) of novice teachers?

All of the respondents indicated that they were white. Therefore, Research Question 4 could not be explored. There are possibly several reasons why all of the respondents were white.

One reason could be that there are a small number of blacks and other races in the Knox County School System.

Research Question 5

Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools participating in Project Grad or not participating in Project Grad?

There was no significant difference perception of the effectiveness of the mentoring program on the four dimensions between novice teachers who work at schools participating in Project Grad and those who do not. Both groups tended to agree that their relationship with their mentors was positive. Both groups agreed that the mentor activities were useful in their development as educators. Both groups also indicated that their mentors helped them in developing and maintaining professional relationships.

Research Question 6.

> Is there a difference in the mean score on the four dimensions (working with my mentor, mentor activities, professional relationships, professional development) of the NTPME survey between novice teachers working at schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or not meeting AYP?

There was no significant difference perception of the effectiveness of the mentoring program on the four dimensions between novice teachers who work at schools that made AYP in 2007-2008 and those at schools that did not make AYP in 2007-2008. Both groups tended to agree that their relationship with their mentors was positive. Both groups agreed that the mentor activities were useful in their development as educators. They also indicated that their mentors helped them in developing and maintaining professional relationships.

Conclusion

Based on responses to the six research questions in this study, mentoring appeared to be perceived by the novice teachers as a positive professional experience. Overall, the results did not show significant differences but the participants had similar positive comments to describe their experience with their mentor. In order for the mentoring experience to be successful the mentors need to also gain from their experience with the novice teachers. The mentor must understand the needs of the novice teacher and have a willingness to help mentor the new teacher on the areas that he or she needs to strengthen. Mentors often respond positively to being compensated for their time commitment that is made when agreeing to be a mentor for novice teachers. "Truly effective mentoring programs aid the beginning teacher through more than just the 1st year of teaching (Darling-Hammond & Scalan, 1996)." All of the participants in this study were white. Other ethnic groups had an opportunity to participate but they did not participate in the research study. During the 2007-2008 academic school year in Knox County Schools, thirty (15%) of the novice teachers were African American and ten (5%) were non-white (other).

Recommendations for Further Research and Practice

The results of this study can be used to help schools and school districts consider the best way to help new teachers in their schools. This study provided literature and data collected from novice teachers about their mentoring experience. The literature provided gives the reader an understanding of the teacher retention issue that is in education today. In this study, the participants overall agreed positively on the effectiveness of the mentoring program and their personal mentoring experience. The novice teachers indicated that working with their mentor was the most helpful part of their mentoring experience. A qualitative study can be done to find out why African Americans did not respond to the survey. A replication of the study can be

conducted to include an intense follow-up to encourage minority teachers' view to be adequately documented.

This study can be strengthened by researching additional studies that focus on evaluating the perceptions of novice teachers as they reflect about their mentoring experience.

It is recommended that:

1. Schools and or school districts compensate mentors teachers for the time investment that they make to helping novice teachers develop into professional educators (stipends for mentors). If stipends are costly to the school district, a reduction in the amount given to mentors for their commitment to the mentoring would help sustain the program.
2. School districts can research grants to help cover the financial cost of the mentoring program. (professional development, mentors, new teacher academy)
3. Mentors and novice teacher need to be matched together according to personalities and needs.
4. Mentoring should be a required formal process that every new teacher needs to participate in when coming to a new school or is new to the school district.
5. High-quality professional development needs to take place in order for the mentors to effectively help the novice teacher be successful (mentoring workshops, mentoring institute).
6. Time needs to be incorporated into the school day to allow the mentor and novice teacher an opportunity to communicate (plan time, breaks).
7. School administrators need to help facilitate the mentoring process in the beginning but the administrator does not need to evaluate the mentoring process.
8. School districts may increase mentoring accountability through a formal paperwork process. Documentation needs to take place to record mentoring meetings and the topics discussed at the mentoring meetings.
9. Novice teachers need to have opportunities to observe veteran teachers in the classroom.

10. Additional support needs to be offered for novice teachers who are in hard-to-staff schools and high schools and for minority teachers.
11. The required novice teacher survey administered by Knox County Schools needs to be modified to include different races or ethnicities.

It is further recommended that in order for mentoring programs to be successful, school districts and government officials need to support the development of teachers who are new to the profession. School systems and local governments need to make an effort to financially support effective programs that are proven to help retain new teachers. Building level administrators and teacher leaders need to take a strong position within their school to stress the positive impact that mentoring has on the experience of a novice teacher. Strong relationship building among mentor teacher and novice teacher is the key to sustaining a long lasting effective mentoring program.

It is recommended that the Knox County Schools continue the novice teacher mentoring program. The program should be retained even if budget reductions have to be considered to reduce the stipend amount offered to the mentoring teachers for their commitment to the mentoring program.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Summative Evaluation for CTM-Novice

1. School

2. School level:

- ☐ School level: Elementary
- ☐ Middle
- ☐ High

3. Years of experience:

- ☐ Years of experience: 1 year
- ☐ 2 years
- ☐ 3 years

4. Gender:

- ☐ Gender: male
- ☐ female

5. Ethnicity:

- ☐ Ethnicity: Black
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other

6. Is your school a Project Grad School?

- ☐ Is your school a Project Grad School? yes
- ☐ no

7. Did your school make AYP in 2007-2008?

- ☐ Did your school make AYP in 2007-2008? Yes
- ☐ No

8. As a novice teacher working with my mentor, I felt:

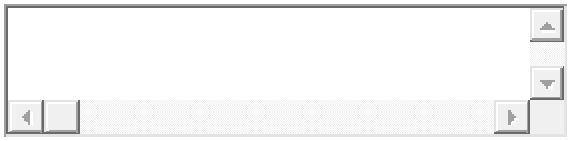
	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
the relationship we had was positive.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the relationship I had with the lead mentor was positive.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the responsibilities of a novice were clearly communicated.	☐ trongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
my responsibilities as novice were appropriate & realistic.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the assistance I received from my mentor was of benefit.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the assistance I received from my principal was of	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
benefit.				
the assistance I received from other faculty was of benefit.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the time I had with my mentor was adequate.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the professional development opportunities were helpful.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
my mentor understood and fulfilled his/her responsibilities.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the mentor was professional and positive in dealing with me.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the assistance and training I received was helpful.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the mentor clearly understood his/her responsibilities.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the novice responded professionally to my suggestions.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
I was able to show adequate growth fulfilling	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

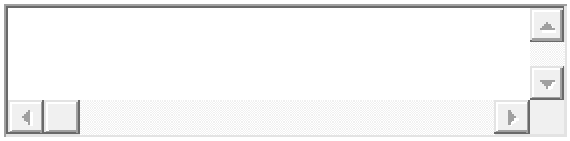
	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
expectations.				
I now have the skills/attitude to be more effective.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
any problems were resolved constructively & professionally.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
the mentoring program was well organized and ran smoothly.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

Other (please specify)

9. What I liked best about my mentor was:



10. Suggestions I have about making the mentoring experience and program better are:

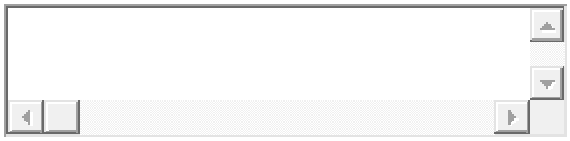


11. Would you recommend this program/mentoring position to other teachers?

☐ Yes ☐ no

12. If not, why?

13. How do you think we could go about involving other faculty members in mentoring?



14. Mentors at my school helped me understand the professional expectations for teachers related to:

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
fulfilling classroom responsibilities.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
assuming grade level or departmental responsibilities.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
assuming appropriate school level responsibilities.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
knowing and following school policies and procedures.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
addressing national, state and system standards.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
completing the TN Teacher Evaluation Process.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

15. Mentors helped me learn how to establish and maintain effective professional relationships:

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
with students.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
with parents and caregivers.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
with colleagues	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
with administrators and other school/school system leaders.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
with community members.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

16. The following mentor activities helped me develop as an educator:

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
regularly scheduled conferences during the school day.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
informal conferences with mentors.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
coaching by my mentor.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
observing mentor	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
and other faculty.				disagree
informal meetings with other faculty.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
informal get-togethers.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
learning opportunities at the school.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
encouragement to attend system-wide learning opportunities.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree

17. Mentors impacted my professional development by:

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
serving as professional role models.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
accepting me as a professional colleague.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
making time for me when I needed assistance.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
providing the specific support and assistance I needed.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
listening to my concerns and helping me identify solutions.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
being flexible and open-minded in assisting me.	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
helping me get to know other faculty and staff.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
linking me with faculty who could assist me in addressing my concerns.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me acquire the resources I needed.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me develop a repertoire of effective strategies.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me design a supportive learning environment.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me learn strategies address students' diversity.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me develop interpersonal and relational skills.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me understand the organization/culture of school.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
helping me understand the community, its issues, strengths.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
linking me with community resources.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
	☐ strongly	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree
helping me learn to balance my own life with teaching.	agree			disagree
helping me become a more reflective teacher.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree
making me develop my own professional growth plan.	☐ strongly agree	☐ agree	☐ disagree	☐ strongly disagree

18. Did you return to the same school this year? (This survey is anonymous)

If your answer is yes, go to question 19. If your answer is no, go to question 20.	▼

19. Please respond to the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The teacher induction process provided to me by my school and the school system is an important part of why I will be back at this school next year?	☐ Strongly Agree	☐ Agree	☐ Disagree	☐ Strongly Disagree

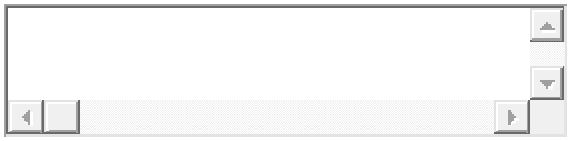
20. Please respond to the following:

Your answer is confidential and anonymous

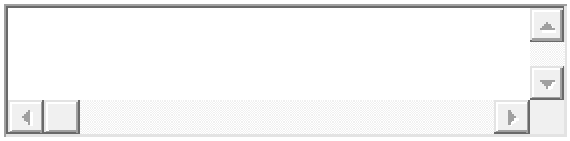
I will not be back to my school because

Other (please specify)

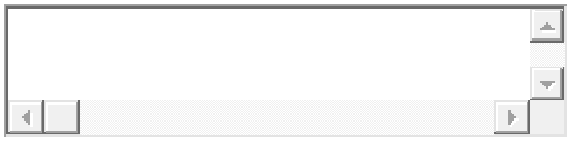
21. I most appreciated the Mentoring Program for:



22. The Mentoring Program addressed my specific needs as a new teacher by:



23. How has your participation in the Mentoring Program affected your attitudes and behaviors as a teacher?



24. How has your participation in the Mentoring Program (i.e., knowledge and skills you derived) affected the teachers, parents, community, and students in your school?

APPENDIX B

Participant Comments

Participant responses to question # 8:
As a novice teacher working with my mentor, I felt:

1. LaKisha, as an experienced teacher, I really wasn't given a mentor. On paper, I signed as a novice teacher, but I had no communication with a mentor. I had great difficulty answering these questions as I really didn't have a relationship with a mentor.

2. The mentoring program where we went to Sara Simpson Bldg., was beneficial, but also conflicted with other requirements and scheduling.

3. I have changed schools to a middle school computer technologies classroom this year. I am currently at another middle school teaching 6-8 grades. I think that the biggest reason I was not brought back to my previous school was because of issues that were not resolved professionally or effectively by members of the faculty regarding some of my students in my classroom.

4. I am back teaching a second year largely due to my mentors.

Participant responses to question # 9:
What I liked best about my mentor was:

1. We get along very well - same sense of humor!
2. She was always helpful and gain me information that I need ahead of time. Very friendly and welcoming
3. The support and help she gave
4. helpful, caring, and practical
5. Very approachable
6. Having someone I knew would help me with any questions or problems that came up.
7. They were positive and helpful
8. She was willing to answer my questions.
9. the fact that she had previously taught the grade I am now teaching
10. Very helpful and understanding
11. Her availability to answer questions.
12. feedback and encouragement
13. She was very approachable and willing to answer questions.
14. My mentor was a great source for information and always made the time to help me out.
15. Informal availability.
16. Her willingness to share her own mistakes.
17. will organized and professional advice.
18. I knew I had someone to go to if I needed help.
19. Informative, supportive, welcoming

20. Friendly and easy to get in contact with.
21. The engaged yet hand-off approach which allowed the novice to learn without being too overbearing as a mentor.
22. She was patient and helpful
23. She was helpful and positive.
24. They were nice. Being the only first year teacher, I did not feel as if there was as much communication started by the mentors as I would have liked.
25. Her professionalism
26. Knowledgeable, experienced
27. Her positive personality
28. Her willingness to discuss anything and to be a sounding board.
29. She was very sweet and non-invasive.
30. My mentor was very easy to talk to and extremely available to me.
31. available and supportive
32. Having someone to talk to with concerns and issues.
33. very knowledgeable, based planning and suggestions on curriculum, always helpful with many resources, has gone out of her way to ensure we are using the most effective teaching strategies
34. Availability
35. n/a
36. Her knowledge and accessibility.
37. My mentor has been teaching for over 40 years. I was able to pull from her knowledge t help me with troublesome areas. I also was able to get and share my ideas with her.
38. How easy it was to contact her.
39. She's nice and knowledgable
40. not overbearing, but always helpful
41. The experience they had. They were a wealth of knowledge and seemed to always be there at the right moments.
42. Regularly checked in with, (positively) nagging me to meet deadlines.
43. Very Knowledgable and helpful
44. Didn't push herself on me, let me know that I could come to her whenever I needed to come…was always patient and answered everything…gave great advice when I had a parent pressuring me to change a student grade.
45. knowledge
46. Despite her busy schedule, she always made time for me at the drop of a hat.
47. Professional Development
48. The support and encouragement she gave to me daily
49. She became a life time friend. She showed me many instructional and organizational strategies to use.
50. My mentor was very friendly and approachable. There were several informal get-togethers that were helpful.
51. professional
52. able to listen and offer advise
53. How they created a "safety net" within our department…I didn't just have one mentor, I had eleven!

54. Was very knowledgeable and was able to answer any questions I had. Gave me good insight into being a successful teacher.
55. She always came through for me when I needed something.
56. How down to earth and approachable he was.
57. He was available when needed to but always on me about things
58. very approachable
59. always positive, professional, and never belittled any of my questions or ideas because I was a new teacher

Participant responses to question # 10
Suggestions I have about making the mentoring experience and program better are:

Question 10 Responses
1. None...my experience was great.
2. n/a
3. n/a
4. only have the mentoring program for one semester.
5. None
6. As a new teacher, I would've liked it if my mentor reminded me of deadlines because everything is so overwhelming. Also, have mentors who have a positive attitude about teaching and the school.
7. The mentors would have meetings without the novices. We only met one time at the beginning of the year and never had another meeting. The mentors were too focused on themselves to help others.
8. More topics relating to preschool and special education
9. keep up the good work
10. none at my school
11. Formal meetings were at many times untimely. I much preferred the impromptu, informal meetings.
12.none at this time
13.A binder of information about the school, websites, dates, people....a little more than the staff binder.
14.n/a
15. There should be more time made for mentor and novice and confer beyond that which is now allowed.
16. More support for instructional strategies
17. None
18.Making the mentors more accountable for contacting the novice teachers.
19. none
20. More meeting times
21. Let teachers teach
22. None
23. Scheduled sit-downs (short ones)
24. If seasoned teachers struggle with teaching, you can imagine what a novice must feel like. It's overwhelming. I have never had more stress related illnesses in my life as that year.

25. Have more structured time together. Share lesson plans
26. Principals need to listen to new ideas from mentor, instead of doing everything there OLD way.
27. n/a
28. none
29. I would suggest holding meetings for new teachers and for separating the mentoring program for teachers new to the profession and simply new to Knox County.
30. None
31. I would have liked to have mentor meetings with all of the other novice teachers. The first year can be difficult and talking with other teachers that are going through the same types of things would have made it better.
32. more meetings
33. meet more often and more formally
34. At Project Grad schools, there is an abundance of "New teacher" meetings. Fewer meetings would help lessen the time burden.
35. not having to do this survey at the last minute
36. blogs
37. clearer expectations
38. an inservice day to discuss questions and issues about half way through the school year. Within this meeting, explaining the responsibilities for the end of the year. (Example: CR's, checking out, inventory, etc.)
39. none, mine was awesome
40. a bit more organization would not hurt
41. none for my school
42. I think that it would be helpful to have a little more time with my mentor at the beginning of the year.
43. have more mentors for bigger schools
44. schedule specific meetings between mentor and mentee with specific topics to cover like evaluations.
45. The program should have scheduled meetings and set times where the mentor and new teacher meet.

Participant responses to question # 12
Would you recommend this program/mentoring position to other teachers? If not, why?

1. Not personally inclined to the format
2. I don't know who my mentor was. I know I had one- but no involvement.
3. I pretty much picked my own mentor and latched on to her.
4. I'm not sure all mentors are as good as mine was.
5. The mentors were not helpful; they only talked to each other and never really met with or mentored the novices.

Participant responses to questions # 13
How do you think we could go about involving other faculty members in mentoring?

Responses Question 13

1. At my school, we mentor each other every day, with or without the title of "Mentor". We work extremely well together and collaborate on almost everything.
2. Maybe including them in various meetings.
3. Just offering for them to help. Encouraging teachers to get advice from them.
4. Make it beneifical for everyone, not just time consuming.
5. Make a point to staff members that we all work together and how we need to encourage the new teachers.
6. give every teacher a mentor even if they have been teaching for years, just someone to come behind and pick you up on a bad day and ask if you need anything
7. Offer a stipend or professional development hours
8. Make them aware of the benefits to the staff as a whole.
9. I think that a lot of experienced teachers are mentors whether they have the title or not. Anytime advice is sought and received, mentoring is taking place.
10. Retain novice teachers in the program to build a stronger team.
11. By reminding all faculty that we are all mentors and mentees.
12. not sure at this time!
13. Provide more incentives.
14. n/a
15. Offer more free professional development for experienced teachers too.
16. Make it beneficial to them. They need some compensation of some sort to take time out of their schedule to help other teachers. (not necessarily monetary, but say, a T.A. to help them do things while they are mentoring. Something along those lines, so they do not feel as "put out" about the time it takes to mentor the new teachers)
17. Volunteer mentors
18. Ask them and provide compensatory time for their efforts.
19. Most are involved anyway. Just about everyone at my school was willing to help me. What is discouraging is to know that the stress level will probably always be the same. I wanted to hear that things become easier with time, but I didn't hear that.
20. Ask them
21. Money always talks.
22. Personal invitations, encourage principals to speak to staff of the need for mentors
23. bring them in for meetings
24. Monetary compensation or inservice credit
25. I am not sure, mentors need to have a drive and will to teach other adults. An incentive may be an idea. Teachers have tremendous responsibilities, I can see where some might not want to participate.
26. stipends
27. offer inservice hours or some similar credit
28. Have more than 24 hours in a day… (kidding). People have busy lives and if they had time to spare they would, but most do not.
29. Inspire the to want to help
30. Communicate that it’s available
31. Remind them about how they were their first year.
32. I’m not sure

33. One possibility would be to pair experienced faculty with new teachers when “learning the ropes”
34. Awareness of program and continued training
35. Make it mandatory
36. Inform other teachers about how beneficial it is to novice teachers when the entire faculty is helpful
37. mentor training
38. specifically ask them to be involved
39. offer more inservice hours

Participant responses to question # 21
I most appreciated the mentoring program for:

Question 21 Responses
1. The program let me know who my "official" mentor was, but the entire staff at my school mentors each and every one of us newbies.
2. Providing a family like atmosphere and always encouraging and helpful
3. the help and advice you receive
4. Being available to assist me which issues, problems, and questions.
5. Helping me survive the year
6. Being there for me if I had any questions or concerns
7. the hour of unscheduled inservice
8. Being there if I needed to ask a question
9. Supporting me during my first year of learning.
10. Helping me to understand why procedures were handled in certain ways.
11. Made someone available to help me when I needed it.
12. Everything mentioned above.
13. All the the relative information gained from meetings.
14. Providing me with an opportunity to meet with other new teachers and more experienced teachers as well.
15. assistance with the evaluation process.
16. the help
17. helping me get to know the staff and helping me with any questions or concerns.
18. The main idea behind it has a great foundation to grow and nurture successful teachers. The process, like many things, still needs some work.
19. Guidance

20. The offer of assistance
21. Being available to help round out my education program (I was in a post-bac program)
22. I came to Knox County schools from a private school. From the first day, I felt more welcome and better supported than I felt in the system from which I came.
23. Introducing me to the school and the staff

24. Having someone to go to for information and to listen to concerns.
25. helping me adjust to being a teacher
26. Gving me a name of someone who could help when they had time.
27. Providing guidance during a time of need, regardless of content, time or day!
28. support
29. n/a
30. The assistance provided to help me have a successful first year.
31. All of the help! Every member of the mentor team at my school helped me in many ways. I could go to any member of the team, at any time, and get help with just about anything!
32. answering my questions
33. helping me with the procedures and culture of the school
34. for connecting me with the people I needed to know to help make my job easier
35. someone to get help, concerning specific questions
36. the support of learning the ropes as a new teacher
37. I had someone to go to with questions
38. Assisting me with my career change.
39. Food provided
40. All of its help. I couldn't imagine doing this year over without them
41. For connecting me to so many great teachers that have helped me educationally, emotionally, and socially
42. The guidance I received through it. I had many questions being a new tacher, and I always had someone that could answer those questions.
43. did not have a mentor
44. feeling like part of the staff
45. feeling secure
46. The wonderful support (giving their time, ideas, etc.)
47. the level of professionalism I experienced from my mentor
48. Helping me understand the evaluation process
49. Providing an experienced teacher who had a responsibility to help me when I needed assistance

Participant responses to question # 22
The mentoring program addressed my specific needs as a new teacher by:

1. The program let me know who my "official" mentor was, but the entire staff at my school mentors each and every one of us newbies.
2. Providing a family like atmosphere and always encouraging and helpful
3. the help and advice you receive
4. Being available to assist me which issues, problems, and questions.
5. Helping me survive the year
6. Being there for me if I had any questions or concerns
7. the hour of unscheduled inservice
8. Being there if I needed to ask a question
9. Supporting me during my first year of learning.
10. Helping me to understand why procedures were handled in certain ways.

11. Made someone available to help me when I needed it.
12. Everything mentioned above.
13. All the the relative information gained from meetings.
14. Providing me with an opportunity to meet with other new teachers and more experienced teachers as well.
15. assistance with the evaluation process.
16. the help
17. helping me get to know the staff and helping me with any questions or concerns.
18. The main idea behind it has a great foundation to grow and nurture successful teachers. The process, like many things, still needs some work.
19. Guidance
20. The offer of assistance
21. Being available to help round out my education program (I was in a post-bac program)
22. I came to Knox County schools from a private school. From the first day, I felt more welcome and better supported than I felt in the system from which I came.
23. Introducing me to the school and the staff
24. Having someone to go to for information and to listen to concerns.
25. helping me adjust to being a teacher
26. Gving me a name of someone who could help when they had time.
27. Providing guidance during a time of need, regardless of content, time or day!
28. support
29. n/a
30. The assistance provided to help me have a successful first year.
31. All of the help! Every member of the mentor team at my school helped me in many ways. I could go to any member of the team, at any time, and get help with just about anything!
32. helping me learn the ropes
33. giving me tools to teach
34. helping me with the procedures and culture of the school
35. introducing me to the school culture
36. someone to get help concerning specific questions
37. help with various questions that my mentor was able to answer very quick and accurately.
38. answering questions and helping me to understand the neighborhood.
39. support
40. giving me the resources and support to be successful
41. intoducing me to the newer teachers
42. answering any questions I had and teaching me how to handle the stress of teaching
43. giving me many resources to turn to for all types of guidance. Showed me the ropes and prepared me for the upcoming school year. Helped with all the paperwork stuff, ie evaluations, beginning/end of the year stuff etc.
44. making me feel welcome in a new position
45. setting example
46. providing multiple resources
47. helping in various ways
48. placing me with a mentor who thought a lot like me and one in which I could really relate with
49. helping me understand special needs students

50. gave me specific person to go to for help
51. giving access to a willing veteran teacher who would help

Participant responses to question # 23
How has your participation in the Mentoring Program affected your attitudes and behaviors as a teacher?

1. I hope it will make me a good official "Mentor" someday. In the meantime, I hope that newer teachers will feel comfortable asking me questions whenever their need arises.
2. It has been positive
3. I feel I am more professional.
4. I know see how important it is to be available to other new teachers.
5. We are all in this together
6. It didn't have an affect.
7. It makes me realize that some teachers only were part of the mentoring program for the hours of unscheduled inservice, and not for helping others. I do not want to be like that. I want to be willing to share what I have learned.
8. I did learn some things that would be helpful to me in the classroom and it helped me to become comfortable with school policies and routines.
9. Teachers must work together to help each other in all areas. Communication, and a positive, helpful attitude is key to having a successful staff of teachers, (including support staff).
10. Yes
11. Unsure.
12. Allowed me to be confident in what I can do as an effective educator
13. for the better
14. I think the program allowed me to have a more positive attitude and not feel so overwhelmed about teaching.
15. I am more positive and have less anxiety about the unknown.
16. It helped me be a more reflective practitioner
17. It has made me feel more prepared and appreciated.
18. Neutral. I learned some great strategies, but I also saw how certain teachers do not like to communicate as much as they should.
19. Helping me to understand the challenges of teaching as a new teacher and the same struggles that seasoned teachers encounter
20. It has given me a broader perspective of my fellow staff members
21. It has made me a more professional teacher and open to other facets of education.
22. I am much more comfortable in my role on a teaching team because I have felt supported in my efforts.
23. I question my choice of profession because of the hours and not being able to find balance in my life or time for my own child. Without the mentoring program, it would probably be worse. At least now I realize this is permanent.
24. None
25. We all have similar concerns, just various years of experience, and my mentor has led me to understand that we are truly doing this for our students, they are what counts.
26. I am more confident

27. n/a
28. I don't think it has affected my attitude.
29. I know that I would love to be apart of the mentoring team when I am able. I think it has been a great program and I know that I would like to help new people to the field like I was helped.
30. broadened my skills
31. slightly more jaundiced
32. in a very positive manner
33. I felt supported and wanted
34. encouragement
35. I don't want to be at any other school because of my colleagues and mentors.
36. about the same
37. It has opened my mind up to understanding other teacher's ideas and thoughts
38. It has made me comfortable here at my school and that is a main part in staying where you are. My previous school/county did not do that and that is why I am not there.
39. I have learned that I am not the only one that has trouble with particular students, and have received help on how to work with those students.
40. positively
41. I LOVE teaching! I can't wait to come back!
42. My mentors have given suggestions/ideas for many situations this year. I have truly appreciated all of the support from my mentors. (which has helped my attitude to stay positive all year)
43. It helped me to see more of the positive aspects of working within an urban school,
44. I am better informed
45. gave me very positive outlook about cooperation within the school
46. I have appreciated the help from any teacher who has been willing to provide it. I have taken the offered advice into consideration for my teaching strategies.

Participant responses to question # 24
How has your participation in the Mentoring Program (i.e., knowledge and skills you derived) affected the teachers, parents, community, and students in your school?

1. It has improved my ability to do a good job as a teacher in all arenas.
2. I have been able to share my knowledge as well
3. It has made me a better teacher
4. I don't believe it was the Mentoring Program that changed how I affect others.
5. I don't believe it has affected anyone else. No one could tell they are mentoring us because they weren't!
6. It has given me the confidence to approach others in a professional manner.
7. I feel I have become a more effective teacher. I also see the value of continuing and open communication between all stake- holders.
8. I have taken on more leadership roles at my school at the request of my mentoring team.
9. Unsure.
10. Fostered a collaborative, cross-disciplinary partnership.

11. NO IDEA!
12. My participation has helped me become a more effective and a more informed educator.
13. I understand my role in my school much better.
14. I try to be the best I can, helping me be better helps my students
15. It has made me a more confident teacher.
16. The community made decisions that were not always in the best interest of the students. These decisions heavily influenced the chooses made by the people in charge of the school.
17. Better communication with community, other teachers, parents and students
18. I have created a more effective program because of it (I refer to the 07-08 mentoring program)
19. I am a better teacher for having participated.
20. I am less reticent to communicate with other stake holders as a result of the mentoring program.
21. I think it has a positive affect because I am more aware of situations unique to our school, and the advice from seasoned teachers is extremely helpful.
22. None
23. It has made me a more effective teacher in regards to planning, communication with stakeholders, and in moving the students where they need to be.
24. I did participate in a mentoring program in my previous county, but only as a mentor. I have never been part of a mentoring program as a novice teacher.
25. It has helped me learn how to communicate with different people in different situations.
26. My mentors have given me strategies to help deal with students, parents and the community.
27. I've become known by them more readily than I would have if I had not joined.
28. no particular effect, as it is rather removed from my interactions with parents and the community
29. It helped make me a well rounded teacher.
30. I knew more of what was expected and going on because of the mentoring, this I had a more professional approach to the education stakeholders.
31. Increased the level of professionalism while maintaining a relaxed and social atmosphere.
32. for the positive
33. I felt that everyone has benefited because without the skills I learned from my mentor I may not have been as effective as I have.
34. It has made me a stronger more confident teacher.
35. The knowledge I derived made me a more comfortable teacher. It has convinced me that I can do this (even in the midst of being overwhelmed with work). This has given me confidence with the students and the parents alike.
36. did not have a mentor
37. positively
38. all very positively
39. It has helped me to have great relationships with co-workers, parents, and students.
40. It affected everyone in a positive manner due to the fact that I increased my knowledge of how to interact with people from an urban background
41. I think everyone is better informed
42. It helped give me the skills needed to deal with the behavior problems in my class which in turn hopefully led to better teaching, better learning, and more student/parent involvement.

APPENDIX C

Permission to Gather Data

May 01, 2008

Mr. John Beckett,

I am requesting written permission to have access to all pre-existing Mentoring data that has been collected and analyzed by Knox County Schools during the years of 2006-2008. I request to have the right to use the mentoring data in my dissertation for research purposes only. I have already completed IRB training. I do not plan to use the novice teachers or mentors names in my research but I would like to use comments from the novice teacher surveys (qualitative data) along with the quantative data that is gained from the demographic information. This research has significant educational value to our school system. I plan to share my research to highlight our successes and help to improve the Mentoring program in Knox County Schools.

I have included below the responses to the nine required questions for obtaining permission to conduct research. Please contact me if you have any questions or need for me to submit any additional information to conduct my research.

Thank you,

APPENDIX D

Participant Letter

January 12, 2008

Novice Teachers,

My name is LaKisha L. Waters and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at East Tennessee State University. I am in the process of collecting data for my dissertation in Knox County Schools. Dissertation Topic: An Evaluation of the Novice Teachers' Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience in Knox County Schools. This study has been approved by the ETSU Institutional Review Board and by Mr. John Beckett, Knox County Schools. My dissertation committee chair is Dr. Terrence Tollefson and he may be reached about any questions by email at tollefst@etsu.edu or by telephone at 423-439-7617.

I know that teachers in their first three years of their professional careers are extremely busy, but it is important for you to complete the attached questionnaire to enable me to evaluate and make any needed improvements in the novice teachers program. The results of this study will be used to make your job as a teacher easier and more productive as you educate children in our school system.

This survey will provide our school system with essential demographic information that will help evaluate our current mentoring program. Participation in this survey is voluntary but the information will be used to enhance the mentoring program in Knox County Schools. I am asking for novice teachers (with 1, 2, or 3 years of experience) that participated in the mentoring program during the 2007-2008 academic school year to complete the attached electronic survey. This survey should take about 5-10 minutes for you to complete. Please take advantage of this opportunity to evaluate the mentoring program in Knox County Schools.

Please read this participant letter before participating in this research study
Survey Link:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=IADHGja71O38Ll4_2bLHUkkA_3d_3d

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this research study or the data collection process.

Thank you in advance for your participation and your support of this data collection project.

LaKisha L. Waters, Ed.S.
Assistant Principal
Ball Camp Elementary School
watersl@k12tn.net
(865) 470-0076

APPENDIX E
Permission to Conduct Research

Knox County Schools
Andrew Johnson Building

May, 2008

Lakisha Waters
142 Revere Circle
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Lakisha Waters:

You are granted permission to contact appropriate building-level administrators concerning the conduct of your proposed research study: *An Evaluation of the Novice Teacher's Perceptions of the Mentoring Program in Knox County Schools.* Final approval of any research study taking place within the Knox County School system is contingent upon acceptance by the principal(s) at the site(s) where the study will be conducted. Include a copy of this permission form when seeking approval from the principal(s).

In all research studies names of individuals, groups, or schools may not appear in the text of the study unless specific permission has been granted through this office. The principal researcher is required to furnish this office with one copy of the completed research document.

Good luck with your study. Do not hesitate to contact me if you need further assistance or clarification of the research policies of Knox County Schools.

Yours truly,

John Beckett

John Beckett
Evaluation Specialist
Phone: (865) 594-1735
Fax: (865) 594-1709

Project No:070826

APPENDIX F

Permission to Use the Survey Instrument

Knox County Schools
Andrew Johnson Building

October 13, 2008

LaKisha Waters
Ball Camp Elementary
Route 60

LaKisha Waters:

You are granted permission to use the survey instrument that you faxed to me.

Yours truly,

John Beckett
Evaluation Specialist
Phone: (865) 594-1735
Fax: (865) 594-1709

VITA

LAKISHA L. WATERS

Personal Data:	Date of Birth: December 29, 1978 Place of Birth: Oak Ridge, Tennessee Marital Status: Single
Education:	Valdosta Technical Institute, Valdosta, Georgia; Accounting Diploma, Sept. 1998
	Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Georgia; Business, A.A.*S.*, August 2001
	Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Georgia; Business, B.S. May 2000
	University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee; Master of Science in Education, August 2003
	Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville Tennessee; Instructional Leadership, Ed.S. May 2006
	East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, Ed.D.; May 2009
Professional Experience:	Teacher (Intern); Alcoa Middle School, Alcoa, TN; Jan., 2003-Feb., 2003
	Teacher (Intern); New Hopewell Elementary School, Knoxville, TN; 2002-2003
	Teacher; Ball Camp Elementary School, Knoxville, TN; 2003-2006
	Assistant Principal; Ball Camp Elementary School, Knoxville, TN; 2003-present
Honors:	J.C. Arnold African American Scholarship;2002-2003
	Tennessee Higher Education Commission Fellowship; 2002-2003

HOPE Scholarship; 1997-1999

Professional Organizations:

KCEA Knox County Education Association

KCEPA Knox County Elementary Principals Association

NEA National Education Association

NSDC National Staff Development Council

TEA Tennessee Education Association