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### Descriptive Case Studies of the Socialization and Acculturation of Two Mentored First-Year Elementary Teachers Within the Seventh-day Adventist School System

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**Andrews University**

**School of Education**

**DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDIES OF THE SOCIALIZATION AND  
ACCULTURATION OF TWO MENTORED FIRST-YEAR  
ELEMENTARY TEACHERS WITHIN THE  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**A Dissertation**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Doctor of Education**

**by**

**Carole B. Smith**

**August 1995**

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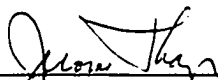
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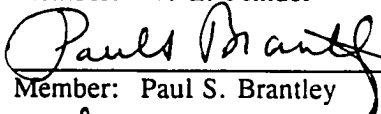
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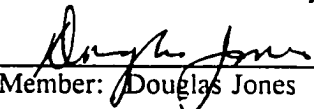
  
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**ABSTRACT**

**DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDIES OF THE SOCIALIZATION AND  
ACCULTURATION OF TWO MENTORED FIRST-YEAR  
ELEMENTARY TEACHERS WITHIN THE  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**by**

**Carole B. Smith**

**Chair: William H. Green, Ph.D.**



**ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH**

**Dissertation**

**Andrews University**

**School of Education**

**Title: DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDIES OF THE SOCIALIZATION AND ACCULTURATION OF TWO MENTORED FIRST-YEAR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS WITHIN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**Name of researcher: Carole B. Smith**

**Name and degree of faculty chair: William H. Green, Ph.D.**

**Date completed: August 1995**

**Problem**

A qualitative design was employed in this study to: (1) investigate the experiences and perceptions of two first-year elementary teachers within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system, (2) gain a better understanding of new teachers' socialization and acculturation during their first year of teaching, and (3) use beginning teacher concerns gleaned from this study and previous studies to identify the kinds of support that need to be offered in a new teacher induction program within the Adventist educational system.

## Method

I studied two first-year teachers, employed full-time at the elementary level by Scenic Vista Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Qualitative data were obtained over a 9-month period through ethnographic interviews, participant observations, teacher weekly journals, and principal/teacher self-evaluations. The majority of the data was procured from taped interviews with the two teachers, their mentors, principals, and the associate superintendent of education. Additional data came from the hours of participant observations in classroom instruction, field trips, school chapels and assemblies, recesses, lunches, etc. All of these data-gathering procedures were formatted in corrected and expanded field notes. A smaller portion of the data was gleaned from principal/teacher documents and the mentor seminar materials.

## Results

Responding to the transition from pre-service training to in-service teaching, both teachers' initial enthusiasm changed to frustration, anger, doubt, and fear. As they endeavored to adjust to the socialization and culture of teaching, each teacher struggled with classroom scheduling and management, school routines and administration procedures, discipline, coping with the withdrawal of a student from her class, and establishing positive relationships with principals, colleagues, and parents. They dealt differently with time management and curriculum issues. Although both teachers internalized the challenges they encountered, each reacted differently to the frustrations they experienced.

## Conclusions

Findings indicate that beginning teacher induction and orientation are needed throughout the year to help novice teachers adjust, but that kind of support is more crucial at the very beginning of the school year. The beginning teachers desire and expect this support from their principal. They also believe a mentor is beneficial to their professional growth and development and for their personal job satisfaction.

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TO

my parents, Frank and Elsie Bowen,  
who started me on my first  
educational endeavor

my three children, Deb, Dave, and Dana,  
who continue to bring me  
special joy

and my husband and best friend, Roland,  
who NEVER doubted

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background for Topic Interest

Vacuous, mediocre, stupendous, nonexistent, and frequent are adjectives describing my own oxymorous experience with teacher evaluations. During my first year of public high school teaching, I had one scheduled classroom evaluation in early spring by my building principal. Due to my husband's job transfer, my second year I taught in a junior high. Unannounced, two men and a woman solemnly paraded to the back of my classroom and sat down, bodies stiff, faces void of expression. They recorded observations for approximately 30 minutes; then, as if signaled by some unseen leader, they silently rose in unison, exiting the room in precise military fashion. Their demeanor implied that any interaction with my students and me would contaminate them. There was no feedback; there was not even an introduction. I know not what they wrote nor what they did with their notes, and I was too shy, then, to inquire. I know only that following their visit, I was rehired. Never once did my building principal observe in my classroom. Informal evaluation without feedback, to me, seemed to be the only systemic type of evaluation, and self-appraisal became my method in attempting to evaluate my own teaching.

In subsequent years I taught grades 1 to 8 in a one-room, parochial school system. The first 4 years I was observed at least once per quarter. My professional growth was enhanced by various means of communication: letters, phone calls, video tapings, conferencing, coaching.

The fifth year (same parochial system, but a different state) I taught fourth grade in a nine-teacher school. I received a 1-day orientation and two supervisory visits consisting of a written checklist and post-conference. There were two visits with post-conferences year 6, but feedback consisted of only brief comments such as "You keep very neat records"; "You have beautiful handwriting"; "Your traffic light system seems to work nicely." Although my building principal popped in and out of my classroom and was an extremely supportive colleague, he never conducted a formal evaluation of my teaching, even though I suggested it.

Research studies indicate that my early experience with supervisory practices is all too common: formal classroom visits are infrequent (perhaps only one annual visit) and comments on teacher performance are general (Bullough, 1989, Natriello, 1984). Yet, research also demonstrates that teachers who are frequently evaluated show greater effectiveness in teaching tasks (Natriello, 1982) and that "relative lack of specific supervision contributes to low morale, teacher absenteeism, and high faculty turnover" (*What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning*, 1986, p. 52).

Later, dissatisfied with the current evaluation system while doing post-graduate fieldwork in supervising student teachers, I asked permission to use several

evaluation procedures I had personally researched. The department chair was excited and pleased with the positive evaluation reports from my student teachers at the end of the quarter and I felt I had offered them something specific on which to focus their development.

This fieldwork whetted my appetite for supplemental knowledge and experience in supervision, and I requested additional training during my internship. Working under the guidance of three experienced educational supervisors, I received classroom instruction and on-the-job training in evaluating beginning and veteran teachers.

These personal experiences and the limited research data on supervisory practices within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system have sparked my interest in beginning teacher induction, new teacher orientation, mentoring, staff collegiality, peer coaching, teacher evaluation practices and their impact on teacher effectiveness, professional growth and personal job satisfaction.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to use content-analysis techniques in interviews, participant observations, principal/teacher self-evaluation data, and teacher weekly journals to:

1. Investigate the experiences and perceptions of two first-year elementary teachers within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system
2. Gain a better understanding of new teachers' socialization and culturalization during their first year of teaching



3. Use beginning teacher concerns gleaned from this study and previous studies to identify the kinds of support that need to be offered in a new teacher induction program within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system.

#### **Problem Statement**

This study explored the first year of two beginning teachers to discover what happened in their lives when they made the transition from pre-service teaching to in-service teaching.

1. What were their perceptions of themselves as teachers?
2. How did pre-service expectations and in-service realities equate?
3. What school-related events did they perceive as successes or failures within and without the classroom?
4. How did they perceive their students, colleagues, administrators, and students' parents?
5. What perceptions did their administrators have of their beginning-teacher skills?
6. What type of support was provided to them during their first year?
7. How effective was induction and mentoring in transmitting the system's culture and promoting their personal and professional growth?
8. What were their perceptions of the mentoring process?
9. How did their perceptions of teaching change during their first year?
10. How did their first-year experiences relate to personal job satisfaction and future teaching plans?

### Need for the Study

Teacher induction and orientation are not new. In the late 50s, research studies revealed the efficacy of planned beginning-teacher induction and new teacher orientation (Eye & Lane, 1956; Strickland, 1956). Only 1 state out of 50 was implementing beginning teacher in-service in 1980 (McDonald, 1980). By 1989, 20 states were participating in "some formalized beginning-teacher assistance program" (Orlich, 1989, p. 78). Yet even with that tremendous growth, approximately 60% of the states still lacked beginning-teacher assistance.

According to a National Education Association report in 1982, teacher dissatisfaction during the last 20 years had increased, with 10% of teachers in the early 1970s, and nearly 40%, 10 years later, desiring a different career (Pounder, 1987). Presently, nationwide statistics are higher: 30% of beginning teachers exit the profession after only 1 to 2 years of teaching, another 10% withdraw after 3 years, and more than 50% depart within 5 to 7 years (*Success for Beginning Teachers*, 1992, p. 5). Even more distressing, attrition rates continue to be greatest among the most competent and academically gifted teachers (Harris & Collay, 1990; *Success for Beginning Teachers*, 1992). Canter (1989) claims that poor classroom management is one of the main reasons for teacher attrition.

The lack of ability to manage student behavior is one of the key reasons why beginning teachers drop out of teaching. Teachers must be trained thoroughly in classroom management skills. It is not sufficient for them to know how to teach content. They will never get to the content unless they know how to create a positive environment in which students know how to behave. (p. 60)

Stimple (1986), however, indicated that implementation of orientation programs for new teachers may decrease attrition rates.

Research studies regarding the benefits of mentoring give conflicting results. Using a multiple-support program for beginning teachers with a building mentor (available for assistance and supervision), university supervisors (responsible for in-service activities as well as monthly classroom visits), and a peer support system (in charge of monthly seminars and a newsletter), Henry (1988) discovered that interns, when compared to a group who did not have this kind of support, demonstrated improved instructional performance and reduced attrition. Not 1 intern of the 20 studied chose to leave. Research data, however, from the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning at Michigan State University

suggest that while mentors may help novice teachers make situational adjustments to teaching and may reduce the dropout rate among first-year teachers, the presence of mentors does not in and of itself guarantee that teachers will become more skilled at teaching or more thoughtful about their work than they would be without the mentors. (*An Annotated Bibliography: Findings on Learning to Teach*, 1992, p. 5)

King (1986) studied various dimensions of work adjustment (job satisfaction, needs assessment, morale, attitude, and teacher evaluation) for beginning elementary and secondary teachers using three models of teacher induction programs. The Trained Mentor/Support Group showed the best results in teacher evaluation, and the Control Group (those without mentor/support) the least. The other variables showed no significant differences. King's findings suggested that induction programs, which include mentors and support groups, positively affect beginning teacher performance. According to Blase and Greenfield (1981), intrinsic contentment also

increases motivation that leads to good teacher performance and job satisfaction. The Teacher Education and Learning to Teach (TELT) study indicates that short-term training and first-year support

did little more than help novices learn to survive in classrooms and fit into the local school setting. [Programs] did not improve teachers' ability to engage students with important substantive ideas in their classrooms and did not help teachers learn how to examine their own instructional practices. (*An Annotated Bibliography*, 1992, p. 6)

It is interesting to notice that teachers' major concerns in the 1970's dealt more with intrinsic rewards of good teaching performance, feelings of collegiality and administrative support, etc., rather than with extrinsic rewards of fringe benefits and salary (Klug & Salzman, 1991). In a later study, Kirby and Grissmer (1993) discovered, too, that salary increases would not alter the majority of teachers' decisions to exit teaching, but over half of the math and science teachers interviewed mentioned higher salaries as the most important factor in teacher retention.

*The Manual for Supervision in Seventh-day Adventist Schools* (1985) outlines several worthy objectives specifically for beginning teachers:

One of the major responsibilities of a supervisor is to counsel and support the beginning teacher. . . . A visit to the classroom of a beginning teacher, before the first day of school, provides . . . assurance that help and encouragement are available. . . . Visits to the classroom of experienced teachers at the same grade level or subject area may give the beginning teacher ideas as well as insights. . . . Periodic in-service is a necessary part of the professional growth of every teacher but for the beginning teacher it is of prime importance. (pp. 41-46)

Job dissatisfaction and turnover rate for Seventh-day Adventist teachers within the North American Division, however, parallel that of the public school systems. Out of 442 elementary teachers responding to a 1987 survey, only about

27% reported teaching in the same school for 6 or more years. In the same survey, 26.8% of the multigrade elementary teachers expressed major problems with feelings of isolation and professional stagnation (Smith & Brantley, 1988). In a similar survey conducted in May, 1995, 50.0% of the 540 elementary and secondary teachers reported they had been teaching at their present school 4 years or less (Brantley, 1995). In the 1995 survey, isolation and professional stagnation were not addressed.

Investigation of evaluation practices within the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists revealed:

Teacher evaluation . . . was perfunctory. In most cases the formal classroom observations were unannounced and the purpose of the visit is [*sic*] not made known to the teacher. . . . The purpose of evaluation was developed by the Conference Office of Education without the involvement of the principals or the teachers and in some instances this purpose was not communicated to the teachers. (Ongwela, 1986, p. 170)

In a more recent study (McCune, 1994, p. 3), 77 first- and second-year Seventh-day Adventist teachers reported their perceptions of beginning teacher support. Only 50% of the 78% of teachers receiving support from their principals were very satisfied with the support, 22% were somewhat satisfied, and 28% were dissatisfied. Conference personnel supported 77% of the teachers, and 31% of the teachers believed their support was very satisfactory, 44% were somewhat satisfied, and 27% were dissatisfied. Less than half (45%) of the teachers received mentor support; 40% of these teachers were very satisfied, 26% were somewhat satisfied, and 34% were dissatisfied. Of the 95% of teachers receiving some kind of support, 18% rated their overall support very satisfactory, 40% rated it somewhat satisfactory, and 43% rated it unsatisfactory. Regarding teaching satisfaction, 100% of the 77

teachers responded: 40% were very satisfied, 42% were somewhat satisfied, and 18% were dissatisfied.

Beginning teacher needs differ from those of experienced teachers. Therefore, whereas first-year teachers should possess a good repertoire of competencies, they should not be expected to perform as skillfully as veteran teachers.

Induction program planners and mentor teachers cannot assume that beginning teachers are proficient in teaching just because they have completed student teaching or some other more extensive field component. The unrealistic optimism of beginning teachers can lead program planners to believe that beginning teachers have the situation well under control. Failing to recognize that the beginning teacher is a novice might reflect the unrealistic optimism of those in charge of induction programs. (Huling-Austin, 1992, p. 175)

In-service education should be designed to meet their unique needs (Kilgore & Kozisek, 1989). According to Huling-Austin (1992), novice teacher evaluations should differ from veteran teacher evaluations, and beginning teachers should be given the opportunity to observe in their mentor's and other teachers' classrooms. "Lack of such opportunities is likely to hinder the process of learning to teach" (p. 175).

Pre-service programs are also vital to the success of first-year teachers and can be improved by soliciting pre-service evaluation from recently graduated in-service teachers:

By considering the needs of beginning teachers in designing preservice programs, we can do a better job in easing the transition from being a student of teaching to a full-time teacher. Listening to beginning teachers, is, clearly, the first step. (Hitz & Roper, 1986, p. 70)

Although the trials and tribulations of first-year teachers are well known, the details of each individual case are unique and offer insights into the nature of the difficulties of the first year--insights that help stimulate thoughts about what would be useful to beginners as they engage the long process of learning to become a teacher. (Kilbourn & Roberts, 1991, p. 252)

This dissertation attempts to supplement previous teacher evaluation research within the Seventh-day Adventist elementary educational system and to describe first-year teachers' socialization process and acculturation to teaching.

#### Conditions

Several conditions were employed in this study:

1. Interview participants were volunteers who had the privilege of remaining anonymous. (To provide anonymity and protect confidentiality of persons involved in this study, I used pseudonyms and changed identifying details.)
2. Participants could withdraw their consent to the interviews and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.
3. Confidential interviews were held at times and places convenient to the interview participants.
4. Interview participants had opportunity to read the proposed draft with the privilege of excluding any portion they felt might violate confidentiality.

#### Definitions of Terms

**Beginning teacher:** A first-year full-time classroom instructor employed by a school system for the first time

**Choosing time:** A non-directed teaching time when kindergarten children work/play at the learning center of their choice

**Conference:** An administrative organization within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in charge of a designated geographical area (usually a state, but sometimes more than one state or portions of several states)

**Elementary supervisor:** An employee of the Seventh-day Adventist Conference, Education Department, whose job description includes classroom teacher supervision (An elementary supervisor within the Seventh-day Adventist Church may have one of the following titles: superintendent, assistant superintendent, or associate superintendent.)

**Established audit trail:** An organized set of dated research data which a person not involved in the research could examine to document researcher's conclusions

**Ethnography:** Qualitative research that is concerned "with the meaning of actions and events to the people" the researcher "seeks to understand. . . . In doing field work, ethnographers make cultural inferences from three sources: (1) from what people say; (2) from the way people act; and (3) from the artifacts people use" (Spradley, 1979, pp. 5, 8).

**Induction:** A "planned program intended to provide some systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers for at least one school year" (Huling-Austin, 1990, p. 536)



**Mentor:** An experienced teacher "who helps guide a protege [beginning teacher] through a developmental process" (*Mentor Teacher Handbook*, 1987, p. 1)

**Multigrade teacher:** "An instructor who teaches three or more grades and five or more subjects within the same classroom" (M. L. Hartlein, personal communication, May 23, 1995)

**Muted Language:** "Unobtrusive traces of un verbalized meanings that deepen the quality and validity of the data" (Schumacher, 1984, p. 22) Examples of muted language are offhand comments and explanations, body language, bulletin board messages, children's art work displayed, teacher's reactions to others, etc.

**North American Division:** An administrative organization within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in charge of unions (see p. 13) in Bermuda, Canada, and the United States

**Participant observation:** A social situation in which a researcher engages "in activities appropriate to the situation and . . . observe[s] the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation" (Spradley, 1980, p. 54)

**Peer coaching:** "A process in which education professionals assist each other in negotiating the distance between acquiring new skills or teaching strategies and applying them skillfully and effectively for instruction" (Showers, 1985, p. 46)

**Pre-conference:** A "shared exploration: a search for the meaning of instruction, for choices among alternative diagnoses and for alternative strategies of improvement" which sets focus prior to the classroom visit (Cogan, 1973, p. 197)

**Principal:** A school administrator in charge of curriculum, instruction, and supervision of teachers and staff.

**Post-conference:** "A careful study of the observation data--a quest for the meaning of what had happened in the classroom" during the evaluation visit (Cogan, 1973, p. 6).

**Triangulation:** "Qualitative cross-validation among multiple data sources, research methods, and theoretical schemes" (Denzin, 1978, as cited in Schumacher, 1984, pp. 22, 23) to increase the trustworthiness of the findings.

**Union:** An administrative organization within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in charge of several Conferences.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Definition of Supervision**

Within the last 3 decades, multiple definitions of educational supervision have been published, each definition focusing on some specific aspect: administration (Harris & Bessent, 1969, p. 11), management (Alfonso, Firth, & Neville, 1975, p. 3), instruction (Marks, Stoops, & King-Stoops, 1978, p. 15), curriculum (Cogan, 1973, p. 9; Curtin, 1964, p. 162), leadership (Mosher & Purpel, 1972, p. 4), and human relations (Sergiovanni & Starrett, 1971, p. 3; Wiles, K., 1967, p. 10). The very complexity of supervision may be the reason for the evolution of multiple definitions. Wiles and Bondi's (1986) definition includes most supervision aspects: Supervision is a "general leadership function that coordinates and manages those school activities concerned with learning" (p. 10).

The objective of supervision is to weave the individual threads of administration, curriculum, instruction, leadership, and school management into a tapestry of human relationships that will foster learning--learning that will provide supervisors with the tools to help develop effective teachers who, in turn, strive to create a quality classroom climate for student growth and development (Bonstingl, 1992a, p. 69; 1992b, p. 7).

### Historical Trends of Supervision

"School supervision," a type of educational evaluation begun in America in 1642, remained the dominant practice for approximately 300 years (Burnham, 1976). According to Dicky (as cited in Burnham, 1976), three school supervision approaches existed: "(a) authority and autocratic rule; (b) emphasis upon the inspection and weeding out of weak teachers; and (c) conformity to standards prescribed by the committee of laymen" (p. 302).

Although there is a difference of opinion among historians concerning "exact dates of various periods, there is considerable agreement in the literature about the progression of major emphases in supervision" (Sullivan, 1980, p. 2). Wiles and Bondi (1986, p. 7) outline a metamorphosis of supervisory styles from the mid-19th century to the 1980s:

- 1850-1910 Inspection and enforcement
- 1910-1920 Scientific supervision
- 1920-1930 Bureaucratic supervision
- 1930-1955 Cooperative supervision
- 1955-1965 Supervision as curriculum development
- 1965-1970 Clinical supervision
- 1970-1980 Supervision as management
- 1980- Management of instruction.

Since 1642, the supervision pendulum has swung from autocratic to adminicular practices. What does research within the last 20 years reveal about the supervisor's role? Examination of the teacher's and supervisor's roles has shown that the supervisor's role involves self-concept as well as cognitive learning (Knight & Knight, 1991; Krasnow, 1993), and open-mindedness on the part of the teacher is needed (Ryan, 1986). Within the supervisor-teacher relationship, rapport (Sullivan,

1992) and openness (Gordon, 1991) have been revealed as important attributes. Shuma (cited in Sullivan, 1980, p. 22) demonstrated that the nature of the teacher-supervisor relationship affected the teacher-student relationship, but as Glickman's (1990) model demonstrates, supervisors can choose from a repertoire of interpersonal approaches to assist beginning teachers at their developmental level.

Current supervision focuses on principal-teacher collegiality (Cole, 1994; Tesch, Nyland, & Kernutt, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1992, 1994; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993); mentoring (Gray & Gray, 1985; Sullivan, 1992); peer supervision and coaching (Bickel & Artz, 1984; Brandt, 1987b; Furtwengler, 1987; McFaul & Cooper, 1984; Sullivan, 1992; Thorson, Miller, & Bellon, 1987); evaluations that include teacher modeling (Mohr, 1987); and more administration-faculty collaboration (George, 1987; Glatthorn & Holler, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1994; Shulman & Bernhardt, 1990; Waters, Cates, & Harris, 1990). Glickman (1984-85) suggests "supervisors need to provide more opportunities for teachers to make choices, observe each other, discuss their work and help beginning teachers ease into their responsibilities" (p. 38). "Thus, teachers, administrators, staff, and nonprofessional school workers who are new to the school need early success if they are to adopt the competence pattern" (Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980, p. 95). Canter (1989) claims:

A teacher also needs support from the building administrator. Without an administrator backing a teacher's efforts to improve behavior managements, without an administrator to coach and clinically supervise a teacher's behavior management skills, that teacher is not going to receive the necessary feedback and assistance to master those skills. (p. 60)

According to Popham (1988), "teacher evaluation in American education has two separate functions" (p. 58). Those two functions are formative evaluation (a process designed to improve or modify teachers' instructional behavior) and summative evaluation (used as a basis in determining teacher dismissal, probation, and the granting of tenure, merit pay, etc.). Popham believes strongly that one administrator should not perform both types of evaluations concurrently.

Many administrators who have been thrust into the formative-summative evaluator role will protest that they can, having "earned the trust" of their teachers, carry out both teacher evaluation functions simultaneously. They are deluding themselves. . . . [A] teacher panel unanimously conceded that the fear of negative summative appraisals drastically disinclined them to identify deficits during formative evaluation. Even though many principals believe that they can, via trust-inducing behavior, be both the helper-person and the hatcher-person, such beliefs are mistaken. (p. 59)

Another aspect of current thought on evaluation focuses on accountability. "Accountability objectives provide, in teachers' words, a necessary 'nudge' and institutional insistence that evaluation be taken seriously" (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988, p. 85). Joyce "advises principals and supervisors not to coach unless they are prepared to develop 'a very high level of competence'" (Brandt, 1987a).

In recent years many collaborative efforts between university teacher education departments and school districts (DeBolt, 1991; Krajewski & Cheney, 1993; Odell & Ferraro, 1992; Ralph, 1994; Schaffer, Stringfield, & Wolfe, 1992) have attempted to help pre-service graduates through the first transition years of in-service teaching. DeBolt (1991) investigated and compared collaborative models with a mentor component in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and in East Harlem and Northern New York. The findings revealed the following: programs were helpful

and desired, support was critically needed for minority group teachers as well as new teachers, the mentoring programs needed to incorporate continuous and context-specific training, and individuals and organizations amassed benefits from participating in the program. Schaffer and his colleagues (1992) conducted a 2-year analysis of classroom interactions in a university/school district collaborative beginning teacher induction program. Findings demonstrated that first-year teachers were concerned with "classroom survival," and they improved in classroom organization. Second-year teachers' growth was in the area of more intellectually complex teaching areas, such as "improving the delivery of academic instruction." Teachers wanted to help students see the relevance of literature to their lives, to find more effective ways to teach math, to incorporate additional lab work into science classes, to include more hands-on activities and still cover content (p. 187). In another study (Ralph, 1994), research results suggested that during those first transition years, teachers need strong collaborative supervision. Progressing a step further, the University of Maine endeavored to help ease the transitional shock of beginning teachers by offering field experiences in district schools every semester for pre-service teachers during their teacher preparation training (Perry & Rog, 1989).

### **Current Evaluation Practices and Issues**

#### **Introduction**

If appraisal of teacher effectiveness as related to student learning is the heart of supervisory evaluations (Wiles & Bondi, 1986), then supervisors should

develop procedures to provide a supportive, challenging, and visionary arterial network for teachers' professional growth and development (Daloz, 1986).

Support entails active listening, to mentally put oneself in another's place to vicariously experience his or her world. It must be "open-ended, allowing a sense of safety" without constriction (Daloz, 1986, p. 217). It also involves identification and affirmation of another's capabilities coupled with constructive and honest criticism, criticism nested within a positive, trusting relationship that exudes warmth and caring (Klug & Salzman, 1991; Phelps, 1993; Telley, 1992).

According to Moir (1990) and her colleagues, all new teachers experience six phases during their initial year of teaching, although they experience them in different degrees: anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation, once again. Merseth (1992) describes the first-year as "often challenging, frequently discouraging, and sometimes devastating" (p. 679). Novice teachers need help and support as they experience these challenging phases.

Challenge can bring pain. It is creating "cognitive dissonance" (a term coined by Leon Festinger, 1957) in order to encourage one to view things differently, to encourage in-depth discussion, to construct hypotheses and alternatives, and to question to discover.

Vision "is the context that hosts both support and challenge in the service of transformation" (Daloz, 1986, p. 230). Without vision, dreams cannot become realities, and by providing vision, the supervisor encourages the teacher to take risks that will challenge thinking and foster growth.



Barth (1988), quotes a portion of a song (Stromberg, 1982) to illustrate participatory leadership:

One day--lying alone in the lawn on my back  
 with only the drone of a distant train  
 on some far off track,  
 I saw before my eyes, 5,000 feet high or more,  
 a sight--which to this day, I must say,  
 I've seen nothing like before.  
 The head goose--the leader of the V--  
 suddenly veered out, leaving a vacancy  
 which was promptly filled by the bird behind.  
 The former leader then flew alongside,  
 the formation continued growing wide--  
 and he found a place at the back of the line.  
 They never missed a beat. . . .  
 So that's how I found out how the goose can fly  
 from way up North to way down South  
 and back again.  
 But he cannot do it alone, you see.  
 It's something he can only do in Community.  
 These days it's a popular notion,  
 and people swell with emotion and pride  
 to think of themselves on the eagle's side,  
 Solitary  
 Self-sufficient  
 Strong  
 But,  
 We are what we are, that's something we cannot choose.  
 And though many would wish to be seen as the eagle,  
 I think God made us more like the goose. (Barth, 1988, pp. 129, 145)

Eisner (1978) echoes the theme of this song in revealing his heart-felt-desire for collegiality within schools:

I would like one day to see schools in which teachers can function as professional colleagues, where a part of their professional role was to visit the classrooms of their colleagues, and to observe and share with them in a supportive, informed and useful way what they have seen. (p. 622)

Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993), strong proponents of collegiality, concur with Eisner. In their book, *Supervision: A Redefinition* (5th Edition), they provide an extensive coverage of collegiality. Concerning collegial supervision, they state:

Collegial supervision extends well beyond classroom observation. It provides a setting in which teachers can informally discuss problems they face, share ideas, help one another in preparing lessons, exchange tips, and provide other support to one another. . . . Collegiality becomes real when it emerges as a result of felt interdependence among teachers, and when teachers view it as an integral part of their professional responsibility to help others and to seek help from others when needed. (pp. 288, 289)

### **Teacher Induction**

Teacher induction is a planned program for beginning teachers to help them bridge the gap between pre-service training and in-service development, and "it is important to have realistic expectations for beginning teacher assistance programs and to recognize that learning to teach is not a one-year (or two- or three-year) process" (Huling-Austin, 1989, p. 14). She cites five goals for beginning teacher induction programs:

1. To improve teaching performance
2. To increase the retention of promising beginning teachers
3. To promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers
4. To satisfy mandated requirements related to induction
5. To transmit the culture of the school system (and the teaching profession) to beginning teachers. (p. 9)

According to a National Education Association report in 1982, teacher dissatisfaction during the last 20 years has increased, with 10% of teachers in the early 1970s, and nearly 40%, 10 years later, desiring a different career (Pounder, 1987). "The attrition rate is greatest during the early years and among the most

highly qualified teachers" (Pounder, 1987, p. 288; also see Darling-Hammond, 1984). More recent studies (Harris & Collay, 1990; *Success for Beginning Teachers*, 1992) support these findings.

According to Schaffer and his colleagues (1992), "induction remains the least researched area in teacher education" (p. 190). What does current research indicate about effectiveness of teacher induction programs? How does it relate to beginning teacher induction goals? Does it prevent or help assist in the above problems? Gatewood (1986) interviewed 60 school administrators, mentor teachers, and beginning teachers regarding their perceptions of the inadequacies of beginning teachers. Her findings indicated that the in-service program helped during the induction period with instructional techniques, classroom management skills, communications skills, as well as policy and political comprehension. Parker's (1986) ethnographic research findings on the efficacy of induction programs indicate that assistance and support appear to help with the resolutions of beginning teacher problems, particularly in the area of discipline and classroom management and that the majority of new teachers valued mentoring above other forms of assistance. In their study of a beginning induction program, Varah, Theune, and Parker (1986) found that the retention rate of beginning teachers was higher if they participated in orientation programs. Results from the California New Teacher Project pilot study demonstrated improvement in three areas: teacher and student performance, teacher instruction for diverse students, and a very high beginning teacher retention (*Success for Beginning Teachers*, 1992). Olson (1986) surveyed teachers who completed a

beginning teacher program. Her findings revealed that these teachers showed significantly higher competency levels for discipline and motivation, and the most common method of assistance was coaching by peer teachers. Huling-Austin (1992) states, "Research on teacher induction suggests that beginning teachers need frequent opportunities to share and solve problems with other first-year teachers" (p. 175).

### **Mentoring/Peer Coaching**

Mentoring and peer coaching are related. Mentors are experienced, skillful teachers who assist beginning teachers in their professional growth and development by serving as peer coaches as well as guides, role models, sponsors, counselors, resource personnel, and colleagues (*Mentor Handbook*, 1987, p. 6).

Peer coaching involves instructing and training one another. Garmston (1987) defines three types of coaching:

Technical coaching helps teachers transfer training to classroom practice, while deepening collegiality, increasing professional dialogue, and giving teachers a shared vocabulary to talk about their craft. (p. 18)

Collegial coaching refine[s] teaching practices, deepen[s] collegiality, increase[s] professional dialogue, and . . . help[s] teachers to think more deeply about their work. (p. 20)

Challenge coaching helps teams of teachers resolve persistent problems in instructional design or delivery. The term *challenge* refers to resolving a problematic state. (p. 21)

From the definitions above, it would seem that technical coaching would be the most appropriate type for the beginning teacher.

According to recent studies, mentoring is a useful component in beginning teacher programs. Fagan and Walter (1982) reported on 107 teachers who, during

their first year of teaching, had been mentored by one or more experienced teachers. The teachers who had only one mentor were more professionally satisfied than those teachers who had several mentors or no mentor at all. Proteges gave credit to their mentors for growth in a number of areas: (1) self-confidence, 74%; (2) listening to ideas and encouraging creativity, 67%; (3) understanding school's administration, 51%; (4) technical job skills, 40%; and (5) working with people, 17%. The positive results of the mentor programs researched by Ladestro (1991) demonstrated improvement in teaching, increased teacher confidence, and higher teacher retention.

Tanner and Ebers (1985) studied 393 Georgia interns and found that they were significantly more effective in 16 competencies when working with a mentor. In a study investigating the problems confronting first-year teachers, Rapp (1986) concluded that new teachers need formal induction and mentor programs and other relevant support sources within the school setting in which they teach.

Researching the mentor characteristics new teachers value most, Kueker and Haensly (1990) discovered that beginning teachers valued mentor supportiveness, trustworthiness, and self-confidence. In another study, Odell and Ferraro (1992) surveyed fourth-year teachers who had participated in a university school system collaborative-mentored program during their first year of teaching. Of the 96% still teaching, most of the teachers valued the emotional support from their mentors.

Analyzing a needs assessment of 38 beginning teachers in two southern counties of West Virginia, McKee (1991) discovered that novice teachers are interested in motivational techniques, instructional strategies, discipline, guidance, and

student self-esteem. The same survey assessed the needs of student teachers who indicated an interest in student self-esteem, instructional strategies, individual differences, stress management, discipline, communications, and motivational techniques. Both groups indicated an interest in attending staff development programs and reading a handbook. To determine how new teachers perceive their working conditions, Bobbitt (1993) analyzed nationally representative data from a sample of 5,275 full-time public school teachers and 1,459 private school teachers with 3 or less years of full-time teaching experience. Irrespective of the private or public school setting, elementary teachers felt more nurtured than secondary teachers, and non-Hispanic Blacks teaching in public schools encountered more affirmative teaching milieus than other ethnic/racial subjects. Surveying 355 mentors and mentees in 10 Virginia mentor programs, Maddex (1993) found the mentees believed they learned new teaching methods, improved in classroom management, and understood how to more effectively pace instruction. In another study, Ganser (1994) interviewed 24 mentor teachers. He discovered that both proteges and mentors found mentoring beneficial. From a list of 55 elements, the mentors listed the following areas beginning teachers most valued: helping with teaching skills and classroom management, providing emotional support, and imparting information on formal policies and school culture.

According to Shulman and Bernhardt (1990), veteran teachers, if given time and the appropriate type of training, can provide invaluable assistance to beginning teachers in a number of areas:

Help beginners learn to meet the procedural demands of the school;

Provide moral and emotional support and function as sounding boards for new ideas;

Provide access to other classrooms so that novices can observe other teachers, and have several kinds of models;

Share their own knowledge about new materials, unit planning, curriculum developments, and teaching methods;

Assist teachers with classroom management and discipline;

Help neophytes understand the implications of student diversity for teaching and learning;

Engage teachers in self-assessment and reflection on their own practice; and

Help them adapt new strategies for their own classroom.

The first six types of assistance help teachers to survive in their classrooms. The last two are keys to continuous learning and increasing self-sufficiency. (p. 42)

"Mentoring is not a staged act that has an unchanging set. It needs one-on-one settings at times--but the relationship and exchanges may also occur in the context of larger meetings and informal gatherings" (Sullivan, 1992, p. 10). There is controversy, however, over assigned mentoring, but whether it is voluntary or mandatory, the match between mentor and protege is important. "One of the keys to successful mentoring is the match between (1) what the protege is, knows, does, and needs and (2) what the mentor provides" (Sullivan, 1992, p. 11). Although Gordon (1991) recognizes the ideal is not always possible, he believes there are advantages to matching a mentor and protege with the same grade level, building, and work area of the building. Beyond that he concludes:

The two most desirable "matches" between mentor and beginner are those of personality and educational philosophy. The need for personal and philosophical compatibility suggests that mentors and beginning teachers should be provided opportunities for informal interaction before mentoring assignments are made, and that matching preferences of mentors and beginners should be considered. (p. 37)

Whereas the majority of studies reviewed indicate positive benefit for teachers involved in induction and/or mentoring programs, some research contradicts this general trend. When comparing vocational agriculture teacher inductees with non-inductees, Waters (1985) found no significant differences in job satisfaction or teacher "clarity." Shaner's (1989) comparison induction study of secondary and elementary teachers concurs with Waters. Teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, information received, confidence, support, and help requested or received were insignificant. Teaching level also showed no effect. Inductees did indicate, however, a positive view toward their mentors' assistance. The findings by Kilgore and Kozisek (1989) revealed an unsatisfactory relationship between mentor and novice teacher, and in a study assessing the component of classroom management within a mentor and new teacher induction program, Stallion and Zimpher (1991) found that trained teachers rated higher than untrained teachers, but there were no significant differences when mentors were present. Sullivan (1992) addresses unsuccessful mentoring in her book, *How to Mentor in the Midst of Change*:

Because mentoring is more personal than procedural, one may attempt to do all the right things as mentor and still have the relationship not work. Sometimes the relationship fails for reasons that will never be understood. If in examining the relationship--the facts, the feelings, and the outcomes--one concludes that the mentoring relationship is unhealthy for either mentor or protegee or for both, then both participants should generate and actively seek alternatives. It is



important to acknowledge that the relationship is not working, but it is unnecessary to analyze all the reasons why. (p. 22)

Moffett, St. John, and Isken (1987) found that beginning teachers also appreciate the assistance, understanding, and availability of peer coaches. The advantages of peer coaching are supported by the following research.

In an investigation conducted by Sparks and Bruder (1987), teachers indicated that peer coaching was valuable in three areas: improved collegiality, experimentation, and pupil learning. Findings from another study (Hosack-Curlin, 1988) demonstrated that the treatment group receiving in-service peer coaching was more successful than the comparison group in learning, implementing, and adjusting to a new curriculum. Rural teachers in Tennessee experienced significant classroom instructional changes in 8 out of 12 categories examined when involved in peer coaching (Phelps & Wright, 1984-85). "Just as gifted athletes can benefit from coaches, so, too, can teachers. 'Coaches' not only observe and provide feedback, but they also demonstrate effective techniques and strategies" (Young, Crain, & McCullough, 1993, p. 175). Sullivan (1992) claims that coaching, to be effective, must concentrate on behavior.

The mentor as coach can help proteges maintain and refine those desirable skills and kinds of behavior they have already acquired. Coaching can remediate deficiencies and expose areas of potential weakness. . . . Feedback must be specific and must be given in amounts and language that makes sense to the protege. Simply saying 'Do better' or 'Try harder' is not appropriate coaching. (p. 20)

Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1987), proponents of cooperative learning, state that "teachers are more effective when they have positive support from

colleagues and can solve problems together" (p. 38). Collaboration decreases the cognitive and emotional demands of teaching (Niles & Lalik, 1985), lessens isolation (Sarason, 1971), stimulates new ideas (Little, 1982), minimizes "status and power differentials" (Showers, 1985, p. 17), and complements autonomy (Wildman & Niles, 1986). The degree as well as the type of support is important as indicated by Telley (1992).

The data revealed that beginning teachers' satisfaction with the help they received from other teachers (not their mentor) was associated with the degree of support the school administration provided the teachers. Although this finding is correlational and causal conclusions are not warranted, it supports Kram's (1983) suggestion that the best mentoring relationships emerge from a positive organizational climate. (p. 219)

An important by-product of collegiality is that "students benefit academically when their teachers share ideas, cooperate in activities, and assist one another's intellectual growth" (*What Works*, 1986, p. 51). But, according to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993), collegiality must be real.

The receiving culture is key in determining whether administratively induced collegiality is contrived or real. When it is real, collegiality results from the felt interdependence of people at work and from a sense of moral obligation to work together. From a cultural perspective, and with the right set of shared norms in place, collegiality can be considered as a form of professional virtue. When this is the case the fulfillment of certain obligations that stem from the teacher's membership in the school as community and membership in the teaching profession requires teachers to be collegial. (p. 104)

### Summary

Teaching is one of the very few professions where "beginners are expected to do essentially the same job on their first day of employment as 20-year veterans" (Huling-Austin, 1990, p. 535). It seems pre-service methods classes,

micro, and student teaching (along with the previous 16 years of school) are assumed sufficient to prepare teachers for their first job. Yet teacher training is a simulation, and no simulation, however perfect, can fully portray reality (Odell, 1987). Research confirms that most new teachers experience "hopes and expectations . . . fraught with qualms and anxiety about their new role" (Eddy, 1969, p. 8) and the "professional and personal concerns of beginning teachers are unique" (Odell, 1987, p. 69).

First-year teachers typically possess three characteristics (Littleton & Littleton, 1988): they are often *unfocused workers*, meaning that they are unable to think of appropriate ways to improve their teaching; they are *highly motivated and coachable*; and they tend to be *idealistic*, with their expectations often exceeding what they can reasonably achieve. These characteristics point to the need and possibilities for teacher induction programs. (Young et al., 1993, p. 174)

Well-designed teacher induction helps novice teachers adjust to the process of actual full-time teaching (Reinhartz, 1989) and "accelerate[s] the developmental process so as to minimize the duration of those early developmental stages which antedate subsequent stages of higher teaching competency" (Odell, 1987, p. 71).

Mentors or veteran teachers in beginning teacher advisor roles need training.

Shulman and Bernhardt (1990) suggest that educators consider the following when planning beginning teacher induction programs:

Provide training in the skills of coaching and the knowledge base of teaching for all advisors. Demonstrated excellence in teaching children does not automatically lead to excellence in advising other teachers.

Define expectations for advisor roles, and then provide ongoing opportunities for advisors to collaboratively develop norms for appropriate interaction.

Provide time for advisors and new teachers to work together during the school day.

Limit the case load for each advisor to a reasonable number of new teachers.

**Make teacher support a routine part of district business so that teachers will develop the expectation that they should collaborate and learn from one another.**

**Ensure that the selection procedures are acceptable to a majority of teachers.**

**Select advisors who are credible, well-matched, and committed to assisting new teachers.**

**Develop a monitoring system that reflects and documents the ways that advisors and new teachers work together.**

**Enlist the support of administrators in the planning and implementation of the assistance program.**

**Be creative in organizing arrangements that encourage constructive support for new teachers.**

**If these principles can be followed, more new teachers will echo the sentiments voiced by this young novice: "I could not have lasted had it not been for my mentor. Thank God for the mentor program!" (pp. 49, 50)**

**Supervision practices initially and throughout the duration of teachers' careers have serious implications: "Done well, teacher evaluation can lead to improved performance, personal growth, and professional esteem. Done poorly, it can produce anxiety or ennui and drive talented teachers from the profession" (Duke & Stiggins, 1986, p. 9).**

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

I elected to use one of the common forms of qualitative research: a multiple case study, embedded design. Unlike quantitative research that bases its explanation "upon statistical associations between operationally defined constructs," qualitative research interprets "directly from actual circumstances, events, behaviors, and expressed sentiments as played out daily by people in the context of their work" (Sirotnik, 1989, p. 95). Guba (1978) states: "The naturalistic inquirer finds the context entirely relevant. . . . The naturalistic inquirer, far from screening out context, makes every effort to understand it so that he can assess its meaning for and impact on the elements being studied" (p. 16).

A survey or questionnaire would have given empirical information from a sample of beginning teachers, valuable information broad in scope but limited in depth. The information would have been based on impressions felt by the teachers at the time they completed the survey. Ethnography, on the other hand, "places researchers in the midst of whatever it is they study. From this vantage, researchers can examine various phenomena as perceived by participants and represent these observations as accounts" (Berg, 1989, p. 52). By spending hours in observations

and interviews, I had opportunities to see changes, to observe the teachers in different settings: in the classrooms, on field trips, during emergencies, handling interruptions, and interacting with students, colleagues, and administrative personnel. I was privileged to probe their inner feelings and perceptions, to share their joys and frustrations, and to get to know them personally as well as professionally, which gave me an in-depth knowledge concerning these beginning teachers that no survey or questionnaire could reveal.

"Small context changes may dramatically affect the quality of a teacher's professional life: complicating or simplifying it; debasing or ennobling it" (Bullough, 1989, p. 122). I was able to see how the "little things" simplified or complicated their professional life, how circumstances or conversations temporarily uplifted or disheartened them, and how they responded to various situations and what impact it had on present and future behavior.

Prior to the research, guidelines were established to help the teachers understand my role in their classroom, and during the course of the year I reiterated that role. I emphasized that I was not there to criticize them or to tell them what to do, nor to exercise the role of a mentor or supervisor. My presence in their rooms, however, was bound to have a degree of influence on this study.

### Ethical Concerns

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school system and participating teachers. The interviews involved sessions at places and at times convenient to the participants. All information collected was kept strictly

confidential. Although the data obtained from the interviews, observations, teacher self-evaluation, and weekly journals may be published, at no time will the participants' names or places of employment be revealed. The participants were given the opportunity to read the completed written report with the privilege of excluding any portion they felt violated confidentiality or anonymity. They were at liberty to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

### Subjects

I studied two first-year teachers employed full time at the elementary level by Scenic Vista Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for a majority of the duration of their first-year contract. Procedures for gathering data included the following components:

1. Investigation of new teacher induction and mentoring processes employed within the school system
2. Qualitative content-analysis techniques in (a) participant observations, (b) interviews, (c) principal/teacher self-evaluations, and (d) teacher weekly journals.

### Data Gathering

"Ethnography yields empirical data about the lives of people in specific situations" (Spradley, 1979, p. 13).

It reveals what people think and shows us the cultural meanings they use daily. It is the one systematic approach in the social sciences that leads us into those separate realities which others have learned and which they use to make sense out of their worlds. (Spradley, 1980, p. vii)

Qualitative data were obtained over a 9-month period (September to May) through 22 ethnographic interviews, participant observations, teacher weekly journals, and principal/teacher self-evaluations. The majority of the data was procured from taped interviews with the two teachers, their mentors, principals, and the associate superintendent of education plus the 78 hours of participant observations of classroom instruction, field trips, school chapels and assemblies, recesses, lunches, etc. All of these data-gathering procedures were formatted in corrected and expanded field notes. A smaller portion of the data was gleaned from principal/teacher documents.

In addition, I was invited by Evelyn Swartz, Associate Superintendent of Education, to participate in the Scenic Vista Conference mentor in-service training. At that in-service meeting, I was able to interact with the mentors of the teachers I had been observing and to gather additional data on their mentoring program.

Immediately or as soon as possible following classroom observation, I expanded my field notes to include details observed but noted only cryptically or unintentionally omitted. Expanded notes included narrative scripting with verbatim quotes as well as descriptions of the school or classroom setting. Interview taping and/or notes were expanded to include observed teacher behavior. Observer comments were interspersed appropriately on draft copy of notes to include insights for further observation and/or interviews. The draft copy was also used to correct typographical errors, insert omitted facts or details, and alter punctuation or syntax to preserve original meaning.



Copies of the observations and transcribed interviews were given to the teachers to review so that any misunderstandings or misperceptions could be clarified at subsequent interviews and/or observations and any needed corrections made.

To save paper and facilitate the handling of the volume of data collected, I used single-spaced lines and a reduced print size (Universe, 9 point) when typing the field notes. In general, expanding field notes and transcribing taped interviews averaged 30-35 minutes per single-spaced typed page. In addition to these 462 reduced-print pages of field notes, I have 32 pages of handwritten scripting (observation notes) and evaluation material obtained from two separate teacher-requested trial evaluations. Following the procedures outlined by Scenic Vista Conference, I conducted a sample pre-evaluation conference, classroom observation, written evaluation, and post-evaluation conference for each teacher. The scripting and evaluation comments were handwritten on prepared forms and given to the teachers at the close of the school day. Additional data includes 64 pages of principal/teacher self-evaluations, school documents, and materials received at the school sites and mentoring in-service.

The field notes were organized into three volumes: Volume 1 contains data collected on Julie Sanders; Volume 2 includes data accumulated on Jenny Hudson; Volume 3 incorporates data from the mentors, principals, and associate superintendent. Each volume has its own numbering, but the sections within each volume are numbered consecutively to facilitate documentation of references.

### Data Analysis

Qualitative content-analysis techniques were used to analyze data. The data, following the initial analysis, at times suggested that some of the original research questions were no longer significant and at the same time indicated the generation of new research questions for investigation.

For example, the associate superintendent of schools focused her supervisory visits on schools with teaching principals or small schools with a head teacher and no principal. At their fall meeting, the K-10 Board of Scenic Vista Conference approved the recommendation to have principals at large schools take the responsibility for teacher evaluations (V. 3, p. 24). Thus my questions addressing the superintendent's observation/evaluation visits and pre- and post-conferences were irrelevant. Moreover, since neither protege was given release time to observe in the mentor's classroom, questions regarding that issue could not be answered. On the other hand, my knowledge of the absence of those procedures helped to broaden my understanding of the school culture.

Examples of the generation of new research questions included: gleaning information for understanding school procedures germane to Aspen Hills or Sandy Ridge, inquiring about specific aspects of curriculum, purpose for administrative committees such as the Administrative and Advisory Councils at Aspen Hills, purpose of their marketing committee or marketing strategies employed at Sandy Ridge, the impact of change on one of the mentors as the school implemented a day-care program, etc.

The process of collecting and analyzing data was repeated throughout the research period. Interview and participant observation data were combined with the teacher self-evaluation and weekly logs in the final data analysis.

### **Levels of Analysis**

Several levels of analysis were used in analyzing the data. I examined both school environments and observed how the teachers perceived, and related to, their cultures. I analyzed what happened to them cognitively, socially, and behaviorally during their first year of teaching as inductees and mentor proteges. In another level of analysis, I investigated the induction and mentoring processes employed by the school system to gain background information and understanding of the mentoring program itself. A final search of the data involved the cross-case analysis where I reexamined the data from a different perspective. In that analysis, I used a comparison and contrast strategy to relate the differences and commonalities of the teachers, mentors, and administrators, as well as their perceptions of the various components of the mentor program and its effect upon them. From that analysis, I drew conclusions for the summary and recommendations.

### **Type of Analysis**

The vast amount of data I collected was overwhelming, and prior to writing, I grappled with the type of analysis to employ. As I observed, interviewed, and reviewed expanded field notes, however, I noticed recurring "concepts" (Berg, 1989, p. 152), concepts similar to those I observed in my pilot study and those

published in current research on beginning-teacher concerns. (See chapter 4, **Background To Case Studies**, under "Current Research Findings on Beginning Teachers.") Consequently, I relate each teacher's "story" based on her individual uniqueness and the two teachers' commonalities with beginning-teacher concerns documented in research.

#### **Reliability and Validity of Data**

Reliability refers to the extent to which one's findings can be replicated. In other words, if the study is repeated will it yield the same results? Reliability is problematic in the social sciences as a whole simply because human behavior is never static. (Mirriam, 1988, p. 170)

Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggest focusing on internal validity. "Since it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability" (p. 120).

Enthnographic validity can be established through triangulation--a "qualitative cross-validation among multiple data sources, research methods, and theoretical schemes" (Denzin, 1978, as cited in Schumacher, 1984, pp. 22, 23). Concurring with Denzin, House (1977) states: "Validity is provided by cross-checking different data sources and by testing perceptions against those of participants. Issues and questions arise from the people and situations being studied rather than from the investigator's preconceptions" (p. 31). Another way to provide validity is to spend extended segments of time at the research site over a long duration and use member checks (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988), a process where participants review data for accuracy and offer additional input.

In this study, validity was provided through basic strategies common to qualitative research:

1. Triangulation: I established triangulation through interviews, participant observations, expanded field notes, principal/teacher self-evaluations, teacher journals, and use of "muted language" (Schumacher, 1984, p. 22) to help ensure that accurately recorded and analyzed data portrayed the clearest possible representation of the actual situations researched.
2. Member checks: This process of taking data back to the participants for review and input was executed throughout the 9 months of research and again after the analyzation process was completed.
3. Long-term or repeated observations at the research site: I observed the teachers in various settings with their students over a 9-month period, which gave richness and depth to the data collected.
4. Audit trail: My expanded field notes were systematized so that a person not involved in the research could examine my organized set of dated-research data to document my conclusions.

#### Conditions of the Study

Teachers selected for the study were not chosen randomly. I needed first-year teachers in a mentoring program. To locate Conferences who were implementing programs to assist beginning teachers, I mailed "Orienting to Beginning Teachers: A Checklist" (see Appendix A) to every Seventh-day Adventist school superintendent in North America. I received 56 returns from the 58 mailed. I also

phoned several Conferences for the following information: Do you have beginning teachers this current school year? Are you currently implementing a mentor or teacher induction program? Would you give me permission to conduct research with your beginning teachers? It was also important to pick a geographic area that was not over-researched where participants might be influenced to give "pat answers"-- answers they thought the researcher wanted to hear (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Scenic Vista Conference had beginning teachers, implemented a mentor program, and was willing to let me conduct research in their Conference. One beginning teacher declined participation. Two other beginning teachers within the same Conference whose teaching positions were similar agreed to participate. Both teachers taught in self-contained elementary classrooms in inner-city schools, had approximately the same number of students, and were assigned mentors.

#### Generalizability

The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize in a quantitative or statistical sense but to describe in depth; therefore, time and practical restraints prohibit studying hundreds or thousands of subjects. With two subjects, I was able to personally spend time with them to observe, interview, examine, investigate, analyze, and repeat that process over and over again during the 9-month study in order to learn and understand about their socialization and culturalization into the real world of teaching and, thus, obtain sufficient data to write in-depth descriptions.

To ensure qualitative generalizability, however, research sites were chosen based on specific criteria, settings and subjects were described carefully, multiple

sources were used to obtain data, and discrepancies or contradictions were related. Since there were only two teachers, the research findings reported in this paper can be generalizable to other teachers and situations only to the extent to which they parallel cases used for this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **BACKGROUND TO CASE STUDIES**

#### **Current Research Findings on Beginning Teachers**

Concerns of beginning teachers differ, but some of the issues Brzoska, Jones, Mahaffy, Miller, and Mychals (1987) have identified as problematic can be used as a lens through which to view what is happening to first-year teachers:

1. **Maintaining classroom management and discipline**
2. **Managing time, including striking an appropriate balance between personal and professional time**
3. **Motivating students generally, but especially working with students who have special problems or needs**
4. **Managing classroom instruction, including: planning instruction, finding resources and materials, evaluating student progress, and coping with a wide variance of student ability in the same class**
5. **Experiencing feelings of isolation**
6. **Developing positive relationships with parents, administrators, colleagues, and students**



7. Coping with workload: number of preparations, teaching outside area of expertise, being assigned more "difficult" classes, and too many extracurricular responsibilities (pp. 2, 3).

"Scheduling and organizing the day" and "functioning within the school system" are also common beginning-teacher concerns (Odell, 1990, p. 13). Ryan et al. (1980) found that beginning teachers experienced difficulty with expectations and perceptions of teaching, teaching assignments, the strain of daily interactions, as well as personal life adjustment. Veenman (1984) lists 24 problem areas of beginning teachers in a prioritized order with "classroom discipline" as number 1 and "motivating students" as number 2. He lists two additional concerns not included in the above: "assessing students' work" (#4) and "insufficient materials and supplies" (#7).

In a study investigating the problems confronting first-year teachers, Rapp (1986) concluded that new teachers need formal induction and mentor programs and other relevant support sources within the school setting in which they teach. Rauth (1986) points out one of the pitfalls of the mentor program.

The time the new teacher spends conferring with the mentor is extremely valuable but, in most instances, too limited. In many cases, minimal release time devoted to training or interaction between mentor and inductee reflects an unwillingness or inability to pay for substitute teachers. (p. 39)

Analyzing several articles on teacher induction, Bowers (1986) cautions those involved in induction programs to understand that such programs "increase rather than decrease the pressure felt by beginning teachers" (p. 41). He also emphasizes several things:

Collectively, the articles suggest that induction is more than the buddy system. No one should get the idea, however, that induction programs are the panacea for all the needs of our education system. They are an important component of a comprehensive staff development program. . . . The purpose of an induction program should be, simply, to assure the success of the beginning teacher. All else is incidental. (pp. 40, 41)

Fox and Singletary (1986) promote peer support as one of the most valuable aspects of teacher induction.

While it is important to provide the beginning teacher with a mentor who is established, experienced, and able to guide, inform, assist, and support, it is also important for beginning teachers to be able to discuss ideas and concerns with peers. Frequent, regular meetings with individuals who are experiencing similar situations and problems provide new teachers with an opportunity to exchange views. (p. 15)

Daloz (1986), a researcher with creative flair, goes so far as to say:

If mentors did not exist, we would have to invent them. . . . Mentors give us the magic that allows us to enter the darkness: a talisman to protect us from evil spells, a gem of wise advice, a map, and sometimes simple courage. (pp. 16, 17)

### Introduction to Case Studies

Since the case studies are lengthy, I have divided them into two chapters. Chapter 5 deals exclusively with Julie Sanders, a second-grade teacher at Sandy Ridge Elementary, and chapter 6 focuses only on Jenny Hudson, a kindergarten teacher at Aspen Hills Elementary. Although Julie and Jenny taught in different schools, both were early-childhood teachers employed by Scenic Vista Conference and part of the same mentor program directed by one of the associate superintendents of that Conference. Later in this chapter, I describe the Scenic Vista mentor program and the associate superintendent's perceptions of it. In chapters 5 and 6, I address the

joys and frustrations of the mentor program as perceived by teachers, and in chapter 7, I focus on the mentor issue once again through a cross-case analysis where I compare and contrast the perceptions and experiences of teachers, mentors, and administrators.

Julie's and Jenny's experiences are obviously not every beginning teacher's experience, but woven throughout the unique fabric of their year are some threads of commonality with the above concerns. Although the phraseology differs, there is some overlapping in the areas of concerns mentioned earlier. For example, "mentoring" and "feelings of isolation" have a relationship; "scheduling and organizing the day" is related to "classroom management" and "classroom scheduling." The areas highlighted in the summary of each case study, therefore, cover the general basic concerns of beginning teachers and summarize how their experiences were either analogous or dissimilar.

There are three volumes of field notes. Volume 1 deals exclusively with Julie Sanders, Volume 2 with Jenny Hudson, and Volume 3 contains interviews from the associate superintendent, principals, and mentors. To facilitate the reading of long quoted passages from these volumes, I have italicized my questions or comments and used bold regular type for responses from those interviewed. These quotes, minimally altered in a few instances to improve readability, are verbatim transcriptions from taped interviews or teachers' weekly logs.

## Scenic Vista Conference Mentor Program

### Mentoring Program Rationale

Evelyn Swartz, Scenic Vista's Associate Superintendent of Schools, a successful former elementary school teacher, did not enjoy her first year of teaching. "I literally bombed [my first year]. . . . By the end of the year, I was so burned out that I didn't want to have anything to do with teaching again" (V. 3, p. 15). She phoned a teacher friend and told her, "You know, I don't know what to do; I don't want to do this again" (V. 3, p. 15). Her friend, however, encouraged her to visit so they could discuss it. "Talking with her at the end of that first year was the only thing that saved me, because I wouldn't be in [education] today if it hadn't been for [her]" (V. 3, p. 16).

A couple years later, Evelyn initiated a mentor program in Sandy Dunes Conference. The mentor program there "worked SO WELL!" and "made SUCH A DIFFERENCE!" (V. 3, p. 1) for teachers that she proposed implementing one in Scenic Vista. I asked her about this in an interview on September 18.

*What were some of the differences you noticed?*

**Well, the new teachers didn't feel so isolated. They felt like they had a friend right away and . . . somebody they could talk to. . . . The mentor teacher went to the protege in a classroom and worked with [the protege] before school started. Then we had the mentor teacher back into that classroom the first month of school.**

*Was this just for new teachers or teachers new to your Conference?*

**We did it for new teachers and teachers new to our Conference or new to small schools. If they were going to be new to the small schools curriculum, then they were in that program. . . . So we didn't have teachers [leaving] small schools as we had before. That was one of the end results we saw.**

**We wouldn't say it was directly related to the mentor teacher program. The mentor teacher program was part of the total picture. . . . We implemented a lot of things but the total goal was to make small schools teaching more enjoyable and satisfying and more manageable. . . . It really worked out well. O.K., so that was the first reason. I really wanted to bring that into Scenic Vista for that reason. (V. 3, pp. 1, 2)**

**The other reason we implemented this in Scenic Vista was because Ginny [the Scenic Vista Superintendent of Schools] was in charge of a union committee on teacher tenure and she did a lot of research on teacher tenure. . . . This mentor teacher [issue] came up time and time again. So we made a list. I went through all the articles and pulled out all the points that they said had to be involved in the mentoring program, [which became the basis for] our qualifications, [and] the criteria for selecting a mentor. (V. 3, p. 6)**

Scenic Vista initiated a mentor program for a third reason. Teachers requested it (V. 3, p. 36).

### **Structure of Program**

Scenic Vista superintendents outlined goals for the mentor teacher program, criteria for selecting mentor teachers, mentor benefits, and mentor responsibilities. The program's overall objective was to "provide opportunities for skilled teachers to help beginning teachers or those who need special help with a specific problem" (V. 3, p. 21). Specifically, it focused on offering "moral support, guidance, and feedback to beginning teachers" (V. 3, p. 21). It was designed to help familiarize the beginning teacher with "Conference policies and routines [and] to assist and guide the beginning teacher in developing and implementing a classroom management plan [that included] student behavior, long-range curriculum and daily lesson planning, scheduling, grading plans, motivational techniques, and instructional presentation and content" (V. 3, p. 21). Additionally, the mentor was to contact the

protege prior to the opening of school, visit one full day in the protege's classroom during the first month of school, arrange for the protege to visit in the mentor's classroom, assist the protege throughout the year by telephone and visitation no less than once a month, and share progress/concerns with superintendents (V. 3, p. 22).

To qualify as a mentor, the teacher needed current certification, to have taught a minimum of 2 years in the Scenic Vista Conference, and demonstrated "exemplary teaching ability as indicated by effective communication skills, subject-matter knowledge, and mastery of a range of teaching strategies needed to meet the need of students in different contexts" (V. 3, p. 21). Ideally, the mentor teacher was to teach the same grades and hold "the same ideology/philosophy of teaching" (V. 3, p. 22) as the protege. The mentors received no financial remuneration, but they did receive benefits in supervision training, experience in supervision and leadership roles, and professional activity credit toward re-certification (see Appendix C for more explicit details).

### **Associate Superintendent's Perceptions of Mentoring Program**

Evelyn Swartz was into her third year as an associate superintendent in Scenic Vista. She and the other two superintendents had major responsibilities. The new mentoring program was an additional assignment for Evelyn, and she seemed a little discouraged and overwhelmed. In our September 18 interview, as we discussed the lack of mentoring programs within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system, Evelyn expressed some of her frustrations regarding teacher training and assistance.

The mentoring program she initiated in Sandy Dunes was no longer used. This, of course, saddened her, and she attributed the demise of the program to the many "administrative changes" (V. 3, p. 3) within the Sandy Dunes Office of Education. Apparently it was not a priority for the new leaders.

She also expressed concern for teacher pre-service training. "I'm a little dissatisfied with the student teaching programs that the church has, because it's really not training our kids to do the jobs that are out there" (V. 3, p. 4). Evelyn was complaining not just to me; she had expressed her concerns to Dr. Thompson, a professor in the education department of Schmidt College. "He and I go round and round about this all the time. . . . It's an artificial setup. . . . Schmidt does more than anybody else that I'm aware of, but still . . . they [the student teachers] are not being trained for what it's really like" (V. 3, p. 4).

As we shifted the conversation to the mentoring program in Scenic Vista, Evelyn said:

**I don't know of anybody that has really [developed a mentoring] policy. I'm feeling really bad about this because I wanted to set up [this program] long before summer, and it just didn't work out that way, so I'm feeling really [hesitates] . . .**

[Interjects] *Under the gun?*

**Yeah, well and sad because, to me, in order for it to really work, you needed that contact before school started. You know, I feel really committed to that. So this is just--I mean, I'm almost sad and sorry that you're doing this, to tell you the truth. [Laughs] But anyway, we'll go from there. (V. 3, pp. 5, 6)**

In a subsequent interview in January, we discussed the mentor program again. I asked her how many mentor seminars she planned to conduct.

**We hope to have one of these a year with a group like this, but what we anticipate doing is having some afternoon get-togethers for an hour or two to support groups.**

*In other words, all the mentors in one area would meet together?*

**Yes, we would have this group get together at least twice a year, I would think.**

*Let me back track to make sure I'm understanding what you're saying. You would have a formal seminar.*

**Right. A formal workshop.**

*And then you would have two additional times the mentors would get together or only one?*

**I foresee us having two other times that they would get together. . . . I would like to see them do it once a month, but at this point we're hoping for twice a year. (V. 3, pp. 26, 27)**

*Is the mentor program mandatory?*

**It's mandatory for brand new teachers and small schools. . . . The ones new to Scenic Vista [have an] option. (V. 3, p. 15)**

*I realize that the program is new this year and from what you said today, you're not really satisfied with plans and reality.*

**We're not satisfied AT ALL!**

*I realize it's not all that you wanted it to be, but with what you have done, how do you feel it's going? What response are you getting from the mentors, from the mentees?*

**I would have to say for this year it's a very mixed bag. In a way, it's surprising me. . . . Two that I'm thinking of just don't seem to do what we're asking them to do. Like they just won't go and observe.**

*Are you speaking of the mentors or the mentees?*

**The mentees.**

*They won't go and observe in another teacher's classroom?*



**Right.** You know, they won't do the steps that we have outlined for them to do. . . . Probably 3/4 of the [mentors] are actually doing what we asked them to do in taking the initiative . . . [but they] are at a real frustrating point right now and that's because they're not seeing a response from the mentee in the way we anticipated. So it's very frustrating this year. It's extremely frustrating, but I think it's more in terms of personality of that particular teacher that we've hired rather than in the program itself not working or the ideas not working.

*Now, in both your large schools are the principals involved in fostering the mentor program?*

**No,** just in AH. I don't think Karl has anything to do with it at SR.

*It's my understanding that at a drive-in, you told Julie that she would have X teacher for her mentor and she requested Barbara and you said that was fine.*

**Right.**

*Julie talked about her mentor at times when I was in the classroom or during interviews, and I assumed from that, that the contact we had talked about had been made. Then when I asked, "How often do you and your mentor meet?" she said, "I don't formally have a mentor." Somewhere there seemed to be a breakdown in communication and I wasn't sure what was going on.*

**Well,** based on Julie's information, we had gone back and reassigned, but probably the breakdown came in the fact that I was supposed to follow up with Barbara and let her know that and probably talk to Karl, and I didn't talk to anybody about it. So I told Julie that would be fine and we at the office assumed it. One of the reasons I didn't follow up more with it is that I assumed they had already taken it. You know, she had said, "We've already talked and would that be all right?" "Sure, it's fine." So that's one of the reasons and the other reason is lack of responsibility on my part.

*I wasn't pointing any fingers.*

**I know that,** but that's what it is. . . . I thought she had assumed that Barbara would be her regular mentor. . . . After you and I talked last week, over the weekend I thought, I wonder if there is a misunderstanding there, and so I called Barbara and said, "We're having a mentor meeting." And to myself, I thought, if there has been a misunderstanding, she won't have been invited to this. So I said, "You have been invited to this, haven't you?" And she said, "Oh, yeah, I understand, you know, because of my relationship with Julie that I'm a mentor. . . ." And I go, "Oh, good,

because I was really worried about you. Since we changed here with Julie, I just wanted to make sure that you knew that." But nothing formal, and that is a mistake. . . . Probably the biggest problem this year is that we just haven't gotten our act together and the letters haven't been sent out and it has not been followed up properly.

*That's another thing I was going to ask you. Jenny got information from the superintendents and Julie didn't.*

Well, I didn't even know the first one did.

*Well, didn't you copy off . . .*

[Interjects] No, because I didn't send that to mentor teachers, especially to the large schools until I got permission from their principals. And I had not gotten permission from the principal here at Sandy Ridge for that.

*Well, Jenny mentioned that Paul had given her three pages. . . .*

Yeah, because I had finally gotten permission from AH for different mentors than we had assigned, but when I got the permission from Paul at AH, I found out that he had assigned them and then I said, "Fine, then let's go through this way."

*O.K., so he had already assigned them?*

He had already assigned them, so we used the ones he had assigned. Besides, he wouldn't give us permission to do anything else. (V. 3, pp. 31-33)

When I inquired about a set format for the mentor program, Evelyn informed me that all that was available was the set of written guidelines (see Appendix C) I had received.

*I could have been reading inaccurately, but I sensed there was some fogginess about the expectations.*

Extremely foggy. . . . That's been part of the problem, too.

*And yet with one school I found what I considered a fairly structured program where the mentee was generally meeting once a week with the mentor. The mentor had already been into the classroom to observe fairly early on, but in*

*the other school . . . the mentee gave me the impression that neither one of them knew what to do.*

**And I think that that goes back to the fact that AH has had a mentor teacher program going for a number of years. See, I didn't even know that until I talked to Paul this year and tried to set up something else, and he said, "Well, we already have our own thing going."**

*He assigned the mentor and the mentor basically knew what to do.*

**And the mentors he has assigned have done this for a number of years, so they are old hats at it, and they know what to expect. . . . Dr. Kent does not have requirements or expectations signed up or written out, but they do know it's to be on a routine basis. I mean, they've got the procedures all set up. No, we hope to have that a little more ironed out by next year.**

*Of course, these two were not assigned until after school started.*

**Right. Well, none of them were, really. And then they were supposed to call that first week just to see how it [was] going. (V. 3, pp. 33, 34)**

### **Changes to Implement in the Future**

When I asked Evelyn, "What changes, based on the experiences you've had this year, would you make?" (V. 3, p. 35), she replied:

**They're a number of them. Probably the first one would be a little more organized and a little more directive. . . . If anything, we'll be more directive whether we're organized or not, but I do hope to organize it a little better and to have a letter go out as new teachers are hired to say we will be assigning [them] a mentor and this is what we expect them to do, you know, right up front. . . . So we hope to have that packet ready for them to have just as soon as they're hired, at the beginning of the summer, so they can think about it. We hope to have a packet for the mentor teacher [with] a notebook and some resources ready for them. We hope to do this particular workshop or something very similar to this probably during the spring of every year to train teachers for the following year. So we hope to get a little more pro-active with it. And another thing that we plan on doing is sending letters to the principal and the board chairman [to inform them] of the responsibilities that we've given each one [mentee and mentor]. They will be coming and going and it is approved by us and a little more of what our financial responsibility will be.**

*So that if a teacher asks a school board to have a day off [for observation in the other teacher's classroom] there is no misunderstanding on the part of the board.*

**That's correct. . . . I think we're going to have to do something different, too, [because] this particular program was primarily designed (when we first wrote this up) for our smaller schools. And then the teachers in the larger schools said, "What about us? We still need it, too." So we thought, "O.K., you know, maybe we should do that." So it will probably be different, but when you're by yourself and you have to travel an hour or two hours to meet a teacher, you can't meet once a week.**

*I realize that.*

**So this was set up more for teachers in that kind of a situation, but I think we will probably make different expectations for our larger schools. . . . We want to just be more supportive of the mentors and the mentees, too. I feel like I personally have lacked that this year more than I should have. I hope to be more supportive of them in initiating my role. In other words, I'm a mentor to the mentors and I hope to initiate that responsibility. . . . The whole thing was not structured enough, so we hope to add a lot more structure, a lot more direction and some more support. (V. 3, pp. 34-36)**

I inquired whether the Scenic Vista Office of Education planned to do an evaluation to get feedback from the mentors and proteges at the end of the year.

Evelyn's response was quite interesting.

**We know that that's necessary but we haven't set it up for this year. It probably won't be done this year. This is one of those years you don't even want to claim. You want to have nothing to do with it. [Laughs] Therefore, you already know there's a bunch of problems; you don't want anybody to do any. [Laughs]**

*You wouldn't be a perfectionist, would you? [Laughs]*

**In certain areas, yeah. This is one we probably won't want an evaluation of, to tell you the truth.**

*I think it's great that you're doing something. No, it's not where you want it to be, but at least it's a start.*

**We're doing something. That's right. We're starting.**

*I sensed a concern and an enthusiasm in those mentor teachers today for this program.*

**This program is really needed. We know teachers have wanted it; teachers have asked for it. We've heard that from a lot of people and they're very supportive of it. (V. 3, pp. 35, 36)**

### Summary

Ryan (1986), sympathetic to the challenges facing first-year teachers, advises beginning teachers to find a good mentor. Based on his own teaching experience and the years spent supervising other teachers, he concludes that the biggest challenge for most beginning teachers is the "survival stage," a stage which usually takes place during the first year of teaching, a time when "the new teacher is fighting for his or her professional life, and often for a sense of worth and identity as well" (p. 13). This stage also can be the critical time for beginning teachers to decide to remain or leave the teaching profession.

Teaching can be a deceiving occupation. Being on the teacher's side of the desk is an entirely new and different experience than being a student watching teachers. Often what looked to be easy turns out to be beyond the beginning teacher's capacities. (Ryan, 1986, p. 18)

No one understood this more than Associate Superintendent Evelyn Swartz, who directed the Scenic Vista mentor program. Any new program presents challenges, and this mentor implementation was no exception. It presented challenges to the school administrators, the mentors, and the proteges, and Evelyn was embarrassed because the program, as she envisioned it, did not meet her expectations. Despite its problems, however, the mentor program in Scenic Vista was a blessing, at least to the two beginning teachers described in the next two chapters.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CASE STUDY OF JULIE SANDERS**

#### **Uniqueness**

Julie began her first year of teaching at age 24. Although she looked like a teenager (a constant source of frustration to her), her behavior reflected maturity, conscientiousness, dependability, as well as insightful and analytical thought. There were times, however, when these traits of dependability, conscientiousness, perspicacity, and self-critical analysis became detrimental, almost liabilities to her own emotional and physical well-being. She was quite a perfectionist and, therefore, dissatisfied with anything less than what she considered her best. On the other hand, Julie's love for children, her creativity and innovativeness, as well as her knowledge and understanding of the various physical, mental, and emotional needs of young children were assets to her job.

She was happily married to Paul, a physicist, and they were home owners with two pets: a puppy and a hamster. She enjoyed cooking, outdoor recreational activities such as snow skiing and horseback riding, and received therapeutic benefits from working in her flower beds.

Even though Julie was an honor graduate and had excellent recommendations, she was unable to find a full-time position the year she graduated

from college. Consequently, she worked as a teacher's aide in a second-grade classroom at Sandy Ridge Elementary. The following year, when she was asked to be a full-time teacher there, she was ecstatic. "Being here everyday and finally realizing that I'm a teacher," she exclaimed, "has been a tremendous joy. I waited a year" (V. 1, p. 46). Her teaching assignment included 25 second-grade students the opening day of school and 30 students 10 days later.

Sandy Ridge is a parochial elementary school located in a large mid-western town. This 30-year-old facility has 20 classrooms, a principal's office and large secretarial suite, additional rooms/offices for the assistant principal, special educational tutor and academic therapist, a faculty lounge and workroom, a library, gym, cafeteria, and greenhouse. Although the building is not centrally air-conditioned, plans are underway to purchase air-condition units for all the main classrooms. There are, however, air-condition units for two classrooms and the office suite. The campus is not large, yet it does provide adequate parking space and a nice playground area. Day care and academic instruction in kindergarten through eighth grade are available at the school.

During Julie's first year of teaching, 352 students were enrolled in Grades K-8. There were "students from 56 countries" (V. 3, p. 48) and 87% of the total student population were Seventh-day Adventists (V. 3, p. 61). According to Karl Johansen, the school's principal, "We have high expectations from the students. They, for the most part, participate in the instructional program and do well. Our test scores are fairly high; they're in the 68th percentile, so I'm told" (V. 3, p. 41).

The school employed a full-time principal, an individual who was half-time guidance counselor and half-time principal's assistant, one full-time and one part-time secretary, 15 classroom teachers, a full-time librarian, an art teacher, one full-time and two part-time music teachers, a special-education teacher, a treasurer, a full-time building supervisor with "five student janitors after school and one other adult [who] works 4-6 hours a day" (V. 3, p. 42). In addition, the school employed drivers for its daily student bus service, field trips, and other school functions that required transportation.

According to Johansen, the school had a stable staff.

**I think our [teacher] turnover is about one or two a year out of a staff of about 20, when you look at the specialists. Some of the teachers have been here 15 years, some of them have been here 4 or 5. I think it's a good place to work. (V. 3, p. 47)**

As is the usual practice in the Seventh-day Adventist educational system, Sandy Ridge's financial base was threefold: student tuition, church subsidy, and Conference subsidy. Although the school had money for needed repairs and maintenance and was operating in the black, the budget was tight, so tight there was not enough money to hire substitutes for fall afternoon in-services (V. 3, pp. 52, 53).

Sandy Ridge had an active Home and School (parent-teacher organization) and school board. Both groups met regularly (V. 1, p. 47). They also produced *The Byline*, a weekly newsletter sent home to parents (V. 3, p. 49). Every other Friday they had school chapels or assemblies for the entire student body (V. 3, p. 50).



## Commonalities

**Scheduling and Organizing the Day**

Julie considered scheduling and daily organization one of her biggest challenges. By the second week of the school year she had 30 second-graders and no aide. Julie had been told another teacher would be hired to teach a first and second combination to help alleviate the overload in first and second grades, but the split was 5 weeks in coming, and during that time Julie experienced a great deal of frustration. With the split, initially 10 students were removed from her classroom. Two students could not deal with the change and were moved back into Julie's classroom. Another change was made and Julie then had a total of 21. The split brought Julie an experience of joy coupled with disappointment and stress.

**Ten of my kids left and went to the other classroom. That was kind of stressful because I was supposed to move a whole reading group out (the largest reading group) because I started out with six reading groups when I had 30 kids. First grade was supposed to have two reading groups and I was supposed to have two reading groups. That way we wouldn't have to do [the] high-low kind of thing and we THOUGHT parents wouldn't feel so out of sorts about it. First-grade parents thought it was wonderful because they felt it was a promotion; second-grade parents felt like it was a demotion. So that's why I still have five reading groups, and I don't get to them every day. I have to alternate every day with the reading groups. . . . I wasn't as thrilled that I didn't get to cut down on reading groups, but the fewer kids have really made a difference in my general teaching.**

**Talking about the move was real hard for me because I felt I didn't have the support of the administrative staff. Whenever I went to [Dr. Johansen] and talked to him about the questions and the feedback I was getting from the parents, he would just say, "Well, move somebody else," you know, so it didn't end up being a reading group or two reading groups that went. It ended up I had to poll the parents and whoever said, "Whatever," and "I don't really care about what happens to my kids," fine and those who said, "No," was no. So, I just felt like my initial reasonings (when I was giving the parents my list of reasons why these children were to be moved) didn't**

hold any water because I wasn't backed by the administration. You know, this is my first year of teaching [laughs] and I have to go through something like this and not to be able to have any advice or feedback or help from the office up there was really very stressing. (V. 1, p. 55)

On December 8, she shared her perspective on the progress she had made regarding scheduling.

I'm planning more ahead. At the beginning of the year I was so overwhelmed with the amount of work that many times I'd come in the morning and I didn't have all the Xeroxing done for the day or I didn't have all the math papers ready to go for the day. I just wasn't prepared for what was going on that day, so I was focusing on how can I time everything so I have time to go out, Xerox and come back, go out, Xerox, and come back. Now I've pretty much come into a schedule. After school I work with Juan for 15 or 20 minutes. . . . After he goes . . . for about 10 minutes, I tidy up and then after that I get the papers ready. . . . I've made a folder: "Today's Work." I have everything in there and it sits on the corner of my desk so all I have to do is pull it out and do my lesson, and it's ready. (V. 1, pp. 96, 97)

Reflecting upon the year, Julie discerned how unrealistic she had been initially regarding the amount of time involved in teaching. "I didn't realize how much time is needed [in] maintaining a classroom, keeping records, grading, lesson plans and that kind of thing" (V. 1, p. 146).

### **Functioning Within the School System**

Julie experienced stress from a lack of orientation regarding basic school routines, staff duties, and other procedures. For example, she mentioned that another teacher was helping her with the *Register* because "it's very confusing."

*I'm taking from what you're saying that you didn't have any training in the Register even here at the school after you were hired.*

**No. None. In fact, at the faculty meetings for pre-school week a lot of times . . . [since] I was here last year as an aide. . . , they assumed that I**

**knew a lot of stuff. When they would talk about things I would say, "I'm new here. What are you talking about? Code Blue, Code Red. What is that?" They think [I] automatically know it. I'm on the marketing committee and one of my goals is for new teachers coming in, whether they are beginning teachers or transferring-in teachers who have taught for awhile, that they be given a packet with a lot of this information and they are teamed up with a buddy system that can help them explain things because a lot of times I feel at a loss. I don't know what I am required to do and what I'm not to do. (V. 1, pp. 42, 43)**

Julie was never truly comfortable when anyone was observing in her classroom. When I asked her if I were the only one who made her nervous, she answered, "It's not just you. . . . It's anybody that comes in. . . . I'm a very nervous person" (V. 1, pp. 166, 178). She went on to explain that her own mother (who came in regularly to help her grade) or another teacher dropping in made her nervous. "But," she added, "it will help your study and I think in a way it helped me to organize myself and it has been beneficial to talk out these things" (V. 1, p. 178).

At the beginning of the school year she felt just the opposite. Initially, my presence in her classroom presented fear, a fear so intense she almost withdrew her participation.

*You mentioned to me at the very beginning of the year when you were concerned about confidentiality and anonymity. . . , "Well, what will the other teachers think if you are in my room?" What was behind that statement?*

**I guess I thought that they would feel—I mean, knowing that they've gone through, you know, a beginning teacher learning [experience where] usually they're observed three times a year and to see a supervisor coming in to observe every month or more, I guess I was afraid it would suggest that I wasn't a good teacher, that you were in here to monitor my program, to give me suggestions on how to be a better teacher and maybe because of all this going on, they wouldn't want to keep me on their staff. (V. 1, p. 107)**

After agreeing to the second observation and interview, she said, "I hope I didn't cause you to worry when I told you I might not continue. I just needed space. I appreciated your letter" (V. 1, p. 62).

Julie came into her first year of teaching with some preconceived attitudes about the teachers within her school.

*Do you share with the other teachers after school, say maybe with the first-grade or the third-grade teachers? Do you have any relationship with them?*

I have a very close relationship with . . . the kindergarten teacher that I mentioned before. In fact, I was frustrated with my scheduling. They kept changing the specialty classes around and I was getting frustrated. So she helped me work that out last night and she spent quite a few hours with me. The first-grade teacher—we talk some. I've been very surprised at the amount of support and sharing that I got because last year when I was here I had the very opposite impression. And it may be because I was an aide last year and sometimes people that are seemingly "below" you, you know, they react differently, so I've made that a point not to treat anyone indifferently because I know how it felt. And it wasn't very nice. I did not expect to be shared with. I didn't expect people to talk to me or anything.

*This year?*

This year. I didn't expect any sharing.

*But as an aide you expected it? Is that what you're saying?*

When I came out of college, the education class that I graduated with—we were closely knit and we would brainstorm. If one of us was working on a science unit, we'd all get together and just brainstorm about ideas and help that person get a really great science unit together. If one of us was doing something in student teaching that was really neat, we'd share it so everybody else could use it. We didn't keep any ideas to ourselves. I feel that through sharing you really embellish your own program as well as others' programs, you know. I didn't feel any of that here last year. But this year when I came, people were OFFERING me ideas and I was shocked! And I think that helped my first week to go very well because the first week every day after school some teacher came down and asked me how it went.

*Oh, that's great! I bet that really made you feel accepted.*

**Yeah. It did. So there is some kind of comradeship around. (V. 1, pp. 49, 50)**

Sharing brought Julie joy, yet she was selective in what she shared. She used caution in mingling with colleagues and endeavored not to get entangled in gossip, either spreading or listening to it.

*You mentioned that teachers talk behind each other's backs. Is this one reason you stay out of the lounge?*

**Yeah.**

*In other words, you've heard them talking about other teachers.*

**Yeah, yeah, it's common. And when I was student teaching, it was common in the other schools, too. I don't know. People just like to gossip, so I pretty much stay to myself. I'm cordial and friendly. . . . I'll be friendly and, I think, acting as a Christian should act toward fellow workers and associates, but I don't think it's my business to find out the details of their life unless it's a personal friend of mine who wants to share that willingly. And some people make it their business to go about [gossiping]. (V. 1, p. 107)**

### **Maintaining Classroom Discipline**

From September through March, I spent over 30 hours observing in Julie's classroom. I thought she had good classroom control, but she felt differently. Her negative feelings seemed to be influenced by two factors: (1) At various times throughout the year Julie was told by a few colleagues that she had the "worst class in the school" (V. 3, p. 120), and (2) her expectations of the behavior of second-graders did not meet reality. I asked her to relate her feelings regarding her colleagues' comments.

Well, the first few times I would get angry that they would have the audacity to say that, especially to someone; I mean, it's not a secret. Everyone knows this is my first year of teaching, especially since I was an aide here last year. [She continues sarcastically] It's real encouraging to hear those kinds of words [She laughs and then gets serious], and I just feel that classes change, children change, you know. It's not fair to the children; it's not fair to me to constantly hear the negative. How can I keep a positive attitude and not get discouraged about teaching if I'm hearing negative things? They do not say it all the time, but somebody will slip it by every once in awhile. I don't know if they think I need a boost or what it is.

*Is it sort of a left-handed encouragement type of thing where, you know, they're looking to the future--next year will be better because this year you've got the worst class?*

Sometimes they say it like that. Well, yesterday, one of the teachers came in and said, "Well, how are you doing? I haven't been down to check on you and see how you're doing lately." I said, "I'm doing fine." She says, "Well, it must be really difficult because you have the worst class in the school. You must be having a terrible year." "Well, it's not that terrible," [I replied.] Inside I was feeling otherwise, but I'm just learning to throw those things off and not to think about those [things]. It really doesn't matter what other teachers think of the kids in my class as it matters to [me] because I have more of an influence than they do.

*Well, was she really coming down to support you? Was she really willing to listen to how you felt?*

Just to pop in. We have here—I keep wanting to say departmental meetings but that was college. It's something like department. We're broken down into groups. For instance, K-2; 3-5; 6, 7 & 8. We have a chairperson for each of those groups and if we have a concern, we voice it to the chair person and the chair person takes it to the principal. So it's a system and it's her responsibility to check on new employees within her unit. I think she was just coming down to say, basically to say, "Hi." She was trying to be friendly, I think, but it just sounds so negative. (V. 1, pp. 120, 121)

It is evident from information in the interviews and her journal entries that Julie vacillated over her ability to discipline her students. She felt encouraged and successful when they cooperated and a failure when the behavior was less than she

expected. At the end of the first week of school, she wrote in her journal: "I made it. Behaviorally, the kids are fine. I think they are still pretty shy--"checking me out" (V. 1, p. 179). By the end of the second week, she was already discouraged. Her entry for September 7: "I find I am exhausted & frustrated most of the time. It seems my job is mostly--Behavior Control. Are they learning anything? Can I do this?" (V. 1, p. 179).

The entry for October 12 reads:

**I'm on a high! Today we went to the pumpkin patch. It was absolutely marvelous! I had fun! Coming up to the field trip, I began to wonder why I ever decided to schedule the trip. Today it was threatening to rain, but the sun came out instead. The only thing that went wrong was that I forgot the check. The people at the orchard were very understanding. We had a great time. Since today went so well everything else is overshadowed! (V. 1, p. 180)**

The entry for November 2, however, is anything but a "high."

**The children are very restless. Halloween is over--I'm glad about that. The children have really been a handful with all the candy. . . . Do they really learn anything? Are they going to be ready for 3rd grade? Am I doing a good job teaching? Do I want to continue this? (V. 1, p. 180)**

A couple of weeks later, her November 16 entry reflects a better attitude. "Their behavior was great! Their handwriting improved! Overall: Great week" (V. 1, p. 181). The following week she writes: "Tuesday we went on a field trip w/Mrs. McDonald's class. It was not a good experience. The children were not on their best behavior. They were very noisy in the museum" (V. 1, p. 181).

The next week her children attended a musical program with the rest of the school and Julie compared the behavior of her kids with reported behavior of other classes.

**This week was great! All the other teachers were talking about how their children were unruly since Thanksgiving. Mine were just beautiful! On Thursday, we went to the Entertainment Theater & saw "Peter & the Wolf." The children really enjoyed this. The students behaved very well on the trip. Overall, it was a beautiful week. (V. 1, p. 181)**

The first week in December, she writes: "Overall this week I felt frustrated w/the children's sudden change in behavior" (V. 1, p. 181).

Subsequent entries reflect the same up-and-down pattern. In an interview in January, when I asked her, "How's it going?" she used a very unique phrase, "Some days I feel it's mostly crowd control."

*Crowd control?*

**You know, getting their behavior to be such that you can do your teaching.**

*Well, as you compare the beginning of the school year and now, how do you feel about the control?*

**It varies. I mean, some days it's very good; some weeks it's very good. And then we'll come across maybe a two-three-day period when it's just hard or a week when it's hard. For instance, the week before Christmas [laughs] was absolutely mind-boggling.**

*Typical.*

**I was certainly ready for Christmas. I couldn't wait to boot these kids out the door. But there are other times when it is absolutely the opposite and I have wonderful days when I'm not focusing so much on crowd control or behavior as I am on teaching, you know, and that's what I like to do most. (V. 1, p. 102)**

Julie's perspective seemed to change throughout the year when she compared the two classes of children, the ones where she served as an aide and the ones she served as full-time teacher. In January, she told me, "This year my second-graders are better behaved for me than the class last year" (V. 1, p. 115). Toward



the end of the year, she commented, "They [last year's students] were easier than this group of kids to handle" (V. 1, p. 169). I'm not sure what precipitated this altered opinion. Perhaps her exhaustion or struggling with year-end antsy kids played a significant part in her transposed view. In May, however, when I asked Julie to reflect on the year thus far, she voiced some possible reasons for her perceptions on the behavior of the second-graders she was currently teaching.

**I'm anticipating next year to be better . . . , hearing that I'm getting a more behaved group of children--not a better group of children, a quieter bunch than this year, fewer learning disabilities than I have this year, fewer behavioral problems than I have this year.**

*I'm really sorry you didn't get to observe in another classroom because maybe I just came in on days when they were super well-behaved, but I really didn't see a lot of struggle with your controlling the classroom nor a lot of disruption with the kids.*

**I don't know. It just might be that my expectations were different. Maybe I expected more of them.**

*I don't see them as the bad kids you said everyone was saying they were. I see them as very normally behaved kids. They're really a sweet group of kids. If you're getting a better group, you'll have angels next year. [JS & CBS laugh.]*

**I really don't like it when they tell me that. One, it makes it harder for the teacher to face her kids everyday, even if [she doesn't] believe [what they say]. I don't think they were as bad as people said because I remember the group I was aiding with last year. Everybody said that was the worst group. I loved that group of kids. They were just so much fun and full of life and energy and they did listen and I didn't have problems. They were easier than this group of kids to handle. It might be because I was an aide and didn't have them all to myself. Maybe the reason that I view them as a harder group of kids is because it was my first year and my first year with kids totally on my own. (V. 1, pp. 169, 170)**

**Sometimes I think I expect too much behaviorally out of them for their age. Probably, I need to adjust. (V. 1, p. 160)**

### **Working Effectively With Parents**

Julie experienced some joy in working with parents, but on many occasions she experienced frustration, exasperation, and even desperation. Throughout the year, she felt a lack of respect, support, and understanding. In fact, in our very first interview, when questioned about the value of pre-service training for teacher preparation, one of the things she mentioned concerned teacher-parent relationships.

**Even though I felt my training was very good as far as lab time, I don't think anything can prepare you for the real thing, even student teaching. . . . It's a much different situation than student teaching. You don't deal with the parents at all. I am not prepared at all to deal with the parents. I know that, and that's something I wish we had done more in college, but I'm not sure how they could have prepared you for parents or working with other teachers or things of that nature. (V. 1, p. 41)**

One week later Julie felt overwhelmed with the demands of teaching, her marriage, and students' parents.

**Is teaching always this frustrating? I need to get my reading groups organized. I'm still testing them. The janitor told me that I have the messiest room in the school. I try to keep it clean, but I have so much stuff and so little time to organize it. I already stay till 7-8 o'clock at night—many times I stay much later (10 o'clock). Paul is trying to be understanding, but I am even wondering how long I can keep it up. I need to be faithful to my marriage and my job.**

**This week I had to inform parents that their child will be moved. The parents are NOT happy. I have to agree, it (the situation) was not handled properly. It could have been done a lot better. (V. 1, p. 179)**

Julie was very nervous about the Open House, but her fears were unwarranted. She put in tremendous hours, working until midnight several nights

getting ready for it, and her preparation, with the help of her mother and husband, was richly rewarded.

**Open House is behind me! It wasn't as bad as I had anticipated. I prepared a Parent Packet for the parents. I had to shorten my speech. After the first session, I calmed down considerably. Several parents were positively supportive of me. Many parents said they appreciated the Parent Packet. (V. 1, p. 179)**

Julie felt more comfortable regarding her first parent-teacher conferences to take place the second week in November than she did about the Open House.

*How do you feel about the upcoming parent-teacher conferences?*

**I'm not too nervous with it at all. I think it's because I've met a lot of the parents already and the [children] that I have questions about making it next year, I've already conferenced with so [the parents] pretty much are expecting what's on the report card. I mean, there are no failing grades this time. . . . The only thing that would make me nervous is . . . proving to them that this is the grade [their child] deserve[s]. So I'll have my grade book there and I have kept samples of work. I hope it will work out. (V. 1, pp. 67, 68)**

Typically, she went the second mile in preparation, as noted in her journal entry, and again felt tired but rewarded.

**Parent Teacher Conferences were this week. I made notes on each child to guide me during the conferences. I also had snapshots of each child to give to the parents to take home. The parents seemed to like the snapshots. Overall, I think the conferences went well. It was an exhausting day. (V. 1, p. 181)**

The last week in January Julie was so devastated that she considered not ever teaching again. I had made an appointment to visit in her classroom and also to conduct another interview, but she canceled the visit, briefly telling me over the phone that something terrible had happened and she was "still too shaky" to talk about it. A week later she felt up to an interview.

*Apparently 2 weeks ago something happened that was quite traumatic.*

**I don't know, maybe some people don't think it's traumatic, but it was very difficult. I had a student withdraw out of my classroom and go to public school and for reasons unbeknown to [me] and I didn't get any administrative support and it just made me feel like I was kind of inadequate and not capable of doing my job and what not because of everything that was involved. [Julie's eyes fill with tears and she apologizes.]**

*That's O.K. [I wait.] Did the parents talk to you?*

**Tuesday evening. The little girl was Anne Watkins. Her mother died last March of a heart attack and [Anne] happened to be in the home while her mother had a heart attack. The father doesn't live with them. They've had no contact with the father since Anne's birth. So she was alone with her mother and then the mother died on the way to the hospital in an ambulance. So Anne witnessed it all taking place and she's now being raised by her aunt here in Sandy Ridge and last year she was living in Maine. So it's a new environment, a new home. Anyway her aunt came in for a conference and Anne wasn't doing badly, but she was getting B's and C's and an occasional A. They anticipated her getting all A's.**

*Because she was in a private school?*

**Because she was in a private school and I think every parent wants their child to be a straight-A student and she did well last year in first grade. Well, see, we don't know anything about the school system there. Here when children have transferred in from public school, they're lower than what our kids are. The parents work for public school systems so they don't really understand that. They see us as a private school as being lower in standards. I had all her grades caught up. Report cards were due a week later, so I was working on report cards at the time of the conference. She came in and Anne was 40 pages behind in her reading workbook. I should have contacted the parents sooner, but I failed to do so because I was behind in grading my workbooks. But that was the only thing. I had gotten everything else caught up that week. And that was the only thing she was behind in. That was the only thing she was suffering in. [In] everything else she had maintained B's. And I explained to the parent that I would not be penalizing Anne because it was largely my fault in not [keeping] up in the grading in that particular area. And I assured her that she seemed to be progressing fine in the other areas. She brought in some papers that Anne had done poorly on, but in about 50 pages, you know, considering a child does about 50 pages in a grading period, one or two pages are poor doesn't really affect [the overall grade]. Being a teacher**

herself, I would have thought she would have understood that, but she didn't. But our conference went very well. We talked about how we could get Anne to be more aware of her surroundings. She [the aunt] confided in me some reasons why she thought Anne was not very good about turning her work in. Since the first day of school, she's had a problem turning work in, getting her work completed, and staying on task. And I reminded her [the aunt] that her mother had just died, that it takes about a year for an adult or a child in the best of circumstances to fully get over that kind of situation. She said, "Yeah, I know," but she's still dealing with the fact. It was her sister that died. She's got a three-year-old boy who apparently is very bright and who knows things and is more aware than Anne of her surroundings.

*Children also develop differently.*

[Laughs] Well, I know that, and I tried to explain that to her. She seemed to be very comfortable, very cooperative. She didn't seem dissatisfied at all when I explained to her about the reading workbook. That was her biggest concern, and I was giving her [Anne] a week to complete it before I would grade it. She didn't seem at all unhappy or dissatisfied. We were here for an hour and she confided in me reasons why she thought Anne wasn't doing very well which was like her mother did her homework for her last year and her mother, before she died, allowed Anne to watch enormous amounts of TV and Anne's still adjusting to the home she's living in now. There is no TV. So that's still an adjustment and she's being pulled out of her place where she felt safe and secure, being put into another place, living with people she really didn't know a lot about until after the death. She had hardly been with her aunt at all.

She said, "I don't think Anne is suffering too much because she doesn't cry. She doesn't talk about it." But then how much is a 7-year-old really going to talk about it? If the aunt can't talk about it herself without getting emotional, how can the child? Anyway, the only area she seemed upset about was the reading workbook. That was the only thing I can think of.

*Now did you contact her about the reading workbook prior to this conference?*

To the conference? No. It was at the conference that I pointed it out. . . . But like I said, I had no ill feelings from her. She seemed very happy and satisfied that I was giving her a week to get caught up. And I thought that was plenty of time for her to get 40 pages caught up and maybe it wasn't. I don't know. I was allowing her to take it home. She had extra time at school to work on it, because she usually completes all her school work before school's over. I didn't see that there would be a problem with her

completing it. The aunt took it home and had it all completed by the next day. [Sighs] So the next morning I walked into school and Karl says that the aunt came in and very much bent his ear about the reading workbook and just, he said, "yelled" to him about it and that kind of stuff. He wouldn't tell what was actually said. I asked him for details, but he said, "It really doesn't matter." He said, "You know, we all get behind in things" and he asked if there was anything else I was behind in and I said, "No, just the reading workbooks." That was the truth. That was the only thing that I was behind in. I had caught up in everything else except for reading workbooks. And he said, "Well, they're pretty upset about it, but I tried to explain to them, again, that her little girl is getting over her mother's death and whatnot." Apparently there were some other things said, but he hasn't said anything. I wanted to speak with him, but he said not to worry about it. He said, "You can't win them all." Just not to let it happen again but try to treat Anne with extra care and courtesy so she goes home saying good things, but I didn't think that I was not treating her courteously. I enjoyed having Anne. . . . The next day he comes up and said, "They've withdrawn Anne." So what do I say? That was it. You know the aunt would usually come to the door once in awhile and that week she had been picking up Anne at the door and she had been making excuses not to come in. She was supposed to pick up Anne early that day and she called in to the office and had Anne paged to the office instead of coming down here. I spoke with Karl. He said they gave no reason. [Julie is struggling to maintain control.]

[Empathetic tears well up in my eyes.] *All I can say, Julie, is that sometimes parents or guardians are not very understanding about what happens in a classroom.*

[Tearfully] I was really trying. I don't know. It made me feel that if I can't do a good job then maybe I shouldn't be here at all. I'm really thinking about what I'm going to do next year, anyway.

*Maybe you could take a pencil and a paper. In fact, maybe you could do this for your log. Make a pro and con list: "Areas Where I Feel I'm Succeeding; Areas Where I Feel I Need Help." Then compare them. From my observations, I think you'll find the list of pros will be longer than the cons.*

I've done it in my mind. It doesn't seem that way.

*Sometimes putting it on paper helps to visualize it. It's always difficult to lose a student, through a move or because of death or because a parent's upset. It always leaves a void in the classroom.*

**[Still tearful] It's just left me feeling very inadequate, incapable, questioning. And I had a good relationship with this woman. I don't understand.**

*Sometimes parents are very sweet and cordial to your face, but that's not the way they really feel and sometimes it's hard to detect. You know you said she's having a hard time dealing with her sister's death. You may be a scapegoat. I'm coming in as a stranger. I don't know all the factors, but sometimes innocent people become a target because the hurting person doesn't know how to deal with the situation. She may have had a lot on her, particularly over Christmas, with Anne missing her mother and then to find that Anne hadn't done so many pages in her workbook might have been the straw that broke the camel's back. Under normal circumstances that might not have been any big deal, especially considering that you yourself had been out ill. All I can say is that time is a healer. In another interview that we did, you said you had been trying to look at the positive and I would say keep that focus and learn from it but don't let it discourage you to the point that you may make a decision that you'll later regret. Don't make a decision until you can look at it with non-emotional thought. Get away from it a little bit. That's why I suggested the list because there you're just not focusing on the problem but on the things that you've done this year in the classroom. Have you thought of contacting the aunt?*

**My mentor said I should write a letter, but I have no idea what to say. I don't even know where to begin.**

*Well, from what you indicated, you were disappointed that she didn't come to the room to say goodbye to you rather than having Anne summoned to the office. In the letter you might say, "I missed the opportunity to tell you goodbye and I would like to talk with you." I think since she is a teacher you might say to her, "I want to learn from all my experiences this year. Could you really be open and honest with me about how you feel?" You know, she may choose not to and just from her actions I would assume that she didn't want to talk, but with the passage of time, she might feel differently. That's up to you whether you feel you can handle that letter or a face-to-face confrontation with her. Sometimes talking with a parent really helps; other times some issues are just better off left alone. Your principal's advice was . . .*

**[Interjects] Not to worry about it.**

*That rolls easily off the tongue, but that's a little more difficult to do when you're the one involved and you've been feeling the way you've been feeling.*  
(V. 1, pp. 124-126)

Julie had a few rough weeks following this incident. The first week in February she recorded the following in her journal:

**Still depressed; feeling discouraged. I didn't want to be here. Every time I come across a paper from Anne, I get all angry inside. I'm left with so many unanswered questions. They say a teacher will be cut—maybe I'll be it—I lost a student. Am I really doing anything? I don't want to be mediocre. I just want to get away! I'm frustrated. (V. 1, p. 182)**

And 2 weeks later she did get away, taking full advantage of the holiday.

**No school on Monday! President's Day. Paul and I went skiing. It helped to recharge me for this week. Only one bad day! So good week. (V. 1, p. 183)**

During the month of March, Julie experienced good and bad moments with parents.

[March 1 entry] Parent (one) yelled at me in front of children because I was late bringing the kids out. We had a messy art project and it took longer to finish and clean up.

[March 15 entry] Spring Fair was Monday night. Our display was on the 5 Senses. The children have really enjoyed this science unit. Our display looked great. Parent response was nil! I had one parent even tell another 2nd-grade teacher about how much she appreciated and enjoyed her display (I was standing w/this teacher) & said nothing about mine. I heard nothing neg. or pos. about the display. I feel defeated! Unappreciated!

[March 29 entry] We had Parent-Teacher Conferences on Monday. They went well. (V. 1, p. 183)

In our April 22 interview, Julie described parents with one word.

**Frustrating would be the word. I know it's a negative one.**

*That's all right.*

**But that's how I feel about the whole year. Relationships with parents have been frustrating, because I feel like I've done basically all I can do to keep the parents informed, yet there are still parents who come up to me and say, "I didn't know you were doing this." I send home a weekly newsletter.**



If there's a problem with the child, or the child has done something really wonderful that day, I'll call or I'll send a note home. . . . The parent will sign the [homework form] and not even look over what their child has done, and the homework is not even done! Then when report card time comes, the parent wants to know why this grade and so I pull out what I have to show them--the proof--and they'll say, "Why wasn't this completed?" And I'll show them. For those parents that I have that problem with, I keep those homework forms. And I say, "This was sent home on this date. It's right here recorded on the homework sheet. You signed it. Your child brought it back home unfinished." They'll ask, "Are you sure that's my signature?" and I'll show it to them. "Yes, it's my signature." [Laughs] Parents have been a very frustrating thing. I don't know what else I can do.

*Have you thought of having a parent conference the first week of school just to explain the procedures?*

I did. I explained all of my procedures, and the first day of school I sent home my rules and things that would be happening on a regular basis, such as the homework folders, homework slips, but it's been frustrating. . . . I feel in some aspects I've made the parents and the children glad and in other aspects I've made the parents and children disappointed with me. . . . I became intimidated by parents. . . . I intend next year to . . . not let the parents dictate or bully me. A lot of parents looked at me in a different way because I'm young, I'm new. I look young. I don't think I look as young as parents think I am. And also because I don't have children, the parents did not respect me because I am not a mother and because I'm not older and that comes with age. [JS and CBS laugh.]

*Right! No pun intended, of course!*

**NO!** But I think age helps in this job.

*It does.*

And if you have your own children it helps. (V. 1, pp. 119, 151, 152)

### **Administrator/Administrative Concerns**

I found Julie's principal, Karl Johansen, warm, friendly, and jovial when I telephoned him and asked for an interview. He was responsive, telling me he had

obtained his doctorate, knew what it was like, and would be glad to do anything he could to help me.

Johansen had more than 30 years in education, 19 of them as a principal. This was his first year at Sandy Ridge. He enjoyed the "tempo of the day and all the excitement it provides" (V. 3, p. 60). He felt, however, the hours were long.

**I spend an incredible amount of time here. . . . I try to be here before 7:30 . . . , and I'm never out of here before 4. Sometimes it's 4:30, 5. If I have a project I want to work on around here, sometimes I don't get home until dark [around 7 p.m.]. It's a good thing I'm not married. I married a school. . . . I always like to do my paper work before I go home. Seldom do I take paper work home. (V. 3, pp. 59, 60)**

Johansen used some creative ways to staff classrooms when teachers were out for a couple of afternoons for in-service.

*Do you ever relieve a teacher and teach a class?*

**Yeah, we had no substitute money for the two in-service afternoons that we had so our special education teacher, and my guidance counselor and myself took classrooms so the teachers could go to the in-service. We've done that twice and we will do it again on November the 8th because it's the only way to get your whole faculty in in-services.**

*As an administrator, how would you look at no money for substitutes?*

**Sometimes it's like me against the world and you have to scramble to survive.**

*But do you look at it positively or negatively?*

**Oh, it's an exciting place to be. [Laughs] Living on the edge is always exciting.**

*All right. Considering the opportunity to teach in a class,*

**[Interjects] It's fun.**

*Would you take that opportunity if you had substitutes available?*

**Every now and then. I don't know my student body until I get in the room, and I go into classrooms sometimes and talk to groups of students. (V. 3, pp. 51, 52)**

Johansen told me he spent approximately 50% of his time outside of his office (V. 3, p. 46). When asked about staff development, he believed he did not need to do any since Scenic Vista Conference did such an excellent job. I asked him, "What type of staff development would you do if the Conference did not provide any?"

**I would have my own staff development. I've already met with groups of teachers on each grade level and told them what I thought they needed to do in the instructional program and will continue to do that from time to time. When I do my classroom observations in a couple of weeks, then I'll talk with that particular teacher about their particular room and may or may not make some suggestions about the way they conduct their lessons and their decor.**

*Are you talking about formal evaluations for your teachers?*

**Well, I'm usually in and out of everybody's classroom every day, but later on this month I will start formal classroom observations. They're aware of it and they'll be aware of when I'm coming in their room.**

*And that's for every teacher?*

**That's for every teacher. They'll get a formal observation this fall. Every teacher will get a formal observation in February, and there's a year-end evaluation.**

*Are they encouraged to make suggestions as to what they would want you to observe?*

**Well, the things I'm most interested in observing is the teaching of reading and then math. And I'll probably see a better lesson than if I hadn't let them know I was coming, but I'm in and out often enough to have a feel as to whether they're carrying it through day by day. (V. 3, p. 43)**

According to Julie, Johansen did not follow his plan for teacher evaluation, at least in her case. As mentioned earlier, Julie was not only disappointed about not receiving support from her principal regarding the students to be transferred from her class, but she was provoked to further frustration by his lack of observation in her classroom and, in general, his administrative style.

**I was very frustrated because I expected (I don't know if this was a wrong expectation or not), but since I was a new person on board, and since I was a beginning teacher, that the principal would make it a point, if not on the first day, my first week, to come and discuss it with me. "How did your first day go? How did your first week go? Do you have any questions? Do you have any frustrations? Can I give you any pointers? How can I help you out? Is there anything I can help you brainstorm on?" There wasn't anything. That made me VERY frustrated because I expected that, and because I worked with the principal who was here last year, I knew that THAT particular individual would have MADE that effort because she did with EVERY teacher. She made it a point every once in awhile to come by and ask those questions and sit down and talk about your feelings, knowing that teachers are, you know, people who have frustrations. (V. 1, p. 45)**

On November 8, I asked Julie to elaborate on the frustrations she was still experiencing.

**My biggest frustration, I think, is with the administration and the staff. I just went through a pretty frustrating experience with two of the administrators. I don't feel the support of the principal and the vice-principal and what not.**

*In what ways do you feel they're not supporting you?*

**Well, there's no communication. Last week I had early morning duty and there was no way of knowing what the announcements were, you know. I mean, I'm right there. He could walk by and say, "By the way, these were the announcements." I don't mind asking another teacher and I guess that's a silly example but, I mean, [hesitates] he doesn't talk to us. For instance, during the first pre-week [of] school he said that before he came in to evaluate any of us, he would send us each a copy of the sheet he uses**

to evaluate us so we could look it over and if there were any questions, we could talk to him. Well, we've never seen the sheet. So I don't know how I'm being evaluated. I guess I'm a little upset, because he was supposed to be here [today] when math started. [Since he wasn't], he missed the introduction of the lesson. That upsets me, you know, because I wonder how he could evaluate or what not.

*Well, it's possible he had a phone call or was tied up in the office with someone.*

Yeah, yeah, but, for the most part, it's not the little things so much; it's just that he doesn't talk to me. I mean, I've seen him with some of the other teachers. You know, he's relaxed; he jokes with, he talks to [them]. If there's a problem, he'll go and talk to them regularly. He talks to them weekly. It's just—even when we pass in the hall—it's [pauses]. The other new teacher, Mrs. Dutterer, [has] been observed twice.

*Now you say "the other new teacher." The teacher who is new to the school system, but not a beginning teacher?*

Right. The first and second combination teacher. We're close friends and she's been observed two, maybe three times. And the first time he's come into the classroom was today. I don't know. I guess I'm looking for a more friendly, personable person who's concerned about how you're feeling in your job.

*Would you feel comfortable expressing that to him?*

No, I wouldn't. He doesn't seem to be a person you can approach.

*How do you feel about talking to your mentor?*

She has the same frustrations with him. Yeah, she does. I talked to her about my feelings. She has the same feelings, you know, that it's—she's just going through a lot of the same things. She was used to the principal we had last year. I was too. She was very interested in the children and what was going on in the classroom—how you were relating to the kids, what she could do to help you to be a better teacher and giving you suggestions. She wasn't a critical type; she was more wanting to help you to do a better job for the kids. It wasn't for yourself but for the kids.

*But she did give negative feedback, if necessary?*

Yes. I guess I thought she was a very good administrator.

*Now, I'm assuming that you will get feedback on the evaluation that he did today.*

**I don't know.**

*He didn't mention whether he'd have a conference with you following the evaluation?*

**No, he just came up to me yesterday after school. "By the way, I'm going to come by tomorrow."**

*Now this is the first time he's been in for a formal evaluation. What about just stopping in and looking in your classroom briefly?*

**He came in to do head lice count.**

*But he doesn't come by on a regular basis to just pop in or to say hello and stay for a few minutes?*

**No. He had mentioned at the beginning of the year that he was going to come by each classroom. He's never been down here. I know he made it through the upper grades. Maybe he just never made it through the lower grades. (V. 1, pp. 68-71)**

During my interview with Johansen, I was surprised with some of his comments regarding new staff.

*For beginning teachers or teachers new to this school, did you offer an orientation or some kind of induction program?*

**I have no new teachers this year. We have a teacher that was an aide here who has a college degree in teaching that was unable to get hired on as a teacher right away and so she knew a lot when she took over. We've got a teacher from another school.**

*She worked as an aide last year?*

**For 2 years. [Julie told me she had worked as an aide only 1 year.]**

*So you don't consider her a new teacher?*

**Well, she's a new teacher, but she knows what's going on and is doing a very, very good job. When there are lots of people looking for jobs, you can afford to be picky. (V. 3, pp. 46, 47)**

As previously mentioned, Johansen was not in Julie's room to observe (except for head-lice count), he did not really communicate with her about her class, and he did not conduct an evaluation until November 8. This interview with him took place October 8. How did he know she was "doing a very, very good job"?

His remarks concerning the staff in general also surprised me. He seemed unaware of the stress several of his teachers were experiencing. When I asked him how his staff felt about their workloads, he replied, "I don't hear any complaints."

*As far as you know, they don't feel burned out or stressed?*

**No. You know, everybody looks forward to vacations during the school year and there's nothing here that's different than last year and I would think that this staff would be less apt to get burned out than staffs in other schools I've worked in because they don't have to put up with the daily discipline problems that you do in many schools. (V. 3, p. 49)**

According to Julie, there were at least two teachers feeling a great deal of stress. "As far as an aide or teacher, we [the first-grade teacher and Julie] keep hearing, 'next week, next week'. This not knowing is . . . hard" (V. 1, p. 179).

When I asked Johansen how much release time teachers received to visit in other classrooms, he answered:

**Well, so far they haven't had any. . . . I don't have any time scheduled since I have a difficult time releasing the teachers to do anything. I have brought up the subject several times and I encourage them to do that. We provided some time to do that before school started.**

*But there's no time scheduled for the school year for them to do this?*

**No. (V. 3, pp. 44, 45)**

Johansen shared the frequency with which he communicated with his teachers.

**I talk with several teachers every day, after school usually. Some of them make appointments that I want to talk to, but worship every morning is a good time. There are always a few who want to talk. So I'm available to talk to. (V. 3, p. 45)**

When asked how he would like teachers to view him, Johansen replied:

**As an instructional leader, somebody who will help them be successful. . . . Well, one goal I had with the faculty was to cause them to be comfortable with the change in administration, and I think and hope that I've done that. . . . The action's out there in the classrooms and that's where you 'd better be seen. (V. 3, pp. 51, 53, 59)**

In December, Julie was feeling better about changes she was experiencing in her relationship with Johansen.

**Since [Dr. Johansen] came in to observe, he's been more friendly and he talks to me a bit more in passing. He seems more relaxed. I don't know if it was just the new job pressures on him, too . . . , but a lot of things have changed since you've last been here. My attitude's changed, my schedules have changed, you know, as far as my priorities, and my relationship with the principal. I mean, I still don't feel like I can go to him to talk about something, but it's better than it was. (V. 1, p. 99)**

### **Curriculum Concerns**

For the most part, Julie felt comfortable with the basic curriculum content. The one exception was social studies. She felt the book was "Mickey Mouse kind of stuff," and she wondered how to make map study interesting (V. 1, pp. 48, 179). Early on, her main frustration with the curriculum was not having enough textbooks. She was also frustrated in trying to meet the individual needs of her academically diverse students. She had a number of bright students and six who were labeled as



learning disabled (V. 1, pp. 46, 153). Later she was frustrated in supplementing/reinforcing the curriculum, either with related resource materials or implementing a more hands-on approach. She also believed her classroom library needed updating because it was very inadequate both in quantity and quality of materials. Although she was grateful to acquire a computer during the year, it became a frustration to her and the students for there was so little software to use with it (V. 1, p. 162).

### **Mentor**

Julie's mentor, Barbara Ann McDonald, was a very caring person. She had gone back to obtain her undergraduate degree after her three children were in school. Therefore, she was older than the typical 3-year experienced teacher. She and Julie became acquainted when they took a college class together. Barbara Ann had the advantage of becoming acquainted with Sandy Ridge Elementary through her parenting role, as a school board member, and as a regular substitute for 2 years prior to being hired as a full-time teacher. Even with that experience, Barbara realized how much she did not know or understand when she was new. Also she heard many times from other teachers, "If I had only known," and for those reasons was interested in helping any new teacher who came aboard (V. 3, p. 88). So prior to her official status as Julie's mentor, Barbara Ann was available for Julie.

But initially the mentor experience was frustrating. The program was new and, due to a misunderstanding, neither Julie nor Barbara received materials from the the superintendents explaining the mentor process until months later. The

mentor/protege relationship did not become official until almost a full semester after school started.

Later it was frustrating because the anticipated procedure of observing in each other's rooms, unfortunately, never came to fruition. I think several things influenced this. In addition to needing an aide to assist with her 25 kindergarten and pre-first students, Barbara moved to a new classroom during the school year to facilitate the day-care program (V. 3, pp. 89, 94, 95). And Johansen did not provide or encourage release time during the school year.

Julie and Barbara, however, established a close bond, a type of mother-colleague friendship at the beginning of the year. Julie found this helpful yet also stressful. She feared doing anything that would jeopardize the relationship.

Barbara and Julie took a combined field trip together. Julie had a few differences of opinion regarding the way Barbara handled some procedures during the trip, and she did not feel comfortable discussing this with Barbara. When I questioned Julie about it, she said she would feel free to discuss "other things that don't involve a relationship."

**In other words, if there was something she did that I didn't agree with, I wouldn't feel comfortable going to her and talking about it.**

*Why?*

**I'm fearful of affecting the relationship that we have, the friendship that we have. It seems from what I've sensed that teachers hold what they do in their room like their own little world and to say what maybe I had observed or what I had seen I was concerned about would be very offensive to them. It seems to be an unspoken code here not to talk about what the other teachers think. They'll talk behind your back but they won't come to your**

face and say, "You did this. I'm concerned. Maybe I'm taking it wrong or maybe it was an unusual situation." (V. 1, p. 107)

Julie told me that she and Barbara had frequent contact. "We talk twice or maybe more a week" (V. 1, p. 129). And Julie felt free to discuss safe topics: class scheduling, discipline, curriculum, Open House, parent-teacher relationships, specific student behavioral or academic problems, and obtaining help for Julie with Xeroxing and grading. As Barbara assessed the mentor-mentee relationship, she stated: "We have touched . . . , I think, every aspect of teaching" (V. 3, p. 91). Barbara felt rewarded when Julie followed some of her suggestions and achieved success (V. 3, p. 85).

When I interviewed Barbara, she was quite open about the current administrator. "I think . . . currently, there is really no relationship or support" (V. 3, p. 90). Her comments validated Julie's perceived lack of support from Dr. Johansen and the loving, caring supportive attitude Julie had observed in the previous administrator the year before. Barbara made a point to suggest to Dr. Johansen that he communicate positive feedback to Julie, to "pass along those little compliments. They [mentees] need it. We all need it" (V. 3, p. 89).

From a conversation with Julie in the spring, I was made aware of improvement in Dr. Johansen's feedback. Barbara Ann not only mentored Julie, but also mentored a substitute and Dr. Johansen (V. 1, p. 151).

## Summary

As mentioned in chapter 4, the areas highlighted below cover the general basic concerns of beginning teachers and summarize how Julie's experience was either analogous or dissimilar.

### **Maintaining Classroom Management and Discipline**

Julie needed to adjust her classroom management to meet various individual student needs. Although this was frustrating and certainly less than desirable, she was resourceful in adapting an every-other-day alternative for teaching reading to six different student groups. In addition, she tutored Juan after school because his reading level was too far below any other reading group. When her student load was reduced, her reading groups were only reduced by one, a tremendous disappointment to her.

Classroom discipline was a constant anxiety. While she did not experience major classroom discipline problems, her ingenuity was taxed as she struggled with handling one particular child at the beginning of the year. Sammy had spent first grade in a totally unstructured environment and he experienced quite a shock when placed in Julie's second-grade class with 30 students who were expected to work for certain segments of time at designated work areas (V. 1, p. 75).

**Managing Time**

Julie felt she could use more time to develop her units, and she expressed great frustration with regard to family time. She felt her teaching was all-consuming, the only focus in her life. There was nothing left for God, her husband, or herself.

**Motivating Students Generally/Specifically**

Julie's students enjoyed school. She had a very organized routine, which her particular group of students needed; yet, she provided field trips and fun curriculum-related activities, which suited the typical second-grade student. Although she occasionally had to remind a student to pay attention, her students, for the most part, remained on task. Her biggest challenges specifically in this regard were students working below or above second-grade level: Juan, Level 1.1; Tina, dyslexic; Charlotte, Level upper third/lower fourth, but parents did not want her in third grade; Sammy, the student mentioned earlier, who transferred from a non-structured classroom; Charley, a student with behavior disorders (V. 1, pp. 46, 117, 179). In addition, she had a student who had been abused and because of his social and emotional immaturity, he was repeating second grade (V. 1, p. 84). These children added stress to Julie's teaching, but as she gently and patiently worked individually with them, trying different strategies until she found ones that were effective, she saw academic, social, and emotional growth. Their success was her success, highlights that helped to offset the frustrations.

### **Managing Classroom Instruction**

Managing classroom instruction was a constant source of frustration for Julie throughout the year. Julie wondered silently, and voiced her concern orally to me and in her journal: "Do they really learn anything? Am I doing a good job teaching?" (V. 1, p. 180). Teaching the regular curriculum, for the most part, did not seem difficult for her, but locating and/or preparing supplemental resources and materials and finding time to meet individual needs for the academically, emotionally, and/or socially impaired students sorely taxed her creativity, energy, and time.

### **Experiencing Feelings of Isolation**

Julie did not experience feelings of isolation because she had a mentoring relationship with Barbara, who was not only willing to assist when asked, but initiated contact to help Julie (V. 3, p. 83). In addition, Julie cautiously shared and sought help from other selected teachers.

### **Coping With Workload**

Julie felt tired most of the school year. Her inability to cope seemed to stem mostly from the totality of teaching tasks and her drive to do everything perfectly. Although she was assigned a grade level within her expertise of early childhood, her class preparations were time-consuming because she had to design her curriculum to meet a wide range of academic needs and seek outside sources and materials. Her only extracurricular assignment was serving as a member of the marketing committee, but she imposed extras on herself--snapshots of each student,

pictures of bulletin boards, a parent packet, monthly student-activity packets, a weekly newsletter to parents, additional monthly student mini-units or projects. All of these are wonderful and commendable activities, yet they drained her energy and time.

Julie is a very committed person. Her sense of loyalty, a trait that at times precipitated mental conflict and physical exhaustion, was also a catalyst in helping her to cope with the frustrations and to resist giving up easily. In addition, Julie had support from her family. Her mother came in regularly to grade papers and her husband helped her in the classroom 1 night a week. They also came to her aid during times of stress when she needed additional help to meet critical deadlines.

### **Developing Positive Relationships**

Basically Julie fostered very warm relationships with her students. Although she developed positive relationships with a few of her students' parents, parents intimidated her and she was not always as successful in this area as she would have liked. Several times she felt hurt by parental criticism and at other times she felt frustrated by the lack of comments. Of course, she was encouraged when parents expressed appreciation for something she had done for their children.

Her timidity and fear, precipitated by her experiences as a student teacher and aide, made her wary of other faculty members, causing her to exercise a great deal of caution in establishing close friendships with colleagues. She avoided the faculty lounge because she viewed it as a gossip center, a place for teachers to talk about other students and teachers. Yet, Julie did establish close friendships with a

few teachers. Early on in the school year she had the wisdom and maturity to seek help from an experienced colleague, Barbara Ann McDonald, who later at Julie's request became her official mentor. With Barbara, Julie was able to establish an intimate rapport and thus maintain a support system. But even in this relationship, she cautiously approached certain topics and avoided others completely for fear of jeopardizing the close friendship that had been established.

Her relationship with her administrator, however, was a bittersweet experience and seemed to be one of her greatest sources of frustration. Although there were occasions when Johansen was friendly and communicated words of encouragement, overall he seemed unaware of her despair and failed to minister to her needs as a first-year teacher. In our September 18 interview, when I asked her specifically what she would like him to do, she said:

**[It] would have been nice to start off to get to know me, to get to know my feelings and what not. Well, like I said that other principal did last year-- once in awhile, after school, come by and say, "Hey, how's it going?" or to give me some kind of feedback whether I'm doing O.K. or not O.K. I've had nothing.**

*So you're not just talking about informal evaluation of your teaching?*

**Informal and formal. (V. 1, p. 50)**

Following his November 8 observation, Julie was disappointed. He came in late and missed her introduction. At the post-conference, she yearned for constructive criticism rather than the brief, shallow feedback Johansen offered.

*Your principal was in for an evaluation when I was here last time. Did he have a post-conference with you?*



**Yeah. Very, very brief. He said I was Mary Poppins. [Laughs] He said, "I think you did a great job." He said, "You're like Mary Poppins. The children respond to you like they do Mary Poppins." Whatever. [Laughs] I just said, "Well, I never thought of myself as Mary Poppins," and he said, "Well, that's what you remind me of." [Laughs] Oh, well. . . . I don't know that Mary Poppins was beneficial.**

*Did he give you any [other] specifics?*

**No. The only other suggestion he had was to put my number sign back up. I just took it down, because I've tried everything to get it to stay up there and it won't stay up. It just keeps falling down. I've put that poster putty stuff up, scotch tape, book tape. Tonight I'm going to try rubber cement. A teacher told me to put rubber cement. The rubber cement will just rub off. It won't damage the walls or the paint.**

*So that was the only specific feedback he gave you?*

**Yeah. Basically in the written report that he gave, he just wrote down what I had done in my lesson and the children who needed independent work. Their needs were met at the back table where I worked independently with them. He just spoke very positively. You know, I wasn't expecting so much positive. (V. 1, pp. 84, 85)**

Many of her frustrations could have been avoided if Johansen had been more sensitive to the needs of beginning teachers in general and Julie's needs in particular. He failed to initiate beginning-teacher induction procedures: provide thorough pre-school orientation, conduct informal and formal evaluations with pre- and post-conferences on a regular basis throughout the year, and offer professional feedback and furnish assistance/support when students were transferred and parental complaints were filed.

#### Julie's Future

Julie summed up her first year of teaching with one word: "Frustrating" (V. 1, p. 150).

**Yes, I've decided to give it a year. I think in my heart I really want to be a teacher and I like teaching, but it's just all the other stuff that goes along with it that just frustrates and clouds what teaching is all about. . . . It's all the unexpected stuff, the extras. I knew teaching took a lot of time, but I didn't realize it took *THAT MUCH TIME!* . . . It has been difficult. [As] I mentioned before, when I came in this year, *everything* was new! There wasn't anything I did that wasn't new. (V. 1, pp. 157, 171)**

Julie examined herself critically and gave a great deal of thought to ways in which she could improve. Listed below are the goals she set for herself for her second year of teaching.

1. Plan ahead. She and her mentor outlined a summer schedule to get an advance start on unit plans, social studies and science projects, bulletin boards, etc., in order to give themselves more time during the school year to devote to the regular items and allow them to leave the classroom earlier each day (V. 1, pp. 144, 146).

2. Include more field trips, particularly in the area of social studies (V. 1, p. 146).

3. Provide more hands-on activities in math, science, and social studies (V. 1, pp. 171, 172).

4. Be consistent implementing discipline strategies (V. 1, pp. 162, 163).

5. Plan a monthly educational project for fun, excitement, variety, and to lift spirits, particularly during the low times of the year (V. 1, p. 174).

6. Take a summer class to renew certification (V. 1, p. 147).

7. Be more organized and efficient.

**I don't like working in a disorganized mess. . . . I really want to see my desk and all that area down there become more organized. I want to get a handle on this grading. I don't want it to rule my life next year. (V. 1, pp. 162, 168)**

8. "Become more comfortable with parents. I get very nervous with parents" (V. 1, p. 167).

9. "Prioritize." She learned toward the end of the year to go home at a set time even though everything was not completed, realizing that she could do only so much in one day (V. 1, p. 168).

10. Maintain a more consistent relationship with God, the Master Teacher. She felt as the pressures of the school year increased and she became more involved and tired, she let her personal devotional time slip (V. 1, p. 159).

Julie also thought unselfishly beyond herself and her desires for next year. Realizing why her own unmet needs created stress and frustrations, she approached the marketing group in her school to suggest they develop a "welcoming packet" for beginning teachers, as well as transferring teachers, to help make their socialization process and acculturation to teaching at Sandy Ridge less stressful, easier, and more enjoyable. Unfortunately, the group felt "it was more work than it was worth" (V. 1, p. 164).

In April, Julie felt better about the feedback she was receiving from her principal. "So that has improved, [but] I still feel very inadequate in a lot of ways" (V. 1, p. 151). Although she freely admitted a need to know more, she was no longer the young and inexperienced novice who entered that Grade 2 room the previous August.

Despite the frustrations, exhaustion, and her need for a summer's break, by the end of May Julie felt more "comfortable" regarding her second year of

teaching (V. 1, p. 144). She could reflect upon the past 9 months and recall many highlights and rewarding experiences: teachable moments, improved student conduct or academic success, good days and weeks interspersed throughout the frustrating months, fun activities, student and parent expressions of appreciation, growth in her personal relationship with her administrator, the support and loving care of her mentor, learning to juggle her heavy workload in order to leave school at a reasonable hour, knowledge gained, obstacles overcome, victories achieved, griefs lessened, and joys increased. She relentlessly gave but she received much in return!

## CHAPTER 6

### CASE STUDY OF JENNY HUDSON

#### Uniqueness

**For once in my life, I feel like I'm finally enjoying what I'm doing, 8 hours a day. I'm happy to come here. I feel good when I get home, and it's a lot of fun. . . . And being able to talk about Jesus to children and not have to keep that inside—that's a real big relief . . . , a real blessing. (V. 2, p. 51)**

These words, among many others, just gushed from first-year teacher Jenny Hudson in response to my question, "What are some of the joys you're experiencing?"

Jenny did not always feel this happy about her employment. Her path to teaching took a circuitous route. Desiring to major in education in college, she was advised to choose something other than education because, she was told, the field was flooded with teachers. With education eliminated, she was confused as to what she should do. She considered theology and psychology. Psychology won out, but only for a short time. Fearful of the statistics classes required in psychology, she switched to art. Acquiring her B.A. degree in art, however, brought little satisfaction. Although she enjoyed art as a hobby, she really did not want to use it as a profession. Afterward, someone encouraged her to take nursing. She worked many hours selling Christian books to earn tuition money for nursing classes at Calvin University.

Disappointment and frustration plagued her. "I didn't like any part of nursing, but I stuck with it . . . up until the last two semesters. Then I quit . . . and I'm glad I did. I believe God has given me the gift of teaching" (V. 2, p. 46). Yet amidst the joy was a tinge of regret. "I made the choice of nursing, which I shouldn't have done. . . . I feel it was such a waste. . . . I'm in my 30s. . . . This is really my first year of really being happy at what I'm doing. That's sad" (V. 2, p. 121).

Jenny was vivacious, capable, creative, conscientious, and dependable. She loved planning activities for her kindergarten children that would nurture their academic, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual development. Yet she worried at the outset about her effectiveness and her relationship with her principal and teaching colleagues. She felt intimidated by her classroom aide and her students' parents. She craved camaraderie with the staff, but feared a breach in confidentiality if she established too close a relationship. Her lack of trust in others and her occupation with what others thought about her almost smothered her joy in teaching during the initial part of her teaching career.

Jenny balanced her teaching load by involving herself in outside activities. With college classes behind her and the security of a full-time job, Jenny and her husband purchased an older home and during the year made major renovations. Although it was hard physical work, it was emotionally rewarding and satisfied Jenny's artistic tendencies. Jenny enjoyed teaching a children's Bible class on Saturdays and also enjoyed spiritual and social activities provided by her church.

Aspen Hills, where Jenny taught, is a parochial elementary school located on the outside fringe of a large mid-western city. The school was established in 1907, and the current facility, built in 1938, originally had more land around it, but as the student population increased through the years, additions were needed that decreased the parking and playground area. Typical of an inner-city school, the campus is enveloped by residential homes. Yet the old building is well maintained and the grounds are attractively landscaped.

The school has very little teacher turnover, and since 1936 has had only three principals. Day care and academic instruction in kindergarten through eighth grade are provided. It has 12 classrooms, a library, a gym, music room, a principal's office, secretarial-accountant suite, and a faculty lounge that doubles as a sick bay. There is no cafeteria, but prepared bulk food, delivered each day by a nearby university cafeteria, provides hot lunches for students and staff. Four staff people dish it into individual styrofoam containers during the lunch periods. Two years prior, students had to bring cold lunches (V. 3, p. 67).

During Jenny's first year of teaching, there were 46% Black, 15% Asian, 15% Hispanic, and 24% White students (V. 3, p. 77). The school employed "50 staff--20 teachers [which included 3 teachers' aides] and 30 auxiliary personnel. Most of the auxiliary help [was] part time" (V. 3, p. 74). The auxiliary personnel included bus drivers for daily bus service, field trips, and other school functions requiring transportation. Top enrollment has been as high as 500, but for the last 6 years the school's enrollment has hovered around 300 (V. 3, p. 1).

Aspen Hill's financial base, typical of other Seventh-day Adventist school systems, used a threefold funding procedure: student tuition, church subsidy from area churches, and Conference subsidy. When teacher/staff-student ratio is 15 to 1, however, budgets are tight, and Aspen Hills was no exception. So, as is typical of most schools, fund-raisers--a citrus fruit program, yard sales, magazine and book campaigns--were promoted for extra income.

The school, accredited locally and regionally, had many strengths: a good academic program in grades 1-8, an effective school-wide discipline plan, a school board that met on a regular basis, an annual science fair and open house, stimulating school assemblies, and a stable, qualified staff of teachers. Dr. Kent, principal, told me faculty meetings were conducted "about once a month" but we have "Ad[ministrative] Council in between. . . . We also have group area meetings [Advisory Council]" (V. 3, p. 69).

One weakness was their inactive Home and School (parent-teacher organization). Dr. Kent believed the reason for this was lack of strong leadership.

**You have to have a very dynamic leader. And you have to have a leader that has lots of time to make calls and for preparation and so forth. And here you have very few people who aren't busy. And secondly, in the metropolitan area, you have to have something super to draw people in. And we have found that unless we have the kids perform, most of the parents won't come. So Home and School has had a hard time and I think it is because there are so many things going on in the area. (V. 3, p. 69)**

Kent was not principal at Aspen Hills when the 10-year-old discipline code was implemented, but he felt good about it.

**It's been well thought out and it works. . . . I marvel that a discipline code has lasted for more than three or four years. This one has worked. It's**



**been very effective. Kids are afraid of this thing. You know, they have to take it home and get Mother's signature and there are usually some consequences when they get home.**

*Do you do anything to reward good behavior?*

**That's probably one area where we are a little weak. We do some but not very much. . . . That's one of the things I've wanted to get in but you get so busy that it slips by you. (V. 3, pp. 73, 74)**

Kent's philosophy regarding teacher supervision and evaluation, and his observation methodology, I felt, were weaknesses. These are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

### Commonalities

#### Scheduling and Organizing the Day

Jenny felt completely lost the first week of school. She did not feel competent in planning a schedule: dividing the day into time blocks (pre-school morning activities, beginning morning activities, academic time, recesses, story time, nap time, choosing time, etc.) for her K-II students. "Another teacher gave me her schedule. She said, 'Maybe you could sort of copy this or make it similar to this'" (V. 2, p. 48). These guidelines were a big help to her.

Jenny believed her student teaching experience in first grade was excellent. She was supervised by a veteran teacher who was nearing retirement. "She had so much knowledge, it was overwhelming sometimes," Jenny related. "I really enjoyed her class and learned a lot from her" (V. 2, p. 116). Conversely, her student teaching experience in kindergarten was "insufficient," one of the reasons she believed the transition from student teaching to her current position was difficult.

Jenny's student teaching involved a half-day kindergarten; K-II was a full-day kindergarten.

**I also believe that I shouldn't have been put with an inexperienced teacher like I was for kindergarten. She [had] only been teaching two years, and I feel that really hurt me. . . . She was learning herself and I could tell she was just learning. (V. 2, p. 116)**

**[Also] I was just sort of put in her room, you know, for convenience sake. They didn't know where to place me and they were trying to get a teacher for me at the last minute. And so she was angry about it, and I knew she was frustrated because I was in her room. She didn't want me in her room and it was a bad experience. And I really had to learn how to people please to pacify her [Laughs] because it was either sink or swim with that lady. . . . The other teachers felt sorry that I had to go in her room. So I was really worried. I was worried about my grade, because this was my career and this woman could have ruined it for me, but she gave me an A anyway. I don't know how. I know it was through prayer. I really believe that because when I had the prayer group at church praying about this situation . . . , it was just like it turned around, totally turned around. (V. 2, p. 52)**

*What experience in your student teaching could have better prepared you for what you're doing now, for the "real thing"?*

**Probably more in the curriculum area and just everything in that kindergarten room. I needed so much. . . . I needed more feedback on where I was lacking. The first-grade teacher gave me feedback, but the kindergarten teacher didn't give me enough feedback to know if I was doing O.K. or bad or indifferent or whatever. . . . She gave me a grade but just a grade. There wasn't good communication between [us]. . . . I was going to get a job next and I needed a lot of feedback, I felt.**

*So the only evaluation that you got out of your kindergarten experience was basically self-evaluation?*

**Uh-huh. Yes, and she'd just write down things, you know, during the mid-term time and the final. And that's the only feedback I ever got. So I never knew.**

*You never had any planning . . . or discussion sessions?*

**No, no. That's probably the area I felt I was lacking in. (V. 2, pp. 116, 117)**

Later, Jenny's mentor observed in Jenny's classroom and helped her organize her curriculum and learning centers. Jenny appreciated the guidance and found the changes beneficial to her and her students.

### **Functioning Within the School System**

A lack of orientation regarding basic school routines, staff duties, and other procedures engendered in Jenny a mixture of panic, frustration, and anger.

**When I came to this school, I was hired at the last minute. That was like a week before school began. I was hired on Tuesday, and I had another job to finish, so I could not quit until that Friday. So Sunday, the day before school started, [is] the day they gave me to set up the room. So I came in here Sunday morning early and just spent the whole day. I stayed here, I think, from 10 in the morning until 8 at night just working on that room. I finished that and then I was told that I had to come up with a curriculum. I've adjusted now, but when I was told that I was just angry. I felt very angry; I just couldn't get over that.**

*You didn't know that until Sunday?*

**No, no. This was a couple weeks ago that I was told I had to come up with the curriculum. I was told when I was a student teacher that you walked right into a curriculum. You had to fit your schedule around it, but you're told what to teach, and you have to stick by it.**

*What did you do the first week, then, if you didn't know until 2 weeks ago?*

**Well, I asked about the workbooks [I found in the class room] and I asked about K-II. . . . They explained . . . that it was advanced kindergarten. [Dr. Kent] said, "What is your background with kindergarten age group?" And I said, "Well, in my methods, I had to deal with all different ages, K through 3. . . . And then you plan accordingly to whatever age group you have." But he never said the words, "You do not have a curriculum here." He never told me that I [would] have to come up with my own curriculum.**

*So how have you been coping with finding material for designing your curriculum?*

Well, I use the workbooks and I follow daily by those workbooks, and I have supplementary papers that they do in the morning that are related to what we're learning.

*What type of workbooks do you have?*

Phonics, writing, Level I reading workbook [reading readiness], and then there's math. . . . I'm frustrated about the lack of structure because I'm new and I need some structure right now. Later on I can throw in some new things and change things around, but right now I need to have some kind of guidance.

*You started late. Did you have any orientation?*

No orientation at all. No orientation, just an interview by the board panel.

*What about the other kindergarten teacher?*

Well, I was told to watch what you say to her. You hear all these things when you get to a job, you know. Everybody has cliques. They're everywhere. [Laughs]

*Has your aide been a big help to you?*

She has been a big help, but I'm kind of wondering now since she gave her notice if she's probably telling the parents what's really going on here, you know, with the classroom and the children.

*She's not planning to stay the rest of the year?*

No, she's not going to stay. She just gave her notice, just last Thursday.

*Is it job dissatisfaction or is she moving?*

I think it's job dissatisfaction for the most part. She needs to make more money.

*Will they replace her for you with another aide?*

I hope so. I'm going to be really sending up some prayers about it. [Laughs] And [Dr. Kent] hasn't even approached me. She gave her notice last week and he didn't even come to me and say, "Do you know your aide's leaving or I'm going to be replacing your aide?" So I'm going to

**have to track him down very soon and say, "Who's coming into this room with me?" (V. 2, pp. 48-54)**

Initially, Jenny was very distrustful of her colleagues. She felt overwhelmed trying to manage 24 kindergartners with no curriculum and a group of students with a wide range of ability. She feared criticism from other teachers, her aide, and parents. On October 11, after school, an incident occurred that completely baffled and somewhat unnerved her.

**Two of the veteran teachers that have been here a good while—I think one has been here 13 years, the other one 16 years—came down to my room, and I was wondering what this visit was all about. [Laughs] All of a sudden they decided that they were going to discuss room arrangement with me and how they could give me more space because I've been making . . . comments about the lack of space in there with 24 kindergartners. . . . So they proceeded to change the room around. . . .**

**They started moving all the furniture around. And they said, "Now can you remember how Candy did this? How Candy moved this? Where did she have this?" And they were trying to remember what the other teacher did before I came. . . . I was insulted because [I felt] they [were] saying, "Your room arrangement is not as good as Candy's room arrangement was. . . . So I asked them, "Did you do this for Candy last year as well?" And they said, "Yes, we did. [Laughs] We came in here and arranged her room, too." I couldn't get over it, so I said, "Oh, I see." So I thought I would just let them do it just to see if it was going to help. . . . So we got rid of a lot of things. A lot of things went outside the room and into the hallway. And so, as I looked around the room, I said, "Well, we'll try this. We'll just see how this works." And it seems to be roomier in there, but a lot of things have been eliminated where as before the children had access to certain things. . . . Now there's . . . less play time and more room for the seat work because you have to have one or the other and I'd rather concentrate on the skills that they need in order to move on to first grade. . . . It's sort of an advanced kindergarten room anyway, so I feel like they should be geared more toward the seat work, so I went along with this idea yesterday.**

**And then they said to me, "Candy's mother and father gave her \$1,000 to fix up her room. They really wanted her to be a success." [Laughs] I politely said, "Well, I'm sorry. It's not that way with me!" I said,**

**"There's no money coming from anywhere but maybe whatever's in the budget and a little bit each month when I get my check and that's about it." And they said, "Well, that's the way it works for us. That's the way it was for us. Yes, well, her mother and father—they're just still doing for her." I tell you, it was funny. It was really funny. So I thanked them for helping me and they made a few suggestions. . . . I know these things need to be done, but the money just isn't there right now. So I assured them that things were going to change in the room, that I was going to get more of this and more of that. But I said, "I was hired so late I have to concentrate on these children right now and the skills they need to know and make sure their parents trust me and know that I am going to teach their children the things they need to know. That's the important thing, what they're doing at those seats. That's the way I feel right now. I can get little animals and things as time goes on, and things like that, but for now their art work is going to be stapled on the wall instead of hanging down off those strings and things like that."**

*[You had] no inkling at all that . . . somebody [was] coming in?*

**No, I didn't know. They just showed up at the door yesterday.**

*They didn't ask permission to do anything?*

**Well, they made suggestions as to how they felt there could be more room in there. And I said to myself, maybe I'll go along with this just to see if it will help me. (V. 2, pp. 59, 60)**

Although she felt Di, her classroom aide, had been the most help to her during those first hectic weeks of school when she felt disoriented and overwhelmed with the newness of it all, yet she was not totally comfortable with her. Di left the end of September. Two weeks later, after Jenny had a chance to get acquainted with the new aide, I asked her how she was relating to the change.

**Well, I was sort of happy to see Di go, because I believe Di was really attached to Candy and she liked Candy's ways. . . . I think she was comparing me to Candy, and I think that's how some of this information has filtered to these other teachers because they said something in the room yesterday. They mentioned that Candy wouldn't let [the students] do anything, that there was a lot of discipline. And I said, "Well, I can assure you that there's discipline in this room." But people have to understand**

that kindergartners are at a different age level and in January there's going to be a different group of children than in September. They have to get used to the routine and rules. . . . I think Di was leaking information just because she was here so long and she was friends with Candy. And she worked with Candy for two years, and then Candy's gone and now, you know, well, I've heard Di talking. I heard her talking in the hallway, you know. I was down the hall and I could hear what she was saying. She didn't know I was around the corner. Things like that.

*And from that you felt you couldn't trust her.*

You really couldn't trust her. Yeah, I felt that way. She was nice and she was helpful, but she'd make comments, too, about the discipline in the room and how Candy was able to put all these things in her room. "Oh, Candy brought so many things in here." That's great, that's wonderful, you know, but it's just not that way. There are things being added, but it won't all happen at once. So I just felt a little betrayed.

*How do you feel about the new aide?*

She doesn't know anyone. That's the nice thing about her. And she doesn't leave the room a lot and go down the hall and gab, I've noticed. She sticks right in that room. . . . She's more of an observer at this point . . . , but she's willing to do whatever and help out in any way she can. She wants to see things done on time and things like that. She's trying to go along with whatever ideas I have, you know. She's a good assistant. She really is, [but] I'd almost rather just not have anyone else in the room with me at all because they're always going to have their opinions and you're not going to agree with everything, you know, but that's just the way it is here. I just have to make the best of it. (V. 2, pp. 60, 61)

I sensed Jenny appreciated the help Lori, the new aide, was giving, yet her experience with Di made her leery of having someone look over her shoulder. I asked her if she felt the same way about Lori as she did about Di.

Not as much. She has her opinions, but it's not like Di. Di was a little more forceful, and I think it's because she had the experience and she had been here. My first year of teaching I'm intimidated by that, you know, by someone who's been at a place.

*I'm hearing you say you have mixed emotions.*

**Uh-huh.** (V. 2, p. 61)

A month after Lori started working with Jenny, Jenny appreciated her efficiency but was frustrated with her supervision of the children. Unlike Di, Lori was soft spoken and not as "aggressive."

**Di was very aggressive with children. . . . She was not afraid to speak up. But Lori's just the opposite. Now Di was good with the other things, too. She could write letters to the parents and things, too. They're both talented in an area, but I think it's just going to take time with Lori. . . . But I wish that she would . . . circulate more and try to get right up there and see what they're doing more than she does.** (V. 2, pp. 71, 72)

Even though there were 16 other teachers and three teaching assistants, Jenny felt "very isolated" (V. 2, p. 157). Some of that isolation was self-imposed. Initially, she did not feel comfortable with Dr. Kent because she did not know how to relate to him. She felt uncomfortable with her assigned mentor, Mrs. Ashley Duncan, because she was afraid that Dr. Kent and Mrs. Duncan would confer on the weekly conferences she and Mrs. Duncan had arranged. Her experience with her aide and the two teachers who "took over" in rearranging her room and the advice she had received regarding Mrs. Clarke, the other kindergarten teacher, only reinforced her wariness.

At the beginning of second semester, Jenny shared how she and Mrs. Clarke were successfully dealing with joint field trips, an issue Jenny was uncomfortable with earlier in the year.

*So asking questions at this stage has been beneficial?*

**Uh-huh.**

*And you're feeling more comfortable asking questions?*



Yes. Now I know [whom] I can trust and what kind of people are going to be helpful, you know, and things like that. It just takes awhile. Dr. Kent came in the other day and had a conversation with me. He said it takes a year for new staff members to get used to a place. . . . He said that I seemed sort of isolated from the other workers and I said, "Well, Dr. Kent, I was really trying to keep myself together here." [Laughs] When I was first hired, I didn't know if I was coming or going. I wasn't worried about staff members; I was worried about keeping this room together. So I feel more confident now.

*How do you feel about talking to him now?*

Much better. Much better.

*I gather from that statement that you gleaned he was concerned about you in more than one area.*

Uh-huh. I didn't even know he was thinking about that, but apparently, he's thinking about a lot of things. [Laughs]

*Did he discuss more than staff involvement?*

He wanted to know how I liked it here and, you know, how I liked the class and everything. I told him I was really happy with kindergarten and I told him I felt really comfortable and that I was thankful I had kindergarten. You know, I am.

*Did you share some of your discomforts with him?*

I didn't talk with him about the curriculum. . . . [We talked] about the [new] cots that I had ordered. . . . So while he was in here, he brought up the subject of feeling comfortable around the other staff, but these staff people—they're kind of isolated from one another, too. I mean, they have their little cliques, I noticed, and you can see the ones that probably could relate and the ones that wouldn't be able to relate to them. So I really haven't found my little niche, I guess.

*But you're still cautious?*

Yes.

*If you could compare the way you felt at the beginning of the first semester and the way you feel now, how would you describe it?*

**I feel much more relaxed. I feel much more competent and I feel freer as a staff member here to interact and to ask questions—those kind of things—and I feel more accepted as part of the group now than I did at first. I never really feel like I have it together, though. I always feel there's something new to learn and room to grow. [Laughs] I always feel that way. I wonder if you ever stop feeling that way? (V. 2, pp. 117-120)**

Jenny experienced frustration regarding normal school routines and procedures. Early on she had no idea what to do with the *Register*, a legal document that is used to record student attendance, birth dates, grade placement, parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, names of medical personnel and others to contact in an emergency, plus quarterly and final grades and a section for recording any special needs of students.

*Do you keep a register?*

[Jenny looks blank.]

*For attendance.*

**Yes, yes. I keep attendance every day.**

*Do you turn the attendance into the office or do you record it? Do you have a yellow register book that you use?*

**I wasn't told how to use that, but I have one. And I had to send in an opening report, and I was told that at the last minute. Nothing was explained to me. I got all these forms from the Conference and nothing was explained. I just had to open up and try to figure all. That was the only thing I was confused about because it was in a yellow booklet, and I didn't know what page was to be filled out or what, you know. So that was given to me at the last minute and also I was told that all these forms had to come to the office here at the school and they would mail them to the Conference. Well, in the letter from the Conference, they said, "Mail us these forms." [Laughs] So I mailed them off myself, which really doesn't matter, but the principal should have warned me, you know: "I'm going to collect all these from the teachers and send these by bulk." I just wish I was told that, you know, so I would have given the forms to him. And everything would have been fine.**

*But you're not putting names into a register and recording attendance?*

**No, not every day like that. You know, if you could show me what's involved there, then I would be happy to do that because I have the dates in my own record. I have the dates down and I check off every day that we're here.**

*Why don't you go get it. I think we've got time to do that. (V. 2, p. 58)*

Jenny also worried about parent-teacher conferences and report cards even though it was 6 weeks before she had to have them ready.

**I know nothing about these report cards. I've asked the principal, you know, are these the quarters or what is this? And he briefly explained it, and that's it. That was the end of the conversation. And I'm wondering where am I going to get the permanent . . . forms. What are the [parent-teacher] conferences going to be like? What time are we going to do conferences? I wasn't told any of this. (V. 2, pp. 57, 58)**

**Another thing I'd like to know more about is the filing system. I know that's very important. Children's files—because they're on record for this state. And I want to know what needs to be in there, what kinds of things should I be watching out for during the year to make sure it's in that file for each child. (V. 2, p. 66)**

**There's never any advice given, never any advice. I have to ask the teachers, you know, what I am supposed to do. I feel like I'm a child who missed the first day of school, because I came in late, and I'm trying to find out, you know, drawing straws, and I don't know the teachers well, so how do you know who you can talk to and who you can't talk to? So I have to find that out somehow. (V. 2, p. 50)**

An orientation session arranged for Jenny by the principal or vice-principal would have alleviated much of her stress and frustration regarding routine school procedures. It was even more important because she arrived late and had even less time than other faculty to familiarize herself with the myriad of policies, routines, and classroom preparation.

### **Maintaining Classroom Discipline**

When the two experienced teachers were rearranging Jenny's room and mentioned that Candy had good classroom control, Jenny became defensive about the discipline in her room. She was using discipline strategies, but they were not working to her satisfaction. I spent over 35 hours with Jenny and her students. The observations at the beginning of the year were very draining for me. The children were hyper and there was constant reprimanding from either the aides or Jenny. When the children got loud, Jenny's voice increased in volume. She seemed frustrated and mentally exhausted by day's end. Several times she asked her aide to supervise nap time so we could have our interviews early in the afternoon, which would free her to leave when school ended.

Jenny noted in her journal the week of September 17-21:

The children were very noisy this week, and they seemed to be restless as well. I believe this behavior will get better as the year goes on. I was thankful for Friday to come this week because I really needed a break from school. (V. 2, p. 157)

A week later (September 24-28), Jenny writes:

This week was a much better week in my opinion because I think the children are getting used to the routine of things. Many of the children have become better students in terms of finishing their work on time, and following the classroom rules. I feel less frustrated than last week, but I have not felt as though I have everything all under control. (V. 2, p. 156)

Jenny was frustrated not only with her own lack of success in classroom control but with the discipline procedures of her new aide and how to approach her about it. During the week of October 29-November 2, Jenny writes:

**My teacher assistant needs to be more aggressive, but I am not sure how to tell her. She lets the children get up during nap to go to the bathroom, and I have told her before that I do not allow them to get up during rest time because they use bathroom needs as an excuse to get out of the room. (V. 2, p. 158)**

In an interview on November 9, I asked Jenny to share her feelings about her classroom discipline, comparing the beginning of the year to the present.

**Well, there's a certain group of children that are still acting out and it's that Table 6 over there. Part of the reason is because I know there's one child in there with learning disabilities. And I think Stanley . . . needs some kind of medication or something. He just CANNOT control himself.**

*Very hyper?*

**Very hyper. And Jeri, I don't know what the problem is there, but Dana is a K-I child. She was just put up in the K-II room. So I can understand, you know, why they're probably acting the way they do, but I don't do that name-on-the-board form of discipline any more because Mrs. Duncan gave me this new thing with the head down. But I still believe there still needs to be something more severe if they will not put their head down. I've tried, "If you can't put your head down, you go in the corner and stand," but I just don't know because I'm trying isolation--some kind of isolation form of discipline.**

*Now you have all these hyper kids at one table?*

**Uh-huh, so they don't disturb everyone else because they started getting the whole table going.**

*I notice that you're over at Table 6 more when they're doing their seat work.*

**Uh-huh. Uh-huh.**

*By putting them in a group together and then by supervising them more, you feel you can control their hyperactivity and keep them on task?*

**Uh-huh. (V. 2, pp. 74, 75)**

In February, Jenny was busy teaching a unit on zoo animals, her theme for the March science fair. The children were enjoying the activities, and Jenny was

pleased with the curriculum and their behavior. The week of February 11-15 she wrote in her journal: "The children seem to be calm this week which is a nice change" (V. 2, p. 160). The same week, in an interview with me, she said: "I'm pleased with the progress I've seen the children make. They're better listeners. They're calmer at lunch time and they behave at nap time more so than they used to" (V. 2, p. 143). But there was a change the very next week. "This week [February 18-22] has been rather hectic because of the class pictures. The children seem so excited about getting their pictures taken" (V. 2, p. 160). The week following, February 25-March 1, she disclosed: "The children seem to be rather restless and on edge" (V. 2, p. 160).

Many times during the year Jenny believed the children were better behaved. One such week was May 6-10. "The children were not so hyper, and I was relaxed" (V. 2, p. 162). Two weeks later, however, she lamented: "The children are becoming more and more restless as the days go by. I hope I can make it through the last week of school" (V. 2, p. 162). The week before school let out, May 28-31, Jenny seemed desperate about the children's behavior: "They don't seem to want to listen in class or out of class. We are just trying to take one day at a time until school is out" (V. 2, p. 162).

Some weeks were better than others, and Jenny kept trying different strategies, hoping to get a handle on something that would be successful. In an interview on May 13, she shared a new procedure that she felt was successful:

**I have tried to bring my voice down, more than I ever have and I use a different signal now. I use a quiet signal where I put my finger over my**

**lips and I won't say anything. I won't say a word, and I'll just stand there in the middle of all of them and just hold my finger up here [Demonstrates]. And that tells them they are supposed to do this [Raise hand]. I told them that's what the quiet signal meant. And that has really helped me. It gives me time to take a breather . . . plus it gives them time to focus on the teacher again. It just really helps to do that.**

*So it's very effective?*

**Uh-huh. So I've tried that. (V. 2, p. 146)**

In comparing the students' behavior in her class on May 13 with earlier observations in the fall, I noted definite progress. Jenny used a softer voice when talking to the children and her body was more relaxed. She specified expectations for the students' behavior. There was less misbehavior, but when it occurred, she stopped the improper or disturbing behavior with a calm voice. She was consistent throughout the observation, and the children were responsive to her signals or vocal commands.

Jenny felt less threatened by the end of the year. Rather than becoming defensive, she could look at herself critically and more objectively. This is revealed in her comments during our last interview on May 28, where I asked Jenny to reflect on the year and share any changes she planned to make for the following year. She laughed and said, "O. K., a lot of changes!" Among her changes, she mentioned discipline.

**I'd like to have a better discipline strategy. I'm definitely, you know, I'm not going to use [hesitates and laughs] . . .**

*[Interjects] A bag of tricks?*

**Yes. [Giggles] A strategy. . . . I'm going to use something concrete and I'm going to be consistent with it. I wasn't consistent, and that bothered me the whole year, so I want to change in that area. (V. 2, p. 150)**

Jenny had grown in many areas throughout the year and classroom control was just one of them.

### **Working Effectively With Parents**

Jenny was anxious to please her students' parents from the very beginning. Part of this stemmed from her awareness of parents' normal and logical expectations of teachers, part from her fear that they would criticize and put her job in jeopardy.

Jenny was concerned about the communication between home and school. Daily she would send incomplete work home with the children and not receive it back. At the Open House she had informed the parents of her procedure and she had sent home written communication, but "I'm just wondering in kindergarten, though, if they'll ever get anything back to me. That's the problem with them. They're supposed to bring things in and I never get the forms" (V. 2, p. 81).

Another concern surfaced early in the school year. When comparing working with parents in a public setting and parochial setting, she sensed an unusual parent-child attachment that troubled her.

**I'm beginning to feel like it's a lot different than public school. I expected certain things to happen. It's quite a bit different. . . . In a Christian school I've noticed that the parents are very, very concerned, sometimes overly concerned . . . , which is not too bad, but there comes a point where you have to just let the child go and experience these things or they're never going to grow up or learn anything.**



*Are you saying there's more of a sheltering?*

**Uh-huh, a little more sheltering, but it's . . . , I think, it's being overly protective for a few parents. That's the one thing that I've noticed. But it's this age, too—kindergarten, you know. It's their first experience in school and the parents are a little concerned about how they're adjusting socially and academically and everything. (V. 2, pp. 61, 62)**

Jenny cites an example of what she considers "overly protective." In early October, Mike, who was 7, came to school and would cry to go home soon after his mother dropped him off. Jenny was trying to cope with the situation and, apparently, several people felt she was not doing an acceptable job.

**I was visited by the mother, by Dr. Kent, by Mrs. Blake. (I still don't know what Mrs. Blake's responsibility is around here! [Laughs] So apparently, she thinks she's principal #2.) I don't know, but she came down and she said, "You know, Jenny, I think during nap time Mike . . . doesn't need a nap. . . . He's 7 years old . . . [and] he should be able to get up and play on the computer or something."**

*You don't know why she [was] in the room or what her responsibilities are?*

**No, she just came down here and started making comments. Dr. Kent came down. . . . He said, "Well, I think you should put your arm around Mike and make him feel at home. And maybe if you give him some responsibility around the room today, you'll make him feel at home here."**

**I sat down with him yesterday during the P. E. time because that's really our only break during the day . . . and the only thing I could think of was just to compare my kindergarten experience and how I got upset and cried. I told him it's very normal, and I had prayer with him. . . . His dad said he was coming to get him early yesterday and then he backed out of that. Dad couldn't come, so that just set him into hysterics. So then I said, "After this prayer we're going to ask Jesus to give us peace and we're going to calm down because He's the only One that can give us peace and comfort us during these times. And after prayer we're going to call your mom on the phone at work and we'll have a talk with your mom because I know that your dad promised you he was coming and he's not going to be able to come, so let's talk to your mom about that."**

So his mother came directly—soon after she was called. I feel that the mother's attitude has to change, too. You know, she's going to need to let go and tell him: "You know, you're in school now and you're going to have to stay here. This is your classroom and you can't keep calling Mom and Dad on the phone. We cannot leave our jobs." (V. 2, pp. 64-66)

The situation did not improve and within a week Michael was taken out of Aspen Hills and enrolled at Sandy Ridge. Naturally, Jenny was upset about it.

I really felt as though I should have been more aggressive and just told the mother, "You know, you need to give your child a warning in the morning. 'You're going to kindergarten and I'm going to work.' And just drop him off in the room and if he cries, he cries, and, you know, you go to work." Apparently, I don't know, the family didn't know what to do. They told me that his personality has regressed since he started coming to school. They said, "He's acting totally different now." So I don't know what was going on. I have no idea. . . . When she brought him to this kindergarten, he was really looking forward to going to school, she said. And he was just very isolated, very, very isolated, almost as if he didn't know how to interact with the other children, like he's really never been around other children or something—I don't know—but it was almost as if his little world revolved around his family. . . . He just wasn't fitting in with this kindergarten class. I don't know why. . . . And I don't feel that I'm really trained to deal with this kind of a situation because I'm not a guidance counselor. I really don't know what kind of advice to give these people. . . . So the choice was to go to Sandy Ridge. So that doesn't look good, you know. [My] first year of teaching and [parents] take their child to another school.

*Did you feel personally responsible for his leaving?*

A little bit, a little bit because I know that there was this pressure with the paper work. There was a lot of paper work, you know, and there wasn't a lot of free time. The father asked me specifically, "How much free time do they have?" At that time there was more in the afternoon, but there wasn't much in the morning. (V. 2, pp. 76, 77)

*Early on, you were concerned about a couple of parents who felt their child had been misplaced. How's that coming along?*

Well, one of them went back down to K-I, and I'm thankful for that. The mother was concerned and I said, "You're going to have to discuss this with Dr. Kent." And she had a talk with Dr. Kent, and he put her down

immediately because he brought her up in the first place and she doesn't belong up here. . . . Now there's another child who can't sound out letters phonetically. He's just not there yet. He's not ready, and I've told the mother about that. And she believes he's ready for K-II. She doesn't want to hear it. She said he came from a very advanced program before he came here and that he should be able to do this and told me that he considers that to be a baby room down there. . . . I'm going to contact her again, because he's not going to be able to read. She's going to wonder why [her] child can't read when he's in a K-II program. (V. 2, p. 62)

Parent-teacher conferences were scheduled for November 12. She wrote in her journal the week of October 25-November 2: "I finally finished all the report cards. My mentor teacher has given a lot of advice concerning the conferences, so I feel more confident about what I should say to the parents" (V. 2, p. 158). In an interview the Friday before the Monday conferences, I noticed some apprehension mixed with that more confident feeling of the previous week.

*What concerns do you have about the conferences?*

Well, I'm concerned about a couple of parents. In this classroom, there [are] a couple of children that really should be in K-I and they're in K-II and they're not doing well. You can't flunk kindergartners and they're going to have problems in first grade. I spoke to the first-grade teacher and she said, "Jenny, I've had them come to me before and they don't do well, and I have to send them back." She said, "There's this back-and-forth thing every year. We have it here every single year because Dr. Kent wants these children to be in the rooms; no matter what their abilities are, he just wants 25 in this room, 25 in this room." I said, "Well, Mrs. Lovell, I'm going to keep in contact with you and let you know which ones will really need some help." She said, "You have to pass them on because by law you can't keep them back. You can't flunk them out of kindergarten. If he will not agree to keep them down in K-I, then when they come to me I'll just recommend that they be sent back. And that's what we'll do. We'll get them the help they need by sending them back the next year." But then you have this hassle with the parents; they don't want them to go back. They think, "Well, she passed them. Why do they have to go back now? She passed them out of kindergarten."

*You feel between a rock and a hard place.*

**Uh-huh. So I don't know what to do about that. I'm kind of concerned.**

*I guess I'm a little confused. Can the parents request that their child repeat kindergarten?*

**Yes.**

*You can suggest, but you cannot mandate retention.*

**That's the problem. I wish that I could. . . . You see, Candy did this last year. She wrote on the report card: "I do not recommend that your child go onto first grade but Dr. Kent advises me to do so." So [laughs] I learned that lesson. That cannot be stated at all!**

[Laughs] *That's quite specific!*

**See, then it will be on my shoulders. If I don't mention him at all, then it looks like I am passing these children on. (V. 2, pp. 78-80)**

Jenny had mixed feelings concerning the parent-teacher conferences and records the event in some detail in her journal entry of November 12-16.

**This was the week for the parent/teacher conferences. I was surprised at how smooth everything went. I was concerned about Samir's conference because he is not doing so well. Dr. Kent sat in on the conference. I told the parents how he was doing, and Dr. Kent later told me that he did not appreciate my negativeness concerning Samir's academic accomplishment. I felt as though I must tell the truth because this child was moved up to K-II too soon in my opinion.**

**Dr. Kent felt as though I should wait until spring before I tell them about how he is doing academically. The next day after conferences we had a staff meeting, and Dr. Kent was asked about the K-I and K-II programs, and how the children are being moved up to K-II too soon, but he did not seem to want to change his way of thinking. (V. 2, p. 158)**

In a subsequent interview, Jenny went into more detail concerning the conference with Samir's parents. As uncomfortable as it may have been, she believed she had to disregard Dr. Kent's advice to comply with the dictates of her conscience.

Well, everything went O.K. except for one. I recommended that Dr. Kent sit in on [Samir's conference]. He's from another country, so he has a handicap . . . with the language difference. He was brought up from K-I to K-II early in the year. He is behind. . . . All his seat work he finishes last. He doesn't have as much coordination as the other children; he falls out of his seat sometimes. I feel sorry for the child. I can't take it out on the child because I know he's just not developmentally ready for K-II and I wanted to get this across to his mother and father. So I was honest in the conference and I told them what he was doing and I tried to be as positive as I could. You know, I said, "He's a quiet boy, a relatively shy little child; he doesn't cause much trouble." (What I said in the meeting was that I thought that repeating K-II would help him tremendously. That's what I said to the mother and I recommended that.)

*How did the mother respond?*

Negatively. She said, "Oh, he will not do well! Oh, he just will not like it again! Oh, that will not be good!" She doesn't understand that he's just not developmentally ready and the best thing to do is to give him another year to develop. And I said, "He'd be at the top of his first-grade class whereas if you put him in next fall, I think he's really going to be struggling just to keep up." And Dr. Kent just didn't want me to say those things. Apparently, he didn't want me to say them at the time that I said them. . . . He wanted me to wait until the spring. And this child is doing so poorly I felt like I needed to tell her now so she is ready and is honestly going to take a look at him now and focus in on him. . . . Academically he's just not ready for K-II. . . . He is not improving. He's still at the same level that he was at the beginning of the year. He's still struggling. He still says, "I don't understand this." We hear that over and over and over. (V. 2, pp. 85, 86)

On her way to staff worship one February morning, Jenny was approached by Florence Blankenbaker. Florence told Jenny that one of her students was crying down in the early-morning-care room. Jenny immediately went to early-morning care to investigate the situation. The teacher in charge of early-morning care told Jenny that Kirk said he did not want to come to school. An old painful memory surfaced, bringing "back thoughts of that other child that cried every day and his mother took him out and put him in Sandy Ridge" (V. 2, p. 140).

Subsequent entries in Jenny's journal give us a glimpse of how she responded to parent-related issues. Second semester was not stress-free, but dealing with parents seemed to be less traumatic.

**Parent teacher conferences are coming soon and I am not ready for them, but I hope to work on the report cards next week. Samir's mother approached me at the science fair Tuesday night [March 5] and said she would like to talk with me about him because there has not been much improvement from the first report card. I feel that I would like him to be tested before the conference so I can show her a score instead of just telling her my opinion. (V. 2, p. 161)**

**The parent-teacher conferences were cancelled for K-I and K-II. We are going to have ours on April 28 and 29. I was nervous during the Open House on Tuesday [March 26], but I think it will go much [more] smoothly next year. (V. 2, p. 162)**

**My conferences were this past Sunday and Monday [April 28 & 29]. I thought they went rather well, but some parents did not accept that their children were not doing well. Dr. Kent sat in on some of the conferences, so he spoke to the parents as well concerning the low stanine score. I am thankful that he was here for those meetings. I think it was helpful having him there with me. He was as honest as he could be about . . . the children repeating K-II next year. (V. 2, p. 163)**

**This was an interesting week [May 13-18]. On Friday we saw the Gymnastic's Home Show. It lasted about an hour, and some of my students were in the show. A lot of the parents were there which was nice to see. (V. 2, p. 163]**

#### **Administrator/Administration Concerns**

Dr. Paul T. Kent was a no-nonsense person. He had a hearty laugh but did not use it often. At times, during my interview with him, I sensed a defensiveness with regard to his school and a skepticism for my research. When the interview was over, he said, "Well, I don't know if I've told you anything" (V. 3, p. 73).

Even before I visited in Jenny's classroom, I talked with Dr. Kent and his vice-principal regarding my research and purposes for visiting their school. Because of his last comment, I felt perhaps the reasons for my visits were not completely understood so we spent some time discussing my research and its format. He seemed supportive after that.

Kent had served as a principal overseas as well as in the states. This was his seventh year at Aspen Hills and he felt, as do most educators, that more was expected of him than he was able to do.

**I am usually here by about 7:30 [a.m.] and I don't leave till 6. It's not an 8-hour-a-day job. . . . Then I have all of the meetings in the evenings, but part of it, part of the problem is you make your own schedule. . . . And in this area there is an expectation of getting a good education. . . . Sometimes there are meetings on Sunday. And the last six Sundays I've been here at the school. (V. 3, p. 74)**

Dr. Kent estimated that he spent 50% to 60% of his time outside of his office "just keeping the place running" (V. 3, p. 80). He felt he had little paper work, but what paper work he had he delegated to his administrative secretary.

**I'm not a paper person. . . . I just give a rough outline and spell out different things, then give it to her and she does a nice job. . . . I'm not a person who will finish a letter. . . . She's very valuable to me. (V. 3, p. 80)**

Proud of his school, Kent was pleased to share some of the things he considered unique and innovative about Aspen Hills. One innovation was the school telephone homework program.

**For the junior high [grades 7 & 8] we have a separate phone line and we put the homework assignments on the line and each evening the students can call in and get their homework assignment reinforced or the parents can check with the children about assignments. (V. 3, p. 68)**

He was pleased with the newly implemented hot lunch program, mentioned earlier in this chapter. He was also proud of the music program.

**In the music we've gone into four or five different groups. Most schools have gone into bells and we decided not to do bells; we decided to do chimes and xylophone and some of these other things to make it a little more unique, a little different. (V. 3, p. 66)**

One of Kent's goals was to have more pastoral involvement from the eight affiliate churches. Approximately once a month he invited the pastors to lunch for a brainstorming session.

**We've also started an Adopt A Classroom this year. So we have a pastor for every classroom. And it's working about 50% to 60% of the time. I'm pleased with the procedures we've implemented this year. It's working.**

*And you have how many classrooms?*

**We have 12 classrooms. So we have a pastor for every classroom, which is kind of unique in that the other churches don't have that. So each pastor has [a] particular grade.**

*And how often would the pastor visit in the classroom?*

**We're suggesting at least once a week that they come and tell stories.**

*Have a devotional?*

**Or sit in the classroom or go on field trips or work with that particular classroom and that particular teacher.**

*So the goal is to get them involved, not necessarily to have them do one particular thing.*

**No, no. The teacher and the pastor work out the different parts of the program. (V. 3, pp. 70, 71)**

The last innovation we discussed dealt with classroom structure. The school, as mentioned earlier, offered day care through eighth grade. The junior-high



level was departmentalized and the elementary grades had self-contained, single-grade classrooms for each grade level K-I and up, with one exception. Parents had a choice of enrolling their child in a single-grade or a multi-grade classroom for the first three grades. Mrs. Duncan, Jenny's mentor, taught the primary unit. "A multi-grade room in grades 1, 2, and 3," Dr. Kent explained, "is kind of unique and the children can move quicker or they can take longer. It's kind of an individualized program. So that one's a little different" (V. 3, p. 67).

Kent worked hard to uphold Aspen Hills' long-standing reputation for high educational standards and its local and regional accreditation. Maintaining school quality was critical for another reason. Competition from public and other parochial schools was intense, and since Aspen Hills was located in a poorly visible section of town, Kent said they had to sell the school based on its quality program (V. 3, p. 76).

When I inquired about staff development, Kent told me the staff attended two seminars the previous year. In addition he arranged for resource people to come to the school, and he had "purchased a number of tapes so that the staff can check out tapes and listen to them as they go back and forth to work" (V. 3, p. 67).

Supervision of teachers is also a part of staff development and Kent's philosophy regarding teacher evaluation was not what I would have expected from an administrator who was so concerned about quality education.

**I do visit the classes; I do not do many formal evaluations. I feel that my being in this building 8 or 10 hours a day, I pretty well know what's going on.**

*You said you don't do many formal evaluations. What about informal evaluations?*

**Informal, yes.**

*How often do you visit?*

**I think I'm in every classroom at least every second day for something. You know, it's not a sit down and listen for half an hour and that kind of thing; it's a pop in.**

*How long do you stay?*

**Five minutes. I'll take down mail or some other item and stay.**

*How do you select which teachers will be observed for your formal evaluations?*

**Mainly the new teachers. They're supposed to have formal evaluations throughout the year.**

*How many do you do a year?*

**Probably 6 or 8.**

*So you do one about every month.*

**Yeah. Sometimes I don't get around to that many. . . . I recognize that there's different teaching going on when I'm in there than when the teacher's there alone. So my feeling of just dropping in at different times of the day and getting a quick look at what's happening is probably better than sitting in there for an hour. They should have gone through those formal evaluations in their student teaching program.**

*So how long do you observe?*

**Probably one class period.**

*Approximately how long is a class period?*

**About 40 minutes, 30 to 40 minutes.**

*How often and for what length of time have you met either in groups or individually with beginning teachers?*

**One-half to one hour every two months. I haven't done as well this year as last. I met with all teachers prior to school with the exception of Jenny because she was hired late.**

*Do you have beginning-teacher orientation before school starts?*

**We have staff meetings to get the feel of it, and I have had orientation with all new teachers. I have not yet had an orientation meeting this year.**

*What do you normally do in your orientation meetings?*

**We have a staff policy book that I go over. I go over the grading, record keeping, parent-teacher conference, registers, that kind of thing.**

*Are you planning to have [an orientation meeting] soon?*

**[Laughs] I have, you know, I have done quite a bit of it individually with them, but I haven't gotten them together as a group necessarily. So, in essence I have done it.**

*You've gone to their room or they've come here?*

**Either to their room or they've come here after school.**

*And you've gone over these things--the school procedures, the grade book, the register?*

**Uh-huh. (V. 3, pp. 67-70)**

Initially, Jenny was intimidated by Dr. Kent. She wanted to ask him questions, but she did not feel comfortable with him. When she did ask questions, she felt she was getting insufficient answers or her requests were put on hold. Perhaps she did not state her questions clearly or, possibly because of her inexperience, did not know the right questions to ask to get answers she wanted. "I'm a little frustrated because . . . I don't know how Dr. Kent is really, you know. I'm trying to figure him out before I really know how to approach these kinds of problems" (V. 2, p. 55).

In our September 18 interview I asked Jenny how much close contact she had had with her principal.

**Not a whole lot.**

*Has he visited in your room?*

**No, not at all. He came in there once during nap to find out the nationalities [laughs], but there's never any advice given, never any advice. I have to ask the teachers, you know, what I am supposed to do. (V. 2, p. 50)**

Unfortunately, some of her colleagues hindered her relationship with him by telling her not to talk to him.

**The other teachers said don't even discuss anything with Dr. Kent because he really doesn't know what's going on. [Laughs] That's what they said. That's the way they talk about him. "Just come to us. Just come to us if you have any questions." But I don't feel comfortable with that because, you know, I feel you should not do that. You shouldn't be a traitor. (V. 2, pp. 66, 67)**

By the beginning of second quarter, Jenny seemed to feel more comfortable around Dr. Kent.

**And if he's going to say something to you, he talks to you in the hallway. He'll just mention something. He's very pleasant, though. He's nice; he's not a monster or anything. [Laughs] (V. 3, p. 73)**

From an experience she shared in a December interview, she was no longer intimidated by him. If she had a conviction, she stood up for what she believed, even if it meant ignoring the advice of her principal. She had requested Dr. Kent to sit in on one of her parent-teacher conferences because she needed to share with the parents the unsuccessful progress of their son.

**Well, I wasn't sure what [Dr. Kent] was going to do, if he was going to back me up or what because I had never experienced a conference with him sitting in there. Well, he did not back me up. He hardly said anything-- just observed. And when it was over, he called me into his office and said, "I cringed when you said those things about that child to the parents." And I said, "Well, I told them the truth." I said, "Dr. Kent, I am concerned**

about that child. He is not ready for this class, and I had to tell them that." And he said, "Well, I would wait until the spring. I wouldn't say anything about [repeating]."

Another thing, [Dr. Kent] should have briefed me or something should have been said about how to handle this particular case or maybe I should have gone to Dr. Kent and asked him what I [was] expected to say. But basically that Friday before the [Monday] conferences, he said, "Now don't worry about these conferences. Let the parents do all the talking and you just listen." And I said to myself, "No, no I cannot do that. No." (V. 2, pp. 85, 86)

On October 12, I asked if Dr. Kent had been in to formally evaluate her. She laughed and shook her head. When I further inquired, "Has he been in for pop-in visits?" she replied, "Pop-in. Very, very pop-in" (V. 2, p. 64). On November 7, I again approached Jenny concerning visits from Dr. Kent.

**He just pops in the door. Sometimes he'll come in with a message from the office about a child that's sick or something here. "So and So won't be in today," and then he's out the door.**

*He hasn't been in for any formal or informal visits?*

**No, formal or informal. (V. 3, p. 73)**

In a January interview Jenny and I discussed Dr. Kent's visits to her classroom.

*Approximately how many visits has Dr. Kent made to your room?*

[Laughs] **I think altogether there've been three. They've been very brief.**

*Pop-in?*

**Pop-in kind of things.**

*How long does he stay?*

**I'd say about two minutes. He looks like he's anxious to get out, too. [Laughs] (V. 2, p. 115)**

### **Curriculum Concerns**

Curriculum concerns were one of Jenny's greatest challenges throughout the year. The school provided her with no kindergarten curriculum. "The first week I didn't know what I was doing. I just had to put something together [laughs] quick!" (V. 2, p. 48).

During the first 3 weeks of school, her student enrollment fluctuated from 20 to 25 to 24 as the administration endeavored to place children where they believed they could best succeed. According to Jenny, the room size could accommodate 20 students nicely. Twenty-four was too many (V. 2, p. 49). Additionally, she believed the four new students were not academically ready for K-II. This was a frustration to her. How does one so inexperienced nurture the academically ready students with no curriculum and cope at the same time with students who have special needs?

During our September 18 interview, Jenny described this frustration:

**The other frustrations have to do with what type of children are being placed in K-II. I have two different groups that are coming in, three groups really. One group is from K-I. They're coming on into K-II. Another group is coming from day care--no kindergarten at all. . . . And other children have had nothing and they're in this room.**

*They haven't had day care or K-I; they just come from home.*

**Uh-huh.**

*How does the school base the entrance into K-II?*

**They test the children and go by the test or they'll go by the age.**

*What's the difference between K-I and K-II?*

**K-I is on a more concrete level; more hands-on activities, more reading readiness, math readiness kinds of things. My K-II room is more seat work, more actual abstract ideas, more so than K-I.**

*Basically there's preparation for K-II and the frustration you're feeling is some of these kids haven't had that [preparation].*

**They haven't had any preparation and then they're placed in [this] room.**

*You have basically three groups. Are you individualizing them?*

**As much as we possibly can. Now the four low ones that came up—they're going for remedial help! In kindergarten? This should not be! [Laughs] Kindergarten is [as] basic [as] you can get! And that's going to affect their self-esteem, too! Now they need to go back down or something needs to be done with these children who just can't handle the work.**

*How often do they go?*

**Twice a week. She'll take four for twice a week. That's all she'll take is four, so we have to pick out the most desperate four and send them in there. And it's sad. And it's going to reflect on *me*, because the parent is going to ask me, "Why are you sending my child onto first grade when you knew he was not able to do his work all year?" So, I'm frustrated right now, and I don't know what to do. I don't know if I should tell [Dr. Kent] to try to do something and get these children back down or what, because the lady in K-I downstairs is already overloaded. (V. 1, pp. 48-50)**

**I've already approached [Dr. Kent] about the children that I'm concerned about. I wrote their names down on a piece of paper. I took them into his office. . . . "I'm concerned about these children and these are their names. . . . Please take note of these children; they're not doing too well." He said, "Well, I'll contact the parents and then I'll get back with you later. And I'll find out what the parents want to do, if the parents want to move them back there." He said, "It's just not good psychology to move down. It's better to be able to move them up."**

**To a certain extent I can understand that, but, you know, it's early in the year now and you can explain to the child, "Well, you're really supposed to be here. It's a mistake." You know, something needs to be done for the child's sake before it's too late.**

**And the other teachers are frustrated because they tell me that they know what's going on in kindergarten and they say, "Now here they come. They**

were down at the bottom in kindergarten; they're going to be down at the bottom in first grade, down at the bottom in second grade, and on up." So they're frustrated, too. They want these children to be placed in a proper room.

*Do you know if the other teachers are communicating this to . . .*

[Interrupts] Well, I told them that we have to quit talking behind his back. We should not talk behind anyone's back. We need to go to this principal and tell him exactly the way we feel and something needs to be done—a discussion or something about this problem and they [agreed]. So apparently Ashley Duncan is a representative for the early childhood teachers. . . . She told me she was going to try and set up a conference so that we could all sit down and talk.

*That's nice.*

That sounds promising, but I haven't heard another word about it.

*How long ago was this?*

This was about 2 weeks ago. (V. 1, pp. 55, 56)

Three weeks later we discussed this issue again. Jenny was still frustrated with her lack of a curriculum and how to evaluate her students.

I wish that I had a curriculum. I'm uptight about that. And I would like to have a test available. I don't know if teachers have to come up with their own test or not. I don't know. I assume that they probably have to do this on their own, but I feel that I need some kind of guidelines on this test, because I don't want to expect too much out of them right now and then again I don't want to underrate them either. . . . I've been talking with Mrs. Duncan about them. (V. 2, pp. 66, 67)

She said, "I would try to be positive. Say everything positive that you can possibly say. And then I would recommend, 'Perhaps this child should repeat. I've been noticing these areas and your child really needs a little more supervision in this area. . . . Perhaps it might help [him] to repeat this next year and then [he'll] be a little more mature . . . and more ready to handle this kind of skill'." So she said to handle it like that because she said, "You can't keep them back; you can't flunk these children." (V. 2, p. 78)



A month later, still feeling frustrated over the issue, Jenny was disheartened that the issue was no closer to being resolved.

**They shouldn't be in the room and there's nothing I can do now. Mrs. Duncan mentioned those children to me. We had a talk about those children and she mentioned the fact that [Dr. Kent's] not going to change his mind now.**

*In other words, you've got them for the year.*

**Uh-huh. I've got them. They're going to stay in [here]. (V. 2, pp. 66, 67)**

When Jenny could not seem to get the help she needed within her school, she went to outside sources. She had a teacher friend teaching in Putnum Grove County and was able to obtain a copy of the PGC kindergarten curriculum (V. 3, p. 78). This was not, however, the perfect solution. She found workbooks in her room she assumed she needed to use, and Dr. Kent had given her a skills sheet for kindergarten. (K-II children were expected to be able to read before entering first grade.) Jenny felt somewhat as if she were trying to fit a cowbird's egg into a hummingbird's nest. How could she implement Putnum Grove's curriculum to fulfill the expectations of Aspen Hills? The two were not congruent in philosophy or content.

Dr. Kent informed Jenny toward the end of September that Mrs. Ashley Duncan would be her mentor. By October 8, they had met twice (V. 3, p. 79) with plans to meet formally once a week and informally as often as their individual schedules would permit (V. 2, p. 63). Jenny shared the skills sheet with Mrs. Duncan. "And Mrs. Duncan was surprised and said, 'Oh, my goodness, I wonder where he got hold of one of those?'" [Jenny laughs] (V. 2, p. 69).

Jenny decided that the children needed centers because there was too much seat work, but she really did not know what to do about it. When Ashley believed Jenny was comfortable with her, she told Jenny she wanted to observe in her room and alerted her to the time and day she would observe. Following the observation, Ashley assisted Jenny in reorganizing her classroom into centers and gave direction regarding the use of the workbooks. Jenny shared a brief report in our November 9 interview.

**When Mrs. Duncan came in to observe, she said, "I think there is too much seat work in here." And I said, "I know. . . ." She said, "Well, you're making life hard on yourself." And I said, "Well it probably seems that way, but I didn't know what else to do. I just assumed that I was to use these four workbooks. So I just gave them to the children." She said, "Well, I think you can eliminate the phonics workbooks." So that's what I did. And then she said, "I would combine reading and writing together and let them get started on that instead of this back and forth business where they do one, then they go for free play and come back. It's just too much up and down." So, that's what I've done. I give them free play and then they come back for math. . . . It's much better. I look forward more to coming to work than I did before. [Laughs]**

*Now the first time [we had an interview] you told me you loved coming to work every day. [Laughs]*

**Oh, I like it, but there was something wrong, you know.**

*I know. I'm being facetious.*

**I mean this is the best job I've ever had. . . . I do look forward to coming to work. I don't hate my job or anything. There are just some things that need to be ironed out. Still, even after this, there [are] . . . more things that I'm having problems with and I want to get her advice. (V. 2, p. 71)**

In an interview with Ashley on February 7, when we were discussing the kindergarten issue, she confirmed what Jenny was sharing regarding the workbooks the former teacher had ordered.

I said, "Throw them out." [Laughs] And so Jenny said, "Good." [We laugh.] Now she still does some of that but not nearly everything that was ordered.

*What I'm hearing you say is that she went in, saw the stack of workbooks and assumed that she had to go a, b, c, d, down the line.*

That's exactly what she was trying to do, and I picked that up as soon as I was in there observing. When I was giving her ideas of how to get around this organization bit, she said, "But I've got to do da, da, da, da, da." And I said, [whispers] "No you don't." [We laugh again.] You know, those kind of things. Now I must work with her a little more on some more curriculum, but little by little we're working on that. (V. 3, p. 110)

In the next interview, I asked Jenny, "How do you feel now that you've worked with the newly arranged play time and work time schedule?" With obvious relief, she responded, "Much better. Much, much better. I'm thankful that the phonics book is out and they just have the writing and the reading and the math" (V. 2, p. 93). The phonics workbooks were duplicating the phonics curriculum in the reading series. Her joy, however, was not complete. She still felt frustrated about the placement of one of her students and the kindergarten curriculum.

[Samir was] tested and Mrs. Sanders said he is a K-I child. See, this is the whole problem here. Mrs. Sanders tests every single child and she knows where each child belongs and she cannot understand why Dr. Kent insists on sending K-I children up to K-II. She just does not understand.

*Why are they testing if they are not going to . . .*

[Interjects] place them? And this is another thing. I am supposed to come up with a curriculum.

*For next year?*

For next year. And the way I feel—if [Dr. Kent is] going to place K-I children in my room, I can't really [design] a curriculum [for K-II] because I don't really have a K-II program. I have a mixture of children in there and I can't really call it K-II. I'd rather just say straight kindergarten—it's

**just a kindergarten room—and get off of this advanced kindergarten kick.**  
(V. 2, p. 103)

By the beginning of December it was obvious to Jenny that she had three distinct groups of readers in her room. Surprises with the curriculum would occasionally arise, as was the case here. Children were completing a level, yet she was not allowed to advance them from Level 1 to Level 2 because Level 2 was reserved for first grade. Rather than panic as she would have at the beginning of the year, she assessed the situation and calmly thought it through. In our December 12 interview, she shared the following:

**I was a little taken back by that [not understanding about reading Level 1 & 2]. I mean, I would probably [have done] this totally different if I knew all that but now that [I've] found that out I have to figure out what I'm going to do for the rest of the year.**

**I'm thinking about dividing up into [two] reading groups. . . . I'm thinking about doing that because I have some children who are ready for reading right now and some who will never be able to read this year. And I need to divide them up starting very soon. I'm almost finished with my workbooks and I need to move on into some other workbook or something. . . . I think I could take the reading group out into the hall and seat them at that long table and [Lori] could be in the room for choosing time. That would work out just great. Then they would be away from those children. The children could make noise and talk in there and this group could be out here.** (V. 2, p. 104)

Jenny still had periods of "panic" regarding the curriculum. At such times, however, she would either solicit help from professionals she could trust or bounce her ideas off someone to boost her own confidence. She felt good when her ideas, or those of others she tried, were successful. Her own idea of two reading groups was a good one, yet it did not work smoothly for her at first. After giving it

additional thought and making some refinements, she felt comfortable and pleased with the outcome.

In our January interview, Jenny shared some of the curriculum ideas she had reviewed. She commented on the helpful social studies and science materials Ashley had shared with her.

Although the curriculum was a concern never far from Jenny's thinking, as the year progressed, she grappled with the challenges with less panic and more confidence. When assured that a published curriculum from the North American Division, Office of Education would be available for the coming year, Jenny's joy and relief blended together as a balm to soothe her troubled mind. Her spirit soared and knew no bounds! She was as happy as a small child opening Christmas packages.

### **Mentor**

Mrs. Ashley Duncan, Jenny's formal mentor and a 28-year veteran teacher at Aspen Hills, was petite in weight and stature but monumental in knowledge, experience, and practicality. Ashley started her career as a young substitute teacher at Aspen Hills and advanced to full-time teaching within a few years. As instructor of the "primary unit" (V. 3, p. 75), she was responsible for teaching a multi-grade classroom consisting of grades 1, 2, and 3 (V. 3, p. 101). Ashley served on the Aspen Hills Advisory and Administrative Councils and had been a member of the North American Division Office of Education, K-12, Kindergarten Curriculum Development Steering Committee, the committee responsible for developing the kindergarten curriculum, *A Child's World* (V. 3, pp. 78, 110).

Ashley could not recall the number of years specifically, but she had been mentoring officially and unofficially for "many years" (V. 3, p. 101). Jenny was her official mentee, but she also unofficially mentored two other teachers (V. 3, pp. 101, 106). She was the type of person who was always there for her colleagues and, I would assume, for anyone else who needed her. Her magnanimous and eleemosynary spirit was part of what made her a terrific teacher and an empathetic mentor.

Humble and modest, Ashley found it uncomfortable to talk about herself, and initially she was concerned about violating confidentiality in talking to me about Jenny. As we talked, however, she felt more comfortable in sharing, for mentoring was a role Ashley truly enjoyed. "I like to help others. To me, it's another teaching role. You're just teaching an adult, you know, and I enjoy teaching, so I enjoy it" (V. 3, p. 112).

The same gentle love Ashley lavished upon her students she endeavored to impart to Jenny. A keen observer of human nature, Ashley quickly sensed Jenny's apprehension regarding trust relationships with others. So early on, she carefully and slowly created an environment to establish a safe and comfortable relationship between herself and this fragile new teacher.

**I did not know her until she set foot in this school, which was two days before school started. So I just tried to be friendly to her. And at that point she did not know I was her mentor and I did not tell her. I knew, but she did not know. I just tried to be friendly to her and helpful, suggestions here or there . . . , or "What can I do to help you?" You know, that kind of thing without her knowing, and she got to the place where she was beginning to come to me because I had offered her that kind of [friendship and help].**

*You had broken down the barrier.*

Yeah, I said to her, "I am just a door away. If you don't know what to do about something or [you don't understand] something the school is doing, just come and ask. I may not think to tell you, you know, because you are new," and I went on to explain that someone did that for me when I was new. I still did not tell her I was her mentor because at that time I was not sure that I was even her mentor. [Dr. Kent] suggested it to me, but he hadn't asked me.

*It hadn't become official?*

Right. But later, within a week or so, he did. He said, then, "I really do want you to work with Jenny." By that time I still didn't know her very well nor she me, but we had kind of established at least a talking relationship, you know. So when I did know for sure, I did say, "Dr. Kent has asked me to work with you and help you because you are a new teacher and I have experience." And I went through the whole thing: I'm not evaluating you; I'm not reporting anything to anyone else; it's just me to help you when you have needs. And she seemed to accept it readily, at least to my face she did. Now if she did inside, I don't know, but I think where we are at this point [February 7], I think she has seen that I am not carrying what she and I talk about to someone else and I think she really trusts me.

*And that's important.*

And she's also seen some results from suggestions I have given her, which she was frustrated over. She was LITERALLY frustrated over her management in her room and she didn't know what to do about it. So just a few suggestions made her at least able to work around this and have it a little more acceptable for herself as well as the children. Now I need to observe again and see if it is as acceptable as she thinks it is. Do you understand what I'm saying?

*She has a perception of it, but you would like to get your perception.*

Yeah.

*So you haven't gone back to observe, but you've noticed improvement from her statements.*

I can see that she feels happier. She feels that she's on top of things, but I do want to follow up with another observation to see if it is as acceptable, not as I might do it, but as acceptable as I think she should be able to, having seen what she can do. You know, that kind of a thing.

*So you've seen increased competency in management, at least from talking with her?*

**I think so. (V. 3, pp. 107, 108)**

In an interview on September 18, I asked Jenny to compare her expectations of teaching with the present reality. One of her expectations involved a mentor.

**And also they said that there would be—now this is public school I'm talking about—there would be a buddy system where you would be teamed up with another teacher and she would show you exactly how the school was run and things like that—sort of an informing type of person.**

*A mentor?*

**Uh-huh. I didn't have a mentor here. [Laughs] I had to search one out, and I'm just trying to keep my head above water right now and take one day at a time and get through this year and see how it goes. . . .**

*You said you had to search out a mentor. You don't have to give me this teacher's name, but did you find a teacher who was willing to mentor you?*

**Well [Hesitates] . . .**

*Or are you just saying you've asked questions of different teachers?*

**I've asked questions of different teachers.**

*O.K. You really don't have even a volunteer mentor at this point?*

**No. The person who helps me the most is Di. That's the aide. That's the only help that I have right now. (V. 2, pp. 54, 55)**

As mentioned before, Jenny felt uncomfortable conferring with the other kindergarten because she believed she could not trust her. She wanted a mentor she could trust.



During our October 12 interview, I asked Jenny if she had received any information from the superintendents regarding the mentor program.

No [Hesitates], no. Oh, yes, on a sheet. They gave me a sheet, some form telling me that there's going to be a mentor program this year. That's all I've heard, no personal contacts.

*Has anyone from the Conference been in your room to observe?*

One lady came down. I can't remember her name. . . . It's a younger lady. She's taught elementary before. She came down and did worship one morning and then she went around and visited all the rooms. She was here 2 days. She came to my room and told me about the mentor program. That's all. She just mentioned that there was one this year.

*Did she say when it would be implemented?*

No, but when I got this sheet—Dr. Kent handed me this sheet and he said, "Mrs. Duncan is your mentor teacher."

*So you've been assigned a mentor?*

Uh-huh.

*So what have you and Mrs. Duncan been doing?*

We're had some talks. They've been helpful. Because she's very experienced, she's able to give me some tips. We meet every Wednesday after school and she was trying to advise me to come up with some kind of a test to test the children on their skills . . . and then when conferences come you can show the parent. "Look, she can't do this, this or this," or "[she's] developed this far."

*Do you feel comfortable with that?*

Uh-huh. Yes, very helpful and she wanted to tell me not to feel threatened by her, you know, not to say, "Oh, no, here she comes again," or anything like that.

*So she's here to help, not to supervise and criticize.*

Uh-huh. But I wonder, you know, [if] what I'm telling her is being filtered back. I'm just conscious of coming into the Adventist system. Even though

**I'm an Adventist, I didn't get my training from an Adventist school. I did my nursing in an Adventist school, but I didn't do teaching there. And I feel like they're probably judging me, wondering, "Well, this person shouldn't even be in here anyway because she didn't go to our schools. She doesn't even know what we're all about." And I feel that way.**

*Well, would you feel comfortable asking her about the confidentiality of your meetings? You might approach it from the standpoint that: "You said I shouldn't be threatened by your coming in, not to feel, 'Well, here she comes again.' How much confidentiality can I expect? With whom will you be talking?" Just ask some of these questions and that. . . , I think, would give you a better idea of how free you would feel conferring with her. Knowing what I know about her, I can tell you that she's a very gracious lady. I'm hearing you say that until you're told what the program is, you feel as if you're kind of in the dark as to what this is all about.*

**Uh-huh.**

*How do you feel about a conference every Wednesday?*

**I think that's real helpful. I'm a little leery of the trust issue, wondering where this information is going.**

*Are you free to contact her at other times?*

**Uh-huh.**

*Will she be coming into your room to observe?*

**She didn't say that she would, but she said, "If you need any advice or anything, just come and talk with me." I told her I didn't feel really comfortable asking Mrs. Clarke because I get the feeling that she thinks I should know things. Even though I haven't been here, she thinks, you know, that [I'm] a teacher and [I'm] expected to know what [I'm] doing.**

*I realize Mrs. Duncan doesn't have a kindergarten, but did she offer to let you observe in her classroom?*

**She didn't offer to, but I could ask her. That'd be nice. (V. 2, pp. 62-64)**

Obviously there were some things she felt comfortable in discussing with Ashley as noted later in this same interview. When we were discussing areas about

which she still had questions, I asked her: "As you have these questions, do you write them down?" She responded, "I just keep a mental note about it and I've been talking with Mrs. Duncan about them" (V. 2, p. 66).

A couple weeks later, Jenny recorded in her journal for the week of October 29-November 2: "I finally finished all of the report cards. My mentor teacher has given a lot of advice concerning the conferences, so I feel more confident about what I should say to the parents" (V. 2, p. 158).

By the end of October, Jenny seemed to feel more comfortable with her mentor. During an interview on November 9, she expressed her appreciation of Ashley and shared some of the activities they had done together.

**Mrs. Duncan is a really good teacher and I like how she's very orderly and everything. I really like that in a teacher. And she's really helping me with a lot of things. With her advice, I changed [the room] around, but there are still some things that need to be ironed out.**

*You mentioned that Mrs. Duncan observed in your room. You want to tell me about that?*

**See, we meet every Wednesday after school. And she said, I'm going to come and observe next time. And she told me what time she would be able to come. She said, "I want to see the transition time from seat work to play or whatever." So I said, "O.K." So when she came down there, she sat down and I [went] to her and said, "Now watch this," so she could see what the problems were right away.**

*So you discussed ahead of time the things you wanted her to look for and she mentioned to you some things she wanted to observe.*

**Uh-huh. And she talked about the centers. She said, "You need to get some centers." And I said to her, "Well, Mrs. Duncan, there just isn't enough room in that classroom for 25 children, and I don't know where I'm going to [put] all those centers. There is just not enough room. They're cramped in there." We tried to scrunch up six centers in there . . . , that's more than four children in each center and that's just not enough room in**

**that room. I mean, it's just a little tiny square that they have to fit in. . . . And they're so close to the children at their seats that it seems like the noise just bothers these children because they're right next to each other.**

*You're saying the noise bothers the ones who are finishing up?*

**The ones who are finishing up are disturbed by those that have gone to the centers. But it is a better setup. I feel it is much better. It's better for the children and it's better for Lori and me in the room. (V. 2, pp. 70, 71)**

During the same interview, I asked Jenny to relate what having a mentor had done for her teaching and to compare the pre-mentor weeks with the post-mentor ones.

**Well, I feel like someone is giving me advice . . . and I'm not totally lost now. [Laughs] I feel like I was in a boat but I didn't have a paddle. Now I have a paddle so I can get around in the boat. So, I feel a lot better.**

*But I sense there are still some directions on that sea that are not clear?*

**Yes. Yes. And [Mrs. Duncan] told me that she is going to help me get a little more organized in the room. She said, "I'm going to give you some more advice on things you can do." So, I think that I feel much better every day and I'm glad that she's an experienced person. You know, I like to take advice from people who have a L-O-T of experience. The younger teachers--they're O.K., but, you know, they're young and, I don't know, they have a different mind-set.**

*How do you feel about the trust element? You were concerned about that before.*

**I talked with her about that and she said, "Don't worry. Anything we talk about will not go beyond this room." I don't know if she talks with Dr. Kent; I'll have to ask her about that, but I'm sure she had to talk to him about things. (V. 2, pp. 78, 79)**

On December 12, Jenny shared how helpful Ashley had been in times of frustration, even fear. Because of a lack of orientation, Jenny was not aware of her classroom budget or even what items were charged to the budget account. She was

unaware of the procedure to have classroom purchases pre-approved. During Christmas practice she was called into the office by the accountant. "Jenny, I'm seeing some debts here on your balance that show you have gone over your limit now" (V. 2, p. 88). Jenny had received a "piece of paper" the first Monday of school with her "balance," but she did not remember that she was to have purchases "O.K.'d by Dr. Kent first" (V. 2, p. 89). Jenny had been "charging things through the ABC [Adventist Book Center] and the teacher store. And it's not a lot of things. It's just the bare necessities for the room. You know, I'm not being extravagant" (V. 2, p. 89).

**[Mrs. Duncan has] been very helpful this year. I discussed this budget idea with her, too, and she thought that wasn't fair either to have someone come in with no orientation; with no background; the first day just throw [you] in there; let [you] set up the room the best way [you] can, and then not even give you any details on this budget. And then when you go over, you're reprimanded for going over. She said that's typical of this school. That's the way the administration is here at this particular school. I need to talk with her more about that budget, but she agreed with me that I wasn't treated fairly, but she didn't seem to say that I'd be in too much trouble about it. So that's the main thing I'm concerned about--when you do go over a budget and how they'll react, and those kinds of things.**

*Sure, I can understand that.*

**[Laughs] Do they take it out of your paycheck? If they do, I'm in trouble!**

*What advice has she given you that you feel has been valuable in your teaching?*

**As far as discipline, she's been a big help, because I'm not used to an all-day kindergarten. I had half days, so I've had a lot of time on my hands that I've had to fill in. And she suggested that as soon as they misbehave, that their head be put down right on the table right where they are and if that doesn't work then something else. But she said, immediately, they're punished for talking or whatever it is. Their head goes down right away so that the punishment comes right when they're doing something, not later on.**

*You're referring to when you put names on the board and the punishment came at afternoon recess for something they did prior to lunch?*

**Uh-huh. Because the closest I could come to a severe punishment would be later on in the day to take their recess away.**

*How do you feel the head-down approach is working?*

**Head down really works. It works for keeping the line quiet; it works in the halls; it works for when they are eating their lunch. (V. 2, pp. 95, 96)**

As I observed in Jenny's classroom, I noticed the changes in the behavior of the children. They were less rowdy, and more attentive and focused than earlier in the school year. I do not think, however, it was so much the specific type of punishment (head down) but the fact that punishment was immediate, Jenny was more consistent, and the children understood her expectations and the consequences when those expectations were not met.

Jenny also shared that Ashley had been helpful in the areas of advice for parent-teacher conferences and that she felt comfortable talking with her outside of their regular Wednesday appointment.

**I've tried in the mornings sometimes, and she seems to be pretty pleasant and acceptable to our little conversations.**

*You mentioned that Mrs. Duncan has given you a lot of ideas. I'm also sensing since you've had a mentor that you feel less frustrated, more relaxed, more confident? Is that accurate?*

**Yes, yes, because I feel . . . there is someone who can guide me now. I can go to [her to] ask any type of question that I need, and she's not someone above me in administration who's going to be able to fire me or whatever. I don't feel threatened by her, and that's comfortable. (V. 3, pp. 96, 97)**

Generally, Jenny did feel comfortable with Ashley, but still in the back of her mind a doubt lingered about confidentiality. Jenny finally approached this subject with Ashley and shared their conversation with me at our February 7 interview.

**She said she doesn't really talk to Dr. Kent about everything that we talk about. She said, "He'll ask, 'How's Jenny doing?'" She'll say, "Fine," and that's about the extent between her and Dr. Kent. And I said, "Well, what about the Conference?" and she said, "Well, if the Conference ever comes to me," she said, "I'm not a talker. I'm not a person who is going to go and tell everything, but if they ask me 'How is she doing in this area? Does she need more help in this area? What are her strengths? What are her weaknesses?'" she said, "then I will give them some answers." So that gave me a clear-cut answer to . . . my question.**

*So how do you feel about it?*

**Well, I'm a little leery about the Conference [laughs] coming in and asking questions. I'm a little leery about that.**

*Knowing all three of the Conference personnel as I know them, I don't think that her sharing your strengths and weaknesses with them will make them think any less of you. They're just super people. I can't say enough about them. They really are concerned about teachers and when I talked with one of the superintendents at the mentor meeting recently, I asked her about supervision of new teachers. She said in this area the principals have been in charge of [supervision], but it's possible for you to request one of them to observe in your classroom. I have found them to be very non-threatening in their approach with teachers. And let's face it, none of us has all strengths. We all have some weaknesses and when weaknesses are pointed out, we have a focal point [for improvement]. (V. 3, p. 128)*

Jenny was beginning to organize her conferences with Ashley. She continued to ask about discipline procedures and now had "a combination of things" (V. 3, p. 130) to use. She inquired about educational credits toward future certification renewal and a possible master's degree. Jenny took the school calendar to her conferences and asked about the things listed she did not understand. The upcoming science fair was a big event and she gleaned ideas from Ashley regarding the

procedures as well as subject material. She also talked to her about curriculum issues (V. 2, pp. 130-133). Sometimes she would discuss her frustration regarding another faculty member, or how to approach Dr. Kent about being late to school during a foggy morning (V. 2, p. 142). Jenny peppered Ashley with questions the rest of the school year. In her journal entry of May 6-10 she records the following: "I am beginning to wonder about deadline forms for me to turn in for the school year. I know about some of them, but I don't know about all. I will ask Mrs. Duncan when we meet on Wednesday" (V. 2, p. 163).

Later in the month, May 28, Jenny shared additional feelings regarding Ashley:

**Well, at first I didn't know if I could trust Mrs. Duncan or not. I really didn't feel comfortable with her. . . . And then after we talked a little bit, I was able to open up about some of these problems that I noticed with this K-II program. And she knew all about them. She said, "I know, I know, and I don't know what we're going to do because it's gone [on] year after year like this." That was great.**

*So you felt you had some support in some of the things you had noticed. They weren't just in your imagination, but they really were . . .*

**[Interjects] really were existing. And I didn't know who I could open up about these things and, you know, she really understood the whole situation. So that was a big help. . . . She definitely helped me in ALL areas. She asked me every week, "Well, what are you having problems with this week?" And she said, "In the future, don't think we have to cut this relationship off this year. Next year I'd like you to feel free to come down to my room."**

*That's great!*

**So that was nice. That really is nice. People need that!**

*Oh, yeah, because even though it will be your second year, you are still a new teacher.*



**Yes, very new. [Laughs]**

*And it's great to know that you have someone you can call on when you have questions or someone to listen to you, sometimes, just as a sounding board.*

**YES! YES!** (V. 2, pp. 149, 150)

Jenny believes a mentor for first-year teachers is an absolute necessity (V. 2, p. 151). Her year would not have been as successful without her mentor.

Ashley's wealth of experience, her expertise, her gentle and loving ways enriched Jenny's first year of teaching and her future.

### Summary

As mentioned in chapter 4, the areas highlighted below cover the general basic concerns of beginning teachers and summarize how Jenny's experience was either analogous or dissimilar.

#### **Maintaining Classroom Management and Discipline**

Jenny seemed to struggle more in maintaining classroom management and discipline than in any other domain. A combination of factors provoked Jenny's frustration in classroom management: (1) inexperience with a full-day kindergarten; (2) anger and frustration concerning the lack of a K-II curriculum; (3) frustration with lack of specific written guidelines for K-II skills from the administrator; (4) placement of students; (5) assumptions made by her and her principal; (6) internal conflict; and (7) fear in being perceived as incompetent by parents and colleagues.

Jenny was challenged in filling the afternoon hours for her current full-day kindergarten. She had no previous experience with a full-day kindergarten and the school offered her no curriculum. In her conversation with her principal prior to the beginning of school, Jenny did not understand that she would be responsible for developing her own kindergarten curriculum. When reality hit, she was angry and overwhelmed. She felt incompetent because of her inexperience and lack of knowledge of specific skills for K-II. Dr. Kent assumed she was capable of developing a curriculum since she had kindergarten experience during her pre-service training; she assumed she had to use the material ordered by the previous K-II teacher. This precipitated internal conflict. She felt obligated to use the material and at the same time felt it was too much seat work for children so young. The student ability range was wide and she believed the placement procedure was based on classroom numbers rather than academic ability and need. Her expectations of the guidance she would receive and the reality of basically no guidance really frustrated her. She worried about how to approach Dr. Kent with her situation, how she appeared to the K-I and first-grade teachers, whether or not she was adequately preparing the children for the next year, and at the same time pleasing the parents and meeting their expectations.

Jenny's discipline procedures changed frequently throughout the year as she struggled to find a workable and successful strategy. Her lack of classroom control was a constant frustration.

**Managing Time**

As previously stated, Jenny struggled with the kindergarten afternoon time frame. Since Jenny was hired just 2 days before school started, she did not have the advantage of pre-school weeks, the time when teachers normally arrange and decorate their rooms, develop long-range lesson plans, and familiarize themselves with school routine. Thus, she did spend considerable time, outside of normal hours, at the school that first weekend. Once school started, she kept fairly regular hours. With the exception of progress report time at the end of each quarter and special programs such as the science fair, the time spent on teaching did not seem to interfere with her personal and family time.

**Motivating Students Generally/Specifically**

Motivating students who were ready for K-II did not seem to pose a problem for Jenny. She was challenged greatly, however, in working with specific students who were experiencing learning difficulties.

**Managing Classroom Instruction**

Jenny was challenged in finding ways to meet the diverse range of student abilities. First semester she had been teaching the students as a whole group and, during independent time, giving special attention to those who were experiencing difficulty. By second semester, however, the student range of ability was so wide, she had to implement a different strategy. She originally decided to divide the students into three groups but found that too difficult to manage. Her plan for two

groups, however, was workable for her. Because the room was small and noise carried easily, she found it difficult to work with one group while the other group had center time. Fortunately, her aide's assistance made her next plan viable and easier. She got permission to set up tables at the end of the hall just outside her classroom to teach reading. Group 1 had center time, supervised by her aide, while she taught reading to Group 2 and vice versa. After experimenting with this plan for awhile, she was pleased with the results even though she really wanted three groups (V. 2, p. 145).

### **Experiencing Feelings of Isolation**

Although Jenny was surrounded by many colleagues, she experienced feelings of isolation. Initially, there were several reasons for this: (1) she was intimidated by her principal; (2) her distrust of other faculty members kept her from establishing friendships; (3) she believed Di, her first aide, was "spying" on her; (4) she feared criticism from the parents of her students; and (5) misunderstanding of the role of her mentor made her "leery" of placing complete trust in Ashley. She exercised a great deal of caution regarding relationships; yet, as the year progressed, trust in selected colleagues gradually developed. By the end of the year she had established warm relationships with Lori, her classroom aide; Connie Reichert, the third-grade teacher across the hall; and with her mentor, Ashley Duncan.

### **Coping With Workload**

Jenny seemed to have plenty of energy. She enjoyed teaching. She did complain, however, about the lack of a curriculum and the difficulty of finding materials for her students. Jenny enjoyed gleaning ideas, using her creativity, and supplementing her program with different resources. The frustration, therefore, did not seem to lie so much in finding time to locate curriculum materials as it did in knowing which materials to use to meet the children's needs for K-II skills.

### **Developing Positive Relationships**

At the beginning of the school year, Jenny seemed to be intimidated by anyone who was in any way related to her in her work: her classroom aide, her principal, colleagues, and parents. She desired to be a good teacher, and she seemed almost obsessed with wanting to appear polished and professional in the eyes of those who might have an impact upon her job. This preoccupation with creating a good appearance may have stemmed partly from her negative experience with her kindergarten student teaching supervisor and partly from having finally reached her goal to teach and fearing it would be snatched from her. At any rate, it initially limited her objectivity, made her defensive, created unnecessary stress, and interfered with establishing and building close relationships with others.

As the year progressed, though, she established warm relationships with her students, her classroom aide, the third-grade teacher across the hall, and her mentor. She felt comfortable with Dr. Kent, Mrs. Clarke, and a few other colleagues

later in the year, but still exercised caution until she could find her "niche." In the spring she was feeling comfortable even with the parents.

### Jenny's Future

When I asked Jenny to sum up her first year with one descriptive word, she did not hesitate a second.

**Challenging!** [JH & CBS laugh.]

*O. K. That was quick! I think I know, but I want to hear it from you. Why was it a challenge?*

**Not having a mentor and no curriculum just threw me.**

*At the very beginning?*

**At the very beginning I was really concerned about that, but then the year started flowing a lot better when I got with the mentor and . . .**

[Interjects] *got over the shock!*

[JH & CBS laugh.] **Yes! No curriculum! Whew! We winged it . . . this year. (V. 2, p. 152)**

As Jenny reviewed her year in our last interview (May 28), she expressed additional concerns or needs that troubled her and made her year "challenging." She believed the administration needed to discuss the handbook policies with the parents to make implementation of those policies easier for the teachers (V. 2, p. 147) and to conduct new-teacher orientation regarding "in-house" information. "Things would come up and I didn't know what they were all about. . . . Other teachers would tell me and that's how I knew" (V. 2, p. 148).

Jenny gave much thought to her future and enumerated eight areas in which she wished to improve.

**I'd like to have more manipulatives involved in the activities and I want [to be] better prepared, you know, so the librarian knows what movies to order way in advance. I want to have lots of movies ordered. I want to have more field trips planned, walking field trips so that I don't have to use the bus so much. . . . I'd like to go to the Buena Vista aquarium. I want to go to the Edison Science Center. If we could do those two next year, it would be great! And I'm going to work with the science teacher here [at Aspens Hills] to see if she can get me some more hands-on experiments. . . .**

**I'd like to have a better discipline strategy. . . . I'm going to use something concrete and I'm going to be consistent with it. I wasn't consistent, and that bothered me the whole year, so I want to change in that area. I want to do better bulletin boards and more art . . . and more stories. (V. 2, p. 150)**

Jenny also thought about suggestions she would offer beginning teachers to make the transition from student teacher to beginning teacher easier. She would advise them to think about different kinds of manipulatives, movies, resource people to visit the classroom, "all kinds of things to really develop [their] program to make it interesting, to make it come alive so that it becomes real to [the students]. It's not just an abstract thing they're learning" (V. 2, p. 151).

As she continued with her list of advice, I was amused at her graphic description, description that revealed how invaluable she considered experienced teachers' advice.

**I would tell them to look for someone to give them advice . . . , to look for that person right away. . . . They definitely need a mentor. To get through that first year, you have to! Ask that lady every question in the world. Just bleed that lady! [Laughs] That's a terrible phrase to use. Try to get everything you possibly can from that person to help you. I mean, even if it's something stupid, because I would go in there with crazy questions, and she would laugh a little, but she would say, "Well, I have to**

**remember you don't know what this is all about." And I'd say, "No I don't." (V. 2, p. 151)**

**I would ask the principal about his observations. You know, "When are you going to come? How many times are you going to come and are we going to have a pre-conference and post-conference?" Try to straighten that out when you first get there, too. (V. 2, p. 153)**

One of Jenny's statements thrilled me and yet made me sad: "I appreciate constructive criticism. I need it to grow" (V. 2, p. 154). Her desire for feedback was verbally expressed to me all year. Dr. Kent formally observed her February 1, but, as she related in our May 13 interview, he never had a post-evaluation conference with her to share his observations.

*Let's talk about evaluations. How many have you had this year?*

**Just one.**

*Have you had any feedback on that?*

**No, he's approached me once and he said, "When can I get together with you to talk about this evaluation?" That was during testing week. I said, "Next week is good after testing is over." He never approached me again. (V. 2, p. 145)**

Despite the challenges Jenny experienced, never once during the entire year did I sense or hear her voice a desire to give up teaching. She loved what she was doing, yearned to improve, and optimistically looked forward to another year of teaching--a new year, a different year that would include a kindergarten curriculum, a more consistent discipline strategy, additional resources, and a continuing mentor relationship with Ashley, the person she believed helped to make her first year a success.



## **CHAPTER 7**

### **CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS**

#### **Introduction**

A cross-case analysis, the process of examining the data across cases, helps to strengthen the "internal validity" of the case study (Yin, 1984, p. 103). In this chapter, I relate the results of my cross-case analysis, obtained primarily from summarizing the personal differences and commonalities of the two in-depth case studies of beginning teachers, Julie Sanders and Jenny Hudson. In addition, the analysis is verified by data from the mentors and administrators.

I employ the same basic framework used in analyzing the case studies in my cross-case analysis by comparing and contrasting the teachers in the following areas: scheduling and organizing the school day, functioning within the school system, maintaining classroom discipline, motivating students generally/specifically, managing classroom instruction, coping with workload, developing positive relationships, examining the teachers' concerns regarding administration and curriculum. Secondly, I address the teachers', administrators', and mentors' involvement in, and perception of, the various components of the mentor program. From this cross-case analysis, I also attempt to draw conclusions for recommendations, which are addressed in chapter 8.

## Teachers

### Teachers' Backgrounds

The backgrounds of Julie Sanders (24) and Jenny Hudson (early 30s) had some similarities but also a number of differences. Both teachers were married, owned homes of their own, and had no children. They were practicing Seventh-day Adventists and attended church regularly.

Julie and Jenny were educated in Seventh-day Adventist colleges, but their student teaching training was different. Julie's training was directed through the Adventist college, yet she had the opportunity to student teach in public as well as Adventist elementary classrooms. Jenny graduated from an Adventist college with a B.A. in art, returned to the Adventist college for her nurse's training, but attended a public college to obtain her teaching certificate. She did all her student teaching in public elementary classrooms. Both teachers had some auxiliary teaching experience in addition to their student teaching prior to working as full-time teachers. Julie worked as a teacher's aide in the second grade the year prior to her first year of teaching. Jenny's auxiliary teaching experience included teaching a children's Bible class in her church, working in a day care, and serving as a teacher's aide 1 year.

Another difference was the preparation time each teacher had prior to the start of school. Julie was hired in the spring, knew most of the faculty since she had worked at Sandy Ridge as an aide, and had the summer to plan. Conversely, Jenny was hired 6 days before school started yet needed to work at her other job for 3 more

days, knew none of the faculty, and, in addition, had no curriculum to guide her planning.

Teaching, a complex task, can be emotionally, mentally, and physically taxing. It is more than the dispensation of knowledge and assessment of what students have learned. Wilson (1992) describes teaching as

hard work--not only because teachers have to manage 30 students at a time and teach a range of subjects, but also because it requires reflection on one's own knowledge and belief, considering one's actions and their consequences. I want [teachers] to learn how to look at themselves, for much of the learning we do as teachers is done in isolation and depends on one's ability to critically evaluate and reflect on one's own thinking and action. (pp. 142, 143)

Bullough and Stokes (1994) believe it is important for beginning teachers to "engage productively in self-exploration" (p. 198). They believe that if this is done in pre-service training and continued during in-service teaching, teachers can visualize teaching more realistically.

Exploring images, metaphors and the stories we tell of ourselves and to others represent promising avenues for self-exploration collectively as well as individually. . . . A focus on metaphors can encourage some beginning teachers to think about self contextually and developmentally, and can stretch their imaginations to consider alternative conceptions of teaching and self-as-teacher. (pp. 200, 220)

On the other hand, Ishler and Edelfelt (1989) discovered in the 17 induction programs they examined that "only a few programs emphasized the importance of helping teachers engage in self-evaluation and reflect on their teaching" (p. 61). The exceptions to this were programs in Franklin County, Ohio; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Ohio County, West Virginia; and Chesterfield County, Virginia. These researchers further state:

If teachers are to improve their skills beyond the entry year, in which they may receive considerable feedback through an assistance program, they need to learn the tools of analysis and reflection so that they can become self-monitors and continue to grow. (p. 61)

Julie and Jenny did not mention any formal training in self-introspection, but their school environments and first-year experiences forced them to reflect upon themselves "contextually and developmentally."

### **Schools and Teaching Positions**

Both of these young teachers were employed by Scenic Vista Conference and taught in inner-city, multicultural Seventh-day Adventist elementary schools. Julie taught second grade at Sandy Ridge, and Jenny taught kindergarten at Aspen Hills. Similarities included low teacher turnover, a well-managed school-wide discipline system, a hot-lunch program, and bus transportation. Sandy Ridge had a full-time principal with a part-time counselor/part-time assistant to the principal, whereas Aspen Hills had a full-time principal with a part-time vice-principal/part-time teacher. The staff makeup was also different. Sandy Ridge employed 16 classroom teachers, a full-time librarian, an art teacher, 1 full-time and 2 part-time music teachers, a special-education teacher, 1 full-time and 1 part-time secretary, a treasurer, a full-time building supervisor with student and adult helpers and bus drivers. Aspen Hills employed 17 classroom teachers, 3 teacher's aides, 2 special-education teachers, a music teacher, PE teacher, librarian, 1 secretary, 1 accountant, plus bus drivers and several part-time custodians. Sandy Ridge had 352 students and Aspen Hills had 300.

### **Scheduling and Organizing the Day**

Initially, both teachers struggled with scheduling and organizing their day. Julie was frustrated because she had been told during the 2nd week of the school year that another teacher would be hired to reduce her class of 30 students to 20. With 30 students, Julie had six reading groups. She understood that the students would be selected by reading ability so that the first-grade teacher would have two reading groups, Julie would have two reading groups, and the new teacher with a first/second combination (composed of students from the over-crowded first and second grades) would have two reading groups. The change was 5 weeks in coming and it was not divided by reading ability. Julie ended up with 21 students and 5 reading groups. After experimenting with several plans, she finally had her students settled into a workable daily reading schedule by the end of November. She also devised a personal strategy for after-school hours to help her plan efficiently for the next day.

Jenny's frustration with scheduling was different from Julie's. Basically, Julie knew how to plan; she was just overwhelmed with fitting so many diverse reading levels into the day's schedule and managing her after-school hours to help prepare her for the following day. Jenny, however, was completely lost; she had no idea how to plan the day. Two things contributed to this: her inexperience and the lack of a kindergarten curriculum. Although another teacher gave Jenny a sample schedule that helped her to develop her own, she was still very frustrated with her kindergarten program. Jenny felt inexperienced and incompetent, but her mentor, Mrs. Duncan, came to her rescue. After observing in Jenny's classroom, Mrs.

Duncan made several suggestions, and together, with Mrs. Duncan's guidance, they organized the room into centers and rearranged the daily schedule to meet the developmental needs of the students. Finding a measure of success with the new room arrangement and schedule, Jenny appeared less frustrated and more self-assured.

### **Functioning Within the School System**

Orientation to a new teaching position is very important if teachers are to experience successful job performance and satisfaction (Blase & Greenfield, 1981; King, 1986), and whereas "most schools have some sort of inservice program for their teachers . . . few programs deal directly with the issues and problems experienced by first-year teachers" (Ryan, 1986, p. 33).

The school district should have special programs for their inexperienced staff, programs that provide them with practical answers to immediate problems. . . . These beginning teacher inservice programs should be on-going throughout the school year. . . . These training sessions should become support groups for beginning teachers. Not only should they provide beginners with nuts-and-bolts ideas for coping with their problems, but they should serve a social and psychological function as well. They should help the struggling new teachers to realize that they are not the only ones who are discouraged, have discipline problems, or are totally confused by the attendance records they are supposed to be keeping. (Ryan, 1986, pp. 33, 34)

It is difficult and frustrating to work in an environment where procedures and policies are unknown or only partially understood, and neither administrator took time to properly orient their new teachers. Julie's principal, Dr. Johansen, an educator with 30 years' experience, informed me that he had no new teachers. Yet, Julie was a beginning teacher and there was also an experienced teacher new to Sandy Ridge.

**We have a teacher that was an aide here who has a college degree in teaching that was unable to get hired on as a teacher right away and so she knew a lot when she took over.**

*So you don't consider her a new teacher?*

**Well, she's a new teacher, but she knows what's going on and is doing a very, very good job. (V. 3, p. 47)**

Julie disagreed with Johansen's perception. As we reviewed her year in our last interview, she talked about her needs at the beginning of the year and things that might have helped her.

**[It] would help also if the teacher [could be] given some kind of guidelines, introductory packet of the school, because when I came in, during pre-school week, there was a lot that every one else *assumed* that people knew and new teachers just didn't know about it. They just kind of skipped over it and didn't give you a real in-depth idea of what was going on.**

*Orientation?*

**Yeah. Maybe more check-ups by the principal [to establish] a clear relationship of work. I think, maybe, get together with him, even every other month, to talk about how it's going, [to express] any concerns. Because when I lost that student, I really needed a lot of guidance from him. Other teachers gave advice. [Julie was interrupted by the janitor and another visitor, whom she asked to return later.] You were asking what I thought of the program.**

*Yes, and you wanted included in that orientation meeting something that would give you in-house ideas of how the school was run?*

**And not just for beginning teachers but for any transferring teachers. That would be a wonderful idea. (V. 1, p. 164)**

Jenny's principal, Dr. Kent, told me in our October interview that he offered orientation to beginning teachers and to teachers new to his school, but "I have not yet had an orientation meeting this year" (V. 3, p. 70). I asked him if he planned to have one soon. He replied, "I have done quite a bit of it individually with

them, but I haven't gotten them together as a group necessarily. So, in essence I have done it" (V. 3, p. 70). Jenny informed me that she had no orientation and Kent confirmed this. "I met with all teachers prior to school with the exception of Jenny because she was hired late" (V. 3, p. 68). Jenny, at first, felt uncomfortable talking with Kent. She, therefore, learned the school procedures and policies by trial and error or by asking other colleagues. Unfortunately, Jenny also learned through an embarrassing experience about 6 weeks into the school year.

**No one told me that we were having an assembly. It wasn't written on the calendar. . . . It just said something about campaign, magazine campaign. So I didn't know what that was all about. No one gave me any warning or anything. So 8:30 came around and everyone was down there in the assembly. . . . Usually we're called down by class . . . , but apparently Mrs. Lotus [school secretary] forgot about our classroom. We were never called, so I stayed down in the room. I didn't even know they were down there having anything. We were going on like we normally do and Mrs. Duncan came down and she said, "Why aren't you down in the assembly?" I said, "What assembly?" [Laughs] I was totally embarrassed. . . . but everybody was kind of relaxed about it. "Oh, well," [they said] "consider the source. You know, that's the way things go around here." [Laughs]**

*So you've gotten over that.*

**Yes. Now I know . . . to look at the calendar and ask someone if this is an assembly or something like that before the thing [takes place].**

*You just thought that was the day the magazine campaign started, but you didn't know there was an assembly to initiate it.*

**Yeah, I didn't know there was some big thing going on with it. I didn't know what was involved in that kind of thing. (V. 2, pp. 72, 73)**

At another interview, Jenny approached the subject again.

*Everything was given to you in such intensity on that Sunday. Maybe this was covered and it was just too much at one time.*



**Maybe, but the teacher across the hall says the same thing. She was here last year and she says, "Jenny, it just happened to me. Things would come up and I didn't know what they were all about!" (V. 2, p. 148)**

After getting better acquainted with Mrs. Duncan, Jenny would ask her to clarify school issues, policies, or procedures she did not understand. Sometimes Mrs. Duncan seemed surprised by Jenny's questions and would respond, "Well, I have to remember you don't know what this is all about" (V. 2, p. 151).

Both Julie and Jenny worried about the image they were portraying to their colleagues. They feared something would be said that would jeopardize the security of their job. Trust in others came slowly. It was something that took time and confirmation, and even then, they were selective in what and with whom they shared.

Julie was uncomfortable with anyone observing or visiting in her room. We discussed this in our May 28 interview.

*I know you were internally nervous when I was in observing, because you shared that with me, but you didn't really appear nervous.*

**Well, anytime anybody comes in, if my mom comes in, or somebody from another grade, I get nervous. . . . It's not just you; it's anybody. My mom comes in here regularly to help out with grading and she loves to come in and watch. She comes in once a week and I still get nervous when she comes in. I'm exhausted at the end of the day. But it's anybody. If another teacher pokes her head in, or walks in in the middle of a lesson, or if I happen to be at my seat--and for some reason the last few times somebody has come in, I've been at my desk and the children have been working quietly at their desks--I worry what they think of me when I'm sitting at my desk. I should be up walking around, but there were times when I needed to sit down and get some things done at my desk at that time. It's anybody that comes in.**

*Did you feel pressured or did you actually do something different when you knew somebody was coming in rather than just doing your regular plan?*

Sometimes I did something different, but I think it's good because it encourages me to reach out and do something different. And anytime I did do something different and I saw how much the kids enjoyed it, I just reminded myself that I need to do that more because sometimes you get tired and I don't know. I know *I did get tired!* Towards the end of the year I'm just totally exhausted. This month is very typical. (V. 1, pp. 165, 166)

Once trust was established, Jenny, on the other hand, seemed to enjoy visitors to her classroom. Naturally, she was nervous at the beginning of the school year, but on subsequent visits to her classroom, she seemed to ignore my presence and teach as if I were not there. According to our initial agreement, my visits were always announced; so to confirm my perception, I approached Jenny during our last interview in May.

*When you knew I was coming, did you plan differently or did you have the same program.*

Same. [JH looks a little shocked by the question.]

*I felt you didn't change just for me, [but] if I didn't specifically ask you, I can only assume that you didn't teach differently. That's why I asked.*

O.K. (V. 2, pp. 152, 153)

Jenny found her mentor's visits and feedback very helpful. She said, "I appreciate constructive criticism. I need it to grow" (V. 2, p. 154). She looked forward to feedback from her principal and was disappointed that he never followed up with a post-evaluation conference for his formal evaluation.

### **Maintaining Classroom Discipline**

Classroom discipline was a challenge for both teachers. Julie struggled, at first, with Sammy, a transfer student whose experience in an unstructured

environment conflicted with Julie's more structured approach. She patiently communicated her expectations to her entire class and to Sammy a little more frequently. In time, he adjusted. Although there were a few occasions when the children needed to be reminded to get on task or to quiet down, generally, they complied with what was expected of them. During our May 28 interview when I asked Julie to reflect on the year, she critiqued her classroom discipline. She believed the weakness in her discipline was not in the strategy she employed but her inconsistency in using the strategy. "I think I wasn't consistent. I was consistent in the beginning, then slacked off in the middle of the year, and then I became consistent at the end, which is frustrating for the children" (V. 1, pp. 162, 163).

Jenny, however, struggled all year long with discipline. Initially, she had no planned strategy. She tried several approaches and accepted suggestions from her mentor. I noticed the greatest progress during the last quarter when she communicated her expectations to the students and modeled her strategy. Like Julie, she believed the main reason for her frustration was inconsistency, yet she also felt she needed to adopt a more "concrete" discipline strategy, something she planned to consider during the summer (V. 2, p. 150).

### **Motivating Students Generally/Specifically**

Julie and Jenny were generally quite successful in motivating the students who were operating on grade level. Their biggest challenges were motivating exceptional students. Both of them experimented with various strategies and endeavored to adjust their programs as much as possible to meet individual needs.

### **Managing Classroom Instruction**

Managing classroom instruction challenged both teachers but in different ways. Julie felt quite competent in teaching the basic curriculum, but her challenge came in finding the time and energy to locate and/or prepare supplemental materials for her learning-disabled students. She was also challenged by a few emotionally and socially immature students.

Jenny was also challenged in meeting the needs of her diverse group of kindergartners, but, unlike Julie, she had no basic curriculum. All she had was a list of skills the administrator had given her. At the onset of school, she did not understand the difference between K-I and K-II. Finding time to locate materials was not as much a problem for her as knowing how much and what specific materials to use. Jenny's teaching assistant made it possible for Jenny to divide her students into two groups for reading instruction. This plan alleviated some of her frustration in meeting the wide-ability range that had developed by second semester.

### **Coping With Workload**

Julie fought the clock and calendar all year. Driven to do everything perfectly, imposing extra activities upon herself to enrich her students' learning experiences, individualizing students' learning to the point of tutoring one of her students 4 days a week after regular school hours, and finding it difficult to delegate to others, Julie struggled with the totality of her teaching assignment. It was not until her teaching had consumed her family time, her personal time, her devotional time, and she had reached the exhaustion point, that she realized she had to "prioritize" (V.

1, p. 168). Julie learned near the end of the year to pace herself, to delegate some of the clerical work to others who were willing to help her, to set a specific time to leave her classroom even if everything was not completed, and to mentally convince herself there was only so much she could accomplish in one day.

Jenny, at times, spent considerable hours outside of the regular school day involved in teaching duties, but this was not the norm. Unlike Julie, Jenny usually left school within an hour after student dismissal. Her teaching did not seem to interfere with her family, personal, or spiritual time. She did have the advantage of a full-time aide to help her grade papers, write letters to parents, duplicate work sheets, etc. Jenny's most stressful times seemed to be getting ready for school with such a limited pre-school time frame, completing progress reports at the end of each quarter, decorating her room and preparing her students for special programs such as the science fair and open house.

### **Developing Positive Relationships**

Julie created a comfortable learning environment where students could feel loved, accepted, and successful. She believed a student's failure was her failure, and thus she worked hard to meet the diverse academic, social, and spiritual needs of each pupil. Over the course of the year, she and her students became a close-knit group.

Jenny, too, loved her students and worked hard to meet their overall needs, but unlike Julie, who freely gave hugs and words of praise, Jenny exercised a certain amount of personal reserve around her students. Jenny was somewhat of an

enigma—one who smiled easily, was friendly, yet seemed hesitant to establish intimate relationships.

Parents intimidated both teachers. Many times they struggled with feelings of inadequacy and experienced pain and frustration with parental criticism; on other occasions, they were encouraged by parents' expressions of appreciation and concern.

Both teachers were friendly, yet cautious and very selective in establishing relationships with colleagues. Although they developed close friendships with several of their colleagues, they maintained a certain amount of reserve and exercised caution in what they shared. Even their mentors, whom they respected, were not privileged to certain information. Jenny withheld information for fear it would be revealed to her principal or to Conference administrators. Julie chose not to discuss certain issues for fear of losing her mentor's friendship. I believe their guarded approach was precipitated by feelings of distrust based on their exposure to gossip in their student teacher experience and inappropriate comments expressed by fellow colleagues in the schools where they taught full time (V. 1, p. 107; V. 2, p. 56).

Initially, both teachers were uncomfortable around their principals, partly, I believe, because they did not know them, and partly because they perceived an attitude of indifference from their administrators. With time, Julie and Jenny became more comfortable communicating with their principals, but both teachers experienced disappointment and frustration with the administrative leadership and their trust level was low.

### **Teachers' Concerns With Administrators**

During many of my interviews, Julie and Jenny would express frustrations with their administrators regarding teacher orientation, communication, supervision, evaluation, and evaluation feedback. The perceived lack of support from their principals engendered disappointment and, at times, even anger. They believed feedback from their principals would serve two purposes: (1) appraise them of their current performance, and (2) guide them in improving specific areas of weakness. One of their biggest frustrations centered around their ignorance of many of the school procedures and protocol.

Neither Dr. Johansen nor Dr. Kent seemed cognizant of the needs of beginning teachers. They did not conduct any orientation meetings for Julie or Jenny. Personal dialogue between the teachers and principals was limited, and when dialogue did take place, it was usually initiated by the teachers. Teacher supervision was almost non-existent. In fact, each administrator conducted only one formal teacher evaluation, even though a minimum of three was required by the regional office of education. Johansen's feedback on Julie's informal winter evaluation was superficial, and there was no pre- or post-conference with her formal spring evaluation, but he did share some brief written comments on the formal evaluation form. Dr. Kent provided no verbal or written feedback for Jenny's formal evaluation. He briefly "popped in" to Jenny's classroom on several occasions throughout the year, but the feedback even from those visits was minimal. Yet each principal believed he visited classrooms frequently and was aware of what was taking place in those classrooms.

I asked each principal to describe himself as an evaluator of teachers. (See Appendix B for sample of evaluation form.) Both principals had 11 or more years of experience as supervisors of teachers but neither had recent experience in the classroom. In Table 1, I have compared the two principals' responses. Karl Johansen is listed as "J" and Paul Kent as "K" in the last two columns. Johansen rated himself very positively in the majority of categories. He did not respond to the last section, which requested the respondent to specify other dimensions of himself as an evaluator of teachers that he thought related to his success or lack of success. Kent did not rate himself as high in some areas as Johansen. In fact, he rated himself as limited in "knowledge of subject matter taught by teachers you evaluate" and rated himself as a "C" in his "ability to convey . . . messages to teachers clearly." Unlike Johansen, he did respond to the last section:

The type of evaluation instrument has a lot to do for the comfort of performing the task. The lack of success in evaluations is based on two things: (1) Amount of time it takes for formal evaluations. (2) Spot evaluations to me are more effective than the one-time shot. Communicating to teachers is an ongoing process. (V. 3, p. 85)

Johansen regarded the purpose of teacher evaluations as teacher growth, but Kent regarded the purpose of teacher evaluations as teacher accountability. Kent rated himself as average in his ability to give teachers positive feedback and in mixing positive and negative feedback. He rated himself higher in giving negative feedback. Johansen, conversely, rated himself as very effective in his ability to give teachers positive, negative, and a mixture of positive and negative feedback.



Table 1

Describing Yourself as an Evaluator of Teachers

Description	Scale A <--> E	J	K
Knowledge of the technical aspects of teaching	Little <--> Great deal	E	D
Capacity to demonstrate or model needed changes in teacher performance	Low <--> High	D	D
Amount of experience as a classroom teacher	None <--> Extensive	D	C
Recency of experience as a classroom teacher	Not Recent <--> Recent	A	A
Repertoire of suggestions for good teaching	Limited <--> Extensive	E	D
Persuasiveness of the rationale you use to defend your suggestions	Not persuasive <--> Persuasive	D	C
Knowledge of subject matter taught by teachers you evaluate	Limited <--> Extensive	D	B
Strength of your expectations for yourself	Little <--> Great deal	D	D
General expectations of teachers	Unable to improve <--> Able to improve	D	E
Expectations regarding teachers' motivations	Willing to improve <--> Unwilling to improve	A	D
Ability to encourage risk-taking in teachers	Low <--> High	E	E
Willingness to take risks yourself	Don't take risks <--> Take risks	E	D
Working relationship to teachers	Adversary <--> Helper	E	E
Level of teacher trust	Low <--> High	E	D
Interpersonal manner	Threatening <--> Non-threatening	E	D
Temperament	Impatient <--> Patient	E	E
Flexibility	Rigid <--> Flexible	E	D
Attitude regarding the purpose of teacher evaluation	Teacher accountability <--> Teacher growth	E	B
Confidence that this purpose will be achieved	Lack confidence <--> Very confident	E	D
Training in teacher evaluation	None <--> Extensive	E	E
Listening skills	Ineffective <--> Very effective	E	E
Ability to convey your messages to teachers clearly	Unclear <--> Clear	E	C
Ability to give teachers positive feedback	Ineffective <--> Very effective	E	C
Ability to give teachers negative feedback	Ineffective <--> Very effective	E	D
Ability to mix positive and negative feedback	Relatively ineffective at mixing <--> Very effective at mixing	E	C

I also asked the two beginning teachers to respond to an evaluation experience questionnaire that gave them an opportunity to describe their experience with teacher evaluation in some detail. (See Appendix B for questionnaire sample.)

Both teachers rated their one and only formal evaluation by their principal with a 5 on a scale of 0 (low quality) to 9 (high quality). The next three questions dealt with the impact of that evaluation experience on three specific aspects of their professional practices, with a scale of 0 (no impact) to 9 (strong impact). Julie believed her evaluation rated a 7 regarding the impact on her attitudes about teaching, and Jenny recorded a 5. Both teachers recorded 5s regarding impact on teaching behaviors and strategies, and understanding of the teaching-learning process.

Sections A through E, with the exception of A-11 and A-12, are listed in Table 2 and show how each teacher (identified by her initials) described herself. The data in the table illustrate that Julie and Jenny perceived themselves quite differently in teacher attributes, but recorded many similarities regarding perceptions of their evaluators. In Section F, the two teachers specify other dimensions regarding their evaluations. Julie comments, "Evaluators should not [relate] feedback . . . to TV characters. Mary Poppins? [Other teachers] received this same feedback. We were like Mary Poppins! What does that mean? I'd rather see a list of strengths and weaknesses, if any, and goal collaboration" (V. 1, p. 192).

Jenny believed her evaluation would have been valuable if she had had a "pre-conference, more observation, [and] a post-conference" (V. 2, p. 188). She received feedback from her mentor's observation and Dr. Kent's brief, informal evaluations, but the lack of feedback from her formal evaluation really frustrated her.

Table 2

Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire

Description	Scale = A <--> E	J8	JH
<b>A. Describe your attributes as a teacher</b>			
1. Rate your overall competence as a teacher	Minimally competent <--> Outstanding teacher	D	B
2. Rate the strength of your professional expectations of yourself	I demand little <--> I demand a great deal	E	E
3. Orientation to risk-taking	I avoid risks <--> I take risks	D	A
4. Orientation to others	I'm reserved, private <--> I'm open, public	C	B
5. Attribution of reasons for your success/failure	I hold others responsible <--> I hold myself responsible	E	D
6. Orientation to change	Slow to change <--> Flexible	D	C
7. Orientation to experimentation in class	I don't experiment <--> I experiment frequently	E	D
8. Openness to criticism	Relatively closed <--> Relatively open	D	B
9. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching	I know little <--> I know a great deal	D	B
10. Knowledge of subject matter	I know little <--> I know a great deal	E	D
13. Experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience	Waste of time <--> Helpful	C	C
<b>B. Performance of person evaluating you</b>			
14. Credibility as a source of feedback	Not credible <--> Very credible	B	B
15. Working relationship with you	Adversary <--> Helper	C	C
16. Level of trust	Not trustworthy <--> Trustworthy	B	B
17. Interpersonal manner	Threatening <--> Non-threatening	D	C
18. Temperament	Impatient <--> Patient	C	D
19. Flexibility	Rigid <--> Flexible	D	D
20. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching	Not knowledgeable <--> Knowledgeable	B	D
21. Capacity to demonstrate or model needed improvements	Low <--> High	A	A
22. Familiarity with your classroom	Unfamiliar <--> Very familiar	A	A
23. Experience in classrooms in general	Little <--> A great deal	B	B
24. Usefulness of suggestions for improvement	Useless <--> Useful	A	A
25. Persuasiveness of rationale for suggestions	Not persuasive <--> Very persuasive	A	A

Table 2--Continued.

C. Describe attributes of information gathered on your performance during your most recent evaluation: What procedures were used to address the dimensions of your teaching (standards) to be evaluated?	Scale = A <--> E	JS	JH
26. Were standards communicated to you?	Not at all <--> In great detail	D	A
27. Were standards clear to you?	Vague <--> Clear	D	A
28. Were standards endorsed by you as appropriate for your classroom?	Not endorsed <--> Endorsed	E	A
29. What was the form of the standards?	A: Goals to be attained B: Personal and/or professional traits to possess	B	B
30. Were the standards . . .	Same for all teachers? <--> Unique to you?	A	A
To what extent were the following sources of performance information tapped as part of the evaluation?			
31. Observation of your classroom performance	Not considered <--> Used extensively	C	A
32. Examination of classroom or school records (lesson plans, etc.)	Not considered <--> Used extensively	A	A
33. Examination of student achievement	Not considered <--> Used extensively	A	A
Extent of observations in your classroom:			
34. Number of FORMAL observations per year	A: 0, B: 1, C: 2, D: 3, E: 4 or more	B	B
35. Approximate frequency of INFORMAL observations	A: None, B: Less than 1/mo., C: 1/mo., D: 1/wk., E: Daily	A	B
Average length of observation (most recent one):			
36. FORMAL	Brief (few min.) <--> Extended (40 min. or more)	C	E
37. INFORMAL	Brief (few min.) <--> Extended (40 min. or more)	N/A	A
38. Number of different people observing and evaluating you during the year. If others besides supervisor, give title.	A: Supervisor only, B: Supervisor & 1 other, C: Supervisor & 2 others, D: Supervisor & 3 or more others, E: Other	A	B

Table 2--Continued.

D. Please describe the attributes of the feedback you received:	Scale = A <--> E	JS	JH
39. Amount of information received	None <--> Great deal	C	B
40. Frequency of feedback	Infrequent <--> Frequent	C	C
41. Formality of feedback appropriate for your classroom?	Informal <--> Formal	D	D
42. Depth of information provided	Shallow <--> In-depth	B	B
43. Quality of the ideas and suggestions contained in the feedback	Low <--> High	A	A
44. Specificity of information provided	General <--> Specific	C	A
45. Nature of information provided	Judgmental <--> Descriptive	E	A
46. Timing of the feedback records (lesson plans, etc.)	Delayed <--> Immediate	D	A
47. Feedback focused on district teaching standards	Ignored them <--> Reflected them	B	A
E. Describe the attributes of the evaluation context:			
48. Amount of time spent on the evaluation process, including your time and that of all other participants	None <--> Great deal	C	C
Resources available for professional development:			
49. Time allotted during the teaching day for professional development	None <--> Great deal	C	A
50. Available training programs and models	None <--> Many	A	C
District values and policies in evaluation			
51. Clarity of policy statement regarding purposes of evaluation	Vague <--> Clear	D	A
52. Intended role of evaluation	Teacher accountability <--> Teacher growth	A	A

When comparing the responses of the teachers and administrators, one notices discrepancies between the perceptions of the teachers toward their administrators and how the administrators perceived themselves. For example, Johansen considered the evaluation an instrument for growth. Julie considered the evaluation an instrument for teacher accountability. Johansen and Kent rated themselves high (D) in capacity to demonstrate or model needed changes in teacher performance, but Julie and Jenny rated them low (A). In the level of teacher trust category, Johansen and Kent rated themselves high (E and D respectively), but Julie and Jenny rated them low (B). Regarding working relationships to teachers, Johansen and Kent both rated themselves as a helper (E), but Julie and Jenny rated them somewhere in between that of a helper and an adversary (C). The diversity of perceptions created frustration for both teachers.

### **Curriculum**

Curriculum was an issue for each teacher, but for different reasons. Julie was frustrated at the beginning of the year because she did not have textbooks for all her subjects. Some of the textbooks did not arrive until the third week of school (V. 1, p. 48). With the exception of social studies, Julie felt comfortable in teaching the prescribed second-grade curriculum.

**I don't like the social studies book. It's Mickey Mouse kind of stuff. . . . [The book is] just kind of hodge podge and I can't function on it. I am a person that needs a theme, and you broaden around it, and I think children are the same way. They can't make the connections yet at this age. They just don't have that ability yet. (V. 1, p. 48)**

Julie was not a textbook-bound teacher. She supplemented the textbook in most of her subjects, but with social studies, she augmented to a greater extent.

Jenny was frustrated because there was no curriculum for kindergarten. She had to develop her own, something for which she felt very incompetent. At first she based her curriculum on the materials left by the former teacher. Later, with the help of her mentor, she implemented a more hands-on approach, eliminating some of the pencil-and-paper activities. By the end of the first semester, Jenny found a wider range of achievement in her students' reading abilities. She was able to adjust her schedule to accommodate the ability levels by dividing the students into two reading groups, alternating reading and choosing time. Jenny's aide supervised a choosing time while Jenny taught reading. Then they switched groups. One of Jenny's anticipated joys was to implement the new kindergarten curriculum that would be ready for the next school year.

## **Mentor Program**

### **Perceptions of Teachers**

At the beginning of the school year, the mentor program was not clearly understood by either teacher. During the summer preceding the school year, Julie had sought the advice of an older woman, Barbara McDonald, with whom she had attended college classes and who taught in the same school as Julie. In the fall when mentors were chosen, Julie requested that Barbara become her formal mentor.

Although oral permission was given, Julie and Barbara were expecting some formal

communication, but it was not until the beginning of first semester that the miscommunication was corrected.

Jenny was assigned a mentor by her principal, Paul Kent, but Jenny was unaware of this. When Evelyn Swartz, Associate Superintendent of Schools, approached Kent with regard to the mentor program, he informed her that Aspen Hills had its own program and Jenny had been assigned a mentor. Evelyn, previously unaware of Kent's mentor program, agreed to let Kent run the program as he desired but she included Jenny's mentor, Ashley Duncan, in the Scenic Vista Conference program. Kent, however, did not confirm Ashley's official mentor role until the last part of September.

The original plan was to initiate the mentor program in the summer so mentor and protege could become acquainted prior to the start of school. This did not work out, and the beginning teachers, unless they sought help, struggled alone. The Scenic Vista Conference mentor plan, initially, was not clearly understood by mentors or proteges. Unmet expectations, a vagueness regarding the role of mentor and beginning teacher, and the trust factor regarding confidentiality of information only added to the beginning teachers' frustrations. Also each beginning teacher believed she would have benefited from classroom release time to observe her mentor, but in neither case did that take place.

Yet, despite the frustrations, both beginning teachers appreciated the emotional support, advice, and general input their mentors provided. The mentors afforded the beginning teachers a sounding board to vent their concerns and



frustrations, a resource of experience from which to glean tested ideas, someone to whom they could ask "stupid" questions and get honest answers, and in the end, a trusted friend and colleague. Their first year was more successful because of their mentors.

### **Perceptions of Administrators**

Paul Kent, principal of Aspen Hills, assigned a mentor for Jenny, but other than occasionally inquiring about Jenny, he basically left Ashley in charge of the mentoring. According to Evelyn Swartz, Associate Superintendent of Scenic Vista Conference, principals were informed of the program but the superintendents did not request their participation. And Karl Johansen, principal of Sandy Ridge, did not concern himself with the mentor program at all.

The superintendent, Ginny Walter, the other associate superintendent, Charlene Dempsey, and Evelyn were excited about initiating the mentoring program. They had researched mentoring, Evelyn had been involved in a successful mentoring program prior to working in Scenic Vista, and teachers had requested it. Although the mentor program met with success in some schools, disappointment with unfulfilled personal goals and expectations, unmet deadlines, and lack of cooperation and poor attitudes with some of the proteges involved discouraged Evelyn. She knew everything would not go like clockwork and that a program such as this takes "a good three years" to implement its objectives (V. 3, p. 10), yet her personal goals for the program were not realized, and being the perfectionist that she is, this disheartened

her. On the other hand, she used some of these negatives as stepping stones to build a better program for the following year.

Of course, not all was negative. Evelyn felt joy when she saw the progress a protege made as a direct result of a mentor (V. 3, pp. 7, 8). She was encouraged at the mentor workshop by the mentors' enthusiasm for the program and their concern and empathy for their proteges; she appreciated the mentors' support and their desire for information to do a thorough job (V. 3, p. 36). In her heart and from her personal and administrative experience, she knew the value of mentoring, and that is why she was willing to expend so much energy and effort for the program, look for ways to improve it, and make the commitment to continue it.

### **Perceptions of Mentors**

Barbara McDonald, Julie's mentor, although new to mentoring, was only 3 years removed from her own first-year of teaching and, thus, very empathetic to a beginning teacher's frustrations. She would have mentored even if there had been no mentoring program. Ashley Duncan, Jenny's mentor, had 28 years of full-time teaching experience plus several years of substituting. In addition, she was a seasoned mentor. A gentle and kind woman, Ashley considered mentoring a calling. She loved helping beginning teachers.

When I asked Barbara about her perceptions of mentoring, she shared her own reasons as to why she believed her own adjustment to teaching was easier than most beginning teachers.

**I guess I just have a burden for these new teachers coming in. I felt very comfortable coming here because I feel like I've lived here. I've been on the school board. I'm a parent of three children. I've substituted two years, you know. So I feel like this is just a part of my life. I sensed that [Julie], being a new teacher, needed that extra support.**

*Do you have a regular time that you meet?*

**No. . . . We have such an open-door policy. . . . She knows that she can come at any time. In fact, if need be, it might be during lunch or she might come down during the school day, or I see her in the office and she'll say, "What do I do about this?" or, you know, "I need help." In the cafeteria, recess, you know. . . . She has on occasion called me at home if she has any questions. (V. 3, pp. 85, 86)**

Although Ashley was asked to be Jenny's mentor, Paul Kent, principal, gave her no written guidelines. He relied on Ashley's experience, judgment, and expertise. Unlike Barbara, Ashley set up regular weekly appointments for Jenny to meet with her, but communication between them was not limited just to those appointments. On occasions, Jenny would catch her in the hall, on the playground, etc., and ask a question or two regarding some concern (V. 3, pp. 102, 103).

Barbara was never given release time to observe in Julie's room. Conversely, Ashley had observed in Jenny's room several times during the first semester. She shared in our February 7 interview:

**[I've observed], I'd say, two, three [times] this year, but for pretty long periods of time, and I could do that because I have an aide two days a week and it was on one of those times when the aide was here. We pre-arranged that I would be in her room observing. . . . She always knew when I was coming. (V. 3, p. 104)**

I specifically asked each mentor about her perceptions of the mentor program Scenic Vista was implementing. Barbara was Julie's mentor even before the superintendent assigned her. She started working with Julie early in the summer (V.

3, p. 85). After she was officially asked to be Julie's mentor, she attended the mentor workshop, which served to reinforce the things she was already doing with Julie. It was a confirmation to her that she was on the right track, yet she learned some additional things to do also.

**I appreciated the fact that they [Scenic Vista Conference] were doing this. I appreciated the fact of getting together with other people who were taking this responsibility. I think that that adds to a bonding that's needed. I was pleased that many things they were bringing out . . . I had already implemented. . . . Actually, the menu is something I have not thought about and when I came back, I gave her a hug, and I said, "Now I'm your official mentor," and I said, "You're going to receive a menu from me." So she's waiting for the menu now. . . . I think [the mentor program] is so neat. I feel privileged to have a part in it. (V. 3, pp. 86, 87)**

Barbara reflected on how she would have felt had she come to Sandy Ridge as a total novice and how this and observing new teachers influenced her decision to assist Julie.

**[Beginning teaching] is an overwhelming thing. It's just--well, let's say when I started here if I had not been a previous part of this place in all the various aspects, I would have been lost, even coming in with a couple years of experience. And so I can imagine just what it would be for a new one, and that was my concern of last year, even though I was "new" on this particular role here. There were other teachers that were new, veteran teachers, that were still feeling uncomfortable because they had not had orientation. The orientation that took place was very brief. It did not cover the whole school year. Problems come up. I just heard so many times, "If I had only known." And so that's when I decided that for the next one coming in I would make the road a little smoother. (V. 3, p. 88)**

Barbara, in a sense, not only mentored Julie, but endeavored to mentor the principal, too. As we discussed feedback for new teachers, she said:

**I feel very strongly that any teacher, whether they're new or not, needs that positive feedback. In fact, that's just one thing that I spoke to the administration here concerning my mentee that would help, you know, to pass along those little compliments. (V. 3, p. 89)**

*How do you feel about the support, the interaction of the administrator with the mentor and the mentee?*

**Are you saying current—what I have now—or how do I think it should be?**

*O.K., in general, and how you feel about this particular situation.*

**I think currently, there is really no relationship or support. First of all, I think their priorities are in a different area right now and the experience of the administrators are in a different area. The expertise of the last administration that we had was very much in this area—supportive, teaching. We were taught. Staff development was a very high priority. Support, as far as anything that might come up. [She] was someone you could talk to with full confidence and trust. . . . [She] had experience and expertise in every aspect of teaching. . . . If something happens within a school year with a particular teacher, it's so important to have the administration backing you so you don't feel like you're alone. . . . I think my major burden is [to provide] more help and develop more mentors for every single teacher, new teacher, and a modified type orientation/mentor maybe even for transferred teachers. . . . I think it needs to be initiated from some of these from the administration, but I feel very strongly that they need a mentor program and more of it to help our young people survive. Teaching is not what it used to be. . . . So I'm thrilled with the mentor program. I think it's wonderful. I hope they keep it up, support it, increase it, and use it. (V. 3, pp. 91-98)**

I asked Ashley to share her opinion of the mentor program Scenic Vista was implementing. Ashley, even though a veteran mentor, appreciated the mentor workshop.

**Well, that was an introduction for me, too—what they went through—and I'm glad to see it. I felt like it was good from what I could see. . . . I liked their approach to it, and I hope that every mentor will accept that approach that you are not an evaluator, and I'm trying very hard with Jenny (and I think she feels very comfortable with me) not to make her feel uncomfortable because we are not evaluators. We are there to help and to help a new teacher gain confidence in herself and that's basically as I see the role. . . . I thought [the mentor menu] was good. (V. 3, pp. 104, 105)**

Ashley, however, did not agree with all aspects of the program. Although she was not opposed to having a mentee look through her files, she was

uncomfortable with the suggestion to create a portable detailed mentor file because she believed she could spend a lot of time on a file that was of no value to the mentee.

**I guess when I work with teachers, I draw from my past or even from what other teachers from my past have done, you know. And often all they need is an idea and they can go with it, rather than my handing over something and saying, "Well, this is a wonderful thing. You do it." You know, I would rather give an idea. (V. 3, p. 105)**

Ashley believed the superintendents should incorporate into their mentor program guidance for the mentee's future education.

**Now another thing that Jenny has talked about sometimes is her future as a teacher. And I don't remember that being discussed in that meeting [mentor seminar] while I was there. Now, that might be an area that they could be advised to include, because she really is appreciating that as I talk with her. For example, in the Conference, you have to have six new credits every seven years. Well, a little guidance there would tell a new teacher, "Do you ever plan to go on with your education, like for a master's? If so, make those six credits valuable to YOU. Know now, or at least explore now, what you plan to do in your master's work if you plan to do it, so that you're guiding yourself already with these credits you're picking up towards that goal. . . . You will help your own career this way and what you need to do now is some experimenting and say, 'What do I really want to do?'" (V. 3, pp. 111, 112)**

Ashley had been mentoring for many years and had developed a philosophy that influenced the way she worked with beginning teachers. She individualized her approach, depending on the personality and needs of the protege but she saw general areas of need, too. "I think their biggest hassle is organization and discipline and they go together. If your day is organized, your discipline is less. Management, I guess, is a good word, classroom management" (V. 3, pp. 106, 107).

*We've talked about the mentor seminar and the Conference program. How do you feel about mentoring in general?*

I enjoy it. I enjoy it, and I guess that's why I've done it unofficially [and officially]. I like to help others. To me, it's another teaching role. You're just teaching an adult, you know, and I enjoy teaching, so I enjoy it. . . . I also reap benefits--satisfaction, enjoyment in watching someone grow and develop. (V. 3, p. 112)

### Summary

Julie, Jenny, the superintendents, and the mentors valued mentoring. It was valued by Paul Kent or he would not have asked Ashley to be a mentor, but his role was more of an initial coordinator who delegated the details to the mentor. Karl Johansen, on the other hand, did not consider mentoring one of his priorities. Research has demonstrated that "active support by principals is crucial to the potential success of any support program . . . but such assistance [is] rare" (Shulman & Bernhardt, 1990, p. 44).

The goals of the mentoring program that were met included (1) offering moral support, guidance, and feedback to the beginning teacher, (2) helping the new teacher become acquainted with policies and routines, and (3) assisting the new teacher in developing and implementing a classroom management plan (including student behavior, daily lesson planning, scheduling, motivational techniques, and instructional presentation and content) as needed.

Since the mentoring program was not implemented as soon as anticipated, the goals of (1) getting acquainted prior to school, (2) guiding in long-range planning, assisting within the first week of school, (3) spending 1 full day in the classroom of the new teacher in the first month, and (4) arranging for the new teacher to visit the mentor's classroom were not met in each case. Julie was acquainted with her mentor

as they attended college classes together, and Julie had worked in the school as an aide the previous year. Ashley visited Jenny's classroom several partial days; Barbara never did visit Julie's classroom, and neither beginning teacher observed in her mentor's classroom.

Mentoring is a form of collegial supervision. A mentor is a person entrusted with the tutoring, education, and guidance of another person who is typically new to teaching or new to a given school. The mentoring relationship is special because of its entrusting nature. Those being mentored are dependent upon their mentors to help them, protect them, show them the way, and develop more fully their skills and insights. The mentor is presumed to know more not only about matters of teaching but also about the school's culture so that the novice can navigate through this culture successfully. The unequal nature of the relationship makes it a moral one. . . . The mentoring relationship matures when it becomes reciprocal. (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993, p. 290)

Mentoring takes a great deal of time if it is to be effective. I was impressed with the interest, concern, and commitment of the associate superintendent and the two mentors to the mentoring program. They invested much personal time apart from their already full teaching schedule to help guide these proteges, to make their first year as successful as possible. Other than professional activity credit and supervision training, they received no monetary or other benefits save the personal satisfaction in seeing beginning teachers survive the frustrations of that initial teaching experience.



## **CHAPTER 8**

### **SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe the experiences and perceptions of two first-year teachers within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system, gain a better understanding of new teachers during their first year of teaching, and to use beginning teacher concerns gleaned from this study and previous studies to identify the kinds of support needed in an induction/mentoring program within the Seventh-day Adventist educational system.

Qualitative data were obtained over a 9-month period through 22 interviews with two first-year teachers, their mentors, principals, and the associate superintendent of education. Participant observations, teacher weekly journals, principal/teacher self-evaluations, and information acquired at the Scenic Vista Mentor Seminar provided additional data.

#### **Findings in Relationship to Problem Statement**

Ten questions listed under the problem statement in chapter 1 provide a framework for this summary. Since findings represent results from only two case studies, one needs to be careful in generalizing across the beginning teacher population.

### Transition From Pre-Service to In-Service

What happens in the lives of first-year teachers when they make the transition from pre-service teacher to in-service teacher?

Both Julie and Jenny were enthusiastic about their first full-time teaching position. It was a goal they had anticipated, pursued, and ultimately achieved. Julie said, "I waited a year [after graduation to get this job]. Being here finally as a teacher is a tremendous joy" (V. 1, p. 46). Jenny stated, "I'm glad I got my certification and I'm definitely doing something that I really enjoy doing now. And I believe God has given me the gift of teaching. . . . I'm happy to come to work everyday" (V. 2, p. 47).

It took only a few days of full-time teaching, however, for Julie and Jenny to grasp the magnitude of their teaching assignment and to transform their bright halo of expectations into tarnished realities. Ryan (1986) refers to this as "the curve of disenchantment" (p. 8) and explains the basic reason for it:

While student teaching is intended to allow the student teacher to experience actual teaching, the student teacher does not have the full responsibilities of teaching. There is much benefit in student teaching, in the opportunity to act like a teacher and to try out skills and ideas; but it is different from actual teaching. (p. 12)

Both teachers struggled with classroom scheduling and management, school routines and administration procedures, discipline, coping with the withdrawal of a student from their class, and establishing positive relationships with their principals, colleagues, and parents. In addition, Julie grappled with time management, Jenny with curriculum issues. Both teachers internalized the challenges

they encountered, but each reacted differently to the frustrations they experienced. Julie wondered if she should remain in teaching, particularly after a parent withdrew a student from her class. Jenny, on the other hand, entertained no thought of voluntarily leaving teaching but feared she would be fired when a student was pulled from her class.

Whereas both teachers worried about adequately preparing their students for the next grade, Julie perceived herself as a competent teacher and Jenny doubted her competence. Julie's frustrations spilled over into her personal life, and because she spent so much time with her teaching responsibilities, she feared for her marriage. Jenny, however, seemed to strike a balance between teaching and her personal life.

The above paragraphs give an overview of what Julie and Jenny experienced during their first year. The next section of this chapter focuses on the 10 specific questions from the problem statement.

### **Question 1**

What were their perceptions of themselves as teachers?

At the end of the school year, I asked each teacher to do a self-evaluation (see Table 2). Section A asked the women to evaluate themselves as teachers. Regarding the strength of their professional expectations of themselves, Julie and Jenny both said they demanded a great deal and held themselves responsible--rather than holding others responsible--for their success or failure. Both believed they knew a great deal about subject matter, but in the area of overall competence as a teacher,

Julie rated herself as an outstanding teacher and Jenny rated herself as minimally competent. Likewise, Julie believed she knew a great deal about the technical aspects of teaching but Jenny believed she knew little. In orientation to others, Julie was more open; Jenny was more reserved. Each one liked to experiment in class. Julie viewed herself as flexible in orientation to change; Jenny rated herself in the middle of flexible and slow to change. Julie was open to criticism and risk-taking. Jenny, conversely, was relatively closed to criticism and avoided risks.

Both Julie and Jenny perceived themselves as life-long learners. In my interviews with them, they expressed a desire to pursue graduate studies in the future to help them grow and develop professionally. Jenny thought about reading; Julie considered special education. They planned to use the experiences of their first year as a stepping-stone for another year of teaching. In May, after analyzing their first full-time teaching position, they shared specific plans for change and improvement.

## **Question 2**

How did pre-service expectations and in-service realities equate?

Julie's expectation for her first day of teaching and reality were "very similar. . . . My first day went wonderfully" (V. 1, p. 49). In fact, her first week went well. "People were OFFERING me ideas and I was shocked! And I think that helped my first week to go very well because the first week every day after school some teacher came down and asked me how it went" (V. 1, p. 49). This first week of attention by the other teachers, however, did not last. According to Ryan (1986), Julie's experience was typical. "Often new teachers are warmly greeted by their new

colleagues and then ignored or forgotten. The beginning of a school year is a hectic time even for veteran teachers; it is not always easy to attend to the new teacher" (p. 27). Julie's surprise and joy in the teachers' visits that first week were coupled with disappointment in her principal's lack of visits to her classroom. She had expected him to

**come by and say, "Hey, how's it going?" or to give me some kind of feedback whether I'm doing O.K. or not O.K. I've had nothing. . . . Or you know, [when] he passes sometimes in the hall to just look in the window, or when I'm taking the kids in or out and he sees something that I could improve on, you know, just, "Hey, I saw this happening today. You were doing great. I like your bulletin boards. I like what you're doing in your classroom. I'm hearing good things or I'm not hearing good things. So and So's parents thanked me. Can you tell me what's going on in the classroom so I can better . . . support my staff?" Something! (V. 1, p. 49)**

Later when her principal did evaluate her, she was surprised by several things: First, the post conference was "very, very brief" (V. 1, p. 84). Second, she believed that his comparing her to "Mary Poppins" was not "beneficial" (V. 1, p. 85). Third, "He just spoke very positively. You know, I wasn't expecting so much positive. I was expecting more [negative]" (V. 1, p. 85).

In an April interview, I asked Julie to compare her expectations and reality. This is what she shared:

**[In the] beginning, my expectations were very unrealistic, I think. I had no experience with dealing with parents and I think they are the hardest to deal with rather than the children. My expectations of the behavior of the children were different from what they are in reality. I didn't expect to have so much problem with behavior. I didn't realize how much time is needed in maintaining a classroom, keeping records, grading, lesson plans and that kind of thing. . . . It's all the unexpected stuff, the extras. I knew teaching took a lot of time, but I didn't realize it took THAT MUCH TIME! Then the makeup of the [students] was not what I expected! . . .**

**This group was very immature [with] a wide range of academic levels. (V. 1, pp. 146, 151, 157)**

In our last interview in May, Julie had a visit from a former college friend, also a teacher. They compared teaching experiences. When Julie realized her friend had experienced some of the same frustrations her first year of teaching, it made her feel better. Yet, it also fostered insight into why she became so discouraged when reality did not match her expectations.

**Both of us in school were labeled as over-achievers. Even in college we were over-achievers. And she mentioned that she went through the same feelings that I had. Observing in so many other classrooms and in public schools, you see a lot of things you don't want to be like, and, of course, in that particular school we went to it was drilled in our heads: "You don't want to be like this! Good teachers aren't like this. Good teachers are like this!" So they created this dream for us that I don't think exists in any classroom 100%, but we left with this ideal classroom. This is what we were going to be like. We were not going to be anything less, and to see yourself fall down and not reach that ideal is very discouraging. I think I almost let it ruin, cut my spirit. Looking back and talking with her and talking it out with my husband and praying about it, I think that was my biggest problem. I had this ideal. I didn't see myself reaching that ideal. I felt that if I couldn't reach that ideal, I didn't want to teach. If I can't do a 100% excellent job every day in every subject, then I don't want to be a teacher. In everything I've ever done, I wanted to be 100%, and if I haven't been able to do that, then I'd just say, "I'll try something else." (V. 2, p. 171)**

Julie's response corroborates the findings of Young, et al. (1993): "First-year teachers . . . tend to be *idealistic*, with their expectations often exceeding what they can reasonably achieve" (p. 174).

Later in the interview Julie pointed out something else. "Teaching is just very different. Many people think teaching is not different from being a student, that

it's just a continuation. I think teaching is a much more difficult job than being a student (V. 1, p. 173).

Jenny's expectations were different from Julie's. Jenny expected to have trouble with parents when she disciplined their children and was surprised during the first few weeks of school that she had not experienced any. She also expected to receive a kindergarten curriculum to help guide her teaching. Jenny describes how she felt when reality set in. "I've adjusted now, but when I was told that, I was just angry. I felt very angry; I just couldn't get over that. . . . I was told when I was a student teacher that you walked right into a curriculum. You had to fit your schedule around it, but you [were] told what to teach (V. 2, p. 47).

Second semester, Jenny was faced with another curriculum issue, one that was completely opposite from her expectations.

**I wish I had known that there was only one level for K-II as far as reading is concerned and that there was only one math book when I was hired. I wish I had known that because I would have done things totally differently.**

*I'm assuming from what you're saying you thought those were just for the first semester and that they would be giving you more materials?*

**Uh-huh. That there was another series to move into, because that's what I'm used to from public school. I know you can move into another reader. You know, it's like reading books. They go into another level. (V. 2, p. 112)**

Jenny was also expecting a "buddy system where [I] would be teamed up with another teacher and she would show [me] exactly how the school was run and things like that--sort of an informing type of person" (V. 2, p. 54). Jenny was assigned a mentor, but she expected it the first week of school. Additionally she

expected her principal to evaluate her "four times" with a pre-evaluation conference and a post-evaluation conference (V. 2, p. 54).

**I was expecting a tough time. Your first two years before you get tenure, you have to really have a structured program, and after that meet their criteria in order to move on to tenure; and that wasn't the case here at all, which is sort of a relief, but at the same time I'm frustrated about the lack of structure because I'm new and I need some structure right now. Later on I can throw in some new things and change things around, but right now I need some kind of guidance. (V. 2, p. 54)**

Jenny also voiced her expectations regarding parents.

**I'm beginning to feel like it's a lot different than public school. I expected certain things to happen. It's quite a bit different, because I did my student teaching in a public school and my experience has been in a public setting, you know, working with children. But in a Christian school I've noticed that the parents are very, very concerned, sometimes overly concerned. (V. 2, p. 61)**

Since Jenny took her training in a public college and student-taught in public schools, she expected the church school to be better equipped and was amazed at some of the "raggy-looking" materials; but she was even more shocked when she was told by the accountant that she was over her classroom budget. "I'm charging things through the ABC and through the teacher stores. And it's not a whole lot of things. It's just the bare necessities for the room. You know, I'm not being extravagant" (V. 2, pp. 89, 90).

One thing Jenny did not expect was having to train a new aide. Her original aide, Di, was an experienced aide. Di left the last week in September, just 5 weeks into the school year, and Jenny's new aide was inexperienced.

Many of Julie's and Jenny's expectations did not match reality. Ryan (1986) names this mismatch "the shock of the familiar" (p. 16). School is a familiar



place, a place where teachers have spent, not counting higher education, "somewhere between sixteen and eighteen thousand hours in classrooms before taking over a class. . . . As a result of all this observation and exposure to models, teachers have a large storehouse of images of school life" (Ryan, 1986, p. 17). Sitting on the other side of the desk, however, gives one a new perspective, a new image, a different reality.

### Question 3

What school-related events did they perceive as successes or failures within and without the classroom?

Julie and Jenny experienced success and failure. The successes brought joy and elation or a quiet inner satisfaction, but failure, or the perception of failure, was not easy to handle. It required objectivity, honest evaluation, and coping strategies.

Both of them struggled with classroom scheduling, particularly in individualizing reading instruction. At the beginning of the school year, Julie tested her students in reading and became overwhelmed with the results. How would she manage six reading groups? After her class was reduced by nine students, she still had five reading groups. Although it took her several weeks, she finally devised a manageable plan for herself and one that met the individual reading needs of her students. This was one of her successes.

Likewise, Jenny struggled with reading groups. As the year progressed, she noticed a wide variance in her students' reading achievement. By January, she

knew she needed to divide the class into different reading groups. After mentally considering several plans, she finally decided to divide them into two groups. Her students, she believed, would have benefited from three groups, but two groups were more manageable for her. Her aide would supervise Group 1 in choosing time, while Jenny taught reading to Group 2. Then the groups would switch, and Group 1 would have reading instruction while Group 2 was in choosing time. Jenny felt good about the success of this plan.

Losing a student from their classrooms was traumatic for both teachers. They perceived themselves as failures in helping the student and in dealing with the dissatisfied parent. Julie, so distraught over the loss, seriously considered dropping out of teaching. Jenny worried about her principal's reaction and feared she would lose her job. Neither teacher coped well with this issue, and later, when problems arose with students and parents, it returned to haunt them.

For both Julie and Jenny, just the thought of the fall parent-teacher conferences generated alarming fear and dread, yet it served a fruitful purpose. Their panic prompted them to think about the conferences in advance, ask questions from their mentors, and plan a course of action. Julie records in her journal on November 16:

Parent Teacher Conferences were this week. I made notes on each child to guide me during the conferences. I also had snapshots of each child to give to the parents to take home. The parents seemed to like the snapshots. Overall, I think the conferences went well. It was an exhausting day. (V. 1, p. 181)

Jenny also recorded her reaction to the parent-teacher conferences in her journal entry of November 16. "This was the week for the parent/teacher conferences. I was surprised at how smooth[ly] everything went" (V. 2, p. 158).

Julie and Jenny faithfully planned field trips throughout the year, and spent hours planning and preparing for open house and the science fair. Although there were exceptions with a couple of the field trips, they believed the events were successful. Their personal critique of these events inspired plans for change--a new strategy to implement, details to add or delete, and resources to tap.

#### **Question 4**

How did they perceive their students, colleagues, administrators, and students' parents?

#### **Students**

Julie and Jenny loved their students. Julie believed her students were capable of success and worked hard to help them achieve. If they were not working at capacity level, she endeavored to find ways to motivate and encourage them, to help remove the blockage to their success. Jenny also wanted her K-II students to achieve, but there were times when she believed a couple of her students were academically misplaced. She endeavored to individualize their work, keep the parents informed of the students' progress, and solicit help from the parents; but unlike Julie, who tutored a child below grade level, Jenny requested the child be reassigned to K-I.

## Colleagues

Julie and Jenny perceived their colleagues with mixed feelings. At the beginning of the year, they desired collegiality yet were leery of trusting any unknown colleague. They worried about how their colleagues perceived them, and were concerned with what and how much information they should share. Julie expressed a concern for my frequent visits to her classroom, worrying that other teachers would surmise she was having a difficult time teaching and needed extra supervision. Jenny believed her first aide was a "spy" in her classroom. This seemed a little unusual to me, but Ryan (1986) states, "In fact, many new teachers isolate and occasionally alienate themselves from their colleagues" (p. 32).

I think several factors contributed to their fear of getting too close to colleagues. Both teachers heard comments they considered unprofessional from their colleagues, and they had experienced the teachers' lounge "gossip" while student teaching in other schools. Julie and Jenny also assumed they had to prove to their colleagues that they had the ability to teach; admitting a failure or asking questions that would seem stupid would reveal incompetency to colleagues, and they believed their colleagues could influence whether or not they were rehired for another year. Therefore, their colleagues needed to prove to Julie and Jenny that they were safe to trust, and trust came slowly to these novice teachers.

Sullivan (1992), in writing about collegial relationships, provides an extended definition of rapport, a definition that reflects Julie's and Jenny's thinking about staff collegiality:

**Rapport enables two people to agree and disagree with dignity. It stabilizes a relationship so that any event, idea, or conversation becomes only a single occurrence in an ongoing commitment. Building rapport requires energy but not aggression. It has to be the byproduct of trust, common experiences, shared values, and empathy. Rapport is intellectual and emotion: both head and heart are involved. (p. 14)**

With prudence and extreme selectivity, Julie and Jenny slowly established a measure of collegiality among their colleagues, but even then, they approached certain topics cautiously and discreetly and refrained from discussing other information they believed might harm them or the relationship.

#### **Administrators**

Initially principal-teacher relationships were uncomfortable. Although the early discomfort with their principals lessened as the year progressed, Julie and Jenny, at the end of the school year, did not give high marks to their working relationship with their administrators. On a scale of A (Adversary) to E (Helper), both teachers rated their principals as a "C." In the level of trust category, A (Not trustworthy) to E (Trustworthy), they rated the principals with a "B." When asked to rate the threatening (A) or nonthreatening (E) level of their principal's interpersonal manner, Julie perceived her principal to be a "D" and Jenny believed her principal was a "C." (See Table 2, Section B.)

#### **Parents**

Parents intimidated and frustrated both teachers. Julie felt she was not respected by the parents because she was young, inexperienced, and childless. She based this perception on information shared with her at a school interview.

**One school in particular told me that because I was young and I had not had children I would not know how to deal with children in the classroom, and until I had children they didn't think it was wise for me to be teaching. (V. 1, p. 44)**

In our April 22 interview (V. 1, pp. 151, 152), Julie described parents as "frustrating" and apologized because she was using a negative word. She was frustrated with their lack of respect for her because she was young and inexperienced, their complaining about minor issues, and their lack of cooperation in checking their children's work and returning the forms.

Julie was hurt when she worked so hard with her class to prepare for the Spring Fair. "Parent response was nil. I heard nothing neg. or pos. about the display. I feel defeated! Unappreciated!" (V. 1, p. 183). When parents complimented her or expressed gratitude for something she had done, however, she was thankful and appreciative. It made her day!

Jenny, too, experienced frustration with parents who would not look over their child's papers. She sent papers home every evening.

**I don't know if parents even look in their [child's] book bag and check this work out. I don't think they think that kindergarten work is that important. I don't know.**

*Have you sent a letter of communication home to the parents asking them to look at their child's work?*

**Uh-huh. And I told them, when they had to come in at the beginning of the year to that open house thing. I told them to look over these papers every evening and make sure they finish that work, because if they didn't finish it in class, I'd like them to finish it at home that night so they can learn that skill. (V. 2, p. 81)**

Jenny also perceived parents to be "overly concerned" and "overly protective" (V. 2, pp. 61, 62). At times she found them unrealistic with regard to grade placement. She told a parent her child was not ready for K-II.

**She believes he's ready for K-II. She doesn't want to hear it. She said he came from a very advanced program before he came here and that he should be able to do this and told me that he considers that to be a baby room down there. . . . I'm going to contact her again, because he's not going to be able to read. She's going to wonder why [her] child can't read when he's in a K-II program. (V. 2, p. 62)**

Dealing with parents seemed less intimidating as the year progressed, but Jenny was still nervous about spring parent-teacher conferences. She was pleased that her principal was willing to sit in on her April 28 and 29 parent-teacher conferences and support her decision to retain several children (V. 2, p. 163).

Both teachers, however, perceived many parents as unrealistic in their academic expectations of their children. They also found a group of parents supportive of their children's extracurricular activities and helpful to them as volunteers for field-trip supervisors.

### **Question 5**

What perceptions did their administrators have of their beginning-teacher skills?

Karl Johansen, Julie's principal, seemed to live in a world apart from Julie. He did not understand Julie's need for orientation, principal/teacher communication, support, and evaluations with positive (commendations) and negative (recommendations) feedback. He was insensitive to her frustrations as a novice

teacher; in fact, he did not consider Julie a new teacher because she had worked as an aide the year before "and knew a lot when she took over. . . . She knows what's going on and is doing a very, very good job" (V. 3, p. 47).

According to Jenny's mentor, Ashley Duncan, Paul Kent, Jenny's principal, realized Jenny was "new and had not taught before and wanted her to be 'saved' from some mistakes that a new teacher might make" (V. 3, p. 102). Although he assigned a mentor, he never took time to conduct an orientation for Jenny. When we were discussing orientation for beginning teachers or teachers new to the school on October 8, Kent told me he had "not yet had an orientation meeting" (V. 3, p. 69), but he also said he had met with all teachers prior to school with the exception of Jenny because she was hired late" (V. 3, p. 68). When I asked if he planned to have one, he laughed and replied, "I have done quite a bit of it individually with them . . . so, in essence, I have done it" (V. 3, p. 70), but it was never done for Jenny.

"A system for feedback needs to be established to help novice teachers reflect on their growth in that first year of teaching" (Young et al., 1993, p. 176). Like Johansen, Kent was not cognizant of Jenny's need for evaluations with positive (commendations) and negative (recommendations) feedback. In fact, he saw no need for formal evaluations. "They should have gone through those formal evaluations in their student teaching program" (V. 3, p. 68). Although Kent did not give Jenny any feedback on her formal evaluation, he did give some from his "pop-in" visits. In addition, he realized her need for support in some of the parent-teacher conferences



and took time to meet with her and the parents (V. 2, p. 163). Kent did not seem to understand the full extent of Jenny's frustration regarding the lack of a kindergarten curriculum. When I approached him about it, he said, "That's a little more difficult and we were just fortunate to get . . . the Putnum Grove's County Curriculum" (V. 3, p. 79). He told me he had no experience teaching in Grades K to 4, so he had assigned Ashley to help Jenny. "Having an experienced teacher available to oversee the newcomer's entry into the profession is a way of encouraging her to become committed to teaching as a long-term career" (Bey, 1990, p. 51); however, "mentoring is not a substitute for staff development programs" (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles, & Niles, 1992, p. 212).

Neither administrator had recent experience in the classroom, yet each had years of "experience as a supervisor of teachers" and "extensive training in teacher evaluation" (V. 3, pp. 114, 115, 117, 118). In the case of these two beginning teachers, however, they did not put their supervisory training into practice.

Servant leadership describes well what it means to be [an] administrator. School administrators are responsible for "ministering" to the needs of the schools they serve. The needs are defined by the shared values and purposes that comprise school covenants. They administer by furnishing help and being of service to parents, teachers, and students. They minister by highlighting and protecting the values of the school. The school leader as minister is one who is devoted to a cause, mission, or set of ideas and accepts the duty, and obligation to serve this cause. (Sergiovanni, 1990, p. 152)

When administrators "minister" to the needs of the school, what appears superficially to be managerial and routine communicates meaning in context. (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 144)

**Question 6**

What type of support was provided to them during their first year?

The principals provided minimal support initially and increased their support as the year progressed. Johansen communicated more frequently with Julie, and Kent helped Jenny with some difficult parent-teacher conferences, but the overall administrative support was never considered satisfactory by the beginning teachers. Each teacher desired an orientation and more feedback from her administrator.

The first week of school, Julie was impressed with the care and concern of her colleagues, who stopped in to see how things were going for her; but this diminished as they became busy with their own teaching. Both teachers, however, received a great deal of support from their mentors. The mentors were available as needed. Jenny's mentor, however, set up a specific time each week to meet with her and endeavored to guard that time so she and Jenny could talk without interruption.

In the following section, the specific support rendered by the mentors is addressed.

**Question 7**

How effective was induction and mentoring in transmitting the system's culture and promoting their personal and professional growth?

In Julie's and Jenny's cases, mentoring was very effective in helping them survive the year. Their mentors assisted them in filling out administrative forms, understanding school policies and routines, giving advice for conducting parent-teacher conferences, sustaining and supporting them as they worked through difficult

student-parent issues, guiding them with their adjustment in dealing with curriculum, scheduling, discipline, and grading, and planning for special school events.

The mentors listened, becoming sounding boards for their proteges' venting of frustrations and concerns. Barbara even endeavored to motivate the administrator to give more support to Julie. Ashley became a mediator, a peacemaker, when Jenny felt confused by another colleague's behavior or words. Both mentors guided the proteges with their concern regarding courses for recertification and/or a master's degree.

#### **Question 8**

What were their perceptions of the mentoring process?

In mentoring, "trust is the key element. Each--mentor and protege--must trust the confidentiality, the ability, the intent, and the commitment of the other" (Sullivan, 1992, p. 25). Both teachers appreciated their mentors, but, initially, were unsure of what topics or issues were proper to discuss. Julie disagreed with her mentor, Barbara, on a field-trip issue, but feared jeopardizing their relationship if she approached it. Jenny, at first, worried about the confidentiality of what she shared with her mentor. She did not fully comprehend, until she asked, what information Ashley shared with the principal and the associate superintendent of education.

Julie and Jenny perceived their mentors as colleagues who were there to help them in anyway they could. Of all their relationships, the mentor-protege was the most intimate. It was a friendship they treasured. The novice teachers respected their mentors, appreciated their advice and support, and relied on them heavily in

times of emotional pain or frustration, preparing for parent-teacher conferences and special school events, dealing with classroom management, and in understanding school policies, procedures, and protocol.

There were, however, some frustrations with the mentoring process. Initially, both proteges had to seek out someone to help them. Although the teachers needed their mentors throughout the year, they would have received support at its most urgent phase had the official mentor-mentee relationship been initiated earlier in the school year.

The mentor workshop was instructive, resourceful, and beneficial, yet it, too, was not conducted until late January. This was not a real problem for Ashley and Jenny since Ashley had served as a mentor for many years, but Barbara was new to mentoring and it would have assisted Barbara more in helping Julie earlier.

Julie had several concerns about the mentor program that she shared in our last interview.

*How would you evaluate the mentor program, pro and con, as you've related to it this year?*

**Well, it's been kind of rough, because at the beginning I didn't have a mentor, or I didn't know I had a mentor. My mentor didn't know she had a mentee! [Laughs] So we really didn't find out about this relationship until January. It was pretty late in the school year, and as a beginning teacher, a lot of my primary needs were at the beginning of the year. (V. 1, p. 163)**

Julie had a second concern. Barbara thought by having "an open-door policy," she was giving Julie the freedom to come as needed. Julie, however, perceived otherwise. "I think if the mentee and the mentor work together and meet on a regular basis, at a regular time, I think it can be very beneficial" (V. 1, p. 163).

Julie's third concern dealt with classroom observation.

**Unfortunately, we couldn't get our schedules together to observe in each other's classroom. I think that would have been a very good thing. If the beginning teacher is encouraged by the administration to go and observe other classroom teachers (and it doesn't have to be only in this school; [it could be] at other schools) I think that would be a wonderful idea because you get a lot of ideas by watching. (V. 1, p. 163)**

Jenny's only negative statement concerning the mentoring process dealt with the initial trust element.

**Well, at first I didn't know if I could trust Mrs. Duncan or not. I really didn't feel comfortable with her. . . . Then after we talked a little bit, I was able to open up about some of problems that I noticed with this K-II program. . . . Yes, that was a big help. She definitely helped me in ALL areas. (V. 2, p. 149)**

Each teacher also was glad that the mentor/mentee relationship would continue during their second year of teaching.

### **Question 9**

**How did their perceptions of teaching change during their first year?**

Julie's and Jenny's biggest change was facing the difference between their highly idealistic perceptions and reality. Teaching, in many aspects, was not what they had envisioned. Veenman (1984) refers to this as "reality shock" (p. 143). The biggest reality shock for Julie was the amount of time involved in teaching. She desired to do everything perfectly, and time did not permit that. Jenny's biggest shock concerned two other issues. "Not having a mentor and no curriculum just threw me. At the very beginning, I was really concerned about that" (V. 2, p. 152).

Their ideas on discipline also changed. Both of them learned that consistency is important to any discipline strategy. Julie had a good plan from the start. She just needed to work her plan consistently. Jenny worked to develop a plan throughout the year, but she, too, realized the last quarter that, in addition to a good discipline strategy, the teacher needs to be consistent with the plan.

Initially, both teachers were afraid to speak out, but as the year progressed, they voiced their opinions in faculty meetings and to their administrators and mentors.

In reviewing the year, Julie and Jenny shared what changes they would implement for the following year.

Julie planned to reinforce all subject areas with additional activities. She planned to make science and social studies more interesting by offering supplementary hands-on activities. In addition, she wanted to take the children on field trips that would be more unique, yet still relate to the subjects taught. By utilizing some of the everyday waste/trash that the children handled, such as milk cartons, paper, juice cans, etc., she wanted to teach a unit on recycling. Aside from the curriculum, she desired a better parent-teacher relationship. "I'd like to see myself become more comfortable with parents. I get very nervous with parents" (V. 1, p. 167).

Jenny planned to implement more resources into her curriculum: manipulatives, movies, field trips, art, and stories. She planned to upgrade the science and math curriculum and involve the children in more hands-on activities.

**Question 10**

How did their first-year experiences relate to personal job satisfaction and future teaching plans?

As mentioned earlier, the teachers' initial enthusiasm and excitement of teaching was soon replaced with frustration as reality set in. Job satisfaction was a real issue for Julie. She seemed to struggle throughout the year with whether or not to remain in teaching. It was frequently a topic of discussion in our interviews. In the spring, she was still vacillating, but in April, she made a decision. "Yes, I've decided to give it another year" (V. 2, p. 157). Julie signed a contract to teach Grade 2 for the following year. With renewed enthusiasm, she set goals and planned to work on several curriculum projects during the summer, so the coming school year would be less stressful and time-consuming. Her thoughts, however, went beyond the summer and the next school year. She was giving serious consideration to enrolling in a graduate program to specialize in "some kind of learning disabilities teaching" (V. 2, p. 170). She believed her talent was working with individual students and small groups.

Unlike Julie, Jenny never indicated, even once, that she wished to leave teaching. Her teaching job was not always satisfying, but it was something she had wanted for so long. So despite the lack of a curriculum, the frustrations with the administration and the policies regarding the philosophy of K-I and K-II, the anger that sometimes surfaced, the occasional feelings of incompetency that plagued her, Jenny wanted to stay in teaching. She knew she had much to learn, but also she

knew she had a desire to grow and develop, to be the best teacher she could be, and with time and her mentor's guidance her skills would improve. In one of our conversations, she compared her struggling, first-teacher experience to using a boat without paddles, but she had crossed those uncharted waters during her first year and survived. Although there would be storms along the way, with her mentor paddle in one hand and her kindergarten curriculum paddle in the other, plying the waters of year 2 would be much easier.

### Implications of the Study

#### For Pre-Service Educators

No educator would deny the importance of pre-service training. Quality training, of course, is the ultimate goal. It is important to place the student teacher with experienced and qualified supervising classroom teachers, teachers who are committed to modeling good teaching strategies, coaching the student teacher, overseeing their planning, holding regular conferences, supplying feedback, and providing opportunities for the student teacher to interact with parents, attend faculty or staff meetings, and participate in extracurricular school functions such as the parent-teacher association meetings, school plays, education fairs, outdoor school, and class nights. In addition to the regular supervision of lesson planning and teaching from those plans, the supervising teacher should provide the student teacher with the opportunity to complete pupil mid-term reports, fill in a grade book, and/or use the computer grading system.



Pre-service educators need to look beyond the regular pre-service training and consider implementing plans to acquaint pre-service teachers with some of the clerical work that accompanies teaching: filling out attendance registers, including the opening and closing report forms; emergency drills record; student scholarship record; and exposing them to other forms such as health records, cumulative card, reading record, field-trip permission slips, and medical release forms.

### **For Administrators**

District administrators, when considering beginning-teacher induction programs, need to plan for the training of school administrators and mentors.

When asked to assume new roles, people need assistance and preparation. Whether new teachers, new teacher support providers, or administrators expanding group participation in decision-making, [each needs] the opportunity to develop new knowledge and skill in non-threatening, supported environments. Mentors, principals, and site leaders need training in their roles as supporters of new teachers. New teacher coaches and college and university support personnel need help learning how to work with new teachers in their classrooms. Administrators, teachers and program developers may need training in more complex approaches to new teacher assessment and support. (Wagner, 1990, p. 18)

School administrators need to conduct an initial orientation in-service just for new teachers to acquaint them with school protocol, policies, and procedures. Preparing a new-teacher packet would be helpful. To assist them in understanding the clerical work, provide sample forms with opportunity for explanation and questions. Supply them with a list of terms and definitions that are germane to the school or district. Provide them with a school handbook and explain sections that may be confusing to them. Plan regular, on-going orientation throughout the year.

Also school administrators could give consideration to inviting a pre-service educator from a college into the school to assist in beginning-teacher orientation and even to continue assisting the novice teacher throughout the first year. Research has shown that student-teacher training should be just the beginning of teachers' training. Novice teachers need time and experience to become veteran teachers. According to Doyle (1988), at least 5 years are required for novice teachers to master teaching exigency.

Assign the new teacher a trained mentor, someone preferably in the same grade or at least on the same level, such as early childhood or middle childhood. Schedule tri-staff meetings composed of the beginning teacher, mentor, and principal. If possible, plan regular meetings for novice teachers to interact with one another. Obtain staff development videos or provide guest speakers for some of these meetings. Arrange for a substitute occasionally so the mentor and protege can have release time to observe in each other's classrooms.

Mentors, however, are not evaluators. The principal needs to conduct frequent informal and formal evaluations with pre- and post-evaluation conferences. This feedback is crucial to the teacher's professional growth and development.

The challenge of education in general, and new teacher preparation and support in particular, defy simplistic approaches. However, the process of collaboration and the creativity that can result from multiple perspectives and resources have the potential to generate the solutions that will be needed to meet the complex challenge within education. (Waters et al., 1990, p. 60)

**For Mentors**

"One of the keys to successful mentoring is the match between (1) what the protege is, knows, does, and needs and (2) what the mentor provides" (Sullivan, 1992, p. 11). Each protege enters teaching with basic needs, yet is unique. A mentor, therefore, must assess the protege's strengths and weaknesses and design an individual program. Sullivan (1992) suggests that the mentor consider how he or she can be a "screen, an avenue, a wise counselor, a support, and a role model" (p. 3) for the protege.

Establishing rapport early on is crucial. Without it, the relationship will be ineffectual. Once rapport is established, it is important for the mentor to arrange for regular meetings where mentor and protege can plan uninterrupted time for discussion. At these meetings, the mentor can help orient the protege into the school culture, listen to concerns, and share from personal experience. By observing in the protege's classroom, the mentor can give commendations and offer recommendations to help the protege grow professionally. It is also important to invite the protege into the mentor's classroom to observe.

**For Beginning Teachers**

Beginning teachers need to realize that the first year of teaching is a transitional year, most new teachers make imperfect adjustments, and it is normal to need assistance. If someone within the school system is not assigned to the beginning teacher, the novice teacher should seek out someone to help with the problems and adjustments of that first year (Ryan, 1986). Since the mentor should be competent,

trustworthy, and willing and committed to act as a coach and confidant, the new teacher may need to get recommendations from the pre-service educator, the superintendent of schools, or the school principal for selecting a mentor. "The only thing worse than having no mentor is having a poor one" (Ryan, 1986, p. 33).

### **For the Seventh-day Adventist System**

The findings from this study and the results reported by McCune (1994) demonstrate that new teachers within the Seventh-day Adventist system believe beginning-teacher induction and orientation are crucial for their professional growth and development and personal job satisfaction. Additionally, these studies indicate that novice teachers desire and *expect* this support from their principals and believe mentors are necessary, especially during the initial job adjustment period. The study also indicates that mentors need and desire training.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

- 1. Expand the study to include veteran teachers new to a school system or grade.**

This study described the experiences of beginning teachers. My pilot study, in which I researched the experience of a former secondary teacher teaching for the first time in early childhood, indicated that she faced many of the same problems as first-year teachers. It would be beneficial to see if other experienced teachers in new settings have similar experiences.

**2. Expand the study to include beginning teachers in Grades 3 to 8.**

This study examined the experiences of beginning teachers in early childhood. Middle-school and junior-high teaching are quite different, and it would be worthwhile to know if beginning teachers at these levels encounter the same difficulties.

**3. Expand the study to include beginning teachers in small multigrade schools.**

Research by Odell and Ferraro (1992) suggests that "giving novice teachers assignments that involve multiple teaching preparations, classes out of their areas of expertise, and demanding extracurricular responsibilities [are] practices that not only add stress but also hinder the process of learning to teach" (p. 179). Many Seventh-day Adventist schools contain multigrade classes. Others schools are so small that one teacher teaches all subjects in Grades 1 to 8. It would be valuable to know if first-year teachers in schools with only one, two, or three teachers would experience similar or different challenges in adjusting from pre-service teaching to in-serving teaching.

**4. Conduct a study to compare the induction process of beginning elementary and secondary teachers.**

Research by Bobbitt (1993) suggests that beginning elementary teachers experience more nurturing environments than beginning secondary teachers.

**5. Extend the study over a longer period of time.**

This study examined the experiences of beginning teachers during their first year of teaching. It would be beneficial to compare teacher changes and perceptions of the first year with a second and, perhaps, a third year.

**Questions to Consider for Further Research on Mentoring**

1. Why is there such wide disparity in the research literature between successful and unsuccessful mentoring?
2. Why do some studies indicate that mentoring has a direct impact on teacher instructional skill and reflection on teaching, and other studies reveal no direct correlation?
3. How do the following factors contribute to effective mentoring: short-term mentoring versus long-term mentoring, voluntary mentoring versus mandatory mentoring, a collegial approach to mentoring versus a solitary approach?

**Summary**

Mentoring encompasses a multitude of tasks, but in the majority of studies cited in this paper, even the studies that reported unsuccessful mentoring results, the proteges expressed appreciation for the emotional support provided by the mentor. Julie's and Jenny's experiences corroborate these findings.

Julie struggled with time management. Upon reflection, she said, "[In the] beginning, my expectations were very unrealistic. . . . I didn't realize how much time is needed in maintaining a classroom, keeping records, grading, lesson

**plans. . . . I knew teaching took a lot of time, but I didn't realize it took THAT MUCH TIME!" (V. 1, pp. 146, 157).**

It was just such an evening when she felt overwhelmed with grading that Julie found her mentor to be especially helpful. Barbara offered to find her a student grader, wrote her an encouraging note, and even placed a vase of flowers on Julie's desk the following day (V. 3, p. 94).

Jenny felt her mentor supported her in many ways, but the most significant way was in answering her questions and offering advice. She conveys this when stating what counsel she would give to new teachers: **"I would tell them to look for someone to give them advice. . . . They definitely need a mentor. To get through that first year, you have to! Ask that lady every question in the world. Just bleed that lady!"** (V. 2, p. 153) Ashley was there not just for their weekly meeting, but at crucial times when Jenny needed assistance.

All of us know the story of the Edsel automobile. Everybody thinks that Edsel failed because Ford didn't do its homework. In fact, it was the best-engineered, the best-researched, the best everything car. There was only one thing wrong with it: nobody in the Ford Motor Company believed in it. It was contrived. It was designed on the basis of research and not on the basis of commitment. And so when it got into a little trouble, nobody supported the child. I'm not saying it could have been a success. But without that personal commitment, it certainly never could be. (Drucker, 1990, p. 7)

Julie's and Jenny's mentors were personally committed to their proteges: to support, to listen, to answer questions, to offer suggestions, and to guide them through their initial year of teaching. Exemplifying true collegiality and servant leadership, each mentor offered to continue with her mentor role the following year, an offer both teachers readily accepted.

## **APPENDIX**



**APPENDIX A**  
**ORIENTING BEGINNING TEACHERS: A CHECK LIST**

## ORIENTING BEGINNING TEACHERS: A CHECKLIST

Teacher attrition rate within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is approaching crisis proportions. The North American Division has expressed a desire to study beginning teacher issues. We, here at Andrews University, request your assistance in answering the following questions concerning beginning teacher orientation.

1. Indicate the strategies your Conference Department of Education currently uses to assist beginning teachers by checking ( / ) whether the item is SUFFICIENT, SOMEWHAT SUFFICIENT, or INSUFFICIENT. Indicate the person employing the strategy by placing an S for SUPERINTENDENT, A for ASSOCIATE OR ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, O for OTHERS. Check NOT APPLICABLE if strategy is not used.

	SUFFICIENT	SOMEWHAT SUFFICIENT	INSUFFICIENT	PERSON	NOT APPLICABLE
Use of TELEPHONE in nurturing/followup	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Periodic classroom VISITS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A MENTORING program for beginning teachers	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
WORKSHOPS targeted for beginning teachers	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Consultation with others (i.e. university personnel) concerning beginning teacher PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Beginning teacher SUPPORT TEAMS with conference representation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A formal teacher INDUCTION PROGRAM in schools with beginning teacher(s)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. If your Conference Department of Education is participating in beginning activities other than those listed in Question 1, please list and rate. Use reverse side for additional items.


3. Comments: (Please respond on back side of this sheet.)

Name of SUPERINTENDENT completing form \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

To Return: Please place in enclosed self-addressed envelope and mail it today. Thank you.

**APPENDIX B**  
**EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES**

## DESCRIBING YOURSELF AS AN EVALUATOR OF TEACHERS

This form has been designed to allow you to describe yourself as an evaluator of teachers. Your responses will be combined with those of teachers and other evaluators to yield a clear picture of the key ingredients in an effective teacher evaluation experience. The goal of this research is to determine if and how the evaluation process can be revised to help it serve relevant and useful purposes. If we are to reach this goal, it will be important for you to provide frank and honest responses. This is why your answers will remain anonymous.

Please use the following scales to describe yourself on the attributes listed. Circle the letter that represents the point you select on each continuum.

How would you describe your—

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| 1. Knowledge of the technical aspects of teaching?                         | I know little   | A | B | C | D | E | I know a great deal |
| 2. Capacity to demonstrate or model needed changes in teacher performance? | Low   | A | B | C | D | E | High                |
| 3. Amount of experience as a teacher in the classroom?                     | None  | A | B | C | D | E | Extensive           |
| 4. Recency of experience as a teacher in the classroom?                    | Not recent  | A | B | C | D | E | Recent              |
| 5. Repertoire of suggestions for good teaching?                            | Limited   | A | B | C | D | E | Extensive           |
| 6. Persuasiveness of the rationale you use to defend your suggestions?     | Not persuasive  | A | B | C | D | E | Persuasive          |
| 7. Knowledge of subject matter taught by teachers you evaluate?            | Limited   | A | B | C | D | E | Extensive           |
| 8. Strength of your expectations for yourself?                             | Demand little   | A | B | C | D | E | Demand a great deal |
| 9. Experience as a supervisor of teachers?                                 | A: 0 to 1 year<br>B: 2 to 4 years<br>C: 5 to 7 years<br>D: 8 to 10 years<br>E: 11 or more years |   |   |   |   |   |                     |

- |   |                     |   |   |   |   |   |                        |
|---|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 10. General expectations of teachers?             | Not able to improve | A | B | C | D | E | Able to improve        |
| 11. Expectations regarding teachers' motivations? | Willing to improve  | A | B | C | D | E | Not willing to improve |
| 12. Ability to encourage risk-taking in teachers? | Low                 | A | B | C | D | E | High                   |
| 13. Willingness to take risks yourself?           | I don't take risks  | A | B | C | D | E | I take risks           |
| 14. Working relationship to teachers?             | Adversary           | A | B | C | D | E | Helper                 |

**How would you describe your interpersonal manner in terms of your—**

- |   |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |                          |
|---|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| 15. Level of teacher trust?                               | Low                              | A | B | C | D | E | High                     |
| 16. Interpersonal manner?                                 | Threatening                      | A | B | C | D | E | Not threatening          |
| 17. Temperament?  | Impatient                        | A | B | C | D | E | Patient                  |
| 18. Flexibility?  | Rigid                            | A | B | C | D | E | Flexible                 |
| 19. Attitude regarding the purpose of teacher evaluation? | Teacher accountability           | A | B | C | D | E | Teacher growth           |
| 20. Confidence that this purpose will be achieved?        | Lack confidence                  | A | B | C | D | E | Very confident           |
| 21. Training in teacher evaluation?                       | None                             | A | B | C | D | E | Extensive                |
| 22. Listening skills?                                     | Ineffective                      | A | B | C | D | E | Very effective           |
| 23. Ability to convey your messages to teachers clearly?  | Unclear                          | A | B | C | D | E | Very clear               |
| 24. Ability to give teachers positive feedback?           | Ineffective                      | A | B | C | D | E | Very effective           |
| 25. Ability to give teachers negative feedback?           | Ineffective                      | A | B | C | D | E | Very effective           |
| 26. Ability to mix positive and negative feedback?        | Relatively ineffective at mixing | A | B | C | D | E | Very effective at mixing |

**Are there other dimensions of you as an evaluator of teachers that you think are related to your success (or lack of success) in that role? If so, please specify.**

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## TEACHER EVALUATION EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

This form has been designed to allow you to describe your experience with teacher evaluation in some detail. Your responses will be combined with those of other teachers to yield a clearer picture of the key ingredients in an effective teacher evaluation experience. The goal of this research is to determine if and how the evaluation process can be revised to help it serve relevant and useful purposes. If we are to reach this goal, it will be important for you to provide frank and honest responses. This is why your answers will remain anonymous.

As you will see, this is not a superficial questionnaire. It is designed to be comprehensive in scope and will take more than a few minutes to complete. For this reason, it is crucial that you read and follow directions very carefully. Please set aside twenty uninterrupted minutes to provide thoughtful responses.

### The Definition of Teacher Evaluation

Guidelines for teacher evaluation often suggest that probationary and tenured teachers be formally evaluated annually. The process leading to the once-a-year evaluation may consist of goal-setting, classroom observation, and conferencing between teacher and supervisor before and after the observation. Sound practice also may include less formal, more frequent interactions between supervisor and teacher. When reference is made in this questionnaire to *teacher evaluation*, it should be understood to encompass all these elements.

### Specific Instructions

Given this definition of teacher evaluation, please reflect on the last time you were evaluated—your *most recent* experience with your teacher evaluation system. Regard the entire evaluation process, including planning for evaluation, classroom observations, and feedback. As you think about this experience, how would you rate the *overall quality* of the evaluation? Circle the appropriate number:

Low quality      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9      High quality

Next, please rate the *impact* of that teacher evaluation experience on three specific aspects of your professional practices. Use the scales pro-

vided to indicate impact, from 0 meaning no impact to 9 meaning strong impact.

- Please code the *impact on your attitudes* about teaching: A strong impact rating (9) would reflect a profound change in how you feel about the content you teach, your students, and/or yourself as a teacher.

No impact      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9      Strong impact

- Code the *impact on your teaching behaviors and strategies*: A strong impact (9) would reflect major changes in your instructional behavior, classroom management strategies, evaluation practices, and/or other observable dimensions of your teaching.

No impact      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9      Strong impact

- Code the *impact on your understanding of the teaching-learning process*: A strong impact (9) would reflect a change in your ability to account for your effectiveness (or lack thereof), explain the reasons for your instructional decisions, and/or better understand student needs or behavior.

No impact      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9      Strong impact

Finally, please use the scales provided below (A through E) to describe yourself and the nature of your *most recent* teacher evaluation experience. Do this by—

- Considering the attribute to be described
- Studying the scale to be used to describe it
- Selecting the letter that represents the point you select on each continuum
- Circling that letter.



**A. Describe your attributes as a teacher:**

- |   |                         |   |   |   |   |   |                            |
|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Rate your overall competence as a teacher.                       | I'm minimally competent | A | B | C | D | E | I'm an outstanding teacher |
| 2. Rate the strength of your professional expectations of yourself. | I demand little         | A | B | C | D | E | I demand a great deal      |

*Describe your interpersonal manner:*

- |  |                               |   |   |   |   |   |                           |
|--|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| 3. Orientation to risk-taking                      | I avoid risks                 | A | B | C | D | E | I take risks              |
| 4. Orientation to others                           | I'm reserved, private         | A | B | C | D | E | I'm open, public          |
| 5. Attribution of reasons for your success/failure | I hold others responsible     | A | B | C | D | E | I hold myself responsible |
| 6. Orientation to change                           | I'm relatively slow to change | A | B | C | D | E | I'm relatively flexible   |
| 7. Orientation to experimentation in classroom     | I don't experiment            | A | B | C | D | E | I experiment frequently   |
| 8. Openness to criticism                           | I'm relatively closed         | A | B | C | D | E | I'm relatively open       |
| 9. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching      | I know a little               | A | B | C | D | E | I know a great deal       |
| 10. Knowledge of subject matter                    | I know a little               | A | B | C | D | E | I know a great deal       |

*Describe your teaching experience:*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 11. At current grade   | A: 0 to 1 year<br>B: 2 to 3 years<br>C: 4 to 5 years<br>D: 6 to 10 years<br>E: 11 or more years |
| 12. With current content (if secondary teacher)                        | A: 0 to 1 year<br>B: 2 to 3 years<br>C: 4 to 5 years<br>D: 6 to 10 years<br>E: 11 or more years |
| 13. Experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience | Waste of time<br>A B C D E Helpful  |

**B. Describe your perceptions of the person who evaluated your performance (most recently):**

- |  |                   |   |   |   |   |   |                 |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| 14. Credibility as a source of feedback                  | Not credible      | A | B | C | D | E | Very credible   |
| 15. Working relationship with you                        | Adversary         | A | B | C | D | E | Helper          |
| 16. Level of trust                                       | Not trustworthy   | A | B | C | D | E | Trustworthy     |
| 17. Interpersonal manner                                 | Threatening       | A | B | C | D | E | Not threatening |
| 18. Temperament  | Impatient         | A | B | C | D | E | Patient         |
| 19. Flexibility  | Rigid             | A | B | C | D | E | Flexible        |
| 20. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching           | Not knowledgeable | A | B | C | D | E | Knowledgeable   |
| 21. Capacity to demonstrate or model needed improvements | Low               | A | B | C | D | E | High            |
| 22. Familiarity with your particular classroom           | Unfamiliar        | A | B | C | D | E | Very familiar   |
| 23. Experience in classrooms in general                  | Little            | A | B | C | D | E | A great deal    |
| 24. Usefulness of suggestions for improvement            | Useless           | A | B | C | D | E | Useful          |
| 25. Persuasiveness of rationale for suggestions          | Not persuasive    | A | B | C | D | E | Very persuasive |

**C. Describe the attributes of the information gathered on your performance during your most recent evaluation:**

*What procedures were used to address the dimensions of your teaching (standards) to be evaluated?*

- |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |                 |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| 26. Were standards communicated to you?                               | Not at all   | A | B | C | D | E | In great detail |
| 27. Were standards clear to you?                                      | Vague  | A | B | C | D | E | Clear           |
| 28. Were standards endorsed by you as appropriate for your classroom? | Not endorsed   | A | B | C | D | E | Endorsed        |
| 29. What was the form of the standards?                               | A: Goals to be attained<br>B: Personal and/or professional traits to possess |   |   |   |   |   |                 |

30. Were the standards. . . **The same for all teachers?** A B C D E **Unique to you?**

*To what extent were the following sources of performance information tapped as part of the evaluation?*

31. Observation of your classroom performance **Not considered** A B C D E **Used extensively**

32. Examination of classroom or school records (lesson plans, etc.) **Not considered** A B C D E **Used extensively**

33. Examination of student achievement **Not considered** A B C D E **Used extensively**

*Extent of observations in your classroom:*

(Note: In these items, FORMAL refers to observations that were preannounced and were preceded and followed by a conference with the evaluator; INFORMAL refers to unannounced drop-in visits.)

34. Number of FORMAL observations per year (most recent experience) A: 0  
B: 1  
C: 2  
D: 3  
E: 4 or more

35. Approximate frequency of INFORMAL observations (most recent experience) A: None  
B: Less than 1 per month  
C: Once per month  
D: Once per week  
E: Daily

*Average length of observation (most recent experience):*

36. FORMAL **Brief (few minutes)** A B C D E **Extended (40 minutes or more)**

37. INFORMAL **Brief (few minutes)** A B C D E **Extended (40 minutes or more)**

38. Number of different people observing and evaluating you during the year A: Supervisor only  
B: Supervisor & 1 other person  
C: Supervisor & 2 other people  
D: Supervisor & 3 or more others  
E: Other

If others besides your supervisor evaluated you, who were they (titles only)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Please describe the attributes of the feedback you received:**

- |  |              |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 39. Amount of information received                                 | None         | A | B | C | D | E | Great deal     |
| 40. Frequency of feedback  | Infrequent   | A | B | C | D | E | Frequent       |
| 41. Formality of feedback  | Informal     | A | B | C | D | E | Formal         |
| 42. Depth of information provided                                  | Shallow      | A | B | C | D | E | In-depth       |
| 43. Quality of the ideas and suggestions contained in the feedback | Low          | A | B | C | D | E | High           |
| 44. Specificity of information provided                            | General      | A | B | C | D | E | Specific       |
| 45. Nature of information provided                                 | Judgmental   | A | B | C | D | E | Descriptive    |
| 46. Timing of the feedback   | Delayed      | A | B | C | D | E | Immediate      |
| 47. Feedback focused on district teaching standards                | Ignored them | A | B | C | D | E | Reflected them |

**E. Describe the attributes of the evaluation context:**

- |  |      |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 48. Amount of time spent on the evaluation process, including your time and that of all other participants | None | A | B | C | D | E | Great deal |
|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|

*Resources available for professional development:*

- |  |      |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 49. Time allotted during the teaching day for professional development | None | A | B | C | D | E | Great deal |
| 50. Available training programs and models                             | None | A | B | C | D | E | Many       |

*District values and policies in evaluation:*

- |   |                        |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 51. Clarity of policy statements regarding purpose for evaluation | Vague                  | A | B | C | D | E | Clear          |
| 52. Intended role of evaluation                                   | Teacher accountability | A | B | C | D | E | Teacher growth |

- 53. Recent history of labor relations in district      Turbulent    A   B   C   D   E    Tranquil
  
- 54. Impact of bargaining agreement on evaluation process      None    A   B   C   D   E    Great deal
  
- 55. Impact of state law on evaluation process      None    A   B   C   D   E    Great deal

**F. Are there other dimensions of you as a teacher, the nature of the performance data collected, the nature of the feedback, the evaluation context, or other factors that you think are related to the success (or lack of success) of your past teacher evaluation experiences that should be included in the above list? If so, please specify.**

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**APPENDIX C**  
**SCENIC VISTA MENTOR CRITERIA**

## **MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAM**

### **The goals for the mentor teacher program are:**

1. To offer moral support, guidance, and feedback to beginning teacher
2. To help the beginning teacher become familiar with conference policies and routines
3. To assist and guide the beginning teacher in developing and implementing a classroom management plan (including student behavior, long-range curriculum and daily lesson planning, scheduling, grading plans, motivational techniques, and instructional presentation and content)

### **The criteria for selecting mentors are:**

1. To have demonstrated exemplary teaching ability as indicated by effective communication skills, subject-matter knowledge, and mastery of a range of teaching strategies necessary to meet the needs of pupils in different contexts
2. To have been in conference two years and hold current certification
3. To teach same grades, hold same ideology/philosophy

### **The personal qualities of mentor teachers are:**

1. To be people- and helping-oriented, proficient with interpersonal relationships, able to build trusting relationships
2. To be flexible, empathetic listener, confident and resourceful

### **The benefits to the mentor are:**

1. Recognition
2. Broadened horizon
3. Training in supervision techniques
4. Development of a leadership role
5. Re-certification credit

### **The responsibilities of the mentor teacher**

#### **To the new teacher are:**

1. To telephone the new teacher prior to the beginning of the school year to encourage and answer any questions
2. To telephone the new teacher within the first school week to give guidance and support
3. To spend one full day in the classroom of the new teacher in the first month to advise and assist as needed
4. To arrange for the new teacher to visit the classroom of the mentor teacher during the first month of school for observation
5. To continue to assist the new teacher by telephone at least once a month during the school year and visit as needed.

#### **To the Superintendent/Associate are:**

1. To inform the superintendent/associate of visits/calls and progress being made
2. To telephone any concerns the new teacher has that the superintendent/associate can assist with and or alleviate

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# VITA

## TEACHING & ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

1993-Present	Associate Superintendent of Schools: Chesapeake Conference Children's Ministries Director: Chesapeake Conference
1991-1993	Principal, Fredericksburg Junior Academy: Potomac Conference
Summer, 1992	Contract Instructor: Oakwood College, AL
1990	Graduate Assistant: Teacher Education, Andrews University
1988-1989	Ed.S. Fieldwork & Internship: Andrews Univ., Chesapeake, Potomac
1987-1988	Research Assistant: Dr. Paul Brantley, Andrews University
1986-1988	Grade 4 Teacher: Michigan Conference
1982-1986	Grades 1-8 Teacher: Mountain View Conference
1969-70; 1977-82	Substitute Teacher: Kankakee Co., IL; Mercer & Greenbriar Co., WV
1967-1969	Grade 6 Language Arts Teacher: Manteno Jr. High, IL
1966-1967	English Teacher: Cuba High School, IL

## CERTIFICATION

Administrator/Professional Commissioned Ministry of Teaching Credential (SDA Certification)  
West Virginia State Certificate (Permanent Professional)  
Michigan State Certificate (1-12 Continuing)

## EDUCATION

Andrews University: B.A., 1965; Ed.S., 1991; Ed.D., 1995  
Brigham Young University: Summer, 1989  
WV University College of Graduate Studies: M.A., 1985  
Bluefield State College: 1980-81  
Greater Baltimore Academy: Diploma, 1961

## HONORS

Who's Who in American Education (1994-95, 1989-90)  
Phi Delta Kappa (1990 to Present)

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

National Association of Elementary Principals  
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development

## OTHER

Adventist Education 21st Century Curriculum Committee: Potomac Conference  
Child Abuse & Domestic Violence Task Force: General Conference of SDA  
Columbia Union School Administrators Council  
Children's Ministry Advisory: Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
Education Fair/Bible Bowl Committee: Mountain View Conference  
Elementary School Board Member/Executive Secretary: Mountain View & Potomac  
K-10, K-12 Boards of Education: Chesapeake, Columbia Union, Mt. View, Potomac  
K-10 Curriculum Committee: Chesapeake & Potomac Conferences  
K-12 Education Commission: Chesapeake Conference  
Newspaper Sponsor: Cuba High School, IL  
Principals' Advisory/Council: Chesapeake & Potomac Conferences  
School Evaluation Teams: Chesapeake, Mt. View, Ohio, Home Study Institute  
Teacher Supervisor: Andrews University, Chesapeake, Mt. View, & Potomac

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