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An Investigation of the Mentor-Protege Component of an Effective Teacher Induction Program

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An Investigation of the Mentor - Protege Component Of

An Effective Teacher Induction Program

(TITLE)

BY

Joseph A. McArthur

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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An Investigation of the Mentor-Protege Component
Of An Effective Teacher Induction Program

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EDA 6910 & 6920, Spring 1995

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify common elements in the mentor-protege component of Illinois' downstate school districts which have an enrollment between 2,000 and 6,000 students. One hundred individual schools were selected for the study. Individual schools were selected in order to assure a valid representation of grade levels and geographic locations. This study also identified those segments that, according to administrators, mentors, and beginning teachers, were the most effective in addressing their needs. The information the study gathered consisted of an examination of current literature and research, and contacts with first year teachers, mentors, and building administrators who were involved with the induction program. Information collected led to a descriptive statistical summary of findings. Recommendations were made toward the improvement of current induction programs as well as the creation of a mentor-protege program in districts where one does not exist.

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Chapter 1

Overview of the Problem

Introduction

Every profession faces the task of assimilating, or inducting, new members into its ranks. While the process may vary between professions, but, those entering the business and medical professions are inducted through extensive programs that are considered a natural part of such professions. Some common goals for the induction of the new member could be continuing education, smooth transition from formal education to professional career, inculturalization and retention into the specific profession, as well as assuring the continuation of the profession itself.

Inducting new teachers into the profession has been an educational activity since the beginning of formal education. Following Illinois' "five and five" early retirement incentive plan, induction has become a major activity of administrators. Involving seasoned staff to assist in the induction process has become a popular practice in recent years. Expanding the number of individuals in the induction process, while delegating certain responsibilities, allows the district to assure that each new teacher has a dedicated professional support structure which includes a one-

on-one mentor. In the writer's opinion, planning, adapting and implementing an effective mentor-protege program will serve educational goals shared by the community, business, board of education, and professional educators, as well as assure that new teachers entering the field will more likely choose to remain in the profession.

How new teachers are inducted into the ranks of professional educators, and how they are assisted in assuming the full status as professionals are the specific purposes of a district's induction program. The mentor-protege component is key to an effective induction program. It is the mentor who is the most important person "to the success of the new teacher" (Locke, 1987, p. 24) during the critical first year.

Statement of the Problem

Illinois school districts outside of metropolitan and suburban Chicago whose student enrollment range between 2,000 and 6,000 are often average in financial resources and administrative structure. These districts have programs and procedures which are often too large to be supervised by the superintendent from a "first hand" knowledge base, and traditionally do not have middle level administrative and professional personnel to directly oversee their many programs. In the author's experience, limitations of time and

resources may cause many administrators to adapt the "sink or swim" policy with new teachers.

Current practices often lack a systematic approach to the dissemination of vital information as well as a personal and professional support system for the new teacher. The district's policies and expectations, often contained in a manual, may be referred to, but are rarely explained to the protege. Classroom difficulties addressed only in an evaluative environment often results in the new teacher denying that difficulties exist. Systematic dissemination of information and supportive environmental controls are useful to the new teacher in his/her first experience of teaching. "The transition from student teacher to first-year teacher is a traumatic encounter with what has been labeled 'reality shock'" (Stone, 1987, p. 34). The mentor-protege program is a key to successful reduction of the number of teachers who leave the profession a few years after beginning their careers. The experiences of the first year teacher have been shown to be the determining factor upon the educator's effectiveness and style of teaching, in addition to the rate of attrition (Romatowski, 1989).

Specific Objectives of the Study

Objective One. To identify the common facets found in current mentor - protege programs within the selected school districts of

this study.

Objective Two. To identify the segments of mentor-protege programs that, according to administrators, new teachers, and mentors, are the most effective in meeting their needs.

Limitations of the Study

The study focused on new teachers in schools of moderate size (enrollments of 2,000 to 6,000 students) in down-state Illinois. The sample size of the study was limited to 100 school buildings from the 46 districts meeting the limitations of enrollment and geographic location. Individual school buildings were selected at random while assuring all districts and the three levels of public education would be included.

Definition of Terms

Mentor . An experienced teacher who is considered to be a “master teacher” in his/her subject area; an example of teaching at its best.

Protege. A first year teacher; one who has no formal teaching experience other than the required student teaching or internship which is necessary for state certification.

Induction. The short-term program through which a first year teacher is introduced to the specific school, community and profession of teaching; preplanned, structured experiences, activities, and studies to increase the protege’s knowledge and

improve his/her teaching skills.

Acculturation. The indoctrination of a first year teacher into the culture of schools; occupational socialization; process of learning the norms and role behavior of the group.

Training. Specific efforts to address areas of need or deficiency; a continuation of the teacher education program aimed to assist specific skills or knowledge useful to the professional educator.

Inservice. Specific training that occurs during the school year; typical areas addressed are classroom management, discipline, student evaluation, critical thinking, questioning, motivational techniques, special education needs, stress management, etc.

Preservice. Informational type training that occurs prior to the school year; topics often addressed are community resources, personnel responsibilities, introduction of individual personnel, designing lessons, school policies and procedures, student and teacher support services, etc.

CHAPTER II

Rationale, Related Literature and Research

Rationale

In order to reach educational goals that include higher student achievement, every aspect of the induction process should be examined. The writer has chosen the mentor-protege component because research has indicated that it carries the single strongest influence upon the first year teacher and, thus, influences the entire teaching career of new educators (Romatowski, 1989).

In districts of moderate size, the process of vacancy notice, application, screening, interview, and selection often result in the best candidate accepting the position. With many of Illinois' new teachers beginning their careers in schools of this size, it is imperative that all necessary efforts be made to assure a successful first year of teaching. The success of this first year is important, not only for the individual students being taught by the beginning teacher, but also for the retention of competent teachers in Illinois classrooms.

In the writer's experience, many districts, however, choose to leave the induction process entirely in the building administrator's realm of responsibility. Often, too consumed with the day-to-day necessities of the school, he/she is not attuned to the special needs

of the beginning teacher. It is the writer's position that a formalized mentor program for the district which addresses these special needs, or at least a program established within a building, would be the first step toward improving classroom instruction, teacher effectiveness, staff morale and professionalism, while assisting the beginning teacher to achieve the status of "veteran." Therefore, an examination of mentor-protege programs in Illinois' downstate districts of 2,000 to 6,000 students should greatly assist superintendents and principals in designing an effective program. Common and effective elements may be adapted or modified to increase the effectiveness of a current program or become the basis of designing a mentor-protege program for a district or individual building.

Review of the Literature and Research

A review of current literature indicates an increased awareness of the nature, difficulty of a teacher's first year, and the disturbing number of new teachers leaving the field of education. Correlated to this awareness is the considerable number of articles concerning the induction process of new teachers. Beginning teacher induction programs, often including mentor-protege teams, have become very popular for improving the retention of teachers and quality of teaching. The literature has supplied an examination of

how new teachers are inducted and the harsh difficulties they experience. These difficulties, such as feelings of isolation, reluctance to call for help, expectations of performance, lack of experience with classroom organization and discipline, disenchantment, along with difficult classroom and extracurricular assignments, are forcing the best and brightest new teachers to leave teaching (Smith-Davis & Cohen, 1989). Statistical evidence reveals that some urban, inner-city schools experience up to 30% of new teachers resigning before Christmas.

The induction of new teachers into the professional culture of the school has become the focal point in turning the tide of new teacher attrition. Locke (1987) pointed out that the induction program serves both the new teacher and the students. While improved instruction leads to greater levels of learning by students, the quality of instruction in the first year has been shown to positively impact the quality of instruction throughout a teacher's career. Romatowski (1989) suggests that the experiences of the first year of teaching have a strong influence on the level of effectiveness which that teacher is able to achieve and sustain.

The attitudes carried over an entire teaching career are forged in the early years of teaching. Attitudes and abilities which affect even a forty year career and the decision to remain in the teaching

profession are greatly affected by the first year experience. DeBolt (1991), while asserting that assistance is more effective than assessment, concluded that support of new teachers is critical now because of increasing demands and pressures upon teachers. He also noted that with the changing demographics of our nation's children and schools, assistance for teachers from minority groups is especially needed. Administrators should view their responsibility to first year teachers in a new way. They should become actively involved in the induction and retention of new teachers.

The literature is replete with suggestions that induction, and particularly mentor programs, have the potential to increase the retention rate of teachers and improve the quality of their instruction (Hulling-Austin, 1992). Many practices available to administrators in assisting beginning teachers are reduced teaching loads, programs for support from peers and experienced colleagues, formative evaluations rather than just summative ones, released time for reciprocal observations with veteran teachers and conferences with the mentor teacher.

Stone (1987) espouses that the "mentor" role assumed by the principal can assist or discourage the beginning teacher.

Susan was hired in the middle of the year and

assigned to a special first grade class which included all of that grade level's discipline problems. The principal's idea of supervision was to frequently pop into class unannounced, sit silently in the back for 20 minutes, and walk out with a long face. Susan would then be called into the office and lectured on the noise level and the unruliness of her students. He offered no support and his remarks were negative. His only suggestion was that she observe Mrs. Jones, but he didn't provide any released time to do this (Stone, p. 34).

The influence of the principal is profound upon the beginning teacher, however, this is rarely the individual sought for assistance (Dell, 1988).

Assigning a mentor within the same building is valuable as the accessibility of the mentor to the protege is essential to the success of the program. Additional considerations for the mentor-protege program are same or similar subject-grade areas; released time for ongoing reciprocal observations and planning; social opportunities with fellow beginning teachers, veteran staff, and support groups; and specific training for mentor teachers (Hirsh,

1990). To assist first year teachers Hirsh (1990) suggests the opportunity to be observed by “safe” individuals and to observe experienced teachers. Huling-Austin states that while it is unfair to “ask mentors to assume total responsibility for the induction process,” (Hirsh, p. 3) the mentor is of extreme importance to the success of a first year teacher. Without adequate district involvement and funding, a unit program for staff development cannot exist. The University of Wisconsin-Whitewall Teacher Induction Program was cited by Mainly, Siudzinski, and Vary (1989) for its use of collaborative teams, technical support and continuous assistance throughout the entire first year.

The mentor concept is also related to the larger aspiration of improving teaching by transforming professional relations (Feiman-Nemser, 1992). Mentors are encouraged to model thinking about teaching. To do this, mentors are encouraged to discuss their own experiences with proteges. Developing the protege includes assisting him/her to become self-reflecting.

The literature has numerous examples of training sessions and related studies of induction and mentor programs; however, the study of mentor selection and training has received limited examination (Feiman-Nemser, 1992). The selection and training of the mentor is salient to the success of a mentor-protege program,

and the success of the mentor-protege program is a key to effectively inducting and retaining new teachers.

Research Review

Odell (1988) writes that 95% of new teachers surveyed indicated that teaching is different than they expected. Questioned as to whom they received help from when dealing with challenges, she reported that almost 60% of those surveyed listed colleague teachers, while only 14% listed principals. The proximity, knowledge, and positional relationship held by a colleague explains why a growing number of schools are incorporating mentor teachers as a critical, if not major, component of the induction program.

The manner in which teachers are introduced to their first job differs from most other vocations. Smith-Davis and Cohen (1989) note that new teachers are expected to perform at the same level as seasoned veteran teachers without a gradual induction. They go on to list statistical evidence of the alarming state of teacher attrition: only half the teachers who enter the field remain more than five years, the first year teacher is two and one half times more likely to leave the profession than the more experienced teacher, and teachers who are the most qualified and academically superior appear to be the most likely to leave.

Lawson (1992) states that the current view of induction has

become popular due to three influences: educational research, political intrusions, and educational reform proposals. He argues that collaboration between teachers and school administrators has grown in induction programs where mentor-protege partnerships are incorporated. Administrators are beginning to recognize that all teachers are not alike, interchangeable, and expendable. Lawson warns against mentor programs which try to do too much, neglect the needs of teachers, and foster an atmosphere of competition.

Uniqueness of the Study

The writer has investigated the effective practices employed by downstate Illinois school districts. The writer believes that these practices will assist districts when examining their mentor-protege programs and any district which will be taking proactive steps toward improvement of the delivery of education to the students of Illinois and to the retention of promising new teachers in the education profession. Therefore, this study offers significant information relevant to mentor-protege programs in Illinois. It will also assist Illinois' new teachers by increasing their effectiveness in the classroom and, perhaps, future generations of public school students by slowing the rate of attrition of those exiting the field of education.

CHAPTER III

Design of the Study

General Design of the Study

The study was designed to identify common facets found in current mentor-protege programs within the selected districts and to identify the segments that, according to administrators, new teachers, and their mentors, are the most effective in meeting their needs. The research from this study provided both qualitative and quantitative results. The qualitative results were based upon the opinions and perceptions of the respondents, while the quantitative were drawn from the objective inquiries of the survey instrument. Results from the study were reported both in narrative form and in graphs.

Sample and Population

Forty six school districts in downstate Illinois were selected to respond to the study. These districts, ranging in student enrollments of 2,000 to 6,000 were surveyed concerning their unit mentor-protege program. Surveys were directed to selected schools within each of the participating districts. The selection of schools was designed to assure representation of the three levels of Illinois schools - elementary, middle or junior high, and high school. To assure valid and representative results, up to three schools were

contacted from each of the identified school districts with one administrator, and one to three mentors and first year teachers were surveyed. The choice of buildings was based on random selection when more than a single building was present within a district.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The surveys used for the study were developed by the writer. Specifically, administrators were surveyed concerning the district's mentor program in the areas of selection, training, and assigning of mentor teachers, as well as district fiscal commitments, personnel involvement, and overall satisfaction with the program (see Appendix C). These data provide a block of the quantitative results of the study.

Beginning and mentor teachers were surveyed for personal opinions of the overall effectiveness of the program, from whom they received most of their support, individual units of the program, training, and suggested improvements (see Appendixes A and B). The data provided both quantitative and qualitative results for the study. Data were reported through the use of graphs and narrative comparisons.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative

data of the study. Items of the survey instruments were compared using percentage of respondents and type of respondent (administrator, mentor, or protege). Responses were categorized as current, effective, and/or recommended practice.

The qualitative data from the instruments were used to determine practices considered the most effective by mentors and proteges. These data were analyzed through the use of graphs. A narrative analysis was also made. Qualitative data were reported in the listing of effective segments of moderate sized school districts in downstate Illinois.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Results of Objective One

District mentor-protege programs

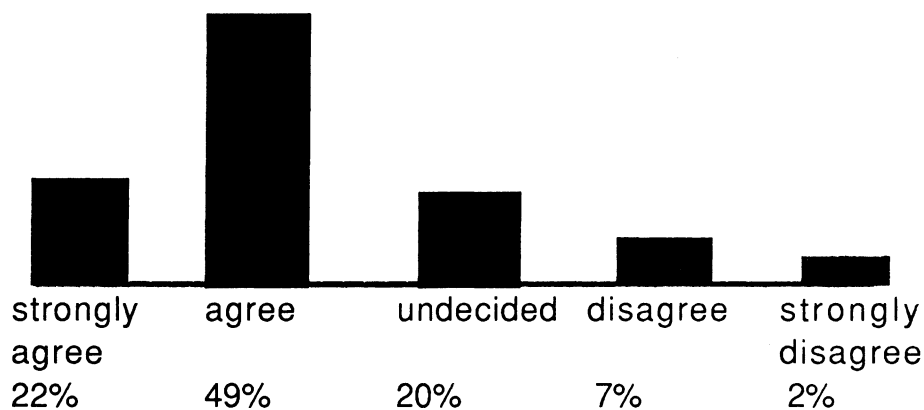
The first objective of this study, to identify the common facets found in current mentor-protege programs within the selected school districts, was achieved through the use of the survey instruments designed by the author. 42 of the 46 districts selected responded to the survey providing a ninety one percent response rate. Twenty one districts, exactly fifty percent, reported having a district mentor-protege program while twenty one responded that no such program existed in their district.

Key to a district's mentor-protege program is the direct role that the central administration plays in the program and the individual components employed by the district. Questions concerning the involvement of central office were addressed in the administrator's survey instrument.

Question One addressed the perception of administrators as to the degree the central office is involved in the induction of new teachers. While the majority of administrators, 71%, responded either "strongly agree" or "agree" that central office is involved with the induction of new teachers, 29% were "undecided,"

"disagree," or "strongly disagree" with the statement. Figure One represents the perceptions of administrators concerning the question of central office involvement in the induction process.

Figure 1. Central office is involved with the induction of new teacher



Note. Based upon responses from 42 school districts.

When district administrators responded to questions concerning the areas and types of central administration involvement the findings were widely scattered. Questions Two through Six of the survey addressed these concerns. While the majority of administrators felt that central office was involved with the induction of new teachers, there was little consistency among the districts as to what that involvement included. Figure 2 illustrates the results of these five questions.

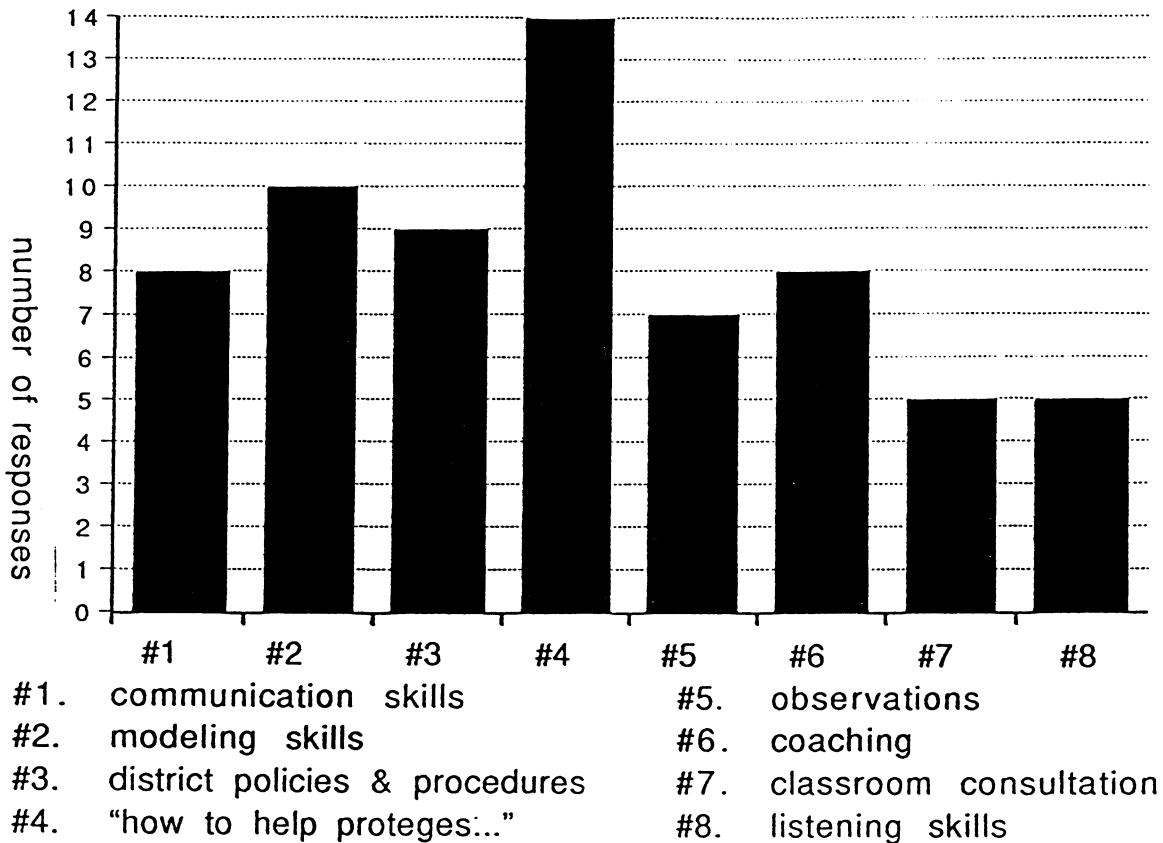
Building administrators were relied upon to select and assign mentors from their staff in 88% of the districts with mentor-protege programs. The other twelve percent of the districts relied upon either central office or a committee for the selection and assignment. The assignment of the mentor-protege was limited to one year in 78% of the districts, and the mentor and protege were within the same building in 98%.

Mentor responses

The literature review supported training mentors prior to their serving in the position (Hirsch, 1990). However, only twenty-five percent of districts with mentor-protege programs actually conducted training for mentors (Mentors, 1995). All districts which trained mentors offered this training prior to the beginning of the school year, and some were limited to a single inservice session.

Nineteen schools were represented through the mentor surveys returned. The current training being given to mentors is consistently represented in each of the districts which are addressing mentor training. Figure Five represents mentor responses to the eight areas of training.

Figure 5. Current training given to mentors



Note. Based upon mentor responses from 19 school buildings in districts which train mentors.

To review two criteria of mentor selection by building administrators, mentors were also surveyed concerning their number of years in their district and the number of times that they had served as mentor. The average number of years in the district was 15.2 while the years of service ranged from 1 to 30. The age group which had over 20 years of service to their district represented

46% of mentors. Forty two percent of the mentors had served less than 10 years, and 12% had served more than 10 but less than 20 years.

The average number of times mentors worked with a protege was 1.7 while a range of 1 to 8 was reported. Seventy one percent of the mentors reported this year as their first year of serving as a mentor, while 18% reported their second year and 11% their third year or more. As noted, nearly three fourths of the 105 mentors who participated in the survey were serving in their first year as a mentor, the majority of which had served in their district in excess of 20 years.

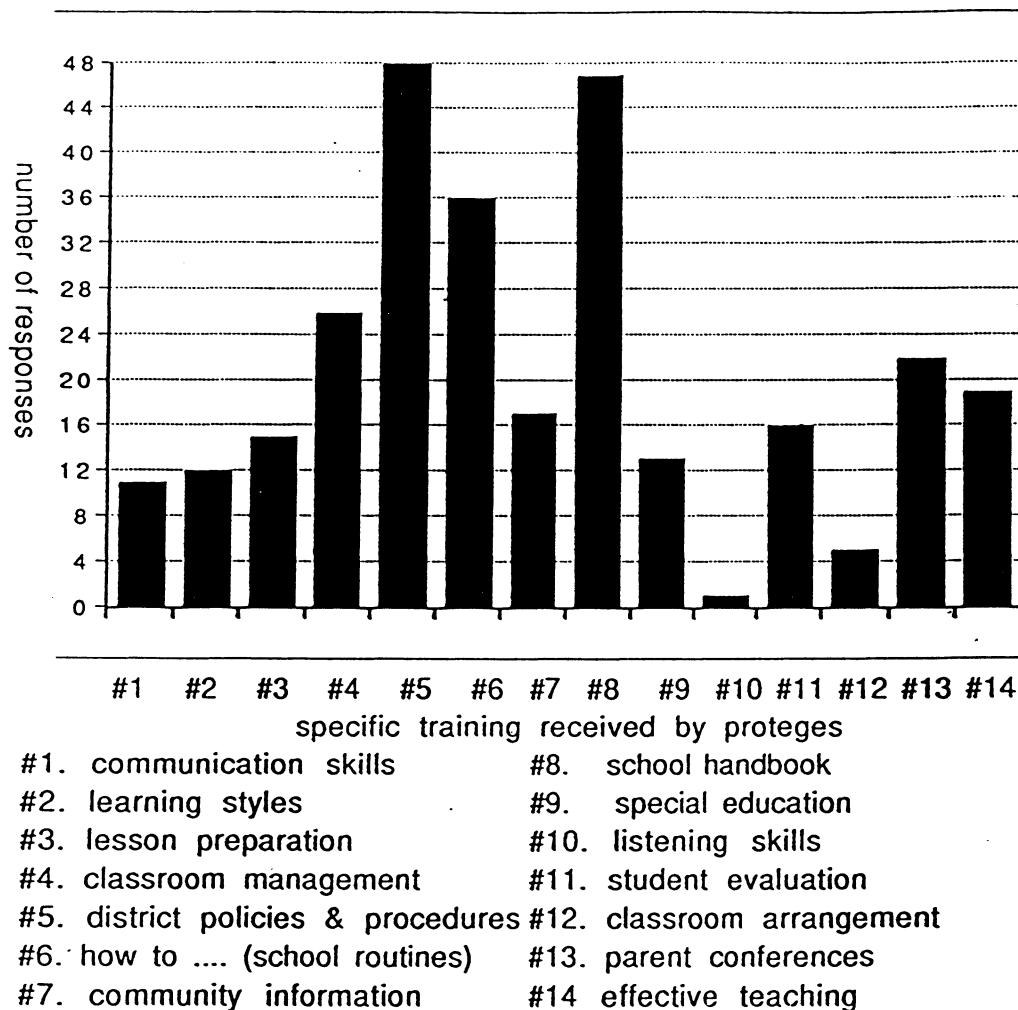
Protege responses

Nearly three-fourths of all districts surveyed reported that proteges received special inservice training prior to the beginning of school. The training offered however ranged from normal orientation activities to carefully planned activities to welcome and begin the acculturation of first year teachers into their role as "educators." Responses from proteges best describe the focus of training sessions. "We had one day of inservice, but it was not specifically for new teachers. It was for everyone and didn't cover the basics that every first year teacher needs to know. I felt very prepared curriculum wise, but very shaky as far as the daily routine

and procedures" (Protege, 1995). "What was wonderful in our district was before school, new teachers were given a bus ride around and through the district then treated to lunch. It broke the ice and made for a wonderful beginning to a great year. We ate lunch with our mentors. I liked it very much" (Protege, 1995).

Figure Six reports the training received by proteges.

Figure 6. Current training given to proteges



Note. Based upon responses from fifty two school buildings in districts with a mentor-protege program.

Specific training received by beginning teachers included all areas surveyed. Though listening skills training was reported by only one protege, many of the training areas are common in those districts providing protege training. Question Five of the beginning teacher survey addressed reduced teaching loads. No response reflected that this is a practice included in districts which administer a mentor-protege program. The review of the literature suggested that a reduced teaching load was one means of improving the instruction of first year teachers (Hulling-Austin, 1992). Eighty-six percent of proteges responded in the survey that they did not have a lighter teaching load than veteran teachers.

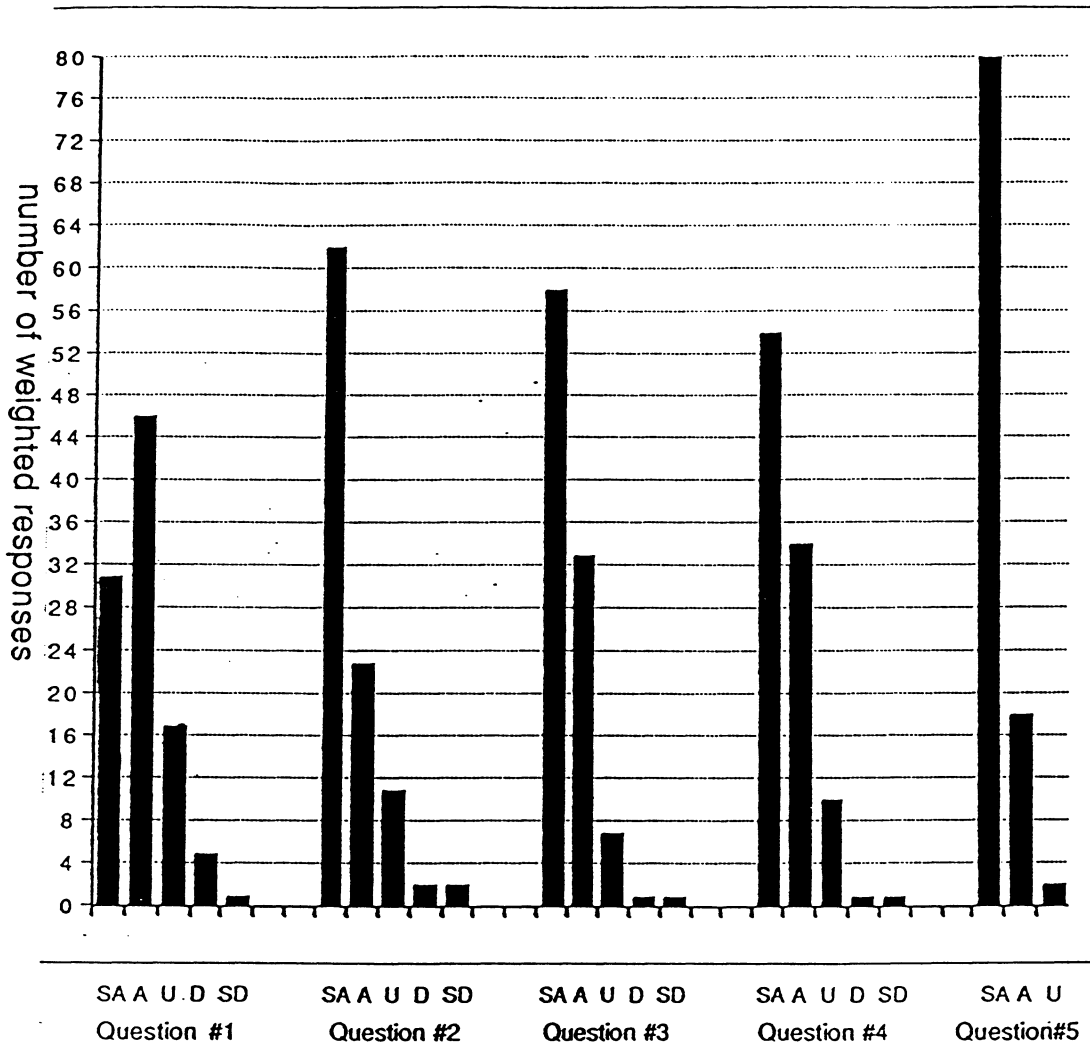
Beginning teacher perceptions of their district, principal, and mentor, as well as their intentions to continue teaching were also surveyed. Proteges, by a 77% majority, felt that their districts had an effective induction program. Eighty-five percent indicated that they could talk to their principal about classroom difficulties, a finding that is contrary to the view held in the research review.

When responding to questions concerning their mentor the majority again support the relationship of the mentor-protege. Ninety-one percent reported they could talk to their mentor about classroom difficulties, while 85% indicated that they could talk to

their principal about classroom difficulties, this area. The high degree of confidence to confide with the mentor is in agreement with the review of research. However, a slightly lesser percent, 88%, indicated that their mentor was concerned with the protege's success.

The review of research drew attention to the protege's perception of teaching prior to and after beginning the first teaching assignment. Odell (1988) noted that 95% responded that teaching was different than they expected. This perception was not directly surveyed in this research, however, 98% of the proteges responded that they planned to still be teaching in five years. This is a very high percentage reflecting a perception of confidence at the beginning of the second semester. Protege responses are listed in figure seven.

Figure 7. Perceptions of proteges



- #1. My district has an effective mentor program: 31%SA; 46%A; 17%U; 5%D; 1%SD
- #2. I can talk to my principal about classroom difficulties: 62%SA; 23%A; 11%U; 2%D; 2%SD
- #3. I can talk to my mentor about classroom difficulties: 58%SA; 33%A; 7%U; 1%D; 1%SD
- #4. My mentor is concerned with my success: 54%SA; 34%A; 10%U; 1%D; 1%SD
- #5. I plan to still be teaching in 5 years: 80%SA; 18%A; 2%U

Note. Based upon responses from one hundred three proteges. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = undecided; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree

Results of Objective Two

The second objective of the study was to determine the segments of mentor-protege programs that, according to administrators, new teachers, and their mentors, are the most effective in meeting their needs. This objective was achieved through the use and comparison of the survey instruments developed by the author.

Effective segments according to building administrators

Building administrators reported their perceptions as to the first year teacher's greatest need. These skills, reported above in Figure Four, were supported by review of the literature. The actual activities building administrators employed in assisting the mentor-protege participants were reported through the survey. Inservice training was the single area that a majority, (77%), of building administrators provide for first year teachers. Thirty-eight percent provided released time for the mentor to observe the protege, and 48% provided released time to the protege to observe the mentor. Only 38% scheduled times for social gathering of mentors and proteges. Twenty-four percent of the building administrators held regular meetings with all mentor teachers.

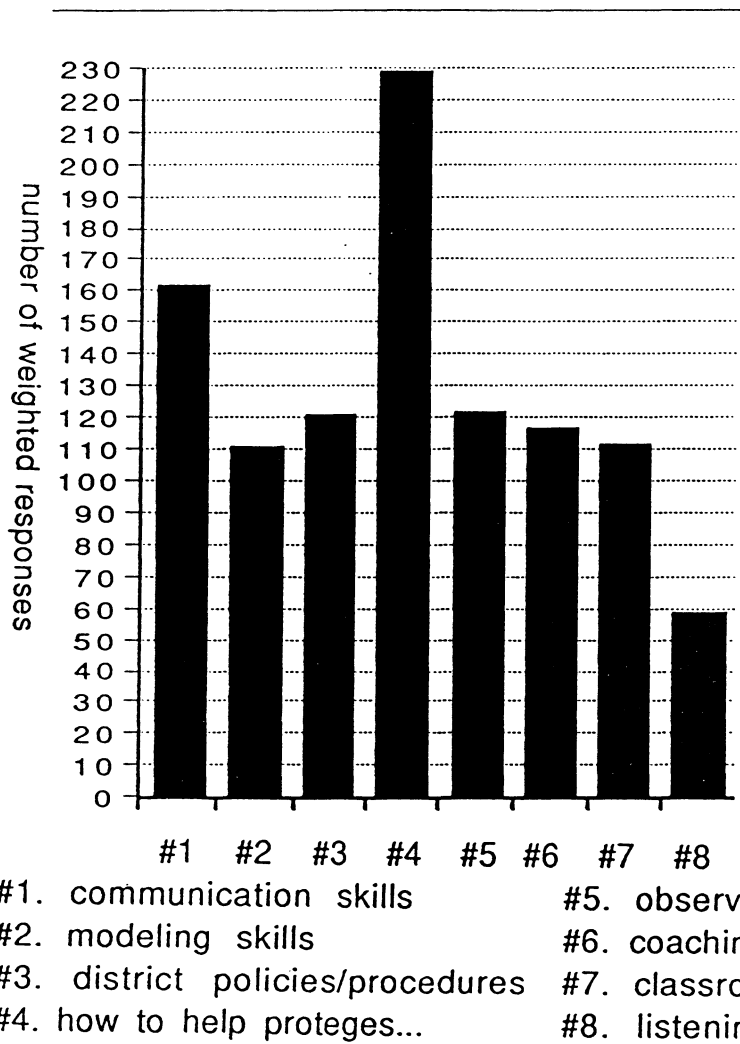
Effective segments according to mentors

Mentors reported in the survey instrument five primary areas

as most beneficial in assisting them in their roles as mentors.

Those five areas, included in Figure Eight, were: "how to help proteges..." general subjects, communication skills, observations, review of district policies and procedures, and coaching skills.

Figure 8. Effective segments according to mentors

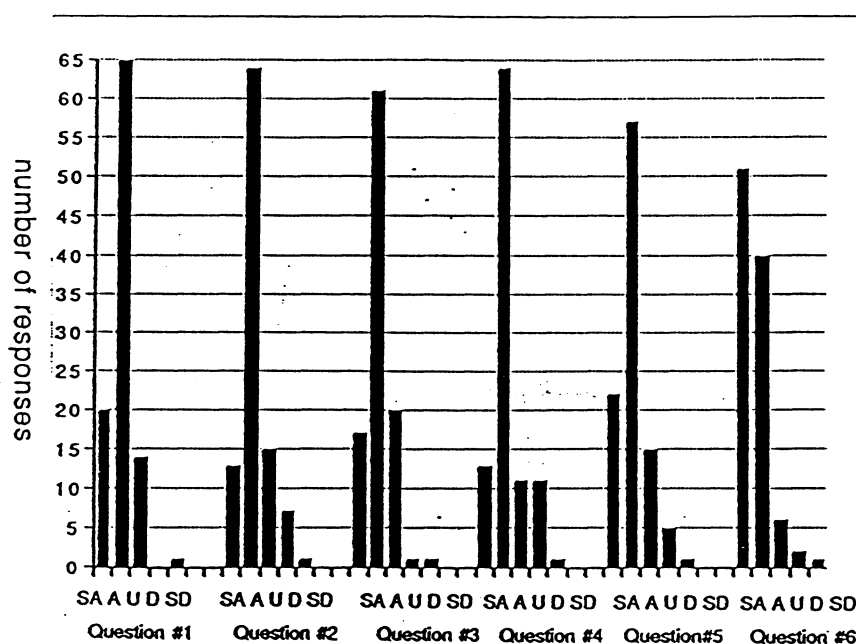


Note. Responses were weighted as per level of importance with a total of one thousand thirty three weighted responses.

Mentor personal perceptions

In addition to the mentors' perceptions of effective segments in their training to assist proteges is the additional effect the training and relationship of mentor-protége has upon the self-concept and overall teaching effectiveness of the mentors. While mentor responses are favorable to the program, there is a significant impact upon their professional abilities and attitudes. Figure Nine presents the responses to six questions dealing with the impact the program has upon the individual mentor.

Figure 9. Perceptions of mentors



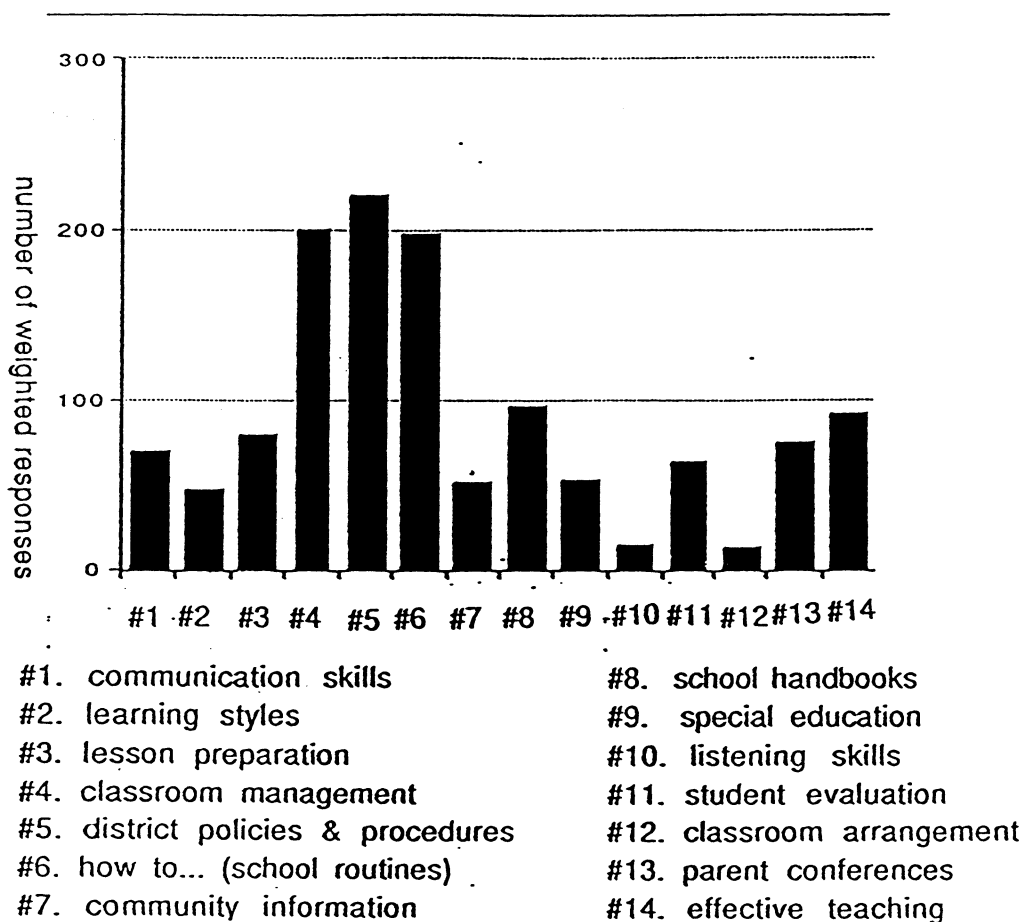
- #1. I make a difference in the success of my protege: 20%SA; 65%A; 14%U; 0%D; 1%SD
 #2. After coaching my protege I found myself improving in the same areas: 13%SA; 64%A; 15%U; 7%D; 1%SD
 #3. I feel, as a mentor, I make a difference in this school: 17%SA; 61%A; 20%U; 1%D; 1%SD
 #4. I know my protege - their strengths and weaknesses: 13%SA; 64%A; 11%U; 11%D; 1%SD
 #5. I feel a sense of pride in being a mentor: 22%SA; 57%A; 15%U; 5%D; 1%SD
 #6. The mentor program is valuable to proteges: 51%SA; 40%A; 6%U; 2%D; 1%SD

Note. Based upon responses from one hundred five mentors. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = undecided; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

Effective segments according to proteges

Proteges reported additional areas effective in assisting them in their first year of teaching. These areas, listed below in Figure Ten, include specific informational type of training along with classroom management. While the areas of administrative concern dealt with specific skills used by the educator in the classroom, these results reflect a concern for both the classroom and the need for basic information dealing with the day to day operations of the school.

Figure 10. Effective segments according to proteges



Note. Responses were weighted as per level of importance with a total of one thousand two hundred eighty three weighted responses.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The results of this study reveal current practices of Illinois' downstate school district mentor programs. These programs, in school districts with enrollments ranging from two thousand to six thousand, reflect a wide range of district involvement in the induction of first year teachers through a mentor-protege program. Measuring a district's involvement with first year teachers is, to some extent, to measure that district's awareness of this particular key toward improving instruction.

The review of the literature indicated that the mentor-protege component carries the single strongest influence upon the beginning teacher. This influence is felt long past the first year, affecting the entire teaching career. Mentor-protege programs have profound impact upon the beginning teacher and his/her students, the mentor, the building principal, and the future of the education profession. Given the author's personal experience and the increasingly difficult profession of education, the results of this study reflect the fact that a division exists in how downstate districts approach beginning teachers. Half of the districts identified in the survey were deeply involved with the beginning teacher through a mentor-protege

program, while the remaining districts had no structured program for the beginning teacher. Forty-six districts were identified in the field experience and 42 responded to the survey instruments representing a 91% response rate. Individual schools were randomly selected to assure a broad view of the three levels of Illinois' public schools - elementary, middle or junior high, and high school. Sixty-three of the 100 schools responded to the survey with the study achieving a 63% response rate from individual schools.

Review of the research revealed that an idealistic beginning teacher often faced the realization that teaching was not what they expected. This realization, along with job performance pressures, add to the numbers of beginning teachers who leave the profession. Only half the teachers who enter the field remain more than five years. This study reflects the typical enthusiasm of the beginning teacher when over 98% reported their expectation to still be teaching in five years.

Objective One

Findings

The first objective was identifying the common facets found in current mentor-protege programs within the selected school districts. While the common facets found in the reported programs were supported by the literature and research review, with a few

exceptions, research based facets in a mentor-protege program were more commonly absent.

Building administrators reported satisfaction with central office involvement in the induction of new teachers, even though only 50% of the districts offered a mentor-protege program and financial support of induction programs was limited to inservice training in the majority of districts. Few districts reported preservice training for mentors as a component in the mentor-protege program. Topics covered in training for mentors and proteges were good, but inadequate, based upon the review of literature.

The administrator's survey indicated the building administrator as the agent for selection and assignment of mentors. Administrators again responded in a majority as to satisfaction with the induction program, while no training for mentors and no released time or regularly scheduled meetings were planned for mentors. However, mentors were assigned to proteges within the same building and often in the same subject/class assignment. Regular meetings for proteges were normally scheduled in a majority of the districts. While administrators responded uniformly concerning proteges' need for classroom routines, discipline, and instructional skills these areas were not addressed through training

sessions in a number of districts.

Mentors reported an average of 15.2 years of service with 46% of the mentors with over 20 years of service. And a 1.7 average was reported for the number of times mentors served in that role and 71% of the respondents reported serving as a mentor for the first time. A majority of mentors responded that they were impacted in a positive manner due to the experience of serving as mentors.

Few proteges listed a lighter teaching load than veteran teachers, and the majority of them felt confident to talk with the building administrator concerning classroom difficulties. The almost unanimous perception of proteges was, that in five years they would still be teaching. This response reflects upon the positive experiences they have had during the first year of teaching.

Conclusions

Even though 50% of the districts responding reported having a mentor-protege program, few are financially committed to the program beyond naming a supervisory administrator. Programs which do not have significant funding are not truly supported by the district. In order to have a viable mentor-protege program, district funds must be allocated for released time, consultations, observations, training, substitute teachers, and necessary structural support. While raising student achievement continues as a goal, the

avenue which increases instructional skills in veteran, as well as novice teachers, is not addressed in a number of districts.

Building administrators, by a majority, reported satisfaction with the districts' involvement in the induction process of the beginning teacher; however, few reported a significant program or personal involvement. In the author's opinion, without financial commitment from central office and key leadership from the superintendent and building administrators, the satisfaction expressed by respondents is hollow.

Mentors consistently responded to the positive impact their personal involvement as mentors had upon their personal teaching and feelings toward the school. It is difficult to reconcile the fact that almost 50% of the mentors had served their district in excess of 20 years and were just this year called upon to serve as mentors. Experiencing a personal renewal, while serving a beginning teacher, was lost to these veterans until this year. Veteran teachers with 10 to 20 years of experience were the smallest group represented. Perhaps restraints of family, work, and professional advancement restrict this group from participating more as mentors. Administrators who are responsible for selecting mentors may find more resistance from this group of teachers. The answers to some questions go beyond the scope of the current research.

The author found it interesting that the respondents who were most critical of their districts' mentor-protege program were 30 year veterans serving their first time as mentors. Matching personalities and desires in the mentor-protege program is, at times, a monumental task for the building administrator.

Proteges responded "yes" almost unanimously to the question if they would still be teaching in five years. Review of research suggested that a high number of beginning teachers experience disillusionment and disenchantment with the profession due to feelings of isolation, job demands, and insecurities. The respondents are more current graduates of teacher training institutions and are seemingly better prepared for the reality of the classroom. In addition, support structures, both formal and informal, may provide the necessary grounds for dispelling the traditional insecurities associated with beginning teachers. The high percentage of proteges who expressed confidence in discussing classroom difficulties with the building principal indicate an unusual relationship with the individual responsible for formal evaluations and recommendation of employment or termination. Both are significant findings for this study.

Recommendations

Structured, financially supported mentor-protege programs

have proven successful in assisting beginning teachers in their first year (Smith-Davis, 1989). While the primary focus is upon the success of the protege, additional positive effects occur in the areas of student achievement, instructional skills, revitalization of mentors, assistance before minor difficulties become insurmountable deficiencies, and the increased professionalism of the entire staff. However, in the author's opinion, without key leadership from the superintendent and building administrators, the program will not progress past the written policy page and program description stage of development. These factors support the inclusion of a viable district mentor-protege program in all school districts surveyed.

The district mentor-protege program needs to include released time, consultations, observations, training, substitute teachers, and structural support of the mentor and protege. With these elements an effective mentor-protege program can revitalize the entire staff.

Objective Two

Findings

The second objective, to identify the segments of mentor-protege programs that, according to administrators, new teachers, and their mentors, are the most effective in meeting their needs, was accomplished in the analysis of the survey instruments.

A high percentage of building administrators reported inservices as the main component in the training of mentors and proteges. The review of the literature emphasized the importance of preservice training, mutual observations, regular meetings for professional support and advancement, and social gatherings for mentors and proteges. However, a limited number of districts responded that extensive preservice training was included in district programs.

Released time for mutual observations, as well as regular meetings and social gatherings for proteges and mentors, were only reported in a minority of districts; participants, however, reported these activities as very beneficial.

Mentors and proteges agreed with the review of research when listing the areas most beneficial in assisting them. Communication, observation, classroom management and coaching skills were identified in the review of literature as needed skills. In addition to these three skills, mentors and proteges identified a review of district policies and procedures and specific "how to ...(school routines)" as highly effective components in their training.

Conclusions

The incorporation of training for both mentors and proteges is a natural addition to staff development inservices. Focusing upon specific topics that are identified as needed and effective for this

program would assist those who are participating and would be beneficial to all members of the staff.

Administrators could possibly attract additional veteran staff members into the program through the benefits provided to the proteges as well as professional benefits available to the mentor. Funds which are normally allocated in budgets for staff development could be selected for the training of proteges and mentors.

Funding may be the primary restriction to expansion of the mentor-protege programs in the selected districts of this study. Districts need available revenue to include substitute teachers in the program, allowing for classroom consultations, mutual observations, and planning sessions, along with some other activities associated with the mentor-protege program.

The practices identified by both mentors and proteges as providing effective assistance in meeting their individual needs are logical and supported by the review of research and literature. For the mentor, often a veteran of more than twenty years of teaching, learning the skills for communicating with an adult learner can be illuminating.

Coaching skills are useful to all educators and are valuable in peer coaching of adult learners as well as peer coaching of young learners, such as in cooperative learning, and the typical teacher-

student coaching environment. These are skills that assist every educator and are naturally effective in educational settings.

Two areas of agreement among research, mentors, and proteges are the areas of training in observation and communication. From the author's personal experience, training in observation techniques greatly aids the educator to hone instructional skills and questioning techniques. Educators are typically the target of observation. Being placed into the position of observer has an inherent awkwardness at first. Becoming aware of observation techniques and increased knowledge of effective teaching techniques assists both the mentor and protege in furthering their professional skills, while aiding them in the task of educating young learners.

The proteges identification of classroom management, policies and procedures, and the simple "how to... (school routines)" are necessary skills for survival in the day-to-day operations of the school. The areas identified as effective for proteges cover information basic to the skills and knowledge needed by every educator, but lacking in the training of most proteges. School is a place that can open slowly to a beginning teacher. The environment can be bright, cheerful, exciting, hostile, threatening, lonesome, and depressing all in the same day.

Education is often a profession that extends a hand to

beginning novices, but rarely lends an ear. Proteges consistently responded that knowing there was someone to talk to, to share a concern, a difficulty, or a terror was invaluable. Mentors responded that one of their chief concerns was to assure the protege that the feelings and experiences they were having in the first year of teaching is common to all educators, novices and veterans alike. The profession offers many challenges each day; to the protege the challenges can become overwhelming. A mentor-protege program is a step each district can take in assisting the student to reach his/her potential while assisting educators in reaching their potential.

Recommendations

An effective mentor-protege program should be addressed in each district of the study which reported no such program in existence. Before making efforts to implement or improve such a program, districts need to determine goals and objectives for the program. The mere existence of such a program is not a guarantee of its inherent success. A clearly stated purpose and goals of a mentor-protege program are needed to gain the support of all staff members. Any program should be the result of collaborative efforts and an understanding of the unique difficulties faced by the novice teacher. Interested educators and faculty members of a college or

university education department would gain much working toward the implementation and monitoring the success of beginning teachers. Teacher preparation departments are becoming more involved with their students following graduation. Keying upon this may be one avenue toward seeing an effective mentor-protege program in a district with limited financial resources.

The 21 districts reporting no mentor-protege program should take steps to establish such a program. The realization of this type of program as staff development, not for a few beginning teachers but for all members of the staff, will assist those in the areas of decision making to move forward toward adopting an effective mentor-protege program.

The 21 districts that reported having a mentor-protege program should conduct annual evaluations of the program. These annual evaluations could include direct and indirect communication with the individuals served by the program. Building administrators, mentors, and proteges should all be given an opportunity to become part of an ongoing effort to meet the needs of participants. By continually working to improve the program, its success and continuation will become a source of district pride through collaborative achievement.

Elements of the program identified by this study as effective

practices need to be the building elements for a district mentor-protege program. Those elements are specific training for mentors in the areas of communication skills, specific "how to help proteges..." (school routines), modeling skills, district policies and procedures, observation skills, coaching an adult learner, classroom consultation, and listening skills. These areas were identified as effective as helping mentors in the responsibilities they fulfill. By a notable majority, key areas to help mentors succeed are the simple ways to assist proteges in basic day-to-day skills and knowledge of the school's operations and communication skills.

Proteges reported several areas of desired training. These areas are noted above in Figure Ten. The three areas most often noted as effective in assisting proteges were classroom management, district policies and procedures, and the "how to... " (school routines). Two of these areas overlap those identified by mentors, the areas of district policies and procedures and the school routines "how to ...".

The delivery of the training is also important. Although a building and district manual of policies and procedures is a vital reference source, it should not become the sole source of training. Many presenters covering the basic information in successive preservice training sessions will assist in the

assimilation of these skills and body of knowledge. While most proteges reported their training included the school handbook, a majority did not include it as the most effective training. While many areas of training need to be included in preservice and inservice sessions, the delivery of that training must be constantly evaluated for relevance, conveyance of the message, and achievement of reception in the targeted audience.

The support structure for an effective mentor-protege program should include employee orientation to the school, community, and staff. This orientation may include tours of school buildings and location of community business such as grocery stores, banks, and dealerships. A luncheon could be provided with community leaders present, along with district personnel and the assigned mentors, to welcome the beginning teacher.

Other activities could include first-day assistance, explanation of curriculum expectations, provision for released time to allow mutual observations between the mentor and the protege, explanation of the district evaluation process, health and other insurance plans of the district, professional unions, and established social opportunities throughout the year. A carefully planned mentor-protege program by committed professionals will assist the induction of beginning teachers in Illinois downstate districts.

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Appendix A

District Mentor-Protege Program Survey
Mentor teacher

General directions: please answer the following questions based upon your personal perceptions and knowledge according to the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

Your response is vital to the results of the study.

Please check if you desire to have a copy of the results. _____

General information

1. Your name & school: _____
2. How many years have you been in the district? _____
3. This is the _____ time that I have served as a mentor.

Mentor training

In my district mentors receive training prior to serving as a mentor Y - N

If YES, what type of training did you receive? (place an "X" for all training)

If NO, what training do you feel would be valuable to you? (mark using an "X")

Communication skills	_____	Observations	_____
Modeling skills	_____	Coaching	_____
District policies & procedures	_____	Classroom consultation	_____
"How to help proteges ..."	_____	Listening skills	_____
Others: _____	_____	_____	_____

Rank the top five areas of training as for its value by marking them with #1 being the most valuable to #5 the lowest value beside the specific training listed above.

- If "YES", how/when was this training delivered?
- _____ prior to the beginning of school
- _____ during the first quarter of school
- _____ throughout the school year

- Please check all applicable
- _____ one inservice session
- _____ over consecutive days
- _____ by many presenters

Mentor perceptions

1. I make a difference in the success of my protege. SA - A - U - D - SD
2. After coaching my protege, I have found myself improving in the same areas. SA - A - U - D - SD
3. I feel, as a mentor, I make a difference in this school SA - A - U - D - SD
4. I know my protege - their strengths & weaknesses SA - A - U - D - SD
5. I feel a sense of pride in being a mentor SA - A - U - D - SD
6. The mentor program is valuable to proteges SA - A - U - D - SD
7. The four (4) most important aspects of our mentor-protege program are:
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____

Suggestions for program improvements

Appendix B

District Mentor-Protege Program Survey

Beginning teacher

General directions: please answer the following questions based upon your personal perceptions and knowledge according to the following scale. strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD).

Your response is vital to the results of the study.

Please check if you desire to have a copy of the results. _____

General information

1. Name & school: _____
2. I am currently teaching (grade level / subject) _____
3. I plan to still be teaching five years from now SA - A - U - D - SD

Perceptions

As a first year teacher I:

1. feel that my district has an effective mentor program SA - A - U - D - SD
2. believe that my mentor is concerned with my success SA - A - U - D - SD
3. can talk to my mentor about classroom difficulties SA - A - U - D - SD
4. can talk to my principal about classroom difficulties SA - A - U - D - SD
5. have a lighter teaching load than experienced teachers SA - A - U - D - SD

Beginning teacher training

I received specific training prior to the beginning of the school year. Y - N

If YES, what type of training did you receive? (mark an X for all training received)

If NO, what training do you feel would be valuable to mentors?(mark using an X)

Communication skills	_____	School handbook	_____
Learning styles	_____	Special Education	_____
Lesson preparation	_____	Listening skills	_____
Classroom management	_____	Student evaluation	_____
District policies & procedures	_____	Classroom arrangement	_____
"How to..... (school routines)"	_____	Parent conferences	_____
Community information	_____	Effective teaching	_____
Other: _____	_____		_____
_____	_____		_____

Rank the top five areas of training as for its value by marking them with #1 being the most valuable to #5 the lowest value beside the specific training listed above.

If "YES", how/when was this training delivered?

- ____ prior to the beginning of school
 ____ during the first quarter of school
 ____ throughout the school year

Please check all appropriate

- ____ one inservice session
 ____ over consecutive days
 ____ by many presenters

Suggestions for program improvement

1. meet regularly with other first year teachers Y - N
2. special inservice training before school begins Y - N
3. what type(s) of training? _____
4. other _____

Appendix C
District Mentor-Protege Program Survey
Administrator

General directions: please answer the following questions based upon your personal perceptions and knowledge. Your response is vital to the results of the study. Please check if you desire to have a copy of the results. _____

General information

1. Name & school: _____
2. How many years have you been in the district? _____
3. My district is in _____ county
4. My district has experienced low / average / high attrition of new teachers.
5. Our district has a mentor program for beginning teachers Y - N
6. I am satisfied with our induction program SA - A - U - D - SD

Central office involvement

Central office:

1. is involved with the induction of new teachers SA - A - U - D - SD
2. supports the program financially Y - N
3. pays a stipend to mentors Y - N
4. provides training for mentors Y - N
5. has assigned personnel to administer/supervise mentor program Y - N
6. utilizes substitute teachers to assist with the mentor program Y - N

Building administrator involvement

The building principal:

1. holds regular meetings with all mentor teacher Y - N
2. provides release time for mentor to observe protege Y - N
3. provides release time for protege to observe mentor Y - N
4. secures inservice training for first year teachers Y - N
5. schedules times for social gathering of mentors & proteges Y - N
6. believes the first year teacher's greatest need is (circle one)
classroom routine/ discipline/ instructional skill/ motivating students

Mentor selection, training and assignments

Mentors:

1. are selected by central office / principal / committee / other (circle one)
2. are assigned to a protege by C.O. / principal / committee / other(circle one)
3. are trained prior to serving as a mentor Y - N
4. only receive training prior to the beginning of school Y - N
5. remain assigned to a protege for only one year Y - N
6. meet regularly with other mentor teacher Y - N

Protege assignments and training

Proteges:

1. are assigned to a mentor within the same building Y - N
2. are assigned to a mentor within the same subject/grade level Y - N
3. meet regularly with other first year teachers Y - N
4. are given special inservice training before school begins Y - N

Appendix D

District Mentor-Protege Program Survey

Dear mentor & beginning teachers:

Every school district has unique induction policies and programs affecting first year teachers. It is the responsibility of the central administration to delineate and delegate responsibilities and roles each individual has in the induction program. As a participant in the induction process, you have a vital role in perpetuating the school and the quality of education its pupils receive.

I am studying the mentor-protege component of induction programs and their effectiveness in assisting first year teachers. The following survey is designed to determine two specific outcomes. **The first outcome** is to identify common facets found in current mentor-protege programs in down-state Illinois school districts whose enrollments range from two thousand to six thousand. **The second outcome** is to identify practices that, according to administrators, beginning teachers and mentors, are the most effective in addressing their needs.

The results of this survey will be reported in my thesis which will reflect the combined efforts of all participants toward improving the induction of beginning teachers into our schools and, thus, improve the quality of instruction occurring in the classroom.

You have been selected by your building administrator to complete the survey because of the value she/he places upon your opinions and the positive contribution you would make to this study.

Thank you for your concern and assistance with this study. It will provide crucial data for improving the induction and retention of new teachers in Illinois schools. Using the envelope provided, please return the survey promptly as it is urgent to complete the data collection. Surveys need to be returned by February 24, 1995.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph A. McArthur, specialist candidate

Appendix E

District Mentor-Protege Program Survey

Dear Educator,

Every school district has unique induction policies and programs affecting first year teachers. It is the responsibility of the district's administration to delineate and delegate responsibilities and roles each individual has in the induction program. As a part of the induction process, you have a vital role in perpetuating the school and the quality of education its pupils receive.

I am studying the mentor-protege component of induction programs and their effectiveness in assisting first year teachers. The following survey is designed to determine two specific outcomes. **The first outcome** is to identify common facets found in current mentor-protege programs in down-state Illinois school districts whose enrollments range from two thousand to six thousand. **The second outcome** is to identify practices that, according to administrators, beginning teachers, and their mentors, are the most effective in addressing their needs.

The results of this survey will be reported in my thesis and will reflect the combined efforts of all participants toward improving the induction of beginning teachers into our schools and, thus, improve the quality of instruction occurring in the classroom.

You will find an envelope enclosed which contains six additional surveys. Select up to three mentor teachers and three beginning teachers on your staff whom you feel would offer valuable information for the study. After the selection, please distribute and discuss the importance of the survey and have them fill out and return the survey to you. A large, self-addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for returning the surveys to me. A prompt reply would be greatly appreciated within the next three weeks (January 30, 1995).

Thank you for your concern and assistance with this study.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph A. McArthur, specialist candidate

Appendix F

Down State Illinois School Districts with Enrollments of 2,000 to 6,000Ball - Chatham C.U.S.D. 5

Glenwood High School

Ball Elementary School

Bellville SD 118

Central Junior High School

Abraham Elementary School

Bellville Twp. H.S. District 201

Belleville High School East

Bethalto CUSD 8

Civic Memorial High School

Bethalto West Elementary School

Bloomington CUSD 87

Bloomington Junior High School

Stevenson Elementary School

Bourbonnais SD 53

Bourbonnais Upper Grade Center

Noel Levasseur Elementary

Cahokia CUSD 187

Cahokia Senior High School

Elizabeth Morris Elementary

Canton Union SD 66

Canton High School

Lincoln Elementary School

Charleston CUSD 1

Charleston High School

Charleston Junior High School

Jefferson Elementary School

Clinton CUSD 15

Clinton Junior High School

Webster Elementary School

Collinsville CUSD 10

Collinsville High School

North Junior High School

East Peoria SD 86

Central Junior High School

P.L. Bolin Elementary School

East Richland CUSD 1

East Richland High School

Cherry Street Elementary School

Edwardsville CUSD 7

Edwardsville Senior High School

Le Claire Elementary School

Effingham CUSD 40

Effingham High School

Central School

Galesburg CUSD 205

Galesburg Senior High School

Lombard Junior High School

Nielson School

Harrisburg CUSD 3

Malan Junior High School

West Side Grade School

Herrin CUSD 4

Herrin High School

South Side Junior High School

Herscher CUSD 2

Herscher High School

Reddick Elementary School

Highland CUSD 5

Highland High School

Highland Junior High School

Hillsboro CUSD 3

Hillsboror Junior High School

Beckemeyer Elementary School

Illinois Valley Central Unit SD 321

Illinois Valley Central High School

Chillicothe Elementary

Jacksonville SD 117

Jacksonville High Schoo

Franklin Elementary School

Jasper CCSD 17

Newton Community High School

Central Junior High School

Jerseyville CUSD 100

Illini Junoir High School

Dow Elementary School

Kankakee SD 111

Kankakee Junior High School

Kennedy Middle GradeCenter;

Steuben Elem Center

Mahomet CUSD 3

Mahomet -Seymour High School

Mahomet-Seymour Junior High

Marrion USD 2

Marion Senior High School

Marion Junior High School

Mascoutah CUSD 19

Mascoutah Junior High School

Sixth Street Elementary School

Massac County USD 1

Massac County High School

Metropoli Junior High School

Mattoon CUSD 2

Mattoon High School

Mattoon Junior High School

Bennett Elementary School

Morton CUSD 709

Morton High School

Lettie Brown Elementary School

Mt Vernon SD 80

Horace Mann Elementary School

Casey Junior High School

Mt Zion CUSD 3

Mt Zion High School

Mt Zion Junior High School.

Murphysboro CUSD 186

Murphysboro High School

Logan Elementary School

Olympia CUSD 16

Olympia Middle School

Hopedale Elementary School

Pekin Comm High School Dist 303

Pekin High School, East Campus

Pekin SD 108

Broadmoor Junior High School

Wilson Intermediate School

L. E. Starke Primary School

Prairie Central CUSD 8

Prairie Central Junior High School

Meadowbrook Elementary

Roxana CUSD 1

Roxana Senior High School

Roxana Junior High School

Central Elementary School

Sycamore CUSD 427

Sycamore High School

Sycamore Junior High School

Southeast Elementary School

Taylorville CUSD 3

Taylorville Senior High School

Tarlorville Junior High School

North Elementary School

Triad CUSD 2

Triad High School

Triad Middle School

Urbana SD 116

Urbana High School

Urbana Middle School

Thomas Paine Elementary School

Wabash CUSD 348

Mt. Carmel North Middle School

Bellmont Elementary School

Waterloo CUSD 5

Waterloo High School

Waterloo Junior High School

W. J. Zahnow Elementary School