Regional and National Perspectives

Alan J. Reiman

This issue of Connections is regional and national in scope. In an interview, Bernadette Watts, director of staff development for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, explains how the College of Education and Psychology’s mentoring curriculum has inspired several initiatives in North Carolina beyond the college’s boundaries. Abstracts of studies in mentoring and induction offer the reader insight into new findings from around the country. And, for the first time, we include abstracts of recent research on professional development schools, given our linkages to the Triangle East Partnership in Education (see News and Notes). Finally, News and Notes describes several exciting programs involving students, faculty, and staff.

Features

Interview with Bernadette Watts

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dissertation. I wanted to determine whether mentoring would be feasible as an element of staff development in our organization. My dissertation focused on the attitudes of new agents who had been working for up to five years and could share information about the value of a formalized mentoring program to our organization.

When College staff and Cooperative Extension began to discuss whether mentoring could be helpful, we secured a grant from RJR Nabisco to pilot-test the Developmental Supervision curriculum. Together Lois, Alan Reiman, 12 excellent Cooperative Extension employees, and I incorporated mentoring into Cooperative Extension’s staff development.

Describe how you did that.

The majority of our 520 agents are located in the 100 counties of the state and on the Cherokee reservation. Additionally, about 200 specialists at N.C. State University and North Carolina A & T University carry out Cooperative Extension research and apply the findings to improve quality of life in the state. They base their work on local citizens’ needs. The specialists try to give the agents subject-matter content that is on the cutting edge of research and supports real-life issues. I manage the inservice training system. All the training that our field faculty [Cooperative Extension agents] and others need has a goal of continuous professional development.

Mentoring is closely tied to professional development. Mentoring in the organization has increased greatly. We now are at the beginning of a Blue Ribbon Study Commission on Staff Development. Its purpose is to create the best model for training, motivating, and retaining our work force—not just people coming in new, but people at different junctures in their careers. Somebody in the organization gets a promotion, and he or she needs a mentor, someone who is nonevaluative and will support and assist that person in the new role. The flexibility of mentoring as developed by Lois and Alan has been extremely helpful to our organization.

Our counties and their staffs are small, so we prefer to have agents mentored by personnel in an adjacent county or within their district [a multicounty grouping]. We have a formal process, with scheduled meetings between the mentor and the new agent. There is coaching, assistance, and problem solving.

What are some strengths of the program?

The strength of the Cooperative Extension program is the mutual benefits. The benefit to the organization is having an individual mentor identified, not always the person who is getting the most visibility. At the same time, we recognize the worth and the professionalism of our agents, particularly those who demonstrate and model competencies that have netted good results in program delivery and ultimately positive effects on clientele.

Cooperative Extension prizes those mutual benefits. If the organization retains a new agent and he or she has had a successful mentoring relationship, then that person may become a mentor.

What do you envision as next steps?

First, we are going to offer a graduate course, Supervision in Agriculture Education, in spring 1999. Barbara Kirby and I will teach it via distance education. [Kirby is a professor in agriculture education who once worked with Judy Lassiter to implement the long-term mentor program in Johnston County.] We are somewhat apprehensive because we will have to be sensitive
to all the sites. Because of the span of the state, distance education is becoming more necessary to include agents and teachers who otherwise could not participate.

Second, through mentoring, we are preparing volunteers to work with Work First clients. Work First is a welfare reform program in which welfare clients are trained in some occupational area to enhance their basic skills of interdependence and sufficiency. The state’s Department of Social Service has identified Cooperative Extension as a vital link in helping Work First clients. We have a grant to do this work, to carry out a mentor program called Breaking the Cycle Through Education and Support. It provides Work First clients with life skills, educational networks, and workplace skills. Further, it teaches them how to interview for a job, how to dress for the interview, how to balance work and family issues, how to problem-solve on the job, and how to retain their job. The whole idea is to take clients to a level of interdependence by providing them with some self-sufficiency.

We and North Carolina A & T are partners in this project. There are seven pilot counties. Each one will first train selected volunteers as mentors. Volunteers will participate in a 30-hour training session to gain familiarity with Work First goals, mentor skills, and local resources. We then will pair them with Work First clients. Certain parameters are agreed on, such as confidentiality and meeting places. As most mentoring programs do, we try to provide mentors with other community resources that can help: housing, protective services, clothing sources, and so forth. Also, we teach problem-solving skills, helping mentors think critically about certain situations and their effects on the client. Mentors enjoy the coaching component of the process. Businesses have committed themselves to providing job opportunities for Work First clients across North Carolina. Many are entry-level positions, but they allow clients to begin anew in the world of work. Moore County is our pilot area.

Thank you for sharing your perspectives and experiences regarding application of the mentor program to Cooperative Extension.

News and Notes

Clinical Educators for 1998–99

- Wendy Levin is a clinical assistant professor at N.C. State.
- Julie Dwyer, formerly a teacher at Cary High School, is a full-time clinical educator at N.C. State, working with Carol Maidon, director of teacher education.
- JoAnn Duncan, a teacher at Cary High School, and Karyn Gloden, a teacher at Davis Drive Middle School, are clinical instructors at N.C. State.

Network Meetings for 1998–99

The fall meeting of the N.C. State Model Clinical Teaching Program Network will be held on November 12, 1998, at the N.C. State Faculty Club. The featured speaker will be Theo Bergen, Fulbright Scholar from the Netherlands.

The spring meeting of the network is scheduled for March 17, 1999. The location will be announced at a later date.

Web Site of the Model Clinical Teaching Program

Visit the Web site of N.C. State’s Model Clinical Teaching Program at http://www2.ncsu.edu/MCTP. Among the resources available at the site are information about the program and its strategic goals, Clinical Fact Sheets, and a copy of Connections.
N.C. State has received a grant from The University of North Carolina General Administration to create a university-school partnership. Triangle East Partners in Education (TEPIE) includes the Franklin, Johnston, and Wake county school systems as well as N.C. State. N.C. State has had a collaborative relationship with these school systems in the past, but this initiative affords an opportunity to extend and formalize the relationship. The three heavily populated counties have a combined student population of 118,486. Before the establishment of TEPIE, N.C. State had one formal partner site in Wake County. It now has four, plus one science department partner site.

During this formative year, the partnership has created its mission, vision, and values statements, enhanced preservice teacher education, supported induction for beginning teachers, and provided professional development for career teachers and university faculty with an emphasis on technology and diversity issues. TEPIE’s desire is to explore new models of preservice teacher development that include extended time in field experiences and increased involvement of classroom teachers.

Noting the shortage of teachers within North Carolina, TEPIE is working toward an extended support model for beginning teachers and increased professional development opportunities for career teachers. TEPIE also is focusing on ways to provide professional development opportunities in instructional uses of technology. The focus on diversity is critical as the schools’ student population becomes increasingly diversified. Professional development focused on best practices that address the needs of all students is another component of TEPIE.

The key components of TEPIE are reflected in its mission, vision, and values statements:

- **Mission:** Triangle East Partners in Education will enhance the professionalism of teaching through collaboration in research and teacher preparation, induction, and continuing advancement, with the ultimate goal of improved student performance.

- **Vision:** Triangle East Partners in Education is a sustainable collaboration fostering creative and inclusive learning communities that enhance continuous growth, individual responsibility, and a capacity for change through shared commitment to prepare students as lifelong learners and productive citizens.

- **Values:** Triangle East Partners in Education values a commitment to students, to each other, and to excellence leading to growth, development, and scholarship in a learning atmosphere that respects diversity, demands integrity, and ensures equity.

**Mentoring and Supervision Text**

*Mentoring and Supervision for Student Development,* a new text by Alan J. Reiman and Lois Thies-Sprinthall, summarizes the current literature related to teacher supervision and mentoring practices. Published in 1998 by Longman, it synthesizes the fields of instructional supervision, adult development, teacher education and mentoring, and ongoing professional development. Supervision, as used in this text, refers to a school-based or school- and college-based activity that improves instruction through guided assistance and discourse among adults.

**Fulbright Scholar Visiting in Raleigh**

Theo Bergen, scientific director of the University Teacher Training Institute, at the University of Nijmegan in the Netherlands, will be visiting the N.C. State Model Clinical Teaching Program during November as part of his Fulbright
study in the United States. Bergen will be a featured speaker at the fall Mentor Network meeting on November 12.

The following articles appeared in the newsletter of N.C. State’s College of Education and Psychology, Making Connections.

Research and Development Center

Ground has been broken for construction of Wake County’s Magnet Middle School. At the same time, the capital campaign for the College of Education and Psychology Research and Development Center is moving into high gear. [Together the R & D Center and the middle school will support innovative research on teacher education, middle school curriculum, and teacher professional development.]

The complex, a collaborative effort of Wake County Schools, N.C. State, the college, and business and industry, is being built on the university’s futuristic Centennial Campus.

Lease agreements were signed in June, providing the go-ahead for fund raising. Under the leadership of foundation director E. Norris Tolson, major corporations and private individuals with stakes in improving student and teacher education across the state are being approached for contributions of time, equipment, and cash.

The campaign’s goal is $12,000,000, the last $1,500,000 of which will provide a limited endowment to support staff operations at the R & D Center. The R & D Center is expected to open early in 2001, six months after the middle school opens.

Midtech

Midtech, developed by Ellen Vasu and Carol Pope, associate professors, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and doctoral students Cris Crissman and Michelle Hsiang, which only went online in the spring of 1998, is designed to infuse technology into middle school classrooms. Funded through an N.C. State extension grant and a Philip Morris grant, Midtech is geared toward inservice and preservice teachers. It serves as a clearinghouse for state and national standards and resources. Interviews with and vignettes written by middle school teachers tell how they got started and offer practical suggestions.

“A lot of teachers are still really struggling to integrate technology into their curriculum,” says site designer Ellen Vasu. “Midtech offers them models of teachers, easy ideas anyone can try, ways to get started. Many teachers feel they just don’t get it—and that there’s something to get! We encourage them to take a few risks, and make some mistakes. You can’t be an expert with a technology that’s still emerging. All you can do is try. Collaborative learning—in teams—is the only way to go.”

Visit Midtech at www2.ncsu.edu/midtech/.

Connections to North Carolina
Central University

Roletaking and Reflection for School Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers

Sandra Peace, North Carolina Central University, has written a paper, Roletaking and Reflection: Promoting the Development of School Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers as Supervisors, describing a two-semester program that prepares experienced counselors for new roles as supervisors.

“Counselors are valuable members of school teams in the United States who provide a variety of services to students, teachers, and families,” observes Peace. “To meet the challenges of an increasingly diverse society and address
the problems facing many children and their families, the need to develop counselors to higher levels of thinking, problem solving, and empathy is greater than ever.” The program’s main goal is to promote the conceptual, moral, and cognitive development of counselors. The program also has been used with school psychologists and social workers. Peace’s paper highlights examples of guided reflection as a means of promoting growth. It also analyzes empirical results and outlines the program’s rationale and curriculum objectives. It has been accepted for publication in *International Community of Psychologists: Cross-Cultural Approaches to Human Development*, to be published by the University of Padua, Italy. *Connections* will provide more information later on how to obtain a copy.

**New University–School System Collaboration**

Cathy Fine and Fern Brown, teachers from Durham Public Schools (Parsontown and C. C. Spaulding elementary schools, respectively), and Shelia Belfon and Sharon Spencer, faculty in the teacher education program at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), are continuing their course work with Alan Reiman at N.C. State University. In spring 1998 they took Clinical Supervision of Teachers. This semester they are enrolled in Practicum in the Clinical Supervision of Teachers. Through this collaboration they are laying the groundwork for professional development school partnerships by establishing relationships and working toward instituting a common model for preparing Durham cooperating teachers and NCCU faculty supervisors.

**Research**

Following are abstracts of research on professional development schools and on support and development for novice teachers, categorized into six dimensions proposed by the Commission on Professional Support and Development for Novice Teachers: program purpose, school district and university cultures and responsibilities, mentor selection and mentor-novice matching, mentor preparation and development, mentor roles and practices, and program administration, implementation, and evaluation. Abstracts were gathered from the following sources: *Dissertation Abstracts International, Journal of Teacher Education, Teaching and Teacher Education, Quality Teaching, Journal of Staff Development, Teacher Educator Quarterly,* and ERIC, from January 1996 to March 1998.

**Program Purpose**


To determine conceptions of mentoring, Swedish researchers videotaped mentoring sessions between student teachers and their cooperating teachers and conducted interviews with both groups. Data analysis indicated that the two groups had different conceptions about the function of mentoring and its content and form.


The purpose of this study was to determine the challenges and the needs of first-year secondary school science teachers and procedures that could be of help in improving their teaching performance. Findings revealed a correlation between the experiences of the participants and problems of teaching hetero-
geneous groups, lack of adequate facilities, little administrative support, scheduling and time management problems, and lack of peer support.


Beginning teacher induction and the ongoing support necessary to guarantee a smooth and successful transition from education student to classroom teacher are the foci of this qualitative study. The author surveyed novice teachers and the personnel officers responsible for implementing induction programs within their districts. Results revealed that understanding beginning teachers’ emotional phases and developmental stages will allow for provision of adequate support to reduce the high levels of attrition among new teachers.


This descriptive study examines (a) whether beginning teacher support programs that include a formative assessment component are more effective in retaining teachers in the profession than teacher induction and support programs that do not provide such a component; and (b) which types of support and formative assessment processes are related to greater feelings of support, higher levels of job satisfaction among new teachers, and higher levels of teacher retention. Six school districts in California participated in the study. Results were as follows: (a) job retention, job satisfaction, and feelings of job support were positively related to both the number and the type of support activities for teachers; (2) use of three or more assessment procedures resulted in significantly higher job satisfaction and greater feelings of support; and (3) demographic characteristics (urban versus rural school, high versus low socioeconomic status, etc.) did not correlate with teachers’ job retention, job satisfaction, or feelings of job support.


This paper presents the findings of a study that examined principals’ and beginning teachers’ perceptions regarding problems, role expectations, and assistance in the first year of teaching. The authors surveyed 75 Nebraska elementary and secondary school teachers who were beginning their second year of teaching in both public and nonpublic schools. The response rate was 65 percent ($n = 49$). The authors interviewed an additional 9 teachers. Further, they surveyed 75 principals from Nebraska elementary and secondary schools, both public and nonpublic. The response rate from this group was 75 percent ($n = 56$). Beginning teachers reported that interaction with and guidance from their principals were important to them. Both groups ranked classroom management and discipline as the number one problem. Teachers reported a need for a year-long induction program that included mentoring. Ninety-four percent of the principals said that they assigned mentors; however, much variance existed in selection, assignment, and training of mentors. The authors suggest that orientation programs be tailored to the school context and teachers’ unique needs.

For this study the author has defined “professional development school” as a school-university collaboration that includes teacher training, curriculum development, research, and creation of a new organizational structure. The purpose of the study is to examine the nature of collaboration among the institutions and the individuals involved in one professional development school. Data will be collected by conducting interviews, doing observations, and reviewing site documents, video and audio tapes, and school artifacts.


Texas Tech University partnered with six public schools and gathered data for them over a three-year period using case study methodology. The study focused on events and actions that facilitated collaborative research in a West Texas professional development school project. The schools included five urban schools (two elementary, two junior high, and one high) and one rural high school. The researchers conducted observations regularly, attended faculty meetings, and documented their informal visits. They also drew on archival records. The researchers noted the uniqueness of each site. However, there were common threads, such as “learning by hanging around” and “question posing.” Significant findings included the following: (1) having sustained interaction with university faculty is valuable, and (2) such interaction prompts deeper questioning about the purposes of education.


This study examined whether formal induction programs are effective in improving the skills of new teachers, including their classroom performance. Also, it sought to determine which areas of new teachers’ needs are effectively addressed in current teacher induction programs, which are not effectively addressed, and how the needs are best addressed. Ninety new teachers were the sample. The findings indicated some difference between the skills, the performance, and the attitudes of new teachers in formal programs and those in informal programs. Formal programs produced greater improvement in new teachers’ performance.


This explanatory case study examined what elementary school principals do to facilitate change in a teacher induction program and who and or what else facilitates this change. The researcher used three public elementary school sites for data collection. Analysis of data revealed three major categories of change: (1) programs, which included participants’ perceptions of the change to the teacher induction programs at their site and the concerns of beginning teachers in relation to these programs; (2) processes, which included participants’ perceptions of how and why the induction program was implemented, the planning involved, and the support given for the program’s implementa-
tion and adaptation; and (3) products, which involved what the participants in this study believed occurred as a result of the implementation of the induction programs. Findings and conclusions were that (1) the elementary principals in this study did not use all the administrative strategies Fullan (1991) contends are necessary for change; (2) the elementary principals were not the key figures in the change process; and (3) the elementary principals implemented change as directed by the state and the district.


This qualitative case study examines two cases in an urban midwestern high school. The researcher conducted semistructured interviews with more than 30 participants, as well as making observations and analyzing archival data. The study explores a potential framework for interorganizational collaboration permitting analysis of structural and interpersonal factors that may support or hinder collaboration.


For this study, 16 cooperating teachers and 14 student teachers completed the Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) Teacher Efficacy Scale and Cheal’s (1990) Middle Level Climate Indicator. The researcher also interviewed and observed these 30 teachers and student teachers. Results indicated that teachers and student teachers who had high personal and general teaching “efficacy” (a personal belief that one can make a difference in one’s teaching) were more responsive to the needs of middle school students. Also, school culture was a critical indicator for teacher empowerment. Student teachers felt much collegiality with their cooperating teachers and reflected the university’s efforts at building collaboration between the university and the professional development school.


This qualitative study draws on five years of longitudinal work by the department of education involving 10 partnerships between 12 middle schools and 8 universities or colleges. The purpose was to look at relationship patterns. The author conducted short interviews and observations to gather data, then used a marriage analogy to describe the relationships of the involved partnerships. Almost all partnerships had stronger, more durable relationships by the end of the first five-year benchmark. However, the study suggests that most partnerships reach a plateau where successful partnering activities coexist with minor disappointments, mixed expectations, and some unmaterialized ideas.


In this qualitative study, teachers were surveyed to determine how well they felt their college and university education had prepared them for teaching. The sample included more than 1,000 public school teachers and 125 principals. Ninety percent of the teachers said that they were well prepared, very well prepared, or moderately well prepared to establish a positive
learning environment, communicate high expectations, design developmentally appropriate instruction, use different teaching strategies for different instructional purposes, and communicate the core concepts of their disciplines. About 70 percent of the principals said that these teachers were better prepared than they themselves had been. Ninety-four percent of the teachers graduated from NCATE-accredited institutions in 1996.

Mentor Selection and Mentor-Novice Matching


Interview data identified two divisive patterns of tension within mentor–student teacher relationships in a high school English teacher education program based on collaborative inquiry and teacher research: philosophical differences and tolerance for ambiguity.


Staff development is crucial in creating successful mentoring relationships in schools and districts. Four major tasks for staff developers when creating programs for mentors are (1) selecting and training mentors, (2) matching mentors with protégés, (3) setting goals and expectations, and (4) establishing the program. Implications for staff developers are noted.

Mentor Preparation and Development


This article focuses on staffing patterns at the University of Utah. From initial interviews a critical concern emerged: the place of clinical faculty in teacher education. More than 60 informants were interviewed for the initial study, and 12 faculty members were interviewed for a descriptive case study. Data were organized around themes and issues. The researchers’ conclusion was that clinicalization represents a deeply contradictory response to the schizophrenia of teacher education. Until teacher education addresses the obstacles to excellence within its own programs, little progress will occur. Researchers also note, “Quality teacher education requires squarely facing both the internal and external institutional obstacles that have stalled teacher education reform.”


Focusing on the benefits of mentoring for beginning teachers, this article reviews common goals and organizational formats for mentoring programs, outlines basic knowledge and skills necessary for effective mentoring, suggests resources useful in preparing teachers to serve as mentors, and examines issues about mentoring for staff developers.


This paper discusses a project conducted by UNC–Wilmington and Brunswick and Duplin counties in North Carolina. The project uses a systems
approach to changing teacher education, drawing on theoretical frameworks from organizational reform, adult learning, and clinical supervision. Elementary schools were the focus. Findings related to the impact on schools, teachers, student teachers, and teacher education programs.

**Mentor Roles and Practices**


The author surveyed 24 classroom teachers who identified themselves as having served at least once as a cooperating teacher (for a student teacher) and once as a mentor teacher. The teachers involved in the study rated themselves as adequately prepared for their roles, but noted that extrinsic incentives to participate were somewhat weak. Many respondents felt that the lack of extrinsic incentives was offset by the intrinsic rewards they received from their involvement with student teachers and first-year teachers. Participants indicated that serving as a cooperating or mentor teacher influenced their own teaching by giving them new ideas, by being a stimulus for reflection, and by offering them an opportunity to talk with someone about teaching and rejuvenation.


The main objective of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences of two novice elementary school teachers for factors related to self-efficacy and motivation to teach science. The researchers conducted semistructured interviews at the midpoint and the end of each subject’s first year of elementary school teaching. They analyzed the data for evidence of (1) successful performance, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal as contributors to the development of self-efficacy in science teaching; and (2) links between self-efficacy and the nature and the style of science and other programs implemented by each novice teacher. Findings were that the subjects benefited from involvement in a cooperative teaching situation and from a small-school environment with a supportive principal. Conclusions are that induction programs providing this kind of support enable novice teachers to implement worthwhile programs. Teachers who have experienced success and have high levels of self-efficacy should be mentors for novice teachers.

**Program Administration, Implementation, and Evaluation**


In this article the authors use a cross-case analysis to explore data collected from 49 questionnaires and 49 interviews with teachers and principals from seven professional development schools. There were three guiding questions: (1) How and in what ways do professional development schools influence the professional growth and development of teachers, and do teachers’ views of teacher education change as a result of their involvement in professional development schools? (2) Do professional development school programs change schools? (3) How do contextual factors within and outside schools influence the development of professional development schools and their effectiveness? Several important points emerged from the findings. First, effective professional
development schools require high levels of school district support. Second, changes in roles and responsibilities of teachers are required. Third, participants must get something of significant worth to them, or they will fail.


This paper reports on the creation of a professional development school designed to improve field experiences for early childhood education majors. The goal of the project was to increase the pool of qualified supervising teachers at a rural primary school. The program evaluation revealed that most professional development school participants were positive about the partnership between the school and the college. An increased number of teachers were willing to act as cooperating teachers. However, some teachers did not complete a state-recommended course for student-teacher supervisors.


This case study describes a partnership between a semirural public school and a university from the principal’s and teachers’ perspectives. The researcher—who also was the school’s principal—collected data using the Minnesota Innovation Survey. The study found nine organizational characteristics that supported successful initiation and development of this partnership: adequate resources, good communication, moderate environmental uncertainty, cohesive work groups, collaborative site-based decision making, assumption of leadership roles, educational action research and inquiry, integration of theory and practice, and continuous assessment and review of learning.


Two questions guided this study: What is the nature of a professional development school in an alternative high school setting? and What is the role of authentic inquiry and collaboration at a nontraditional professional development school? Using a qualitative method with a descriptive, exploratory approach, the researcher conducted interviews with 26 university and school stakeholders. In the author’s view, the site tests the resolve of some teacher educators to embrace the notions of diversity and inclusiveness with respect to “throw-away kids” and nontraditional professional development schools. The school challenges educators to reexamine their beliefs and actions about democratic schools and access to education for all students.


This study examined how the needs of beginning teachers, the teaching context, and the New Jersey District Induction Program have affected the success of beginning teachers. Under the latter program, districts must implement an induction program for traditionally prepared teachers during their first year of teaching. From the 18 Bergen County (New Jersey) school dis-
districts that hired provisionally certified teachers, the author identified eight mentor-protégé pairs. All the participants were elementary school teachers, most of them were females, and they were racially diverse. They completed interviews at the middle and the end of the induction year. The issues posed to them were as follows: (1) which needs of beginning teachers affected the success of the induction program; (2) which teaching areas remained problematic; (3) how did they feel about the effectiveness of the program; (4) which contextual variables affected their success; (5) what district or state induction structures affected their success; (6) how did their needs, context, and program interact to affect teachers’ success; and (7) what were the implications of their experience for development and planning of future induction programs. Data analysis indicated that the districts were committed to induction. Both mentors and protégés believed that ultimately induction would positively affect the quality of education.


The study reported in this publication was an extensive evaluation of the California Mentor Teaching Program established by state law in 1983. Created primarily as an incentive for experienced teachers, the program encourages mentors to provide assistance to new teachers. The researchers distributed a survey to all certified educators in 457 of California’s 7,821 schools. They received responses from 3,490 teachers in 226 schools. The researchers inquired about four domains: program implementation, program improvement, program integration, and policy. The study confirmed that the primary role for mentors was to provide assistance and guidance to fellow teachers, especially neophytes. Local programs that experienced the most program integration also reported consistently higher levels of effect on beginning teacher performance, instruction, curriculum, student performance, teacher morale and status, student assessment, retention of good teachers, and performance evaluations.


In this qualitative study, the researcher used “triangulation” (three perspectives): interviews, observations, and historical documents. The study examined whether involvement in a professional development school positively changed veteran classroom teachers’ attitudes toward professional growth and improved their classroom instruction. The recurrent theme that emerged was the influence of university faculty on school faculty. Working with university professors in a collegial relationship changed the culture of the school and teachers’ perception of their role. There was a direct relationship between the level of a teacher’s involvement in the professional development school and the personal and professional degree to which the teacher changed.


Seven selected professional development schools in Texas participated in this study to determine the effects of implementation of the principles of
professional development schools on teacher organizational commitment. Three questions guided the research: What is the level of implementation of professional development school principles? What is the level of teacher organizational commitment in the selected schools? What is the relationship between the level of implementation of professional development school principles and teacher organizational commitment? All participants reported a high level of implementation of professional development school principles, and surveys indicated that all seven schools had a high level of organizational commitment; the higher the level of implementation of principles, the higher the level of teacher organizational commitment.


The researchers found that coaching, mentoring, and seminars all were successful in providing support to new teachers. The practices perceived to be most effective were interactive activities and a blend of apprenticeships and mentoring.