Becoming a Mentor
Practical Suggestions for A Professional Partnership

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Elements of Effective Mentoring

• Successful Supervision
• Formal Observation
• Constructive Feedback
• Reflective Conferencing
WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO?

- Teach
- Observe
- Document
- Inform
- Reflect
- Intervene
- Trust
- Let go
WHAT DO PRESERVICE TEACHERS NEED AS THEY GROW PROFESSIONALLY?

- Subject matter knowledge
- Authentic and meaningful contexts
- Strategies to represent and formulate that knowledge
- A balance of instructional and emotional support
- Opportunities to become a reflective practitioner
Life Cycle Model for Career Teachers

Emeritus → Novice

Distinguished → Apprentice

Expert → Professional

(Betty Steffy and Michael Wolfe, KDP Fall 2001)
WHO WERE YOUR MENTORS?


“The imprint of good teachers remains long after the facts they gave us have faded and it is important to thank our mentors-no matter how belatedly.”

What made your mentor great? What was it about you that made great mentoring happen?
WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE JOURNEY OF THE PRESERVICE TEACHER?

- University Field Supervisor
- Internship CTs
- Professors
- Student Teacher
- Cohort Coordinator
- Cooperating Teacher
- Cohort
WHAT IS MY ROLE AS A MENTOR?

You are an educational partner.

You are a collegial and emotional coach.

You are:

- a cheerleader
- a good listener
- a critical friend
- an evaluator
- a role model
- a supervisor
Wearing all those hats is not too different than your average day as a classroom teacher or go-to colleague, right?
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MENTOR?

You are developing a professional partnership.

You will be:

- observing
- interpreting
- guiding
- explaining
- inquiring
How does a CT develop a collaborative and co-teaching relationship?

1. Provide opportunity to learn collaboration
2. Arrange for frequent teaming
3. Model best practices, scaffolds, and supports
4. Provide invaluable guidance
WHAT ARE SOME SUCCESSFUL SUPERVISION STRATEGIES?

Consider one of the following situations unfolding as the preservice teacher moves through a lesson:

- A student asks an unexpected question
- The student teacher makes an incorrect statement
- The sequence of the lesson gets off track
- Students are confused
- The overhead, the Elmo, the projector is malfunctioning
- A student becomes disruptive
The Cooperating Teacher “I’ s”
Supervisory Interventions

(Post, Donna. JATE, S07)

I’ s that have never worked:

- interfere
- interrogate
- impeach
- impugn
- impede
- insult
The Cooperating Teacher “I’s”
Supervisory Interventions

I’s that can work:
1. Intercept
2. Intervene
3. Interject
4. Interact
5. Interrupt
6. Ignore (a little different than the others)

❖ These 6 very effective strategies simply provide a label for a cooperating teacher’s action during a preservice teacher lesson.
I’s are Highly Effective

What are the benefits of using these particular interventions?

✓ Provide immediate adjustment
✓ Are perceived as a team approach
✓ Allow for quick assistance
✓ Are relatively painless for all
✓ Move the lesson forward
WHAT ARE SOME ADDITIONAL SUPERVISION TIPS?

Tip #1  Do not assume

Do not assume that the novice teacher can articulate what his or her needs are. Asking “what can I do for you today?” is not an effective approach to mentoring.

Instead, through observation and reflective conversations, plan to list or share strategies that may work for future lessons, transitions, or activities.
Tip #2  Take the Lead

Do not make a habit of missed opportunities…

Instead, take the lead:

- Share teaching/management strategies
- Discuss differentiation ideas
- Offer ideas on how to find out what students do or do not understand
- Review quick assessment strategies
- Suggest student groupings
- Make coursework connections
Tip #3   Follow the Path of Success

Do not dance around the issues…

Instead, chart the course for the most effective mentoring to take place:

- Guidance through formal/informal observations
- Follow-up with reflective conferences
- Consider and encourage self-reflection
WHAT ARE SOME STRATEGIES TO USE WHEN THE PRESERVICE TEACHER OBSERVES A LESSON?

Modeling teacher behavior through early planned (focused) observations:

- Discuss particular teaching behaviors to focus on
- Choose one for the pre-service teacher to observe
- Ask him/her to take notes and write down questions
- Discuss and debrief with the CT later the same day
Teacher behaviors to observe:

- Communicating learning expectations
- Checking for understanding
- Moving around the classroom
- Using technology
- Calling on students/wait time/getting to the answer
- Varying the cognitive level of questions
- Redirecting or stopping inappropriate behavior
- Modifying instruction
- Maintaining appropriate pacing
- Opening, making connections, and closing
WHAT ARE SOME STRATEGIES TO USE WHEN OBSERVING THE PRESERVICE TEACHER IN ACTION?

General Data Gathering
1. Scripting
2. Vertical Fold
3. Four Squares
## Four Square Observation Form

Pre-service Teacher

Cooperating Teacher/Grade

Lesson or Subject

Date ____________________________ Time ____________________________

For a quick or informal observation. Personalize your headings!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Lesson/Objective</th>
<th>Way to Go!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>😊</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students to Note</th>
<th>Something to Try Next Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>😎</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>😎</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specific Data Gathering

When you or your preservice teacher notes a need for objective data:

- Focus on Words
- Tracking Time
- Classroom Sketch
- Strategy Survey
- Sights and Sounds
- Collections
WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK?

Quality feedback should be:

- both oral and written
- frequent
- relevant
- objective
- promoting reflection and goal-setting
- balanced positive and negative
- balanced on lesson delivery and student learning
HOW SHOULD I PLAN FOR A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE FORMAL OBSERVATION USING REFLECTIVE CONFERENCING?

- Before a planned observation
- During an observation
- Post-observation conference
WHAT IS REFLECTIVE CONFERENCING?

Dewey suggested that reflective thinking begins with a dilemma. Reflective practitioners will:
Before a planned observation

Pre-Conference

- Discuss together the goals of the lesson
- Discuss the success indicators of the lesson*
- Discuss the materials and the preparation needed
- Discuss approaches and strategies
- Discuss decisions that may need to be made
- Explain the methods of data collection you will use
Intentional Reflective Questioning

Pre-Conference:

- What is your lesson going to be about? (describe)
- As you see the lesson unfolding, what will students be doing? (translate)
- As you envision this lesson, what do you see yourself doing to produce expected outcomes? (predict)
- What will you see students doing or hear them saying that will indicate to you that your lesson is successful? (operationalize criteria)
- What will you look for in students’ reactions to know if your directions are understood? (metacognition)
During an observation:

- Focus on the observation goals
- Write down questions and suggestions
- Look for positives, as well as suggestions
- Collect data on both teacher behavior and student behavior
- Focus on behaviors that the student teacher can alter or change
Post-observation conference:

- Pick an appropriate time and place
- Sit side-by-side – not across from one another
- Talk with your student teacher in private
- Begin by asking how s/he felt about the lesson
- Encourage him/her to discuss some of the success indicators of the lesson or point out a few positives
- Share the data you collected
- Together, summarize and reflect*
- Give student teacher opportunity to ask questions
- End on a positive note – tomorrow is a new day
Intentional Reflective Questioning

Post-Conference:

- “As you reflect back on the lesson, how do you feel it went?” (assess)
- “What did you see students doing (or hear them saying) that made you feel that way?” (recall)
- “How did what you planned compare with what you did?” (compare)
- “What hunches do you have to explain why some students performed as you had hoped while others did not?” (analyze)
HOW CAN I FACILITATE SUCCESSFUL REFLECTIVE THINKING?

Janssen, et.al, 2009

Using a reflective model of conferencing assists preservice teachers in engaging in deeper understanding of their practice by explaining what has happened.

Further, studies show that early in the reflective thinking process, focusing on what went right, is much easier than on what went wrong.

So, just as we want to begin any conference with the “positives,” consider moving through deeper reflective thinking in the same way.
“What did you do that caused the students to gather on the carpet in an organized fashion?”
(a positive observation and analysis is discussed)

“What might you consider as you dismiss them back to their seats?”
(a problem situation is observed and discussed)
REFLECTIVE CONFERENCING IS CRITICAL TO INTENTIONAL TEACHING

- Intentional teaching connects practical classroom applications to reflective thinking
- It becomes deliberate
- It allows informed decisions
- It aids in maintaining highly effective teaching and learning strategies
- It is necessary to a consistently successful classroom
Reflective Thinking is a Cornerstone to Successful Teaching
Successful, reflective practice of informed teaching is our goal. We appreciate you and all of the time and effort you put into your professional work with preservice teachers.

We could not do this without you!