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## Supporting Beginning Teachers: *Guidelines for Administrators*

"The relationship between new teachers and their principals is the key component in the success of the new teacher." Edward Chance, Edward Costa

### Beginning teachers say that the most helpful professional development is:

- ◆ Principal input on an *informal* basis
- ◆ Planned and spontaneous observations by the principal – followed by *informal* conferences

### Beginning teachers want to know:

- ◆ The expectations that their principals have for the beginning teacher
- ◆ The school goals



### Through the Eyes of a Beginning Teacher

Imagine that you are a beginning teacher assigned to your school.

*What would it be like for you?*

Do a mental walk-through of your school from the beginning teacher's perspective.

*What do you notice and what can YOU do to support the beginning teacher?*

### Assumptions about Principals and Beginning Teachers:

- ◆ Principals are instructional leaders who provide critical support for team members
- ◆ Principals alone cannot provide this support for the beginning teacher – it is a team effort!
- ◆ Beginning teachers do not automatically know how to manage their day-to-day responsibilities
- ◆ Situations that are familiar for principals and experienced teachers can be overwhelming for beginning teachers

### Considerations when Assigning Beginning Teachers:

- ◆ Permanent classroom, rather than floating
- ◆ Classroom that is located near the mentor's classroom
- ◆ Minimal number of preparations
- ◆ Limited number of special needs students
- ◆ Limited extracurricular activities
- ◆ Do for them what will set them up for success



### Provide a Support System for the Beginning Teacher:

- ◆ Assign a mentor who is eager to work with the beginning teacher
- ◆ Meet together with the new teacher and mentor
- ◆ Create a school-wide support climate for the beginning teacher
- ◆ Make the staff aware of and sensitive to the needs of the beginning teacher
- ◆ Respect the confidentiality between the beginning teacher and the mentor

### Provide Professional Development Opportunities for the Beginning Teacher:

- ◆ Provide release time for observations and training
- ◆ Provide substitutes as needed, to allow for observations and training
- ◆ Schedule regular meetings with new teachers
- ◆ Recognize and acknowledge the accomplishments of beginning teachers
- ◆ Provide time and/or common planning periods for the beginning teacher and mentor to develop lesson plans
- ◆ Develop a means for sharing information & ideas with beginning teachers

## Selecting the Beginning Teacher's Mentor – *Important Considerations*

### Mentors are role models as:

- ◆ Teachers
- ◆ Coaches
- ◆ Communicators



### Ideal Qualifications & Characteristics of Mentors:

- ◆ Hold valid teaching credentials
- ◆ Have 3+ years of teaching experience
- ◆ Are exemplary in their classroom performance as evidenced on appraisals/observations
- ◆ Are positive role models of the profession
- ◆ Share similar teaching assignments (grade levels & content areas)
- ◆ Are willing and eager to support a beginning teacher
- ◆ Will allocate quality time for planning, observation, and reflection

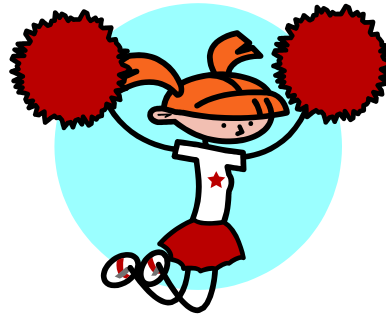
### Considerations when Assigning the Mentor:

- ◆ Designate a mentor who teaches the same or similar grade level and subject area
- ◆ Select a mentor whose classroom is in close proximity to the beginning teacher's classroom
- ◆ Ensure that the mentor is trained
- ◆ Provide release time for mentor training and observations of the beginning teacher
- ◆ Respect the confidentiality of the mentor

### Starting the year right!

#### *Important Considerations*

- ◆ Celebrate the new teacher's arrival
- ◆ Provide a tour of the campus
- ◆ Establish rapport and build trust
- ◆ Expand on the initial orientation
- ◆ Be clear about specific responsibilities
- ◆ Plan for informal interactions throughout the year and especially during the first weeks
- ◆ Encourage interaction between the beginning teacher and mentor



*The beginning is the most important part of the work.*

Plato