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**CASE STUDY OF MENTOR AND INTERN RELATIONSHIPS IN A  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL CONTEXT AT THE  
SECONDARY LEVEL**

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by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the mentor and intern relationships within a Professional Development School collaborative at the high school level. This investigation utilizes case study methodology informed by phenomenological perspectives.

The attitudes and beliefs of six mentors and five interns were explored and analyzed. Data consisted primarily of interviews collected over a full school year beginning in September and ending in June.

Data analysis involved reading of transcripts, searching for common themes and patterns, within cases as well as across cases. Three research questions were investigate for this study: 1) How did the dyad understand and interpret their interactions?; 2)How did the relationships and ways of working evolve?; and 3) What factors, both within the PDS and within the school, impacted the development of the relationship?

Within the study of the different dyads specific themes surfaced. At the beginning of the school year conversations with mentors and interns flushed out these themes as crucial in affecting the development of the dyads: (1) early uncertainty, ambiguity and unclear expectations of the intern's role, (2) mentor expectations of the intern initially, and (3) the influence of the mentor's past experiences working with interns and student teachers. As the school year progressed the

following themes emerged as crucial to the development of the relationship: (1) the amount of mentor support provided the uncomfortable intern, (2) the degree of empathy for the intern, (3) the amount and frequency of communication, and (4) the time spent between the mentor and intern.

Through a cross-case analysis the following assertions about what affected the mentor-intern relationship were established: a)the start of the school year which is filled with ambiguity is most important for the developing the relationship; b)the mentor is the key to the successful relationship; c) past experiences of the mentor impact the relationship; d)clear and frequent communication is essential; and finally e)the intern's level of confidence which the mentor influences impacts the relationship.

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## Chapter One

### BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

As schools in the United States prepare for the influx of students who will be entering the classrooms in the twenty-first century, one of the main concerns is filling the void of retiring teachers with qualified, novice teachers. This qualitative study addresses that concern by examining mentor and intern relationships within a Professional Development School collaborative at the high school level. The research encompasses the full school year, from September through June, examining how these relationships developed and how the structures of the PDS program, as well as the school structures, impacted these relationships.

Within the last fifteen years teacher education programs in the United States have worked to create improved clinical sites in teacher education, establishing Professional Development Schools (PDS), “sites where teacher education is ideally a collaborative venture between public schools and higher education” (Bullough, Kauchak, Crow, Hobbs and Stokes, 1997, p. 153). According to Arends and Winitzky (1996) the purpose and function of PDS is to provide a field placement site for teacher candidates, to provide professional development for the experienced teacher and to increase the knowledge base on teaching and learning by supporting inquiry, research and reflection.

If we are going to have better schools, we are going to need better teachers. If we want better teachers, we need better schools (Goodlad, 1994). A report of the Holmes Group (1986) pointed out that the student’s performance in American schools will not improve without the quality

of teaching significantly improving. Improving the quality of teaching requires dramatic improvements in teacher education. In addition, teachers are overwhelmed with responsibilities, spending the majority of their time isolated with students, and given little opportunity to work with other adult professionals to improve their knowledge and skills (The Holmes Group, 1986). Schools need to change this paradigm and create a structure within which teachers are supported and receive professional development throughout the school year.

A Professional Development School provides the opportunity for this to happen and can improve schools. According to Hopkins, Hoffman, and Moss (1997) a PDS can provide school teachers an opportunity to improve learning experiences within the classroom, participate in the development of the profession, and most importantly develop a sense of responsibility for teacher education through its active involvement in preparing preservice teachers for their first year of teaching. A PDS offers professional growth for the mentor and intern from the university.

Since the traditional student teacher model appears to be falling short in preparing our future teachers for the challenges of teaching, a new program, the professional development school (PDS), has become a vehicle to prepare prospective teachers, as well as rejuvenate veteran teachers (Kennedy, 1991). The Holmes Group, a consortium of education deans and chief academic officers from major research institutes all over the United States (Tomorrow's Teachers, 1986) has identified the PDS as an avenue for reforming teacher education. In 1990 the Holmes Group originally advocated PDS programs as a way to reform education through developing a collaborative partnership between universities and schools (Anderson and Maxwell, 1998).

The majority of PDS's beliefs are founded in the following six guiding principles of the Holmes Group (1990) for establishing Professional Development Schools:

- Committing to teaching for understanding
- Organizing classrooms and schools as learning communities
- Setting ambitious goals for all children
- Establishing an environment that supports continuous learning for all
- Making reflection and inquiry central to the school
- Developing a new type of organization to adhere to these principles

These principles offer public school teachers involved in the PDS program the opportunity to positively influence the school setting, to help develop themselves professionally and to seriously impact the preparation of the preservice teacher. PDSs, according to Ross, Brownell, Sindelar and Vandiver (1999), encourage inquiry on ways to improve the quality of teaching, the preparation of beginning teachers, and the professional development of practicing teachers.

According to Clark (1999) the PDS program has great potential to improve the conditions of schools for the better. Clark believes that “under the correct conditions, broad-based school-university partnerships can successfully create PDS’s that, in turn, can successfully produce the teachers needed for better schools.” This is one of the major goals of a PDS program.

The key words in Clark’s statement are “under the correct conditions.” This study looks at the interactions among the participants through examining their developing attitudes and beliefs. One of the conditions that needs to be created is a strong relationship between PDS preservice teachers and veteran teachers. Levinson (1978) viewed the relationships in mentoring as varying greatly in the degree and form of mentoring involved. According to Levison, mentoring is not a simple, all or none matter. For certain, a teacher mentoring an intern is not an easy task and necessitates a great deal of energy, as well as thought from the veteran mentor teacher.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the issues affecting the development of a positive relationship among mentors and interns. My purpose was to study the experiences that affect the development of the relationships, to study the obstacles within the culture as well as factors that facilitate the growth of their relationship. I focused on the established structure within the program that hinders and facilitates the dyad interacting and developing as a collegial partnership. The relationships among these key individuals may have a dramatic impact on how well the PDS program functions within the school.

The overarching question of my study was: what did the intern and mentor experience during the school year that impacted how their relationship developed? The following sub-questions were explored in this study:

- How did the dyad understand and interpret their interactions?
- How did the relationships and ways of working evolve?
- What factors, both within the PDS and within the school, impacted the development of the relationship?

In order to clearly understand this study the following words are defined:

- mentor teacher: a secondary level faculty member of the English department, who was chosen by the professor from the university and given the responsibility to supervise an intern for an entire school year
- intern: a college student enrolled in a university educational program who dedicates a full year of school working with a mentor, a student teacher is another term used to identify the intern
- university associate: a graduate student or veteran teacher working exclusively with mentors and interns, meeting them on a weekly basis, and coordinating professional development activities to

support the interns and prepare them to become teachers.

### **The Importance of the Study**

Schools are in serious trouble across the nation. Kennedy (1991) described the serious problem of our present day teacher-training program with this statement: “We are caught in a vicious circle of mediocre practice modeled after mediocre practice, of trivialized knowledge. Unless we find a way out of this circle, we will continue recreating generations of teachers who are not prepared for the technological society we are becoming” (Kennedy, 1991b, p. 662). Kennedy’s conclusion is a grave commentary on the present conditions of teacher training. A PDS program attempts to address this serious problem and develop the teacher education program to provide schools with teachers prepared to undertake the challenges of the twenty-first century.

During the next decade, schools will hire over two million new teachers to fill vacancies (Postman, 1996). Much of the success of school improvement will hinge upon how these new teachers are prepared, and how they are inducted into teaching. At the present time, neither teacher education programs nor schools are good enough (Clark, 1999). The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (1996) reinforces the need for improving the preparation of novice teachers. The commission proposes:

- What teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn.
- Recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for improving our schools.
- School reform cannot succeed unless it focuses on creating conditions in which teachers can teach, and teach well.

John Goodlad (1990) suggested nineteen postulates leading to conditions necessary for effective teacher education. Postulate fourteen points to the benefit of PDS programs: “Programs for the education of educators must involve future teachers not only in understanding schools as they are but in alternatives, the assumptions underlying alternatives, and how to effect needed changes in school organizations, pupil grouping, curriculum and more” (Goodlad, 1990, Teachers for Our Nation’s Schools, p. 61). PDS programs address Goodlad’s criteria for establishing an environment which fosters the development of preservice teachers. A PDS program supports these beliefs and strives to create these conditions.

I believe training prospective teachers is a difficult, challenging task. Based on my research and experiences as a mentor, if a novice teacher is to gain significantly from the experience and develop into an effective teacher, the relationship between the mentor and him or her is crucial to a meaningful, successful experience. A PDS program gains from choosing mentors who have the ability to work collaboratively with interns. A mentor may be very good at teaching classroom students, but they may not be qualified or prepared to teach novice teachers. In other words, a mentor may not be able to explain his/her practices or use his knowledge of teaching or teacher learning to guide novices.

A great deal of literature describes mentoring, but there is little analysis or theoretical data regarding the study and practice of mentoring (Hawkey, 1997). There is a need to examine the complexities of mentoring interactions and how mentoring relationships actually work (Glickman & Bey, 1990). Studying the relational dynamics among those involved in a specific set of mentoring interactions may help us understand how to maximize the potential benefits of PDS programs.

One study that described mentoring by Schneider, Seidman, and Cannone (1996) determined

that the mentor teacher was impacted by three significant issues: a sense of loss surfaced within the mentor as the intern replaced them in the classroom, an overwhelming feeling of a great workload as they balanced their interactions with the interns and students, and finally facing the struggle of interacting daily with a less than confident student teacher.

Stanulis (1995) also studied mentor teachers in professional development schools. She determined that four themes describe how teachers mentor their interns. Stanulis pointed out through her research that mentor teachers focus on developing intern's thinking, work with interns to connect theory and best practices, help interns connect subject matter to children, and treat interns as colleagues.

I chose to conduct this study because I have spent a year myself as a mentor, struggling with how my relationship was or was not developing. I saw the difficulty of the relationship based on a number of factors. As I mentored, I have realized the importance of my mentee developing her style and approach to teaching. Everston and Smithey (1999) pointed out one of the challenges of mentoring is how to give feedback to an intern that does not threaten her growing sense of autonomy and efficacy. They found that interns value mentors who encourage reflection, rather than simply offering answers and suggestions. This is a difficult position for mentors who feel comfortable and are accustomed to providing answers and suggestions to their students over the years.

The relationship between the mentor and intern can become the most important aspect of a PDS program. My experience is that the different stages in the school year affect the relationship. The mentor and intern's interactions is a crucial element that determines how successful is the year long relationship.

As the year begins the intern and mentor work to develop a level of trust. For the intern to

gain confidence and a degree of self-efficacy a trusting relationship must develop. The mentor forms an impression of the intern initially that remains with him or her throughout the school year. During the first few months the intern too decides how much the mentor trusts him and that may affect positively or negatively the relationship.

When an experienced teacher and a novice teacher moved successfully through the many phases of a mentoring relationship, both gained knowledge about teaching and could, at the end, redefine their roles and identities. Interns who reported learning in a supportive relationship talked about what it meant to be a professional, a colleague, and a teacher, and the mentors reported learning what it meant to be a reflective professional leading another adult to learn to teach. (Everston and Smithey, p.34)

In order to study the effects of the relationship, it is important to collect data on how it developed from the beginning stages and progressed through the year. Many researchers have addressed the topic of the mentor relationship stages (Fuller, 1969, Caruso, 1977, Haberman, 1983, Piland, 1992, et al.) Although researched over thirty years ago, Pogue's study still has important implications in understanding the student teacher as the school year begins. Pogue (1969) discovered that student teachers initially appear self-centered, concerned with their appearance, their choice of words, and supervisor's view of them. In my view this continues to be true today.

Many other factors can affect the development of the mentor and intern relationship. An intern enters the school in September with a lack of identity and understanding regarding what it means to be a teacher or intern. It is a difficult transition from a university student to a novice teacher working with a mentor. Caruso (1977) focused his study on student teacher feelings and attitudes, which could affect the relationship with the mentor. These feeling "brought about by the difficulties inherent in the concurrent development of a personal and professional self-identity, the timing and sequence and training experiences, the ambiguity of the role of the student teacher, the development of personality and role of conflicts within others, unfamiliarity with the school context and the adventure and



uncertainty always associated with the unknown” (p. 63).

Franke and Dahlgren (1996) wrote about the importance of mentoring in regard to teacher training. They found that mentors are the teacher educators who have the greatest influence on student teachers before they enter the profession.

How the relationship between the mentor and intern develops depend upon many factors. For a mentor teacher the responsibility can be time-consuming and emotionally draining. As Tatum and McWhorter (1999) point out “nurturing and encouraging an idealistic teacher candidate is another “preparation in a day full of lesson plans and student interactions.” The added responsibility and stress of interacting with another needy individual within the school day may impact how the relationship develops or does not develop between the mentor and intern.

When studying the developing relationship of this “marriage” it was vital for the study to examine what the mentor was thinking as he or she began the year with the extra responsibility of working with the intern. The beginning weeks of the year set the tone for the relationship and how the mentor approached the intern and how he or she chose to interact with the intern can impact how strong the relationship became over time.

This study adds to the present literature in a number of ways. First, not many researchers have presented a long term study. Also it focused on a full year which showed how the relationship changed from September until June. I discovered that the last two months of the year had a dramatic impact on the intern’s attitudes. Another reason I believe it was important for this study was that few studies focused specifically on the interns and mentors. Other studies looked specifically at the mentor’s influence on the success of the relationship. While others looked at the shortcomings of the intern in regard to being prepared to student teach. But few studies examined how the attitudes of

the mentor could negatively and positively impact the success of the intern. Finally, few studies examined the attitudes of the mentor and intern in regard to how their relationship developed. This is a crucial aspect affecting both the success of the internship as well as the success of the mentoring.

## **Chapter Two**

### **THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### Introduction

The purpose of my study was to examine the experiences of the two individuals in a professional development school and determine how these experiences affected the development of their relationships within the school year. By definition, a professional development school is a functioning public school (Holmes, 1986), which has three goals: enhancing student achievement, transforming teacher induction, and improving practice. The dyad consisted of the mentor and intern or collaborative. I studied the experiences of the dyad that affected collaboration and examined structures within the PDS program that benefitted and hindered their interactions. In addition, my study looked to determine how the cooperating teacher approached the mentoring of the student teacher or intern and the effect of the approach.

Prior to the 1980s little research addressed mentoring in schools. The Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) cumulative index from 1966 to 1986 contained hundreds of articles addressing student teaching (Stalhut, 1987). No articles about mentoring per se were included. No article titles refer specifically to leadership behaviors or mentoring styles practiced by cooperating teachers. During that twenty-year period no research appeared on student teacher relationships. Few studies examined or analyzed the intricacies of mentoring interactions, how mentoring relationships operate between the individuals involved, or how and what student teachers learn from their mentoring experiences (Hawkey, 1997; p. 325).

Beginning in the 1980s mentoring surfaced as part of a broad movement aimed at improving

education (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Educational leaders considered mentoring an effective way for reforming teaching and teacher education. Beyond mentoring first year teachers, the idea of mentoring expanded to the preservice level. The Holmes Group (1990) proposed to redesign teacher preparation where teacher candidates worked closely with experienced teachers in internship sites and professional development schools.

The remainder of this chapter reviews the pertinent literature in four areas: the meaning of mentoring, mentoring roles and types, factors that impact mentoring relationships, and obstacles and barriers to effective relationships.

### **MENTORING**

Since the mid-1980s many books and articles have discussed mentoring. Mentoring can be defined as the behaviors of a mentor that assist a mentee to become self-reliant. Portner described these behaviors: “building and maintaining relationships with mentees based on mutual trust, respect, confidentiality, and professionalism; gathering diagnosing, and using data about mentee’s ways of teaching and learning; coaching mentees in ways that help them fine-tune their professional skills, enhance their grasp of subject matter, understand how students learn, locate, and use resources and expand their repertoire of teaching modalities; and weaning mentees away from dependence by guiding them through the process of reflecting on decisions and actions for themselves, and by encouraging them to construct their own informed teaching and learning approaches” (2001,p.8).

Alleman (1986) views mentoring as conducted by a person of greater rank or expertise who teaches, counsels, guides and develops a novice in an organization or profession. She elaborates on

her definition by pointing out nine mentor functions: giving information, providing political information, challenging assignments, counseling, helping with career moves, developing trust, showcasing protégé's achievements, protecting, and developing personal relationships/friendship (pp. 47-48).

Other researchers have differed in their definition of mentoring as far as whether all facets of mentoring must be present. Zey (1984) believes that mentoring may be expressed within any or all of a number of mentoring functions that include teaching, counseling, supporting, protecting, promoting, and sponsoring. On the other hand, Klopf and Harrison (1983) stress that all processes of mentoring (i.e., teaching, advising, counseling, sponsoring and modeling) must be present or there is no mentoring.

Anderson (1987) believes that mentoring can be defined as:

a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé. (p.42)

Odell and Huling (2000) defined mentoring as a professional practice occurring in the context of teaching when experienced teachers support, challenge and guide novice teachers in their teaching practice. The act of guiding the student teacher is a reoccurring element of the definition.

The definition of mentoring varies according to the researcher. But the importance of developing a trusting relationship is a crucial part of mentoring. Mentoring is advising and modeling for the mentee. Mentoring involves encouraging the mentee to reflect consciously on his or her actions and to construct their own teaching and learning methods.

### **MENTOR BEHAVIORS, ROLES AND STYLES**

Stalhut (1987) proposed that mentors use four distinct leadership styles when working with student teachers. These styles change according to the situation. Mentors create a nurturing process and practice the following styles: direct, coach, support, and delegate with less experienced persons for the purpose of promoting the student teacher's professional and personal development within the context of a caring relationship (Stalhut, 1987). The mentor needs to provide direction for the inexperienced student teacher and encourage them to engage in the class in order to help them develop as a teacher. These styles contribute to the relationship between the mentor and student teacher.

I believe by utilizing these styles the mentor shows flexibility depending on the student teacher and their relationship. Based on my experiences I have concluded certain student teachers need more guidance and support than others. The mentor cannot expect all student teachers to have the same degree of confidence and desire to become involved initially. While directing the student teacher, the mentor tells the student teacher what, how, and when to perform structured tasks and expects productive output. The mentor guides the student teacher, communicating the expectation as far as leading a lesson, creating tests, and grading homework assignments. As a coach the mentor demonstrates and models expectations as well as using persuasiveness and resolving conflicts in a considerate way. The mentor shows how he expects specific situations should be approached and is sensitive while addressing an issue with the student teacher. When implementing the supporting role, the mentor maintains harmony, praising the student teacher, cooperating and always emphasizing consideration. The final style Salhut describes as the delegating role where the mentor acts as a facilitator allowing the student teacher to experiment and tolerate uncertainty.

Researchers have described mentors involved in a teacher development program in many ways including supporter, sponsor, guide, protector, encourager and confidant (Odell, 1990). Schein (1978) described the mentor as a coach, positive role model, and developer of talent, opener of doors, protector, sponsor, and successful leader. The impact the mentor has on developing the relationship with the student teacher is great. The student teachers' preservice field experiences and specifically the role the mentor plays in those experiences affect whether the program develops successful teachers.

Blocker and Mantle-Bromley (1997) concluded that "in comparison to the traditional campus-based students, preservice teachers prepared in the PDS took part in a wider variety of experiences, became more involved with public school classes, associated more with teachers and students and were more satisfied with their preparation" (Belinda, p.27).

In support of the benefits of PDS for the intern, Smith (1996) concludes that preservice teachers gain from the planning conferences, expectations for them to begin teaching from day one, and a clear understanding of what is expected from them while teaching. Smith's study states that the preservice teacher appears more committed to teacher collaboration and understands collaborative practice.

Silva (1996) points out the emergence of a 'family-like' atmosphere within a PDS program. Teachers discussed their work, listened to each other's reflections, and helped each other make challenging transitions. PDS enhances collegiality (Rushcamp and Roehler (1992).

According to Sudzina and Coolican (1994), "due to misunderstandings or miscommunication about roles and expectations, some student teacher-cooperating teacher dyads appear to be tormentor relationships." It is apparent that the relationship between the mentor and student teacher needs to be more deeply examined if we want to improve pre-service field experiences for novice teachers.

Another group of researchers described the roles of mentors as a parent figure, support system,

troubleshooter, scaffolder, guide, counselor and role model (Abell, Dillion, Hopkins, McInerney, & O'Brien, 1995; Anderson & Shannon, 1998; Gray and Gray, 1985; Williams, 1994). McNally and Martin (1997) used in-depth interviews with a few mathematics mentors working on a 1-year postgraduate secondary ITE course. Three typologies of mentors were developed. McNally and Martin viewed mentors as Type A where they stress the nurturing and supportive role and take a laissez-faire, low-challenge approach to mentoring that may confirm the status quo. Type B empowered the student teachers with high support and a challenge to engage in teaching in a critically reflective process. The third type is mentors who have a strong sense of themselves as authorities in the role of mentor, but lean toward a lack of real engagement with the student teachers' needs. This style may lead to student teachers feeling unsupported and overwhelmed.

Besides the roles of the mentor, stages of the relationship have been suggested. Bravmann (1986) proposed three stages during the development. The first stage is marked by idealism and dependency from the student teacher; the second characterized by increasing independence and an increase in negotiation of the details of the interaction, and finally the student teacher recognizes the fallibility/humanness of the mentor. During this last stage the relationship shifts from hierarchical to one of independent equals.

The research on cooperating teachers has focused on the question of what kind of knowledge they need to have in their role. Hauwiller, Abel, Ausel, & Sparapni (1989) determined that cooperating teachers need expertise in supervision techniques and observation skills, while Copas (1984) believes they need a background in interpersonal communication and effectiveness as a classroom teacher. Rowley (1999) suggests that a good mentor is committed to helping new teachers find success and gratification in their work, accepts them as a developing person and professional, provides



instructional support, and models the belief that all teachers are continuous learners. In addition, Rowley believes that it is crucial for mentors to communicate their belief that the student teacher is capable of overcoming present challenges and of accomplishing great things in the future. Finally, he sees the role of the mentors as sharing their own struggles and frustrations in order to develop trust with the student teacher.

A study by Jacknicke and Samiroden (1991) focused on secondary interns and their mentors. This study pointed out a crucial conclusion that validates the importance of the following research. Jacknicke and Samiroden concluded through in-depth interviews that the “personal relationship between an intern and his or her supervising teacher determined the amount and nature of professional growth experienced by the intern.” Chamberlin and Vallance (1991) reinforced this conclusion in their study that found the individual novice-cooperating-teacher relationship played a major role in determining how much knowledge a novice acquired.

Another study by Silva (1999) focused on mentors and how their work impacted their work lives and in addition their interns, administrators, other mentors and the university faculty in a PDS program at the elementary level. Silva pointed out the importance of mentors having authentic space to participate in the education of prospective teachers. This space allows mentors to join university teacher educators and to construct learning opportunities for interns. Also Silva’s study showed the importance of mentors collaborating with university colleagues in supervising interns which leads to mentors finding their own professional voices.

### RELATIONSHIP FACTORS THAT IMPACT MENTORING

Bradley (1994) investigated relationships between cooperating teachers and student teachers. He concluded that, for a cooperative relationship to occur between the teacher and student teacher, there had to be a give-and-take exchange. Both cooperating teacher and student teacher needed to make time to meet, discuss, and address concerns. Clearly the time dedicated to the student teacher impacted the relationship. The extra time the cooperating teacher spent planning lessons and communicating with the student teacher helped develop a positive relationship.

In addition, the quality of interaction was influenced by the cooperating teacher's and student teacher's views about themselves, their workplace, and the world in general (O'Neal, 1983). The higher the self-esteem and confidence of the student teacher the more likely the relationship would develop. If the cooperating teacher enjoyed his classroom and school, this positive attitude would affect the interactions between him and the student teacher.

Daloz (1986) contends that support from the cooperating teacher is a key. When in a mentoring relationship the support is low and challenge high, the student teacher will withdraw from learning if she does not feel that she is being supported to have her own ideas and opinions. Student teachers enter the student teaching experience with their own views on teaching and gain from words of encouragement from the cooperating teacher. The need for validation is high. The student teacher enters the relationship with great respect for the cooperating teacher and is eager to hear how they are doing with the class.

Daloz (1986) has written extensively about the dynamics in the mentoring relationship. He concluded that the mentor could both support and challenge the intern during their relationship. The mentor can reinforce the intern and provide a sense of caring for the novice teacher. This approach

keeps the relationship comfortable but may limit the intern's development. Daloz suggests that the mentor can assume the role of challenging the intern, creating cognitive dissonance that can lead to growth. This approach affects the intern's relationship by opening "a gap between student (intern) and environment, a gap that creates tension in the student, calling for closure" (Daloz, 1986, p. 213). This cognitive dissonance leads to significant learning within the intern. According to Kagan (1992) without dissonance and the "concomitant mitigation of pre-existing images, knowledge acquired during pre-service teacher education appears to be superficial and ephemeral," (p. 147)

According to Head, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall (1992), a bona fide mentor-mentee relationship occurs when both parties are equally committed to the goals and when the mentor possesses broad career and personal influence over the mentee. If only the mentor in the relationship is committed, the mentee does not develop the same strong bond with the mentor. "Real mentoring is a complex activity involving awareness of the process and function for both the mentor and the mentee with benefits for both parties" (Head, Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall, 1992, p. 44)

Beyond these many roles and relationships, Clauson (1980) has proposed that the relationship must include mutual involvement whereby the student teacher feels admiration, respect, appreciation, respect, gratitude, and love for the mentor. Both the mentor and student teacher must want the relationship; a healthy mentoring situation is never one-sided. In addition the relationship must be comprehensive with the mentor involved in the student teacher's total life, not just work.

McWilliams (1995) points out the benefit of the relationship between the student teacher and mentor. She defined the relationship between them as "a commitment to the mutual growth and professional development of the other." Often, the cooperating teacher, through the relationship, acquires more than he or she gives.

McWilliams sees the relationship as a commitment for the student teacher. She describes the relationship this way.

Cooperating teachers invite student teachers into the special, personal world of the classrooms and take a risk in offering them partnerships in the education of their students. The two enter into a sort of covenant with one another where each agrees to work together to achieve what is best for the students they teach. For the relationship to work, both parties must establish a spirit of open, honest communication, and mutual respect. For the experience to be mutually beneficial, it must be approached as an opportunity for both mentor and student teacher to explore together the implications of research and theory for effective classroom practice. (McWilliams, 1995, p 41)

The issue of power in the relationship often surfaces between the mentor and student teacher. Staulis and Russel (2000) pointed out the most supportive mentoring relationship is not able to escape some issues of power among the classroom teacher, university faculty and student teacher. This is very significant because both the mentor and student teacher must be aware of the negative feelings that materialize when power becomes the main issue in the relationship. Both mentor and student teacher suffer when they cannot agree upon certain issues. The mentor cannot believe that he or she is always correct and that the student teacher must always agree with him.

Anderson and Shannon (1997) concluded that the relationship established between mentor and student teacher is the avenue through which all mentoring processes, complete with the interplay of cognitive, affective, and interpersonal factors are mediated (p.322). The relationship affects all the interactions between the mentor and student teacher. Anderson and Shannon (1997) believe there is a need for further research in the area of mentoring relationships.

The novice intern depends upon the mentor immediately as school begins. But as Eisenhart et al. (1991) realized, the novices were expected to function on a sophisticated level.

To solve their own problems, relate theory to practice, acquire advanced instructional skills, use innovative classroom strategies. Although encouraged to reflect on their actions, the student teachers were so overwhelmed by these demands and their common lack of procedural knowledge that they had no time to engage in introspection (Eisenhart et al. 1991, p52)

I believe at the start of the school year, the relationship that the mentor forms with the intern may either inspire the idealistic novice or contribute to the tension and anxiety prevalent with interns who are facing an overwhelming situation. In a study by Eisenhart (1991) student teachers lacked survival skills. I see this deficiency in ways to cope with teaching as a crucial factor in the early stages of student teaching. Eisenhart determined that teachers seemed insensitive or non-responsive to the developmental needs of the novice teachers and neglected to provide them with procedural knowledge.

### **OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS**

Sudzina and Knowles (1992,1993) studied 25 cases of “failed” student teachers over a 10-year period. They found that unsuccessful mentor-mentee relationships resulted from personality conflicts, philosophical differences, and cultural misunderstandings. Lack of accepting or recognizing each other’s thinking early in the preservice experience can negatively impact the relationship between the mentor and mentee. Sudzina and Coolican (1992) studied two teacher preparation programs and discovered mentoring was never mentioned as an expectation between the cooperating teachers and student teachers. Both cooperating teachers and student teachers attributed the following factors to a successful student teaching experience: a good relationship, open communication and a positive work environment.

Another barrier that hinders the student teaching process involves the university supervisor or representative who tends to be less involved and less credible than the mentor or intern. The supervisor does not teach within the structure and rarely visits the dyad. This may lead to lack of connection between the supervisor with the mentor and intern. Cooperating teachers often found the university's support not sufficient and rarely clear or well defined (Griffin et al., 1983).

Time is another obstacle that prevents the cooperating teacher and student teacher from developing a functional relationship. Anderson and Shannon (1998) proposed that plenty of time spent together over the experience develops a relationship. The less time the cooperating teacher and student teacher have to discuss issues, the more likely the relationship suffers. Koerner (1992) discovered through looking at journals of cooperating teachers that they had a serious concern about having to take time away from planning for and instruction of their pupils to work with student teachers.

The mentor's reluctance to disagree with the mentee adds another obstacle in the dynamics. Feiman-Nemser et al. (1993) discovered that mentors failed to engage in critical discussion with their mentees. Haggerty (1995) examined conversations between mentors and student teachers and realized that although mentors were successful in encouraging mentees to discuss their developing ideas, the mentors did not feel able to disagree with or challenge such ideas. Mentors were concerned about not creating tension between them and their interns. They felt challenging the interns would lead to negative feeling and an uncomfortable situation for them. Jacques (1992) examined mentors and concluded because mentors ignored wherever possible their mentee's difficulties they became collaborators in avoiding the issue. A conspiracy

of silence reigned (Jacques, 1992, p.345).

Stress and dissonance within the mentor and student teacher may limit the student teaching experience. These uncomfortable feelings create an opportunity for either learning to happen (Elliot, 1995) or a retreat from novel learning toward safer ground. The student teacher must face the constructs he or she brings to teaching as a novice and the mentor must face, and be able to express, the pressures he/she brings to mentoring in order for them both to recognize their limitations. Extra anxiety and tension develops within the cooperating teacher when he/she feels the instruction is suffering within the classroom. Tension and angst surface when there is a lack of communication and agreement as to the responsibilities of each member of the dyad.

Besides stress within the cooperating teacher a sense of displacement developed as the student teacher was “liked” better than the cooperating teacher (Koerner, 1992). Sometimes the cooperating teacher felt threatened when the student teacher suggested new ideas for instruction. They admitted discomfort, as well as some jealousy.

In her study of eight experienced cooperating teachers who were supervising student teachers Koerner (1992) discovered that the involvement of the student teachers within the class disrupted the classroom routine. Jackson (1968) pointed out teachers develop routines that help them make sense of the complexity of classroom events. After a cooperating teacher planned certain things to happen, the student teacher often disrupted the classroom routine and rhythm.

Another obstacle centers upon the feeling of the cooperating teacher losing privacy. The cooperating teacher may feel he is being judged by the student teacher. According to Koerner, often the student teacher challenges the veteran cooperating teacher about an established

practice, and even if the student teacher's questions were not confrontational, the cooperating teacher worries that he may not be able to adequately answer them.

Stanulis and Russell (2000) believe that the power issue during the student teaching experience is an obstacle in the relationships. They stated that the most supportive mentoring relationship couldn't escape issues of power among the classroom teacher, university faculty and student teacher. Problems arise out of conflicting philosophies of cooperating teachers and university supervisors (Vickery and Brown, 1967). Cooperating teachers and student teachers perceived that developing self-confidence was the most important factor of student teaching, while the university supervisor considered application of theory into practice as the most important issue during the experience (Tittle, 1974).

Researchers (Awaya, McEwan, Heyler, Linsky, Lum and Wakukawa, 2003) studied student teachers and mentors in the Masters of Education in Teaching Program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. This two-year program gradually involved the student teachers in a professional development school. During the fourth semester the student teachers became paid interns working closely with a mentor. The study concluded the mentor/protégé relationship was most likely to fail if either the mentor was unable or not willing to work collaboratively with a particular student, or the student was unable to engage the mentor as an equal. The key to the successful relationship involved the mentor not asserting his power or authority and avoiding the traditional role of supervisor.



## **Chapter Three**

### **The Research Design**

#### Theoretical Framework

For this study I utilized a qualitative methodology to examine the experiences of five mentors and four interns as they established a collaborative relationships in a professional development school program over a full school year. A case study with phenomenological underpinnings guided the study's design. My research question asked how did the relationships between the mentor and intern develop during the course of the school year.

When phenomenology is applied to research, the focus is on what the individual experiences in a language that represents the lived experiences as much as possible (Polkinghorne, 1989). The study strives to describe and make clear the meanings of human experience. Phenomonology attempts to get below the surface of how people describe their experiences 5that underlie consciousness. Typically a phenomenological study uses interviews or extended conversations as a source of data. As described by Bailey (1992) "phenomonology research uses sampling which is idiographic, focusing on the individual or case study in order to understand the full complexity of the individual's experience. From this perspective, there is no

attempt to claim an ability to generalize to a specific population, but instead, the findings are relevant from the perspective of the user of the finding.” (p. 30)

### **Context**

Lincoln Memorial High with a population of over 2,550 students attending the four year high school is located in central Pennsylvania. Of the graduating student body 79% attend a four year college, while 6 % attend a two year college. As far as the PSAT test scores, the average on the verbal and math was a 54.6 and a 55.0 on writing skills. Within the high school there are 24 English teachers with the average teaching load of five classes. The student population is economically diverse, but because it is nestled in a small university town, it has a number of students who come from well-educated families. Students also come from affluent families, as well as low income neighborhoods. The school is rather conservative, and many of the students are white and middle class. A small percent of the student population is from foreign countries.

The secondary English Professional Development School was established during the 1998/1999 school year at Lincoln Memorial School District. One of the goals was to improve the English Language Arts instruction in grades 7-12 and simultaneously enhance teacher preparation. The number of teachers (mentors) and interns involved in the PDS is approximately 30 each year. A collaboration between the school district and the local university, the PDS is a year-long, entirely school -based, teacher education program. The PDS advocates an inquiry model within the classroom, encouraging professional development and educational research. The PDS mission statement established in 2000 stated the following:

In order to construct a community of learning, all members of the Lincoln Memorial

School District-Liberty University Secondary English Professional Development Partnership promote collaboration, reflection, and PRAXIS, embrace diverse identities and literacies, and seek shared knowledge, agency and equity.

- Literacy uses and experiences shape possible identities and relationships.
- Our community of learners includes students, mentor, interns, and associates.
- Our collaboration involves co-planning, co-teaching, and co-questioning.
- Reflection involves self-reflection and dialog using both written and spoken forms.

During the school year the PDS structured meetings in order to facilitate the program. Triad meetings which included the intern, mentor and associate were encouraged. Weekly building inquiry group meetings were held to help generate local knowledge about teaching English. In addition, all the interns and associates met once per month for an all day seminar to discuss methodology, pedagogy and other issues related to teaching.

### **Participant Selection**

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995) the strengths of qualitative studies includes exploring or describing and stressing the importance of the context, setting, and the participant's frame of reference. Having realized the seriousness of carefully considering those involved in my research, I chose my participants based on their involvement in the PDS program. Since I am a teacher at Lincoln Memorial High School, I selected the interns and mentors who were working in my building and were sharing the English office with me. In addition, I also interviewed the associates who were designated to assist these specific interns and mentors. After considering all

the mentors and interns at Lincoln Memorial High, as well as the three associates assigned to the building, I chose five mentors, four interns, and two associates as part of my study. My choice of participants was based on several criteria: the availability and willingness to be interviewed, my past interactions and relationships with these specific mentors, and whether I thought they were comfortable with me.

In addition, I wanted to include both a mentor teacher who had been involved in the PDS for a number of years and a mentor teacher who had chosen to mentor for the first time, as well as one mentor who was fairly new to mentoring. The degree of experiences mentoring and teaching may affect the relationship. A seasoned veteran with a number of years mentoring may develop her relationship in different ways from a novice mentor.

The following dyads were participants in my study: Angela and Marilyn, Hank and Vince, Tom and Vince, Rebecca and Mark, Eileen and Arlene. The reason I selected these dyads was my past association with the mentors. I knew these mentors as fellow colleagues at the high school. I had taught with them for the last two years, and I had also worked with them in the PDS program. These specific interns became a part of my study because they were paired with the selected mentors.

I chose Marilyn and Angela because I felt Marilyn trusted me and knew me outside the building. She had shared with me how excited she was to work with Angela who was eager to experience the internship. I chose Tom part way through the year because Vince made it clear that he valued Tom's mentoring. Vince was working with a teacher whom I knew quite well and had many conversations in the past about the PDS program. Rebecca had also shared a classroom with me last year, and we had become friends during her internship. Finally I chose

Arlene because of her reputation as being an effective veteran mentor. Prior to the selection process I had met her intern, Eileen. We had connected in the late spring at the luncheon for the mentors and intern candidates.

### **Intern/Mentor Pairings Selection**

During the school year, prior to the selection of the new interns, applicants spent a day at Lincoln Memorial High, visiting the classrooms of mentors, as well as shadowing a mentor. This was the first time the mentors met the applicants. This time helped the mentor with the decision process of selecting his intern. At this time mentor teachers could provide feedback about how they perceived these prospective interns. During their visit prospective interns talked to the present interns to understand the program better. Mentors could also look at intern's applications and letters of recommendations from college professors to become more familiar with them.

After this initial visit the applicants were invited back in the spring for a mixer where prospective interns had a lunch with the mentors. A mini interview took place where mentors asked the applicants questions in order to become more acquainted with their interests in teaching. At the same time the prospective interns were deciding which mentors they would like to work with in the fall. The mentors submitted a list of whom they would consider as an intern in the coming year. The interns also listed which the teachers they would be interested in having as a mentor. In the summer mentors were informed about which intern they would be working with in September.

Angela, a veteran with thirteen years of teaching was paired with Marilyn. Hank, also a veteran teacher with ten years of experience, was paired with Vince. In addition, Vince was with

a CTI teacher, Tom. Finally, Rebecca, a second year English teacher and an intern in the PDS program two years ago was paired with Mark. This final pairing evolved late in the summer.

The story that lead to the pairings of the mentor-intern pairings varied. Marilyn, a young graduate student in her early twenties, met her mentor, Angela, late in the spring at the all afternoon meeting designed for prospective interns to meet and learn about the pool of mentors and vice versa. Immediately Marilyn and Angela gravitated to each other and felt good about each other. They both indicated that they would like to be paired with each other. On the other hand, Vince was an older intern who had previous experiences teaching. His mentor, Hank, had selected him prior to the all day meeting. Tom, a CTI teacher, was also paired with Vince. Arlene was pleased that Elaine had chosen her. On the other hand, it was not until last July that Rebecca knew that she was mentoring Mark, a graduate student who over the summer decided to enter the PDS program.

### **The Role of the Associate Within the PDS Program**

The associates were initially assigned to work with three mentor/intern groups. The original plan was to have associates switch mentor/intern groups after a certain amount of time. The associate responsibilities included:

- to support and be a resource for the interns and mentors regarding theory and practice
- to act as a mediator if the intern and mentor had difficulties in their relationship
- to meet weekly with the mentor/intern dyad to discuss their needs
- to help set goals for the mentor/intern at the beginning of the school year
- to visit the mentor/intern classrooms observing the class
- to facilitate communication between the mentor and intern

- to encourage the mentor/intern dyad to reflect on their classes and practice

### **The Inquiry Meetings**

In addition to the associate providing support to each dyad, she met with a group of mentor/intern dyads during weekly inquiry meetings. During these inquiry meetings mentors, interns, and the associate discussed a variety of topics. Subjects commonly discussed included: approaches to teaching, the mentor/intern dyad's experiences within their classroom, the successes and concerns of that week, and issues which were affecting the whole school.

## **Role of the Researcher**

### **My Background and Experiences**

Mentoring had been a definite interest prior to conducting my research. The previous two years prior to my study I had been a mentor in the PDS program at the high school. I found the year long experience with both interns rejuvenating and stimulating. I walked into school with more enthusiasm, and I thought more deeply about how I was teaching. Beyond my enthusiasm I wondered if my relationship with my intern could have been better, and if it were, how would that have impacted my intern. In addition, I wondered how some of the relationships I observed had become so positive over the course of the school year. What factors lead to that positive relationship? I found mentoring exhausting and difficult at times during specific times during the school year as well as invigorating and rewarding at other times. I wondered why I was feeling certain ways at specific stages in the development of the relationship.

Besides my background in mentoring at the high school, I had worked at a middle school for

five years as an assistant principal where I took the initiative in mentoring a number of new teachers informally. In addition as an administrator I also worked for one semester with an intern graduate student who was completing her degree in educational administration. I found mentoring to be a valuable experience for me as I worked with beginning professionals.

Both interns whom I had mentored had found full-time teaching positions and felt prepared to teach. I found mentoring to be hard work and very time consuming. As I mentored, I began to read literature on mentoring and discovered the positive impact of the experience for both the mentor and intern. I believed I benefitted from both my interns as they challenged my decisions and established thinking.

As this school year began, I saw advantages as well as problems with my dual role as an English teacher-mentor and researcher. In the past two years I had developed relationships with all the teacher-mentors as colleagues. Having a familiarity with them helped me secure their cooperation and willingness to participate in my study. They were comfortable working with me and were cooperative in providing time to be interviewed. On the other hand, during some of the interviews I noticed the teacher-mentors wondering out loud if they were providing the kind of data that I was seeking. I had wanted them to view me only as a researcher and not as a friend or colleague in the English department.

Based on my role as a mentor for the last two years, I concluded that the mentor's attitudes and beliefs about mentoring were crucial in the development of the relationship between the mentor and intern. I have wondered how the mentor and intern have perceived their roles and how it has affected the stages and the development of the relationship. I concluded mentors who seemed unprepared to undertake the responsibility of supporting an intern and had difficulty



understanding the intricacies of effective mentoring impacted the development of the relationship. Beside the mentor's difficulties with recognizing the initial challenges of mentoring, I realized that certain interns faced similar difficulties. Their difficulties in relating to their mentors and the classes lead to negative relationships which prevented a positive experience. Both the mentor and intern played crucial roles in determining whether the relationship would work out or not work out.

### **My Preconceived Views about the Relationship Between the Mentor and Intern**

Having had the opportunity to function as a mentor in the PDS program for two years prior to my study, I had developed pre-conceived views about how the relationships developed between mentors and interns. I viewed mentoring as a struggle which required me as the mentor to work at accepting the intern as a co-teacher in my classroom. From the first day, I wanted the intern to realize that she was a part of the daily learning experience for the student. I believed for the relationship to work well I had to validate the intern's views and allow her to make mistakes without me trying to save her from potential failure just because I did not think she would succeed. I saw how we interacted while teaching the class as important to both of us. I needed to feel comfortable when facing the classes with my intern and likewise my intern needed to feel comfortable working with me in the classroom. Based on my two previous years as a mentor, I realized when the intern shared her ideas about teaching a lesson, I felt more positive about the intern. At the same time, I believed my efforts to make clear the lessons and my reasons for approaching the lesson and students in a particular way was important.

In addition, I learned through my mentoring that joining a class and learning to work with a

mentor was a challenge for the intern. My one intern found it difficult adjusting to the early school day schedule and facing a first period class. I believed that my interns were successful with me partially because I accepted them and spent a great deal of time discussing the expectations I had of myself, the class and of my intern. I saw a relationship functioning effectively if our communication between each other was constant, honest and direct. Reinforcing what the intern did well, supplying positive feedback, daily looking for what went well all could enhance the relationship between the mentor and intern. I concluded that stress and pressure negatively impacted the relationship and that certain times of the year had a profound impact on the relationship.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

Data collection took place during the single school year that the interns were working with the mentors. The major source of data for this study were in-depth phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 1998). Qualitative researchers rely on in-depth interviewing. Kahn and Cannell (1957) describe interviewing as “a conversation with a purpose” (p. 149). Patton (1990), pp. 280-290 places interviews into three categorical types: the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach, and standardized open-ended interview. Through my study I utilized open-ended questions which lead to informal conversations.

I conducted interviews with both the mentors and interns on a regular basis, typically once each month. Sometimes several months elapsed between interviews due to scheduling factors and the interns' time constraints. Through the nine months I gathered data from my participants, I asked an established set of questions which I formed based on the previous month interviews.

Each interview was shaped by the responses to my initial questions presented to the mentors, interns and associates. None of the participants kept journals except Marilyn. See Appendix A for a list of interview dates, and Appendix B for interview questions.

Interviewing was my main technique for collecting data and I realized that this approach had its strengths and limitations. This gave me an opportunity to obtain the direct information from those involved in the study. Also I was able to follow up on previous interviews to delve deeper into the previous conversations. Because of convenience, most of the interviews took place at the end of the day. Some of the mentors and interns were tired and struggled with questions at times during the interview. Some were eager for the day to end. On the other hand, the interviews I conducted during the day were limited to 40 minute time limit because of the mentor's and intern's responsibilities and teaching schedules. Conducting a focused, yet congenial interview helped. The interview is the best way and maybe the only method to find out "what is in and on someone else's mind (Patton, 1980, p. 196).

According to Devault (1990) much of human experiences cannot be put easily into words. As an interviewer I encouraged the participants to articulate their ideas and attitudes that they had not articulated before. By asking questions and probing for meaning I attempted to elicit their beliefs. Devault points out that interviewers sometimes have to fill the meanings that participants are unable to express themselves. He writes: "My procedure involves noticing ambiguity and problems of expression in interview data, then drawing on my own experiences in an investigation aimed at "filling in" what has been incompletely said. The point is not simply to reproduce my own perspectives in my analysis; the data and clues I gather from this kind of introspection are only a beginning and should lead me back to hear respondents in new ways."

(Devault, 1990, p. 104).

The interview is a form of social interaction. It is a face-to-face encounter between two people, each of whom is sizing up the other and constructing meanings of the other's words, expressions and gestures. What informants say to interviewers will depend on how they view the interviewers and how they think the interviewers view them.

As the interviewer I related to the participants on a personal level. The relationship which developed over time between the interviewer and informant was the key to collecting data. Over the course of the interviews I met with the participants in coffee shops and bookstores, as well as at the end of the school day in classrooms.

I used the structural general interview guide approach which presented the participants with an established set of questions. The interview developed into an informal conversation to glean insights into the attitudes and beliefs of the mentors and interns involved in my study.

My first month interviews focused on how the participants felt about entering the PDS program as mentors and interns. In addition, I explored their views on what created a positive relationship and their initial impressions of the PDS program. The second month the interview focused on how their relationships were developing and what was assisting or preventing the development of the relationship. Each month throughout the whole school year I presented the participants monthly with questions. Typically I listed ten specific questions for each interview. Later interviews gave me the opportunity to gauge if the relationship was continuing positively or whether the relationship was starting to develop problems which stood in the way of a positive relationship.

According to Kvale (1996) an interview enables participants to talk about what is on their

minds and what are their concerns without forcing them to respond to the interviewer's interests, concerns and preconceptions. I used the general interview guide approach and the informal conversation interview to explore my participants' attitudes and beliefs about their relationships.

I utilized the following procedure in conducting interviews:

- The time of interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes in length, permitting the participants to respond to questions in depth.
- All interviews were conducted in a private environment with no interruptions.
- An established set of interview questions was used to guide the process.
- Probing questions encouraged the teacher-mentors, interns to expand their responses.
- All interviews were tape recorded which allowed the researcher to concentrate on the responses of the participants and to ask probing questions based on the participants' past responses.
- Informal conversations evolved during the interviews.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Marshall and Rossman (1999) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data. Analyzing qualitative data involves searching for general statements about relationships among categories of data (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). Bogdan & Biklen (1982) defined analysis as working with the data, organizing and breaking the collected research in manageable units, looking for patterns, and finally discovering what is important and what is to be learned. I utilized Wolcott (1994) and his approach to analyzing data. Wolcott emphasizes three facets of examining data: description, analysis, and interpretation I looked for patterned regularities from the transcribed data. I looked across the dyads and their conversations with me so I could determine what affected the development of the relationships. As I collected the data I looked for categories, themes and patterns, as well as tested the emerging understandings through my interview with the mentors and interns.

The taped transcripts provided me with data. After having the interviews transcribed, I took notes on emerging themes by reading through all the data collected.. I highlighted similar attitudes and beliefs that surfaced with different participants. I listed all the possible themes which were evolving and read over all transcripts to identify themes that were evident through the words of the mentors and interns. I copied quotes from the participants which supported the themes that I believed were prevalent in my study. I identified all themes present in each participant's interviews. These themes helped me create questions for the interviews as the school year proceeded.

As I worked to analyze my data I also began exploring the literature which focused on the mentor-intern relationship and discovered that some of my themes surfaced in the journal articles. I made sure to not have the literature influence my thinking as I conducted interviews and members checks. As Bogden and Bilken (1982) suggested the reading one does should provide the researcher with stimulation, rather than be a substitute for thinking.

Another technique I used during my analysis was the use of graphic organizers and drawing flow diagrams to help me at different stages of my research. I found it beneficial to graphically conceptualize on paper what variables positively influenced the mentor and intern's attitudes about the relationship. According to Strauss, 1987; Miles & Huberman (1994) graphics and charts can be employed in all stages of analysis from the planning to the completion of the study.

Only one intern provided me with a monthly journal which she kept during the school year. Her reflections assisted me in forming the some of the themes.

In conclusion, for me to formulate an understanding of the beliefs and values about the mentor-intern's relationship, I analyzed separately each case. Initially I read each case, secondly I

did multiple readings of each case to acquire data related to their beliefs and values, thirdly I searched for themes or patterns which surfaced through different dyads. After finishing the analysis of all cases, I re-examined the complete data to conduct the cross-case analysis by repeating the analytical phases described previously.

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

The techniques I utilized to establish trustworthiness of the study included prolonged engagement and members checks. According to Erlander (1993) trustworthiness

is established in a naturalistic inquiry by the use of techniques that provide truth value through credibility, applicability through transferability, consistency through dependability, and neutrality through confirmability. (p. 132)

The first technique I used to help establish the credibility of my study was prolonged engagement.

Erlander clearly states the advantages of prolonged engagement. He sees it as

enabling the researcher to learn the culture of an organization over an extended time period that tempers distortions introduced by particular events or by the newness of researchers and respondents to each other's presence. Prolonged engagement also helps the researcher build trust and develop rapport with the respondents. (p. 133)

Prior to my study I had spent two years as a mentor in the PDS program and had established a relationship with all the mentors involved in my study.

Another factor that assisted me in building trust and rapport with my research participants was my familiarity and understanding of the PDS program, as well as the daily struggles of juggling the responsibilities of a regular classroom teacher and mentor. All the mentors were aware that I had spent two years as a mentor myself and that even as I was conducting the study I was continuing to mentor interns. The mentors sensed I could with ease relate to their circumstances and challenges of establishing a year long relationship with their interns. Mutual trust had been established through

my role as a mentor working along with them during those two previous years.

### **Members Checking**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) substitute the notion of “trustworthiness” for that of validity. In order to validate the evolving themes I used “members checks” with the participants to reconsider the interpretation of the data. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) member checks are the most important method of establishing credibility. I shared my transcripts of the interviews with the mentor teachers and interns in order to establish credibility for my study. In addition to the transcripts, I read my interpretations of the participants’ words sharing themes that I felt were established. I asked each participant if I had correctly interpreted the relationships and deleted text which they believed was inaccurate. I asked them to elaborate on specific parts of my text in order to develop a better understanding of how the relationship developed throughout the school year. When necessary I changed words and added more details based on the member checks.

In order to establish trustworthiness I spent sufficient time with each participant and clarified tentative findings and conclusions with them. Within my qualitative study I emphasized “thick description” of a relatively small number of participants within the context of the PDS program. In my descriptions of the participants I included numerous direct quotations based on the transcripts about their experiences and beliefs.

As Seidman (1998) points out: “by interviewing a number of participants, we can connect their experiences and check the comments of one participant against those of others. Finally, the goal of process is to understand how our own participants understand and make meaning of their experience.” This helped lead to validity within my study.

Through establishing trustworthiness I attempted to determine if my conclusions really came



from the data. I used audit trails, thick description, and the participants' words to illustrate the conclusions. The process resulted in an audit trail which someone else could use to trace the links between my conclusions and the original new data.

### **Audit trail**

According to Erlandson the audit trail is essential to determining the trustworthiness of the study. The audit trail leads to dependability and confirmability. During my study I assumed the role of auditor making sure I kept adequate records. I kept a record of the times and dates of all interviews. I secured all taped interviews and once these tapes were transcribed I kept all transcribed interviews in chronological order according to the date in separate three ring binders. I kept audit trail files that provided me with the key questions that guided my inquiry, at the beginning and during the whole year. Also I kept documentation of data analysis procedure which included my own notes on emerging themes, the categories I formed, and the emerging themes.

## Chapter Four

### Portrait of Mentor-Intern Relationships

#### Introduction

The following chapter will relate the stories of the mentors and interns and how their relationships developed. Each dyad formed a unique relationship which changed as the school year progressed. Some of the portraits are filled with more details and specifics based on how open the mentors and interns were during the interviews. Other participants were less open and more guarded with their beliefs and attitudes about the relationship. Each story presents the challenges of mentoring as well as the struggles of an intern learning to teach.

#### The Story of Marilyn and Angela

During late spring Marilyn and Angela had met at Lincoln Memorial High at an all day intern candidates/mentor luncheon. The luncheon provided an opportunity for mentors as well as interns to become acquainted and to determine who they wanted to work with in the fall. After informally interviewing all the prospective interns, Marilyn listed Angela as her number one choice. By the end of the school year they were both informed they were a match.

In late June of 2003 Marilyn met up with her official mentor, Angela. It was apparent from the beginning that Marilyn had high expectations of herself and the internship. She was eager to achieve in the classroom and was accustomed to succeeding. As both a high school student and Penn State

student she had earned very high grades and shown a keen interest in learning. During her summer meeting with Angela she presented her mentor a handout with twenty-two bulleted points. Highly organized in her thinking, Marilyn asked five questions including, what is the level of parental involvement, what is the educational philosophy of the school and what resources would she have access to. In addition she presented her goals under the headings of professional, personal, student and co-teacher relationship and student teacher and mentor relationship. From the first encounter Angela realized she had a dedicated, thoughtful, inquisitive intern who was eager to communicate her aspirations

As the first day of school approached, Marilyn was excited. She had met Angela and had already respected her expertise as a seasoned, veteran teacher. Marilyn respected Angela's ability to teach and that aspect of her mentor was quite important to her.

Teaching starts in just a couple days! I hope I am always filled with excitement for the first day of school. (Marilyn's Journal of Monthly Reflections, late August)

Marilyn felt comfortable and positive about the internship. She appreciated the August orientation and embraced the PDS philosophy.

The first thing that stuck me at the orientation was the conscious effort on the part of the leaders of discussions to establish an open, supportive environment for all the interaction, reflection, and discussion that would take place throughout the week and entire school year. I can only describe this effort as highly welcoming and thoughtful. This effort to value safety and open-mindedness influences me so much. Thankfully my mentor also values this concept and sees it as a goal for our first weeks. (Marilyn, August)

During the first week of school Angela realized her intern was highly motivated and cooperative. Angela established the expectation that Marilyn would arrive by 7:30 a.m. daily. Students officially did not arrive until 7:50 which gave Angela and Marilyn time to connect prior to first period. This early, established routine contributed to the beginning of a positive relationship.

Angela would arrive, begin brewing coffee and sit at her desk awaiting Marilyn. Within minutes of her mentor's arrival Marilyn would enter the room eager to start the day. Often Marilyn would write on the board the assignments for the different classes. Both took time to ask about each other's personal lives and show an interest in each other more as individuals than educators.

Marilyn began her first month with the opportunity to work with Angela's classes. Angela, early in the relationship, showed Marilyn how much she trusted her abilities. She asked Marilyn to lead a discussion of a poem with the first two classes of the day. This demonstration of confidence created an initial positive relationship. The one concern which surfaced at this point was whether Marilyn believed she was successfully working with the class.

If you look at a couple of my entries in my reflection, you'll see that I was hesitant about a couple of the times when I took control of the classroom and I was the lead or something, um, and a couple of times when I didn't think things went so well and I was, I was nervous because I didn't really know how she would react, 'cause she was, you know, trusting me with her class and, and, um, well I know we share the class but she's the, solely responsible, I'd say. She's, she's um, she's, I was worried I would be too much of a burden when I screwed up and then luckily, um, you know I talked to her afterwards and she had a different, um, opinion of how the class went, she'd see different things than I saw and I felt very comfortable telling her when I felt unsure of what I'd done or what I was about to do. Um, I lead one discussion on, oh I think it was one of the novels, it was our first novel and, you know, we don't have, we didn't have very strong readers in the beginning of the class and the people were having a tough time transitioning from summer, I think, and it was, it was difficult for me to lead a discussion because I didn't know what to focus on and I tried my best and then at one point I think we just had a really tired class and it was sixth period, they'd eaten lunch and I wasn't getting the responses I had hoped for from some of the questions I was asking and, you know, then the next day I'd do something and it would be fine. So, you know, I talked to her directly after, after that one incident when I was really scared that I just had a really boring, you know, presentation or discussion and she said no, I thought they got something out of it, you know. She actually said, I, I too have problems with, um, reading and discussion and figuring out how I would lead a discussion after, you know, the students had read something.( Marilyn, October)

Angela's willingness to be open and honest about herself helped to develop the high level of trust which was growing as the month went by. During the fall the trust level between Marilyn and

Angela increased dramatically. Angela recognized that Marilyn was dependable, arriving every morning by 7:30 A.M. Besides her promptness, Marilyn made an effort to interact with the students and seemed sincerely interested in them as individuals. This shared approach to developing a rapport with students contributed to the positive relationship between Angela and Marilyn early on in the year. Marilyn was eager to be involved in the lessons and offered to run off any handouts or tests. Angela valued her doing things that would assist in the smooth running of the class and believed they were important aspects of a successful teacher.

I can depend upon her and if, I didn't think I could depend upon her then I would end up just doing it myself and then I would end up being very resentful. I would wonder what's the point of being in this program, if she's just taking up space in the room. But because she is very dependable and shows initiative and interest in what we're doing, you know, all of that and she really wants to learn. That's an advantage. (Angela, September)

Angela made an effort to involve Marilyn in her planning. Her willingness to be open and communicate her thinking about her teaching helped Marilyn to understand her mentor. Even before beginning a new unit in late October she consulted with Marilyn and discussed with her the upcoming units of study. Angela's efforts to share her thoughts on the curriculum as well as her interest in Marilyn's views and thoughts continued to create a solid, healthy relationship in which the intern felt valued and accepted as an educator. Angela understood where Marilyn was as an intern and had realistic expectations of her. This was very important and prevented undue stress and pressure for Marilyn as November approached.

And we sat down and said okay, what's the next unit we're going to do and we just talked through the possibilities and how were going to shift around certain units, save Steinbeck's The Red Pony for a later time in the year when the kids might be able to handle it a little better. We decided to do our 'hero quest' unit. I said to her, 'you know, we should always keep in mind what is the goal for whatever activity we are going to do, for whatever approach we take into the activity, what is our purpose, our goal. So we start with that and so that should really determine our activities as opposed to the activities just being something fun to do.' And we talked through all of that and I probably did most of the

talking; it's not that she can't give input, but she's taking it in, she's learning the process of creating lessons or creating units. (Angela, October)

As October was ending, Marilyn also felt the relationship was developing nicely. She realized that she could trust Angela and that Angela was an excellent teacher.

I think my relationship with Angela is even stronger now. It's even more positive. Just because we've been through things and I've needed her support and she's needed mine at times. Although, most of it's been me needing support from her. I just know that I can trust her and I see that she's really a good teacher. Her students love her. Well, not all of them, but that's what happens. By you know, she's a great role model for me and she's human too. You know, that's another thing. I was worried she'd be too perfect, but she's great. (Marilyn)

In November Marilyn began to be more actively involved in presenting the lessons in class. Angela noticed her intern was talking too much and giving too much support to her students. Her tendency to stifle spontaneous, student thinking concerned Angela, but she had difficulty sharing her feeling with Marilyn. After observing Marilyn, Angela was aware of the need to provide more feedback to her, but was not sure how to approach Marilyn.

She is working on that (structuring a classroom discussion), you know, she's going to have to work on that. For instance the lesson today (November 11<sup>th</sup>), it's hard to articulate that, I see as one of my biggest weaknesses as a mentor is that it's very difficult for me to observe her teach or lead a discussion and change how she runs that. It's difficult for me to come up with suggestions. (Angela, November)

During November Marilyn's confidence as an adept teacher slowly increased. Her confidence grew because she was able to decipher her own weaknesses through her own thinking and reflecting. But she did appreciate Angela's willingness to talk about her weaknesses and with her about the "horrible lessons." Marilyn was conscious of the fact that there was room for improvement. The relationship between Marilyn and Angela was growing because both agreed on areas which were in need of improvement. Marilyn did not have this false confidence that she had

mastered how to direct a lesson from beginning to end. Both mentor and intern had a realistic impression of Marilyn's development and areas which were in need of improvement.

I generally felt that we could talk to each other about what was happening in our classes and be pretty open about what was happening. I attempted to teach two lessons about two weeks ago and we went over it. I thought it went well, not the lesson, the lesson was horrible. My teaching style I thought was bad, but I thought that I was really reflective and I could see where I should have changed things. In that sense it was a very good success. I got to learn a lot from the experience and I wrote down a lot of questions I had about my teaching. I read them to Angela where we were going, when we designated to meet and talk about her observation of my teaching. And everything I'd addressed had been what she wanted to talk to me about as far as the teaching, opening a class, dealing with chatter, transitioning from lesson to lesson, moving large groups to small groups and back to large groups, concluding a class, introducing new ideas. I did a really poor job and I was able to see where my weaknesses were so the fact that I could ask questions and pinpoint what I needed to do I think was helpful for both of us. (Marilyn, November )

But if Angela was noticing Marilyn's strengths, Marilyn was unaware of these feelings. In fact Marilyn felt less and less appreciated.. Very sensitive of her mentor, Marilyn noticed a change in Angela's demeanor. She did not seem to be the same positive and upbeat mentor of the earlier months. This change in mood negatively affected Marilyn and she was not sure of what to do with new new uncomfortable feelings.

I just noticed things here and there. (It was) probably the first week of November which coincided with the end of the marking period. So I don't if it's general (typical) this slump for teachers, they feel stress, maybe she just doesn't know that voicing a lot of negative opinions about the program or about our Associate affects me. She just doesn't seem, I don't know, as friendly or something. I'm really not sure. (Marilyn, November)

Marilyn's feelings about the relationship continued through November. Angela seemed to be becoming more and more distant and less open with Marilyn. Marilyn felt unsupported as an intern and her mentor's moods unsettled her. Marilyn did not know what to do.

I don't want her to think I'm a fragile person or a delicate person and that I need a lot of

support. But I feel like there's been a sort of negative support. I don't know if that makes sense. Just a sort of not a lot of comradery or working together at this point. Although we do lesson plans. We do a lot of things that we have to do. So, it's just been odd for me because I can't articulate it. But, I think in my mind that something has changed. (Marilyn, December)

In December, just before the Christmas holidays Angela began to value Marilyn even more. She realized that she had an intern who exhibited similar qualities and beliefs about school. Marilyn was student focused with her number one concern, teaching.

After Christmas break the relationship between Angela and Marilyn was affected by unexpected situations . Snow days shortened weeks and Angela's son was sick. Marilyn was unsure about how Angela was feeling about her as an intern. Recently Angela had made a remark to her which concerned her.

It was something to the effect of 'you're not a full time teacher yet and you think **you** have a lot of work?' But it was said in such a tone that I felt that the work I was doing for our class together was not appreciated. In other words, she thought I was goofing off during all our break periods and having a great time and not actually trying to do work. (And she thought) I didn't have to do reflections on my own and other things for the program or my degree that didn't deal with the class. I felt I was underappreciated a little bit. So now I realize I probably should have said something lightheartedly. (Marilyn, January)

Marilyn longed for feedback as she taught her unit. She invited her associate Roxie to observe and anxiously waited for input. But she was disturbed by the lack of feedback from Roxie as well and her confidence waned.

I'm not getting a lot of support (from Roxie, the associate). I do like the freedom of just doing what I want to do. However, I'm a little worried because I don't know if I could be doing things better for my students or better in general if I am going to get recommendations from the people who are observing me. (Marilyn, January)

As her unit continued, Marilyn felt Angela was hardly mentoring her. The second semester had begun and she was hoping that Angela would provide feedback about her unit. As she taught her unit Marilyn came to the conclusion that Angela had not offered her the positive feedback she longed



for while teaching the unit.

I think probably the mentoring I've sort of seized or experienced has made me less confident over the year and seeing I am a pretty confident person to begin with, it hasn't damaged my ego to the point where I don't think I can ever teach again or that I shouldn't pursue teaching, but it certainly doesn't make me feel good about what I'm doing with my students. Or my level of competence, I guess, in a classroom. It surprises me that I don't really know that I've ever been told that I do something well except for maybe showing up on time and just being attentive. I don't know if anything that I do in the classroom with the students is good. (Marilyn, January)

By midyear Marilyn was thinking more like a teacher. She longed for a mentor who would take the time to point out anything that she could work on to improve her practice. The experience of teaching a unit on her own pushed her to think about her needs as an intern. Angela, her mentor, was stepping back and becoming less engaged with her while Marilyn yearned for more input which her mentor could not provide.

Mrs. Morgan (Angela) is really busy and I think it's hard for her to reflect on a class. But it would be nice if I could get feedback for the next day. Something to think about. We don't really reflect on things. (Marilyn, January)

The midyear crisis negatively affected their relationship. Marilyn did not know what to do about her frustrations. She was torn about taking responsibility by initiating a discussion about the problem. She expected Angela to be assertive and step forward.

I don't really think we communicate about my teaching ability or what I can do to improve or what I should be thinking about at this point in the year. I feel like maybe I should initiate a lot of conversations, but I'm worried that she won't respond well to want to talk openly about things. I think that is a fault of mine, but I am kind of timid to start things halfway through the year that weren't initiated by her. (Marilyn, February)

Angela viewed the middle of the year much differently than her intern. About to give the unit, Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter to her intern, she saw this point in the year as a chance for Marilyn to

face the everyday challenges of organizing and teaching a unit. As a mentor she became even more hands off than she was in the fall. She saw no need to provide encouragement or teaching suggestions as the unit unfolded.

Sometimes you don't get the opportunity to learn how to be flexible until you are in your own teaching scenario, but she's being forced to learn how to adjust lesson plans, reading schedules, activities to accommodate two hour delays and snow days and things like that. Plus being part of the program (PDS), there's always me as the mentor who at least she knows that she can fall back on me for advice or something like that. You know, in other words, what do I do about a reading schedule that we had set up. She gave them a calendar of due dates and then we had three snow days in a row. So I just said well it's okay to just move the whole calendar back a day or forward. (Angela, February)

The winter months created a strained relationship for Marilyn. Angela believed she was supporting by giving her intern space, while Marilyn felt unsupported. Angela did not see her intern's unit as a teachable moment for her to provide feedback about Marilyn's teaching. She did not see her job as supervising her.

I was feeling the pressure, responsibility that somehow that was my job that I should be training her, teaching her, giving her all of this advice on how to be a teacher, but through our conversations I came to the realization that I view myself, or feel most comfortable viewing myself, as a mentor who is a role model. (Angela, March)

The beginning of Marilyn's unit revealed how insecure and unsure of herself Marilyn, in fact, was. Marilyn concluded that it actually was not her unit, but rather taking her mentor's unit and teaching it by herself. She did not trust Angela to accept her thinking about the unit.

I didn't feel like I was actually in charge of making the unit. On Tuesday I met with Roxie (her Associate).and I told her that I was a little worried about my unit because it wasn't exactly what I thought Angela wanted. I was really nervous that my taking a different focus or adding a focus, which is really what I did, I added a focus, rather than taking away, might be too much and might upset Angela somehow. That's why I was really nervous this morning. I'm scared to plan the unit and with the inquiry in mind because I don't know if

that will be what my mentor wants.(Marilyn, March)

Inwardly Marilyn was begging for Angela's critique of her teaching but received no comments. At this point the associate Roxie was invited in to observe Marilyn. The apparent good idea fell apart as Roxie observed, but failed to share her notes with Marilyn. In addition, Angela saw no need to discuss the observation with Roxie and share the observation with Marilyn. Even though she knew for Marilyn being observed during her unit was very important, Angela still did not provide a critique of Marilyn's unit.

...you know (we) have built this kind of relationship and it's hard for me even to stand on the outside and give some objective (critique) and as I said, I'm not trained in that. I don't know how to give advice on that. (Angela, April)

Even during the early weeks of Marilyn's unit Angela remained in the room. The difficulty of Hawthorne's work created a dilemma for Marilyn within the first week. When Marilyn confused two characters with the same name Angela intervened.

Yesterday there was just a bit of information that she shared with the students that was just incorrect. She conflated two characters because both characters are referred to as ..... but they are two different characters. So whenever made reference to that, I had to speak up and correct her. And I said, well those are two different characters. They're actually two separate characters. But she (Marilyn) was so good about it; you know and the kids teased her. But she said , oh, I guess I didn't read carefully enough. (Angela, April)

Angela's correction of Marilyn in front of the whole class contributed to Marilyn's low level of confidence. She not only had to contend with teaching an extremely difficult novel, but she also was not allowed to make a mistake without being corrected by her mentor in front of the whole class.

By the end of her unit Marilyn came to the conclusion that Angela's lack of praise had a negatively affect. She realized the importance of the mentor's praise.

I do wonder, however, why praise is not an every day part of her mentoring style. I think it would make me feel less intimidated and more comfortable. I think that if I ever have a student teacher or intern, I will try to remember how as an intern I needed some reassurance and praise. (Marilyn, journal entry March 15)

After spring break Marilyn became more and more stressed by the end of the year pressures.

In the middle of the first week of her CTI unit she discovered that only two of her students had read the assigned story. The discussion of the short story was a disaster and Marilyn was exhausted.

I was relieved that Angela refrained from criticizing my instruction. It's not that she ever offers harsh criticism, but today I knew I wouldn't have even been able to handle sugar-coated version of the truth. It's unfortunate at times that I take my performance so seriously, but I suppose it's better than the alternative.(Marilyn, March)

Angela began to feel the stress of mentoring as spring advanced. The stress and pressure of working with Marilyn every day of the week began to impact her. She longed to be recognized for her hard work as a mentor. The time and energy she spent with Marilyn began to impact her attitude towards the program.

I think everybody wants to be appreciated. I certainly would love to have, from time to time, someone say, 'gee, we really appreciate what you do for the program.' I mean, you think about it. She's with me more than anyone else. I don't see how on earth you would last for the entire year or you just become indifferent maybe and go and do your own thing. Certainly I would love to have somebody, anybody, Remick (curriculum director), whatever say—it amazes me what you do with those interns. Thank you so much for helping us make this program work. We couldn't do it without teachers like you. (Angela, June)

With less than a month remaining Marilyn became focused on securing a teaching position for the next year. With Angela's blessing she took a few days off of school interviewing for openings in various areas of Pennsylvania. Her excitement for working with Angela and teaching at the high school diminished greatly and she began to focus on making sure she had a job for the fall.

By the end of May, Marilyn was offered a teaching position. She no longer needed a

recommendation from her mentor. The end of the year was bittersweet.

I called her after I got my job offer and she said, you know, congratulations, it's going to be exciting for you and they're lucky to get an intern like you. You know, I think a couple other times she said I did a good job as an intern. I remember that she made bad comments, but I just seem to remember all of the negative comments I've ever received more than the praise. (Marilyn, May)

And with Marilyn's unit completed, she wondered what would be her role in the classroom.

I'm trying to figure out what my role in the classroom should be for the rest of the year. I have to finish my inquiry paper, but also teach my students. How can I do both? What are my priorities? I am thankful my job hunt had ended. (Marilyn, May)

Marilyn concluded that she no longer would have an active part in the teaching. She still wanted to be contributing to the lessons, but realized Angela had taken over in toto.

She's done a good job of not picking on me or anything like that, realizing everyone needs to improve different aspects of their practice. It's the end of the year and we're sort of working together, but I'm not holding my weight completely. It is a little frustrating for me because I'm not doing what I could do if teaching were all I were doing. (Marilyn, June)

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### **The Story of Mark and Rebecca**

From the beginning Mark was battling a collaboration that was not to be. Waiting until late summer to enter the PDS program, Mark never had the opportunity to interview any of the mentors or be involved in selecting his mentor. September began with stress and pressure for both the mentor and intern. Mark was adjusting to being an intern and Rebecca was faced with the challenges of a young teacher.

Even before the first day of school Mark disappointed Rebecca. Hoping to have a bulletin board ready for the classroom, Rebecca asked Mark to put up a bulletin board. Without any guidance or suggestions from Rebecca, Mark attempted to create a welcome back students display.

His mentor instructed him to make a bulletin board to welcome students for the first day of school. He didn't know how to do this, but he didn't say anything. He did the best he could with what he was given and then after he left for the day she didn't like it. So she took it down and redid it. They never had a conversation about this. (Elrena, associate, October)

The first few weeks of school continued to create a strain on the relationship between Mark and Rebecca. Rebecca was eager to push Mark to think about why he wanted to teach. Mark, on the other hand, was adjusting to a new environment, a new schedule and many more responsibilities than he had in the past. Early on in the month Rebecca strove to involve Mark in the process as much as possible. From the beginning of the year she sought his input and ideas.

I've gone about trying to incorporate Mark in the classroom, in the planning, in reflection. (We are) really focusing on planning a lot together. Planning everything together, trying to do maybe a class period together. I'll take the lead for a class period and then have him take the lead for a class period or some small section of the class where he's comfortable right now. (Rebecca, September)

By the end of September Rebecca's disappointment and dissatisfaction with Mark had peaked. She could not help but compare Mark's attitude and efforts to her own experience as an intern. Mark was not the kind of intern she expected and his atypical behaviors were seriously affecting her in an extremely negative way.

We don't have the kind of relationship that I would like for us to have so I feel like it's not a productive relationship. Part of that is because of my conception of a mentor and intern pairing from my own personal experience. Even though I knew coming into this that my experience would not be the same and that I was prepared for a different experience. But I was not prepared for one that was so vastly different, for an intern who was so vastly different from the kind of intern that I was and the kind of interns that I've seen coming through and the characteristics of those interns. (Rebecca, September)

October brought no improvement with the relationship. Rebecca still felt Mark was not making the effort necessary to be an effective intern. Rebecca was expecting Mark to show more initiative in planning and to take more interest in the classes. Mark showed little desire to help in

planning lessons.

There is not a lot of improvement and a lot of ‘unimprovement’. I have to struggle to get him to set an agenda for a planning period. If we have a period to plan together, I have to sit down and say, ‘well, what do you think we need to do this period? What do you think we need to do? I know what I think we need to do, but what do you think we need to do.?’ It’s difficult to get him to answer. (Rebecca, October)

Rebecca expected Mark to work at night preparing lesson plans. She gave him opportunities to plan lessons and believed that this was important for interns to experience. Giving Mark little guidance, she hoped Mark would take her assignments seriously. Mark failed to prepare lessons and came to school unprepared to share any lesson plans with Rebecca. His lack of follow through seriously damaged a relationship that already was slowly falling apart. To make it worse, Rebecca lost faith in Mark’s ability to follow through.

Well the problem is that there wasn’t enough time to plan and so now I have to plan, write this stuff out myself tonight because I don’t trust that he would be able to even if I asked him to...I don’t think he would know how to do it. I don’t think that he would be able to. I do not trust that he could go home tonight, write up and design a coherent assignment and have it ready for tomorrow. (Rebecca, October)

Rebecca did not understand Mark’s lack of follow through. She was perplexed and disturbed by Mark’s lack of ambition. Mark was not cooperating with her. His lack of accountability and taking responsibility for himself damaged the frail relationship even more.

I think if I tell him to do something, he’ll do it. If I give him an assignment, he would do them. (I would think.) But he doesn’t and it’s not like he would take the initiative and go home and write something up anyway, you know, if I didn’t ask him to or even that he would think about what needs to be in the assignment. (Rebecca, October)

Mark continued to have difficulty following through with Rebecca's request to create lesson

plans outside of school. Rebecca's hope that Mark could succeed lessened even more. Through October Mark showed no marked improvement in Rebecca's eyes. Her lack of confidence in him created a wedge between the two of them. She did not trust him or have much hope he would make it through the PDS program.

I don't know. I don't know what to expect. I keep waiting for the light to turn on somewhere. I don't have an expectation of when that will happen. I don't know if it will happen. (Rebecca, October)

On the other hand, Mark did not view the first nine weeks of school as a disaster. His perspective of the experience was much different than Rebecca's. He saw some positives in the experience and liked the way Rebecca involved him by asking him to create new activities for the Outsiders unit. He valued Rebecca's willingness to involve him in the planning.

For the first nine weeks the first thing I really appreciated looking back on it was that I came up with ideas. She helped me adapt my ideas to where they worked pretty well in the classroom. We did the Outsiders from a community perspective and a worked a 'point of view' writing exercise in there and letters to the editor. I think we did a lot of neat things and a lot of it was, you know, they were my ideas and she helped me develop them. (Mark)

But from the first day of school an underlying way of proceeding seemed to be present, but not stated. Rebecca was the supervisor, the judge of Mark's abilities and Mark was "the student" being daily critiqued. The tension and resentment increased as December approached. Mark's little confidence, built up during the unit on Orwell's Animal Farm, decreased as the days went by. Mark was beginning to feel he could do nothing right in Rebecca's eyes.

I just felt like she was constantly watching and evaluating which wouldn't have been a bad thing, but I felt like she was waiting to, denigrate me. Got very little positive reinforcement. But she was right there any time she felt like she could point out something I'd done wrong. (Mark, November)

During the extensive unit focusing on the novel, Animal Farm, Mark had an opportunity to



be involved in teaching the lessons. He was eager to be engaged in this unit since he had helped develop the unit. But Rebecca was unwilling to let him lead the class alone. She continued to be critical of Mark and began openly criticizing his behavior in front of the students.

She would encourage me to talk to the class about something and then jump in because she didn't feel like I had covered something properly. But, I never got a chance really to finish what I was going to say. She would interrupt me and start talking and I just felt like saying, 'I was getting to that.' (Mark, November)

Rebecca, impatient and frustrated with Mark, devalued Mark's method of talking to the students. She did not like Mark's teaching style or approach with the students.

She definitely discouraged me from using the board at all. She didn't like writing on the board. She seemed to perceive any time I talked to the class that I was lecturing or that I was being too patriarchal. Somehow I was suppose to get certain content across without actually talking about it, I guess. (Mark, November)

After the Outsiders unit Mark began his own unit, persuasive writing. During his unit he introduced to the class the different types of persuasive writing using the overhead projector. Mark believed the unit went well and was pleased with it. He thought the students were involved in identifying the different types of persuasive writing used in newspapers' letters to the editor. However, Rebecca viewed Mark's unit much differently.

I asked her for more direct input on what she expected and she sent me this really complicated email about 'what did you see here?' She waited to ask me direct questions about what I had done until the lessons on persuasive writing which she verbally trashed, thoroughly and said that it hadn't worked at all. The students had gotten it and then she wants me to thoroughly analyze the experience. Why couldn't we analyze a positive one? And by that time, I was just like you know what, screw it. Because I felt like the lesson went really well. And then she thoroughly outraged me the next morning by coming in with a quiz to quiz the students on the content that I had taught the day before without saying anything about it. She just throws a pop quiz at our students after talking the whole nine weeks about how she doesn't believe in that form of evaluation. I felt like her sole reason to do it was to

humiliate me, honestly. (Mark, November)

Without consulting Mark, Rebecca chose to administer a quiz during Mark's unit.

Rebecca's decision seriously damaged a relationship that was already frail. Mark no longer trusted his mentor and for good reason. In Mark's eyes, Rebecca did not believe in him.

I would have liked her to trust me to succeed. Then why couldn't she trust me to guide the students through during the piece of writing and see what the end product was, then evaluate? Maybe I could have discovered that they didn't understand or I would have discovered that they did understand. But from her perspective she felt like I didn't get it across. I wish she would have trusted me to carry out the rest of that lesson and see what kind of product I got from the students. That would have given me an idea of whether or not I was effective and what I needed to change. I was never given that opportunity. She didn't trust me to repair what she saw as my mistakes. (Mark, November)

Without communicating her reasons to Mark she stepped in and administered a quiz.

Rebecca's actions put Mark in a very difficult situation as he felt betrayed by his mentor. He felt he could not approach her about his feelings without endangering his mentor's recommendation.

She just did it. I was just enraged. She felt like she needed an assessment to know how many of the kids (understood the content), but there was nothing to compare it to. I didn't want to challenge her on it because things were already so bad. I didn't want to have a big fight with her because I knew at some point unless things changed she would be evaluating me and I was still thinking maybe I can salvage this situation, at least until the end of the semester. (Mark, November)

Mark wanted to challenge his mentor on her decision to give a quiz, although he refrained.

But the results of the quiz were not bad and Rebecca was not able to use the poor results against Mark.

The seventh and eighth period with the regular ed students the scores weren't as good but they weren't awful either. I think she thoroughly expected those kids to just totally bomb the quiz and then to use the quiz to slam me and when that didn't happen she didn't have any more use for the quiz and she never brought it up again. (Mark, November)

Rebecca's frustration and lack of confidence in Mark continued to grow. Her frustration

centered on Mark's apparent lack of effort and dedication to all the demands of a teacher. In addition, his slow, methodic thinking in response to her questions added to her impatience.

The frustrations are pretty consistent. I've been frustrated with him because he does not really seem like he's willing to devote time and effort into producing all the assignments or he seems like he is not willing to put time and effort into clearly assessing student work. It takes him a long time to process things which is frustrating. It takes him so much time to think about what I've said and think about a response and then answer. (Rebecca, November)

Exhausted and not sure what to do, Rebecca felt like she was putting much more effort and thought into the relationship than Mark. It was the middle of November and Mark's apparent lack of progress disturbed Rebecca. She continued to push Mark to think for himself and present his own ideas for their units. Mark struggled to formulate any original ideas about how to teach Shakespeare's Much To Do About Nothing. His inability or reluctance to share his strategies for teaching the comedy seriously disappointed Rebecca. At this point, Rebecca's level of frustration had peaked.

I really feel like he does not bring much. I give him time to think about it (the lesson) and maybe give him some kind of planning before hand. 'Okay, on Monday we're going to meet to do this. So think about this and have some ideas.' But, when we do have that meeting usually he has thought about it, but he really has nothing most of the time. I think we were meeting to plan Much To Do About Nothing and I gave it to him and had him read it. Three days later, we met to plan it and I said, 'what ideas do you have for Much To Do About Nothing?' His only response was, 'what do you think about reading some of it out loud in class?' That was the extent of his ideas. (Rebecca, November)

With December beginning Rebecca realized all her efforts and work with Mark had produced an unsatisfactory performance from her intern. She had lost hope in him.

I still have these root concerns that I don't think that he's capable of handling all of these things that he needs to handle. So even though I can recognize that he is improving and even though I can recognize that he does some things that are good, I can still say I don't think he should be a teacher though. Maybe not an English teacher.. I think of him like a special education student who needs to make a lot of adaptations in order to be successful in this field and I don't see that he either knows how to or is willing to make those adaptations from what I have seen so far in the last three months. He really needs a lot more desire and more passion to really be an effective teacher. (Rebecca)

In the short month of December, Mark's confidence did not grow. He became less and less confident of his abilities. With Rebecca no longer showing any confidence in him, Mark felt like a failure. Rebecca contributed Mark's lack of confidence to his vague reasons for wanting to teach.

I don't think that he does have a great amount of confidence in himself. I think it all goes back to the fact that I don't know that he knows why he's teaching or why he wants to be a teacher. All the things I have heard him say are about job security. I haven't heard him say a lot about why he wants to be a teacher. (Rebecca, December)

Rebecca concluded that Mark's reluctance to interact with her stemmed from his fear of her.

Mark with more and more in December. Mark was reluctant to reflect about the lessons partially because he was worried about Rebecca's negative criticisms of him.

I think he's afraid of me. I think it got to a very clear point where he felt like nothing he could ever do would please me. I think at some point in the classroom he becomes afraid to do anything. (Rebecca, December)

In late December Mark's dissatisfaction with the relationship crescendoed. He realized Rebecca demonstrated poor time management skills during the school day and was expecting him to sacrifice his weekend to catch up on grading papers. Mark was unhappy with himself giving into Rebecca because she was the mentor and had authority over him.

I just had forgotten how condescending and overbearing she could be. I wish I would have negotiated less and stood my ground with her a little more and forced her to respect me as a professional. I guess she set the tone in a hierarchical way like she was the authority and expected me in a lot of ways to be flexible and work on her time frame and work when she wanted to work on what she thought was important. Of course, she was the mentor, but I found it hard to understand why papers would lay around and we would not do anything with them for weeks and then suddenly it was crucial that I come in on a Saturday morning and work for hours to get those graded so that they could be turned back in on Monday. It had to be done by Monday when we could have spent a couple of hours each day grading these things and done them at our leisure, but they just sat around. That was a big frustration. I should have stood my ground and said ‘no, I am not going to come in on Saturday and spend my Saturday grading papers when we had weeks to do this. Maybe you like working Saturday and Sunday mornings, but I don’t.’ I think I would have been more professional with that and should have challenged her with her time usage and said we have two hours during the day. I finally gave up trying to get any work done during the school day. (Mark, December)

As Christmas arrived the relationship ended. Rebecca, a frustrated mentor, felt defeated..

Mark’s willingness to work with Rebecca vanished. Neither saw any positives in the relationship.

Before the first semester had ended the relationship had dissolved.

I was disappointed that we weren’t in the end like two educated people who both want to teach and are both — I feel certainly she is focused on the kids and they are her priority and I feel like they are my priority too — it’s just disheartening that we weren’t able to work it out. I guess, I am a little idealistic and think that we should have been able to make that relationship work and somehow we weren’t able to communicate and make it work. (Mark, December)

### **The Story of Elaine and Arlene**

In the fall Elaine and Arlene began a cordial, relaxed relationship. Arlene, a mentor with many years of experience both as a mentor and classroom teacher, allowed Elaine to acclimate herself to the school and students. Arlene was much more concerned about creating a successful beginning for herself and her students. Elaine spent the month of September observing Arlene’s lessons.

I think September is the honeymoon period so if I look back, I mean, I think that there was the thrill of starting the year and the worrying started in October. I don’t know that I ever worried

at the beginning because I was so intent on getting the year started and meeting my kids. I'm really pre-occupied in that sense. (Arlene, September)

While Arlene was focusing on her students and starting off the right foot, Elaine seemed to get lost in the shuffle. She was unsure of herself and uncomfortable in the classroom. Like many beginning teachers, Elaine was worried about how the students were perceiving her and whether or not they liked her. She had a strong need to be liked and accepted.

I was worried about if the students would like me or (as I was) feeling like an outsider and I really didn't have a reason (to be there) at first, I sort of held back what I had to offer at first. It was difficult securing my place in the classroom and feeling really a part of the teaching experience. It was sort of like this weird limbo state because I am a student but I am not a student, but not a teacher. (Elaine, September)

Elaine was unsure of her role in the classroom. Initially she was frustrated by this uncertainty and ambiguity of her role.

I just wasn't sure of how to portray myself. My identity as a teacher or as an intern, like what was it? I don't know, if there is a way to figure that out sooner that would have been good. And I don't think there was a point when I said, 'oh, this is what I'm suppose to be, but I think I gradually figured it out. (Elaine, October)

As October began things changed for the better between Arlene and Elaine. The relationship began to become more positive. As a mentor Arlene began to sense Elaine's low self confidence and self-doubt. She was still becoming accustomed to the classroom. At this point Arlene began to work at building up Elaine's self-confidence. Elaine communicated her impressions of her intern and provided positive feedback.

October comes and the daily routines of school and life and somebody in your space intrudes and then I think that's when the warts and blemishes start appearing and there were some. She had some personal matters that erupted in October and November, nothing to do with school, kind of self-esteem thing. I started thinking, 'does she have the constitution to do this?' So maybe that the initial worries were about her emotional fortitude. (Arlene, October)

After the first month Arlene was beginning to show empathy for her intern.

This year I had a lot of struggles with insecurity with myself. So Arlene provided a unique (picture of) myself is something she definitely gave me because she saw me in this totally different light when she'd say things like, 'when I see you in the classroom, you look like you are confident, but when I talk to you out here (outside of the class), you're not really confident. You do a good job.' She helped me a lot of times to see myself not the way I was seeing myself at the time. That was especially the beginning of the year when I was just having a really tough time. (Elaine, February)

Arlene realized as her school routine was now established that the honeymoon was over. She discovered the main issue with her intern, her self-esteem. Elaine's feelings of being unsure of herself surfaced. Arlene concluded she needed to step in and address her concern with Elaine.

Through the first month Elaine's confidence in herself had been low and she felt unsure of her ability to teach. With little opportunity to teach Elaine was uncertain of her strengths as a teacher. Arlene had taught exclusively the class during September. Elaine had no idea of her own potential as an instructor.

November brought new hope to the relationship. Arlene realized Elaine was good at creating graphics for handouts. She had more confidence in Elaine's potential as a teacher. The second marking period was beginning and Arlene and Elaine were more comfortable with each other. Arlene was accepting Elaine and encouraging her to accept herself.

I've learned some really neat things from her and I'll never be able to really replicate. She's really good at taking ideas and visually presenting them in handouts. She's really good that way, which will be a wonderful attribute to her as a teacher. (Arlene, November)

Probably in the second marking period we just sort of were getting comfortable in the classroom with each other. The first marking period is just a blur. (Elaine, November)

Elaine had a breakthrough in her internship. She was eager to show her independence in the classroom. Arlene and she discussed how her role was evolving. Their meeting in the auditorium was crucial to fostering their relationship.

I think it (the relationship) is built on trust, commitment, fortitude, communication between the two of us and it is a commitment. There really is a commitment between both of us to the benefit of the students and the work place. There have been probably four really critical times and we chuckle about it now, but there were a series of emails and I came in Wednesday and I said, 'I need to talk. We need to go to a quiet place and I had the key to the auditorium and I said, come on we're going down to the auditorium because I knew I could lock us in and nobody could disturb us. We really had a heart to heart about what was going on and it was like we had reached the next plateau. She's ready to fly more. It seems like there is a critical time and we need to work our way through it, to take up the next step and go to the next step. I don't know if that's maybe what comes with working with me because I'm very possessive of my students. (Arlene, January)

We made a pointed effort that they (the students) would see me as a teacher also and not just as an observer or a student in the classroom. (Elaine, November)

Elaine saw this brief conversation with her mentor as crucial stage in her relationship with Arlene. Her mentor was beginning to view her more as a teacher in the classroom.

I had to have independence in front of the classroom and I built up my confidence that I could do it on my own so I knew that I was ready to do more in front of the classroom. I felt more confident as a teacher that I could work with her (Arlene) and have a dialogue because I had some experience. That was probably, I don't know, in November maybe. (Elaine, December)

She (Elaine) had a crisis, crises of confidence in late October and November. I mean serious ones. (Arlene, December)

Elaine's self doubt and low self-esteem became apparent to Arlene during those two months.

Arlene questioned whether it would be a reoccurring pattern. Even though she was not really sure she believed in Elaine, Arlene continued to show confidence in her.

There were times that she wasn't sure she was going to make it through this program and I wasn't sure she was going to make it through this program. I never told her that. (Arlene, December)



The stress and long days at school began to wear on Elaine. As a college student she had the luxury of not working eight hour work days. Elaine became exhausted and her resistance wore down. Worried about how Arlene would react if she asked to take a day off of school she avoided informing her that she was sick and needed to go home.

Like one day, she came in, she was sick and she came in and I was in study hall and she gave Carmon (another intern) a post-it-note that said I'm sick. I'm going home. This is the middle of her unit. And I thought she doesn't realize that as a teacher and it was no problem for me to pick up because I can do, but I was a little miffed because I thought you know your responsibility is to come to me and say okay, I'm going and I would have said fine go home, you don't feel good. But she wasn't thinking, she was thinking oh Arlene can pick that up but it wasn't a sense of okay this is what I thought we would be doing are you sure you're okay with that? (Arlene, December)

January brought concerns for Arlene. Arlene had been hoping Elaine would look more professional as the year progressed. When Elaine walked in one cold, snowy January morning with attire only appropriate for a college student, but not a teacher, Arlene decided the time had come to address her concerns. She was concerned that the students might not see as a teacher and that her choice of dress might communicate a lack of professionalism to the administration.

She had a real slump in January, coming back after the holiday. We had a testy time and I said, 'teaching is hard work and whether you feel like coming in or not, you need to do this.' We had one conversation about professionalism and a college student dress. I said 'you're a young woman and you're going to have to dress better than I do because you're trying to get a job.' (Arlene, February)

Arlene's concern for Elaine's appearance seemed to coincide with Elaine beginning her unit. Prior to teaching her unit Arlene noticed Elaine taking more initiative. In the past Elaine would e-mail her whenever she had a concern. Communication had changed and become more direct and personal.

Although she knew Arlene did not like talking on the phone, Elaine made the decision to call her about how upset she was with Arlene's critical remarks in regard to her teaching that day.

I was writing in response to something that happened in class and I think my frustration came through. You know kind of "what about this, what about that. It was a lengthy email. I could spend an hour writing an email. I mean I do spell check and all of that. We had been communicating quite a bit via email and it was really good I said to her the next day that you're picking up the telephone. (Arlene, February)

I had sent her an email and she telephoned me and I said I was starting to respond but I thought this going to be an hour and I'm going to call her. That was a huge step for her because she really retreats when there's tension and she's the one that instigated the conversation. (Arlene, February)

Elaine's initiative and courage to talk directly to Arlene had a positive impact on Arlene. Her mentor appreciated her intern taking responsibility to openly communicate and in timely manner.

That was another plateau where she grew in my eyes respectfully because she in a sense said, 'no, I'm not going to respond to the email. I'm going to call and we're going to talk about this which was the right thing to do. (Arlene, February)

Because of the deeper level of trust and faith in her intern Arlene realized their relationship was becoming even more positive. Elaine was showing to her mentor that she was ready to teach the class alone and Arlene understood that.

I think her relationship and my relationship are getting easier. That there's trust. We know each other. There's, you know, we're starting (to trust each other more). I can look at her; she can look at me. There's a know telepathy. I think it started when she had to start her unit and we had a little dance around which had a lot to do with me letting go, which is very hard. But you know, stepping back and allowing her to be (the teacher) and taking the role. Were you in inquiry the time that we talked about that? So that's a trust issue. You know, trust in the other person, faith that she will (succeed), not faith that she's going to fall or stumble. I see her taking the initiative, having her own confidence in her abilities. This is the first time I've left her, by the way, for a full period. (Arlene, February)

As Elaine was teaching her unit Arlene realized that her intern need space and that she was being too critical of her.

She was starting her unit and it was hard for me to let go and so I found myself for the first time in my mind mentally picking apart what she was doing wrong. We started talking about it and as I began going through (what she was doing wrong) I stopped short and thought I wouldn't do this to my students. I generated an observation sheet as a result of that conversation and we came up with a (list of items) and even the terminology. I said I need to rethink how I am criticizing her, even though it was meant as positive criticism. (Arlene, February)

In the third week of Elaine's unit Arlene chose to join the class as a "student" and found her new role beneficial to grasping how the class was performing. Her new role gave Arlene the chance to support her intern since she could observe the dynamics of the students more easily. Joining a group of boys who were studying a choice novel, Arlene had a better understanding of Elaine's unit. Elaine indicated to her that she felt one of the class periods was unsuccessful. When Amanda informed her mentor of how disappointed she was about the class Arlene explained how she viewed the lesson differently.

I like both of us (collaborating), but she does need to try it on her own and we'll go back to the collaboration (later in the year). But I'm really learning as we said because I'm learning to be a student in class. We're doing literature, the choice novels. I've joined (a reading group). I'm doing the assignments and I think it is fun for the kids. There are only two boys and so I'm reading (the novel) right along with them and we're having a good time. At the end of sixth period she (Elaine) said, 'well that didn't work.' I disagreed. We had a great discussion in our group. That was a great assignment. Don't focus on three kids who are fooling around when everybody else was doing it (the assignment) and it was really good. That was nice to be able to say (to Elaine). (Amanda, February)

As Elaine was ending her unit, Arlene recognized her intern's progress. She was becoming more appreciative of her expertise as a teacher.

I'm always concerned about making sure that she's prepared, but I don't worry about that as much as I used to because I think she is smart enough to figure out that. Frankly this is a fun time in the year because I think she knows enough and we've established a relationship enough that there is energy that's very productive the second half of the year. It's getting easier, I don't feel the weight. I feel like the load is really light. (Arlene, late February)

Besides working with Arlene's English classes early in the day, Elaine was asked to help Arlene with an afternoon class.

It was hard starting out. It was a new class for me to be going into. They were just getting to know the class. I was an intern and hadn't been in an advanced class to begin with. Then it was the end of the day and for awhile I was so exhausted by sixth period. I would go in there sometimes. Then for awhile I wasn't going in. There was tension because I wouldn't always be in seventh and eighth period. That's a tension we didn't talk about for a while. (Elaine, March)

Elaine felt better because she was expressing her concerns and Arlene felt better because of the higher degree of communication between the two of them. She appreciated Arlene's willingness to discuss her issues.

I talked about it with Arlene later and I said, 'you know, I feel like my ideas don't matter and she said, 'it just matters that you are there and the kids see you and you make yourself available. That's what matters. You don't have to come up with all of the ideas.' (Elaine, March)

Arlene was relieved that Elaine openly communicated her frustrations with her.

I think that we can very quickly get to the conversations we need to have. In the beginning of the year it seemed like that we almost danced around those until there was like a critical moment. But now I can look at her and say, 'you're frustrated and she'll say yeah. And then she will tell me what it is and I'll say well now look at it this way and then the whole thing de-escalates. In the past we didn't name those tensions and we didn't talk about that so much. (Arlene, May)

With the fourth marking period beginning, Elaine appeared more confident. This seemed evident to her mentor. Arlene made an effort to comment on her increased level of confidence and her growth since the start of the year.

She (Arlene) said it just seems like (you are) a different person since the fourth marking period in the classroom. You're so comfortable and confident. It's like you've always been there. She said, 'the way you dress, the way you present yourself. You just seem like a different person from the beginning of the year. I think that's true and it had a lot to do with her and her encouragement and support. I think all those things are motivating. (Elaine, April)

After spring break Elaine became more involved in the class and the new unit, The Red Badge of Courage. She realized the novel unit was Arlene's and noticed a different atmosphere in the classroom. She had mixed feelings about the class. Even though she was enjoying the experience, she was not sure if she fit into the new unit or not.

We started a research project after spring break and then from there everything was good. I have been in the class every day and working with Arlene doing Crane's The Red Badge of Courage and it's been fun. I like it so far. It just took awhile. I mean this is the fourth marking period and I'm in here all the time. That took awhile to happen. That was sort of hindering our relationship. It was coming from both sides because she wanted me there but they were struggling because some of the kids hated the class and parent issues about the class. It was hard for her to deal with this and then I felt like I shouldn't be there because they were trying to foster this new class. I didn't know where I fit in. But I always developed good relationships with the kids. I know a lot of the kids. That just made it easier. (Elaine, April)

Arlene encouragement and comments about her marked improvement of her intern had a positive impact on Elaine. In addition, Arlene voiced her confidence that Elaine would find a job for next year.

Right now I am really struggling because I don't have a job or an interview and her (Arlene) saying that she has faith and that something will happen has really helped. (Elaine, June)

As the end of the year was approaching communication between Arlene and Elaine continued to enhance the relationship. Arlene realized that she and Elaine were able to read each other much better than in the fall.

I think that she and I have had to figure out our own pattern of communications and when there has been moments of tension I think we have become much better at negotiating, identifying them (the tensions) and dealing with them. I think this has been important to be honest with each other. (Arlene, June)

Arlene took a sincere interest in Elaine's fear of not securing a job. It was the end of May and still no school had contacted her about an interview. With less than a month remaining in school Elaine was ready to panic. Arlene showed empathy for her situation.

I keep saying to her. Let things unfold because I think she wants to see it as a plan and I think she's just going to have to let things unfold and be patient which is hard. She needs to be patient. You can't anticipate hiring decisions, you can't. We've talked a lot about that. (Arlene, May)

Elaine appreciated Arlene's efforts in supporting her as she dealt with finding a teaching position for the following school year. Both were feeling very positive about each other.

She's been there to support me with what is happening out of school or outside of the classroom. Right now I am dealing with the insecurities and fear of the unknown future. (Elaine, June)

June came and Elaine still did not have a job. Arlene continued to show empathy and realized that her job was almost done as a mentor.

I think this is (June) the last lesson plan which is releasing them (the interns). And I said to my students in the letter, I said, 'you know, it's time for me to send you along to the next stage, which sounds great for them. But it's time for me to send her along to the next leg of her journey. She's ready, just as my kids are, ready. We're done, I think, we've done the things we need to do. (Arlene, June)

Arlene had a clear understanding of June being the last leg and she treated Elaine with sensitivity and care. She was very aware of Elaine's many demands. She decided Elaine needed a different kind of support as the school year was coming to a close.

I think she (Elaine) sees me more as more support. It's the time of the year, graduation, her inquiry paper and she's planning a wedding. The last thing she needs is for me to add one more demand on her. I've tried to be very aware of that. (I am ) more a supportive partner than a task master. That part of the relationship is over. (Arlene, June)

### **The Story of Tom and Vince**

The story of Tom and Vince is abbreviated in contrast to some of the other stories because Tom was not identified early on as a mentor to Vince. Although Vince worked with Tom the whole school year, he spent only two periods per day with him, one planning and the other co-teaching a non-college

bound English class. Interviews with this dyad did not begin until March. But the relationship of Vince and Tom is a crucial part of my study since these two individuals developed one of the deepest relationships during the school year.

Since Vince emphatically stated that Tom was a beneficial mentor to him through the school year, I have included this dyad in the study. The dates noted in this chapter are not reflective of when the interactions occurred because Tom was first interviewed in the spring of 2004. Through out the interviews Tom mentioned a number of times that he did not perceive himself as a mentor, although he was designated as a mentor by the PDS program as the school year began. Tom and Vince's dyad was unique because Tom did not attend the spring get together and was not planning on working with an intern as August began. Tom was hoping not have an intern during the 2003/2004 school year and was skeptical of the benefits of working with any intern because of past negative experiences.

September brought an atypical beginning for both Tom and Vince. Their time together was minimal the first month. During the first week of school Tom's elderly mother became very sick and Tom was not able to be in school. Vince was 'the teacher' for fourth period as that class began the school year.

When Tom returned the third week of school he immediately began to appreciate his intern. He observed Vince taking initiative and showing a concern for him. This early on stressful period in Tom's school year was lightened by a competent intern who wanted to be involved in the teaching. They both became comfortable with each other and this strengthened the relationship within the first month of school. Tom had confidence in Vince's abilities and Vince had confidence in himself which helped him successfully work with students in the class.

When I came back I let him run the class, make quizzes, and I helped him. I knew from day one how he was going to handle it and we did what felt comfortable. (Tom, April)

He had a task that he had to accomplish for me because the very first week of school. I spent the first week of school in school and then the second week of school I went out to my mother from California. She had a stroke and I had to move her to Michigan. So he and my substitute ran the show for a week fourth period. You know, my respect for him just jumped through the roof because he just did an excellent job and my substitute that I had just sat back and let him do it. He was so efficient and he had things so well in hand when I came back that I just, I mean he relieved me of so much of my stress that right away I bonded with him. You know it's unusual to find a student teacher who's as concerned about his mentoring teacher as he is about what goes on in the classroom. He's so sincere all the way around. He kind of solves problems. Had it been another teacher, I don't know if he may not have felt free to jump in there and make suggestions. 'Here, let me help you with that and that kind of thing.' He has always been that way. I felt confident just hearing him talk the first time made me sure that this was not going to be a bad experience because of all the questions he asked in the very first hour. Of course, seeing his work for the first few weeks of school and then since then it's just been a growing experience-very good. (Tom, April)

Vince brought excitement to Tom's class and revitalized Tom as a teacher. Tom was more excited about going to class since Vince came with new ideas and was taking chances in order to keep the kids excited.

It was stimulating to have him around. I think an older teacher every once in awhile needs to have this infusion of energy. He pushed me to be more creative myself. I appreciated it even though at first I wasn't sure I was going to appreciate it. When a student teacher works with you, you spend a lot of time re-evaluating your own philosophy and that's really exhausting. I did not find it so with him. It was easy to do. I did not have to explain everything. I found myself learning from him. (Tom, April)

Vince started the year working with a lower level eleventh grade class period 4. During third period he met with Tom and talked about the politics of education. Tom shared his experiences dealing with the administration, relating to parents and the ins and outs of teaching.

It's been me mostly spouting off about my perceptions of things. It's a give and take though because he had a lot of insights and that's interesting conversation. (Tom)

After he returned in late September Tom marveled at Vince's ability to run the class. He realized fourth period was Vince's class and Tom decided to become the facilitator and Vince continued to be



the lead teacher. Having developed a great degree of confidence in Vince, Tom was comfortable sharing the class with him early on in the relationship.

When I came back I had a lot to learn about how the class was being run. He and the substitute teacher did a terrific job of keeping the kids on task. He started off as really competent and because he started off in such control of the classroom, it was more of a question of the two of us sharing the responsibility for the rest of the year. And so we continued to divide the class into two groups, one in the classroom and one in the hall. We kind of team taught and kept them on the same curriculum but clearly working at different speeds. So from time to time I would have to come up with something to entertain or fill in the gaps while others were catching up and vice versa he found that the readers, as he was working with the strong reading group, and I was working with the others, would accomplish something very quickly. We tried to find some enrichment task either writing or discussion or maybe go to the library. (Tom, April)

Vince valued the opportunity to start the class solo, as “the teacher,” without Tom, yet when his mentor returned he handled this change in role comfortably. Aware of the change in dynamics, Vince showed to the class and Tom that he appreciated his mentor’s expertise.

Being there right from the beginning is crucial . I mean to this day now, where he’s there, he’s the primary teacher and I deflect most things to him because I know that he handles things differently than I would handle them. So I tell them to ask Mr. M. (Tom) when they ask questions, but they always come to me. (Vince, October)

At the beginning of his relationship with Tom Vince appreciated his mentor’s willingness to allow him to shape his experience as a mentor. After observing other mentor/intern relationships he more deeply valued Tom’s laid back and trusting nature. Vince was relieved that Tom did not expect him to just follow his lead as the mentor.

I watched another pair (of a mentor and intern) who expected the intern to pretty much just follow the lead for the most of the year. I don’t know what that’ll change. Certainly at the beginning that was the expectation. I know when I arrived I wasn’t given a clear expectation of what it was that was expected of me. I was given more of like a green light. It was, what do you want to do and work from there. (Vince, October)

Right from the beginning Vince continuously asked many questions. Tom appreciated his inquisitive intern. It was gratifying to Tom that Vince's questions were pertinent and relevant to what they were doing.

I'm trying to think of the type of questions. Mostly he wanted to know how I see things. What's my perspective on this and that. He's very inquisitive and you can see him trying to clear the way ahead of him by learning as much as he can about how it works. I realized that we connected to a large degree. (Tom, May)

By the end of September Tom had developed a great appreciation for Vince as an intern. He liked the way he interacted with his students and had established himself in the classroom as a professional, well respected by the class.

He is so professional already. He looks like he's been teaching for years. He's just got a very professional demeanor and he's always on task. I've never had a student teacher like him. He's never come up short on anything. (Tom, May)

Tom began the year not even expecting to have a student teacher. He did not want a student teacher. After years of working with student teachers Tom had been ready for a break.

They sort of surprised me with it at the beginning of the school year. I wouldn't have chosen to have a student teacher. I have had one for twenty-two years every year and I just don't do that anymore. So I really didn't have a positive attitude about it when I was told that I was going to have to have a student teacher because not only this was not a sixteen week event. This was all year long and I thought well, okay. (Tom, May)

But his early experience with Vince was surprisingly positive. During September and October Vince created a positive presence in fourth period English. Tom was very pleased with what he observed and grew to like Vince's style with the students, as well as his enthusiasm for teaching the class.

He did a nice job of fleshing out what could have been bare bones curriculum. If you consider trying to approach every kid at where his skill level is that is a very tough task. It was so nice to

have him working with me. It was like having another professional teacher all year. By the end of the year I felt as comfortable with him as any other teacher on the staff.

I think he is finding it much more appetizing than he thought it was going to be and that I think it partly because he wants to know why it works and how it should work. You know, that kind of stuff, as opposed to just how do I get through the eight hours and keep these kids quiet in the back of the room. He has no trouble with that. Boy, he's so good with the kids. These kids love him and he has pretty much taken the class away from me. They'd rather see him than me. (Tom, May)

Throughout November Tom valued Vince's adeptness at working with the students. Tom was very aware of Vince's natural rapport with his students and he appreciated it. As a mentor, Tom was conscious of his intern's strengths, as well as how well he was performing.

He's so comfortable. I very seldom even think of him as an intern. (Tom)

After Christmas Tom and Vince taught Thornton Wilder's Our Town. This play required a great deal of student discussion. They sat in a circle and talked about the main characters, Wilder's point of view about family and relationships, as well as the subject of loneliness. Tom appreciated Vince's ability to draw the students into the discussions and to help them feel comfortable volunteering their views and experiences.

Because of the way Vince related to them, I think this was partly because of the age similarity they were willing to tell him all kinds of things that they might not have told me. I am an old guy in their eyes. Vince spoke their language. He found ways to talk to them with language that I wouldn't use. They felt more comfortable that he understood what they meant when they would talk about what happened to them that was similar to the main character. (Tom, May)

Tom continued to value Vince's ability to relate well to and work effectively with the students. He believed Vince worked very well with academically lower level students who lacked motivation. By observing Vince, Tom could see that Vince was very natural and relaxed with students who had the potential to be disruptive.

He is so articulate. They listen to everything he says and he never uses intimidation of any kind. He looks like an experienced teacher. He knew when to have patience and when to give them a moment or two to get their act together. (Tom, May)

Highly observant and appreciative of his intern, Tom provided his intern with encouragement, letting him know he was doing a good job.

He gave me positive feedback. To some of his feedback he basically told me, 'you'll be fine, you'll be good as a first year teacher and you'll learn a lot then. And you know you're on track, good for you.' And that was the kind of essence of his feedback. So, anything I was stressing about, if I mentioned it to him, he'd say, 'relax, you're doing fine, you'll get through it and you'll be fine.' (Vince, May)

Vince as well liked his mentor's style with him. Daily they would have conversations third period which fostered their positive relationship. He senses that Tom was confident and comfortable with his interactions with him.

It was very useful to definitely feel that I had an authentic conversation with a real teacher who has no motivation but conversations and no personal motivations. (Vince, May)

Beginning in April Vince was no longer involved with Tom in teaching his fourth period class. At that point in the year Vince became involved in other activities which did not involve Tom. He observed other teachers and spent time on his PDS assignments.

By the end of the year he got involved in other tasks and I had the class under my control. There was some units like the poetry unit that I really wanted to work it my way and I wanted the whole class to work with me. At that point I let go of him and he did other things outside of class. For about two months he was in and out of the class and it was not his focus. He was observing me and not in charge of the class. (Tom, June)

By the end of the first week in June he had secured a teaching position in Virginia. At this point Tom sensed Vince's pressures and purposefully lessened his work load in his classroom and work. Tom's understanding of Vince contributed to an even more positive relationship.

Last week he was kind of burned out. I think he had spent a weekend just working, working, working and he had to focus on nothing but getting the school work done. So, I know, he's a little fried. So, I haven't been putting much pressure on him along those lines as far as lesson planning is concerned. It looks like he's, um, got plenty of pressure. Since we are not doing any project that he's working on specifically, I'm hoping that it lightens up his load a little bit, but I guess I hadn't thought about it consciously other than I feel sorry for him. I remember feeling exactly the same way when I was in his situation. (Tom, June)

Tom's empathy for Vince continued through June. He understood the pressures and stress of student teachers ending their year. With less than a month remaining Tom took over the class and allowed Vince to step away from the majority of teaching responsibilities.

I think things are pretty much done and I wouldn't be surprised at all if he starts withdrawing from everything right now to try to wind things up. I'm sure he has some responsibilities, whatever classes he has. But I won't be for instance asking him to participate in creating the final exam. (Tom)

Through out the school year Vince appreciated Tom's laid back, unstructured approach of mentoring him.

We spoke like equals. You know, and having had different experiences and not equals in the profession, but just as equal people. If there's a power differential between the two individuals involved in a relationship, they're not meeting as equals. There is one person with power and one person without power. In a mentor/intern relationship that is something that you struggle with at any rate or you don't struggle with it and accept the position as given to you. Am I suppose to be following their lead, am I suppose to be giving you more power, am I suppose to be giving you less power; it's a question they have. I never felt this with Tom. He walked into the classroom (in mid September) and he just said 'okay we're going to be doing this together, without any knowledge of the program I was in. It was just, okay we're teaching this class together and what do you like to teach, what do you like to do?' So we started out things as there were no questions of, who is in charge. We were just people involved in the situation. That was really useful for me because I think that were he to consider a mentor through the year he might have felt the responsibility to act in a certain way or not say certain things. (Tom, June)

### The Story of Hank and Vince

Hank first met Vince when he had visited the school last year. Early on a positive connection was developed. Hank invited him over to his house prior to the prospective intern/mentor luncheon in the spring.

Vince was brought to our attention early on. I met him last year. He came into the school on a visit and from there we exchanged e-mails. I had him to the house. He came for dinner and we talked about what we going to expect of each other. I told him a little about the program, gave him a textbook, gave him some information about stuff he wanted (to know). Basically the relationship started, friendship started. I think it set the ground work in the summer (when he came over for supper).

After a summer visit at Hank's home, September brought Vince into Hank's English classroom at Lincoln. Vince was eager to work with his mentor, Hank, who was a mentor for the second year in the Professional Development School. With previous experiences teaching, Vince had some established approaches to teaching. As the year progressed, his strong, formulated views on teaching would challenge Hank's established view on teaching.

Hank began the school year excited about Vince's past experiences. In fact he saw Vince was contributing in areas where Hank did not feel as adept. The beginning brought promise for a very positive relationship.

So far (later September) I've really been impressed with the young man (Vince) who's joined and comes with a lot of experience. He's taught English before. He's lived in Japan, traveled the world. He's older and he knows his way around. He fills in some of the places where I'm not so strong and that's good. (Hank, September)

As September progressed Hank appreciated his intern although the pressures of time to teach were creating some stress. Hank was focusing on his challenges of teaching and felt less concerned about his intern whose first month was going well.

Friday I had the computer lab booked for us to start a project with the kids. I panicked when they said we not going to have class on Friday. I had the computer director come down with the projector and basically I tried to do the class with the kids taking notes. I know the class was not nearly as good as it would have been if each kid had his own computer in front of him. I wanted them to be able to move forward so we can stay on track and keep our calendar. Computer lab time is so hard to get. To me that was a failure because the class could have been so much better. The kids all had to sit there and watch me go through the exercise and take notes on what I wanted them to do on their own. (Hank, September)

Vince viewed the month of September as a time for him and Hank to become acquainted. He was feeling comfortable with him mentor.

We're getting to know each other. I now have a picture of who Hank is and he has a picture of who I am. I don't know if they're necessarily more correct than they were at the beginning. We have a good way of working next to each other and working together. (Vince, September)

In October Vince's relationship with his mentor was becoming even more positive, Vince appreciated Hank's willingness to approach him and share his views on his progress, as well as providing guidance. He respected Hank as a supervisor and liked the way his mentor took the initiative with him. In addition, Vince believed his mentor's willingness to collaborate was enhancing their relationship.

There certainly is a boss element to it (the relationship) because they're (the mentors) the ones showing you where it is, what you should be doing, introducing new concepts and guiding you through these concepts. We have a good way of working next to each other and working together. We're working together and we've built a sense of who the other person is that works and allows us to work together. He understands my schedule and I understand his schedule and we've fallen into those schedules. Over the last two weeks or so I think that he (Hank) does come forward and say things.

Although an intern in his mid twenties, Vince appeared more assertive and more eager to create an open, honest relationship. Vince was much more of the communicator and initiator of his feelings

and concerns. On the other hand, Hank was more laid back, patient and willing to see how their dynamics would develop.

Vince appreciated his mentor's style of presenting him with a great degree of freedom. Hank allowed Vince to shape his own lessons very early on and implement the trial and error approach.

Hank doesn't necessarily agree with everything that I'm doing at times, but he knows that the ultimate outcome would not be detrimental to the kids nor would it be detrimental to me. If it falls apart, it's salvageable even at this point. There is almost like the feeling I could do no wrong in the sense that I am allowed to try anything as long as it's well thought out, we've discussed it and at that point he turned over the class to me from point one. Like the first week which most interns did not have and as a result of that I am starting to realize why I messed up here and how I could have done these things better. We're talking about these things now. While I was going through them he didn't say anything until I came around and was like this didn't work and he was like, yeah, well you probably could have done this and that kind of thing. Which for me was much better, a better place to be and I think it was a wiser place for him to be than micro-managing along the way. (Vince, October)

Hank felt the stress and pressure of being a responsible teacher and combating the interruptions to teaching. In late October his frustration with classes was increasing. Hank appeared more concerned about his program than mentoring Vince. He was dissatisfied with himself more than anything else.

I'm frustrated. I'm frustrated with the year so far and I'm frustrated with things that are going on in my classroom that are perhaps outside the purview of the PDS program. I'm really feeling that I have not been able to create a good classroom environment. For myself I feel like that we are really choppy. We start a project, we work for a day or two, we put it aside and we pick up another project. The PSSAs come right in the middle of our work. We have a field trip we are trying to get ready to go on. Basically all I want to do is teach history and that's not true. I mean I'd like to be a better teacher, but it ends up that I am just solving all of these problems all of the time. (Hank, October)

Although unhappy with his own teaching situation, Hank was very pleased and impressed with Vince after two months. Hank was very aware of his intern's strengths which helped strengthen their relationship. He appreciated Vince's level of confidence, willingness to cooperate with him, as well as his excellent rapport with the students.



He's very self sufficient and very sure of himself. I think he appears to listen to me. He appears to take what my advice may be and I think I've seen him incorporate some of the things that I have talked to him about into his work. He's had experience; he's taught. He has my fourth period class which is our lowest level. He's been running them for the last three weeks and he is really good with them. He's really got a nice way with that group of students and they have a lot of fun and they seem to really enjoy it. That's wonderful. (Hank, October)

After collecting a writing assignment during the later part of October Vince became frustrated with some students who did not complete the assignment. Vince appreciated his mentor's empathic approach with him.

There was a point in which I took it personal when the students didn't complete a writing assignment on time. He (Hank) knew I was taking it personally and pointed it out. He said, 'I think you're taking it personally as I was.' He was worried how it might come out at a different time in the classroom. I think he does a good job of trying to see where I am emotionally with the process as well as physically how I'm doing. (Hank, October)

After having a conversation with Hank about this classroom problem, Vince seemed even more comfortable with approaching his mentor about his frustrations.

Hank's coming from someone who's easy going and easy to relate to. We were able to see each other as equals and when that conversation took place, I wouldn't have been afraid at all to say if he had bothered me in some way. He hadn't, but I wouldn't have been afraid to say it. (Vince, October)

As October was coming to an end Vince's appreciation for his mentor continued. He liked the way Hank would step back and allow him to take charge of the class. He liked the open support he was receiving from his mentor.

If I had failed in any class I know he (Hank) would step up and add things. When I miss something that he feels is crucial he'll add into the class. But he'll add it not as taking over the class; he'll actually raise his hand like a student and be like, 'I have a question, like what would you do about this?' which is comical to the students but it provides them like with ...there are two authorities in this classroom and there's not a difference to the students which helps me relate to the students. When I created units he said, 'well, what do you want to do? Why don't you create a plan and come back to me and we'll talk about it. He was really good about that, going with my ideas, working on my idea with me and developing it and then letting me teach it, letting me do it. And then coming in afterwards and saying, 'well, what do you think worked

and what didn't work, because ultimately you're not going to fail the students. The students are gaining something out of it anyway and it's not going to be a disaster. It's going to be like a first year teacher's unit which means your going to make mistakes in it, but every first year teacher's unit would have those mistakes. He just happens to be there to help afterward. I think that (his mentor's comments to him) were wise. This may seem harsh but a lot of problems that I see people having or the struggles I see interns having relates to that idea of feeling over scrutinized by their mentor or not having autonomy in the unit that they're planning. Not that they feel like (they) can even do what it is that they (other interns) would like to do, which is explore. I have a mentor who allows me to explore. (Vince, October)

Even though through October the relationship went very well in November Vince had some uncertainty about how Vince was perceiving him.

I said (to Hank) 'hey, you know, we had this kind of weird interaction the other day and I think I perceive it correctly now but I didn't perceive it correctly initially and makes me realize that I have a lot of fears about what it is you're thinking. I just wanted to know what it is that you think I could improve upon, where I am standing, and how do you think things are working out with us.' And then we just started talking about what was going on in the classrooms and where we were and what was working and what his concerns were. I thought that was really good. I'm lucky that the situation worked out so well. (Vince, November)

Vince valued his mentor's style of mentoring him. He appreciated Hank taking chances with him and allowing him to make mistakes early in the school year. Vince recognized Hank's reasons for giving him space and the opportunity to develop his own units within the first months of school.

I'm very fortunate because Hank doesn't necessarily agree with everything that I'm doing at times but he knows that the ultimate outcome would not be detrimental to the kids not would it be detrimental to me and if it falls apart it's salvageable even at that point. In a way there is almost like could do no wrong in the sense that I'm allowed to anything as long as it's well thought out, we discussed it and at that point he turned over the class to me from point one. I'm starting to realize why I messed up and how I could have done things better. We're talking about those things now. While I was going through them he didn't say anything until I came around and (said) this didn't work out and he was like 'yeah, well you probably could have done this and that kind of thing. Which for me was much better , a better place to be and I think it was a wiser place for him to be than micro-managing along the way. He allowed me to do things. I've seen other kind of relationships be more strained as a result of mentors saying 'well this is how I want it to look of this is my unit (and) I want you to do my unit.' That doesn't function I don't think because you never feel at home in someone else's house. You never feel comfortable in someone else's unit. (Vince, November)

Vince was excited about teaching his own unit and appreciated Hank's willingness to let him to teach the unit the way he wanted to teach it. Hank provided the kind of support Vince valued. Hank was a facilitator who gave Vince the chance to think for himself through the unit. It was completely Vince's unit.

I've not done a single one of his units. I've done only units that he gave me with a time period (in history) and said 'teach this' or he gave me a concept and said 'go with this or he said 'what do you want to do this week?' I created a unit and it was totally mine from beginning to end with his input, rather than his unit handed to me and (he) said 'see what you can do with this.' Yeah, absolute autonomy whenever I was teaching, which was great. And then, good reflection afterwards. We sat down and we talked about it. (And I would say to Hank) like I really didn't feel like the writing unit we were just completing went well and (we would discuss) why it didn't go well and what was missing which was good to have. (Vince, November)

Hank was concerned about Vince's approach to the research unit, doubting if he was supplying enough support for the students. Vince believed in giving little support to the students as they began their research and expected the class to pick up and run with the project with a goal in mind. They would have all the tools to reach that goal.

I think some people perhaps more than others need to suffer the slings and arrows of ah, of ah classroom and I think the great equalizer is a room full of teenagers. I'm curious to see how this research paper really turns out, how well it works. I think he's, he may be over reaching in some areas. He may not have provided enough support in others. (Hank, November)

Vince appreciated Hank's approach and method of mentoring him. He valued the opportunity to experiment and figure things out for himself without Hank attempting to influence his thinking or approach to the unit.

I think that Hank and I have a positive relationship. It was a balanced, reciprocal relationship. He had encouraged me, I think, to do what I feel comfortable and interested in doing. I wonder what would have happened if I was an intern who didn't want to take charge of the classroom or didn't take initiative. How would it have played out? I am someone who probably gets in over my head as opposed to never swims. I jumped into a couple of things and I made mistakes along the way. He allowed these mistakes to happen without, almost any comment until afterwards. Usually we

talked about them. There was a couple of times when he tried to tell me that he didn't necessarily think something I was going to try would be successful. I am a stronger individual to a fault and so I think then he said, 'go do it' and then afterwards we talked about it and we talked about where he was correct or where I was correct, where it worked, the situation I am thinking about, I apologized and said he was right. It was the decade project. (Vince, November)

Through out the fall Hank continued to provide support to Vince. His mentor's feedback enhanced an already positive relationship that was becoming more positive as December approached.

He gave me positive feedback. To some of his feedback, he basically told me, 'you'll do fine, you'll be a good first teacher and you'll learn a lot. You're on track, good for you. And that was the essence of his feedback. Anything I was stressing about, if I mentioned it, he'd say, 'relax, you're doing fine, you'll get through it and you'll be fine.' (Vince, November)

Even though Hank worked hard as a mentor to allow Vince to think for himself through his unit.

At times Hank was uncertain whether he communicated enough when they worked at co-teaching. With his unit Hank took the initiative with Vince.

It makes it a little less comfortable sometimes. Because I feel I always have to defend myself. Vince will say it's a shame that we can't do something more with them and I'm thinking well we are going to do this because we are going to do this. Maybe it's my fault because I'm not communicating to him well enough my own thinking behind my planning and the reason I'm doing things in my class. I may have it all done here in the top of my head but never really said to him which could be my feelings about not truly being collaborative. If I don't think that it is really collaboration maybe then I don't feel like I need to share all of the stuff with him all of the time. (Hank, November)

Vince was beginning to wonder what Hank was thinking about him as an intern. Hank continued to give Vince plenty of space and time to process his own teaching. But Vince felt that he would gain from concrete feedback from Hank.

There's a bit of fear that maybe that space isn't there and I just have not been given an expectation that I am not living up to. Certainly there's that fear. But I don't know if it's warranted. As I said, this week has been a lot of that. I have been considering that an awful lot so I feel a little bit paranoid about it this week. (Vince, November)

Hank continued to encourage Vince to think for himself. In addition, Hank showed empathy at this point. He knew that Vince was not satisfied with his unit and wanted to do even a better job.

He knew I was disappointed and he said, 'what do you think you could do better' and I said, 'right now I'm just disappointed and I can't think what can I do better.' And that ended the conversation at the end of the day. And the next day I came back and said, 'well this is what I think I could have done better and then we discussed it. He initiated the question and we reflected the next day. Sometimes you're too far into something when you have that bad moment in a class sometimes you really can't reflect at that moment. You need that time to be sad about it.

Hank provided that time for Vince to feel "sad about it" and come back the following day and share his reflections. Hank was aware of how Vince was feeling yet provided the time for him to think it over before approaching him.

I think that he (Hank) does a good job of trying to see where I am emotionally with the process and things as well as it's like physically what I'm doing. (Vince, November)

During November Vince continued to teach his decades project. Hank and Vince reserved the computer lab to have the students work on the internet, researching their decade.

Can people like myself and Vince, who are philosophically very different, make, create a really positive school experience for kids or do you really have to be similar? I don't know the answer to that. (Hank, November)

As Hank took his students to the lab with Vince's class he wondered how the lesson would unfold. Collaboration was not possible in his eyes. He was struggling with the concept of collaboration. Hank was thinking the power was ultimately with the mentor teacher. Power thus makes the collaboration not a true collaboration. Hank believed that for there to be true collaboration the power must be equal.

I would say I don't believe that this is going to be collaboration. What the word collaboration means to me is that it has the idea of people being on equal footing, professionally. Maybe this is a

little arrogant on my part, but how is it that a person who's never taught before or who has never had methods classes or hasn't done any of his studies, how is it that a person is truly going to be able to collaborate in an equal fashion, a meaningful two-way sharing. How is it that a person is going to be able to collaborate. It doesn't turn out to be collaboration, at least at the beginning of the year. I don't think there is any collaboration. I think we are inherently on the "I know the system, I know who to talk to, I know all of the things about the school, I know how to plan the lessons, I know how the school year is going to work, I know what we have to do on these days, I know all of that stuff. The new person doesn't know any of that. The collaboration can't be there. Now, that's not to say they don't have things that they can offer, but they cannot, I think, truly collaborate. So, it's like a benevolent dictatorship in which now you basically say to the intern—this is how we're going to structure our day, this is how we're going to structure this class. Where do you see yourself making a contribution? Now can we build, can we work toward having collaboration? Well, I hope so. (Hank, November)

The computer lab experience created tension between Vince and Hank. This was not Vince's unit and he was working with his mentor in an environment where he was not the teacher in charge. Hank viewed the computer lab as his classroom and wanted to do things his way. Although Vince and Hank communicated during the lab time there was tension between them.

Maybe I'm too dismissive of what the intern can bring to the table. I don't know, maybe that's my own insecurities popping up but then maybe what I say to myself is when this intern says 'well, can't we do this or can't we do that—I guess there was a moment that I'll share. We were trying to structure, plan out, with all of these tests and the day and the way everything was going to fit in and then in the middle of the week there was a class period in which we had half of the class going to do something else with one of the other groups because of the requirements, we have 9 through 12 in our group. One of the classes was going to be in the computer lab that we had already assigned and I said, 'here's the plan, this is what I think we ought to do' and Vince said, 'well, it seems a shame we are doing something else. Now he says we have them there, we should do something more meaningful basically. I don't think he probably realized what he was saying. He probably didn't realize he was, or at least I was taking it as being critical. He was questioning my decision and what I thought then was he was questioning the validity of allowing a group of students who when you have a situation where your classroom is going to be half, half of them are going to be going and half of them are going to be staying behind. He was questioning that. Whether is was good. I would prefer to have it with all of the kids doing the same thing about the same place and about the same time. It just makes life so much easier. (Hank)

Hank decided not to communicate his feelings to Vince. He did not see the relationship as a partnership or collaboration.

At the end of the day it doesn't matter what he thinks because I'm not in a collaboration with him anyway. (Hank)

With the first marking period ending in late December Hank looked to a more successful second marking period. He believe that Vince could improve upon his decades unit. In addition he was apprehensive about the research paper.

I'm curious to see how this research paper really turns out, how well it works. I think he may be over reaching in some areas. He may not have provided enough support in others. And I think perhaps the same could be said with my current events project. But the best thing about it is that we've got next marking period to make sure that we do a better job if we see that this hasn't worked out too well here. (Hank, December)

In early January Vince continued to teach his unit. The early tensions from working with Hank in the computer lab were gone. Vince realized his time in the PDS program was eventually coming to an end. They came to an understanding. Vince realized he needed to do his time and move on. Job searching became the number one concern for him.

In February after some reflection and some time Vince admitted Hank was right that the students did need some scaffolding in the Decades Project. He decided to put the added steps in.

There was a great deal of time issues. He spread himself thin. He spent time with a regular English class. A big chunk of time in the afternoon was unavailable for Vince to work with Hank.

Vince taught first, second and fourth with Hank and spent the rest of the day with Hank. Period three was not available for the two of them to communicate because the need to mentor and counsel the ESL students. The classroom was not conducive to communication. Phone calls and students would interrupt any possible opportunity to discuss issues.

Through spring Vince supported Hank with current events units and shared the load of grading student presentations. They worked well together. They spent little time together as at the end of fourth period Vince would pack up and move across the street to work with Hank.

By May Vince had secured a teaching position. He spent little time with his mentor teachers. He continued to teach both ESL first, second and fourth period and work with Tom's English class across the street. Vince was ready to move on.

With the school year ended Hank decided that tension was not an issue in his relationship with Vince. He realized the uncertainty of his role as a mentor was his main frustration and not his relationship with his intern. Hank summed his frustration with his role with the following words.

It seems at one hand the level of freedom is appreciated, but on the other hand that level of freedom creates all that other feelings of tension...like I am not doing my job because I am not giving him feedback all the time. To me that is the only way to do it. That is not really my defined role in the PDS. I have very little to do with their grades. Why should I have to find him concrete feedback. Unless I am going to grade them I don't want to have to do that. But I will supply him with space, time, supplies and experience to run a classroom. (Hank, June)

Reflecting on the school year Vince valued and appreciated his mentor. He realized that Hank provided him the opportunities to experiment in the classroom and to receive support from him whenever he needed it. In addition Vince viewed Hank's effort to communicate as valuable in strengthening their relationship.

Vince liked Hank's style of mentoring. He viewed it as the "parachute approach" which increased his comfort level through out the school year.

By being given the chance to fail and by failing I learned not only was it his way and that I have to do it his way but it's probably better than the way I was thinking. I think it is important for the teacher, for the mentor, to show the intern what it is that they're going to do and ask for their input on what it is that they're going to do, even if they are going to be in control of the class experience. Because that allowed me to feel comfortable, to give him my input and then when I did my project I felt like I could ask him for his input and I didn't feel like it wasn't my project anymore. It certainly was (my project) but I couldn't imagine doing anything in the classroom that I hadn't run by him. Vince (June)



## Chapter Five

### Cross -Case Analysis

#### Introduction

The purpose of the following chapter is to identify themes from the individual cases that cut across the cases and impacted the relationships in important ways. How well the relationship develops over the course of the year is based on a number of factors. Graham (1993) pointed out that both the mentor and intern are in transition, accepting new responsibilities and roles and negotiating a close working relationship many times “plagued by uncertainty, fraught with questions of power and authority, cooperation and conflict.”(p.26 )

The major themes covered in this chapter include the uncertainty and ambiguity that impacts the relationship, the impact of the mentor’s expectations as the year begins, how the mentor’s past experiences as a student teacher and mentor influence her interactions with the intern, the need for the mentor providing support to the intern as the year progresses, the need for empathy in working with the intern, the advantages of clear communication, the impact of time on the relationship, the mentor’s validation and respect of the intern’s input and ideas, and space issues. All these themes surfaced at different times in the school year. Some of the themes surfaced early; others were important later; and some remained key throughout the year.

### **Uncertainty and Ambiguity**

Uncertainty is the greatest as the year begins but continues to affect the relationship throughout the school year. Both the mentor and intern enter the relationship uncertain about how the school year will go for them individually and as a pair. Both are adjusting to a new school year and facing the stresses and difficulties that all teachers face in September. No mentor can avoid the pressures which the first weeks of school present the staff. The mentor affects the intern's entry into school, just as the intern affects the mentor's re-entry into the school environment. Both arrive with different expectations and assume different roles. As the year goes on interns at times continue to feel uncertain how to approach the mentor regarding certain situations. It is inevitable that the intern will make decisions uncertain of whether the mentor is in agreement especially when teaching their own unit during the second semester.

The intern is new to the building, new to the classroom, new to the PDS program, and all these conditions affect how she feels entering the school in September. The intern is anxious and worried about how the year will go. She worries about how her mentor will perceive her in the classroom and feels an anxious anticipation about how the students will relate to her. Faced with a variety of demands she is typically uncomfortable with her new environment and learning to adjust to new, unexpected pressures.

Often the intern may be cautious with the mentor. Choosing words carefully as well as choosing when to speak enter the intern's mind as she works with her mentor. The intern often hesitates to appear too assertive and to engage the mentor with in-depth questions about the curriculum.

Within the first month Mark learned to keep his opinions to himself and hesitated to express his opinions. He suspected his mentor did not value his suggestions and that she was confident about how to approach the lessons. Mark was reluctant to challenge his mentor who appeared to have all the answers.

In contrast to the hesitant stance of many interns, Vince entered the PDS program with past experiences teaching, and he was confident with his teaching abilities. This self-assuredness ended up working against him as he began the year with Hank. He realized his mentor was a very strong, confident teacher who had established a well defined approach to teaching. In addition, Vince knew that his mentor was very sensitive about anyone challenging his thinking or beliefs as far as structuring a unit of study.

Within the first month a underlying tension developed between Vince and Hank which would impact the relationship for a great deal of the year. Vince's sensitivity and cautiousness affected his approach with his mentor. He restricted what he said to his mentor and was less open because of his anxiety about how his mentor would react to his inquisitive statements.

There is still the case that there is a general hesitation certainly on my part (intern). I'm very hesitant to spend a lot of time questioning how it is...I'm concerned about stepping on his toes.. I'm concerned about making sure to present myself in a way that's not overly aggressive or overly out stepping my bounds in a way.(Vince, September)

Vince sensed that Hank was sensitive toward critical remarks which might have questioned his decisions within the classroom. As an intern Vince was much more conscious of his mentor's moods than any other intern in the study.

Besides hesitating, an intern is typically careful and cautious as far as the best way to approach the mentor. The lack of familiarity with the mentor affects the intern. The intern's perception that the mentor is the authority within the classroom and evaluator of the intern adds to the intern's reluctance to approach the mentor.

Early on an associate, Anne, sensed the overall interns' hesitation and anxieties. One of Anne's role in the PDS program was that of a confidant for the interns. Even in the first few weeks of school she had conversations with some of the interns regarding their insecurities and worries. The outside pressure of meeting the academic requirements of the PDS program affected the intern's relationship with the mentor. Surprisingly, the intern was concerned about the mentor's perception of her within the first month because the intern realized her future in teaching more than likely would be impacted by the mentor's recommendation.

I've had actually within my group of interns and mentors, I've had a lot of frustration coming at me from interns who have all these projects they have to do. They have no due dates and they have no rubrics for guidelines for what they're suppose to be doing; they have no clue. They're still in an environment where they are being assessed. To that assessment a letter grade will be attached and their recommendation for being a teacher is going to sink or swim, you know on the recommendation that they will be given, based on how they perform. (Anne, Sept.)

The intern does not perceive the classes as her students, but rather her mentor's students. The intern believes she is a guest in the classroom as the year begins. She does not see herself as a co-teacher or as a collaborator of the curriculum.

Marilyn was quite self-conscious and unsure of her role in the classroom. She worried about Angela's impression of her and whether she would approve of her approach with the class.

I was hesitant about a couple of the, the times when I took control of the classroom and I was the lead or something, um, and a couple of times when I didn't think things went so well and I was, I was nervous because I didn't really know how she would react, 'cause she was, you know, trusting me with her class and, and, um, well I know we share the class but she's the, solely responsible. (Marilyn, Oct.)

Elaine also faced the ambiguity of her role in the classroom. She did not believe her role or position was clear to Arlene's classes. This uncertainty and inability to determine what she was doing in the classroom disturbed her. Elaine was expecting and hoping that her mentor would take the time with her students to clarify the intern's role in the classroom. Elaine's irritation and disappointment impacted her feelings toward Arlene in the early stages of the relationship. She expected her mentor would help establish her identity with the students and it did not happen.

At first because I think the students aren't quite sure how to see you because they don't know about the program. I don't know so sometimes I'd just be sitting in the seats with the students just sort of seeing what's going on and commenting and doing things, but I just wasn't sure how to portray myself yet---- my identity as a teacher or an intern, like what is it? I don't know if there is a way to figure that out sooner but that would be good. (Elaine, November)

Besides being unsure of their role in the classroom, the interns faced a stress outside the classroom of abiding by the school rules. An early issue affecting the interns developed because of the school's expectations of the staff. The interns considered themselves as part of the staff. The fear that their cars would be towed away because they had no parking passes entered their minds. The mentors were unaware of this pressure and no one related to this apparent fear.

Most of the interactions that I've had with the interns has been: 'where do I get my parking passes, how do I get my password, how do I get this, and other things and I actually got into a little bit of trouble because I was asked questions (as an associate) and then I went and tried to find the answers and apparently what I did was incorrect and people got upset and (told me) somebody else should be dealing with that and you should just tell the interns to wait.(Anne, Sept.)

Anne, as the associate, saw how the initial ambiguity with the expectations of the program and lack of clarity from the mentor were negatively impacting the interns attitudes toward the experience. As an outsider Anne was in a better position to see the intern's situation in a global way and became more objective since she was not directly involved with the intern or mentor.

As one of my interns said, 'being an adult for the first time in my life.' They've got You have them (the interns) in performance based situation but yet you're keeping everything ambiguous and I think having projects that people don't know when they are due is just not right because I think the amount of psychological stress that affects someone who's trying to deal with a teacher (mentor), being a teacher, trying with developing a new identity, trying to deal a lot on their plate. (Anne, September)

The intern enters the relationship with her mentor with no clear understanding of the mentor's expectations for her as the school begins. This uncertainty can affect the intern in a negative way because she is eager to meet the mentor's expectations. Part of the initial intern success is based on how well she satisfies the mentor's expectations.

Vince was sensitive and thoughtful of Hank's unsaid feelings and position as a mentor. Of all the interns in the study Vince showed the most empathy and concern for his mentor. He seemed confused as far as what Hank's expectations were in September. He sensed Hank's high stress level. In addition, Vince showed a greater understanding of how much an intern can burden the mentor and be in the way.

Today we are going to work in the textbook on these books, on this chapter, this is going to be their homework and then he (mentor) goes in and he presents that information. So, he doesn't tell me like his techniques or where he's going to talk about what. But when he says, 'you know today we're going to introduce this new project or this new assignment, then we go over it together in length. I thought a lot about am I getting the same kind of

non-verbal communication that I should be more involved. And I don't know if I am or not. And then that kind of raises the questions, well, is that the case or not the case? But there is an extreme in the opposite direction too where you can be kind of pestering too much. 'What should I do? What should I do? What should I do? Where do you want me; what can I do to help; what can I do to help. It gets to be too much. (Vince, Sept.)

This lack of clear, expressed expectations negatively affects the intern who is eager to succeed and to show the mentor a degree of competence. The mentor's neglecting to clearly lay out her expectations affects how the intern feels in the classroom and within the school. She may become uncomfortable with the new environment and have difficulty adapting. Confused about her role in the classroom, the intern may shut down and feel paralyzed by the situation.

Even though Vince continued to be empathic and accept his mentor's lack of communication, he became gradually more concerned about what was his role in the classroom. The ambiguity of the mentor's expectations frustrated Vince because he wanted to do an excellent job and had high standards for himself.

And like right now today, this week, it's been a lot of where am I on a spectrum of, you know, offering myself too much and not offering myself enough. Where do I want to be and where does my mentor want me to be? And, I'm okay with those two being different, but at least I want to know they both are. (Vince, September)

When the mentor begins the school year, besides mentoring an intern the main concerns revolve around preparing to teach again. The mentor is adjusting to a new school year, new classes, a new schedule and coping with the stresses and pressures of a new routine. The first few weeks are especially exhausting for the mentor. Working with the intern becomes secondary to teaching the students and preparing lessons. The mentor becomes more concerned about herself and the class and one of her goals is to survive the first few months.

Arlene summarized her major concern for the start of the school year in the following words:

“I don’t know that I ever worry about it (the intern relationship) as the beginning because I’m so intent on getting the school year started and meeting my kids. I’m really pre-occupied in that sense.” (Arlene, September)

Hank expressed his worries at the start of the year in these words.

I’ve had a lot of problems getting my stuff together in some ways because I keep feeling like it’s just so choppy. Because I’ve never, I’m never sure when I’m going to be in the classroom and what’s going to happen when I’m in the classroom. I’m just a little frustrated. He (the intern, Vince) is really anxious to sometimes share things and I ‘ll, you know, be honest sometimes I just want to get work done. I’ve got this stuff that I have to get checked off of my desk and I think at times, god can’t I just get some work done. Why can’t I, can’t I get anything (done)—leave me alone. (Hank, Sept.)

The mentor is not only adjusting to new classes but learning how to teach in the new situation where there is another “teacher” in the classroom. According to Hawkey (1998) mentors interpret their roles in quite different ways and in ways which appeared to reflect their own approach to teaching. During the study Hank, Rebecca, Angela, Tom and Arlene approached their intern in different ways. Arlene was an extremely nurturing English teacher who strove to mother her students. While Hank, although personable, avoided becoming too close to his students and kept a definite distance. Angela embraced the philosophy that students learn best by trial and error and worked to create this environment with her intern. Tom valued encouraging the creative side of the pre-service teacher learner.

One of the major roles of the mentor as school begins is to create and establish a schedule for both the intern and mentor to follow throughout the week. In Stanulis and Jeffers’



study (1995) it was determined that the mentor/student teacher relationship began with a springboard where the mentor's responsibility was to provide the intern with topics for lessons and units, and to make suggestions about managing the classroom, creating instruction, and assessing student learning in the classroom and school. Many mentors do not know what to expect. More certainty could benefit both the mentor and intern. However, being forced to create structure for the intern produces more stress for the mentor whose main concern is to provide structure for the classes.

Because I usually think with most people I start out thinking alright we'll see what we got; we'll see who we are and I reserve judgement until, until I get to know someone (the intern) for quite awhile.(Arlene, May)

Within the first week Vince understood Hank's approach to mentoring. His role appeared hands off and he was open to Vince's ideas as well as accepting of his ideas about teaching. This approach brought mixed blessings to their relationship.

I know that when I arrived I wasn't given a clear indication of what it was that I was expected of me. I was given more of a green light. It was, what do you want to do and work from there.(Vince, May)

The mentor works with the intern to help her see the big picture as far as the curriculum and what will be covered over the school year in the classroom. The expectations increase as the year progresses. Mentors have clear expectations for their interns, although the mentor may verbalize very few expectations.

## **Mentor Expectations**

The mentor enters the relationship with unspoken and unwritten expectations of the intern and how the school year will unfold. The mentor's expectations include the intern's role in the classroom, the amount of time and effort the intern will dedicate to planning, correcting student papers and being a part of the class. Some mentors immediately voice their expectations and look for the intern to meet the expectations. While other mentors are not concerned about expressing their expectations. They are more concerned about beginning the school year successfully with their classes.

I didn't feel that my expectations were as externally placed as other mentors had theirs. Which means that maybe Hank has very clear expectations that I'm not living up to and those just weren't verbally expressed. I'm not sure. Like he started by kind of adding things bit by bit onto what it is that I would do for him and with him. It hasn't changed in the last two weeks." (Vince, late September)

I guess my expectations is that having two teachers in the classroom and having an intern and a mentor can significantly improve what I can do for my students and what as a team we can do for our students and how we can help them differently with a pair of people working in the classroom. My expectation is that my teaching will improve from being involved in the program (PDS) and that my students' experiences over the course of the year will be richer for having two minds planning and two bodies facilitating. (Rebecca, September)

The mentor expects that the intern has a strong belief in the value of learning that the intern brings to the class and shows an evident enthusiasm for the aspects of English. The mentor is expecting the intern to take risks and bring ideas to the experience and relationship. Taking some initiative is expected of the intern.

Often times my expectations are at this point like a blank slate. I'm not really sure. It's been, let's get to know each other. I would expect that they are like children, like students. I would expect they have a value of education and I would hope, I don't even know if I would just really expect that they would love reading and writing and that literature has meaning for them. (Arlene, September)

(I expect) a student teacher who's really eager, inventive, as far as the relationship goes, I guess following my lead but willing to sort of break out of the traditional stuff. Things are not set in stone in my class and I don't see myself as that kind of mentor. I just sort of see the teaching experience as an opportunity for a young guy to get to try a bunch of different things. Because once you start teaching, you are out there. (Tom, September)

Some mentors from the very beginning are eager to have an intern. Based on their past experiences they expect the intern to adapt well and contribute to the class.

I often have not a lot of difficulty. I often find the age difference between some student teachers are intimidated by me. In any case, they're much more academic and very well intimidated by the classroom. So that my expectation of him was that he'd fit right in and he did and anything else he wants to do this year, that'll be fine. (Tom, September)

### **Influence of Past Experiences**

Past experiences with other interns as well as the mentor's experience as a student teacher affect how the mentor approaches the intern early on in the relationship. The mentor has established views about how she will begin the year working with the intern. The mentor determines how to relate to the intern based partially on past experiences with previous interns and student teachers. In addition to those past interactions the mentor may recall when she experienced her student teaching. These memories help guide the mentor as she decides how best to approach her intern.

Hawkey (1997) researched literature focusing on the roles, responsibilities and relationships in mentoring. He concluded the following about relationships and the importance of different experiences.

Mentoring relationships are much more complex than these typologies suggest, involving not only the personality of mentor and mentee (Turner, 1993), but also interpersonal or psychosocial development, career and/or educational development, and socialisation (Field, 1994, p. 65) between individuals of different experience, expertise, and orientations.(Hawkey, p. 328)

Early on the mentor may compare and contrast her present intern with her past intern in areas of ambition, dedication, work ethic, and willingness to be involved in the class. How well the intern stands up to the qualities of last year's intern may seriously impact the relationship. These past experiences may create an appreciation for the present intern or may create a sense of disappointment in the present intern's attitudes and abilities.

When Rebecca was an intern in the PDS program she had a very positive experience and developed a healthy, successful relationship with her mentor. Her relationship with her mentor was not a struggle and the two seemed to click and have similar views and priorities from the first day.

...in our co-teaching relationship we had similar philosophies and similar ideas about what was important and this meant we didn't have to spend a lot of time arguing, not necessarily even arguing but talking about the way we wanted to approach things. We had those same ideas about overall reasons for teaching. (Rebecca, Sept.)

Rebecca's experience with a mentor involved a great deal of communication which contributed to the constructive interactions between her and her mentor. Time was not an issue

since they both valued the opportunity to spend time together. Rebecca's conversations with her mentor focused on the events in the classroom, the students' learning and reflecting on the lesson. She had these same expectations when Mark became her intern. The fact that her intern did not value or show an interest in carrying on similar discussions disturbed and frustrated Rebecca.

In the past Tom had terrible, counterproductive experiences with student teachers. He was leery of accepting another student teacher or intern because of the marginal student teachers who added a burden to his school year and failed to support him. This school year he was hoping not to have an intern.

Well when I was real young and I had a student teacher, I was calling him at night, every night making sure his act was together, yeah, well it was in the beginning and I was really focused. And it burned me out. So that it was like having a second job, I think. Because you wind up not just as mentoring, you wind up spending a lot of time dealing with issues that are outside of the classroom and all that kind of stuff. (Tom, October)

Tom immediately appreciated Vince because he was not at all like his former student teachers. He viewed Vince as an exception to the typical student teacher. His past experiences as a mentor had soured his view of the benefits and advantages of mentoring. Tom valued the relationship with his interns, and in the past the student teacher did not work at developing rapport or a positive relationship with him. He resented student teachers and believed they were using him in order to satisfy the requirements in their program.

...we both have concern for each other as people. It's nice, it's really a nice relationship in that regard. And I have had student teachers in the past who were so, who always saw this student I was teaching drama (when I student taught) and as far as they (supervising teacher and university supervisor) I was the expert. So they would come down and be entertained by what was going on in class, but nobody ever criticized or questioned anything I was doing. So, my sixteen weeks, I made it up and I learned how to teach by just being completely free to do whatever I wanted. (Tom, May)

Likewise, Angela's intern was not like her previous intern. Quite often the later stages of the mentor/intern relationship can be tense and stressful because the intern's interest in teaching lessens. She is applying for jobs, putting more energy into the job search and focusing on the PDS requirements. The previous year Angela experienced an unmotivated intern who quit participating early in the spring.

My relationship with my intern last year became the most tense. Because she shut down for me and was trying to focus on everything else that was a requirement for the PDS for the program. She shut down for me last year about this time (end of March). I resented it because it was no longer a partnership. She was not really much of a help. She had already taught her unit. (Angela, March)

Angela and Tom developed a much deeper appreciation for their current interns. They valued their interns' desire to participate and cooperate with them until the end. Both realized how ambitious their interns were and driven to work up to the end. Having experienced the difficulties and challenges of working with an uncooperative and unmotivated interns, the mentors developed a greater appreciation and respect for their present interns. Both concluded the school year with positive feelings towards their interns which lowered the stress and anxiety of wrapping up the school year.

## **The Need for Mentor Support**

Support by definition means to give assistance, encouragement, or approval to.

Throughout the relationship and especially at the beginning, support from the mentor enhances the relationship and can lead to a more positive connection. According to a few researchers who have examined the mentoring relationship from the student teacher's perspective, student teachers value the mentors' support (Booth, 1993; Odell & Ferraro, 1992; Perlberg & Theodor, 1975). In contrast, the lack of or low support can negatively impact the relationship and create irrevocable damages. Hawkey (1998) stressed that the student teacher needs to feel adequately empowered to influence the mentoring experience in order to address their individual needs. Anctil (1991) found that the mentors spent "an inordinate amount of time providing moral support and emotional support" (p. 13). Kartje (1996) developed a short list of crucial mentor characteristics which all related to the quality of support. The list included authenticity, intellectual respect, advice, collaboration, personal as well as professional support, empathy, sympathy, love and encouragement. Anderson & Lucasse Shannon (1988) viewed the mentor as "a role model nurturing the student (teacher) and giving care." Mentor support is essential for many reasons.

As the year begins, the intern is learning to adjust to a school day from the perspective of a teacher. During the semesters on campus an intern's day was much different, allowing for flexibility and choice. The intern has little understanding of how physically and mentally draining and how time consuming the beginning of a school year can be.

The intern feels uncomfortable with the new environment, the new routine, the new challenge of relating to another adult who will be assessing her performance over the course of a

school year. Abell et al. (1995) saw the mentor as providing a support system initially helping the intern develop the knowledge necessary to survive in a school setting. Abell described survival knowledge as becoming accustomed to the school climate and figuring out routine tasks such as taking attendance and entering grades in the computer program. Kram, (1985) and Zey, (1985) both viewed the mentor's responsibility as an aid to helping interns overcome difficulties and becoming more versed in a profession. They realized anxiety can be lessened by having a mentor to assist them through the new or different situation. This inevitable anxiety makes it essential for the mentor to provide support early on. The amount of mentor support will affect the degree of the intern's comfort. Hawkey (1999) viewed support in the following way.

A mentor enacts support behavior in the form of advice, guidance, protection, encouragement, etc. In return, a protege responds to a mentor's support behavior with reciprocal action, labeled reciprocal support behavior. Therefore, we view expectations for career and social support from both mentor and protege perspectives presuming that the mentor provides support and the protege enacts reciprocal behavior related to support provided by the mentor. (Hawkey, 1999, p. 24)

The intern enters the PDS internship with little or no background related to teaching. She has no experience selecting teaching strategies, creating a lesson or delivering a planned lesson. Some of the mentors were negligent in providing support in these crucial areas. It appeared that the mentor did not realize intern's need for support as fall began. Early in the year Marilyn was longing for support and feeling inadequate during the planning periods with Angela.

I think I should bring more good ideas to our discussions. I can't think of any (brought up) ideas I have you know, I was really insecure in the beginning that because I'm coming from and English background and not an education background I wouldn't have enough ideas as to how to actually go about teaching things. (Marilyn, November)

Just as Marilyn initially looked for support, Mark too felt unsupported by Rebecca. He was uncomfortable working with her, and part of the reason was Mark feeling unsupported. Rebecca's



unrealistic expectations of Mark contributed to her not providing support as a mentor. As Mark perceived it, Rebecca believed Mark should have walked into the relationship with a clear, specific understanding of how to teach.

I was apparently not suppose to be developing a teaching style but just be born with one or something. (Mark, November)

Mentors' support of interns develops differently and looks different according to the relationship. Mark believed he needed the opportunity to experiment and fail with the students. He was trusting that Rebecca would support him through his growing pains. On the other hand, Rebecca did not interpret encouraging Mark to take chances with the possibility of failure as support. Her high, unrealistic expectations contributed to her showing little support for Mark. Mark's idea of support and Rebecca's were much different.

I think a little positive reinforcement would have been nice. Even though I helped develop the lessons I was never really allowed to try to communicate with the students and with direct instruction. I think if she would have let me try it and fail and then worked with me from there that would have built a lot more trust. If she could have been supportive through that, but she just never really was (supportive). (Mark, December)

### **The Need for Empathy**

Mentoring involves something more than teaching. This extra ingredient is empathy, a measure of interpersonal involvement and caring (Kunich and Lester, ). From the beginning the intern benefits from an empathic mentor. Whether the intern realizes it or not, empathy helps her cope with the immediate stress and anxiety which comes with the internship. Kunich and Lester (1996 ) describe empathy and the importance of it in a relationship this way.

The ability and willingness to empathize are central to mentoring. Only by truly understanding what the protege is experiencing, and by identifying with what the protege is feeling, can the mentor know what is needed. Without empathy, the would-be mentor is reduced to acting in a canned, off-the-shelf, generic, one-size-fits-all manner, and the protege is robbed of the individualized focus that is so important to every mentoring relationship. (p. 34)

When the mentor is empathic she can anticipate difficulties and the intern's needs and take actions to smooth the path. Empathy is instrumental in forming a bond between the mentor and intern, fostering the kind of mutual commitment that characterizes the best mentoring (Kunich and Lester).

Abell et al. concluded that successful mentor/intern relationships include mentors empathizing with interns and "understanding what interns live through by drawing on their past experiences as beginning teachers."

During the school year Arlene noticed that Elaine was experiencing highs and lows. Arlene made an effort to share her own experiences as a struggling first year teacher. Elaine appreciated recognized her mentor's empathy and appreciated it.

When I had a really low, sort of a low time in my personal life and was dealing with some issues, I really couldn't talk about it but I had to call her and say, 'I don't think I'm going to come to school today. I don't think I'm going to make it.' She would say, 'you know, I understand (because) when I was starting out as a teacher I was feeling a lot of the same sort of anxiety or insecurity' or things like that and respecting my privacy while still being involved and still caring about me. When it finally got to the point that I could talk about it. I think when I would have that anxiety again she really respected my feelings and encouraged me. (Elaine)

Central to fostering a close relationship are the mentor's warmth, patience, caring ways and empathic approach with the intern (Alleman, 1982 cited by Barnett, 1995). During Vince's unit Mark silently observed and was extremely impressed with Vince.

We talked about why it was successful. I told it was a good job. I gave him a whole lot of praise. (Tom, April)

Besides providing positive reinforcement to Vince, Tom showed a caring way as he mentored him. Tom worked at preparing Vince for any unforeseen problems in the classroom.

When we talk about lesson planning I try to show him where the hidden dragons are so that he won't make the mistake of a certain door. (Tom, April)

Angela was careful that Marilyn did not take on too many responsibilities during the school day.

I expressed my concerns and I just said, 'I know you're very conscientious but I don't want you to take on duties of whatever that perhaps other people in your party of teachers should be taking responsibility for. (Angela, September).

Besides the mentor providing an empathic approach with the intern, the intern strengthens the relationship by showing empathy. Within the second month of the relationship Marilyn showed empathy for her mentor, Angela. She was quite aware of Angela's heavy work load which included three different preparations.

I think that's probably why I take initiative, plus I know that she has two other classes that she has to worry about when I only have three. It's only fair for me to try to work hard and be prepared...(Marilyn, October)

Considering that it was only the beginning of the school year, Marilyn showed a great deal of empathy for her mentor's new situation.

This is their (mentors') career, this is their classroom and their students so they might feel, I think if I were a mentor I might feel a little worried in the beginning as to whether my intern would pan out or not and be dependable and helpful and tactful things like that. (Marilyn, October)

As an intern Vince was concerned about Tom's work load and expressed his concerns for him during the later part of the school year. Tom appreciated Vince's caring way.

He's always worried about how much of a load I am taking on. He asks me what can he do (to help me). We both have a concern for each other as people. It's really a nice relationship in that regard. (Tom, May)

The empathy was reciprocated in Vince/Tom relationship. As the year was winding down both made an effort to offer to spell the other one.

I have relieved him from whatever her was doing in class and let him go work on what he needed to accomplish. And vice versa. (Tom, May)

## **Communication**

One way of showing support is embedded in how effectively the mentor and intern cooperate and communicate with each other. Griffin (1986) points out that communication between the mentor and intern is likely to be demanding and perplexing for both parties because they do not share a common framework for interpreting events. Events could include grading tests, interacting with students as the authoritative figure and facing the stress of calculating grades at the end of a

marking period. The intern is experiencing these events for the first time. Communication can be crucial during these events. Because of the challenge of communicating, the onus is on the mentor to initiate the communication. The mentor can more easily take the initiative with her intern and take charge as far as communicating her expectations and views regarding how the school year will begin. At the start of the year the intern is learning ways to cooperate with her mentor. Open communication leads to a clear understanding of the both the intern's and mentor's feelings and helps them grasp each other's concerns and initial issues.

Yet communication becomes difficult when mentor and intern begin discussing the events within a class period (see Gonzalez and Carter (1994) because of the "essential differences between expert and novice teachers' personal understanding of the same classroom events."(p. 44) All of these researchers, Huberman, 1993; Nias, 1989; Sikes, Measor, & Woods, 1985) concluded that it takes about 4 years for beginning teachers to reach a comfortable understanding of classroom situations and their management.

The mentor expects cooperation from the intern when conducting class, when planning and through out the day as they discuss teaching strategies. Lack of cooperation leads to early frustrations and negative feelings. Both the intern and mentor gain from cooperating with each other. Within the first month the intern looks for and is eager for feedback, as well as an indication of how well she is performing. The more often the two communicate, the more likely the relationship will grow and become stronger.

Elaine realized within the first month how valuable and important was the mentor's communication with her. She did not realize how much she and her mentor would interact.

I think it (the relationship) was better than I expected because I think Arlene and my relationship is deeper than I expected to have with a teaching mentor. I expected it just to be about teaching and I didn't expect all the discussions and things we had. I guess I expected to sort of observe her, talk about what we were doing for the class and do my own things. Our communication and everything was really good which added to how good we were in the classroom. So I think that was all successful. (Elaine, September)

From the start Marilyn was eager for communication from Angela. Marilyn demonstrated a high level of confidence in herself, but sought affirmation from her mentor. Very critical of herself, Marilyn was eager to hear positives and realize that her mentor appreciated her approach. Her mentor's opinions, views and moods especially, affected how Marilyn felt about herself as an intern.

I was hesitant about a couple of the, the times when I took control of the classroom and I was the lead or something, um, and a couple of times when I didn't think things went so well and I was, I was nervous because I didn't really know how she would react, 'cause she was, you know, trusting me with her class and, and, um, well I know we share the class but she's the, solely responsible, I'd say. (Marilyn, September)

Teaching is a difficult and challenging profession which can frustrate, as well as baffle, the intern with no experience. Eager to succeed with a class, Marilyn discovered the difficulty of leading a discussion with a reluctant group of students. This was a time early on when Marilyn was unsure of herself and lacked confidence.

I lead one discussion on, oh I think it was last week., it was one of the novels, it was our first novel and, you know, we don't have, we didn't have very strong readers in the beginning of the class and the people were having a tough time transitioning from summer, I think, and it was, it was difficult for me to lead a discussion because I didn't know what to focus on and I tried my best and then at one point I think we just had a really tired class and it was sixth period, they'd eaten lunch and I wasn't getting the responses I had hoped for from some of the questions. (Marilyn, Sept.)

Communicating helps lead to a positive relationship, and the lack of communication can lead to a negative relationship. Lack of communication may create within the intern a false impression of how the mentor is feeling about her. The amount of time available for the mentor and intern impacts the level of communication. Time allows the mentor the opportunity to discuss concerns and issues with the intern, just as time enables the intern to share how she is feeling with the mentor.

In late November Marilyn became apprehensive and worried about her relationship with Angela. She seemed unable to recognize her mentor's efforts to communicate.

I think I just haven't had a good two weeks and I - it's nothing to do with PDS in general or with, you know, my work load, with my students or anything but I -Elaine-made a couple little comments two weeks ago and it's just, it just has - I haven't felt like she's been very happy. I don't know if it's happy with me or what's happened but yeah, it hasn't been a good two weeks and it's mostly just my interaction with Elaine. This isn't a constant. I mean, it's mostly just every once in awhile things happening but overall I just - I don't know if things are clicking, which is actually really interesting because I thought we had been doing so well, like unreasonably well for - since the beginning. Um, so I think - I don't know if communications lines broke down or, you know, I know the end of the marking period is very stressful for everyone. It wasn't stressful for me but I think that's because I'm an intern. Um, and ah, I don't know. I don't know what happened and I'm still trying to figure that out. (Marilyn, November)

I do value the insights Angela gives regarding my own technique and that we have a relationship that is open enough for her to feel comfortable questioning my practices. (Marilyn, October)

At the beginning of the relationship Marilyn strove to communicate her feelings and concerns to Angela. She was not afraid to express her worries and concerns. Eager to succeed she felt responsible for any student activity which did not work as planned. She conveyed her worries and doubts without hesitation to her mentor.

At the end of class I walked over to Angela's desk and basically apologized for my failure. She, however, didn't see the discussion as a failure. In fact, she divulged that she too sometimes has difficulty leading a discussion. That Angela related to my challenges and shared her own challenges speaks to her openness and eagerness to improve her methodologies. (Marilyn, September)

At the same time communication did contribute to developing a positive relationship. Marilyn appreciated Angela's frankness and willingness to share her past struggles. Marilyn valued her mentor's openness. It appeared that this early interaction contributed to the positive feelings toward Angela which Marilyn developed.

Tom valued and appreciated Vince's involvement from the start. Tom focused on Vince's positive attributes and realized his intern was contributing to a positive beginning for the year.

He just has a sort of natural ability to keep kids on task and work with them. I never saw him get angry once. Like he's had reasons to and he's talked with me about it and he doesn't have any of those responses. I think he's going to be quite successful. He is so easy to work with and we have really easy rapport and he's got—I like his sense of humor. We spend a good deal of time in third period just previous to the class, talking, not always preparing for class but just generally talking about things in general. (Tom, May)

Hank also valued Vince's involvement with his classes, but sensed the relationship lacked something. Hank struggled with sharing his feelings with his intern and worried whether he had the energy and desire to work at a deeper, personal relationship.

I kept asking him, well how are you going to be able to differentiate between a C paper and A paper. We communicate like a couple of men and they (another mentor and intern) communicate like two women. They are much more open with each other about their feelings and they are much more, I think they're probably more willing to listen to each other and share their feelings. Well I'm sure it (communication) would help the relationship between Vince and I, but the question is do I really want to that kind of, am I committed enough to the Professional Development School to really share myself at the level with this person. I mean, we're talking about real relationships here that I'm not sure, there's something going on probably under this, there's an undercurrent I think between Vince and I and I don't know quite what it is, but it's a small eddy of uncomfortableness either on his part or on my part or



we send kind of these vibes to each other that are really difficult to put your fingers on.  
(Hank, October)

## **Time**

Time is a crucial element of the day which impacts both the mentor and intern in different ways. Time provides the intern and mentor with the window of opportunity to discuss issues, concerns and successes which are important to fostering the relationship.

Mentoring requires significant amounts of time for the mentor and protege to be in close proximity. The protege is always observing and learning from the mentor. The opportunity to see how the mentor actually deals with a variety of situations is an important part of the process because it takes things from the abstract, conceptual level to the realm of practical, pragmatic application. (Hawkey, 1999, p.18)

An effective mentor must lead by example. When the mentor serves as a real-world role model for the protege, the cliché that "actions speak louder than words" comes to life.

The mentor can either believe that the intern must be dedicated to every minute of the day or accept the understanding that an intern needs time during the day. Young and Wright (2002) researched the importance of time.

Time involves commitment and dedication demonstrated by the mentor's accessibility which allows the relationship to become a seamless part of the learning culture. The time in the relationship is spent on developing the protege, listening, and helping the protege to solve problems. (Young and Wright, p.36)

Zey (1984) views one of the risks of mentoring as time. He sees mentoring as plainly requiring a great deal of time.

It involves training the junior person during formal work periods, lunchtimes, and often before and after work. It can be assumed that the mentor is engaging in this training in lieu of personal activities that would bring him a more immediate return. (page 91)

Not all mentors or interns embrace this view. The issue becomes how much does the mentor respect the intern's time and to what degree does the intern respect the mentor's.

Hank viewed time as a crucial and important for his opportunity to mentor Vince. As the year progressed he became resentful of Vince's involvement with Tom in the North Building. Vince's extensive unit which required students to research various time periods in American history was far from ending. The longer it continued, the more concerned Hank became. As a mentor, Hank was eager to discuss with Vince the students' problems and difficulties with composing their research papers. Vince was not around when Hank hoped to discuss these concerns.

Well time is always an issue. Time is always an issue. I don't want to end up getting into debates and philosophy. (Hank, November)

Although Rebecca talked as if time was very important to her and a serious concern, she failed to communicate her concerns to Mark. Mark complained that days would go by when test papers were not graded or returned. Mark thought that precious time was lost during the day when Rebecca would socialize with her fellow English teachers during their prep period. When she wanted to catch up over weekends Mark was reluctant to cooperate.

Time becomes an element that negatively affects the relationship partially because one can never have enough of it, and it can negatively impact both intern and mentor throughout the day. Both must combat time. Every day provides pressure and stress and time creates even more stress. Time is a precious element which cannot be recovered once it is gone.

Angela too was overwhelmed and viewed time as fleeting. The quest for more time never ended. Time affected both Angela and Rebecca's opportunity to expend energy with the mentoring. Both seemed pressed and stressed by the limited time during the day.

We sit down like this and talk through every day's lesson. So how did you think it went and what would you change and that kind of thing. Maybe I should (do this), but it doesn't ever feel like we have enough time. (Angela, October)

Rebecca attempted to struggle against the restrictions and limitations time put upon her. Feeling a lack of cooperation from Mark increased her frustration and fed her resentment for Mark. Lack of time contributed to the stress and created another issue which intensified the growing negative relationship.

We had decided to meet earlier in the week before we even thought we would have these presentations to grade and we had hours of work to do at this point and after the first hour he (the intern) said: 'I do have a time constraint. I have to be somewhere in fifty minutes.' This left us with barely enough time to even get through one of the things that we needed to do. (Rebecca, November)

Time was not always construed as a negative factor between the mentor and intern. Marilyn valued the time she and Angela spent during the school day and realized it was productive. As an

observant intern who was motivated to improve, she realized how important was the time she spent with her mentor Angela.

Sometimes it's really nice to be able to work with her and see what she's thinking as far as planning things and, um, talking about students. We've had a couple of times where we were really worried about certain students, um, so it's really nice to be able to see her a lot. (Marilyn, October)

### **Validating Input and Ideas**

How realistic the mentor's expectations are regarding the intern's strengths and abilities impacts the relationship. The intern enters the PDS program with ideas about teaching and is eager to become involved in the mentor's lessons. The mentor determines to what extent she will affirm the intern's ideas. The mentor has expectations of the intern and recognizes what the intern does well and what limitations the intern brings to the internship.

Within the first month Marilyn recognized that Angela appreciated her approach with a learning support student. She realized her mentor saw her as contributing to the success of the special education student. Her mentor's approval of Marilyn's involvement with a student with Asperger's Syndrome raised Marilyn's self-confidence at a critical point in the school year.

I know she values my interactions with one of our students with Asperger's Syndrome. She values my efforts, I think also my working with the learning support teacher and my thoughts about how we might be able to modify some assignments or lessons. And I think she runs a lot of things by me before we plan. (Marilyn, September)

Tom's early acceptance of Vince's ideas contributed to a positive perception of Vince which remained throughout the year. Open to new approaches to teaching, Tom saw value in Vince's strategy. Realizing how effective the novelty of using tennis balls was for his students, he encouraged Vince to continue the technique as the year went on.

I empowered him and he liked it. He looked like a professional teacher. I never got the impression he did not know what to do. (Tom, May)

In contrast to Vince's early on acceptance of his teaching ideas, Elaine faced a mentor who viewed her as along for the ride the first month of school. Arlene believed her primary job as the year began was to develop her presence in the classroom. Elaine was lost in the shuffle and was wondering why her mentor was not making an effort to involve her in the classroom or planning.

Elaine expressed the need to have her strengths recognized and validated. She saw her self-confidence and identity wrapped up in the mentor's impressions of her. She wanted her ideas recognized and desired a greater involvement with the class as the year began.

As the year began Elaine felt her ideas were not valued. The mentor appeared to devalue her talents and strengths.

I talked about it with Arlene later and just said, 'you know, I feel like my ideas aren't mattering' and she said 'it just matters that you're there and the kids see you. You know, make yourself available and that's what matters. You don't have to come up with all of the ideas and everything, which I feel like my problem is that's my stronger point. (Elaine, November)

Early on in the relationship Mark developed a negative attitude towards Rebecca. He did not feel that Rebecca believed in him as a potential teacher or his abilities to work in the classroom. Rebecca perceived Mark as weak intern, unaware of why he wanted to teach. It appeared she doubted

his intentions for becoming a teacher and entering the PDS program. Repeatedly she asked Mark why he wanted to teach and never thought she received a satisfactory answer. Early on Mark realized his mentor had little respect for him or his background. As Clauson (1980) points out, “the relationship must entail mutual personal involvement in which the protege feels admiration, respect, appreciation, gratitude, and even love for the mentor.”

Mark resented Rebecca’s treatment of him as an intern. Valuing his own intellect and knowledge base of literature, Mark was offended and frustrated. He believed his mentor had no confidence in him and that she did not appreciate what prior knowledge he could bring to the classroom.

My knowledge base wasn’t ever utilized with Rebecca, you know, the fact I knew the canon and a lot of the literature wasn’t really important really. (Mark, December)

With Vince the school year began much differently than Mark because Vince’s mentor was out of school with familial responsibilities. The absence of his mentor helped Vince established credibility and a comfort level prior to Tom’s return. When Tom came back in September he observed Vince using tennis balls to motivate a class. He accepted Vince’s ideas and saw merit in it since it worked as far as encouraging students to participate. Vince valued experimenting and taking risks with students. Tom supported Vince’s need to attempt different approaches to teaching. His attitude that the intern and the class benefitted from the intern taking chances contributed to the positive relationship between him and Vince.

A student teacher who's really eager, inventive and as far as the relationship goes following my lead but willing to break out of... and that's what Vince had done is broken out of traditional stuff. Sometimes he wanted to take them in different directions or he didn't want to do it the way I was doing it. I think that's sort of the right relationship. I don't see myself as the kind of mentor who sees things as set in stone. I see student teaching as an opportunity for a young guy to try a bunch of different things. Because once you start teaching, then you are just out there. (Tom, December)

Just as Tom supported Vince's view of teaching, Arlene also respected Elaine's ideas about conducting a lesson.

I think that she respects me, my ideas that I bring to the classroom and my philosophies and theories that I have deviated from her's. She realizes I don't have to be the teacher that she is. She likes silence and I don't and so when I'm doing a lesson it's okay if it's a little noisier because we talk about it. She trusts my reasons for doing things. I feel like she respects me as a teacher and place in the classroom is important. (Elaine, December)

### **Space Issues**

Both the mentor and intern valued space. Space became an issue in more than one way. It can be interpreted as both physical and psychological. The intern wanted to have space for herself within the room. A specific spot to sit and a place for her materials was missing for some of the interns. Sharing the space which included the mentor's room, the one computer and desk negatively affected the relationship. The intern walked into the room feeling awkward with no specific area to call her own. Beyond the little space available to the intern, the mentor longed for more longitudinal space where she could have distance from her intern. Working in close proximity to the intern impacted the mentor's need for time alone within the day.

One of the associates, Brenda, noticed the issue of space early on the relationship between the mentors and interns. She believed that early on in the mentor/intern relationship too much time together and a lack of space could be a barrier to fostering a healthy relationship.

Time together and time away from the classroom usually help foster student (teacher) relationships, however, we do have some mentors who desperately need their space. And too much time together is detrimental. (Brenda, October)

Angela valued the time by herself during the school day. She found Marilyn exhausting at times and was relieved when her intern attended the monthly one day seminars. With Marilyn gone, Angela was able to relax and not worry about being responsible for her intern. Angela liked the chance to teach her students completely by herself.

I think that every mentor/intern or any kind of relationship where you are with a person a lot, well especially with the mentor/intern, they're with you all the time, you can get kind of tired or him or her, but just that I think is the nature of the relationship. The intensity or the sheer amount of time you spend with a person. I have to admit it was nice on Friday whenever the interns were at seminar just to have the classes to myself just to, you know, be the regular old teacher. (Angela, March)

Space impacted Marilyn too in another way. She believed Angela failed to provide her with needed space. Marilyn walked into the classroom not sure where she was suppose to situate herself. Without a designated area in the room, Marilyn felt uncomfortable and was unsure of where to sit or place her materials. This was a serious concern for Marilyn, but Angela failed to notice it.

I know that's not really my desk and the other computers around the classroom are great for the kids, but then it makes it nearly impossible for me to sit anywhere around there. I could sit in the back, the desks in the rear of the room but then it looks as if I'm trying to hide from my students. So I just sit at a student desk. And this won't be an issue in four weeks. So, but that's something I, I realized is that not that I would need a desk to be like a teacher, but it, it's difficult when you don't have your own desk and you have a lot of students. So, in second period there is really no where for me to go. (Marilyn, April)



Deciding on how much control to relinquish is a challenging and difficult decision for the mentor. Although the mentor shares her classes with the intern, the mentor still perceives the students as her students. The intern is eager to teach the class by herself without the mentor interfering. When the mentor lets go of her class the intern may feel more trusted and gain more confidence in the classroom.

The majority of the mentors found it difficult leaving the classroom to their interns. Arlene, Marilyn, and Rebecca never left the classroom for any extent of time during the whole school year. All three of the interns within these classrooms voiced a desire to have the classroom by themselves. The presence of these mentors within the class affected how the students interacted with the interns and how comfortable the interns felt leading the class as the mentors looked on.

On the other hand, Vince had the opportunity to work with his classes without his mentor in the room. The absence of both Tom and Hank increased the trust level between Vince and his mentors. When the mentor was willing to let go of the class, the intern developed a more positive relationship with the students and the mentor.

### **Conclusion**

All of these themes enter the mentor/intern relationship over the school year. Some remain a serious aspect of the relationship for the duration of the year, while others are pertinent to only one stage in the relationship. Within the first few months the key to building the relationship between the mentor and intern revolved around the intern feeling validated and supported by the mentor. The initial confidence of the intern was low for the majority of the interns and the encouragement from the mentor

positively impacted the intern. As the year progressed the mentor's reluctance to let go of her class negatively impacted the relationship with her intern and became problematic. Empathy and space remained an element of the relationship throughout the whole year. As the school year ended the intern, as well as the mentor, valued their personal space and appreciated empathy partially because of the increased stress brought on by the end of the year.

## Chapter Six

### ASSERTIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is lay out the assertions formed through studying the relationships between mentors and interns in a Professional Development School. Based on my themes and understandings of a quality relationship, I have made some overarching conclusions about what leads to a positive chemistry between the mentor and intern. I hope to support my recommendations with specific examples gleaned from conversations with mentors and interns.

Developing relationships is a challenging, difficult endeavor which takes concerted effort, thought and time from all involved. All relationships hinge upon the participants' past experiences, the reasons for developing the relationship, and how much time and energy those involved want to dedicate to developing the relationship. Past experiences affect how one looks at new situations and people. Negative, past experiences can create a feeling of uneasiness, uncertainty, and doubt as to whether new relationships will work. Past, positive experiences with others can create a feeling of hope and excitement that the new relationship has potential to be a success. If those involved in the relationship see the value and benefit of interacting with each other, they may be more willing to devote time to the

relationship, think more deeply about their interactions and behaviors, and exert more energy into fostering the relationship.

The relationship between a mentor and intern is an artificial relationship in many ways. Even though they volunteered to work with each other, both participants are forced to work with each other in close quarters with a mass of immature, potentially uncooperative adolescents for almost nine months. From the first day of school both face a strict, inflexible, daily schedule which keeps both of them accountable almost to the minute. Besides those obstacles, the time and pressures that both face on a daily basis can be overwhelming and immense. The mentor, an experienced teacher, wants to be the best instructor possible for her students and yet work closely to develop the intern. The intern, a novice to teaching, wants to show to herself and her mentor that she has the potential and drive to be a successful teacher. Both the mentor and intern are faced with a great deal beyond developing the key to a successful year, the relationship.

Many factors impact the relationship between the mentor and intern during the school year. The beginning of the year creates tension and anxiety for both the mentor and intern, but especially the intern. Much of the onus lies with the mentor to create a comfortable, accepting environment for the insecure, anxious intern. The mentor is the authority in the classroom and dictates the mood early on in the year. The mentor has the power to raise or lower the intern's level of anxiety. The mentor's willingness and ability to show empathy towards the intern can lead to positive feelings between the mentor and intern.

Showing empathy does not always come naturally for mentors. Being empathic towards the intern takes a great deal of energy and necessitates a conscious effort to be aware of oneself. The mentor needs to expect that the intern is walking into the PDS program with anxiety about how will she

fit in and how she will be accepted by both the mentor and the students. The intern is eager to appear competent and contributing to creating a successful classroom. The mentor's priorities lie with her students in the classroom and beginning the year positively. Providing structure for her students and herself becomes the focus during the month of September. The intern as well gains from structure, and without a sense of structure the intern grows uncomfortable and unsure of herself.

Many times the month of September becomes the most important month for either developing or not developing the mentor-intern relationship within the school year. The dance between the mentor and intern is awkward for both individuals and both have reservations about how much initiative to take at the beginning. The intern does not want to be perceived as too aggressive with the mentor and the mentor has much more on her mind than how to relate to an intern. If the intern begins to step on the mentor's feet and not understand the dance resentment quickly surfaces. The mentor feels stressed as it is with all the daily responsibilities of teaching. Within the first four weeks the mentor's perception of the intern's competence and desire to be an active participant can set the tone for the rest of the relationship. For the intern September is a crucial, serious time period which can easily make or break the relationship. The onus is on the intern more than the mentor to establish the positive connection.

September is a crucial time period as well as other times when pressure and stress affect both the mentor and intern. The end of grading periods create an additional burden for the mentor teacher who must have calculated and recorded all final grades for the classes. If the intern takes an active role in supporting the mentor during these time periods the relationship benefits. The mentor expects the intern to assert herself as the semester ends and new grading periods begin.

Late spring brings an urgency for the intern to explore job opportunities. At this point the intern becomes less engaged in the relationship and more focused on her own future. Besides the job search,

the intern is finishing up her course work which adds another stressor. As May approaches the mentor takes more of a responsibility for winding up the year and looks forward to becoming the one almost completely in charge of the students and classes.

The teacher's role as a mentor is a lonely job. As the year goes on the mentor appreciates knowing that her efforts with the intern are recognized and valued. The PDS program could designate an individual to stay in contact with the mentor. The associate could assume this role. One of the goals would be to let the intern know that she is doing a good job with the intern and asking if she needs any help. The mentor's mood can affect the intern and when the mentor does not feel that she is valued for her dedication to the PDS program, she can become resentful and unappreciated. The mentor needs as much emotional support as the intern and a positive remark can help the mentor's outlook on mentoring. The mentor may need different kind of support. This positive attitude can help with the mentor-intern relationship.

Certain interns including Elaine and Mark spent the first month struggling to discover and define their role within the classroom. Confused and unsure of how they should present themselves they lacked confidence and felt lost, as well as uncomfortable during class. Neither Arlene nor Rebecca, the mentors, made an effort to help their intern establish a role in the classroom. This oversight from the mentor lead to mentors perceiving the interns as weak, unprepared, and unassertive. Both the intern and mentor felt negative and resentful of each other.

Borko and Mayfield (1995) concluded in their study that student teachers wanted to become more confident and comfortable in their roles. They pointed out that a few studies stressed the positive effects of the cooperating teacher assisting the student teacher in making the transition to educators by providing support for their new roles. These effects included improving communication between

cooperating teachers and student teachers (Painter and Brown, 1979) and more specific feedback to student teachers (Wheeler, 1989).

**The interactions which lead to a positive relationship include:**

- **on-going communication throughout the school year**
- **validation of each other's ideas**
- **support for each other**

For the relationship to develop both the mentor and intern must strive to communicate on a daily basis. The mentor needs to express her frustrations and concerns to the intern. The intern as well needs to let her mentor know when she is stressed out, feeling left out, or has some ideas for the lesson plan.

Mentors and interns communicate in different ways. These difference can affect the relationship. Some mentors are uncomfortable talking on telephones with their interns about daily concerns. While other mentors rarely utilize email and find that vehicle of communication too impersonal. Some mentors are uncomfortable with bringing up concerns about their interns. Lack of clear communication hinders the development of the relationship. The quicker the mentor and intern learn how to communicate their concerns, the better the chances are that their interactions will be more productive.

Clear communication by both the mentor and intern can only enhance their relationship

The development of the intern-mentor relationship is negatively impacted by the lack of confidence exhibited by the mentor towards the intern. Conversely, the mentor's support of the intern can positively affect the relationship. Although without support the intern's self-confidence waffles through

out the school year. While the more often the intern feels supported the more likely she will have a greater degree of confidence.

The intern's confidence depends to a great extent upon the mentor validating the intern's input and ideas. If the mentor neglects to ask for and fails to accept the intern's suggestions about ways to approach the classes or to present a lesson, the intern quickly loses confidence in her capabilities and begins to doubt herself. Negative feelings develop when the intern feels inept and the mentor fails to recognize the need to support her intern.

Empathy fosters and contributes to positive relationship between the mentor and intern. When the intern hears from her mentor that she too went through similar struggles, the intern feels less insecure and more comfortable as the year begins. Beginning the year the mentor can establish a bond between her and the intern when she provides reassurance that the experience of facing over a hundred students each day, creating lesson plans and coping with the pace of the day is challenging and exhausting even for her. Empathy for the intern must continue throughout the year as the intern faces different types of challenges and pressures at different times in the school year. By the middle of the year the intern begins wondering if she is prepared to teach alone. Other interns have reached a high level of confidence and long to be "the teacher" and no longer the intern.

Daily Tom and Vince met the period prior to class and discussed concerns. As mentor Tom stated it was not necessarily important that they discuss the lesson or activities of the day, but rather that he had an opportunity to answer Vince's questions. Vince grew more comfortable and appreciative of Tom as each month passed. That one period every day strengthened their relationship and both grew to appreciate each other. The period provided on-going communication between the two of them. Of all of



the dyads this was the only pair who religiously met every day for one period. This forty five minute meeting had a profound positive affect on their relationship.

In addition Tom let Vince know he liked his ideas and encouraged him to continue to share his ideas. While Vince felt validated, Mark and Elaine received little or no validation which negatively impacted their relationships with their mentors.

Empathy was lacking extensively between Rebecca and Mark. As Mark struggled to find his place in the classroom, Rebecca continued to criticize his apparent lack of ambition and dedication. During the fall Mark's dog became sick, and he asked for time to take his dog to the vet. Rebecca seemed to resent her intern's preoccupation with his pet. When Mark's dog died unexpectedly Rebecca gave no words of solace.

Both the mentor and intern feel better about the relationship when there is evidence of support. The intern can support the intern by volunteering to grade more of the student papers when the mentor feels stressed out or overwhelmed by the teaching load. Likewise the mentor can support the intern through lightening the load during the holidays and when the intern is searching for a teaching position.

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#### **Assertion #1**

#### **The key to the relationship is the mentor**

**I believe the mentor is the key to a successful relationship with the intern. For the mentor to create a comfort level early on she needs to accept the intern. The empathic, sensitive mentor can make all the difference as far as how smoothly the year begins for the intern. Accepting the**

intern leads to positive feelings. The intern enters the classroom with no clear understanding of the qualities of good teaching. The intern benefits from immediate mentor support and a high degree of empathy. The mentor creates the tone with the relationship just as she creates the tone for her classes. The intern is looking for the lead from the mentor and benefits from any reinforcement or encouragement. The mentor has the power to make the first days and weeks of the school year comfortable and nurturing or uncomfortable and stressful for the intern.

Within the relationship between the mentor and intern power is unequal. The intern is aware that ultimately the mentor has the final say. Early on the mentor dictates the degree of the intern's involvement when planning lessons and delivering them. At times the intern resents the mentor's power which leads to frustration. The intern's lack of power can negatively impact the relationship. By the nature of the situation the mentor is more powerful since it is his or her classroom and she is held responsible for the students' success. The intern senses this power differential.

Besides realizing how much the time of the year affects the relationship, I have realized that certain mentor-intern relationships do not develop because of the mentor's unrealistic expectations of the intern. Some mentors expect interns to have instant rapport with the students, to feel comfortable interacting with them and be as engaged as much as the mentor teacher. The mentor cannot understand why the intern does not have the same strong work ethic. Some interns never can please their mentors because of their limited understanding of what is effective teaching. When the mentor begins to doubt the intern's motivation or competency the relation suffers irrevocable damages that only becomes worse as the school year progresses. The relationship becomes ugly and both the mentor and intern are unhappy, as well as frustrated with the dynamics of the relationship.

Even though the mentor is the key to the relationship, there are some interns who would fail to develop a positive relationship with the best mentor. Some interns are unwilling to embrace the mentor's teaching philosophy or are unwilling to accept the necessary responsibilities of an intern. At first the mentor may be empathic with the intern, but if the intern continues to not cooperate, the relationship is negatively impacted. The intern who shows little initiative and fails to connect with the students can put a severe strain on the mentor/intern relationship, leading to an unsuccessful relationship.

### **Suggestions To Help the Relationship Develop**

Mentors can learn a great deal about developing a positive relationship by understanding the intern's perspectives of the school year in the PDS program. This can help the mentor do a better job of working with the intern. As the school year begins the intern views the classroom as the mentor's and feels uncomfortable taking the lead with the students. The mentor needs to be mindful of the intern's hesitation to take the initiative , and help him or her become accepted by the class. Besides the intern perceiving himself as an outsider within the classroom, he regards himself as possessing little power within the relationship. The mentor can be more aware of the intern's insecurities and look for ways to encourage the intern to take control of the class. Early on the intern needs specific assignments and tasks to show to the class and the mentor that he is part of the teaching process.

Keep the lines of communication open

I believe frequent, open communication strengthens the relationship. Both the mentor and intern need to establish how they plan to communicate. Email may work for one intern, but not another. Face to face communication should be encouraged as much as possible since emails can be misconstrued and place added stress upon the relationship. The mentor could establish a specific time and place during the day or week where the intern or mentor could bring up issues, concerns, problems and questions. The amount of time together can lead to improving the relationship or to hampering the relationship. The intern needs a designated period of time to talk with the mentor freely without anyone else present.

#### Provide the Mentor with Emotional Support

The mentor gains from support and a feeling of being appreciated. The responsibilities of the mentor are great and taking on the intern adds more stress and pressure to an already overwhelming job. The mentor could gain from receiving recognition from the others within the PDS program or from an administrator within the building. The mentor needs to be recognized publically throughout the school because mentoring is so important to shaping a new teacher and exemplifies a caring, dedicated professional educator. The morale of the mentor dramatically impacts the development of the relationship. The more positive the mentor feels about her position, the more likely she will feel positive toward her intern.

#### Create More Time Prior to the First Day of School For Mentor/ Intern Interactions

The mentor-intern relationship could benefit if the beginning of the school year could begin more relaxed and with both participants more comfortable with each other. Time immediately surfaces as a constraining, stress forming variable in the relationship. The intern could benefit from spending

time with her mentor prior to the first day of school in a relaxed environment with no one else involved. If the mentor was expected to invite the intern for a weekend retreat where they would discuss their goals and expectations for the school year they both could feel more comfortable about each other and how the school year would progress.

#### Providing Mentors with Staff Development with Methods to Supervise Interns

Both mentoring and supervision are important in developing the intern. Supervision provides an added burden and responsibility to the mentor's job. The mentor needs to make clear that the intern has responsibilities much like a regular teacher and hold him/her accountable. The mentor must require that the intern arrive at school at a specific time, attend faculty meetings, as well as department meetings and follow the teacher handbook's procedures. Many times the mentor is the sole professional to observe the intern teaching. The mentor has the challenge of mentoring as well as supervising the intern through the school year.

Mentors enter the PDS program unaware of how to supervise other teachers or interns. Many take the role of mentor with no expectation that they will also supervise their intern. They need tools and ways to provide feedback while working with beginning teachers who have specific needs. In my study the mentors revealed they felt uncomfortable providing feedback because of a lack of training in supervision, while other mentors tried to provide feedback, but focused on the negative, creating a worse situation. The intern hopes that the mentor will observe her teaching and expects feedback from the mentor. Kalbfleisch (1997) believes that effective mentor quite often need to be in a supervisory position in order to professionally support and champion an intern.

Although supervision can positively affect the relationship, this expectation can easily create stress and uneasiness for both the mentor and intern. The mentor teacher may have no idea how to coach her intern and help her develop her ideas and ways to teach effectively. While observing the intern the mentor may not know what to look for or how to point out the negative and positive actions of the intern within the classroom. The intern may become disillusioned when she receives no constructive criticism or suggestions about how to teach a lesson. The mentor could gain from learning ways to constructively assess beginning teachers. Without any formal background on how to supervise teachers the uncomfortable mentor easily can choose to avoid providing feedback to her intern. No mentor input creates tension within the intern and negatively impacts the relationship. Ambiguity leads to an unconfident, hesitant intern. As the year goes on the intern's relationship with the mentor could either become stronger as the mentor provides constructive feedback or become weaker because the intern is unaware of how she is progressing.

All interns are searching for feedback and they look to their mentor to provide it. The mentor can enhance the relationship by having the tools to assess her intern's teaching and realizing how important it is to look for and express the positive attributes of the intern as she works with individual students and the whole class.

Kalbfleisch and Davies (1993) conjecture that mentoring relationships are not one sided, but that as the relationship develops and the intern's knowledge increases, the intern may provide support for the mentor. The mentor gains from being open to this possibility. The mentor who enters the relationship recognizing that the intern will have helpful thoughts and constructive ideas will be open and receptive to the intern's involvement. If the mentor encourages the intern to offer their views and

accepts them the relationship benefits. An open minded, encouraging mentor helps the relationship develop in positive ways.

#### Discuss the Issue of Space and Agree To a Plan

Space appears to be a simple concept within a relationship. But both the mentor and intern benefit from a clear, well defined understanding of space. For the intern having a desk drawer, a bookshelf, or just an area in the room considered her's helps in adjusting.. The mentor does not know or understand the intern's need for space. The mentor needs to bring up this point even before the students arrive for the school year. When the mentor takes the time to approach her intern about space the intern immediately feels that she is being taken into account. The mentor could also bring up what she would expect from her intern during the first weeks of school. They could discuss questions including:

- are they going to use both the black board and the white board?
- are they going to greet the students at the door together?
- are they going to work at creating a dialogue as the period goes on?
- are they going to meet in the morning prior to the students's arrival?
- are they going to meet after school to discuss plans, the day, personal issues?

### Lessons Learned About Research

As a researcher I learned that it is crucial to establish a strong, personal relationship with my participants. I realized it was easier to conduct the interviews with certain interns who I felt closer to and more interested in their development. I felt most successful with Marilyn whom I decided to informally mentor as the year developed. The story of Marilyn and Angela was much richer than any of the other stories because I knew both of them better. Marilyn was very comfortable with me and seeing her everyday helped keep us connected. Marilyn and Angela's room faced my room and daily we would interact even before the students arrived. Daily I would walk over to their room and share a cup of coffee even before the students arrived.

As the year went on Marilyn and I went out for coffee and even an evening dinner now and then. I believe the depth of my research hinged upon how close I came to developing a caring, positive relationship with my participants. Marilyn went out of her way to share how she was feeling near the end of the year. In the late spring I invited her to join me and my intern in teaching The Outsiders for three weeks. We planned the unit together and discussed different teaching strategies. Marilyn was eager to work with me and I tried to challenge her thinking and encouraged her to approach teaching as an experiment.

One of the most difficult stories for me to compose was the story of Elaine and Arlene. Because one of the dyads of mentor-intern ended abruptly in late December, I decided to follow Arlene's mentoring of Elaine. It was difficult partly because I had to reconstruct the first semester and how the relationship initially developed.



Another dyad which did not develop into a very detailed story was Hank and Vince's. Hank's interviews were filled with frustration about the difficulty of working as a specialist, an ESL teacher, in a big school. He seemed more perturbed by his difficulties with other teachers' lack of understanding and supporting his program. The difficulty of his schedule and the pressures of daily teaching were more of a concern than his intern.

Early on in the school year Hank had specific ideas of a way to approach Vince's classes. After the disagreement Hank appeared to let Vince go with it and Hank became a hands off mentor. Because of Vince's independent style, strong personality and confidence, Hank stepped back from confronting him and his beliefs. By January Vince was on his own. Hank appeared uncomfortable challenging Vince and refrained from expressing his concerns with Vince. It seemed easier that way and maybe for the good of all in Hank's eyes.

Beyond Hank's decision to keep his distance, Vince became more comfortable functioning on his own and did not seek out Mark as a mentor. Possibly with Tom across the street, Vince believed he was receiving adequate support. It appeared Vince had a more positive relationship with Tom than Mark.

During the interviews from January on both participants seem satisfied with the relationship which seemed more artificial than real to me. They had gone their separate ways and were both happy with the arrangement: no conflicts no arguments, no discussions about methodology or teaching strategies. The story ended.

One of the richest stories was the brief, but intense story of Mark and Rebecca. I had known Rebecca from her involvement for the past two years in the PDS program. She and I developed a friendship while she was an intern and the positive interactions continued during her first year of

teaching when we shared a classroom. Rebecca and I had gone out to breakfast socially and I felt close to her as colleague.

Mark and I seemed to connect the first time we met. An intern in his mid thirties, he had many experiences beyond the typical intern. He had lived throughout the United States and had experiences which I could relate to as mature adult. I believe my appreciation for his past and being a male may have helped him trust me. Both Rebecca and Mark seemed willing and comfortable sharing their deepest feelings about the relationship. Each time I met with them they both shared how unhappy they were with the relationship. Rebecca was frustrated and angry with Mark's lack of cooperation and motivation within the first few weeks of September. Her frustration continued until the abrupt ending in late December. Mark was frustrated too with his relationship and felt restricted and hindered by his mentor. Both believed the other was not supportive or contributing positively to the relationship.

While Mark and Rebecca were providing honest details about their school year, the other mentors and interns seemed guarded about revealing their feelings with me. Angela carefully constructed her thoughts when interviewing. She appeared worried to show any negative feelings about her intern or the PDS program.

At the same time her intern, Marilyn, attempted to be extremely positive and complimentary of Angela even when it was forced. Angela revealed to me during the members check that she was afraid to write anything that could be construed as negative in her weekly reflective journals since she was not certain of who would be reading her words. Her journal of reflections consisted of guarded comments which did not reveal any of her sincere feelings about Angela.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Literature has examined the basic knowledge and skills necessary to effectively mentor beginning teachers and suggests resources useful in preparing teachers to serve as mentors. These studies have focused on the formulaic approach and view mentoring as skill based. This research has neglected to explore the importance of fostering the relationship between the mentor and novice teacher. Other studies have explored the student teaching triad through the eyes of the cooperating teacher. These studies have focused on cooperating teacher's power and influence over the student teacher.

I believe future studies could gain from focusing on how the mentor views her understanding of mentoring. I believe that each mentor has a different view on what it means to mentor. The mentor's view and perception of what is effective mentoring could impact the relationship with the intern. A study could focus specifically on mentors and establish a set of mentor styles evident when working with the interns. It could be beneficial to determine which mentor styles most successfully foster the relationship.

Mentoring and supervision are different skills and both impact the relationship between the mentor and intern. Mentoring can be defined "as a powerful emotional interaction between an older and younger person, a relationship in which the older member is trusted, loving and experienced in the guidance of the younger. The mentor helps shape the growth and development of the protege or intern (Merriam,1983, p.162). Schmidt (1980) views mentoring in three dimension: role model, information provider and door opener. Daloz (1983) perceived mentoring as aiding the intern in confronting and moving through their fears while help them to create an environment where it is safe to grow from the experience.

On the other hand, supervision is different than mentoring. By definition supervision is the process and a function which helps teachers improve with their instruction of students (Harris, 1975).

Supervision provides encouragement and opportunity for the intern to learn by trial and error. Both mentoring and supervision can positively affect the relationship between the intern and mentor. A study which focused on both the impact of mentoring coupled with supervision would be worthwhile.

Silva (1999) studied mentor styles over an eighteen month period in a Professional Development School at the elementary level. Silva also believed the relationship was the key to successful mentoring. She concluded that a key facet of mentoring is to develop a trusting relationship with the intern. She viewed effective mentors as giving space to the intern. Silva felt that a mentor's role was to be a leader and nurturer of the intern.

In addition to focusing on mentor styles, a study focusing on the stressors and obstacles which stand in the way of establishing a sound relationship between the mentor and intern would be valuable. The mentor and intern do not interact in a vacuum and extraneous factors could hinder the relationship as well as encourage a strong relationship.

Through this study it became apparent that mentoring is a difficult, extremely challenging experience which does not appeal to many experienced teachers. A study which attempted to determine why mentoring is such a tough and overwhelming experience could help determine what can be done to create a healthier environment for the dyad.

A Professional Development School has the potential to offer the mentor an opportunity to grow professionally. I concluded through my study that the mentors did not view mentoring as staff development and missed out on the experience of growing professionally. A study focuses on which

factors encourage mentor teachers to view the PDS experiences as staff development could be worthwhile.

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## Appendix A

### Dates of Interviews

#### Marilyn

August  
September  
October  
November  
January  
February  
March  
April  
May  
June

#### Rebecca

September  
October  
November  
December  
June

#### Elaine

January  
February  
March  
April  
June

#### Mark

September  
October  
November  
December  
June

#### Arlene

January  
February  
March  
April  
June

#### Angela

September  
November  
February  
March  
April  
June

#### Vince

September  
October  
December  
March  
May  
June

#### Tom

April  
May  
June

#### Hank

September  
October  
November  
December  
January  
June

**Appendix B****Interview I**

1. What are your expectations as a mentor/intern/university associate as the school year begins.
2. What do you consider the ideal relationship with your mentor/intern/associate?
3. What are the qualities you are looking for in the intern? in the mentor? in the university associate?
4. What do you anticipate and what are you worried about as you begin this relationship?
5. How would you describe an ideal relationship using a metaphor?



## **Interview II**

1. How has the relationship been going since our first interview?
2. How has your relationship changed in the last month?
3. How has your level of responsibility changed in the last month?
4. How do you expect your relationship will change in the coming weeks?
5. What has been an obstacle to developing the relationship?
6. What has assisted in helping develop your relationship?
7. Has the relationship changed at all since the first month? In what ways?
8. How has the associate affected your relationship with your intern or mentor?

### Interview III

1. Reflecting on the whole experience, if you could be a mentor/intern again what would you do differently and what would you do the same?
2. If you could give advice to a new intern or mentor what advice would you offer in order to develop the relationship?
3. How has your relationship changed since September?
4. In what ways do you think your relationship will remain the same the rest of the school year and in what ways do you think it will change?
5. Why do you feel this way?
6. In what ways has daily routine/schedule lead to fostering or discouraging your relationship with your mentor or intern?
7. Reflecting on the first three months what do you feel you have done to help your relationship?
8. How has your mentor/intern fostered the relationship?
9. In what ways has your relationship succeeded? In what ways has it not worked out as well as expected?

August 2003

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a graduate student working towards my doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction at Penn State University. I am seeking research volunteers who are mentors, interns, and university associates in the Penn State Professional Development School. The study will focus on the relationships of the mentor, intern, and associate at State College Area School District High School.

If you are interested in being involved in this study please read and sign the informed consent form attached. Thank you for your interest in being involved in this study.

Sincerely,

Harry Freeman  
hpfl1@scasd.org

**VITA**  
**Harry Freeman**

**Education**

- 1981-1984      **Masters of Arts, Latin**  
                    Millersville University
- 1992-1995      **Master of Educational Administration**  
                    Pennsylvania State University
- 1981-1984      **Masters of Arts, Latin**  
                    Millersville University
- 1970-1974      **Bachelor of Arts, English**  
                    Indiana State University

**Work Experience**

**State College Area School District**  
2001-Present      **English and Latin High School Teacher**

**State College Area School District**  
1995-2001      **Middle Level Administrator**

**West Shore School District**  
1998-1994      **Latin Middle Level Teacher**

**Southern York County School District**  
1986-1989      **Latin and English High School Teacher**

**Baltimore City School District**  
1985-1986      **Latin High School Teacher**

**Forest Hills School District**  
1975-1985      **Latin and English High School Teacher**

