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The effects of mentoring on the elementary special education mentor

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The Effects of Mentoring on the
Elementary Special Education Mentor

by

Maria Angeliadis

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education
Department of Special Education
College of Education
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Dedication

The journey I selected to travel in search of this study was only possible by the grace of God; therefore I dedicate my work to His Glory. I also dedicate this book to my husband, Gregory, who waited patiently along my way. I dedicate this book to my mother, Alice, for passing on her love of learning and to my brothers, Jack, Emmanuel and Nick, and my sister, Dena, for their encouragement. I dedicate this book to my beautiful children, George and Aspacia and children by marriage, Stacey and Erik, who have been supportive and brighten my life with their love. I dedicate this book to all the students who have brought joy and learning into my life.

I dedicate this book to my spiritual advisor, Fr Stanley Harakas, for helping my journey be spiritually peaceful and for helping me realize the joy of my work. I dedicate this book to my close friends, Gloria and Kay and my cousin Niki, who listened patiently and helped transcribe the words of my mentors. I dedicate this book to the mentors interviewed in this study and whose voices I promise to support.

I dedicate this book to three very special professors, who committed themselves to helping me complete my work and guiding me to complete a worthy study. I thank Dr. William Morse, Dr. James Paul and Dr. Jeannie Kleihammer-Tramill for all the encouragement and advice.

Most importantly, I dedicate this journey to my sweet grandchildren, Amelia, Miccah, Rylee Basilia, and Gregory, in the hopes that they will love learning as much as I

and will follow in our legacy through higher education and fulfilling their dreams always.

May their lives be full of God's love and glory and a desire to continue learning always.

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The Effects of Mentoring on the Elementary Special Education Mentor

Maria Angeliadis

ABSTRACT

Increasingly, mentor programs are being developed in teacher education programs to assist novice teachers. The focus in most of the literature on mentoring is on the new teacher being mentored. While the mentor teacher appears to be the most crucial element in mentoring programs (Feinman-Nemser, 1992; Little, 1990; White, 1995), there is not much information about how a teacher experiences being a mentor or the perceived benefits to a mentor.

The purpose of this present study was to examine the effects of mentoring on mentors in order to: (a) address the gap in the literature by exploring the effects of mentoring on the mentor, (b) inform the mentoring and mentor training process and (c) examine the effects of mentoring on mentors. To meet these purposes, six mentors in a southeastern county in Florida were interviewed using Seidman's, (1998) protocol.

The analysis of the interview data revealed that the mentors felt strongly about the benefits derived from being a mentor. They believed they were a vital part of their school environment. The major theme throughout the data showed that the reason these teachers chose to become mentors was because they wanted to help. Their desire to help new teachers came from either not having a mentor themselves or having been inspired by other mentors. They saw mentoring as their opportunity to help new teachers be successful in their first year as teachers.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The role of mentors has become a very important aspect of teacher preparation and plays an increasingly significant role in school reform. Halford (1998) states that, “From classrooms to commission chambers, education leaders are recognizing the power of mentoring,” (pg. 34). During the last two decades, an extensive body of research has examined the nature and effect of mentoring. The literature is rich with information and research on how a mentor benefits from watching the growth and gains in knowledge of novice teachers in the field of education (e.g. Dreher & Ash, 1990; Koberg, Boss, Chappell, & Ringer, 1994; Mobley, Jaret, Marsh, & Lim, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Scandura, 1997; Ragins, Cotton, Miller, 2000). While there is a large body of literature that describes the effect of mentoring on the teacher being mentored (mentee), little literature is available regarding the impact of mentoring on the mentor.

Problem and Purpose of the Study

The problem addressed by this study is that relatively little is known about the impact of mentoring on the mentor. The purposes of the study were (a) to address the gap in the literature by exploring the effects of mentoring on the mentor and (b) to inform the mentor training process. The benefits of mentoring have been widely described in recent literature related to the preparation of new teachers (Houston McDavid, & Marshal, 1990; Huling-Austin, 1990) and the retention of existing teachers (Boreen, Johnson, Niday, and Potts, 2000). Darling-Hammond (1996) suggests that mentoring is

an essential component of the induction of new teachers. Boreen and colleagues have found that the availability of a mentor teacher significantly reduces the risk of teacher attrition during the first 3 to 5 years of service in the field and it may be reasonable to assume that mentoring also increases the likelihood of retention for the mentor teacher.

While the mentor teacher appears to be the most crucial element in mentoring programs (Feinman-Nemser, 1992; Little, 1990; White, 1995), and even though mentoring has been found to benefit novice teachers, there is not much information about how a teacher experiences being a mentor or her perceptions of the benefits of mentoring. Little is known about how mentors experience the process of providing mentoring; thus, information about potential opportunities to improve the conditions under which mentoring takes place, the supports needed by mentors, or how teachers assess their effectiveness in their own classrooms or the classrooms of their mentees, is not yet available.

By studying the impact of mentoring on the mentor, it may be possible to help identify the benefits of serving as a mentor and to help mentors understand and reflect on the process. It is essential for the mentor to understand the process of mentoring and how he or she impacts the mentee. With this understanding, the mentor will have a better understanding as to how to best meet the needs of a mentee. The results of building this knowledge base may benefit novice teachers, school systems and, most importantly, the education of students.

Research Questions

The study was designed to address the question: What is the impact of mentoring on the mentor? Subordinate questions were developed to elicit mentors' perceptions of

how mentoring affects their beliefs, perspectives, values, professionalism, level of investment in the quality of education, job satisfaction, and retention in their current professional roles. The subordinate questions included:

1. In what ways do mentors undergo a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?
2. How does mentoring affect the mentor's perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?
3. How does mentoring affect the mentor's perception of his/her own teaching and sense of professionalism in his/her own classroom?
4. What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?
5. Does mentoring affect the mentor beliefs and/or values?

Method

Six individuals served as participants in the study. Participants included special educators at the elementary school level who currently serve as mentors in one Florida school district. The researcher sought nominations from building principals in the school district to identify mentor teachers who might wish to participate in the study. The researcher and director of the mentoring program in the local school district selected potential participants from this group. Potential participants were identified by using three criteria. First, all participants had at least two years of experience in the role of mentor. Second, all participants had participated in a formal mentor training program delivered by the school district being studied. Third, all participants signed a form,

approved by the University of South Florida's Institutional Review Board, indicating their consent to participate in the study

Seidman's (1998) interview framework was used to guide the data collection in answering the research questions. Interviews were completed in three 90 minute sessions. The first interview focused on the mentor's personal history as a mentor, the second interview on the mentor's role, and the third on the impact of mentoring on the mentor. Specific interview questions related to the overall research question and the five subordinate questions came from two sources: the literature on mentoring, and the researcher's own experiences as a mentor.

After the interviews were conducted and transcribed, the participants' responses to each of the three interviews were coded, using Atlas Ti, and the researcher analyzed them to identify common themes.

Definitions

The terms listed below are common to the field of mentoring and were used throughout the dissertation. A brief definition is given to aid the reader.

Mentor - a mentor in this study is a person who has been selected by the school district being studied to serve in this role. A mentor is an individual who takes on the role of counselor, guide, tutor, and adviser to a first-year teacher. In general, teacher mentors aid the new teacher with all aspects of the school environment and classroom, including, for example, lesson planning, behavior management and parent conferencing. They also help new teachers assimilate into the school environment.

Mentee/novice teacher – a mentee is the new teacher, usually in the first year of teaching experience. The mentee typically has recently completed study through a

teacher education program, and has successfully completed requirements for certification as an educator. For the most part, the mentee has had no prior experience in the school setting beyond their field-based work associated with classes, student teaching, and/or a final internship.

Mentoring Process – for the mentee, the mentoring process is most often a prescribed plan through which the mentee must travel in order to successfully complete the first year of teaching. The process includes learning how to teach subjects, developing strong behavior management skills, creating a strong learning environment in the classroom and learning how to communicate well with parents, students, administrators and colleagues. For the mentor, this process involves providing support and guidance to the mentee that results in the mentee’s acquiring these skills and knowledge.

Mentor Programs – As defined by the school district being studied, the mentor program involves preparing mentor teachers through a Clinical Education course that gives the mentor strategies and resources to help the mentee. All mentors are also required to complete a mentor add-on document verifying that they have read materials to update their knowledge of mentoring. The school district being studied offers a voluntary mentor training that increases mentoring skills and strategies. Over 1953 mentors have been trained and some are in the process of receiving updated courses. All new teachers in the school district being studied are provided with a mentor.

Assumptions

The research was based on the assumption that valid and dependable reports of the relevant experiences of mentors can be obtained by using the interview protocol described in this study. The researcher also assumes that information gathered and analyzed is of potential value in understanding the positive transformation for knowledge between mentor/mentee and the benefits for mentors in their own development as educators. This study may be meaningful to mentors, mentor trainers and supervisors who have had similar experiences and are able to apply the findings in their own professional situation. This kind of generalization in qualitative research is referred to as verisimilitude. The description and analysis of the data obtained from interviewing six (6) mentors in one school district may be relevant to other mentors and mentor trainers and supervisors on the basis of 'verisimilitude'. Verisimilitude is the quality of appearing to be true or real and has the appearance of being something that is true or real. Therefore, the responses and the analysis of those responses will give the reader an understanding of what the mentors perceive as true or real

Chapter Two

Literature Review

History of Mentoring

The mentoring concept dates back to ancient Greece. Long before the process of mentoring was applied to schools, classrooms and new teachers, mentoring dealt with life schemes and the betterment of a young apprentice. When Odysseus went off to fight the Trojan War, he entrusted his son, Telemachus, to the tutor, Mentor (Bey& Holmes, 1990; Podsen & Denmark, 2000). The teacher later revealed herself as the Goddess Athena, patroness of the arts and industry, and accompanied the youth when he went in search of his missing father (Collie, 1998). As progress and modernization occurred in societies, mentoring became an apprenticeship. Many young boys learned a given trade at the hands of the ‘experts’ in the craft. These young ‘mentees’ were often sent to live in the home of the mentor and would stay until they had learned from the ‘master’. Once the trade was mastered, the mentees would begin a life in their chosen trade and often, as they became the ‘experts’, they, too, became mentors to other apprentices.

Today, we continue to value the roles of mentors for those who are novices to a given field. While young people are no longer sent to learn the trade from the ‘master’, or to live with a master as they learned the life-long career they had selected, most fields of work do use the mentoring process to help the novice employee. In medicine, for example, an intern is guided and closely monitored and mentored before beginning practice as an independent professional. In the business world, the novice is guided by a

member of a team of business people who continuously monitor the progress and skill of the mentee. Mentors stand ready to guide and help the new employees, allowing them the opportunity to achieve and complete the tasks required of their field. In many careers, there are experts who are willing and who make themselves available to assist the novice.

Mentoring has become an important aspect of teacher preparation and has called attention to the need to assist novice teachers in their important first year of teaching. Feiman-Nemser (1996) explains that by the early 1980s, mentoring had burst onto the educational scene as part of a large movement that focused on improving education, those who create policies to aid education and educational leaders who have placed high hopes on using mentors and mentoring as a ‘vehicle’ for reforming teaching and teaching education (p.1). There has also been a speedy increase in creating mentoring programs across the nation, with over 30 states mandating mentored support for novice teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 1996).

Gagen and Bowie (2005), explain that “mentoring has been used in many professional-development settings to support individuals new to a profession. In particular, mentors are used in education and nursing to support new professionals who must meet the demands of a new position while managing the stresses of a new environment” (p. 40).

In a study conducted by Fairbanks, Freedman, and Kahn (2000), fifteen experienced teachers and the novice teachers assigned to them were invited to help explore the characteristics of successful mentoring, during the spring of 1997. The mentors had between 4 to 20 years experience teaching and had excellent reputations as

teachers. In the study the teachers and novices were expected to document their experiences in dialogue journals and then analyzed the information with the researchers. The mentors and their mentees attended workshops and were interviewed, videotaped during mentoring conferences and identified characteristics of effective mentoring. Data were collected throughout the semester. The study identified the following characteristics of effective mentors and mentoring:

- Mentors help the mentee to survive their beginning teaching experiences
- Mentors established mentoring relationships that were based on dialogue and reflection
- Mentors helped build professional partnerships with their mentees

(Fairbanks, et al. 2002)

In education, the field responsible for cultivating new minds in preparation for participation in society and the workforce, there is increased attention to the role and necessity of the mentor for the new educator. Ideally, the mentor undertakes a significant role in helping another person, in this case the new teacher, to develop into a successful professional. Odell (2006) suggests that mentoring is ‘typically associated with having experienced teachers work with novice teachers to help ease the novices’ transition from a university student learning to teach to full-time teacher in the classroom” (p. 203).

The word ‘mentor’ evokes different images of supportive individuals who have assisted and continue to support the mentee in their professional and personal lives (Hansman, 2003). Some see the mentor as a teacher, an advisor, or a sponsor (Levinson et al. 1978). An educational mentor must possess many social attributes and dispositions to interact successfully with the mentee, be able to offer useful information and

resources, and give the mentee understanding and insight into the education field. The mentor needs to be prepared to model and teach specific classroom skills that will enhance the mentee's teaching skills. The mentor observes and offers feedback, both positive and constructive. Most importantly, a mentor is able to offer support and strategies that will assist the mentee to 'survive' the first, very critical and difficult, year of teaching.

Mentor Characteristics

Zachary (2000) explains, "Today's mentor is hardly the all-knowing source of wisdom that dispenses knowledge, hands out truths, and protects and guards. Rather, today's mentor is a facilitative partner in an evolving learning relationship focused on meeting mentee goals and objectives" (p.161). The literature regarding characteristics of successful mentors suggests that the mentor must have a complex array of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In a study focused on preparing new teachers for diversity, Achinstein and Athanases (2005) explain the necessity of the mentor's having knowledge of both student learners and teacher learners. The mentor is responsible for understanding the school environment in context at both the classroom level and the community level. The mentor's ability to transmit this vital knowledge provides a transition for the mentee between the role of novice and that of professional. They also discuss the need for mentors to know teaching as it relates to students. Achinstein and Athanases (2005) also point out that mentors teach, tutor and mentor to the adult learner as new teachers.

The role of mentor is sometimes ambiguous; thus, a mentor is not always in the formal position of mentor when the new teacher needs assistance. A relationship needs

to be established immediately with the mentee. An effective mentoring relationship is distinguished by mutual respect between the mentor and mentee, trust toward the knowledge and ability of each individual involved, an understanding of the role of teacher and student, and empathy on the part of both participants. In the experiences of the researcher, effective mentors are those who are willing to share their own life experiences as educators and have the necessary astuteness to recognize the strengths and areas of necessary growth in their mentee, without prejudice and with a non-evaluative spirit.

“Critically reflective mentors find that they are more focused in their mentoring relationships. They bring expanded energy, take more informed action, and are generally more satisfied with their mentoring relationships” (Zachary, p. 162). Effective mentors know how to be quiet listeners, cautious observers, and skilled problem-solvers that are a part of the solution and not a part of the problem. Successful mentors make every effort to recognize, acknowledge, and respect the aspirations and interests of the mentee and not attempt to force their own views, values and perceptions upon them. The focused mentor accepts the mentee as an individual and makes every attempt to create an environment of trust and safety, which will allow the mentee to accomplish all he or she wishes, being limited only by the extent of his or her own desires and abilities.

A mentor is also an important component of success for the special education first-year teacher. There is great concern over the problems of attrition and shortage of special education teachers. Mentoring for beginning special educators has been related to those teachers who have chosen to remain in the special education classroom (Amos, 2005). This is especially crucial since there is such a shortage of special educators.

Amos (2005) conducted a small study of special educators in their first semester of teaching in special education classrooms throughout Kansas. The impetus of the study was concerned with defining the mentoring relationship to determine the usefulness and benefits for future special educators. The method used for this “generic qualitative mini-field study” included using a sampling of twelve first year teachers. Interviews, phone calls, emails and/or mentoring sessions helped provide information. The interviews were taped and notes were taken in other meetings. Mentors were assigned a mentee, although they were given the option to ‘change their mentors’ after the first week. The results showed that beginning special education teachers do need an experienced special education mentor who is aware of all the information, strategies, curriculum, policies, laws, and resources the mentee needs to be made aware of. The findings further explain that beginning special education teachers benefit from appropriate mentoring relationships that would decrease the rate of attrition of teachers in the special education classrooms. Because a beneficial mentoring relationship is tied to keeping these novice teachers in the field of special education, Amos (2005) explains that this will positively affect the learning of the students in the special education classroom. Amos (2005) concludes by saying that “the emotional support given by an effective mentor to a new special educator, will most likely lead to a successful teaching experience for that beginning special educator, giving that new special educator the confidence and skills to continue teaching in this field (p. 18).

Mentee Characteristics

The mentees are the second component of the mentoring relationship and need to shoulder the responsibilities that face them during the first year of teaching. Much of the

success or failure of that first year hinges on the attitude of the mentee. A mentee also needs to work on forming a positive relationship with the mentor. The mentee needs to have a strong understanding of his or her own goals and expectations and be willing to share them with the mentor. Developing a trusting relationship with the mentor will facilitate growth and understanding for both. Very importantly, just as a successful mentor is one who is willing to be a good and patient listener, a mentee also needs to listen and be willing to accept constructive advice, accept reflective feedback and attempt to implement mentor suggestions.

A mentee is also responsible to work with the mentor to find positive solutions and not view the mentor in a critical or negative manner. If the mentee does not agree with a mentor's suggestion, then he or she should discuss this with the mentor in a professional manner and respect the fact that the mentor is also a colleague. This understanding and acceptance on the part of the mentee will allow for a positive experience for both. It will also allow for growth for the mentee and mentor. It will allow for a successful sharing of perceptions, strategies and skills. It will create a strong mentoring relationship.

Mentees may need different types of guidance at different points in their development as a teacher. Both mentor and mentee must recognize the limitations of a given relationship and know when to seek persons who can offer additional knowledge and skills. "Mentees are likely to have many mentors over the course of a lifetime, based on their individual needs at a specific point in time" (Zachary, 2000, p.161).

At the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, a Beginning Teacher Assistance program was developed as a mentoring project to serve new teachers (Monsour, 2000).

In this program, the expertise of local educators and principals, from the university and the schools, was used to help train experienced teachers to mentor first-year teachers. The mentor teachers were required to have been teaching a minimum of five years. They were matched with protégés (mentees) and were considered exemplary teachers in the field. Over five years' data from exit interviews were collected and analyzed. The data consisted of qualitative interviews, surveys and workshop evaluations. The analysis helped to highlight the qualities desired by mentors. Some of those qualities were:

- Excellent teaching skills
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Excellent listening skills
- Compassionate understanding
- Ability to model teaching principles
- Ability to point out options

Successful protégés (mentees) exhibited the following characteristics:

- Ability to disclose concerns
- Willingness to trust that confidentiality will be maintained
- Ability to ask for and accept help, especially when overwhelmed (p. 54)

This program study mirrors many of the same findings in earlier studies and continues to allow for understanding of what may benefit mentors, mentees, mentor relationships, mentor programs and finally successful classrooms.

Mentoring Relationships

The character of the mentoring relationship differs depending on the commitment and willingness on the part of the mentor and the mentee. The mentoring relationship

must be based on a shared goal between the mentor and the mentee in order to be able to promote the educational and personal growth of the mentee. As this occurs and the mentee develops into a stronger, more proficient teacher, the most important stakeholders – students -- benefit. New teachers, regardless of their strength or deltas, are the teachers in the classroom with young people who need to be taught. When a mentoring relationship is successful and a mentor and mentee respect the goals and abilities of each other, the children in the classroom are able to benefit enormously. Bullough and Baughman (1997) explain this very succinctly: “Students rightfully expect instructional and content competence from their teachers, but they also expect to be greeted by a whole person, a caring person, one who knows who and what he is, who has moral standing, and who can be counted on to continue standing, face to face, with students. (p. 24)

As new teachers come into the field of education, it becomes evident, early in their career, that they need guidance and understanding. The field of education is wrought with obstacles and pitfalls for the unsupported teacher.

Many education scholars agree that the first year of teaching is exceptionally challenging (Huling-Austin, et. al., 1989; Veenan, 1984). First-year teaching experiences are powerful influences on teachers’ practice and attitude throughout the remainder of their careers (Kuzmic, 1994). Because of the importance and complexity of beginning teachers’ experiences, their socialization has received increasing attention in education research and reform during the past two decades (Huling-Austin, 1990; Kuzmic, 1994; Gratch, 1998). Darling-Hammond (1995) points out that it is essential to help the new teachers become a part of the school environment and assist them in learning strategies to cope with the isolation and stress that often cause them to leave

teaching. The role of the mentor has become an important aspect of the help and guidance system for helping new teachers successfully join the field of education. Johnson and Kardos (2002) explain: “What new teachers want is experienced colleagues who will watch them teach and provide feedback, help them develop instructional strategies, model skilled teaching, and share insights about students’ work (p. 13). The most effective mentoring relationship for the beginning teacher may begin as a transmissive relationship, in which the mentor initiates the discussions, defines the problems and helps to solve the concerns and problems of the mentee (Zuckerman, 2001).

In addition to the assistance provided by an effective mentor, the mentees need the support and understand of the school administrator who has hired them to teach. Sargent (2003) states, “To establish a supportive environment for new teachers, schools must offer teachers professional development opportunities and provide a social setting in which teachers enjoy working. Teachers who feel welcome in their new school environment form relationships that will tie them to the school for years to come,” (pg. 44). When a new teacher recognizes the camaraderie of caring and friendliness among the staff at the school in which he or she teaches, there is a perception of belonging and support. This holds true for all teachers, including those who are novices and those who are veterans.

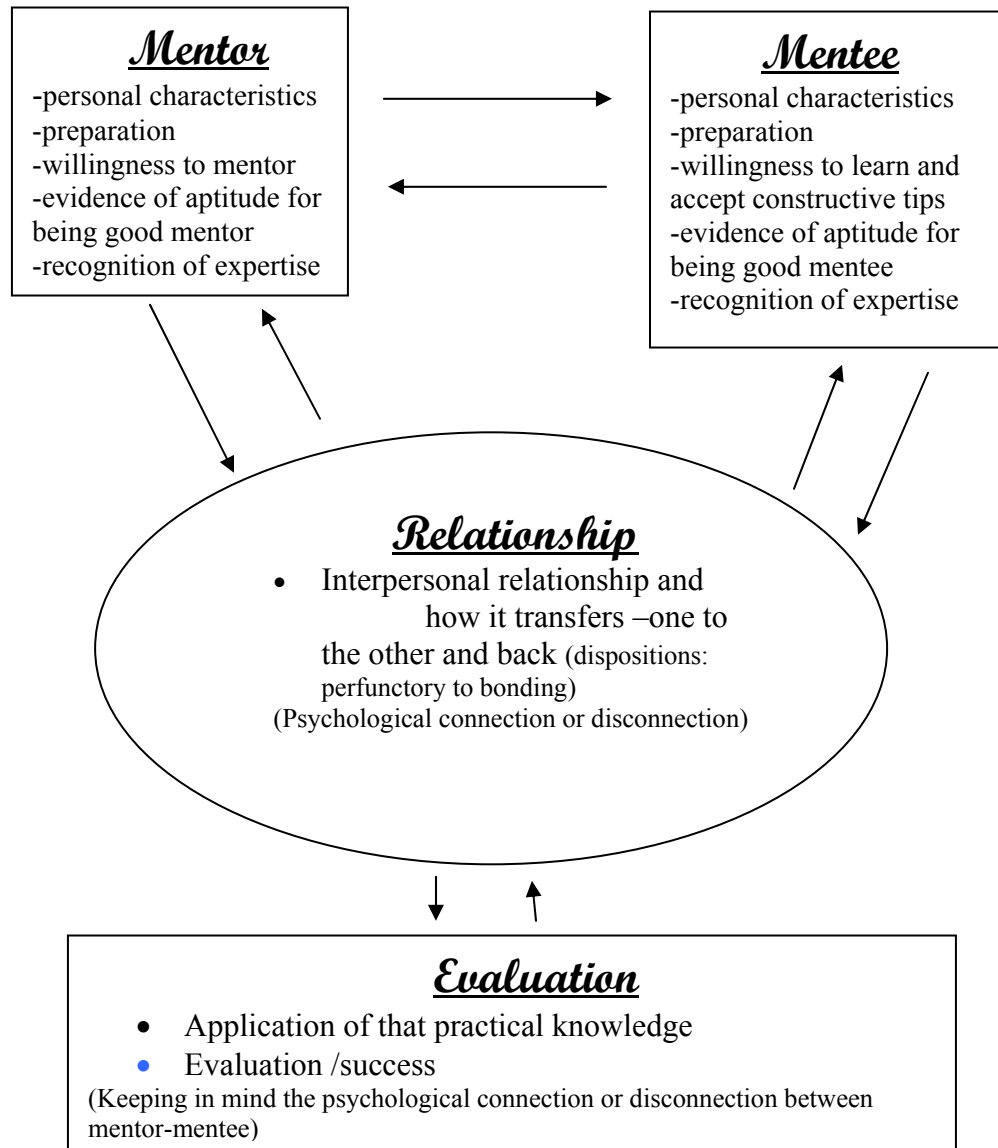
Despite the desire to form positive mentoring relationships between the mentor and mentee, there can be barriers toward the development of successful connections. In a research study conducted in four school districts, the types of concerns and problems that can become a detriment in K12 mentoring relationships were examined. In the study,

149 mentoring teams in four districts were involved in providing data, through surveys and interviews. After collection and analysis of the data, the study was able to identify common sets of problems in the mentoring teams, as well as identifying, introducing and assessing intervention strategies. The results emphasized the need to continue the assessment of mentoring programs and mentoring relationships. It was also strongly suggested that mentor selection should be more carefully considered and that in-services and workshop opportunities should be made available to mentors to help in the establishment of more successful mentor programs. It was felt that this would greatly benefit the novice teacher and the classroom (Kilburg, G. M. & Hancock, T., 2006).

Teachers are typically willing to give their fullest effort in an environment where they are valued, supported and accepted. When the school environment is welcoming to its staff, it reflects that caring to students and parents. The school becomes a place where learning thrives. The administrators of a school play an important role in this thriving environment. Evans asserts that: “Principals need to provide the same thing for teachers that good teachers give students: real challenges-goals that stretch you, but that you can reach; and real inspiration-encouragement to keep trying no matter what (1996, p. 289).

Gagen and Bowie (2005), suggest that “comprehensive training, along with the opportunity to ask questions and become more familiar with the problems and expectations involved in their role, will relieve mentors' anxiety about taking on the responsibility of mentoring the novice teacher,”(p. 42).

Figure 1: Theory of How Mentoring Impacts the Mentor



Expansion of Mentoring Programs

In the recent past, many states have directed their schools to create mentoring programs for beginning teachers (Boreen, et al. 2000). As early as the late 1980s, thirty-one states had adopted statewide mentoring and twelve more states had district level programs (Wilder, 1992). Blair/Larsen (1998) point out that state legislatures have now mandated programs as part of the teacher certification and licensure process in order to

provide excellent teachers for educating their constituents. The 2000 Florida Legislature enacted legislation to initiate the Florida Mentor Teacher School Pilot Program (Florida Department of Education–Division of Professional Educators, 2000). This program was piloted at the following Florida schools: Gardendale Elementary Magnet School, Brevard School district, Florida State University School, Leon School district, Sebastian Middle School, St. Johns School district, Palmetto Elementary School, Manatee School district, Heritage Elementary School, and Pahokee Mid/Senior High School, Palm Beach School district, and Ryder Elementary Charter School, Miami-Dade School district.

Zuckerman notes, “Formal mentoring programs for beginning inservice teachers have been proliferating rapidly since the 1980’s” (Abell, Dillon, Hopkins, McInerney & O’Brien, 1995; Furtwengler, 1995; Gold, 1996; Huffman & Leak, 1986; Little, 1990). These programs may ease the transition of the mentee during the first year of teaching. Having strong programs in place for the mentee can help alleviate difficulties and allow schools to retain potentially good teachers.

There has consistently been a call for more training for mentors and more structured mentor programs. In a study by Prater and Sileo (2004), they attest that national reports and legislation (No Child Left Behind) call for improved teacher preparation. Questions asked in the study dealt with compensation for mentors and minimum qualifications for mentor teachers. A 20-question survey was prepared, distributed, completed and returned in stamped, self-addressed envelopes. The survey was sent to every third institution of higher education listed in the National Directory of Special Education Personnel Preparation Programs (Council of Exceptional Children (CEC), 1991). Of the respondents, 11.1% said mentors do not receive any form of

compensation, while others responded that mentors receive university tuition and privileges, adjunct faculty status, recognition and appreciation and professional development activities. Those institutions that provide a stipend average about \$147 per term or semester. As for the qualifications that respondents identified the most, years of experience was selected by 99 of the 115 surveys which were returned. Approximately 47% felt mentor teachers needed a teacher license, certification or credentials in an appropriate area. There were actually 18.2% that felt mentors should have a master's degree in education. Much of the study points to the need for more structured teacher preparation programs and more research to be done to establish programs for training and mentoring. "Arthur E Wise, President of NCATE, argues that teachers are no different from other licensed professionals such as doctors, engineers, accountants, and pilots. All "require grounding in the profession's knowledge base and in how to apply it as required though extended supervised practice" (NCATE, 2002, n.p. as found in Prater & Sileo, 2004, p. 259).

Berliner (2002) concurs: "Today...hundreds of teacher education programs...have strong field-based programs...These ensure that students understand propositional and procedural knowledge (how to do things such as preparing a lesson plan) in real-world context(s)...Teaching is not a craft to be learned solely through apprenticeship. (pp. 354-5) (As found in Prater & Sileo, 2004, p. 259). Thus, it is necessary to train mentors, as well as teachers.

Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Attrition

High rates of attrition among novice teachers have been well documented in the literature (Harris and Associates, 1992, 1993; Schlechty & Vance, 1981, 1983). Nearly

30% of novice beginning teachers will leave the profession within the first 5 years of their career (Boreen, et. al., 2000). Amos (2005) reveals that “an annual attrition of 40 percent of beginning special educators leave the field of special education by their fifth year. This was reported by the Council of Exceptional Children (p.14). Mentoring programs have become a common response to this growing concern (Tellez, 1992).

According to Boreen, Johnson, Niday, and Potts (2000) much research suggests that mentoring reduces attrition by one-half or more, and teachers who have mentors are more likely to stay in the field. Likewise, Odell and Ferraro (1992) report that 96% of the elementary teachers who received mentoring were still teaching four years later. Millinger (2004) points out that: “In the 1999-2000 school years, approximately 500,000 public and private school teachers left the teaching profession, with more than 123,000 of them attributing their departure to a lack of appropriate administrative support. Nearly one-fourth of new teachers leave the profession after only two years and one-third leave after three years (Ingersoll, 2002, p. 66). Millinger further states, “Reversing this trend of new teacher attritions requires finding cost-effective ways to give teachers opportunities to grow, to learn from their mistakes, and, most important, to ask for help,” (p. 66). This points to the necessity for strong, effective mentoring programs which would support the new teacher and decrease the rising numbers of teachers who leave the education field (Millinger, 2004).

With strong support and mentor guidance, the rate of attrition can be decreased. Odell, 1992, found that the attrition rate for teachers receiving one year of mentoring was only 16 percent after four years of teaching, about half the national attrition rate. In fact, 80 percent of the teachers who had received mentoring predicted that they would still be

teaching in ten years. National attrition rates indicate that 17 percent of educators leave teaching after one year, 30 percent after two years, and 40 percent after three years, nearly half after five years, and up to 80 percent after ten years (Heyns, 1988; Huling-Austin 1986; Morey and Murphy, 1990). In fact, the National Center for Education Statistics reports that new teachers leave the education field and their classrooms at a rate five times higher than those of their more experienced colleagues (1999). It is also important to point out that not only does the field of education lose good teachers to attrition, the need to retain beginning teachers is compounded by the job market prospects. A 1996 report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future estimated that in the next ten years, half of the nation's educators would retire. This factor, combined with an expected increase in the number of students, means that by 2005, the nation's classroom needed more than two million new educators. Mentoring, thus, becomes even more vital (Boreen, et. al, 2000).

The quality of education depends upon teacher ability. To ensure that students of the future will be challenged to think and to learn, it is imperative that the educational community find a way to retain the talented teachers who are leaving the profession (Boreen, et. al., 2000).

Mentoring has become an important aspect in education. A good mentor is able to help the novice teacher in the critical first year. The mentoring process can be used to retain good teachers, before they choose to leave teaching. The astounding number of teachers who leave the profession of education, after only a few years of service, discuss the very difficult and painful first year as testimony to the struggles that beginning teachers face and therefore, speak to the tremendous need for mentor teachers

(Rosenholtz, 1989; Veenman, 1984). Perhaps beginning teachers experience difficulties because teaching is the only profession that expects its beginners to be responsible for the same work veterans perform (Lortie, 1975); moreover, beginning teachers are typically given the most difficult or undesirable teaching situations (Darling-Hammond, 1996). They are placed in classrooms with unruly students, difficult parents and many children who have difficulty learning. As accountability for student learning is placed on the shoulders of new teachers, many are unwilling to stay after the first year.

Research on Mentoring

Mentoring has been the focus of much research and discussion over the past decade. Comparisons of non-mentored and mentored individuals yield consistent results: compared to non-mentored individuals, individuals with informal mentors report greater career satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989), career commitment (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990), and career mobility (Scandura, 1992). As described earlier, teachers who are mentored are more likely to stay in the field of education. Informal protégés also report more positive job attitudes than nonmentored individuals (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Koberg, Boss, Chappell, & Ringer, 1994; Mobley, Jaret, Marsh, & Lim, 1994; Scandura, 1997).

Darling-Hammond (1996), Executive Director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future asserts, "To retain new teachers, we must do two things: design good schools in which to teach, and employ mentoring" (p.34). Mentoring has led to more confidence, greater teacher satisfaction, and expectations for longer tenure among new teachers who rated their mentors as effective (Houston, Marshal, & McDavid, 1990). For over a decade, reformers have called for induction programs with mentors to ease the transition of beginning teachers into full time teaching (Huling-

Austin, 1990). Many (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Koerner, 1992; Staton & Hunt, 1991) believe that working with an experienced teacher will help shape a beginning teacher's beliefs and practices. Most induction programs attempt to increase retention and improve the instruction of new teachers (Odell, 1986).

The significance of mentoring is becoming important to school reform, as well. Halford (1998) states that, "From classrooms to commission chambers, education leaders are recognizing the power of mentoring" (p. 34). The role of mentors has become a very important feature of teacher training.

In a study by Whitaker (2002), a statistically significant relationship between effectiveness of mentoring and first-year special education teacher plans to remain in special education was reported. Although the effect size was small, it was felt that with the large number of special educators leaving the field, the study results showed the influence on retention of these teachers was significant. Participants were first-year special education teachers. Random samples of 200 teachers were selected. First- and second-year special education teachers, mentors of special education teachers, and special education program administrators participated by responding to discussions in a focus group. Participants were divided into two groups of first-and second-year teachers, one group of seven mentors and one group of eight administrators; each was taped. The researcher developed a questionnaire based on data collected from the focus groups. Of the 200 questionnaires sent out, 134 were returned after the first mailing and 36 after the second. The data was analyzed and results reported. The overall information reported showed that mentoring is supported as a component of induction of beginning special education teachers. "The provision of emotional support and assistance with the

mechanics of the job seems to facilitate entry into the profession, improve job satisfaction and result in a slight increase in the retention in the field” (p. 557).

Mentor Selection

The mentor teacher appears to be the most crucial element in mentoring programs (Feinman-Nemser, 1992; Little, 1990; White, 1995). The process of mentor selection is considered one of the strongest determinants of perceived program effectiveness (Little, 1990; White, 1995). An analysis of the literature reveals professional characteristics of good mentors. Among those attributes are: mentor teachers should be viewed as experts by their peers, (Bird, 1986; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986), mentor teachers should be able to demonstrate the ability to be reflective and analytical regarding teaching (Borko, 1986), mentor teachers should have a desire to mentor and work with new teachers (Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986) and mentors should have a strong commitment to their own role as leaders in their teacher community (Howey & Zimpher, 1986).

Teachers become better mentors when they have 3 to 5 years of experience, are considered master teachers, have been trained to mentor, teach in the same certification area, same grade level, and same building as the new teacher, and they volunteer for the assignment (CEC, 1997; Huling-Austin, 1992; Little, 1990; Odell, 1990; White, 1995). Personal characteristics include being flexible, tolerant, involved, a good listener, nonjudgmental, realistic, caring, supportive and professional (Feinman-Nemser, 1992; Feinman-Nemser & Parker, 1993; Recruiting New Teachers, 1999). These personal characteristics and attributes allow the mentor to guide the novice teacher through the process of learning to teach.

In considering the process for selecting teachers to enter into a mentoring program, Ganser (1995) suggests that veteran teachers serve as mentors. To ensure teacher competency and practice, mentor teachers should have several years successful teaching experience, including a long affiliation with their present school and school district. A suggestion of sources of information of prospective teachers would be beneficial, including letters of nominations, and statements based on a prospective mentor's philosophies of teaching (Ganser, 1995). No teacher should be forced to act as a mentor, but volunteers should be willing to take on the position.

How Mentoring can be Used

Mentoring can be used in a number of situations to help an individual's development. One example is during the entry of an individual into an organization, commonly referred to as the organizational socialization of a new employee. McManus and Russell (1997) identify three phases of organizational socialization during which a mentor could play a useful role:

- anticipatory socialization: learning about an organization that occurs prior to becoming an employee, including information from recruitment efforts, the organization's reputation and job previews;
- encounter: becoming an employee and learning through direct experience what the organization is actually like; and
- change and acquisition: mastering important skills and roles while adjusting to the work group's values and norms. Mentoring may be one career development tool organizations use to socialize newcomers (p. XX)

A mentor is commonly described as an important friend, and someone who can guide the mentee and be responsible for watching over the mentee and their career. In a paper written to discuss findings of a review of classroom-based action research at Aga Khan University, a study was conducted involving approaches to teacher development (Halai, 2006). In this review, a mentor is defined as a “critical friend...in the mentoring interactions...that was supportive (as a friend) and yet encouraged the mentee to take a critical stance towards his or her practice (p. 710). A strong, well-trained mentor is crucial to the success of the new teacher.

Mentors who are effectively trained and have experience in the school can help with the transition into the school environment (Gagen & Bowie, 2005, p. 41). As Moir (2003) has said, "The real-life classroom presents questions that only real-life experience can answer. Mentors help provide those answers," (p. 5).

Preparation of Mentors

Mentors should be prepared to mentor. Programs to prepare mentors should commit themselves to adequate time, intensity, and focus to prepare teachers to fill this important role. The role of the mentor must be well defined to void ambiguity and unattainable expectations (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Feiman-Nemser, Parker and Zeichner, 1992; Lane & Canosa, 1995; Little, 1990). Further, the preparation needs to be sustained and should model effective theory, research and practice. Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall (1997) submit that such preparation for supervisory and coaching roles should be multifaceted, and include both formal course work and guided practical or laboratory experiences in which basic helping skills, supervision and coaching principles and knowledge of the developing adult learner are acquired.

A study conducted by Everston and Smithey (2000), discusses the effectiveness of using a research-based mentoring program to prepare mentors to support their mentees. An inquiry-based mentoring workshop, which used information and materials developed and evaluated over a ten year period, was used to help train mentors. Monthly follow-up meetings with mentors and protégés (mentees) were conducted to help the team understand teaching successes and concerns, document the goal setting of the mentor and mentee and review weekly mentoring activities. In the research, questions revolved around development of specific knowledge and skills needed to assist the new teachers and if the use of these skills results in more student learning as opposed to classrooms without mentor support. One group consisted of nine districts with 21 participating schools and the second consisted of 14 schools. There were a total of 46 mentor teachers and 46 novice teachers participating in the study. Before the beginning of the school year, all 46 protégés (mentees) attended a 3-day workshop covering effective classroom organization, establishment of classroom routines and behavior management practices. Twenty-three of the mentors participated in a 4-day workshop. The other twenty-three experienced mentors were in the comparison group and did not participate in the workshop (p. 297).

Data were collected through observation at least three times and some from four to six times. Videotapes of mentor-protégé conferences were taken. Summaries from weekly meetings and monthly goal-settings were analyzed.

Results indicated that there was no difference in the prepared versus the comparison group mentors. In analysis of the videotapes, there was significant evidence to show that the prepared mentor was better able to support their protégés (mentee). As

for the weekly summaries of mentoring activities and monthly goal-setting summaries showed that the prepared mentors used vocabulary consistent with what was learned in the mentor and protégé (mentee) workshop and that the prepared mentors elaborate more about what mentoring activities should be practiced, how they will be accomplished and what results could be expected (p. 301). This study provided evidence that preparing mentors for working with their mentees helps the mentor/mentee team be more successful and help increase skills and practices that will enable the mentees to be successful in their classrooms with the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct an effective class. The researchers felt an important finding in their study was that “the presence of a mentor is not enough; the mentor’s knowledge and skills of how to mentor are also crucial” (p. 306). This study shows that a prepared mentor can most benefit the mentee through the first-year of teaching.

Developmental Process of Mentoring

Kram outlined two basic mentoring functions: career and psychosocial. Career mentoring involves promotion and visibility, sponsorship, socialization, and coaching; psychosocial mentoring is more general in its role of friendship, affirmation, modeling, counseling, and support (Kram, 1985). Both forms of mentoring provide valuable access to power structures and an understanding of “culture in the settings or circumstances of importance to the protégés in the relationships” (Ragins 1997b; Ragins and Scandura 1994). According to Kram (1983), mentoring relationships progress through a series of “four predictable, yet not entirely distinct” developmental phases—initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition (p. 614). Each of the phases or steps allows for the mentor and mentee to participate in an effective relationship. By progressing through each of the

phases successfully, the mentor and mentee both benefit. The progression would allow the mentor to help build a positive foundation for the mentee, help promote a strong commitment to the classroom, allow the mentee to grow and be able to go from newly graduated student teacher to teacher and also help give the mentees the ability to become proficient enough to lead the classroom themselves.

In addition, while the majority of empirical research has focused on the benefits of mentoring in a dyad (one-to-one), Kaye and Jacobson (1995) propose group mentoring where one senior colleague mentors several junior protégés. This format allows protégés to benefit from the advice of a mentor as well as to exchange ideas and receive feedback from other group members (Hansman, 2003).

Through effective collaboration between mentor and mentee, a higher quality of professional development can be attained and this can affect teacher learning. Richardson & Anders (2005) suggest that “Professional development may be defined as “a purposeful educational program designed to engage teachers in developing their knowledge, skills, or habits of mind,” (p. 206).

In an article written by Nielsen, Barry, and Addison (2006), it was stated that research has shown that an effective way to help new teachers continue in their developmental growth and process was to include them in ‘highly structured induction programs’. In their article, authors cited many individuals who were proponents of these programs in order to help new teachers, ‘through mentoring, professional learning and emphasizing collaboration that is broad and focused’ (p. 14). They also stated research shows that “Common characteristics across reviews note that teachers are more apt to increase their learning and apply it in their classrooms if their professional development

experiences are long term, focused on content, and in coherence with their daily teaching lives; if they respect their current knowledge; and if they include opportunities for active learning and collaboration” (p. 22). They suggest that these findings are similar to the findings on induction research. They state, “Induction programs are essentially professional frameworks for novice teachers. As professionals, we should build bridges between these two bodies of knowledge and determine which components of a new-teacher induction program affect the ultimate goal: student achievement” (pp. 22-23).

The importance of teacher mentoring is definitely a major component in the development of new teachers, professionally and personally. The more a new teacher is helped to develop necessary skills to effectively teach, the stronger the commitment becomes to the school community and most importantly, to the students who will benefit from those skills.

Benefits of Mentoring for the Mentor

As witnessed by the abundance of literature found, it is apparent that mentoring truly benefits the mentee. There are, however, many benefits for the mentor, as well. Serving as mentor allows teachers to expand their own development of teaching strategies and enhance their own teaching styles. Banschbach (1993) suggests that through mentoring, novice teachers are able to become familiar with a variety of teachers, classrooms and schools, thus, decreasing the physical isolation that can be found in teaching. By doing this, a mentor becomes a partner in problem solving and guides new teachers to develop their own teaching style without intruding on the mentees’ often tentative drive for their own identity and independence as educators. (Feinman-Nemser & Parker, 1993, p. 699). A mentor is also seen as an agent of change, someone who is

always helping new teachers build networks and break down the isolation associated with the first year (Feinman-Nemser, 1992; Feinman-Nemser, Parker & Zeichner, 1992; Feinman-Nemser & Parker, 1993).

When helping novice teachers with the learning process, mentors continue to develop their own progression as effective teachers. Koskela (1998) gives three major areas for the role of mentor: modeling, guiding and facilitating. Each of these areas becomes a teaching and learning experience for the novice and the mentor. The mentor models correct teaching strategies, helps to guide the novice through lessons, by planning with the novice and helps to smooth the way toward a rewarding experience in teaching. It is important, therefore, to take many things into consideration when selecting teachers to mentor.

As mentors, veteran teachers can learn from their mentees about innovations in pedagogy and technology-based instructions (Thoresen, 1997). More important, however, they can also be revitalized, first by their mentees' energy and idealism and second by opportunities the relationship affords for such activities as recalling and reflecting on their own experiences as a beginning teacher (Abell et al., 1995; Benoit & Braun, 1989; Healy & Welchert, 1990). Veteran teachers can thus recover from the weariness that is such a familiar consequence of both the repetitive nature of teaching and its limited opportunities for advancement (Lortie, 1975; Thies-Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1987). Mentors also found that working with beginning teachers engaged them in reflection about their own instruction practices (Holloway, 2001).

Mentoring contributes to the development of professional expertise. It facilitates team building and cross training, and enhances job satisfaction (Peterson & Provo, 1998).

Further, as Stalker (1994) and others have suggested, mentoring holds promise for promoting structural change and more equitable opportunities in our institutions, agencies, and organizations (Cohen & Galbraith 1995; Daloz 1999; Daresh 2001). Thus, mentoring may provide significant developmental assistance to both the mentor and protégé, while benefiting a learning society as well.

Banschbach and Prenn (1993) very aptly point out that a transformation occurs in the mentor due to the experiences found in mentoring. This results in mentors becoming teacher leaders. As quoted, “Through mentoring, mentor teachers become familiar with a variety of teachers, classrooms, and schools, thereby overcoming the physical isolation that typifies teaching.” (p. 127). Because of this opportunity, many mentors play a large role in the structure and environment of their respective schools. They are given the opportunity to make a difference.

In a study conducted by Zuckerman (2001), three veteran teachers serving as mentors, were asked to respond to questions three different times over the period of one school year. The study searched to analyze how each was transformed, and for a better understanding of the collaborative mentoring relationship that was to be the context for that transformation (Zuckerman, 2001). The researcher was interested in discovering the difference in a collaborative relationship between the mentor and mentee, instead of just having the mentor explain and solve the mentee’s pedagogical problems. The three mentors' stories began to surface during a year-long, interview study of seven veteran teachers in five New Jersey secondary schools as each participated in his or her district's formal mentoring program. The purpose of the study was to understand, from the perspectives of mentors establishing such a collaborative relationship, the potential for

their own transformation (p. 19). The 40- to 50-minute interviews consisted of a series of somewhat repetitive, indirect, open-ended questions focused on the experience of being a mentor. Each interview was audio taped and the tapes transcribed. The collected data was then analyzed for evidence that the relationship had been collaborative.

Of the seven mentors interviewed, three stories demonstrated the potential in a collaborative mentoring relationship for the veteran teacher to emerge from the experience transformed. They stated they felt revitalized and realized an enhanced sense of their own professional worth. From this particular study, it can be seen that a collaborative mentoring relationship has the potential to provide the context for the revitalization of a veteran teacher.

In fact, however, none of the other four veteran teachers participating in this study established a collaborative mentoring relationship or emerged from the experience so transformed. In one of the four cases, the mentor saw his role as little more than the sharing of curricular materials and resources, never going beyond showing and telling his mentee what to do. Consequently, by the beginning of the second quarter, the relationship was virtually over.

Even with the dissatisfaction of some of the mentors involved in their experience, this intensive study of veteran secondary school teachers acting as a mentor in a formal mentoring program confirms the work of others who have found that in the very process of collaborating, mentor teachers effect not only the transformation of their mentees but their own transformation, as well (Healy & Welchert, 1990; Thompson, 1999).

Although one cannot generalize about what is typical from these few accounts, they do provide insight into the kinds of transformations that are possible and how school

administrators and mentors can promote and support such relationships (Zuckerman, 2001).

Disadvantages of Mentoring for the Mentor

On the other hand, the role of mentor may also cause stress for the individual who has undertaken the task of helping the novice teacher. Kelley (1993) submits that this may contribute to burnout in mentor teachers. Mentor teachers play a dual role in their own career: one as teacher and one as facilitator. Separate studies by Accuse, (1983); Cassese and Mayerberg, (1984); & Hunt, (1984), found that women experienced more emotional exhaustion, less ability to depersonalize situations (Dale & Weinberg, 1989), and less feeling of personal accomplishment (Caccese & Mayerberg), than men. These factors may make it difficult to retain good mentors. Solutions to these concerns can be found through collaboration and with teachers who serve as mentors and individuals who design mentoring programs.

Despite the numerous positive benefits of mentoring, tension can arise in a mentoring relationship. The most common problem in mentoring is a lack of time for collegial conversations and observations. Differences in educational philosophies can create barriers between the beginning teachers and mentor (Boreen, Johnson, Niday, and Potts, 2000).

Researchers studying the mentoring of teachers tend to encourage separating mentoring and evaluation (Bey & Holmes, 1992). Beginning teachers may well hesitate to approach their mentors with problems if they are aware that these same mentors will later evaluate their performance. Fritz (2006) reveals: “mentoring student teachers can be a rewarding experience for the mentor teacher, while at the same time one of the most

anxiety driven experiences for the student teacher,” (pg. 10). Similarly, mentors may find it difficult to be objective in evaluating beginning teachers for whom they feel empathy. Requiring mentors to evaluate creates a conflict between the involvement required for nurturing and the objectivity required for judging. Ideally, beginning teachers should be free to view their mentor as guides, thinkers, and coaches (Boreen, Johnson, Niday, & Potts, 2000).

As part of his research, Cornell (2003) conducted a study used to identify some critical perceptions as well as significant differences in perceptions of mentors functioning in a district that has had a CPDT (Centers for Professional Development and Technology) for a number of years versus those in one recently formed. It was hoped that the comparison might help determine if quality of perceptions and interactions appear to have improved over time as a natural function of the collaborative effort. An important aspect of the study of program functioning was how mentor teachers view their role and relationships with others in the joint venture. The individuals in the study consisted of mentor teachers in the seven functioning CPDT's established in collaboration between Texas A & M University-Commerce and local school districts in the north-east Texas area, including both "new" centers and those that have been functioning for a number of years.

A questionnaire involving 2 demographic questions and 13 perceptual statements was sent to every mentor in both districts. The 13 statements required a response according to a Likert-type scale. One hundred questionnaires were sent and sixty-six were returned. The results showed that the typical mentor teacher was female, had from five to twenty years' experience as an elementary teacher and was most often assigned to

an early-elementary grade. Fifty percent of the entire sample agreed that the more years of teaching experience one has, the better mentor he or she would be.

Seventy-two percent, in both districts, felt their mentor role was satisfying and fulfilling. Those who did not agree that their role was satisfying and fulfilling cited concerns with the amount of time and work required, or dissatisfaction with interns and residents 'mentees' unwillingness to contribute sufficient time and energy to classroom activities.

Of those who responded, fifty-nine percent in both districts agreed they would not hesitate to be a mentor teacher in any future field-based situations. The wording "I would not hesitate" in the question was written to help screen those who, though willing to be mentor teachers, might attach one or more conditions to their agreement to do so. Nevertheless, just a little over half indicated a willingness to be future mentors. This figure does not match that of seventy-two percent who identified their mentor role as satisfying and fulfilling. A relatively large group (20%) that fell into the "neutral" category may have had doubts about certain aspects of the program or their role in it. These, plus twenty-one percent who indicate they would not become mentors again, yields a total of forty-one percent of the current mentors who remain in the "doubtful" category as candidates for future mentor service. The study determined that mentors saw themselves as lacking in opportunities to communicate their concerns to program administration, and to be able to do so while enjoying a degree of impunity.

Much of the study data appeared to reflect a frustrated desire on the part of mentor teachers for empowerment and genuine recognition of their inputs, suggestions and concerns. They perceived themselves as a critical component in implementing the

field-based program, yet with few opportunities to contribute to its content and direction, as would a true partner in the program (Cornell, 2003). This dissatisfaction in mentoring could serve as a detriment to the mentoring process and the mentor teacher's perception of mentoring.

Summary

In the realm of teacher preparation, mentors facilitate the training of the preservice teacher. The mentor assists the preservice teacher through the developmental stages of internship and, often, helps the preservice teacher to successfully complete the first year of teaching. Much literature is available regarding the positive effect of mentoring on the individual being mentored.

In the education field, mentoring has become a necessary aspect of teacher preparation programs. A reflection on the history of formal mentoring in the United States shows mentor programs were developed during the 1980s.

In 1980; Florida's program for mentoring new teachers was the only state sponsored effort (Gibb & Welch, 1998). By the late 1980s, 31 states had adopted statewide mentoring and 12 more states had district level programs (Wilder, 1992). Blair-Larsen (1998) points out that state legislature have now mandated programs as part of the teacher certification and licensing process in order to provide excellent teachers for educating their constituents.

Along with the advantages for novice teachers in having a mentor, there are many benefits for the mentor, as well. When helping novice teachers with the learning process, mentors continue to develop their own teaching styles and allow for renewed interest in their own progression as effective teachers.

Kelley (1993) submits that mentor teachers may experience burnout. The mentor teacher plays a dual role in his/her own career: one as teacher and one as facilitator. Separate studies by Caccese, (1983), Caccese & Mayerberg, (1984), and Hunt, (1984), found that women who served as mentors experienced more emotional exhaustion, less ability to depersonalize situations (Dale & Weinberg, 1989), and less feeling of personal accomplishment (Caccese & Mayerberg, 1984) than did men. These factors may make it difficult to retain good mentors. Solutions to these concerns can be found through collaboration with other teachers who serve as mentors and individuals who design mentoring programs. Through this collaboration, each member of the team will feel ownership of the program.

Serving as mentor also allows teachers to expand their own development of teaching strategies and enhance their own teaching styles. Banschbach (1993) suggests that through mentoring, novice teachers are able to become familiar with a variety of teachers, classrooms, and schools, thus, decreasing the physical isolation that can be found in teaching.

Gagen and Bowie (2005) offer the following conclusion to give insight into the mentoring process: "Providing organized, comprehensive, mentorship training is an appropriate way for the profession to begin to address the problem of teacher retention. Successful novice teachers, backed up by effective mentors, are more likely to remain in the profession and they will become potential mentors for the new professionals who come after them," (p. 46).

The Need for Additional Research

While there is much literature which describes the effect of mentoring on the teacher being mentored, less literature is readily available to discuss the impact of mentoring on the mentor. One purpose of the present study is to address that gap in the literature. The second purpose of the study is to develop a better understanding of the mentor and mentoring process. The study will discuss how the mentoring teacher develops through the process of mentoring, how the experience might help improve the mentor in the capacity as a mentor, how the process of mentoring might help transform the mentor in a professional capacity and how the mentoring process might help the mentor improve as a classroom teacher. Figure 1 provides a hypothetical framework for how mentoring may impact mentor and the mentee.

The study includes information on mentor education and training, personal history of the mentor, experiences as a mentor and how the mentor perceives the role of mentor. The information will be analyzed to determine common themes between the mentors being interviewed. The study may lead to identification of strategies that will enable mentors to be as effective as possible when mentoring first year teachers and provide information about how to enhance mentor programs.

Chapter 3

Method

Research Participants

The participants in this study were six experienced special education teachers from a southwestern school district in Florida. As described in the paragraphs to follow, all participants had completed mentor training required by the school district in order to be able to work with a beginning teacher. The six mentors selected for this study came from various professional and cultural backgrounds. They had taught for a time period ranging from 5 to 25 years, and they had served as mentors for 2 to 15 years. All mentors selected were currently employed as elementary, special education teachers. Two of the mentors had also served as behavioral specialists for self-contained classes. Three currently taught in middle socioeconomic schools (with one being close to a high socioeconomic rating), two in low socioeconomic schools and one in a high socioeconomic school. Two of the schools in which the participants taught earned a grade of A from the state for FCAT testing, two attained a B and two scored a C. One high and one mid-socioeconomic school earned an A; one mid- and one low-socioeconomic school earned a B; while one mid- and one low-socioeconomic school scored a C grade based on the FCAT testing results. Four of the schools earned provisional Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status, while two did not.

The mentors included four females and two males, who had taught grades K through 12. All mentors were very willing to be interviewed and reflect upon the study

and offered their time to work with the researcher. The characteristics of the mentors are included in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographics for Mentors in Study
(Fictitious names used)

<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Grades Taught</i>	<i>Years Teaching</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Years Mentor</i>	<i>School SES</i>	<i>School Grade</i>	<i>School AYP</i>
1. Barbara	F	Caucasian	Pre-school 1-5	16 yrs	Clinical Ed	2 yrs	low	B	Provisional
2. Christina	F	Caucasian	Spec Ed K-12 Basic 5 th	11 yrs	Clinical Ed	3 yrs	low	C	no
3. Tino	M	Caucasian	El: 3-5 Middle 8 th	9 yrs	Clinical Ed	2 yrs	mid	B	Provisional
4. Mixael	M	Caucasian	K-6	9 yrs	Clinical Ed	3 yrs	high	A	Provisional
5. Luka	F	Caucasian	K-4	5 yrs	On-line Mentor Training	2 yrs	mid	A	Provisional
6. Sevi	F	Asian/ Native American	K-12	25 yrs	Mentor Training- Counseling Colorado	15 yrs	mid	C	no

The school district where the mentors are employed has established several mentoring programs to assist new teachers. Teachers who wish to become mentors are required to take a clinical education class in order to be prepared to work with beginning teachers. Information on the mentoring program is included in Appendix 1. Four participating mentors were trained through the clinical education course offered by the

school district, one obtained training through an on-line mentor training program, and one had received mentor training and counseling courses in Colorado. The school district also provides a mentor liaison role in each school to support all beginning teachers and any teacher who seeks help with school situations. The mentor liaison role facilitates communication with the school district and enables the school district to provide training and support to all mentors.

All newly hired teachers who are general educators, special education teachers, and alternative certification teachers are provided with mentors. The purpose of the program is to help the school district support new teachers through their novice year of service so that good teachers will be retained in their professional roles. Ultimately, the district's goal is to strengthen the abilities and knowledge of all our students.

Selection of Participants

In selecting participants for the study, the researcher chose special education mentors at the elementary school level in the school district being studied. Letters were sent to principals of schools representing several areas of the school district to request nominations of mentors who might want to participate in this study. This resulted in a list of mentors being nominated by their principals. The researcher then contacted each potential participant by sending a letter describing the study and soliciting participation.

Each potential participant was invited to participate in the study and was provided with a written and verbal explanation of the study. All participants signified their consent to participate in the study or decline participation by signing a form from the IRB, which defined what their responsibility was and how they would be safeguarded. All written information soliciting participation in the study, describing the study, and allowing for

consent or refusal to participate is included in Appendix 2. After selection of the mentors was completed, the mentors were contacted, and appointments were set for individual interviews.

Sample Size

When considering the number of participants to interview, Seidman (1998) suggests that there are two criteria for determining when a researcher has conducted enough interviews. One is selecting a sufficient number of participants "...that make up the population so that others outside the sample might have a chance to connect to the experience...." (p.47). Seidman also suggests that a researcher has interviewed enough participants when there is "...saturation of information...." (p.48). While Seidman indicates that he would "...err on the side of more rather than less...." (p.48), he suggests that when a researcher finds that the data have become redundant, and nothing new is being discovered, then this would be the time to say 'enough' (Seidman, pp. 47-48). Based on Seidman's recommendations and the researcher's experience as a mentor, six mentors were asked to participate in the study.

Qualitative Procedure

Qualitative methodology was used to collect and analyze data. Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research in the following way:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (p.15).

In meeting the purpose of the study, the researcher believes that building an understanding of the perspectives of mentors in the district being studied will help to create a ‘picture’ of what mentoring has done for them and to them. The researcher believes that there is more to the process of mentoring for each mentor than the perfunctory definitions commonly provided as to what a mentor is and does.

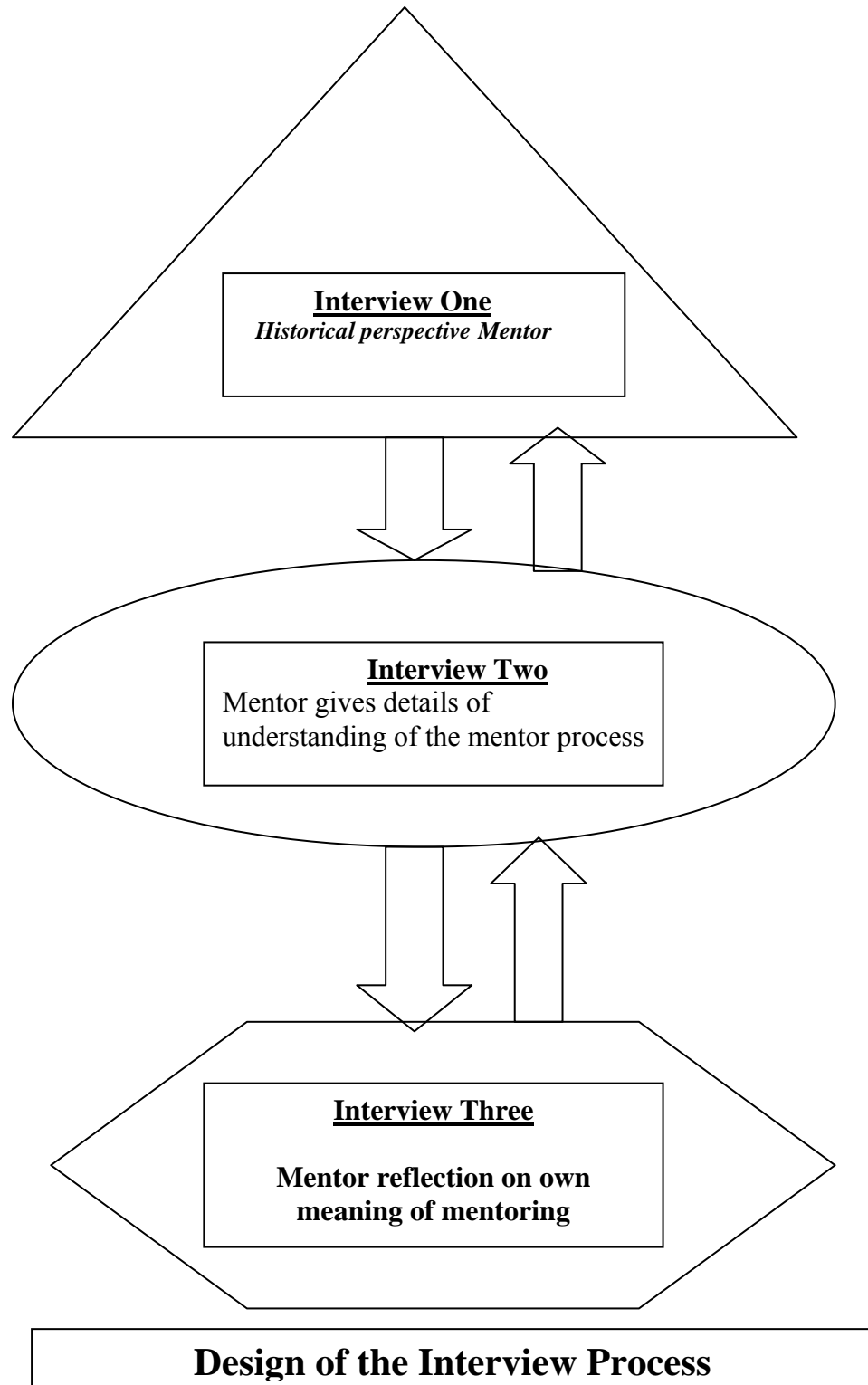
Seidman’s (1998) interview framework was used to guide the data collection in answering the research questions. Seidman states, “It is hard and sometimes draining, but I have never lost the feeling that it is a privilege to gather the stories of people through interviewing and to come to understand their experiences through their stories.” (p. xxi) Seidman points out that recounting narratives of experience has been the primary means that humans have used to make sense of their experience throughout recorded history, and he quotes Vygotsky, stating, “Every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness” (Vygotsky, 1987)” (Seidman, 1998, p. 24). He provides further insight into his assumptions about the value of the interview process in the following statement:

Interviewing provides access to the context of people’s behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of the behavior. A basic assumption for in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience.Interviewing allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to understanding their action (p. 4).

Seidman’s interview design involves a three-interview process and assists the researcher in organizing the information collected. This process is illustrated in Figure 2.

Seidman has found that separating the interviews into three meetings allows the participant and interviewer to reflect on what was discussed.

Figure 2: Design for the interview process



In the first step, Seidman advises that interview questions should be designed to help the researcher learn the actual history of the person being interviewed. This level of the process allows the researcher to build rapport with the participant and to gain an overview of the individual's experiences up to this point. The second step of the process helps to bring out the details of the individual's experiences as related to the research question, and the third step deals with the reflection of what the experience means to the interviewee. The questions for the present study were organized around these guidelines.

Seidman points out the delicate balance of understanding and reflection for the participant as well as the researcher. The researcher needed to maintain sufficient focus to guide the interviews correctly. Seidman cautions about losing the focus of the three interview process, as it is very easy to stray from the intended purpose of the interview.

Seidman recommends that each of the three interview sessions should be no more than 90 minutes long. Each session was scheduled within three days to a week of the previous interview. While Seidman recognizes that there may be some variation in the scheduling structure due to situations out of the researcher's control, he strongly recommends that the structure of the interview process be adhered to as closely as possible.

Along with the concern to follow the interview process, Seidman points out important aspects of the development of the interview questions. In his approach, the interviewer should use "primarily open-ended questions" that "build upon and explore participants' responses to the questions. The goal was to have the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under study," (Seidman, 1998, p. 33). The

interview questions for this study were designed to help the mentors describe their perceptions of the mentoring process as related to their own experiences.

In selecting Seidman's method of interviewing, two questions came to mind: "What truths or untruths would be garnered from the answers of each participant?" and "Will others answer the selected interview questions as the researcher would?"

Seidman's interview techniques will allow for discovery of the answers to these questions and allow for in-depth analysis of the perceptions of mentors and the effect of mentoring on them.

Following Seidman's recommendations, participants were asked questions from the interview list in three sessions held before or after the school day. Table 2 provides a sample of the interview schedule. The first interview aimed at understanding the mentor's personal history of mentoring. The purpose of the second interview was to ascertain specific details of their understanding of the mentoring process. In the third interview, the mentor was asked to reflect on the meaning of the mentoring process as it related to his or her own values and beliefs about the psychology of professional development. The interview process, as suggested by Seidman, is expected to be iterative, with the mentor's reflections in each session building on the previous session.

Table 2: Interview Schedule

Interview Session I	Interview Session I	Interview Session II	Interview Session II	Interview Session III	Interview Session III
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each	Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each	Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each	Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each	Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each	Approx 1-1 1/2 hrs each
Mentor 1 C.- (low) 3/3	Mentor 4 L-(mid) 3/10	Mentor 1 C. 3/8	Mentor 4 L. 3/13	Mentor 1 C. 3/11	Mentor 4 L. 3/19
Mentor 2 B. (low) 11/12	Mentor 5 M. (high) 3/7	Mentor 2 B. 2/15	Mentor 5 M. 3/13	Mentor 2 B. 2/22	Mentor 5 M. 3/19
Mentor 3 S.-(mid) 3/10	Mentor 6 T. (mid) 3/6	Mentor 3 S. 3/16	Mentor 6 T. 3/10	Mentor 3 S. 3/20	Mentor 6 T. 3/15

Interview items were drawn from several sources to address the primary and subordinate research questions. Information found in the literature on mentors, mentoring, the affects of mentoring on the mentee, and the perceptions of the work done by mentors were used as the basis for the interview questions. The list of interview questions is included in Appendix 3.

The interview questions were also based on the researcher's perceptions and understanding of mentoring and the mentoring process and the level of commitment she brings to the process. From the researcher's perspective, there are many levels of

understanding in each mentor's role as a mentor. Mentors are likely to hold different perspectives depending on the number of years a mentor has mentored, their connection to the mentoring process and the level of commitment individual mentors make to this process.

Data Analysis

Once the interviews were conducted and transcribed, common themes throughout the interviews were identified, coded, categorized and analyzed using the text analysis software, ATLAS.ti. Use of ATLAS.ti assisted in analyses of the qualitative data that could not be properly analyzed by using statistical approaches. It allowed the researcher to draw conclusions based on the themes that are found through the analyses.

In order to establish reliability of the theme identification, a second reviewer examined the transcripts to identify themes. The percent of agreement was established with a criterion of agreement at 90%. The researcher developed clear definitions and rules for coding, which are contained in Appendix 4. Then, she and another doctoral student independently coded one interview. There was 94% agreement found between the two.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to refine the interview questions and method of the study. Participants were given an explanation of the three-interview process prior to the first interview. The researcher prompted with statements that explained the focus of each interview, in order to establish a comfort level for the mentor. Seidman (1983) recommends some statements to begin the interviews but does not advocate for a scripted interview, preferring to generate questions from the participants' responses. In order to

conduct this study, prompts to begin the interviews were written to encourage initial responses from the participating mentor. The interviews were tape recorded, with permission of the mentor being interviewed, in order to capture her or his comments accurately. Based on the information gathered and the recommendations of the research supervisors, questions and methods were revised.

Data Analysis for the Pilot

Responses to the interview questions were recorded on audiocassettes by the researcher. After the interview process was completed, the tapes were transcribed and typed. The researcher, then, coded, categorized and analyzed the information found in the three interview sessions. As the mentor had the opportunity to reflect upon each consecutive set of questions, her responses revealed more information about where she felt she was in the mentoring process.

Results of the Pilot

Through the interpretation of the data collected, patterns or themes became apparent. In the pilot interview, the themes reflected many perceptions. Some of the perceptions were based on personal experience being mentored. Other themes were based on the respondent's perceptions of being a mentor. Some of the themes that emerged included:

- Mentors had a wealth of experiences.
- Mentors built a safe environment for a new teacher.
- Mentors acted in the capacity of an informal, caring relationship including emotional support.
- Mentors felt the role of mentor varies according to who is being mentored.

- Mentors felt that when mentoring became a challenge, one mentor was not enough.
- Mentors felt that often there was not enough time to meet and plan with mentee.
- Mentors felt that mentoring could be stressful if mentor was inundated with her own accountability to the classroom and the school.

The themes identified from the pilot interview are consistent with the research literature. There are positive aspects of mentoring, as well as challenges. In detailed discussions with my research supervisors, it became apparent that my interpretation of the responses to the questions reflected my own philosophy of mentoring.

Through the interview process, the researcher was able to determine which questions needed to be reworded and which were not necessary or were redundant. Based on the research supervisors' recommendations, the proposed set of interview questions were derived from the literature and from the researcher's experience.

After completion of the first pilot, questions were improved and a second pilot was completed with three additional mentors. Based on the second pilot and the recommendations of the committee, this study was limited to special education mentors at the elementary-level because of the differences in experience and the contextual influences on perceptions of the second group of pilot participants.

Limitations of the Dissertation Study

Numerous factors might have arisen that would have posed limitations to this study. One important factor was that the time required to conduct three interviews with each mentor that may have interfered with data collection. The schedule preferences of

the interviewee were considered, and the mentors selected various meeting times that fit into their own schedules. The mentors were at several different schools, in various parts of the school district. Their schedules were accommodated by the researcher; therefore, the time for scheduling was not a factor for the mentors. One of the potential mentors felt reluctant to commit to the number of interview sessions and the time factor involved in the study, and he declined participation in the study. It was important to take into consideration the wishes of the interviewee, as to the prescribed amount of time to interview (according to Seidman), without interfering with the collection of data. Each interview was conducted with sufficient time between sessions to allow the interviewee to reflect on the previous interview. Also, it was important to consider the place where an interview was conducted. While the interviewee may have selected a public/neutral place to be interviewed, it was very important to consider the quality of the interview being taped. Therefore, the researcher advised the mentor that the meeting place needed to be one where there would be no interference and that it was a quiet area in which to speak. Three interviews were conducted in the mentors' classrooms; two were conducted in a conference room of a library and one was conducted in a private office. All interviews were conducted in an area that allowed the researcher to take clear, well-understood recordings of each mentor's comments.

While the information gathered may contribute to the literature on the affects of mentoring on the mentors, the results apply only to the teachers who were interviewed in this study. With an understanding of the characteristics, age, years teaching, and self-esteem of the individuals being interviewed, the reader will have to form an opinion according to their own situation.

Another limitation taken into consideration was the researcher's own experiences as a mentor. Based on the experience in the pilot study, it became clear that the researcher needed to be sensitive to the influence of her own view of mentoring on the kinds of questions she asked and the manner in which she asked them. This was especially true when the interviewee had a view of mentoring that was different than the researcher's view. The researcher sought to address this by keeping a parallel record of her own thoughts about the interviews, and writing them in a journal log after each interview. This journal record was useful in the interpretation and discussion of the interview data.

Another source of concern in the interviewee's responses to questions was his/her professional relationship with the researcher. The interviewee may have responded in terms of what he/she thought the researcher wanted to hear. The researcher sought to address this, if it became a concern, by reassuring the interviewee that the focus of the research was on the interviewee's beliefs about mentoring and that there was no need for responding in a way that the researcher or anyone else would respond. While this would not prevent a bias in the interviewee's responses, it created a context within which the issue would have been discussed and taken into consideration in the interpretation of the data. This did not become a concern since the researcher selected individuals who were not familiar with the study or the researcher's interest in the subject.

The mentors have been in the field of Special Education as teachers from 5 to 25 years and served as mentors from 2 to 15 years. Three of the mentors had two years experience mentoring which limits the interpretation of the findings related to the developmental process of mentoring.

Chapter 4

Results

The intent of this study was to examine the effects of mentoring on the mentor. This study has been conducted to help discover the insights and perspectives of the mentors interviewed. The purpose of the study was (a) to address the gap in the literature by exploring the effects of mentoring on the mentor, and (b) to inform the mentor training process. This chapter summarizes the results and analysis of the data collected through the 3-interview study.

The research questions posed in the study were as follows:

1. In what ways do mentors undergo a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?
2. How does mentoring affect the mentor's perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?
3. How does mentoring affect the mentors' perception of their own teaching and sense of professionalism in their own classroom?
4. What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?
5. Does mentoring affect the mentor beliefs and/or values?

In order to answer the questions above, six individuals, who were currently mentors in elementary special education, were interviewed. The data were analyzed by identifying common themes from each of the three interviews with each of the six

participants. The following provides an analysis of the themes that emerged in response to each of the research questions.

1. *In what ways do mentors undergo a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?*

The mentors' responses reveal understanding of their own growth as a mentor and where they see themselves in the developmental process of mentoring. There were several areas that the mentors viewed or recognized as growth in their own role as a teacher, mentor, or colleague, which may have resulted from the process of mentoring and working with mentees. The mentors felt they benefited and learned through their interactions with their mentees. They strived to help the new teacher fit into their new school environment, they helped with strategies necessary to develop good classroom skills and they worked on helping their mentees progress as competent educators. For some mentors, mentoring has helped them realize their own strengths and has produced a sense of personal and professional empowerment. One of the mentors, Barbara, a sixteen year veteran teacher who has taught children in special education throughout her career, revealed her own understanding of development:

I see myself as very accomplished. I've been an ESE teacher for my entire career. I taught emotionally handicapped children prior to my current position, so I certainly knew what it was like and what had to be done. I would say I felt very accomplished in showing how to teach to someone else.

It was felt that mentoring helped the mentors understand their own desire to do well and help others. The desire to help new teachers acclimate to their new

environment seems to be very important to the mentors in the study. Luka, a special education teacher with 2.5 years experience as a mentor, views her progress in her desire to do more for the new teacher, and most importantly, for the students, who ultimately benefit from the growing expertise of the new teacher:

I think I realize more what else needs to be accomplished. I know that they give us the training and provide us with the ESE mentor manual to go by for setting it up. But as I find things, I make my own timeline of things like, not addressing any of the IEP needs until it arises or not addressing any of the testing until it arises; to prioritize what goes on.

Luka was not alone in her desire to help the novice teacher. The reflections of another mentor also emphasize the desire to help others.

I'd like to be a part of getting people to do it and helping them to do something more than what they do. I think there is a giant need with all the new teachers coming in. They need more help than they are getting.

The desire to help the new teacher rings through many of the comments and reflections of the mentors in this study. Christina, a mentor who has taught for 11 years and mentored for 3, explains:

I guess that whole wanting to help, you know, you don't only want to help the kids then you want to help the teachers and so I think that if anything that was probably it.

Along with his desire to help new teachers, Mixael offers his own ideas about his values and beliefs in his perspective of helping the beginning teacher:

It's probably reinforced a lot of those values about helping others the professional development of others and really it's all about helping the kids if you're helping teachers do better, then, hopefully the kids are doing better.

Mixael came from a long history of helping as an informal mentor in his years prior to becoming a teacher. He mentored many young people in his position as counselor for the YMCA. This seemed to have given him a clear sense of how he developed as a mentor. In the following comment he addresses his understanding of where he sees himself on the continuum of development as a mentor:

I think in a way, it's always going to be the beginning stages cause you're always leaning new things, new techniques. There's always new issues coming up to help you improve; but intermediate in the sense that I've learned from my mistakes. I've learned from my mistakes. I've learned from seeing how different people react to different things and from being around other mentors, too. So probably I'm in the intermediate stage and probably be there for the rest of the time because I don't think you could master it. You're always going to be like I said. Learning things and trying to come up with new things and perfect it and do a little better than last year.

Others are just coming to the realization that they have grown in their own professional development. Barbara recognized who she was and how she has grown through responding to the questions in the interview. She states,

Mentoring has made me realize how much I have learned over the past nine years and it takes so much time to learn all that and I mean whatever it is even if it's a way to not be confrontational with a parent like not be pulled into it like sit there and let them vent you know like that's something you learn with experience. No one can teach you that. You experience. I think mentoring in my life made me realize how important I could be to someone else who is just starting out.

When the mentors were asked where they saw themselves in the developmental process Luka shared that she viewed herself as being at the beginning of her own developmental continuum:

I see myself continuing on, taking more classes in more of the subject areas so I can provide more guidance.

While Luka, who has been teaching for 5 years, felt she is just at the beginning of her experiences and expertise as a mentor, Tino, who has been teaching for 9 years felt it was an ongoing process:

You learn something all the time, so you're never at the end of it.

Then, there are those mentors who feel they are in the 'twilight' of their mentoring time. Sevi, a lady of Asian and Native American culture, has been an educator for more than 25 years and a mentor for 15 years. She was very articulate in her evaluation as to where she finds herself on the developmental continuum.

Well, in my teaching, I'm on the downward swing. So, I would think it's in that area. It goes more downward. I don't think that I'm tired of

doing it. I'm always willing to help somebody to help them. It doesn't matter if I'm paid or not paid. That's not even the issue of it, you know? Other than that, I don't know. I don't think you're ever at full capacity cause I think you're always willing to learn some more. But with all my years' experience, I'm hoping that I'm higher than most people. I'm up there, you know. So I've had lots of experiences.

The mentor perceived her growth as being a part of her experiences and her desire to continue learning more, even though she felt her time to mentor was coming close to the end of her mentoring career.

While Sevi felt she had finished most of her career as a mentor, Tino shared his desire to continue to grow through mentoring:

I think it's just an ongoing process. I don't think you're ever are full capacity, because I think you're always learning.

Through mentoring and their own experiences as mentors, these individuals see themselves in a continuing role. Barbara, who has taught for 16 years, explains:

You become more professional because you have to show someone exactly how things are...by the book.

One mentor drew his feelings about his own developmental growth as a mentor from his own life experiences. Tino, who spent his youth working for the railroad, relates:

The idea of being exact in what I want comes from my jobs that I've had and I was a production manager and we worked every thing from single

family homes to high risers, I did have time for mistakes. So, when I started doing this, it was just a matter of developing the knowledge to doing the same thing. I don't want my mistakes to hurt one of these kids. So I'm very careful that way and that's how I developed my present perspective of what I'm doing. Actually it's changed; I've got some different ideas of what I want to do....

The understanding of the developmental process for this mentor has become a component of how and why he mentors. He added more to his reflections in the following comments:

So yeah, I think it has developed if nothing else then just the fact that it's just official at one point. Not that you don't want to help the other people, but I think that's more casual. You help when you can, especially if there's an issue with a kid that you're working with in your class or if there is something dealing with maybe the bigger picture..... But as a mentor-mentee situation, you have that where they know they can come to you and that you're going to go to them and check on them.

The desire to continuously help, whether as a formal or informal mentor, is evident in the reflection of this mentor.

Sevi did not feel that mentoring had been the reason for her developmental progress, but an element of it:

Yeah. I think it's almost like it's not necessarily because of the mentoring because that happens in small increments of time, but you definitely see

people coming along. You know from point A to point B. A lot of it is stuff that's incidental that you that you pick up along the way. I mean it takes experience. It takes going out and doing it and being around it and being a part of it.

Although Sevi did not feel mentoring was instrumental in her developmental process, she did feel it added to her experiences as a mentor.

The responses to the question above by the mentors interviewed had a common theme in that the mentors continuously mentioned their desire and willingness to help those mentees who are new to their school. This desire to help aided the mentee, but was beneficial to the mentor in the context of their own understanding of their individual developmental process as a mentor. Their desire and ability to help the mentee made them realize who they are as mentors and how they have grown in their own personal abilities as a mentor and as a teacher. This is best explained by the following comments shared by Christina, an 11 year veteran educator:

Through mentoring you evaluate yourself. It's part of it. You are able to look at other people and help them. Then, you take back what you learned from them, how you helped them and that can only help you be better.

While some mentors may not have a full understanding of where they are on the continuum of their developmental process, it is apparent that they recognize mentoring as a process that has aided their own growth.

2. How does mentoring affect the mentor's perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?

This question allowed mentors to address their own understanding of (a) job satisfaction, (b) their own self-worth as a mentor and (c) their commitment to the education profession. Responses to question two are organized by these three issues.

Job satisfaction is an important aspect of the mentor's school life. If there are concerns as to the environment in which the mentor teaches or if there is a concern about administrative support, this may greatly affect the ability of the mentor's effectiveness.

This is also the case in how the mentor perceives their role in the school and how they see themselves, which can determine their perception of self-worth. Is the school supportive enough to allow the mentor to feel as though they make a difference in their classroom, amongst colleagues and in the professional development of their school? Is there an understanding of their accomplishments and do they feel an important part of their school? The environment of a school plays an important role in the self-worth of a teacher. If the teacher feels welcomed and a part of the school community, the teacher may be greatly benefited. If the environment of the school is unwelcoming, this may become a hindrance in the overall success of the novice and veteran teacher.

Another important aspect of the mentor's perspective and their role at their school is how they view and handle their commitment to education and their own profession. Is there a commitment to enhance their own professional development? The investment into the school and the classroom may help the teacher continue to enhance teaching skills

and benefit the students who are the recipients of these skills. The mentor responses to this question were varied:

(a) Pertaining to job satisfaction:

Barbara, who teaches in a low socioeconomic school, felt mentoring has allowed for job satisfaction. She states:

Yes. I think that people would think that if you were a mentor, that you were somewhat accomplished in what you're doing to be asked to be mentor. I can only say I enjoy being with this young lady and helping her. But I was just as satisfied before I was mentoring.

Christina, who feels mentees need to be helped as soon as they are hired into the school, spoke of her own satisfaction in her chosen career and the effect mentoring plays on her job:

I think it helps because you are helping other people to do a good job, too. Helps make the school a better place, because if people are comfortable and know each other and feel good about the job they're doing, it makes it a nicer place to work in. If it's in your team, it helps make things run more smoothly. So I think it just...everybody's happy and I love it when everyone's happy.

Mixael views mentoring as a part of the continued desire to help his colleagues. His response points to his perspective that if everyone works together, everyone will be successful, the school will prosper and most importantly, the children will benefit the most. Below, he reveals his thoughts:

From my stand point, I think it gives you one more thing that you can feel good about. That you're helping people, which is why you're probably in the job, in the first place..., is to help kids. I think you realize after a couple of years of helping kids you also have to help other teachers and other professionals do what they're doing. You don't just survive in a box all by yourself. It's a team effort, even if you're in a self-contained class. Or people that care about the kids and you have to deal with them, too. So I think it's definitely been rewarding in a lot of ways and it keeps you motivated. It keeps you interested in the little things and keeps you on task a little more. I think on some of the more mundane things that you might let slip if you weren't mentoring somebody.

Tino, who takes a very practical view of the effects of mentoring on job satisfaction, explains:

I think to some extent there is. Like I said, some of it can be aggravating, but I think in the end, after it is done, sure. I think when you look back you think, "OK! This is a positive thing." I don't know. I don't think that much. I was pretty satisfied before, before doing it, because I like what I'm doing. I like working with these kids, especially at this level. If anything, it has a positive impact just because it makes it more fun.

Sevi also takes a practical view of job satisfaction and the effects of mentoring, as well as the frustrations that she experiences when she does not see progress in the mentee. She shares her views very succinctly:

It doesn't add to my job and it doesn't subtract from my job. It's rewarding. It's great to help other people...to help other teachers who are starting out. When I think I'm very effective, when I can be effective, I think it's very rewarding. When I feel like I've gone in circles and the persons I have mentored do not realize that I have gone in circles and I am doing the same thing over again and they're not moving forward, then, I guess this wasn't fun.... I don't try just one way I try many ways just like teaching methods if one thing doesn't work for the kids. You just keep pulling those tricks out till you go, "This is where I need to be!" Yeah, I find it really satisfying, because I feel like I know what's going on in the other classrooms around me than just my own. Sometimes I feel like, I wonder if anyone else is seeing the same thing. You don't really know until you talk it over.

Luka, who teaches children with special needs in a mid socioeconomic school, enjoys the feeling that she is an important stakeholder in her school environment and that she is viewed in a positive way. Her job satisfaction due to mentoring comes from this positive perspective. She explains:

I feel like I have more of a presence on the school campus. Not that I didn't already but it kind of gives you that...somebody is looking up to you type of thing other than the children you're with all day long with the runny noses. But I think it gives you that presence...I feel like I'm more needed to be there. Not that I ever didn't feel like I was needed to be there

but being a mentor gives you that extra. Somebody else is listening to you.

Mixael, who is working on becoming an administrator for the school district in which he works, also finds that mentoring has had a positive effect on his job satisfaction. This behavioral specialist shares his point of view in the following statement:

I think it's a positive (mentoring). I've always thought about wanting to do more, as far as being a teacher leader type of person so I think that gives me a little more satisfaction, just knowing that I'm there to help people, not just with the kids but also the adults. I'm sure I'd feel the same way, maybe even more than if I was just teaching because you're in a classroom. You tend to have less effect over the whole campus. You have just your one class, which is good in a way, but you know it probably helped me and I don't think I ever mentioned it to anybody. When I was teaching officially (in his own classroom). It was when I became a behavior specialist a second time, I began to think it would be even more rewarding then because you would have less impact on the campus. So you want to have those people (mentees) where at least, you know you have some impact on a couple of people.

Mixael is a soft spoken educator, who teaches in a high socioeconomic school. He speaks articulately about his views and the importance of helping others. He derives satisfaction from his ability to work in a position that allows him access to many of his colleagues. He reveals his views in the following:

From my stand point, I think it gives you one more thing that you can feel good about, that you're helping people. Which is why you're probably in the job in the first place; to help kids and I think you realize after a couple of years of helping kids, you also have to help other teachers and other professionals do what they're doing. You don't just survive in a box all by yourself. It's a team effort even if you're in a self-contained class. Or people that care about the kids and you have to deal with them, too. So, I think it's definitely been rewarding in a lot of ways and it keeps you motivated. It keeps you interested in the little things and keeps you on task a little more. I think on some of the more mundane things that you might let slip if you weren't mentoring somebody.

The preceding interview findings are consistent with previously mentioned research. Job satisfaction is an important component in the mentoring process. Mentoring contributes to the development of professional expertise. It facilitates team building and cross training, and enhances job satisfaction (Peterson & Provo, 1998). Further, as Stalker (1994) and others have suggested, mentoring holds promise for promoting structural change and more equitable opportunities in our institutions, agencies, and organizations (Cohen & Galbraith 1995; Daloz 1999; Daresh 2001). Thus, mentoring may provide significant developmental assistance to both the mentor and protégé, while benefiting a learning society as well.

(b) *Pertaining to self-worth as a mentor:*

While much of a mentor's role deals with enhancing the self-worth of the mentee, it is important that the mentor also experiences success in the role they play, in order to

feel as though they are perceived in a positive light. This perception of self-worth adds to their feeling of success and allows them to continue working with mentees and satisfactorily in their school environment. Many comments made by the mentors interviewed in this study relate this perception very well. Barbara, who feels it is very important to advocate for her mentees in her role as mentor, explains her perceptions:

I feel very worthwhile that someone would ask me to do it. And I think it is a compliment if someone asks you. It feels that you are that capable that you'd be able to instruct someone else. I was very flattered that they finally came and asked me, because I was really annoyed at some point that I went and did this and everybody else in creation seems to be chosen or asked to be a mentor and I wasn't. I understood logically why but I'm like 'I don't know. I could have still been a mentor, I guess to an ESE teacher, even though it wasn't the same exact thing.

Christina also feels it is important to feel as though she plays an important role:

I think it helps that because you don't always get....I mean you get that to a certain extent being a teacher, but sometimes you have to give it to yourself. People aren't always around saying, "Wow! What a good job you did!" So, if you are with another person and you see that you are really helping them, and I'm sure they thank you, whatever. It makes you feel good that you are helping someone else, because that's pretty much why you became a teacher.

During her interviews, Christina voiced many concerns about the mentor training process in the school district and had many ideas to help the school district enhance the program and to help it be even more successful.

(c) Pertaining to their commitment to the education profession:

The mentors interviewed for this study were all very committed to education and to the betterment of their schools. Their desire to help the novice teacher become a proficient teacher was evident throughout each interview session. Their commitment reached to every aspect of their lives as educators and they were proud to further their education to help enhance their abilities as mentors. They perceived this commitment as an investment to education. Barbara, who viewed her opportunity to mentor as a privilege, was very proud to reveal:

I've invested personally a lot into the education field. I have two Masters –one that I'm not even using. Compared to other things I've done, I don't think this was a huge investment. As far as continuing on with it? I think I would take more (mentees). I think you can only do one (*mentees*) though at a time. Last year, I did two (*mentees*) and it was a little rough because you're pulled in so many directions. But I see myself as continuing on, taking more classes in more of the subject areas so I can provide more guidance like if I...like this year might be the primary where we might get a new position next year. We might get a different ESE person in our community.

Luka, who is relatively new to mentoring, feels it is important to continue to take classes, therefore increasing her educational background. She believes it is necessary to

take classes and be involved in the learning environment of her school, which received an A in the FCAT testing this year. She feels the universities need to do a better job of preparing students to become teachers. She wants the university to prepare people more efficiently to come into the field. She relates her concern about the new teachers she works with and sees:

They don't know what special education is about. They come in and don't like it and they leave-they leave a big gap, too.

She feels it is important to continue in her own educational skills and emphasizes the need for teachers to continue learning for the sake of their students. Luka's affect is gentle, and calm but firm. She refers to her students as 'pumpkins' and 'my babies'. She strives to do the best she can for her mentees as well as for her students. It is easy to know where she stands:

I continue on. I'm taking two classes now and it's killing me. I've always got the need to find something else. I think there's more out there and the more I find out the more I can bridge that gap between my pumpkins and where they should be.

All the mentors interviewed spoke highly of the need to be committed to the field of education and specifically, special education. One mentor spoke of the need for accountability on the part of mentors and felt that his willingness to commit fully to the field by continuing in his education. Mixael, who is very knowledgeable as a behavioral specialist, is a mentor who works hard to stay on top of his field and watches out for his mentees and colleagues. He is willing to help all who need it. He is a gentleman and

makes sure he is meeting with mentees. If he feels he doesn't know something the mentee ask, he delves into the subject or situation until he finds the answer. He feels very responsible for his mentees-past and present and believes in the accountability necessary to be an efficient mentor. His goals for the future as an educator are to always remain a mentor and to work with students with special needs as well as with his colleagues, who teach students with special needs. Much can be seen and understood about this strong advocate for special education through the comments he shared in his interview:

I think you always want to learn more, too and if something comes up and it's new you don't just want to just kind of be the last one to find out about such a thing. You want to go out there and actively engage yourself on how to improve certain areas. I don't know if mentoring has changed it a lot. Like I said, it's kind of that desire (commitment) to do it just because you know it seemed like the right thing to do. It seems like, why wouldn't you want to help the people that are helping the kids and especially, when you are working on a team. You know, when you have kids like with autism in there, generally, going from one class to the next, you know at least the majority of the kids would go from pre-k to primary to intermediate. So, it's like you're the extended family type of thing. So it's always something I want to do. So, I think it may have helped it by not hurting it. You know what I mean? If I hadn't done that, (become a mentor) maybe I'd be less inclined to be still committed the way I am. How it's helped I think it's probably the biggest 'aha'! I just thought of

that. If nothing else, it probably keeps the fire stoked, at least a little bit, because it gives you more buy in. It gives you more something to think about, that's more helpful, and that you know is positive. They might not always know it, but I think you know that it's really helping (mentoring). So you know I don't think I'd be out of education if it wasn't (helping), but maybe it's keeping kind of the fires alive a little bit more than you think about. Yeah and it gives you more of a reason to go the extra mile and stay involved and to keep everything going in the right direction.

As each mentor spoke, during the interview process, it became evident that there was a strong sense of self-worth in the comments that they made. It became apparent to the interviewer that the mentors had selected to become a part of the study in order to give voice to their views, commitment to education and concerns about mentoring and the mentoring process. Each offered suggestions in how the school district might improve upon the training for mentors, support for the mentees and ways to help retain teachers in the schools. Even though some spoke of how difficult it can be to be a mentor, all the mentors spoke of continuing to mentor. They view mentoring to be a positive vehicle to help new teachers, but they also felt they benefited from being a mentor.

3. How does mentoring affect the mentors' perceptions of their own teaching and sense of professionalism in their own classroom?

Throughout many of the interviews, the mentors readily spoke of their desire to help the new mentees in their transition from college student in the teacher preparation classes, to the new teacher in a 'real' classroom in charge of the education of young

students. Throughout this transition process, the mentor guides, teaches, and supports the mentee, as well as serves as a sounding board. The mentor is there to help the mentee acclimate to the school environment and introduces him or her to new ideas and methods of teaching. The mentor is able to help the new teacher grow and gain practical knowledge to use in the classroom. This experience helps mentors polish their own skills and abilities.

The mentor teacher is viewed as supportive, professional and a teacher leader. He or she is expected to model and teach the mentee skills that will help enhance educational proficiency. When mentors work with the mentees and offer their expertise and constructive feedback, it is expected that the mentee will be able to incorporate this learning into the classroom. The mentors also offer the support and advocacy the mentee need to ease through their difficult transitional first year of teaching.

However, as Zachary (2000) reminds us, “Today’s mentor is hardly the all-knowing source of wisdom that dispenses knowledge, hands out truths, and protects and guards. Rather, today’s mentor is a facilitative partner in an evolving learning relationship focused on meeting mentee goals and objectives” (p.161). The successful mentor teacher is one who realizes that continuous education is necessary to help the mentors enhance their own proficiency and skills as the teacher in their own classroom. In his interview, Mixael explains his understanding of the need to continue training as an educator:

I think so. I think it makes me definitely want to keep abreast of anything that might be new or different. I mean I would like to think that I would do that anyway, but there’s always that in the back of you mind where you’re

responsible for other people. So it probably does encourage you to do some more of that.

He also finds that mentoring has allowed for an understanding of advocacy and the need to support the mentee. Mixael states:

(Mentoring) has prompted me to advocate for educational values and conditions; values and conditions of schools, education and schooling. I think it's a positive. I mean, I've always, like I said, I've always thought about wanting to do more as far as being a teacher leader type of person, so I think that gives me a little more satisfaction, just knowing that I'm there to help people, not just with the kids, but also the teaching. You get at chance to work with so many more adults that are interested in the same things as you and you get to help them.

Mixael, who began his informal mentoring as a counselor at the YMCA, feels that all teachers, parents and students need a mentor. He feels he has benefited from being a mentor and not only working with his mentee, but with colleagues, students and their parents. He reveals his view of the effect of mentoring on his own teaching and professionalism in the following passage:

I think it's made me a little bit more into the details on a day to day, as opposed to maybe coming in some days when you don't really feel like being there and you kind of just do what you've got to do, just to get through the day. Having that extra little bit kind of helps out. I think in little ways, it maybe keeps you focused on a lot of the details. Maybe not on a daily basis, but I think there are times when you stay more focused

and you stay more involved in what's going on around. Just because you know you're responsible to get that information to other people. Kind of like being a team leader or some other responsible person. Where you're not only responsible for yourself. You have to see things when you need to. If you're dealing with other people you need to talk to them in a timely fashion, because you might not get the chance again.

Some mentors felt their desire to continue adding to their own teaching skills was just a part of their own need to go on learning and to enhance their own professional repertoire. Luka, who as a younger teacher feels it is important to keep training, bases her desire to take more classes on the need to learn more. While she wasn't sure this was due to her role as a mentor, she did feel that mentoring has given her an awareness:

I'm seeking reading endorsement right now, but I don't think that's because of the mentoring. I just always am reading and always wanting to do something else. I think that the mentoring has made me more vocal towards things. I tend not to sit and observe as much. I tend to express my opinion on how I think certain things...I don't know if that's from mentoring though. It probably is but I don't know. It's hard to say.

Luka also spoke of her ability to recognize her professionalism through her role as mentor:

I think I'm more conscious of what I do in the classroom. Just little things like making sure that I am continually monitoring their progress so that they can be mainstreamed, there out there. Testing, more option, keeping track of their work a little better so that I can pull work samples easier. I

think just being organized overall, writing things down as opposed to trying to remember it all. It's a little easier.

Luka's role as mentor made her feel more accountable to her mentee: When it was just me I could kind of get by but now there's me and someone else.

On the other hand, Barbara, a veteran teacher, who feels she needs to continue to grow in her own teaching strategies, related that doing so would benefit her and her mentee:

Yes, I do, because the best way to learn something or review something is to teach it. And I would remind myself of things as I was showing her.

And it just made me feel good to be able to be there for her.

Barbara was a very reflective mentor and enjoyed discussing mentoring. She felt one of her roles was to be a sounding board for her new mentee. She feels that she is perceived as knowledgeable in her field of Special Education and feels honored to have been selected to mentor at her school. She is very serious about her role as a mentor and speaks of her responsibility toward the mentee:

Well, I think you want to make sure that you show her everything in exactly the way it's supposed to be. Cross your t's and dot your i's because you want to show her the right...how do things properly. What's expected. You become more professional because you have to show someone exactly how things are – by the book. To put terminology (on IEP)... 'the student will...and makes it measurable'. Criteria – 8 out of 10 times.

This very compassionate mentor, who was not mentored herself, as she was beginning her career, spoke often of how she tries to watch out for others who may need help. Barbara also emphasized the fact that she had become a stronger, more professional educator due to mentoring.

The best way to learn something or review something is to teach it. And I would remind myself of things as I was showing her. And it just made me feel good to be able to be there for her.

Another mentor spoke strongly about her concerns about the mentoring program in the school district and felt mentoring played a large role in the experiences of both the mentor and the mentee. Christina, who had many suggestions for the school district, spoke caringly about her mentoring role:

I think it makes you think more about your teaching so then whenever you think more about it, hopefully you'll do more. Whatever you're telling the new person, it brings it back to am I doing what I told her she should be doing? I think it may help organize me more because I have to help them do that. So then I'll do that. And you have to be able to spend time with them. I think, yeah, it makes you think about your teaching more and probably any time you do that you're better at it.

Although Christina has been teaching eleven years, she felt that mentoring expanded her teaching abilities:

I think you just think about how to do things better or if you're helping them come up with ideas or something then maybe it's an idea you could use. So I think it's mostly positive.

Christina also discussed the fact that mentoring a new teacher gave her awareness in how she may be perceived and, therefore, helped her polish her own strategies as a teacher and mentor:

I think sometimes when you...maybe when you hear other people...I know that I do that and it's not only with people I mentor but people around the school...when you hear them speak to the kids and then you think to yourself, "Oh my gosh, do I sound like that?" You know those kinds of things that you don't even realize. I think if anything, instead of just doing stuff, you think more about it. Reflect more about it and think, "Gosh, I didn't sound that way today, did I?" So if you're helping someone else to try and keep positive and deal with situations, hopefully, you are helping yourself to continue to do that, too. So if anything I think it just makes your behavior...again, you think about it. I'm telling her to do this, am I doing this? I need to keep doing this, too and not just get into a... Practice what you preach. An awareness.

Christina mentioned one way she felt mentors could expand on their mentoring and professionalism:

Organize yourself so that if you are going to do this, you have to find the time to help them because they're going to need you. So get your stuff together. Find out what they need. Whether they'll tell you or not, is not always the case. You know, they may be afraid. So find a way to figure out what they need and give them that.

Christina, a very knowledgeable and concerned advocate for mentoring explained how she felt mentoring has benefited her:

I think it showed me how many different types of... not people, but.... you know, different things that you're going to go learn about. You know that they are dealing with all these different situations that I really have never dealt with.

During each successive interview, Christina revealed that she had the chance to reflect on the previous interview and discussion. She divulged that this gave her the opportunity to reflect upon her own mentoring and its effect on her own teaching abilities and her experiences as a mentor. She viewed these experiences as positive contributions to her growth as a teacher and mentor:

I think it makes you think more about your teaching, so then whenever you think more about it, hopefully you'll do more. Whatever you're telling the new person, it brings it back to, "Am I doing what I told her she should be doing?" I think it may help organize me more because I have to help them do that. So then I'll do that. You have to be able to spend time with them. So then you can't get something done that you need to get done. I think, yeah, it makes you think about your teaching more and probably anytime you do that you're better at it. I think you just think about how to do things better or if you're helping them come up with ideas or something then maybe it's an idea you could use. So I think it's mostly positive. It's fun when you hear them come up with something to go back and use it, too. Another tool. And that's fun.

Some of the mentors did not feel mentoring was the only aspect of their teaching career that allowed them to grow in their professionalism as teachers. Sevi, who has taught for thirty years, has had many experiences in her life that she feels also added to her professionalism. She parallels her role as a military wife to her role as a mentor, since she acted as an informal mentor to many. Her understanding of her growing professionalism brings those aspects of her life to her classroom and mentoring:

I mean I try to always be professional. When you mentor you have to have just be a little bit more of the protocol you know you have to be careful. I think it's helped me see other perspectives even as experienced as I am, sometimes I still pickup on something that I go, "Wow, that's really good. I should use that!" So, you know, it helps me not to also be so closed minded. That one way is the only way you can do something. I've always been flexible because of the military and we've always had to move, so flexibility is one of those things that's a characteristic of being in the military.

When asked if mentoring had changed her behavior as a teacher, Sevi spoke on her thoughts and reflections:

Gee, I hadn't thought about that one! I think it helps me probably to be open to things. You know, I can't say it changed my behavior from a positive to a negative or a negative to a positive. Maybe in the way I've approached something could be a little bit different. Depending on if I think that would really work in my classroom, which the mentee has shown me or just because I observe them or they're sharing with me. So I

think that has helped me as a teacher. It's helped me grow because I still pick up on things and each person is different that you mentor. Hopefully, you learn from everybody.

Tino, a gentleman who teaches in a mid-socioeconomic school and has taught for nine years, also credits his professionalism to other experiences in his life, along with his teaching experiences. He is well respected by his peers and administrators and enjoys the fact that he is considered highly respected in his school. He is quick to speak his opinion and discussed the necessity for mentors in the school setting to help new teachers. In the following comments he speaks of his willingness to continue working as a mentor throughout his interview sessions. He speaks of this in the following passage:

In all honesty, probably just like...I have certain principles and philosophies on how these kids need or can learn or the hierarchy of what I think is important for them. I've done a lot of research and reading on it, so I feel like I am correct and I want to be able to let somebody else know, "Look, this is what I do and this really works. You need to do this and try it." I feel like everything I do always makes me...each year I feel like, wow, I learned something again. You never know it all, you never will and no one will. So yeah, I think. You get a different perspective from someone when you're working with them every day. You pick things up from other people that they don't even know they're passing on to you. You learn something all the time, so you're never at the end of it. If I took and intern or a mentee for the next 10 years in a row it'd be...I'd still be, I'm sure, I could do this better or I should have been doing this all this

time. There's always going to be something that you're going to pick up on. I don't care what it is. I don't care how small or major it is. So I don't know that there is...that you could place a timeline on it until maybe I retire and then I could tell you what I felt like at the end. Because I think it's just an ongoing process.

In summary, all of the mentors in this study felt they learned and continued to learn from their experiences as mentors. Some reflected upon their life experiences as well and related how these life experiences gave them a fuller perspective as to who they were as teachers and mentors. All the mentors credited their ability to work with new teachers as a benefit to their own teaching and their growth as professionals. Mentoring helped to establish each of them in their school environment as knowledgeable, professional and advocates for teaching and for new teachers. They each perceived themselves as strong teachers and well-respected by administrators and colleagues.

4. What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?

In mentoring, many things are important when working with a new teacher, some of which include building a strong, supportive, professional relationship with the mentee. This helps establish a safe and ethical environment. It allows the mentee the ability to come and ask for help and become willing to accept constructive instruction. The mentor is responsible with helping the mentee feel comfortable in the school and acts as an advocate for the mentee. The mentor introduces the mentee to their new colleagues and helps them learn where to find necessary resources that will enhance strategies learned. The mentor oversees the mentee in a non-evaluative way and works through obstacles

which may arise. This support can be essential in the retention of the new teacher. Each of the mentors in this study were asked to discuss which supports were important when mentoring a new teacher. Barbara had many ready responses and took them seriously. She felt these not only helped the mentee, but allowed her to strengthen her own mentoring strategies.

I don't have the exact words, but my goal is to effectively mentor a brand new teacher by showing her 'xyz' and including learning strategies. The only thing that I could find impeding is that there is not a time frame. If they're going to set up a mentoring program they should make a time frame. If you have a good relationship, which I do, that new teacher is going to get to vent every Thursday morning and get a little more insight and find out she's not alone I think that's so important. I think the support and just knowing that person is there and is on your side and is going to be there to listen.

Barbara voiced some concerns as to what she and many of the mentors felt the mentoring program in the school district needed to take into consideration. While they loved being mentors, they did feel that more could be done to help them help the new teacher. She very astutely spoke on those concerns:

If they (school district) really believe that mentoring serves to retain teachers, if they really believe that, then they need to provide time in order to do this (mentor). I really think they can improve on the individualism and the structure on how they set up a mentoring. I think that's one of the ways to help, but it's got to be on a regular basis, just even if it's to check

in how did things go this week. The only thing I would criticize about the program is that there is no time (to mentor). I mean, we didn't have mutual planning periods; we didn't have lunch at the same time. Actually, I had my planning period when she had her lunch, so sometimes she would bring her lunch in. But you know yourself as a teacher there are meetings every morning. It's crazy.

Barbara often spoke of the necessity to support the new teacher in order to help them through the first year and want to return the following. She felt her ability to mentor a new teacher had an impact on helping them want to stay in the teaching profession:

I think it's really a crucial step in retaining teachers. To give that them that support and remind them that Rome wasn't built in a day. Just when you think you've learned it, it's going to change anyway. You know, go with the flow. And, too, let them know that they're not alone, you know. That it's very admirable that they would choose that type of profession. It takes a special person. They need a lot of positive input, because often you question your own competency when you start something and you make a mistake.

Barbara truly believes that mentoring a new teacher is important and realizes the magnitude of the commitment she has made as a mentor. She sums up her dedication to mentoring in the following statement:

I think that mentoring in my life made me realize how important I could be to someone else who is just staring out. People seem to forget that

when you are a brand new teacher you know nothing and you just take it for granted that they know something. It's amazing the little things that they don't know and to have someone that supportive and non-judgmental there for them to work right next door and to be able to run over and say, "What do I do now?", made me feel important in her life and I was glad I could help.

While Barbara did discuss some concerns about the mentoring program and did give some suggestions for remedying them, Christina chose to take a proactive approach to the situation by preparing lists and suggestions for the school district to help new teachers travel through that difficult first year and to assist mentors in their roles as facilitators and advocates. She initially described what she felt her role was as a mentor:

Really my role is to help her with, kind of acquainting her to the school. I didn't get her until she was already at least in school about a month or more. I should have helped her in the beginning because she was lost. She was very happy to have me when I got there because she wanted someone to ask the little questions of: how the school runs, how do you do this, and about all of paperwork. A lot of it was asking if it's important, should I do this, should I know about this. My mentee was trying to help another mentee who one had just graduated college and this one had never been in school so they were both sitting in the same room together saying, "What do we do now?" So, I would talk to the other one too because it was just a matter of, "What do you need, what are you doing?" and they would just be able to ask questions of someone who

could possibly help them. We are just there for the school stuff, for the school environment and the climate, and that a lot of times can play a larger role, so I'm sure she appreciates that.

She continues with comments on what she feels mentor characteristics are:

I think you have to be open, you have to be honest, you have to be willing to do this, you know put the time in whatever they need. Different people need different amounts of time. You have to be patient.

Christina feels the school district can help the mentoring program and that it should be more accessible and continues to be focused on retaining new teachers, especially in the field of Special Education. She readily shares her ideas and plans to discuss them at the school district level. She suggests the following ideas:

I think each year we (mentors) should have an update or meeting or something. I think we should have to do a certain number of hours (inservices), I really think we should. Maybe we should do some kind of checklist, or something saying, "How is this person doing?" They (school district) should think logistically. Where you are placed is important. You have to be near them (mentee), you just have to be. I was in a very big school, my mentee' was not close by. We didn't have the same planning; we didn't have the same lunch, so you always had to get together after school. That means, this person is probably staying a lot anyway getting their stuff together, now they have to stay to get some help, you know? Support for the mentee, I think, it's like anything time. Time to give them (mentee) that you're not having to take care of your

own stuff. I think that probably one of the biggest things; you don't get a break from your stuff to go help them. I think that would be one of the biggest supports. Being near by would help. It would help you to support them. There need to be supports for mentors, such as getting together with other mentors and saying how do you do it at your school; maybe even having more meeting at our school, as mentors. You could be helping each other (mentors) if you're doing something good and that another mentee could go watch. So you're (mentors) working together more. Truthfully it would be more beneficial to do that than to pay us. The pay is divided up so much anyway, so I'd rather have it that way. I don't think anybody's doing this for money. So, if you knew that you were going to be given time, maybe they would get more people to do it (mentor) if they knew it wasn't on their own time. I think people might be more willing to take the time. That would be something you could plan for. You would know, "OK, we're going to cover this and we can take care of these things." I think that would help tremendously. I think finding a way to get together with other mentors, to see what they're doing, what you could be doing would be very beneficial. Because I think that you're put out there and then you don't talk to anyone else unless you happen to know one. So I think ways of getting together with other mentors would be a great support. Maybe a yearly meeting...not on your own time...I mean the one I went to at district was on our own time and it was really well attended, which means that it must be needed. I think they were shocked

that this many people wanted to come. Even in the summer during one of those preplanning days.

Christina also shared suggestions for other mentors, as well:

First thing, get to know your mentee as soon as possible. Make them feel welcomed. Help them...just let them know there is someone there to talk to. Just give them a face and a person to talk to. Second, find time to mentor. Organize yourself so that if you are going to do this, you have to find the time to help them because they're going to need you. So get your stuff together. And third, I guess just find out what they need. Whether they'll tell you or not is not always the case. You know, they may be afraid. So, find a way to figure out what they need and give them that. You're going to be a mentor, you are a mentor. How can we help you? I don't think anyone's ever asked me "Is there anything you need?" I don't know who I would even ask, truthfully. The school district should remember all of those things that the mentees need, so do the mentors. As a mentor, I don't know who I'd go to. Even a newsletter or something would help. Perhaps a website could be developed. You could look on the mentor website. I mean I love doing those things. I would click on that. What's new for mentors? Try this. Maybe one of those kinds of things.

While Christina had many ideas and suggestions for the school district, she also wanted to help the administration of her school become more aware of the needs of the mentee and the mentor:

If the mentors got together with the administration and came up with information to tell your mentee, “This is what’s going to be happening. So you’re going to have to help them find a way to prepare for that. I think something like that would be a big help. Really if the mentors met with the administration as a group...wouldn’t that make some sense?

During her final interview, Christina spoke of having reflected on all of her suggestions due to the questions asked and has chosen to go to the school district and ask to help out beyond her role as a mentor at her school. She has written her ideas down and will go to the school district and discuss ways to implement some of them. She felt the interviews she participated in help her decide what she could do to help enhance the mentoring programs in the school district.

Luka also spoke of what she felt mentoring should be for the mentee and also discussed supports that would benefit the mentor. She has concerns about the retention of teachers and she felt mentoring was a good tool to use to help the mentoring program.

The whole idea of mentoring somebody is to help them out, to make them successful at the job that they have. If you are not providing what they need then it should be noted somewhere. You should also look at it as a reflective piece. I’m not perfect – I make mistakes. There may be something that I missed altogether that would have been an important piece of the puzzle, and even making a check sheet: yes, it was accomplished, or no, it wasn’t and give them back the feedback. The whole idea is to keep them as a teacher so you want to build that

relationship so they want to stay at your school and not go to a different school.

Luka, who is a very strong advocate for her children with special needs, also spoke of what is necessary for a mentor to have to support the mentee:

You need an open relationship where you can either walk into the classroom or they can walk into yours and ask you a question at any time. You also need to have administration that is very supportive, as you want them (mentee) to come and observe you or you going and observing them, doing a lesson so you can provide feedback or they can pick up on some of the things that you would like them to incorporate more into their lesson plans. You also need a staff that is willing to work with new teachers and new ideas because we've had a bunch of people retire so there's bunch of new faces this year. Those are probably the biggest essentials that you need. It's kind of like molding someone to be a teacher. To get the skills that they need so that they can be successful and have success teaching the children so that they'll want to stay instead of having a high turnover rate where you're always training new people. It's better to get them in and help them be successful so they'll want to stay. The administration definitely has to be there. Because not only can you go up there to get support, like leaving your own classroom to go watch or they can leave theirs to go watch you, but you also need that in case there's something else going on. Can you go down there and observe? Do you see if this, this, and this is going on? Are things different when

you're in the room that when I'm in the room? Those types of things. Get them (administration) to sit in on a parent conference or two so that they know what is being presented to the parents or how it's being presented because that's hard when you're a first year teacher.

When Luka was asked how long a new teacher should be mentored, she had a ready response. She had previously discussed the fact that she had worked with mentees who were not ready to work without support from a mentor.

I think the relationship probably needs to last for more than a year. Even if it's not, our school district pays you to be a mentor, but I don't know that you necessarily have to have a monetary value assigned to doing it. I think, even after a year of teaching, you still need support, especially for ESE teachers. There is so much to do, especially with IEP and providing accommodations and finding those hooks to getting those kids attached to wanting to learn. I just think there are too many valuable things in an ESE classroom that you can't learn in a year. You need a little bit longer.

Many of the mentors also spoke of the location of the mentee. Most preferred that the mentee be close to the mentor, to allow for easier access. Luka supported this thinking:

I think it would be hard if she was across the campus. I wouldn't be able to get over there. Plus with only a 35 minute schedule, special schedule, by the time you get over there, you're time is gone.

Although Luka felt there were aspects of the mentoring program that needed reconsiderations, she really felt the school district was at least attempting to enhance the mentoring program.

I like the fact that we do have the mentor system. I feel that as long as it's there, we'll maintain and keep the stronger of the teachers and the ones that weren't meant to be will weed themselves out. That's what we need to do. You don't want anybody in there for too long that's going to have an impact on the children negatively. I think the mentor program is a positive thing. I don't see it as being a negative. I see it as being...I think you'll always need support.

Mixael also voiced his ideas of what good mentor characteristics encompass. He spoke of how he makes a point of being there for his mentees, the parents and, most importantly for Mixael, the students. He sees them as his first consideration.

I think you need to be very open and willing to accept that there are things you don't know. You'll have to find out if you are going to have to be the kind of person who not only initiates going and looking for opportunities to help with a person, but just being open minded as far as the kind of questions they might ask you. They might ask the same question 5 or 6 times you know over in just a little bit different way. Then, obviously they didn't really understand the answer. You have to be patient with that. You have to understand that a lot of things you might have said they were just not able to fully comprehend. A lot of times you are talking 10 minutes after school or 5 minutes before school, so it's a little bit chaotic.

It's very important to be patient, and open. Make yourself available and supportive. You definitely need to be there to just encourage the person. There are a lot of days that things are not going real well and they need to hear that it's probably a lot better than they think it is. Make sure they get their questions answered. Make sure that they have you as a back up type of deal. That's what I see it as important.

Mixael also had his preferences of placement of the mentee in conjunction to the mentor. He emphasized the need to make things most accessible for the mentee.

Well, I think the most obvious preference would be on the same team. So if it's just a primary team and you're in the same building at least, then, you know that you can go to that person. You don't have to go to someone else and hope it's the right answer. If you need an answer then it's quick and also probably eliminates a lot of maybe meeting for no reason. I still think you need to have that formal meeting, also. It'd be definitely preferential to be on the same team or at least in the same building.

Mixael made an interesting observation when he noted that the mentee could benefit from meeting with other mentees as a support system. He felt mentees would understand what each of them was experiencing and discussing issues together could help make mentees feel as though they were not alone in their concerns and questions.

I think the mentees should probably meet together, too. It might help to get a group together. This would be good and seems like a positive thing.

I think it's good for the mentees also to have to know that maybe it's a bigger process sometimes. It would be supportive.

His feelings about the school district program are positive and he appreciates the fact that the school district takes the mentor and mentee into consideration. He discusses his thoughts below:

Over all, I think it's a great theory (mentoring), you know? It's a great thing to have people who are there for the mentees and someone they could turn to, hopefully and someone who, hopefully, will help them with a lot of little issues that can be big ones, too.

When asked what supports a mentor should offer to the mentee, Sevi spoke of her experiences with her mentees, as either a formal or informal mentor:

They should be flexible. You have to be willing to try something that you may think is not going to work but you know you have to give them the opportunity to try it, cause if you don't fail at something you don't know how to pick yourself up and keep going with it I think you have to be willing to listen and not always be opinionated. Be open, be flexible. If I need to go to her (mentor) or she needs to come to me, the door is always open.

Sevi took her initial mentor training in Colorado and she spoke about the program she took to become a mentor. She spoke about some of the supports she found helpful:

I went through resolution facilitation and that was a really good class because they put us in situations where we'd have all kinds of conflicts between parents and teachers and teachers and students and

administration. That was a really good training and would be helpful here. When I did mentoring and coaching here, it was really good, but they didn't put you in situations. You had basically had to go back to your school and practice situations or try to find a situation to get into, you know, because it's just different. The resolution facilitation was really, really good.

When asked what supports she'd like to see in place for her as a mentor, Sevi answered:

Wow, I would think to have time within a day that you feel like your not rushing. You're not rushing from your classroom to that classroom, back to this classroom and that you're leaving the kids that you have to leave in a good place. I've always left my classroom to go to their classroom. For me to get coverage was easier having an instructional assistant and having another teacher in a classroom has made it easier to get from one place to another place.

Tino's understanding of the characteristics a mentor should possess sound much like the other mentors in the study. He is a serious individual and this shines through his answers. He spoke often about his idea of the mentor's role.

They need patience. A lot of patience and seriousness about what you're doing. You've got to not take it lightly. I won't judge other teachers, but I know myself that I think this is a very serious job. Bottom line. But you have to be patient. I don't think its life or death but it's extremely serious. I mean you have to be real patient with someone. Patience is the biggest

thing and seriousness. When it's really important to get serious and let it be known that this isn't something you take lightly.

I'd say be up front with whomever you're working with, first and foremost, all the time. Be patient. And make yourself a very good listener and do a lot of it. Because they say a lot of things that they don't realize they're saying and when you repeat it back to them it's like, "Oh, I didn't realize I was there. I said, "Yeah, yeah, listen to yourself."

He also speaks about the school's and administration's responsibility to the mentee:

Make sure the principals and assistant principals are with everything and these two are. So it's a support that you don't even notice, because it's just there. Well, I've got a history with the one (principal) for the last...I've been with her at three different schools. So it's something I don't really give a lot of thought about anymore. That's why I'm with her because she's...you go to anybody in this school and if it's needed, she's there to support you. So, she's terrific. Terrific. But yeah, I'd say anything you can imagine that would come under that heading, I'm sure I have it because it's always there. I've never heard...her door is always totally open. And that's important. I think that part helps. But it also helps just that you know that. You know what I mean; it just helps all the time. That just makes this even more easier. And they think...I like the way they take notice and they let the interns know that they're in the school and they let them know that they appreciate them being here. That

type of thing. I think the biggest thing is whatever school you're at that the administrator gives you 100% backing.

In summary, this question seemed to totally focus the mentors on what they would like to have in place to help the mentee and, in turn, help themselves. They were all willing to have more training and spoke of ways to make the program better, although they did feel that the school district was doing much to support the mentee and to help retain good teachers. Each of the interviewed mentors was committed to their mentee and to the school district program, even being willing to offer suggestions that would enhance the program. It was very interesting that many of the mentors didn't feel that they even needed to be paid to mentor, only be supported by the school district, the school and, most importantly, their administration. This should be taken into consideration by all counties who are attempting to establish a strong, well-received mentoring program. As the mentors explained, this would help recruit and keep good teachers from leaving. The strongest commentary that emanated from the mentors was that they wanted to help new teachers and that they desire to be supported by individuals that would most benefit the mentee.

5. Does mentoring affect the mentor beliefs and/or values?

A person's beliefs and values are truly a very personal consideration. Each person comes to have certain beliefs and values that encompass their entire thinking about all aspects of their lives, including their teaching and mentoring experiences. These beliefs and values are learned and developed through each individual's experiences in life. All teachers bring their values and beliefs with them into the classroom. Care must be taken that those beliefs and values do not overshadow the need to view

colleagues and students as individuals with their own beliefs and values. This becomes paramount between a mentor and a mentee. Therefore, beliefs and values become large considerations when mentoring. The mentor becomes an observer and support system, not an evaluator of things thought to be different than those that others may hold important. Mentors interviewed in this study had a strong understanding of the need to be cautious when working with their mentees.

Most mentors felt that their beliefs and values led them to want to help others and thus, brought them to the decision to become mentors. Christina, who truly believes in advocacy for the mentee and the need to be supportive, explains her views:

Yeah, I think so. I think you have to be an advocate; you have to know what needs to be done and being the person who's helping the ones coming in. You're the one who can speak logically and be able to say, "You know, this person needs this, or we need this". Then, try to make it better and we would try to have meetings where we would discuss what would be a good idea and how to do this. So, yeah, I think it's definitely helped me want to help people and try to advocate.

Christina, who always thought through the questions and answered reflectively during the interview process, shared more of her beliefs:

I think pretty much my beliefs and values are pretty set. However, I think they get opened up. You know, maybe I look at them more, think about them more. I don't think they change, maybe they become stronger. It confirms that you can't make someone be something they're not. You can't, it just goes to show, this is what I do believe. I believe everybody's

different, and we need to treat them differently and with respect and maybe it just makes them stronger if anything. I don't think it changes them, it makes them stronger.

Christina is empathetic toward being there for her colleagues and strives to help them whenever she can. She is awakening to her own mentoring process and is realizing she is an advocate for the field, for the teachers and for the children. She feels very strongly about the needs of the mentee and the children.

Beliefs and values, that's a hard one. Maybe it's opened my eyes to people. I think that you get to know teachers. You get to know them in a different way, you know and getting to know the people that you're helping. You probably know more about their teaching and all that kind of stuff, where you don't necessarily know that about other teachers. So maybe beliefs about how teachers should treat each other. My old mentee always felt judged, always; like she wasn't doing it right (teaching). It made me really realize that you can't do that. You can't do that to people and those people should not be doing this job if they're just, if they're not going to make you feel good. I mean to me, I think you should be boasting about what they are doing. I'm sure that they are doing as good a job as they can and to hear they are doing it wrong and to make them feel bad would be terrible. So, I think in terms of ways that they're learning, just like the kids. So, they need to be told that they are doing a good job and all those kinds of things.

While Christina was very verbal as to her concerns about the mentoring programs in the school district, Mixael was strongly connected to the accountability factor connected to mentoring. He spoke about his own beliefs and values and the care he took to keep them separate from his task of being a mentor. His consideration for his mentee, students, and colleagues is reflected in his response:

You mean do my beliefs come in on to them? I'm sure they do, especially this day and age; there are a lot of different ideas of what right for kids. Well, I do try and be open-minded. I like to think I was before (mentoring), but now I definitely do. We have to. You know, it's not always my way's the right way, which I don't think it ever really has been. You never know, it might come off that way sometimes. But, I think it's definitely more of giving people options and trying to help them talk through things and think about the pros and cons. Let them know this may a certain way, a district thing, where it's a mandate that has been handed down. This is the way you have to do this, then being clear. That this is what that is vs. there is a couple of ways to handle some things. You need to use your best judgment. You know the kids the best and giving them (mentee) that power to make the choices, too. I guess I wouldn't say they definitely haven't changed (beliefs and values). I could say they have a little bit. I've always tried to be flexible and I realize things change and you might have a certain idea about something and somebody else can do it a different way and that works too, you know?

Mixael's solutions to helping the mentee without ignoring whose own beliefs and values are mentioned in the following passage:

Well I think it's a matter of making them to feel comfortable with coming to talk to me for one thing and the other thing is just letting them know that I do know what I am talking about as far as if it is a district mandate or is it something that they can choose from. A lot of the questions do have to deal with. I am honest with them if you ask 3 or 4 different people at district office or supervisors and you might get different answers, slightly different answers and then we kind of have to figure out what we are going to do. I also want them to feel like they are secure in the decisions they are making, too. I think the impact is knowing that they have somebody to talk to. Hopefully, that's something that makes them more secure in what they are doing to. Everything about it seems to be a process that we are going through; a different process.

Mixael also spoke of the effect and impact he feels mentoring has made on him as a teacher and mentor:

Well, it's a nice way to feel like you're helping teachers officially kind of feel you're counted on, on things outside the ordinary. Which is good. I think it's rewarding. It can be frustrating on those days when you feel like you've told the person especially what needs to happen, and they're just kind of like blowing it off at the time. Then, they have to keep asking you about it or they didn't do it. It could be frustrating and then a lot of times you just you know if it's a person who's just generally trying to do

the right thing. It's just a little easier to accept. I'd say, generally, it's rewarding and it's definitely worth it. It's (mentoring) probably reinforced a lot of those values about helping others; the professional development of others. Really, it's all about helping the kids. If you're helping teachers do better, then, hopefully, the kids are doing better. I don't think they've changed (beliefs and values). I think they've been reinforced. Enhanced.

For Barbara, beliefs and values revolve around her understanding of herself and who she is as a person. She has high expectations of herself as an honest individual and brings that into her mentoring. For Barbara, her beliefs and values have been internalized from her own history.

No, I think my values are my values and because I'm mentoring does not change the way I feel about anything. I'm like seeing it from a different aspect, but it doesn't change my values, no. Honestly, I mean I am honest, and have integrity. I had those values, but I underscored them, because now you're showing someone else the right way to do things. The values were there they have just been highlighted.

She explains her perspective on what is important to offer the mentee as a mentor and what she feels she brings to a mentoring relationship.

Well. the number one thing is that you have to be sincere and love children. And if you don't have that, then, you don't belong there. I've always thought that way, but I think you get a sense of that in other people as well. I think that getting to know where someone is coming from in the

relationship is a big part of it, because they could be very disillusioned if they were expecting ABC and got DEF. You don't know everybody's individual expectation, but I imagine there are people who come into the profession and expect to be like, "Everybody sits in their seat in this perfect little classroom and everybody learns what they're supposed to." That's just not reality, especially in ESE. There are a lot of stumbling blocks, and the paperwork, well that's another story.

Barbara is very articulate in her responses and she reflects upon what is being asked and thinks about what she will say that will best match her thinking. She had suggestions for mentors and also felt that this is how she perceives her own strategies with her mentee:

Communicate that you've been there and that you will be able to get past that first year and you'll look back on it someday and realize that, yes, it was hard, but it was doable and that you got through it. Because knowing that other people feel the same way is, to me, personally a wonderful thing.

Validating the mentee and allowing them to realize that their ideas and opinions have merit was an important component of mentoring for the mentors in the study. Luka, who describes herself as being 'child-centered', makes a point of helping the mentee feel less burdened and protected:

I try not to let any of the outside burdens dictate what is going on in the classroom. We you know it's what they (mentee) need to be successful. I hope that I convey that to the people that I'm mentoring. That it's not

only to their benefit, but that it's for those children and they come first. All the other stuff that they want you to do comes after you fulfill their (students) needs.

She goes on to explain the reason why she feels professional growth in her teaching and what she believes is the most important aspect of her career.

I think I'm more conscious of what I do in the classroom, just little things, like making sure that I am continually monitoring the children's progress so that they can be mainstreamed. Keeping track of their work a little better, so that I can pull work samples easier. I think just being organized overall, writing things down as opposed to trying to remember it all. It's a little easier. My personal opinion is that I've always been student-centered first. I mean it doesn't really matter what else is going on. I never let the children know that, "Oh my God, I have to learn the new IEPs!" I still believe the children should come first and I think sometimes we tend to want to make decisions based on what we would like to do, as opposed to what the children need. And it's evident in these end-of-the-year placement issues where we are deciding based on who the teacher is going to be and I don't think that is always the right decision.

While Luka readily expounds that she feels the children should always come first, she also admits that she feels her mentoring may make a difference. In a positive manner, no matter what the mentee decides about teaching:

I kind of feel more of a pride knowing that I might be like the hook to keep them in this school or the push to get them out if I think that they are

not doing the job. Which happens. Some people come into teaching and suddenly realize that they're not really cut out for and it's not for them.

I'd rather have them find out early instead of trying to stick with it.

The mentors definitely had a very distinct understanding about how they felt. Many defended their beliefs and values, but were sure to not color the thinking of their mentee. Some reflected on how they came to have the beliefs and values they claimed as their own and realized this helped to form the person they became. Sevi credited her family for her values and felt that these life lessons follow them into their classroom. Sevi, who is part Native American, discusses her background and the lesson taught:

My father used to say that you always give back. You may not always give back money. You may not always have the money but you give of yourself and he used to help others. Christmas Day was never a holiday for us. Our Christmas Day was spent feeding the police department, the telephone company, and everybody who had to work. We would feed them. So you were always giving back something. It was a natural thing to do and so I grew up that way.

Sevi does bring some of these same values with her when she works with a mentee, but not in a way that is overbearing and judgmental. These values and beliefs are so much a part of this mentor, colleagues automatically recognize her passion:

You should always help. I try not to be opinionated. I try to be very, very careful not to have that, "I know it all!", because I never will know it all. We were raised to live a good life, you respect everybody else, and you value everybody's opinion and whatever religion they are. It's who they

are. I always think that people have choices. It's when people don't have choices that they run scared. Even in the classroom, they don't see their choices and our jobs as teachers is to help them that there's a choice as to how to handle a situation. I think it helps me to look at the world, not with blinders on but with leadership. They need to look at the big picture. There's always a big picture. I hope the way I was raised is to look was to be open minded and not be very narrow minded. However, I think I had pretty good values to begin with.

For Sevi, the perception of her own idea of beliefs and values is a simple one. She feels everyone should respect everyone's views and opinions. She explains how mentoring has helped her expand on her own feelings about beliefs and values:

I think mentoring is important. I think that it bonds people together and if it's really a good experience for people, they are willing to look down the road and say, "You know what? That person helped me! Let me help somebody else!" I think a lot of people in education tend to help each other. Mentoring to me was just an extension of what I do. There's a lot of value to it, for those who receive it and what they do with it. If they do nothing with it, then it hasn't been valuable.

Tino also viewed his professionalism and his beliefs to have been fostered in him as he grew. His mother passed away when he was nine and his father passed away while he was serving in Viet Nam. He took on the role of mentor and parent to his fourteen year old sister. For Tino, these experiences help to mold the individual he is. He explains that his beliefs and values are more than mentoring:

We do come in with certain values and beliefs and of course people say your not suppose to hand that on to someone else. I don't think it's changed anything (mentoring). What it does is it helps you review all the stuff, you know, as you get on in years, you've done a lot more in your life. We have all have forgotten a lot more than we could all hope to remember. So in the 9 years that I have been teaching, there is a lot of stuff, you know it, you just don't think about that with the hectic day and there are some things that will come around. No, I'm not sure mentoring has done that. Teaching's got me a lot more...

In summary, it was not a difficult task for the mentors to express their ideas about beliefs and values. All felt they did have very strong views and opinions as to who they were as people and as mentors. None of the mentors hesitated to verbalize their thoughts on the subject. Most importantly, however, every one of the mentors felt it was important to help the mentee grow in their own beliefs and values and to learn to express these ideas in a way that did not overwhelm or offend anyone. They know who they are because of their beliefs and values, but they stressed the importance of allowing their mentees to grow through their own beliefs and values and become successful teachers who are strong in their desire to become proficient in their field.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The literature on mentoring is rich with information relating to how much a new teacher or mentee benefits from the help and encouragement of a veteran teacher. The importance of mentoring has been discussed extensively in the research literature for many years. Mentoring has been found to be a very beneficial aspect of new teacher programs as an avenue for helping in the retention of new teachers and as a way to acknowledge and use the talents and expertise of veteran teachers. The mentor teacher has been found to be the most important element in mentoring programs throughout the United States. However, very little literature addresses the impacts of mentoring for the mentor

Mentors Interviewed

In the present study, the researcher interviewed six special education elementary school mentors in an effort to discover what, if any benefits to themselves, mentors perceive in the mentoring process. The six mentors selected for this study had been teaching from 5 to 25 years and they had been mentors between 2 and 15 years. All participating mentors currently teach in elementary schools in a county near Tampa, Florida, and all are special education teachers. Two of the mentors also serve or have served as behavioral specialists for self-contained special education classes. Three teach in middle socioeconomic schools, with one being close to a high socioeconomic rating, two in low socioeconomic schools, and one in a high socioeconomic school. Two of the

schools earned a grade of A from the state based on FCAT results, two earned a B and two earned a C. One high and one middle socioeconomic school earned the A, one mid and one low earned the B, while one middle and one low socioeconomic earned a C grade based on the FCAT testing results. Four of their schools earned a provisional Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) score, while two did not.

The mentors, who consisted of four females and two males, had taught grades K through 12th grade. Four had been trained through a Clinical Education course at the county, one had obtained training through an on-line Mentor Training program and one had received mentor training and counseling courses in Colorado. She also had some training in the county. All mentors were very willing to be interviewed and reflect on their experiences. The interview questions were derived from the literature and from the researcher's experience as a mentor.

Study

In preparation for the study, interview questions were developed and tested in a pilot. The methodology for the study was based on Seidman's work on the interview process (1998). Three interviews were conducted with each mentor on three separate occasions and the interviews were recorder and transcribed. Once the interviews were conducted and transcribed, common themes throughout the interviews were identified, coded, categorized and analyzed using the text analysis software, ATLAS.ti. This analysis enabled the researcher to identify themes that emerged during the interviews. These were matched to the original research questions.

The research questions posed in the study were:

1. In what ways do mentors undergo a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?
2. How does mentoring affect the mentor's perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?
3. How does mentoring affect the mentors' perception of their own teaching and sense of professionalism in their own classroom?
4. What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?
5. Does mentoring affect the mentors' beliefs and/or values?

In order to establish inter-rater agreement, the researcher developed clear definitions and rules for coding, which are contained in Appendix 4. Then, she and another doctoral student independently coded one interview. There was 94% agreement was found between the two.

This study was established to help address the gap in the literature on the effect mentoring has on the mentor. Since research has shown that little is known about how mentors experience the process of providing mentoring to the new teacher, interview questions were created that would help discover how mentors perceived their roles as mentors and how this information might be used to benefit the training of new and established mentors. This information could help establish potential opportunities needed to improve the conditions under which mentoring takes place. In response to the

research questions, the mentors provided their perceptions of the mentoring process and ideas about how to strengthen the program and help retain new teachers.

The main theme resulting from the interviews was that the mentors feel a need and desire to help. Mentors shared the need to increase support for the new teacher and the necessity to provide the tools to create stronger and fully supported mentor training programs. Several of the mentors had not been mentored themselves and believed that all new teachers needed to have someone who would provide a support system. Some spoke of having had problems in school, with either learning disabilities or insecurities during their own first years of teaching, while others had positive experiences as ‘informal mentors’ with children or colleagues prior to becoming teachers. For them, becoming a mentor was a natural progression toward their teaching career.

Many of the mentor characteristics discussed by the mentors interviewed are found in the mentoring literature including:

- Mentors help the mentee to survive their beginning teaching experiences;
- Mentors establish mentoring relationships that were based on dialogue and reflection;
- Mentors help build professional partnerships with their mentees
(Fairbanks, et. al., 2002);

The mentors interviewed in this study also emphasized the need to understand that mentoring is not just a formal event, but may include informal support. Many of the mentors found that informal mentoring was very satisfying and made them feel as though they were an important influence in their school environment.

The mentors were all quick to mention that they did not mentor for the monetary incentive established by the county. They reiterated time and again that their decision to work with the new mentee was based on their desire to help new teachers do well in order to help children do well in school. The mentors believed that a strong teacher would create strong students. They spoke of the need to retain special education teachers and were concerned that the number of special education teachers who leave the field very early in their careers has increased and will continue to increase if the new teacher is not supported.

The mentors expressed the view that mentors should exhibit the ability to communicate, be nonjudgmental and diplomatic, and be aware of the differences among personalities. According to the mentors, being knowledgeable with subject matter, understanding individual differences, and being willing to share new ideas with the mentee, were important parts of mentoring new teachers. They also expressed that it was important to be well-versed in different teaching strategies to help new teachers with the actual teaching process. The mentors held honesty, truthfulness, and the ability to know when to step back, as valuable tools for creating a workable relationship with the mentee. While the mentors had expectations for the mentees, they also felt strongly about being advocates for them. Building a strong working relationship with the mentee was considered to be essential to the success of their mentoring process.

Throughout the interviews, the mentors discussed mentee characteristics and how these characteristics could enhance the mentoring relationship. Mentors stated that it was important for the mentee to be willing to accept constructive comments from the mentor and to be willing to attempt to implement what the mentor had suggested. They spoke of

the lack of mentor and mentee time to meet and plan together. They indicated that the new teacher was often either unable or unwilling to meet before or after school hours. The problem of time to meet was mentioned often, and the mentors pointed out that the county program needed to help find a solution. This concern was also found to be a large problem with mentoring programs described in the literature.

The mentors interviewed expressed the view that the training they had received to become mentors was sufficient to begin with but lacked important components. They believed that more training should occur beyond the beginning of the mentoring process. They thought more time to plan with the mentee was vital and that all mentors should have the opportunity to meet with other mentors. This would allow them to discuss mentee concerns and to share effective strategies for working with the mentee. Mentors suggested that a checklist of requirements would help the mentor become accountable for their responsibilities with the mentee. They recommended that some sort of evaluative instrument be created that could help define specific goals and rules when working with the mentee.

As the interviews progressed, the mentors became more willing to voice their concerns for the training of mentors and the monitoring of the mentoring process. Many suggested that more administrative support and faculty was needed to aid in retaining new teachers and making them feel part of the school. Such efforts by administrators could create a safe environment for the mentee and promote their success.

When the mentors spoke of their own beliefs and values and how these were influenced or impacted by mentoring, they expressed the view that their beliefs and values were not totally changed, but they were enhanced. They spoke of being more

cautious and detailed in their own teaching habits. For the mentors, mentoring was an ‘extension’ of who they are as teachers and people. The mentors stated that they learned along with the mentee every time they worked together. Their satisfaction came from seeing the progress of the mentee and the success in their classrooms.

Proximity was an important factor in the mentoring process according to the mentors interviewed. Being at the same school and possibly on the same team was the most operative situation for working with the mentee. This would make it easier to observe and assist the mentee when they needed it and not after the fact, when the mentor and mentee could find time to meet. Many of their experiences were different and they continued to be willing to work through any obstacles in meeting. Time was the biggest concern, since there was never enough time to plan or meet.

By discussing the impact of mentoring on the mentor, the mentors interviewed spoke of ways to identify the benefits of serving as a mentor and to help mentors understand and reflect on the process. The mentors did have a strong understanding in the process of mentoring for themselves and how they might impact the mentee with whom they might be working. They were reflective in their understanding of the mentoring process and made attempts to search for ways to best meet the needs of a mentee. They spoke of their reasons for choosing to become mentors and their desire to do the best they could to build upon their own knowledge base of teaching in order to benefit novice teachers, school systems, and, most importantly, the education of students.

Throughout the interviewing process, it was found that the selected mentors were committed to the field of special education. They spoke of the need for professionalism in their chosen career and the need to help create a strong, well-supported environment

for the new teacher. The mentors spoke often of their desire to encourage the administrators of each individual school and the mentoring program in county to also help the new teachers feel safe and supported in their new school.

On the whole, mentors found mentoring a very rewarding endeavor and planned on continuing to mentor. They also mentioned that the monetary incentive was not a factor for them to continuing to mentor. They spoke of their own professional satisfaction and believed that mentoring was enhanced by mentoring, but that many of them expanded their education because they experienced the need and desire to ‘do more’ and the need to seek out new. One mentor expressed a desire to build on her own professional education: “Yeah! Mentoring has helped me want more, but I think so because I am not satisfied with just knowing. There’s always something out there that I don’t know about, so it always leads to something else”. Others spoke of always having been satisfied teaching because they liked working with ‘the kids’. For this mentor, personal satisfaction was already in place. He states, “If anything, it has a positive impact just because it makes it more fun. When you have a good mentee... it makes it easy”.

Many mentors took great pride in mentoring and believed they might be ‘the hook’ to help retain a good teacher. Also, some spoke of increasing the time to mentor the new teacher should go beyond the first year, even if ‘there were not a monetary value assigned to being a mentor’. Some believed mentoring made them better teachers and found the process rewarding. They agreed that mentoring was time consuming, but also purposeful. Several of the mentors expressed the belief that mentoring had given them

purpose and an understanding of how powerful the mentoring process was for them. The responses of the mentors continuously came back to their desire to help.

Implications of the study show that there is satisfaction and many benefits for the mentor due to the mentoring process. The responses to the questions asked throughout the three interviews showed that these mentors responded very similarly.

One of the essential questions in the study was if the mentors believed that they experienced a discernable developmental process through mentoring. Their perceptions of the process and whether it existed for them was sometime unclear. When asked about their own experience of the process, and where the mentors saw themselves on this continuum, they were not always aware of where they were. Some expressed they were just at the beginning, while other saw themselves at the ending phase of their 'journey'. Through the interviews and the discussions stimulated by the questions, the mentors were often able to recognize that they had progressed through their years of mentoring. Much of this understanding revolved around the number of years the mentor had taught and mentored. The more years a mentor had taught and mentored, the more recognition of a developmental process was mentioned.

Mullen, (2000) relates the experiences of several mentors involved in a co-mentoring partnership that parallel the findings of this study. Mullen discusses the fact that the mentors had an understanding of their own goals, concepts of their projects, and how they worked to develop them, much as the mentors in this study came to an understanding of their own development as mentors. Mullen points out, "Participants said they are continuing to learn about mentoring, synergy, and support groups. They noted they are learning from others, their lives have become enhanced, and they feel

more comfortable mentoring others. They indicated a need for mentoring relationships and values that support collaborating for a common goal. One teacher responded:

Working on this project has increased my awareness of mentorship and deepened my understanding of the importance of the process. I have always liked working with others and using them as sounding boards for my ideas, but I did not realize how much I "drew" from others." In the same respect, many mentors in this study spoke strongly of their experiences as mentors and how they have learned and benefited from being mentors.

Researcher's Perceptions

As a veteran teacher for twenty-six years and a formal mentor of nearly twenty years, the researcher believes very strongly in the necessity to assist the new teacher. Acting as an advocate for new teachers and colleagues helped the researcher develop as an educator and realize the benefits to be found in mentoring. This study was conducted to understand how other mentors experience the process. The interview questions were informed by her experiences as a mentor.

The researcher discovered more than anticipated from the responses of the mentors in the study. Not only were their answers closely connected to the perceptions and beliefs of the researcher, but they mentioned benefits due to mentoring that the researcher had not recognized. The mentors listed many of the same characteristics of a successful mentor written in the literature. Their answers showed their proactive attitude in helping to make the mentoring process even more successful in their county.

One of the most exciting aspects of the conversations with the mentors came in the form of their gratitude in being asked to be a part of this study. All were willing to participate and felt they had much to share about their experiences with mentoring. They

related the fact that no one had ever asked their opinion or asked them to reflect on their own perceptions of mentoring. The most beneficial aspects of their interviews were the comments and recommendations they wished to share with the county. They believed their suggestions could benefit the mentoring program in their county. Two mentors interviewed were committed to planning meetings with the director of mentors in the county. They planned on taking their suggestions to the director and to volunteer their help in the implementation of their ideas. One of the suggestions was to design a website that would help connect all mentors and mentees to each other and enable them to ask questions, make suggestions and offer teaching and mentoring strategies. The researcher believes their proactive attitude will be beneficial to the mentoring program in the county. During this study, it became evident to the researcher that the comments of the mentors showed a strong commitment to mentoring and a strong desire to help the mentoring process grow and improve in the county.

In the perceptions of the researcher the mentors came into the interviews with different reasons for agreeing to be a part of this study, but with one goal. They all wanted to voice their concerns for novice teachers and the mentoring program in general. The mentors gave many sound suggestions as to how to help the county improve its mentoring program. Some of their suggestions included:

- Create a web page where mentors could connect with one another and share things that worked, as well as concerns with the mentoring process;
- Continue training and taking refresher courses on mentoring;
- Reduce the amount of paperwork required, especially for the Special Education teacher;

- Create more accountability in the mentoring process for the mentor and the mentee;
- Allow the mentee to give suggestions to help evaluate the partnership;
- Keep mentor and mentee in close proximity;
- Focus more attention on matching of mentor and mentee
- Set clear and concise goals and expectations for mentors and mentees.

Recommendations

- Future studies of the impact of mentoring on the mentor should include mentors in middle and high schools.
- The recommendations of the mentors in this study should be considered by other counties to help improve the effectiveness of their mentoring programs.
- Additional training for mentors is needed.
- The mentoring process could be established in preservice teacher education programs to help beginning teachers adjust more readily to the transition from student to novice teacher.
- More research is needed to understand how mentoring can be used to help retain teachers in special education.
- Studies of the veteran teachers could be useful in understanding who should mentor novice teachers. Current research discusses the need to be selective when matching a new teacher with a mentor. Literature on mentoring suggests that retired teachers could benefit the new teacher and

be able to spend more time in assisting the mentee through the first year of teaching.

- Most importantly, mentors should be supported in their position as mentors by the county in which they teach, as well as by the administration in the school in which they teach.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to help determine the effects of mentoring on the mentor. There was a clear indication that those interviewed did believe their lives have been affected by their work as mentors. Many spoke of their own beliefs and values being enhanced through the mentoring process. The mentors were motivated to help new teachers. They found mentoring to be a satisfying part of their own careers and many chose to increase their own professional education. They found mentoring to be rewarding and stated they would mentor even if they were not paid to do so. Many went into mentoring because of their own background, as some stated they were “raised to be care givers” and to help when needed. The mentors interviewed were strong advocates for their mentees, and more importantly, for the children in their classes. They stated that mentoring made them more involved and effective teachers in their own classroom. The mentors perceived themselves as important in their school environment due to their roles as mentors and a few mentors even wanted to stay with their mentees after the first year of mentoring. The mentors spoke of taking pride in knowing that they could help a novice teacher want to stay in the field of special education, therefore, helping to retain good teachers. For these six mentors, mentoring was important and helped define them as good teachers, good mentors, and strong advocates. A few of the mentors felt that

mentoring was a journey for them and they believed that they too developed as teachers and as mentors. Through the responses of these six mentors, the study concludes that mentoring does indeed affect the mentor. For these six mentors the effect is clearly perceived as positive and beneficial.

Mentoring programs should attempt to establish strong mentor relationships between mentors and mentees. Through the establishment of strong mentoring programs, counties and schools will be able to positively affect the lives of many novice teachers, many veteran teachers and more importantly, the lives of many students who would benefit from having the best teacher in their classroom.

This study revealed feelings of self-worth in the mentors. Many said that having someone ask their opinion on this subject gave them a voice in an arena they had not been given before. They expressed their desire to be a part of the study because they wanted to make the mentoring program in the county better. They wanted to participate because no one had ever asked their opinion on such matters before and they wanted to help new teachers and mentors benefit from their experiences as mentors. While every mentor and mentee relationship is different, many of the mentors interviewed for this study expressed the belief that what they had to say was important and could help establish a stronger desire help the novice teacher.

The perceptions of the researcher strongly match those of the mentors in this study. It was obvious that these mentors were committed mentoring and could be strong advocates for their county. The caliber of the mentors in the study is evident through their responses and commitment to mentoring. They could be a strong foundation of mentors to build upon. The perceptions of the researcher are that these mentors should be

given a voice and guided to become proactive in the mentoring program to help establish guidelines and assessment to be used with mentors. Their expertise, commitment and desire to help new teachers could be used to enhance the mentoring programs in the county.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Local County Schools' Mentoring Program

The mentors will be teachers in Possible County with a range of teaching and mentoring experiences. There are approximately 1950 mentors in Possible County. Mentors will be asked a series of questions from the interview list in three sessions. The first interview will aim at understanding the mentor's personal history of mentoring. The purpose of the second interview is to ascertain specific details of their understanding of the mentor process. In the third interview, the mentor will be asked to reflect on the meaning of the mentoring process as it relates to their own values and beliefs about the psychology of professional development. The interview process, as suggested by Seidman, is expected to be iterative with the mentor's reflections in each session, building on the previous session.

The mentors will have all gone through mentor training, in order to be able to work with a beginning teacher in Possible County. Possible County has established many mentoring programs to assist new teachers and recently has begun a program that will have selected mentors acting as liaisons between the schools and the county, in order to provide support for the new teachers and mentors. Teachers are required to take a Clinical Education class in order to be properly prepared to work with beginning teachers. In Possible County, there are state-trained teachers who mentor those individuals who are coming in from other fields of study. They are alternative teachers and the mentors who work with them are required to have special training to work with them. Possible also requires all mentors in the county to complete a mentor add on course.

Appendix 1: (Continued)

Programs offers for mentors also includes a volunteer mentor training that helps increase mentoring skills and also help in working with non-education majors. The programs offered include overview of teaching and learning, Possible's curriculum and support and classroom management. The program offering information on classroom management is called Go TAGS, "Getting Off to a Good Start: The First Three Days of School!!" With the support from the county and administrators of all schools, Possible County mentor programs feel that all schools, mentors, teachers and students will benefit from this supportive environment. It is hoped that this will allow for preparation and retention of teachers. Last year, there were 800-900 new hires in Possible County. Some of these new teachers hired were re-appointments from the previous year. In Florida, 45-47% of new teachers leave within the first five years they are hired, 33% leave in the first three years. This pattern is seen in Possible, as well. One alternative certification program in Possible, in its third year, offers support for non-education teachers. Through this program, the statistics showed 85% retention of the teachers who participated. Those who left teaching did so because of transfer, maternity leave or moving away from the area. Such programs can help this county build a strong foundation of teachers and mentors.

The mentors who work with these non-alternative teachers through a competency-based program are national board certified teachers. They, along with the site-based and district-based mentors, help the new teachers adjust to all aspects of teaching and school dynamics.

Appendix 1: (Continued)

The policy for new teachers in Possible is that all new hires get district support. “All new teachers will receive district and school support and will participate in district and school induction activities. Teachers in their first year of teaching receive mentor support. Teachers required to demonstrate mastery of competencies receive building-level administrator support.” (Possible County Induction Program Sequence of Events) If an administrator feels a teacher needs support, they can ask the district to allow this teacher to receive a mentor.

The county also conducted a pilot with St. Petersburg College that provided mentors with leave time to work on clinical supervision to help them improve their skills for working with new teachers. A mentor liaison role was established in each school to support all beginning teachers and any teacher who seeks help with school situations. The program also facilitates communication with the county and enables the county to provide training and support to all mentors. Basic educators, special education teachers, and alternative certification teachers are also provided with mentors. The purpose of the program is to help the county retain good teachers and therefore strengthen the abilities and knowledge of all students.

While Possible County offers a good deal of support to mentees and mentors in its schools, the biggest concern which faces them is the accountability factor. It is the goal of the county to assure that mentoring is more equitable for all teachers/mentees. It is hoped that the programs will become more structured, with stronger expectations so that all mentors and mentees receive the appropriate level of mentoring and instruction. It is

Appendix 1: (Continued)

hoped that the information garnered from this study, will the county in its endeavor to establish well-planned and equitable mentoring programs.

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Statement

The Possible County Public Schools strongly support the mentoring process and programs for mentors in the county. Many programs and pilots have been established to help support the mentee in many aspects of their induction into the school setting. Mentors play a large part in this induction. To learn more about how the mentor feels about their role as mentors, several exemplary teachers have been selected to participate in several interview sessions that will help the researcher understand the mentor's progress through the mentoring process. The project you are being asked to participate in will reflect on "The Effects of Mentoring on the Mentor".

The purpose of this project is to understand how mentors are affected by mentoring novice teachers. The research holds the potential for improving training for mentors, helping you reflect on and improve your own mentoring, and for development of data-driven approaches to recruiting teachers to become mentors.

If you choose to participate in the project, you will participate in the three interview sessions, each of which will last approximately 90 minutes. One session will cover the historical facts of your own mentoring. The second session will establish details about your perception and understanding of the mentoring process and the third session will reflect on your meaning of mentoring and how it has affected you as a teacher and individual.

The researcher will record each interview session by audiotape so as to not lose valuable information by forgetting content. The recording will be transcribed by the researcher. Written transcripts of the interview may be reviewed by members of the

Appendix 2: (Continued)

researcher's doctoral committee at the University of South Florida; however, no information that might be used to identify any individual will be included in the transcript. There are no known risks to participating in this research.

You are free to choose to participate in the study or not participate in the study. By giving your written consent to participate in this interview process, you are consenting (a) to be interviewed, (b) to provide relevant information on your mentoring experiences and (c) to judge the credibility of the project's findings and outcomes.

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. Authorized research personnel, employees of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the USF Institutional Review Board may inspect the records from this research project. The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from you will be combined from data from others in the publication. Names of participating individuals will be kept confidential and will not be used in any written reports about the project. A copy of this consent statement is being provided for you to keep.

Each participant may withdraw consent at any time. Should you decide to withdraw, please notify Maria Angeliadis, Interview Coordinator, at 727-93*-**** or 727-50*-****. Please remember that your participation is solicited, but strictly voluntary. If you have concerns about the study or participation in it, please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Maria Angeliadis, EdS

Appendix 2: (Continued)

Consent to Participate and Be Quoted

Having read and understood the attached Informed Consent Statement and the material below, I agree to participate in the interview project and to be quoted.* I also understand that I have the right to read the interview, as it is used in the project.

Signature of Participant

Date

*Consent to be “quoted” means that I agree that the information I provide during an interview may be quoted in writing, but that my name will not be attributed to what is said. In addition, I consent to having my role as mentor stated in connection with the quotation.

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Interview One: (focused on history)

1. Why did you become a mentor? Describe your own history as a mentor.
2. Was there anything in your own experiences in elementary, middle, high or college schooling that encouraged you to become a mentor?
3. Discuss events or experiences during your own school life that may have lead you to becoming a mentor.
4. As a mentee yourself, did any events encourage you to become a mentor.

The items listed above partially address the following research questions:

Research Question 1:

In what ways do mentors report undergoing a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?

Research Question 5:

Does the mentor believe mentoring changes his/her beliefs and/or values?

Interview Two: (giving details)

1. What is it like to be a mentor?
2. What characteristics do you feel an effective mentor should possess?
3. Describe your best day as a mentor.
4. Explain your most trying or difficult day as a mentor.
5. Has the context in which you mentor or work facilitated or impeded your effectiveness as a mentor? Explain.
6. How has mentoring influenced your beliefs and values? Have they changed?

Appendix 3: (Continued)

7. What training strategies would most benefit a mentor?
8. Did your mentor training define specific mentor goals and roles to be followed?
9. How should the mentoring process be monitored to determine if the goals of mentoring are met?
10. Has mentoring motivated you to advance your own professional education? Explain.
11. Has mentoring prompted you to advocate for educational values and conditions? Explain.

The items listed above partially address the following research questions:

Research Question 1:

Do mentors report undergoing a discernable developmental process based on experience in mentoring other teachers?

Research Question 2:

How does mentoring affect the mentor's experience and perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?

Research Question 3:

How are mentoring affect the mentor's perceptions of his/her own teaching and sense of professionalism in his/her own classroom?

Appendix 3: (Continued)

Research Question 4:

What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?

Research Question 5:

Does the mentor believe mentoring changes his/her beliefs and /or values?

Interview Three: (reflecting on the meaning of your experience as a mentor)

1. What does mentoring mean to you?
2. Do you believe mentoring has made you a better teacher? Explain.
3. Has mentoring changed your behavior as a teacher? Explain.
4. Do you believe you are a good mentor? Explain.
5. Is your work or experience as a mentor satisfying for you?
6. If you could speak to all mentors in our county, what are the three most important things about mentoring you would want them to know?

The items listed above partially address the following research questions:

Research Question 2:

How does mentoring affect the mentor's experience and perception of job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and commitment to the education profession?

Research Question 3:

How are mentoring affect the mentor's perceptions of his/her own teaching and sense of professionalism in his/her own classroom?

Appendix 3: (Continued)

Research Question 4:

What contexts and supports do mentors see as most important to successful mentoring?

Research Question 5:

Does the mentor believe mentoring changes his/her beliefs and /or values?

Appendix 4: Defining Rules

1. Mentor roles/ Being a mentor means:

Responsibilities a mentor has assumed when working with a mentee. What mentoring actually means to the mentor. This definition also deals with what the mentor thinks mentoring means. How does the mentor define what mentoring means?

- Mentoring means to be able to: “Communicate that you’ve been there and that you will be able to get past that first year and you’ll look back on it someday and realize that, ‘Yes, it was hard but it was doable and that you got through it.’ Because knowing that other people feel the same way is, to me, personally, a wonderful thing.”
- “It’s very difficult because it’s a real...because it’s elementary...I’m developing somebody who I think I see progress made. So I know what’s good right now.”
- “I think it’s very, very important. I think it could make the difference between a teacher remaining in the field or not.”
- “Well I think you want to make sure that you show her everything in exactly the way it’s supposed to be. Cross your t’s and dot your i’s because you want to show her the right...how do things properly. What’s expected.”
- “...really I think I am more of a person that she can talk to.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

2. Mentor development/ Self-efficacy:

Areas that the mentor viewed or recognized as growth in their own role as a teacher, mentor, or colleague, which may have resulted from the process of mentoring and working with mentees. Self-efficacy deals with statements that relate to how mentoring helped the mentor gain self-worth and growth as a mentor and teacher.

- “I feel very worthwhile that someone would ask me to do it. And I think it is a compliment if someone asks you, feels that you are that capable that you’d be able to instruct someone else.
- “... to some extent I think a lot of it is things that I was doing informally before, but not on a regular basis and then you go to class and you become trained and you become officially assigned. So, yeah, I think it has developed, if nothing else, then just the fact that it’s just official at one point. Not that you don’t want to help the other people, but I think it’s more casual.”

3. Mentor satisfaction & Job satisfaction:

These are statements that relate to how mentoring has an impact on how the mentor views their own job satisfaction. Are they happy in their own school and placement as a teacher? Are they happy with the school environment and colleague interaction?

Appendix 4: (Continued)

There are also statements that indicate that mentoring helped the mentor feel satisfied with their role as a mentor, as well as, satisfaction with how they mentor and in achieving their personal goals and expectations.

- “I think it’s a positive. I mean I’ve always like I said I’ve always thought about wanting to do more as far as being a teacher leader type of person so I think that gives me a little more satisfaction just knowing that I’m there to help people not just with the kids but also the adults.”
- “Well it’s a nice way to feel like you’re helping teachers officially kind of feel you’re counted on, on things outside the ordinary which is good, so I think it’s rewarding...”

4. Program problems/county fix/Mentors meeting(*aspects of the mentoring program the county can remedy*):

Mentors expressed concerns with the county training of mentors. Suggestions as to how the county can improve the mentoring process for the mentor and mentee were discussed. What problems are there with county program and what suggestions are given? What should the county do or implement to make the mentoring program better? Mentor meetings relate to the ideas the mentors suggested in order to meet to discuss their experiences as a mentor and concerns about their responsibilities with mentees.

Appendix 4: (Continued)

Mentors meeting allows them to talk to other mentors-discuss concerns and give suggestions about mentoring.

- “We don’t meet, I think we should. We met one time this year, all the mentors, yeah and it really was just an informational, you need go give me a log so I can send it somewhere.”
- “Well I’d definitely tell them to be open minded and flexible maybe that’s two different ones we’ll use it as one just be open and flexible about the way you think about things cause other people don’t always do it the same way.”
- “The only thing I would criticize about the program is that there is no time. I think there definitely needs to be more help for the mentors.”
- “More getting together, more e mail, more this is a good article, you know, any of that stuff.”

5. Mentor Efforts to Promote Self-Esteem:

Self-esteem refers to how the mentor attempts to help the mentee feel better about themselves and how they are developing as a teacher that first crucial year.

- “I think the support and just knowing that person is there and is on your side and is going to be there to listen to you whether it’s about you know: “I really can’t stand the kids screaming today.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I just like sat there and she went through it and you know if there was anything really important I would say something, but she did a good job and after I told her, I said, you did a fantastic job. I said for the 1st time you would never know you were a new teacher.”

6. Mentoring influence/impact/ Retain good teachers:

How has mentoring influenced/impacted the mentor in educational situations?

How can mentoring assist in retaining teachers into the education field? Many new teachers leave the field of education and mentors feel the frustration of not knowing what to do. Mentoring can help the new teacher wish to stay in teaching.

- “...mentoring is a very positive thing and the impact that you can make making someone feel accomplished at the end of the first year is just there is no way to measure that.”
- “I think the impact is in knowing that they have somebody to talk to and you know hopefully that’s something that makes them more secure in what they are doing to.”
- “So I think it’s really a crucial step in retaining teachers. To give that them that support and remind them that Rome wasn’t built in a day.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “Oh we’re losing teachers across the board. I absolutely think that mentoring would help that just you know even if it’s just so much as a person to reality check now and then.”

7. Investment & Professional Advancement:

What has mentor put into mentoring and personal development in their education and in their level of helping? How has mentoring benefited the mentor? Has mentoring encouraged the mentor to advance in their own professional goals or encouraged mentor to become an advocate for the mentee and education?

- “I’ve invested personally a lot into the education field. I have two Master’s - one that I’m not even using. Compared to other things I’ve done, I don’t think this was a huge investment. I enjoyed it.”
- “Yes. When you stop and realize how little to nil that they know and then you realize that I was like that and look how much I’ve had to learn by experience. Yes, absolutely. At that point you say, “Wow I learned a lot over the years.”
- “Yeah, has geared you towards wanting to advance your own professional career.” “I think that’s probably the biggest ‘aha’ what I just said I just thought of that that if nothing else it probably keeps the fire stoked at least a little bit cause it gives you more buy in it gives you more something to think about.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

8. Beliefs and values/Advocacy:

Have beliefs and values changed due to the involvement with mentoring? Beliefs and values are the mentor's understanding of what they believe in and what values they hold as important as to who they are and what they believe in. The mentors perceived being an advocate as someone who is willing to speak for the mentee when the need arises. An advocate acts as a 'sounding board' for the mentee. An advocate supports and encourages the mentee throughout their first year and after.

- “Well the number one thing is that you have to be sincere and love children. And if you don't have that then you don't belong there.”
- “No. I think my values are my values and because I'm mentoring does not change the way I feel about anything, you know? I'm like seeing it from a different aspect but it doesn't change my values.”
- “No. The values were there they have just been highlighted.”
- “Well I do try and be open-minded, I like to think I was before, but now I definitely am.”
- “So advocacy, your advocacy falls in the line of what's good for the children. The importance of advocacy and actually I was able to help...”
“If that's what education is coming to, which probably it is, where we don't want to pull kids out, and then those teachers are going to need somebody to help them get along.”
- “You know, I'm a mentor. Are you willing to help the next person who we hire?”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I guess a matter of becoming familiar with maybe who they could turn to.”
- “I think you have to be an advocate, you have to know what needs to be done and being the person who’s helping the ones coming in, you’re the one who can speak logically and be able to say, you know, this person needs this, or we need this and try to make it better...”
- “A first year teacher should not have been put into that position and I would have been her advocate...”

9. Proximity/Time:

Does the place where a mentor assists the mentee make a difference? Is on site better than off site of the primary campus? Mentors also voiced a concern about time to spend with mentors is heard throughout many of the mentor interviews. Mentors need to have time given to them to adequately meet mentees’ needs.

- “But time is the biggest obstacle overall because it’s just not enough of it. They could try to improve it by scheduling maybe planning periods together or building in something to make it even more successful.”
- “Time is really important. How can you do it successfully if you’re not given time?”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “Wow, I would think to have time within a day that you feel like your not rushing your not rushing from your classroom to that classroom back to this classroom and that you’re leaving the kids.”
- “I think it’s much more helpful to be on site.”
- “I think that people that are mentors that had to travel to another school would find it more convenient and more satisfying to being at the same school as opposed to driving someplace. Also, if there is an issue that the mentee wants to talk about from the faculty meeting you can identify with it much more because you were at the same meeting.”
- “Only that you’re getting a different perspective. Because maybe you have different administrators or different policies. Ummm, there could be some advantages. Ideas from what’s happening at another school - how they solve problems.”
- (*advantage to off site*): “I think they need to really do a better job on matching you. If you’re on a team, or if you’re in the same building, or just even the same proximity. Logistically, if I’m next door to you,
- I’m going to stop in and see you more often than if I’m across the building, you know?”
- “Probably, just time wise, flexibility wise. I can go into the class any time. I can observe if they need me to observe without worrying about covering my class. I can do things that need to be done.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

10. Support/lack of support, No help/no mentor:

Does the mentor feel that the administration is supportive of the mentoring position? Are colleagues and the county supportive? Many of the mentors did not have their own mentor to help them. Most of them mentioned their desire to mentor because of this.

- “There were no people assigned to me. I was just like put in a building by myself and the other ESE teachers were across the campus and it was almost like swim or sink.”
- “There should be someone helping new people. And so I decided to, you know, that what kind of made me do it (want to mentor) because I never had one and I thought that someone should be doing something.”
- “There was no mentor. There was no help. It was ‘fly by the seat of your pants’.”
- “I had no mentor.”
- Support for the mentee I think, it’s like anything. Time to give to them that you’re not having to take care of your own stuff; I think that probably one of the biggest things. You don’t get a break from your stuff to go help them and I think that would be one of the biggest supports, being near by would help, would help you to support them. Supports for mentors, getting together with other mentors and saying how do you do it at your school.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I have always had positive relationships and I think that is one of the keys to staying and having a team around you.”

11. Mentor characteristics, Mentor Needs & Help:

What characteristics are found in an effective mentor? What is the mentor's history as far as school is concerned and what characteristics does a mentor need to mentor? This refers to the desire of the mentors to help new people to adjust into the school community and to help them progress to their fullest abilities. Many mentors feel that since they were or were not helped, they have the desire and need to help new teachers. What characteristics does a mentee need in order to be successful in that first year and working with mentors and others in school? This theme deals with what mentors feel they need to be good mentors.

- “Keep your sense of humor. And it's hard sometimes, especially with difficult populations. But I think that reminding the mentor that this too shall pass...it's a part of life and not the end of the world.
- “...just communicating that it's a safe environment.” “I became a mentor because as an ESE teacher you are constantly helping each other...”
- “Well anyway, the thing is, how do you say ‘no’ when you're out to help somebody. Exactly, yes that's absolutely true when you know that no one else is really out there you say, “Okay I'll do it.”
- “I think when you are helping someone else do something then you think about what you're doing, it's easy to tell somebody that you should be

Appendix 4: (Continued)

doing this and then you think, am I doing this? So I think it makes you think more and hopefully you're following your own advice."

- "Somebody that's willing to have a mentor."
- "...she also has no education background. I think that has a big hindrance. I think if you have somebody that has education background or even worked in a school system or something but when you're coming and you've never been in a school or taken any background then I think it's kind of overwhelming."
- "Well professionalism, obviously, because learning something in theory and actually doing it are two different things."
- "Be fair. I mean, you give advice and it's not taken, don't feel offended. Because I would always say you might want to try. I'd never say do this or do that or come in with this. Or I would say, "I used to do this." You might want to... It was a conversation. It's not like dictating words or she did try it and didn't like it. Just be fair and remember how it was for you."
- Mentor should be: "Definitely, kind of open, open to different kinds of people because everyone is not going to be exactly what you hoped them to be or what you think."
- "I think you have to be open, you have to be honest, you have to be willing to do this, you know put the time in whatever they need different people need different amounts of time."

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I think you need to be very open and willing to except that there’s things you don’t know.” “I think it’s very important to be patient open make yourself available supportive definitely need to be there to just encourage the person.”
- “So you need to keep on task with it. I think mentoring helps you keep focused. I think it kind of keeps you involved in the day to day things. It kind of keeps you invigorated a little bit because you’re working with younger people or at least newer people to the whole idea of teaching and being in classrooms. So it kind of reminds you of what it was like and then it kind of it keeps you going too because you remember that it was tough and you want to give them every advantage.”

12. Experience:

Experience refers to the experience of the mentor in the field of education. This could be based on the amount of years taught and educational training, as well as years served as a mentor.

- “When I was in college, going for my bachelors, I was a mentor in writing for another student who was a young girl who was really, really good in math, but her English skills were not so wonderful and your ability to pass in that college was totally based on writing. There were no, you know, scan sheets or anything like that, so I helped her.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

13. Goals/expectations:

Goals and expectations are the situations that the mentor and/or the mentee expect from each other. There are things the mentor expects of the mentee and the mentee expects from the mentor, such as help in learning about the school, academic lessons to understand and time in which to work together. The mentor, in turn, expects the mentee to be willing to work with the mentor and to be committed to the classroom and school.

- “I don’t have the exact words, but my goal is to effectively mentor a brand new teacher by showing her xyz and including learning strategies...”
“I just think you need to almost be able to say, “So am I doing enough, good enough?” Almost ask someone else, “What are you doing, what do you think, should we be meeting more, should we be sitting in their classroom?”
- “Make sure they get their questions answered make sure that they have you as a back up type of deal.”

14. Informal Mentor:

An informal mentor is someone who is not formally assigned to a mentee, but someone who helps the new teacher anyway. Often this is an individual who is on the same team or has befriended the new teacher

- “...when I was in college, going for my bachelors I was a mentor in writing for another student, who was a young girl, who was really, really

Appendix 4: (Continued)

good in math, but her English skills were not so wonderful and your ability to pass in that college was totally based on writing. There were no you know scan sheets or anything like that so I helped her.”

- “We did help her, you know, you couldn’t not to help her. You felt so bad. So, we were helping her and yet her mentor who was supposed to be helping her, did to some extent, but didn’t almost know the extent to how much she was suffering, as we did.”
- “I like to make myself available to the person, just for general questions and answers, but also seek the actual mentee, when there’s something that I know is coming up.”

14. Length of mentoring:

This refers to the amount of time mentoring should occur. Ordinarily, a new teacher is assigned a mentor for a full school year. There are occasions when the mentor is assigned for an additional amount of time.

- “If she chooses to stay (in teaching) I would you recommend that she has a 2nd year with a mentor.”
- “I think, really, for the first couple of years because there is so much to it.”

15. Mentor Evaluation of Mentee & Mentee Evaluation of Mentor:

The mentors stressed the importance of having an opportunity for the mentee to evaluate the mentor and for the mentor to be able to evaluate the mentee. Not in a

Appendix 4: (Continued)

punitive way, but in a way where they were able to discuss the progress of the mentoring partnership.

- There should be something like a back and forth, where I'm hearing, you know, "How are you doing, am I doing enough?" You know and even at the end of the year, they maybe they should evaluate it. An evaluation of the mentee of the mentor, and the mentor of the mentee.

Right, and say she never showed up, she didn't do this. I mean we shouldn't have mentors out there who really don't want to do this. They are doing it, you know, for whatever it's for, but maybe an evaluation at the end of the semester or year would be helpful."

- "I think the mentees should have to grade you."
- "If only they had asked us. If only someone asks real teachers - teachers who are actually still in the classroom. Teachers who haven't forgotten what it's like and we are intelligent. We have good ideas. We need to be asked."

16. Motivation/ Always wanted to be teacher:

What motivated the mentor to become a mentor? This refers to the reason why mentors selected to become mentors. The mentor stressed the desire to become an educator early on in their lives and from the time they thought of a career choice.

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I was one those people who always wanted to be a teacher, you know. That’s what I played when I was a little kid and I was just always going to be a teacher and I guess that whole ‘wanting to help’, you know, you don’t only want to help the kids, then, you want to help the teachers...”
- “I was one those people who always wanted to be a teacher, you know. That’s what I played when I was a little kid...”
- “I’m sure that there were a lot of experiences where someone helped me and I was grateful and you know kind of like ‘pay it forward’ type of thing. But to think of specific time when I can said “Oh, wow!” that may have made me think about mentoring.”
- “No, I probably didn’t know what mentoring was. I just liked helping each other out.”
- “And so he, you know, he made all the difference, like he could tell me something and in a day I could change what I was doing while at work. So maybe that, you know, knowing that one teacher could change so much and the other teacher can really affect it. So maybe somewhere along the way maybe I wanted to be like that second one (teacher).”
- “Well, probably, my history of work made me do it.” (mentor)

Appendix 4: (Continued)

17. Paperwork:

A complaint for most mentors and teachers is that there is entirely too much paperwork to deal with that becomes overwhelming for everyone, especially first year teachers.

- “Paperwork was not easy. I did it all, but I didn’t like it and I struggled with it and so did she of course. I didn’t know everything and I think I just didn’t pretend I knew it. Oh, my gosh, I don’t know.
- I told her, “We’ll figure that out”, and she was just happy to hear that someone who was just like telling her it was okay to be frustrated and confused.”
- “It was always like she just didn’t know what she was doing and a lot of it was the paperwork. A lot of it was the paperwork and so we would be staying after to do our paperwork. Then you had to stop yours and help her.”
- “And then on top of that, we get to do hours upon hours, upon hours, upon hours of paperwork for basically no extra compensation with very little help and with a constant administrator or somebody telling you, ‘Oh, they just changed that. You’ve got to do it this way and then go back and do that, but yet you don’t get any more time to go fix it, but maybe you have an hour and a half to do IEPs. It almost took you about seven or eight hours!’”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

18. Placement/ Matching mentee/mentor:

This theme refers to the logistical proximity of the mentee and mentor. Often, the mentor is not on the same team or in the same area as the mentee and this can add to the difficulty in meeting to help. This definition is also in reference to how well the mentor and mentee fit together as a team or partnership. The mentors discussed the necessity to be sure that the county do a better job of placing and matching mentees with the correct teacher and matched the placement better.

- “And her philosophy wasn’t that different from mine to begin with. That was one reason why I thought it was a good match when they asked me to do it.”
- “Oh, I think the fact that she’s right next door is a good thing. It’s not like she’s at another side of the school I can pretty much hear what’s going on when it gets a little tense.”
- “I think logistically, where you are placed is important. You have to be near them. You just have to be. I was in a very big school, my mentee? That was another thing. We didn’t have the same planning; we didn’t have the same lunch, so you always had to get together after school. That means this person is probably staying a lot anyway, getting their stuff together, now they have to stay to get some help, you know.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

19. Training/compensation:

This refers to the training the mentor received through the county to become a mentor, as well as, the compensation a mentor receives to be a mentor.

- “I took a clinical course through _____ County, which you are required to do in order to become a mentor.”
- “I became a mentor because I was asked to become a mentor and I had taken the clinical ed. part of it. I was very gung ho when I first went. You need I think 60 credits to recertify and service credits and then I’m not sure if you need another 60 for another certification, but within the first five years I had 400 and something without my college courses. So I was like basically taking everything that interested me and mentoring was one of those things I wanted to utilize my skills.”
- “I think more ongoing, I took a class for a couple of days and that was like okay go ahead. So really I could be doing nothing or I could be doing an amazing amount and I really think there should be accountability too.”
- “Or not a, you know, there’s nothing that says these are your specific responsibilities, but there probably is it’s a big manual.”(county manual on mentoring)
- “I don’t remember specific training enough to say that I don’t think it could ever hurt to have more support you know.”
- “I took the professional test in the beginning.”

Appendix 4: (Continued)

- “I mean I don’t know what the county can do about that unless they’re going to put more money into it. When I mentored in Colorado, I got \$600-700. So it was a huge difference and you know that tends to motivate people because I guess money talks, but you know to me, there was not a money value on what you could do to help somebody.”
- “I don’t think anybody’s doing this for money. So if you knew that you were going to be given time...now I guess if you had 2 and 3 mentees then...but maybe they would get more people to do it if they knew it wasn’t on their own time. I think people might be more willing to take the time. That would be something you could plan for.”

About the Author

Maria Angeliadis received a Bachelor's Degree from Youngstown State University in 1981 and a M. S. in Special Education from Youngstown State University in 1983. She started teaching while in the Master's program. After moving back to Florida in 1987, she taught Special Education and formed an inclusion classroom for students with emotional handicaps in the public schools in Pasco County. She began an Ed.D. program at the University of South Florida.

While in the Ed.D. program at the University of South Florida, she was an adjunct professor for the University for 5 years. She now serves as an adjunct professor in the Special Education Department at St. Petersburg College. She teaches education courses dealing with curriculum and instruction, as well as character education in the public schools.