Selection and Assignment of Georgia Teacher Support Specialists (Mentors): Perceptions of Principals and Beginning Teachers

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SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT OF GEORGIA TEACHER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS (MENTORS): PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

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To the Graduate College:

This dissertation entitled "Selection and Assignment of Georgia Teacher Support Specialists (Mentors): Perceptions of Principals and Beginning Teachers" and written by Nelda Rose Anvik Bishop is presented to the College of Graduate Studies of Georgia Southern University. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education with a major in Educational Administration.

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SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT OF GEORGIA TEACHER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS (MENTORS): PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the College of Graduate Studies of
Georgia Southern University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
in
Educational Administration

by
Nelda Rose Anvik Bishop
August 1997
DEDICATION

In recognition of their constant support and encouragement

I hereby dedicate this dissertation to

my parents, Art and Maxine Anvik, who as my first mentors

provided me with guidance and unconditional love

and to

my children, Kimberly and Eric Bishop, who have given

meaning and joy to my life.

I love you all.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"Anything worth doing is worth doing well" is an adage I heard frequently as I grew up. Many of my waking hours during the past three years have been devoted to successfully completing the requirements for the doctorate degree. Any success that I have achieved, however, can be largely attributed to an outstanding group of supportive individuals without whom I may not have continued.

Initially, I want to express my thanks to Georgia Southern University and particularly to the members and staff in the Department of Educational Leadership. I appreciate Dr. Ron Davison's vision and encouragement in including me in the doctoral program. Dr. Lars Bjork, Dr. Malcolm Katz, and Dr. Mike Richardson were among many who challenged my thinking throughout my coursework. As director of the doctoral program, Dr. Richardson provided invaluable support, encouragement, and direction during the three-year process. The Georgia Southern University Graduate Student Professional Development Fund financially supported my research efforts.

A very special thank you is extended to each member of my doctoral committee. Dr. John Gooden not only provided guidance and leadership as we worked through the research process but also offered inspiration as my own mentor. It is my pleasure to extend a warm public "thank you" for his wisdom and support. Dr. Cordelia Douzenis exhibited a never ending supply of patience in assisting me with my research design, my instruments, and my data analysis. I value her expertise. Dr. Garth Petrie could always be counted on to help me clarify my thinking as well as my writing. To him I extend a word of thanks. Dr. Fred Page brought many years of expertise in working with student teachers, beginning teachers, and mentors to the reading of my dissertation. I appreciate the tremendous insight he provided throughout this research effort.
The members of Cohort II -- Charles Boyer, Margie Varnadoe, and Vicki Hunnicutt -- have become lifelong friends. I am indebted to them for their warmth, encouragement, and motivation. It was my "good fortune" to meet and work with each of them. They have touched my life as I know they touch the lives of the students and educators with whom they work daily. Other friends, too numerous to mention by name, not only have supported and encouraged me but also have assured me I would have a life again after I completed my coursework, research, and writing.

I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to my colleagues who assisted me with their expertise and service as members of the validity panel. In addition, those professional educators who took their time to provide written feedback on the pilot study were invaluable to this investigation. Thanks are extended to Dr. Harbison Pool who graciously shared his expertise in editing my references. My brother Ardean was instrumental in my pursuing this degree and, as a writer himself, gave of his time to edit my work. Jonathan Nichols, Kim Bishop, and Lynn Wright helped with stuffing and mailing hundreds of research packets. I appreciate each of them for their time and kind assistance.

My family has always been very important to me. They have provided me focus throughout my life. My parents, Art and Maxine Anvik, were my first and best mentors. They gave me structure, encouragement, and unconditional love as I have moved through the hills and valleys of my life. My three brothers -- Ardean, Rollynn, and Kevin -- and their wives and children are an important part of my support system. I love them all dearly.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to extend my warmest thanks to my children, Kimberly and Eric, who constantly encouraged me as I devoted myself to my studies. They are the love of my life and my source of inspiration!
VITA

Nelda Rose Anvik Bishop was born in Sidney, Montana, and raised in Glendive, Montana. She attended college in Montana and South Dakota and taught in the Rapid City Public Schools in South Dakota. She completed her Bachelors and Masters degrees at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas, and subsequently taught in the Austin Independent School District.

Nelda moved to Statesboro, Georgia, where she taught in the Bulloch County Schools and completed the Education Specialist degree and certification in numerous areas at Georgia Southern University. For more than 20 years, she has worked as an educational consultant with the First District Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) teaching staff development sessions and courses and assisting school system personnel with curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school improvement planning issues. Nelda serves as an adjunct faculty member at Georgia Southern University where she has taught several undergraduate and graduate courses. Nelda has presented at local, state, and national conferences and has had her work published.

She is a member of many state and national professional organizations and has been honored by membership in Phi Delta Kappa, Kappa Delta Pi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Pi Lambda Theta. Nelda serves as a turnkey trainer for several state and national programs. She is a state trainer of trainers for the Georgia Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) Program and is a member of the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program state advisory committee.
ABSTRACT

SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT OF GEORGIA TEACHER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS (MENTORS):
PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS AND BEGINNING TEACHERS
AUGUST 1997
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M.A. THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
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Directed by: Professor John S. Gooden

The results of this study provided insight into the priorities that Georgia principals and beginning teachers place on interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select experienced teachers to serve as mentors for beginning teachers. This study further identified the processes which principals use in the identification process for potential mentors and examined the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers provide for concerns used in assigning mentors to beginning teachers.

All public schools in Georgia are eligible to participate in providing mentor support for beginning teachers through the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. Monies made available annually from the Georgia Department of Education through the Leadership Academy provide stipends to mentor teachers who support beginning teachers. All principals and beginning teachers involved in the mentor support process during the 1995-96 school year were the populations for this study. Data were collected from an equal stratified random sample of 100 elementary school, 100 middle school, and
100 high school principals and from an equal stratified random sample of 150 elementary school, 150 middle school, and 150 high school beginning teachers. Responses were received from 217 of 300 possible principal respondents and from 248 of 450 possible beginning teacher respondents resulting in an overall study return ratio of 62%.

The data for the study were gathered through the use of two parallel questionnaires containing three sections. First, both principals and beginning teachers rank ordered ten interpersonal characteristics and ten professional characteristics for the selection of mentor teachers. In addition, principals checked items used in the identification process for mentor selection. Second, principals and beginning teachers rank ordered their perceived importance of mentor assignment concerns. Third, demographic information was elicited from all respondents.

The study results indicated that there is general agreement between principals and beginning teachers regarding the characteristics and concerns which should be given priority in the selection and assignment of mentors to support beginning teachers. The greatest differences were among the various school levels for both principals and beginning teachers. The only consistent element used in the identification process for mentors is the use of the principal's recommendation.

Results from this study provide guidelines for principals to select and assign mentors and for other educators to help with the decision-making process. Interpersonal characteristics which should be given greatest attention in mentor selection are: willingness to devote the time necessary to be an effective mentor; willingness to perform the roles expected of a mentor; effective communication skills; willingness to maintain the confidentiality of the beginner; and willingness to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior. Professional characteristics which should be given greatest attention in mentor
selection are: demonstration of effective teaching strategies; ability to maintain effective classroom discipline and management; ability to plan effectively; and maintenance of high student expectations. High school mentors should demonstrate expertise in subject matter, and elementary mentors should understand and follow policies and procedures. In addition to the principal's recommendation, this study indicates that other mentor identification criteria might include classroom observation and recommendation by the assistant principal.

In making mentor assignments, this study indicates that principals should concern themselves with: providing a common planning time for the mentor and beginning teacher; consideration of the compatibility of the mentor/beginning teacher personalities; and providing mentors in the same content area for middle school and high school beginning teachers and in the same grade level for elementary beginning teachers. This study's results indicated that more emphasis should be placed on the issues of direct support than on the social issues when making mentor assignments. However, if equally qualified mentors are available, issues such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, and interests could be considered.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

To a great extent, the success of a school depends upon the quality of its human resources. Though programs and facilities are important to the instruction provided to students, these programs and facilities are powerless without quality personnel (Jones & Walters, 1994). “Teachers have enormous potential to influence the lives of students under their care and power to effect change, to inspire, or tragically, to defeat” (Kestner, 1994, p. 39). Teachers not only occupy a position that is important to the student but also to the school and even to society as a whole. The most important factor in a child’s education is the teacher (Hoerr, 1996). It is essential, therefore, that teachers, especially those beginning teachers new to the profession, be given the support necessary to successfully enter the school’s culture and provide learning opportunities for the students in their charge.

The principal’s primary purpose is to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. To this end the principal is charged with maximizing the potential of each teacher on the school staff. One aspect of the principal’s role is the induction of beginning teachers (Edelfelt & Ishler, 1989; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Little, 1990). Beginning teacher induction “can be considered the mortar that cements preservice training to continued in-service professional development” (Reinhartz, 1989, p. 4). Simply put, teacher induction is a process of welcoming and helping beginning teachers adjust to their new roles as teachers. However, Reinhartz further noted that the gradual induction of beginning teachers into the profession in a systematic way is very much the exception rather than the rule. Beginning teachers are assigned students and expected to take on the same role as their veteran counterparts from the first
day of the school year. Though the measured distance from the teacher’s desk to the students is short, Cruickshank and Callahan (1983) noted that "... it is probably the largest psychological distance that these young adults have traveled in such a brief time" (pp. 251-52).

The school principal has the power and responsibility to set conditions which assist the beginning teacher to be successful in his or her new role and to encourage the beginner to remain in the profession (Wise, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 1987). These conditions include providing a stable working environment, access to district resources, and the assistance of both the principal and senior teachers in the induction process. Hughes (1994) asserted that the literature on instructional leadership, instructional supervision, and teacher induction all offer suggestions on how the principal can serve as a key figure in the professional development of the beginning teacher. This literature impresses upon the reader the importance of the principal’s role in supporting the beginning teacher’s professional development. The induction literature defines a major aspect of the principal’s role in beginning teacher induction as carefully selecting and assigning a mentor teacher to provide tangible, immediate responses to the multitude of beginning teacher needs identified in the research. The principal is responsible for providing the ongoing support that such a collaborative effort requires.

Morey (1990) noted that nearly half of the beginning teachers nationally leave the field during their first five years. Added to this concern is the aging teacher force and impending retirements which mean that students will be spending more time in the future with beginning teachers (Kestner, 1994). This greater reliance on beginning teachers will make it critical for educators to help each beginning teacher move from the role of a student of teaching to that of a teacher of students.
Not every experienced teacher will possess the capabilities necessary to be an effective mentor. An important administrative task, therefore, is for the principal to identify an appropriate veteran teacher who will provide both a good professional role model and a source of personal support for the beginning teacher. "The prevailing admonition is to choose mentors carefully" (Jones & Walters, 1994, p. 143). Principals have the daunting task of identifying the characteristics which provide the most effective and efficient mentors for the beginning teachers and pairing the beginning teachers with mentors for the best possible results.

Statement of the Problem

Mentoring is a widely respected method for inducting beginning teachers into the profession (Glatthorn, 1990; Jones & Walters, 1994; Reinhartz, 1989). The principal, as school leader, is responsible for the identification and selection of the experienced teacher to serve as mentor to a beginning teacher. The quality of the mentor is one critical factor which determines the success of the mentor program. It is, therefore, critical that appropriate criteria be identified and implemented in the mentor selection process to help assure that the quality of the mentors selected is high.

The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program for beginning teacher induction includes a person serving in the role of mentor. This individual, referred to as a Teacher Support Specialist (TSS), is assigned by the building principal to provide support for the beginning teacher during the first year of employment, and, if necessary, for a second and third year. The success and retention of beginning teachers in Georgia's schools may be positively impacted by principals who are able to successfully identify and select veteran teachers who will be effective in the role of mentor and then thoughtfully assign those mentors to beginning teachers. This study answered the question: As part of a
beginning teacher induction program, what characteristics and concerns do principals and beginning teachers perceive as important for the selection and assignment of mentors to serve as Teacher Support Specialists (TSS) for beginning teachers in their schools?

Research Questions

This study was designed to examine the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers assign to characteristics to be used in selecting experienced teachers to serve as mentors for beginning teachers and to identify the process used by principals for potential mentor teacher selection. In addition, this study examined the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers assign to concerns to be used in assigning mentors to beginning teachers. The following questions were answered:

1. Are there differences in perceptions between Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on the interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

2. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

3. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

4. What processes do Georgia school principals use in the identification of experienced teachers for potential selection as mentors?

5. Are there differences in perceptions of Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on concerns which are to be considered in the assignment of mentors?
6. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals when assigning mentors?

7. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers for the assignment of mentors to support them?

Importance of the Study

Approximately 4,000 - 5,000 beginning teachers will need to be inducted into the ranks of teaching each year if growth continues in the teacher workforce as it has since 1986 (Georgia Alliance for Public Education, 1990). The 1990 Georgia Alliance data further projected that by the year 2000 an 80% turnover in teachers will have occurred with 75% of those who are teaching in the year 2000 having received their teacher training since 1990.

These data suggest a mandate for school administrators to implement a strong induction program which can assist beginning teachers to be successful. As the teacher induction research indicates, carefully selected and assigned mentors can provide support to both the principal and the beginning teacher. If a well chosen mentor is paired with each beginning teacher and given the role of providing beginning teacher support, the principal can be better assured of the beginning teacher's success.

This study addressed the priority which principals and beginning teachers place on various mentor selection characteristics and on assignment concerns important in mentor/beginning teacher pairings. A set of criteria can be established for potential use by principals as they select and assign future mentors. The implementation of a set of selection processes and criteria would allow principals to be more proactive in their selection of potential candidates to serve as mentors to support beginning teachers in their schools. In addition, the implementation of a set of mentor assignment criteria would allow principals to
be more deliberate in carefully matching mentors and beginning teachers to achieve effective results in supporting beginning teachers in their first three years in the profession.

School principals who use the findings of this study could positively impact the careers of beginning teachers in their schools by providing carefully selected and assigned mentors to support the beginning teachers' work. The school system staff development coordinator or personnel director in charge of requesting a portion of the state stipend monies for mentors could use the research results to help assure that mentors were carefully selected and assigned in the schools within his or her school district. The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program through the Georgia Leadership Academy would benefit from a study of mentor selection characteristics and assignment concerns to serve as a basis for recommending a mentor selection and assignment process.

Other audiences for this study include colleges and universities, Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs), large school systems, and national and state professional organizations. Colleges and universities with graduate education programs which offer the prescribed course sequence for mentors to receive the TSS endorsement could use the findings to set prerequisites for entrance into these programs. In addition, professors who teach leadership and administration courses could stress the importance of beginning teacher induction and the principal's role in assuring the success of the mentor/beginning teacher pair. Personnel from RESAs and large school systems who provide coursework leading to the TSS endorsement and advise principals on the selection and assignment of mentors would be able to apply the research results in their work. National and state professional organizations which provide recommendations for mentor teacher selection and assignment could use the research data in their reports.
A final audience to benefit from this study may be the beginning teacher who, upon being hired by a Georgia school system, would be paired with a mentor. It would be to the beginning teacher's advantage to have a mentor who had been selected and assigned based upon specific research-based criteria.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in the formulation of this study:

1. School principals and beginning teachers could prioritize the identified mentor selection characteristics as to the degree of importance which they place on each characteristic.

2. School principals could identify the processes which they use in the identification of experienced teachers for potential selection as mentor teachers.

3. School principals and beginning teachers could prioritize the assignment concerns as to the degree of impact they have on mentor/beginning teacher pairings.

4. The samples of principals and beginning teachers surveyed would respond candidly to the survey instrument.

Limitations

Limitations for the study include the following:

1. The only principals and beginning teachers who received the survey were those in schools for which system-level personnel requested state stipends for mentors during the 1995-96 school year.

2. The mailing addresses used for contacting beginning teachers were school addresses applicable for the 1995-96 school year and were used for mailing during the 1996-97 school year.

3. A potential loss of response resulted from beginning teachers who moved from their assigned schools following the 1995-96 school year.
4. Only principals and beginning teachers from Georgia were surveyed.

5. When using self-report instruments, respondents tend to give socially desirable responses.

Definition of Terms

1. Induction: term used to identify a systematic program between preservice and on-going in-service education in which the beginning teacher is provided continued professional development to acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to effectively carry out his or her occupational role.

2. Mentoring: term used to refer to an empowering process wherein an experienced teacher provides planned technical assistance and psychological support to aid a beginning teacher in his or her first three years of teaching to develop the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be effective.

3. Beginning teacher: term used in reference to a full-time, certificated teacher with zero, one, or two years of teaching experience.

4. Teacher Support Specialist (TSS): a mentor who, by Georgia definition, has a minimum of three years of teaching experience and who has completed the training to receive the TSS endorsement on his or her teaching or service certificate.

Summary

Teachers who have been trained since 1990 will constitute 75% of the Georgia teaching force in the year 2000. Since the most important factor in the child's education is the teacher, it is incumbent upon principals and others to assure that the potential of each beginning teacher is maximized. Research indicates that systematic induction of beginning teachers into the profession is the exception rather than the rule. However, the principal is in a position to provide a planned induction program which encourages the success of the
beginner. One aspect of the principal's role is the selection and assignment of a mentor teacher to support the beginning teacher. The delineation of a carefully designed mentor selection and assignment process will support the principal's role and will allow the principal and mentor to work collaboratively to support the beginning teacher's work.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature relevant to the induction of beginning teachers, including mentoring, and the support processes which can be provided by the school principal to ease the beginning teacher's induction period. The relevant research on the principal's broader role in teacher induction will be presented with emphasis placed on mentoring as a key induction process including the specific roles of selecting and assigning mentors. The literature review is divided into six sections.

The first section addresses teacher induction, its history, application, and role in the development and retention of beginning teachers. The second section provides a brief history of mentoring and relates mentoring in education to its roots in other professions. This section also considers the needs of beginning teachers and the mentor's role in meeting those needs. Section three presents the literature related to the instructional leadership role, the instructional supervision role, and the induction activities of principals of which the selection and assignment of mentors are a significant part. The fourth section addresses the literature on the selection of mentors, specifically the interpersonal and professional characteristics of potential mentors as well as the process of selection. The fifth section discusses the assignment of mentors and presents the relevant research. The final section of this chapter addresses the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. The history of the Georgia program will be presented along with the endorsement requirements, the suggested selection criteria for prospective mentors, and the funding stipulations.
Teacher Induction

The theory and practice of teacher education during the preservice phase has been a national focus of study (Stupiansky & Wolfe, 1992). However, the induction phase of in-service teaching, typically the initial one to three years, has not received the same in-depth study. Veenman (1984) reviewed 83 international studies which were conducted and published over a 24-year time period and presented the consistently reported findings of the numerous challenges the beginning teacher faces. He noted the remarkable homogeneity of the conclusions of the various studies and further noted that the more problems encountered by the beginning teacher, the more likely that that individual would leave the teaching profession. These problems have resulted in a national decline in the retention of beginning teachers. Nationally, as many as 50% of beginning teachers leave the profession during their first seven years of employment (Huling-Austin, 1989a). The findings of Schlechty and Vance (1983) pointed out that those leaving in the greatest numbers are the most academically talented. Reinhartz (1989) noted that without a planned induction program, the national dropout rate for beginning teachers could escalate and rival the student dropout rate. She noted that the situation is further worsened when attempting to recruit and retain minority teachers. Educators point to the efficacy of a planned induction program to ameliorate this problem.

Definitions of Teacher Induction

Induction is simply defined as the "process of welcoming and helping beginners adjust to their new roles as in-service teachers" (Reinhartz, 1989, p. 4). Schlechty (1985) stated that the purpose of induction is "to develop in new members of an occupation those skills, forms of knowledge, attitudes and values that are necessary to effectively carry out their occupational roles" (p. 37). According to McDonald (1980), induction involves the mastery of two concurrent tasks described by the assimilation and adaptation into the school
social system and the effective use of teaching skills. Tisher (1982) viewed
induction of beginning teachers as assisting them to be professionally
competent. Eye (1956) viewed induction as encompassing all that is done to
assist the beginner to adapt to the new situation and further stated that induction
begins as soon as the teaching contract is signed.

Mager (1992) noted that induction programs have resulted from the
renewed interest in the well-documented problems of beginning teachers and
have developed primarily in the past decade. He stated that, though induction
was previously used to refer to the "informal, often reactionary, and ritualistic
socialization of new teachers, its use now refers to more sophisticated and
systematic efforts to initiate, shape, and sustain the first work experiences of
prospective career teachers" (p. 13). Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay, and
Edelfelt (1989) defined induction as "a transitional period in teacher education,
between preservice preparation and continuing professional development,
during which assistance may be provided and/or assessment may be applied to
beginning teachers" (p. 3). For the purposes of this study, induction is defined
as a systematic program between preservice and on-going in-service education
in which the beginning teacher is provided continued professional development
to acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to effectively carry out
his or her occupational role.

Induction Roots in Other Fields

For years both the private and public sectors of business and
government have used induction and mentoring activities in their career and
human resource development programs. Private companies such as AT&T,
Bell Laboratories, Hughes Aircraft, and Merrill Lynch & Co. and public agencies
such as the Internal Revenue Service, Federal Executive Development
Program, and the Science and Education Administration of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture have used mentoring to socialize people into their organizations
and help them strive for career goals and advancement (Phillips-Jones, 1982). Employees at Marriott Corporation hotels are inculcated with the philosophy and culture of the organization. Similarly new employees at Harrah’s Casino, Disney World, and Digital Electronic Company (DEC) are indoctrinated through an orientation into the respective company (Deal & Chatman, 1989).

Roche (1979) conducted a survey of nearly 4,000 executives in the business field. Two-thirds of the 1,250 who responded indicated that they had a mentor as part of their induction program and that they tended to earn more money and be happier with their career progress than those who had not experienced the mentorship. Fagan and Walter (1982) surveyed 107 school teachers, 70 police officers, and 87 nurses and found that the frequency of mentoring among teachers was not significantly different from that of police officers or nurses.

Mediated entry into a profession is the classic form of work induction (Lortie, 1975). The practice of apprenticeship was highly developed in medieval times and undergirded the system of guilds. Mediated entry can be viewed by studying the long formal apprenticeship of the building crafts, clerkships in law firms, internships and residencies in medicine, and the management training programs in corporations. Other examples are the continuous training of airline pilots or certified public accountants. In each case, the beginner learns in small steps from a person who has attained recognized position within the organization or occupation. Lortie stated that the only comparison in teaching is student teaching which is much shorter and comparatively less consistent in its structure.

History of Teacher Induction

Historically teachers in the United States have not received any systematic induction assistance (Reinhartz, 1989). The findings from a survey which Ishler and Kester (1987) conducted indicated that between 1969 and the
mid-1980s only two of the leading professional educational organizations addressed the topic of teacher induction: the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the American Federation of Teachers. Since the mid-1980s, induction programs of some variety have been initiated in literally every state across the country (Neuweiler, 1987). Greta Morine-Dershimer (1992), a recent vice-president of the American Educational Research Association, noted that the beginning teacher must make a dramatic transition from thinking and acting as a self-absorbed student to thinking and acting as a teacher with responsibility for the learning and performance of others.

Education is the only profession where the beginning worker is expected to take on the same roles as the veteran worker from the first day of employment (Huling-Austin, 1988). Lortie (1975) noted that the teaching profession appears to be the only profession where “the beginner becomes fully responsible from the first working day and performs the same tasks as a twenty-five year veteran” (p. 72). Beginning teachers are often assigned no permanent classroom, multiple preparations, the lower-ability pupils, unmotivated and/or disruptive students, subject area classes for which the beginner is not certified to teach, and time-consuming extra-curricular activities (Henry, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1989b). The least experienced teachers in effect have the hardest job. Houston and Felder (1982) likened the induction period of beginning teachers to the breaking of horses.

Teachers who are left on their own to develop their expertise as teachers often learn by trial and error (Lortie, 1975) and develop strategies and techniques that crystallize into styles of teaching that will eventually prevent them from becoming effective teachers (McDonald, 1980). The beginning teacher’s initial years of teaching have a significant impact upon that individual’s career which is critical in the overall development of the teacher.
The induction years often determine whether the teacher will remain in the teaching profession. During the first years, the beginning teacher "learns his role, internalizes the basic values of the teacher's culture, (and) forms his conceptions and standards that will strongly influence his behavior for years to come" (Bush, 1966, p. 7).

Entire books have been written on the problems of beginning teachers attempting to work through the induction years. Ryan (1970) wrote Don't Smile Until Christmas, and Ryan et al. (1980) furthered the description through case studies provided in Biting the Apple. Nearly a decade later Bullough (1989) wrote First Year Teacher. These texts all point to the problems of beginning teachers and the need to address them with continuing support. Henry (1989) stated that it is ironic that the induction year is recognized as the most difficult year of a teacher's career, and yet "this is usually the time when support from universities is withdrawn and public school assistance is either minimal or perceived as evaluation" (p. 74).

Kilgore and Kozisek (1989) conducted a study based upon the fact that the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) stated that colleges have an obligation to support the graduates of their programs. Using an adjective checklist, a pre/post instrument designed to measure knowledge and competency on selected teaching behaviors, and qualitative measures such as logs, observations, and seminars, they concluded that the life of the beginning teacher is indeed tenuous. These authors stated that "... if it were not for the extremely high level of self-confidence and high expectations that a beginning teacher has, one might predict that the number of teachers that leave the profession would be higher than it is at present" (p. 108). They noted that current induction programs are not meeting the needs of beginning teachers and concluded that beginning teacher induction must be improved since the consequences of losing potentially good teachers are serious.
Theory: Stages of Teacher Development

Theoretical perspectives of the teacher's development relate to three areas of concern: the cognitive development of the teacher, the teacher's concerns, and the individual's expertise in teaching. Beginning teachers are thought to progress through a series of developmental stages. Hypothetically, then, a well-designed teacher induction program would attempt to determine the current status of the teacher's development and then plan a course to facilitate the development of that beginner (Odell, 1987).

Cognitive development theory postulates that beginning teachers pass through stages of conceptual development from simplistic and concrete thinking to analytic and flexible thinking. The beginner who rapidly progresses to the higher stages tends to be more adaptive, flexible, and tolerant and is more likely to produce students who think at higher levels and work more independently (Glassberg, 1979).

Mager (1992) discussed what he termed as a widely recognized and valued concerns-based model to present his research and views on teacher induction. In the stages of teacher concerns theory, the preservice teachers move from concerns about their own survival to concerns about situations in which they are expected to teach to concerns about students (Fuller, 1969; Glassberg, 1979). Mager discussed induction not as a specific time in the life of a teacher, but rather as a continuum of experiences over a span of time.

Preservice preparation has been considered to be fairly standardized from the perspective that nearly every program follows fairly conventional patterns and is designed to meet the requirements for certification from the various state agencies (Mager, 1992). In-service education is not particularly standardized, however, resulting in a variety of induction practices.

Mager (1992) presented a theory of induction based upon three concepts and four principles. The three concepts include: teacher competence, which is
the body of knowledge, skills, and values pertinent to the work of teaching which the teacher has acquired; teacher performance, which is the expression of that competence through the enactment of the acts of teaching; and teacher effectiveness, which is the accomplishment of the outcomes intended as a result of the teacher performance. Mager further stated that a set of four principles act upon the three concepts:

1. Teacher competence is the basis of teacher performance.
2. Teacher performance is the basis of teacher effectiveness.
3. Though teacher competence grounds teacher performance, it does not guarantee teacher performance.
4. Though teacher performance grounds teacher effectiveness, it does not guarantee teacher effectiveness. (p. 18)

This theory as proposed by Mager suggests the importance of providing induction programs which help teachers refine their competence, performance, and effectiveness.

The Induction Need and Response

The findings of a three-year study on the induction of beginning teachers conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals indicated that "no other important profession is so careless about the induction of its new members" (Hunt, 1968, p. 135). Over 20 years later, Huling-Austin (1989) pointed out that, though at that time many states across the nation had begun implementing induction legislation, the quality of the program cannot be legislated. School practitioners need to be committed to the quality of the induction program and responsible for its outcome (Friske & Combs, 1986). According to Reinhartz (1989), the process of teacher induction should be viewed as ongoing, comprehensive, and necessary as well as a method of revitalizing our profession.

In 1986, Stewart reported that the identifier "beginning teacher induction" had been in use in the ERIC data base for only two months. At that time most of the entries on teacher induction resulted from studies conducted in Great Britain
and Australia. Since that time, numerous annual meetings of educational organizations and journals have been devoted to the topic of teacher induction (Huling-Austin, 1989a). Many researchers point to Australia and Great Britain as countries where induction programs have been well researched and effective induction programs are in place. However, Tisher (1982), in discussing the nationally funded Australian Teacher Induction Project, noted that only 40% of the nation’s beginning teachers were involved in the project and, of those, only one-half found it to be of value. This study indicates that even the nations leading in teacher induction programs ought not to be satisfied until they clearly identify the most productive response for the induction of teachers. The induction literature not only suggests the need for providing a more systematic plan for inducting the beginner into the profession, it also provides direction for the development and implementation of teacher induction programs (Reinhartz, 1989).

**Teacher Induction: Research Directions**

Kozisek (1988) conducted a doctoral research study to measure the effects of an induction program for beginning teachers. Based upon an analysis of the data retrieved from quantitative and qualitative sources, Kozisek found that extra planning time was not provided for beginning teachers, lighter loads were not given to beginners, release time was not provided on a consistent basis for work with mentors, beginning teachers were not given fewer students or students who were easier to handle, there was no exemption from duties outside the classroom, and extra support and feedback from mentors and principals tended to be the exception rather than the rule.

Beginning teachers in Kozisek’s (1988) study found support through formal meetings with the principal prior to the beginning of the school year were beneficial in preparing for the school year. However, the beginning teachers in the study were disappointed by the limited amount of administrative assistance
and support which they received noting that their principals were unavailable. The mentor typically was reported as the first source of information for the beginning teacher. However, as the school year progressed, the mentors did not always meet the expectations of the beginning teachers. Additionally, many mentors -- who did not receive extra pay, recognition, or training -- were not assigned until well into the school year. Therefore, valuable time for establishing a relationship with the beginning teacher was lost and the beginner had to seek whatever help he or she received from whatever sources could be found.

Kozisek (1988) conducted an extensive review of the literature and identified several research-based recommendations for establishing an induction program. These recommendations were divided into recommendations designed for before the school year begins and recommendations for once the school year is underway. The recommendations designed for before the school year begins included: (1) forming a support team, (2) developing a partnership between the university and the school system, (3) pairing the beginning teacher with a mentor, (4) asking beginning teachers to report earlier than the other teachers, (5) having the principal/mentor meet with the beginning teacher as soon as possible to provide materials and information, (6) staying realistic about the assignment of courses and extracurricular duties, (7) matching the initial teaching assignment and the teacher’s major area of preparation, (8) encouraging teacher interaction with the beginner prior to the beginning of the school year, (9) conducting a separate orientation for the beginning teachers apart from the experienced teachers, and (10) planning an orientation program. Kozisek noted that the orientation program should include an orientation to the school program, policies and procedures, facilities, printed material about the school,
introduction to the faculty and staff, and information on the student body and community.

Twenty-six recommendations for assisting the beginning teacher once the school year is underway were made by Kozisek (1988) based upon an extensive review of the literature. Highlights of these recommendations include (1) help the beginner feel wanted and accepted, (2) provide the mentor and beginning teacher with release time to work and plan, (3) plan for meetings with the beginning teacher and principal as well as on-going supervision, (4) plan special staff development activities for beginning teachers, (5) provide the beginner with a reduced workload, (6) consider a staged entry process adding expectations gradually, (7) provide an induction manual, (8) work with the college to provide continuing support and partnerships, and (9) ask the beginner to keep records such as portfolios, journals, and videotapes of instruction.

Findings from qualitative doctoral research study data collected in nine school districts in the greater Puget Sound area of Washington state were based upon the perceptions of district office administrators, elementary principals, and beginning teachers (Torgerson, 1987). Focused interviews revealed that the most frequent induction activity was a personal welcome to the teaching staff. Principals in the study viewed the beginning teacher's competency to teach as more important than the assigned student teaching experience level. However, beginning teachers felt more secure when assigned to the same grade level as in student teaching. Prior notification of the grade and building assignment was viewed as very effective by beginning teachers. Distribution of curriculum guides was generally seen as effective by respondents, as was a districtwide orientation session and conferences between principals and beginning teachers. Beginning teachers, however, expressed a desire to have more frequent conferences. Beginning teachers
were less convinced of the effectiveness of the distribution of a teacher's handbook than were the central office administrators or elementary principals. Strong evidence was present for the development of beginning teacher/mentor relationships regardless of whether the mentor was assigned or not. Beginning teachers indicated that a mentor relationship was one of the most effective induction practices (Torgerson, 1987).

Release time and/or release from non-instructional duties were seldom used as induction activities. In very few districts were beginning teachers assigned fewer students than other teachers at the same grade level. Only slightly over half of the beginning teachers studied agreed that the principal observed and provided feedback more than two times during the school year. The formal feedback cycle was viewed as effective by teachers and principals and very effective by central office administrators. The college or university from which the beginning teacher graduated did not play a significant role during the induction period or offer on-going support to their graduates. Over half of the respondents noted that no workshops, courses, conferences, or in-services were offered to the beginning teachers though the majority of respondents perceived workshops as having a positive effect for professional growth (Torgerson, 1987).

In decreasing order, the induction practices rated as very effective or effective were (1) providing additional time to prepare the classroom, (2) having notification of grade and building assignment, (3) assigning a mentor, (4) observing experienced teachers, (5) including beginning teachers in planning future induction activities, (6) principal providing observation and feedback more than twice a year, (7) providing in-services, (8) providing personal contacts of welcome, (9) conferencing with the principal, (10) providing curriculum guides, (11) providing a teacher handbook, (12) providing a district orientation session, (13) establishing small group
beginning teacher meetings, (14) providing release time, and (15) establishing an ongoing relationship with the college or university (Torgerson, 1987).

Torgerson (1987) noted that the induction programs which were studied were about one year in length and found that no district had written goals or a budget for the teacher induction program. Also the author found that the chief responsibility for planning and implementing an induction program at the school level was the principal. Three additional conclusions were drawn from the study for the principal to consider: the building principal needs to (1) formalize a teacher induction plan so that all significant areas of concern are met, (2) provide regular constructive feedback to the beginning teacher, and (3) carefully monitor the beginning teacher's class to not overly burden the class with students with disciplinary or learning problems.

Some research indicated positive effects from a well-conceived and implemented induction program. An experimental design was developed to study the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Teacher Induction Program (Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986). Administrators in this study found fewer student referrals, fewer parent calls, and fewer student complaints from the induction program teachers. The close working relationships between mentors and beginning teachers were credited for these findings. For this study, an experimental group of beginning teachers provided with an induction program and a control group of beginning teachers not involved in an induction program were administered a questionnaire and structured interviews. The findings from the study indicated that the induction teachers had less difficulty motivating students, had more positive relationships with their pupils, and had more success in dealing with student misconduct. The induction teachers generally felt more positive about their first year of teaching. Also, the induction teachers felt they were helped by observation and feedback on teaching performance by their mentors.
Through a RAND case study research project (Wise, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 1987), nine conclusions were drawn based upon interviews with 40 school districts. These conclusions were used to devise recommendations for the induction of beginning teachers. One conclusion and recommendation are particularly pertinent to this discussion. Conclusion nine noted that "beginning teachers value supervised induction which helps them learn to teach and to learn the expectations of the school district" (p. xi). The report further noted that an induction experience which included mentor support provided the beginning teacher with feelings of efficacy and resulted in a greater likelihood that the beginner would remain in teaching. The recommendation made by this study was for school districts to establish mentor teacher programs.

Many recommendations have been made in the literature as to specific procedures needed to respond to the concerns and needs of beginning teachers to improve induction (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Houston & Felder, 1982; Kurtz, 1983; Veenman, 1984). Several researchers believe that, because the needs and concerns of beginning teachers are extremely diverse, the induction program should be built to allow for flexibility to meet the individual's needs and to be specific to the context in which the beginner works (Huling-Austin, Barnes, & Smith, 1985; Huling-Austin, Putman, & Galvez-Hjornevik, 1985; Ryan et al., 1980).

Goals and Categories of Induction Support

Huling-Austin (1989) synthesized the results of 17 systematic, data-based studies on teacher induction programs and practices. From this she described five goals as supported by most induction programs:

1. to improve teaching performance
2. to increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years
3. to promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers
4. to satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification
5. to transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers (p. 16).

An approach to the induction support of new teachers was offered by Odell (1986) based upon research data which were obtained from 86 beginning teachers and 79 teachers new to the school system. Collaborative support for the beginning teachers was provided through the school district and a cooperating college of education. The teachers in the study identified types of support needed throughout the school year as recorded by clinical support specialists (mentors). These seven generalized categories of support were derived from the data: system information, resources/materials, instructional, emotional, classroom management, environment, and demonstration teaching. Loucks (1993) presented a research-based induction plan which she devised for teachers. The plan included an introduction to the schedules, materials, and daily operation of the school; an orientation to the physical plant; principal’s expectations with regard to discipline, student motivation, and time management; and the assignment of a mentor.

Some beginning teachers reported an informal source of support from fellow teachers (Stupiansky & Wolfe, 1992). These “buddy” teachers help the beginner, but are not always present when they are needed. Providing an ongoing support system has to be built into the culture of the school (Stupiansky & Wolfe). “The assignment of an appropriate support teacher is likely to be the most powerful and cost-effective intervention in an induction program” (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1985, p. 50). Often this planned support role is provided by an experienced veteran teacher especially selected to serve in the role of mentor to the beginning teacher. Mentoring the beginning teacher is frequently an established part of a planned induction program.
Mentoring

Historical Background of the Mentor Concept

The concept of mentoring has a long history of success. In Homer’s epic poem, *The Odyssey*, Mentor is entrusted with guiding the son of Odysseus. As a great warrior in this myth, Odysseus charges his wise and trusted friend, Mentor, with serving as an advisor and guardian to the entire royal household while Odysseus is off fighting the Trojan War. Mentor accompanies Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, as he searches for his father and ultimately for his own identity. Athene, goddess of wisdom, manifests herself to Telemachus throughout the story in the form of Mentor.

Mentor continuously helps Telemachus to grow and learn, and this is not done in isolation. Mentor seeks to assist Telemachus in understanding the adult world by listening to stories of the past from Odysseus’ old comrades. Mentor did not try to make Telemachus a clone of either himself or of Odysseus, but rather assisted in the growing and learning process allowing Telemachus to fight his own battles along the way with Mentor’s support and encouragement. As Telemachus struggled with his quest for knowledge, he was prepared for manhood and his own leadership role.

Anderson and Shannon (1988) draw several conclusions from the story of Mentor to the activity which bears his name. First they state that “mentoring is an intentional process” (p. 38). Mentor’s responsibilities to Telemachus were intentionally carried out. Second, “mentoring is a nurturing process” (p. 38). Mentor nurtured the growth and development of Telemachus toward his full potential. Third, “mentoring is an insightful process” (p. 38). The wisdom of Mentor was acquired and applied by Telemachus. Fourth, “mentoring is a supportive, protective process” (p. 38). Telemachus was to weigh the advice of Mentor who, in turn, was to protect that relationship. Anderson and Shannon completed the analogy by noting that role modeling is a central component of
mentoring just as Athene, taking human form, provided a "standard and style of behavior (to Telemachus) which he could understand and follow" (p. 38).

Mentors need to be available to beginning teachers as role models, and they need to understand how their role modeling can stimulate a sense of empowerment in their proteges.

Another literary selection provides insight into the multiplicity of tasks associated with the role of mentor. In Dante's The Divine Comedy, the Roman poet Virgil can be seen as a mentor who guided Dante in his journey through Hell. Virgil served in a transitional role as Dante moved toward self-knowledge. "Virgil knows the territory. He is Mentor Supreme, alternately protecting his charge from threat, urging him on, explaining the mysteries, pointing the way, leaving him alone, translating arcane codes, calming marauding beasts, clearing away obstacles, and encouraging -- always encouraging." (Daloz, 1986, p. 28).

Popular Usage of the Term "Mentor"

Recent interest in the concept of mentoring stems from research on adult developmental psychology. Many studies have investigated the career paths of successful professionals and the role of mentoring. Erickson (1950) studied the development of healthy adults and described eight stages. Of interest to this study is the stage of generativity versus stagnation which describes that period when the adult is established in his or her adult role and is ready to nurture another individual. Through successful mentoring, the adult is able to reach the final stage of integrity. Daniel J. Levinson (1978) adopted Erickson's stage theory in his study of The Season's of a Man's Life. Levinson found the role of mentor to be important in times of impending life changes and particularly as the adult enters early adulthood and is concerned about the legacy he will leave the next generation. Levinson defined the functions of the mentor when he said the mentor may act as:
A teacher to enhance (one's) skills and intellectual development; ... a sponsor ... to facilitate ... entry and advancement, ... and a host and guide welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his own virtues, achievements and way of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protege can admire and seek to emulate. He may provide counsel and moral support in time of stress (p. 98).

Sheehy (1976), a student of Levinson, wrote a book entitled *Passages* which described women's developmental stages and noted that women who had been mentored or who served as mentors were believed to be more successful and felt that their lives had greater meaning. DeBolt (1992) attributed much of the popularity of the term "mentor" and its frequent use in a wide range of fields of study, including teacher induction, to these two books published in the 1970s. Gail Sheehy's *Passages* first coined the term mentor and Daniel J. Levinson's *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (1978) reintroduced the term into popular usage.

Though mentoring is a fairly new concept in education, many professions have used the knowledge which has been gleaned from the informal mentoring which has gone on for centuries and have created planned mentoring experiences to aid the induction of beginners into their profession. Gray and Gray (1985) noted that mentoring relationships have been a part of the training of psychologists, sociologists, nurses, administrators, scientists, and business executives. Research has been conducted on mentoring in such diverse fields as nursing (Bahr, 1985; Fagan & Fagan, 1983; Hess, 1986), psychology (Goldberg, 1987), and law enforcement (Fagan, 1988, 1989). Many of the mentoring programs used in education have been modeled after programs in the world of business. The business mentoring literature has proven to be helpful to educators establishing a mentoring relationship for teachers (Alleman, 1989).
Male and female managers between the ages of 25-35 were interviewed by Kram (1983) to determine the contributions of mentor relationships toward career development. She concluded from her study that the mentoring relationship enhanced career development by learning the necessary elements of the organization, preparing for advancement opportunities, and by psychosocial development of a feeling of confidence and effectiveness in a managerial role. Though the original Mentor in Homer's Odyssey denoted a trusted guide and counselor, the term "mentor" has developed over time to loosely mean teacher, trainer, sponsor, coach, positive role model, protector, promoter, and leader (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986).

Definition of the Term "Mentor"

Mager (1992) noted that mentoring is increasingly becoming the central feature of formal induction programs. Anderson and Shannon (1988) noted that few articles present a clear image of mentoring. Many of the studies which have been conducted investigated informal mentoring relationships, many of which had existed years in the individual's past (Egan, 1985; Gehrke & Kay, 1984).

In 1983, Merriam published a review of the literature on mentoring. However, she was not able to find a precise definition for mentoring and determined that the definition used would impact the extent to which the phenomenon can be studied by a researcher. Merriam found that different professional groups define mentoring in different ways, but that Levinson (1978) provided the classical idea of an older, wiser person guiding a younger person.

Merriam (1983) and Levinson (1978) noted the importance of focusing on the specific roles that mentors play, the mentor-beginner relationship itself, the motivation behind the relationship, and the outcomes of their work rather than attempting to struggle over a definition for mentoring. Levinson (1978) preferred to define mentoring in terms of the character of the relationship rather than the formal roles.
Egan's (1985) interviews of teachers and their mentors from informal mentoring relationships resulted in this definition of mentoring:

The mentoring of teachers is an empowering process characterized by availability and approachability on the part of an experienced educator, and receptivity by the neophyte. Through this process a beginning teacher receives technical assistance, career advice, and psychological support from an experienced person. This assistance and support is transmitted through observations, ongoing discussions, questionings, and planning together in an adult learning mode. During this process, the experienced educator acts as a role model, teacher, and counselor to the beginner. The influence of the experienced person is pervasive and enduring, while still honoring the autonomy of the neophyte teacher (p. 197).

Anderson and Shannon's (1988) article, "Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring," is recognized in the literature as a seminal piece on mentoring. The authors argued in their work that the various definitions of mentoring fail to specify whether mentoring involves a set of functions that are disjunctively (may be used individually) or conjunctively (must be used together) joined. The essential components of Anderson's and Shannon's definition of mentoring include (1) the process of nurturing, (2) the act of serving as a role model, (3) the five mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending), (4) the focus on professional and/or personal development, and (5) an ongoing caring relationship.

For the purposes of this research, mentoring will refer to an empowering process wherein an experienced teacher who has been carefully selected and assigned provides planned technical assistance and psychological support to aid a beginning teacher in his or her first three years of teaching to develop the necessary skills and attitudes to be effective.
The Needs and Concerns of Beginning Teachers

Galvez-Hjornevik (1985) reported that beginning teachers are afraid to ask for help because they may appear to be incompetent. The beginners have so much to learn and so little time in which to learn it all. Jensen (1986) noted that the informal norms, customs, and routines inherent in schools are hard to discover and understand. What matters and how things are done in schools often go unspoken. The professional and social community of the school, the attitudes, values, roles, opinions, and expectations are all unfamiliar to the beginner (Johnston, 1981). Therefore, a mentor can be a valuable resource for the beginning teacher.

One frequently cited need of beginning teachers is to have a mentor who provides friendship, personal support, and encouragement (Enz & Cook, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Gordon, 1991). The beginning teacher is attempting to fit into a school where friendships are established and finds it frustrating to learn not only a new job, but a new administrator, co-workers, students, and parents. The beginner needs a mentor who is a caring, active listener who is willing to devote the time to the beginning teacher's needs and frustrations.

The highest ranked need in a study by Freiberg, Zbikowski, and Ganser (1994) was the need to be informed on district and building policies and procedures. Ganser's (1991) study also reflected the practical need for the beginner to be informed and found that filling that need was a key element in an effective mentoring program. Gathering pertinent information was found to be one of the most important beginning teacher needs in the research conducted by Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992) and was prioritized as second most important by Gordon (1991).

As early as 1951, Wey surveyed beginning teachers and their principals to determine the types of difficulties beginners faced. Analysis of the results, in
rank order, indicated that beginners had difficulty with discipline, lack of equipment and materials, adjusting to the teaching assignment, adjusting to the broad range of student abilities, student motivation, recordkeeping, teaching strategies, and developing relations with supervisors (Wey, 1951).

Veenman (1984) reviewed 83 research studies dating from 1960 to 1984 and identified the eight most frequently perceived problems of beginning teachers (in rank order) to be: (1) classroom discipline, (2) motivating students, (3) dealing with individual differences, (tie 4/5) assessing students’ work and relations with parents, (tie 6/7) organization of classwork and insufficient materials and supplies, and (8) dealing with the problems of individual students. The problems of beginning elementary teachers and secondary teachers were very similar though there were slight variances in rank order.

Gordon (1991) also conducted a literature review and found the highest ranked need was classroom management. Considerable documentation confirmed that the need identified as the greatest need by Wey in 1951 and Veenman in 1984 continued to be a major problem for beginning teachers as attested to by Gordon's 1991 review of the literature on beginning teacher needs. Enz and Cook (1992) ranked management of students along with the planning and delivery of instruction as a high level concern. Thomas and Kiley (1994) found highly statistical differences and noted that classroom control, management, and discipline was ranked as third of the top five classroom concerns by beginning teachers in that study.

The planning, organizing, and managing of instruction was highly ranked as a concern in several studies (Enz & Cook, 1992; Gordon, 1991; Thomas & Kiley, 1994; Veenman, 1984). In one study, Odell (1989) conducted a series of interviews throughout the school year with a random sample of first-year elementary teachers to determine the categories of greatest concern during their induction period. The responses revealed the greatest need expressed
was for assistance with instructional issues which, along with the second greatest identified need, managerial issues, matches two of the most frequently identified needs of beginning teachers. These needs remained evident in this study across the school year.

Other needs of beginning teachers were evidenced through the work of various researchers. Obtaining instructional resources and materials ranked high as a need in several studies (Feiman-Nemser, & Parker, 1992; Freiberg et al., 1994; Gordon, 1991; Veenman, 1984). Other highly ranked needs of beginning teachers included having a clearer definition of what is expected of them and how they are doing (Freiberg et al., 1994), operating within the culture of the school (Enz & Cook, 1992), and dealing with individual students’ needs, differences, and learning problems (Gordon, 1991; Thomas & Kiley, 1994; Veenman, 1984).

The principals in Veenman’s (1984) study concurred with many of the problems identified by the beginning teachers. Principals identified classroom discipline, motivating students, teaching slow learners, organizing classes, assessing students’ progress, and devising schemes of work as the major problems beginners had. Huling-Austin, Putman, and Galvez-Hjornevik (1985) added locating materials, knowing how to get started, and performing as well as other teachers as identified needs. The beginners in their study noted that there was a decrease in the intensity of these concerns during the second semester of teaching. Odell (1986), in a study of beginning teachers, noted that initially the primary needs of teachers included obtaining information about the school district and obtaining resources and materials to teach. Later in the year, beginning teachers became more concerned with teaching strategies and the whole instructional process. In both of these studies, authors noted that the needs of the beginning teachers changed as the school year progressed.
Several researchers have investigated the reasons why beginning teachers struggle with their new role as teacher. Frequently mentioned problems included teaching in an area where they had little or no training, time-consuming extracurricular activities, not knowing the norms of the school, poor physical facilities and lack of equipment and materials, isolation from the mainstream of the school, lack of understanding of district and school expectations, and inadequate supervision (Kurtz, 1983; Ryan et al., 1980; Veenman, 1984). These identified problems exacerbate an already difficult role as a beginning classroom instructor. The support of a mentor can help to respond to the needs of the beginner and ease the difficulties of the beginning teacher's induction period.

The Role of Mentors

Since recent years have brought increased attention to the needs of beginning teachers and the need for more formal, well-planned teacher induction programs, more attention has been given to the experienced teacher who will serve in the role of mentor. As roles for the mentor are identified, characteristics which will serve the mentor well are also articulated. The mentor role requires a diversity of responses.

Mentors can fill the role of encourager, helping to meet the often-cited concern of assisting the beginning teacher to fit into the larger school organization (Enz & Cook, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Gordon, 1991). A further implication of the Enz & Cook study was that the mentor, then, needed to be a caring, active listener who can articulate the art of teaching, and he or she should be able to offer candid, regular, supportive feedback. Ganser (1991) noted the need for the mentor to be able and willing to provide support for the beginning teacher.

Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992) identified the sharing of materials and methods as one of the activities from their study which mentors can provide
to smooth the beginning teacher's entrance to the school. Similarly, the planning, organizing, and managing of the materials and instruction was seen to be a need the mentor could fill (Enz & Cook, 1992; Gordon, 1991; Thomas & Kiley, 1994; Veenman, 1984).

Freiberg et al. (1994) noted the need for the mentor to provide frequent feedback to beginning teachers to let them know how they are doing. The mentor needs to be close to the beginning teacher in order to know the specific needs and problems which the beginner is facing. The mentor needs to fill a role of building collaboration, shared inquiry, and networking in a supportive environment (Enz & Cook, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992). Working together collaboratively provides mutual support for the mentor and the beginning teacher.

Using effective teaching methods was determined to be an important function of the mentor according to Gordon's (1991) discussion of a beginning teacher assistance program. Freiberg et al. (1994) agreed that modeling effective teaching practices is an important mentor role and that the mentor should demonstrate effective teaching practices and behaviors in reciprocal observation opportunities. Freiberg et al. concluded from the two-year study that mentors can mediate many of the problems beginning teachers have through encouragement, resources, information, and modeling good teaching.

Research findings from a study using the multiple procedures of a series of three in-depth structured interviews and a questionnaire concluded that beginning teachers who were mentored had less difficulty in student motivation, more success in responding to student misbehavior, and more positive relationships with students (Varah et al., 1989). Findings also revealed more positive feelings toward teaching among mentored teachers than among the control group, and three times as many experimental group teachers indicated
an intention to continue in the teaching profession than those teachers who were not provided induction support through the mentor role.

Principals in the study found that the beginning teachers in the induction program had fewer student referrals, fewer parent calls, and fewer student complaints and contributed these findings to the close working relationship between the beginning teacher and the mentor (Varah et al., 1989). All principals in the experimental schools found that the induction program was effective because of the assistance provided to the beginning teacher and because of the professional stimulation received by the mentor. One by-product of the mentoring role was determined to be the increased professional stimulation of the mentor and the leadership qualities developed by the mentor through the process of working with the beginning teacher. Mentors interviewed in a study by Thies-Sprinthall (1986) reported that the new responsibilities and professional opportunities resulting from their mentoring experience had provided rejuvenation and energization of their careers. McKenna (1990) not only found increased job satisfaction in the mentors she interviewed but noted significant differences in those mentors who received release time compared to those who received no release time to conduct mentoring activities.

McKenna’s (1990) study provided further evidence of program benefits when she postulated that participation in the mentor program was linked to higher student achievement. Little (1990) agreed with McKenna’s program benefits, but noted other areas of concern. Some mentors experienced frustration juggling the commitment to their proteges and to their students. Time away from the classroom presented some internal conflicts while additional external conflicts were experienced from friction caused by jealous peers. Varah, et al. (1989) indicated that those involved in the induction process of the beginning teacher needed to spend time together planning for the beginning
teacher and that the goals of the program and roles of the various participants needed to be defined.

Though most studies have declared a positive impact of the mentor's relationship on the beginning teacher's development, some have noted failings in the mentor program. In a study by Kilgore and Kozisek (1989), the mentor role was determined to not have been fulfilled. Though the mentors did provide an initial link and appropriate information for the beginning teacher, the support later in the year did not meet the expectations of the beginning teachers. Mentors were not given support from their principals such as training, extra pay, or recognition for their role as mentor. Some of the beginning teachers questioned the need for an assigned mentor and several sought their own mentor, someone closer to their own age and interests. The authors concluded that mentors and principals need to be aware of the changing needs of the beginning teachers and respond to those needs.

In a study of first-year teachers, Hoffman et al. (1986) found that the mentor was the most significant positive force for the beginner during that first year of experience. The beginning teachers not only rated their mentors as highly influential, they noted that the mentors were increasingly influential as the year progressed. One hundred eight teachers who had participated in a beginning teacher program responded to a questionnaire. Ninety-six percent rated the mentor as an important element in the induction process. The respondents said that the mentors provided encouragement and help in improving their teaching. The beginning teachers found that their mentors provided "positive reinforcement, guidance and moral support, patience and understanding and a shoulder to cry on" (p. 23). They liked having one mentor formally assigned to them to provide feedback, assistance, and answers to questions.
Fagan and Walter (1982) surveyed 107 teachers and found that "74 percent of (beginning teachers) credited their mentor with helping them to gain self-confidence; 40 percent said their mentor helped them learn the technical aspects of their job; 67 percent reported that their mentor listened to their ideas and encouraged their creativity; and 51 percent indicated that their advisor helped them better understand the school's administration" (p. 116). Kilgore, Ross, and Zbikowski (1990) analyzed interviews with beginning teachers and found that teachers who worked with supportive colleagues and administrators in schools tended to exhibit more mature reflection and reflective judgment.

Odell and Ferraro (1992) conducted formal interviews, questionnaires, and structured observations in order to provide a summative evaluation of the Albuquerque Public Schools/University of New Mexico Teacher Induction Program. They used a five-point scale and found that beginning teachers felt very positive about their involvement in the program (4.4 on a scale with 5 high), and further felt the program significantly impacted their professional growth as teachers (4.4). The researchers found that beginning teachers reported that mentors were available when needed (4.8), were helpful (4.4), were supportive (4.8) and offered constructive feedback (4.3).

At the end of each year for five years, principals in the Odell and Ferraro (1992) study responded to a five-point scale item questionnaire in which they expressed very favorable views of the program (4.7). They believed that visitations to beginning teachers' classrooms by mentors was very important (4.9), and found the communication between mentors and principals as useful (4.6). One interesting aside to the research data gathered was that principals observed benefits of the teacher induction program generalizing to the entire teaching staff. They noted a "multiplier effect" of a positive atmosphere in their schools resulting from the teacher interactions and collaborations. Principals in the Odell and Ferraro study also noted that the assistance of the mentor
teachers somewhat relieved them of the burden of not being able to interact as frequently with beginning teachers as they would like.

The Role of the Principal

Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) commented: "The well-known statement 'as the principal goes so goes the school' is still apropos. There have probably been more research findings to substantiate this point than any other topic concerning the principal" (p. 12). The principal is indeed a key element in the success of any school endeavor. Therefore, the role the principal plays in instructional leadership, instructional supervision, and beginning teacher induction may positively impact the beginning teacher's success.

Instructional Leadership Role

The challenge for principals to serve in a proactive role as the school's instructional leader has been a major focus of the educational literature for the past decade (Weise & Holland, 1994). With the demographic shift of the teaching force to include a greater number of beginning teachers, it is even more important for the principal to assume the responsibility of instructional leader. The principal will have to closely attend to the needs and the performances of beginning teachers to assure that they receive the direction and support they need.

In response to Veenman's (1984) findings that beginning teachers' needs can be classified as either person-specific or situation-specific, the principal is responsible for meeting the beginning teacher's personal needs as a new professional and their situational needs as one of many contributing members of the larger organization (Weise & Holland, 1994). A suggested beginning point for the principal is to establish a creative culture wherein the principal serves as facilitator and energizer in this process (Norris, 1994). Norris stressed that the principal cannot fully actualize the process alone but reflects the personal orientation of the staff. This culture provides a vehicle for
the principal to address Veenman's first classification, that is, meeting the beginning teacher's personal needs as a professional.

Building on the idea of a creative culture, Norris et al. (1988) stressed the importance of the principal as leader involving the staff in embracing a common mission and developing the entire human relations of the school. This leadership role of the principal begins to address the situation-specific needs of the beginning teacher to be a productive unit in the larger organization of the school. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988) suggested that the principal is responsible for the growth and development of his or her followers. By creating an environment of mutual trust and collaboration, where everyone is a continual learner, the principal will not only choose beginning teachers who share this vision but will support them through a proactive stance as an instructional leader (Weise & Holland, 1994).

Deal (1987) noted that, overall, the effective schools' literature has made a significant contribution to education. However, he argued that there is no empirical evidence that, if a principal provides instructional leadership, the school will perform at a higher level. Although Deal believed the connection between effective schools and effective principals is still debatable, he concluded that there is little disagreement that the principal maintains the responsibility for overseeing instruction and supervising staff.

Instructional Supervision Role

An assumption that is prevalent in the literature on instructional supervision is that supervision is especially important for beginning teachers (Hughes, 1994; Weise & Holland, 1994). Clinical supervision, common to nearly all forms of instructional supervision, originated in the Harvard Master of Arts in Teaching Program (MAT) which was designed to prepare beginning teachers (Cogan, 1973). The process of providing student teachers with a mentor teacher charged with supervision responsibilities reflects the intent to
provide specific guidance to a beginner in the field of education. The task of instructional supervisor for the formative development and evaluation of beginning and veteran teachers is frequently accorded to a curriculum coordinator or supervisor. The principal's role is frequently seen as that of performance evaluator with the principal generally acknowledged as the individual who provides a summative evaluation of the teacher's performance.

Though principals directly supervise beginning teachers, there is sufficient evidence in the literature to suggest that beginning teachers require more time than the principal can be reasonably expected to provide (Acheson & Gall, 1987; Cogan, 1973; Garman, 1982). The clinical supervision cycle is repeated frequently and requires an intensity of time as well as a high level of skill and knowledge about the grade levels and subjects taught by the beginning teacher (Garman). Additionally, the literature suggests that supervision is most effective when the supervisor tailors it to the individual beginning teacher (Blumberg, 1980; Cogan, 1973; Grimmett, Rostad, & Ford, 1992). In Glickman's (1985) model of developmental supervision, this individualism is articulated. Glickman suggested that the supervisor should select the strategy which is most pertinent to the needs of the beginning teacher in determining whether to be directive, collaborative, or nondirective in their work together.

The supervisory relationship is optimally seen as a collegial relationship where the beginning teacher and the supervisor both give and receive support from each other (Alfonso & Goldsberry, 1982; Little, 1987; Smyth, 1984). This colleagueship is nonhierarchical (Cogan, 1973). Therefore, the principal is presented with a major obstacle since the principal is generally accorded the full responsibility and authority to evaluate the teaching competence and professional growth of each member of the faculty, including the beginning teacher. Under these circumstances, it is unreasonable to expect a beginning
teacher to reveal any personal limits in necessary skill or knowledge to the supervisor since that individual will later evaluate him or her.

The principal is expected to establish a learning environment which encourages a shared vision and articulates the role of the beginning teacher in the school organization, and he or she is expected to serve as leader (Smith & Andrews, 1989). Instructional supervision, cited as a principal’s responsibility, requires that the principal serve in a collegial relationship in a sustained effort to nurture the growth and development of the beginning teacher through an individualized program (Weise & Holland, 1994). Concurrently, the principal is expected to step out of this role as colleague to conduct summative evaluations. These contradictory roles lead one to examine the induction literature for implications for the role of the principal in beginning teacher induction.

**Beginning Teacher Induction Role**

The principal is a key professional in the participation and support of teacher induction practices (Edelfelt & Ishler, 1989). The teacher induction literature presents several roles for the principal for the induction of beginning teachers. The first role of the principal is to assign a mentor to the beginning teacher as a primary source of help (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Little, 1990). The principal is most often the individual who is charged with the selection and assignment of mentors (Weise & Holland, 1994). Further, the principal has the important function to see that beginning teachers not only carry out plans made with a mentor but to frequently monitor the beginner’s progress through the process.

A second role for the principal discussed in the induction literature is to assure that efforts focus directly on the individual beginning teacher. The assignment of a mentor provides direct assistance for the specific needs identified by the beginning teacher. Emphasis in the role of the mentor is on the development of generic skills of teaching such as classroom management,
instructional competence, and lesson planning. These generic skills need to be shaped to specifically meet the identified needs of the individual beginning teacher. The skills directly impact performance examinations conducted by the principal and required for the beginning teacher’s permanent certification (Berry & Ginsberg, 1988; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1992).

The third role of the principal in beginning teacher induction, according to Weise and Holland (1994), is transmission of the organizational culture. An induction program should not only meet the beginning teacher’s competency requirements in the areas of basic knowledge and technical skills, but it should provide indoctrination into the culture of the school through the principal as well as through other personnel in the school (Huling-Austin, 1988). Learning to work successfully within a specific culture helps the beginner enter the “profession” of teaching as opposed to simply entering what the induction literature refers to as the “practice” of teaching (Weise & Holland, 1994, p. 225). As a member of the culture, the beginner moves from learning about the school to learning within the school.

Among the Holmes Group’s (1986) recommendations for the induction of beginning teachers, one recommendation is pertinent to this discussion. The Holmes Group recommended that the principal define the responsibilities of the beginning teacher so carefully as to potentially avoid assignments in which the beginner’s inexperience might result in failure. Appointments to the most difficult classes, to heavy teaching loads, and to incompatible teaching relationships, all of which are typical beginning teacher experiences, should be avoided (Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway, & Friesen, 1993).

The induction literature perceives the induction process as an extension of teacher education. As described earlier, the beginning teacher is vulnerable as he or she approaches the new responsibilities as teacher. Evaluation studies of beginning teacher induction programs have noted that the principal’s
involvement and interest in the beginner are important to the beginning teacher’s success (Brooks, 1986; Swanson, 1968). Where the principal is visible and maintains a positive presence, the beginning teacher feels accepted by the school’s authority figure and feels he or she meets with the principal’s approval (Hoffman, et al., 1985).

Sergiovanni (1987) described four functions of the ideal conception of the principalship: “planning, organizing, leading, and controlling” (p. 7). Within this schemata, Sergiovanni described each role. Planning means establishing the school goals. Organizing relates to the human, financial, and physical resources. Leading is used to refer to guiding and directing the personnel. Finally, controlling refers to the responsibilities of the principal for evaluation.

Sergiovanni’s (1987) four ideal principalship functions describe the responsibilities of the principal in establishing an induction program for beginning teachers. Historically, principals have placed a low priority on the first two functions of planning and organizing as related to induction programs. In the mid-1960s a three-year study was conducted on teacher induction by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Recommendations emerged from that study for the improvement of induction practices, but few were followed (Hunt, 1968). Hunt noted that “there are sound ways of inducting teachers, and that the school and its principal play a critical role in this stage of the new teacher’s training” (p. 131). The principal needs to attend to the functions of planning and organizing. Klug (1988) noted that administrators may approach planning and organizing a teacher induction program with a hint of skepticism. He further noted that principals may “resent the implication that not enough was done in their own buildings in past years to assist beginning teachers” (p. 4).

Sergiovanni’s (1987) third function for the principal, leading, would ask the principal to be responsible for guiding and directing the induction program
and the personnel involved. The principal's role involves overseeing the induction program to facilitate the structure of the program. The fourth role of controlling suggests that the principal should reflect upon the induction program, evaluate it, and revise it as necessary to provide the support the beginning teacher needs.

The Principal's Role in Beginning Teacher Induction: Research Directions

Research studies have provided additional insights into the principal's role in beginning teacher induction. Only seven percent of the teachers in a study of over 200 beginning teachers in a 10 state region identified the principal as the individual who had helped them most during their first year of teaching (Gorton, 1973). Greenberg and Erly (1989) conducted a study of a large school system and the status of school building level context variables which impacted on the induction of the teachers into the schools. The most dramatic and important finding from a questionnaire administered to 368 teachers was the perception of the help provided by the administrators and colleagues in the building. The authors noted that administration and staff help was mentioned "eight times more than resources and over 13 times more frequently than logistical considerations, the third most frequent area cited" (p. 38). However, within the same study, there was even greater spread in the negative citations noting matters of "misassignment, multiple preparations, nonpermanent or inadequate classroom and other space, and difficult schedules, interruptions, (and) administrative demands" (p. 39). The authors contended that insufficient attention had been given to the potential success of induction programs resulting from the integral relations of administrative decisions.

Kilgore and Kozisek (1989) concluded beginning teachers were not treated differently than veteran teachers and that "job-embedded considerations for first-year teachers such as providing extra planning time, lighter loads; more observation and feedback; release time to visit other classrooms, work with the
mentor teacher or talk with other first-year teachers, and exemptions from
duties" (p. 109) were not being provided for first-year teachers. The authors
concluded from an extensive quantitative and qualitative study of support
offered for first-year teachers that principals treat beginning teachers like they
were treated and need to realize that teachers "enter with a set of skills that
need to be extended, refined, and developed" and that “the impact and role of
the schools must be redefined to meet the needs of the first-year teacher"
(p. 109). Kilgore and Kozisek further noted the powerful role that the principal
plays as a socializing force for beginning teachers.

Conclusions from Kilgore and Kozisek’s (1989) study indicated that “the
principal is a major force in helping to make the transition from student to
teacher a successful one” (p. 110). They found that principals in their study
varied in their degree of supervision. Though some principals were actively
involved with the beginning teachers throughout the year, most were perceived
by beginning teachers to be invisible. The teachers were left alone, allowed to
repeat errors, and were disappointed with the lack of administrative assistance
and support they received.

As a result of their study, Kilgore and Kozisek (1989) recommended that
principals increase supervision so that beginning teachers do not concentrate
on survival tactics rather than effective teaching practices. Included in the
recommendations was a staged entry process where principals are encouraged
not to see beginning teachers as finished products but rather as beginners who
need continuing supervision and instruction in order to develop into master
teachers. At a time when the beginning teacher is so vulnerable, supervision is
a key element. Principals are often reluctant to visit beginning teachers too early
in the year, but Jensen (1986) noted that supervision is needed so that
beginning teachers do not repeat errors. More involvement from the principal in
the mentoring of beginning teachers was one of the positive impacts from the Texas Model Teacher Induction Project (Huling-Austin et al., 1985).

Kester and Marockie (1987) found that most districts consider the primary purpose of induction to be orientation to the district and the community. This often involves a one- or two-hour meeting in which the district handbook and policy manual are distributed. Kozisek (1988) noted that there is a conflict between what administrators and beginning teachers see as sufficient orientation. Administrators see induction as a short-term process while teachers view it as a long-term process. Kozisek commented that school personnel need to reconsider the quality of their formal school orientations and better plan orientation activities including more in-classroom assistance. Grant and Zeichner (1981) noted the need to identify and personalize the support based upon the individual teacher's needs.

Administrators often unintentionally set beginning teachers up for failure by not taking care in making course assignments, assigning physical facilities, and overloading extra-class assignments (Kozisek, 1988). She continued to state that principals must be certain that district expectations are clear and that the supervision and administrative contact the beginner receives does not come only when problems arise.

Principal support is important in the development and implementation of teacher induction programs (Hoffman, et al., 1986). Principals serve a multifaceted role as evaluator, resource, support assistant, and administrator (Godley et al., 1989). The four principalship functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling describe the tasks of the principal in establishing a functional, effective induction program (Sergiovanni, 1987). Everyone must work together to effect positive change under the principal's guidance.
Selection of Mentors

"Research on mentoring... is largely exploratory and the findings are at best tentative. Little is known about the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are needed by mentor teachers" (Pajak & Carr, 1993, p. 268). In this statement, the authors point to the limited research data available to administrators as they select veteran teachers to serve in the role of mentor. Kestner (1994) noted that the study of teacher induction and mentoring is a relatively new field and "much of the literature consists of recommendations based more on personal experience and informal observation than on carefully designed, empirical research" (p. 44). A joint study by the Tennessee Education Association and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory stated that careful mentor selection is an issue for concern (TEA & AEL, 1988). Since the mentor is the key individual who supports the beginning teacher, careful selection of a person who is qualified to carry out this role is crucial (Varah et al., 1989).

With the above in mind, this section of the literature will address the research questions pertinent to the characteristics used for mentor selection. Primary research will be addressed first and followed by interpersonal and professional characteristics identified not only in primary research studies but those utilized by districts and states throughout the United States.

Pajak and Carr (1993) studied a national sample of mentors who were identified by members of six professional organizations to investigate twelve dimensions of supervisory practice. An initial survey was conducted which asked respondents to rate twelve dimensions according to their importance to mentoring as it currently is and as it should be. A second survey was designed to further investigate the extent to which statements of knowledge, attitudes, and skills were relevant to the effective performance of the mentor’s duties. Because of the small number of respondents in the second survey (n=44), the researchers suggested strong caution in generalizing the findings.
Nonetheless, the following six dimensions of supervisory practice were rated highly: (1) staff development, (2) communication, (3) observation and conferencing, (4) service to teachers, (5) instructional program, and (6) personal development.

The first dimension, staff development, yielded strong agreement among mentors that knowledge of adult development was relevant to their role. Further, the mentors expressed commitment to continuing their professional development as among the strongest in agreement (Pajak & Carr, 1993).

Within the dimension of communication, mentors selected open and clear communication as essential. The factors of being open and approachable, encouraging mutual trust, writing clearly and concisely, listening attentively, and speaking clearly were selected with strong agreement among the mentors.

The third dimension, observation and conferencing, identified factors having strong mentor agreement including being knowledgeable about effective teaching strategies, lesson design, and classroom management techniques. Also valuing collegial relationships with teachers and establishing mutual trust and respect were deemed to be in strong agreement among the mentors.

Within the dimension of service to teachers, mentors noted the strong agreement in having knowledge of a variety of instructional techniques as well as a willingness to share resources and materials. Also noted in the dimension of service to teachers was the need to provide psychological support.

The instructional program dimension yielded strong agreement with the attitudes of awareness of research on effective instruction and a commitment to instructional improvement. The final dimension, personal development, found strong agreement with mentors being self-directed, modeling ethical behavior, having a sense of humor, being a reflective practitioner, being willing to exert
leadership, staying current with professional literature, and serving as a role model for others (Pajak & Carr, 1993).

Pennell (1992), in an unpublished doctoral dissertation, asked respondents to rank order qualifications considered to be most important in selecting mentors in order to assure that people who would be most helpful to beginning teachers were chosen. Three-fourths or more of the respondents ranked the top five choices: (1) interest in mentoring/helping beginning teachers, (2) willingness to devote time and effort to mentoring, (3) effectiveness of teaching performance, (4) interest in professional development/attitude about being an active and open learner, and (5) competence in social and public relations skills. Also highly ranked were the ability to communicate clearly, sensitivity to viewpoint/autonomy of others, and ability to build strong working relationships with co-workers.

Roseberry (1991) conducted a qualitative doctoral study of mentoring among women in academic library administration. Among the findings noted was that when her informants described their mentors, the most frequently used descriptors included intelligence, ability, capacity for hard work, ethics, creativity, and initiative.

Bahr (1985) conducted a study of mentoring in the field of nursing. She used a researcher-constructed, structured interview schedule to gather her data. The personal characteristics of a mentor which were mentioned by her respondents (in rank order) included (1) honesty, (2) expertise, (3) interest in another, and four equally valued characteristics: astuteness, political savvy, good interpersonal relationship skills, and candidness.

Pennell's (1992) study further queried the respondents to determine who had the best information about whether a teacher has the qualifications and potential to become a good mentor: principal, department/grade level chairperson, peers, principals with the recommendation of department/grade
level chairperson, principal with the recommendation of peers, department/
grade level chairperson with the recommendation of principal, department/
grade level chairperson with the recommendation of peers, or the prospective
mentors themselves. Though Pennell found some inconsistency in the reported
rankings of the various groups studied, she found that the principal or the
principal with peer or department/grade level chairperson recommendation was
the most consistently reported response. Principals noted that they either
selected the mentor alone or with peer recommendation. However, they
believed that self-selection is the least preferable option.

An important finding resulted from a controversy over the career ladder
which was connected to merit pay. Teachers in Pennell’s (1992) sample began
to self select into the mentor training program in order to move up on the career
ladder and receive merit pay. However, without being selected for assignment
purposes, some of these mentors could not complete their internship and
therefore were not certified as mentors. Pennell found that it was in the actual
assignment of mentors to beginning teachers that principals really practiced
selection.

In a response to research articles presented in an induction and
mentoring theme issue of the Journal of Teacher Education, Rauth (Rauth &
Bowers, 1986) noted that it was fortunate that mentor teachers often voluntarily
apply and submit to a screening procedure to be selected as mentors because
the author believed principals’ judgments could be quite unreliable in
identifying the most effective teachers for mentoring roles. Rauth noted a
preference for more involvement by joint committees of teachers and
administrators in the mentor selection process.

Murphy (1992) stated, in his doctoral dissertation, that there seems to be
no standardized or consistent set of criteria for the selection of a mentor. He
noted that typically the teacher's eligibility to become a mentor is based on testimony by peers and administrators.

The literature indicates that there seems to be a general belief that if a teacher is effective in the classroom, then he or she will be an effective mentor. Since the mentor's role includes assisting with the areas in which beginning teachers typically have identified needs and a master teacher would most likely possess those necessary skills, the suggestion that classroom effectiveness would transfer to mentor effectiveness seems to be credible. However, Thies-Sprinthall (1986) noted that this conjecture is not necessarily true and stated that training is necessary for the mentor to move from successful teacher to potentially successful mentor. Kent (1985) encouraged training for mentors as a part of the selection process. He noted that teachers who are to become mentors need additional skills and knowledge, particularly in the areas of adult learning and change theory. Kent noted that mentor teachers, who were part of a teacher advisor project in Marin County, California, were found to need preparation for their work.

Wagner (1985) agreed with Thies-Sprinthall and Kent when she stated that training for the mentor is an important step. In her review of the California Teacher Mentor Program, Wagner found that the mentor selection criteria failed to include a knowledge of adult learning theory. She stated that “the authors of the legislation seem to have made a very tenuous assumption that the ability to work well with children implies an ability to work successfully with adults” (p. 25).

Several researchers supported training as a prerequisite for selection as a mentor teacher (Bey & Holmes, 1990; Bowers & Eberhart, 1988; Brooks, 1987; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1985; George, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1989a; Stroble & Cooper, 1988; Thies-Sprinthall, 1986; Wagner, 1985). Odell (1990), based on data retrieved from mentor teachers' logs, provided a list of topics needed to be
presented in mentor training. These included school district philosophy, needs, and priorities; district policies and operating procedures; stages of teacher development; clinical supervision, conferencing skills, and classroom observation skills; needs of beginning teachers; encouraging self reflection and self-reliance in the beginning teacher; and working with the adult learner.

Huling-Austin (1992) noted the benefit of training in problem solving or schema theory, approaches to subject matter, and the use of case studies.

Rauth stated that all too often “short, sporadic, and piece-meal” training takes place rather than a carefully planned training program (Rauth & Bowers, 1986, p. 39). Huffman and Leak (1986) described a program in which mentors began their work with only a half day of orientation. Rauth called this lack of training irresponsible. The Los Angeles Unified School District has offered two weeks of training similar to that offered by Georgia school districts (Wagner, 1985). In each case, this training included adult learning theory. Thies-Sprinthall (1986) agreed that training is necessary and noted that induction program planners should worry about well-meaning but poorly trained buddy teachers passing on the wrong set of instructional strategies and secrets of success to the beginning teacher.

Newberry (1978) conducted a field study with beginning teachers and among the findings noted that beginning teachers hesitate to request assistance and experienced teachers hesitate to offer it. A planned program where the mentor is trained to work collaboratively with a beginning teacher, ease the personal relationship, provide confidentiality, and be prepared to support instructional and other school concerns will provide structure for the mentor’s task. As the mentor supports the beginning teacher, an atmosphere will be created in which the beginner will then feel comfortable to request the needed assistance.
In summary, the characteristics which are identified in the literature for the selection of mentors can be organized into two categories: interpersonal characteristics and professional/pedagogical characteristics. The state and local programs investigated in this review of the literature, as well as many authors who write in the areas of teacher induction and mentoring, noted characteristics used in the selection of mentors and often provided insight into the selection process. This information will be used along with the primary research noted above to identify the interpersonal and professional characteristics which seem to be appropriate as well as the selection process which has been used in various locations. Research and expository data regarding the approaches to identifying potential mentors will be presented.

**Interpersonal characteristics**

Many of the mentor selection characteristics prevalent in the literature can be classified as interpersonal. These characteristics describe an ideal mentor's willingness to work with a beginning teacher as well as a mentor's interactions or relationships with the beginning teacher. Each of the items selected has been identified as desirable by a number of mentoring programs or studies.

*Is willing to devote the time needed.* A characteristic with which researchers have overwhelmingly agreed is that the mentor must be willing to devote the time necessary to provide the support the beginning teacher requires. Mentoring a beginning teacher requires after school work as well as a potential for staff development sessions on Saturday or during the summer. Mentors frequently give up their own planning period in order to resolve issues identified by their paired beginner. A willingness to devote the time required to do a good job of serving as mentor to a beginning teacher implies a commitment by the mentor to the profession of teaching and to the beginners entering the profession (Eagan, 1986; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Huffman & Leak,
Is team-oriented and collaborative. Mentors are seen by many programs as being people-oriented and secure. They like and trust their paired beginning teachers and honor the autonomy of the individual beginner. This characteristic, common to many programs, reflects the willingness of the mentor to work with the beginner in a collaborative relationship, being interested in the beginning teacher's work, valuing the collegial relationship, and serving as a team player in all endeavors (Alleman, Cochran, Doverspike, & Newman, 1986; Bahr, 1985; Clawson, 1978; Eagan, 1986; Gray & Gray, 1985; Guyton, Fox, & Sisk, 1989; Heller & Sindelar, 1991; Newberry, 1978; Odell, 1989; Pajak & Carr, 1993).

Communicates effectively. Communication is a key characteristic with any human interaction. Program developers not only recommended that mentors be clear and effective communicators, they also valued candidness, sensitivity, and being an empathetic, active listener. In addition to listening attentively, speaking clearly was valued. The Los Angeles Unified School District specifically noted that the prospective mentor would need to be able to communicate well in writing. Candidness and honesty were valued characteristics in many programs (Bahr, 1985; Eagan, 1986; George, 1989; Haensly & Edlind, 1966; Jensen, 1987; Lowney, 1986; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Pennell, 1992; Wagner, 1985).

Maintains confidentiality and trust. Confidentiality is frequently listed as a desirable characteristic in mentor programs described in the literature. The interaction between the beginning teacher and the mentor demands a trusting relationship if the pair is to discuss openly the problems the beginning teacher faces and to seek solutions to those problems. One program emphasized the importance of mutual trust and respect. Approachability was another facet of
this interpersonal characteristic allowing the beginning teacher to feel comfortable in discussing confidential matters with the mentor (Bey & Hightower, 1990; Eagan, 1986; Gordon, 1991; Newberry, 1978; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Wagner, 1985).

Works effectively with adults. Knowledge of adult learning theory and development was cited in the literature as a characteristic desirable in a prospective mentor. Having excellent skills in working with adults was considered a desirable trait for a mentor to possess. However, programs do not include adult learning theory as a mentor trait consistently. Several writers pointed to the need for training in this area prior to serving as a mentor. The authors implied that competence in social and public relations skills results from the ability to work effectively with adults in the school (Gordon, 1991; Haensly & Edlind, 1986; Odell, 1989; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Pennell, 1992; Wagner, 1985).

Is self-directed. Since one function of the mentor is to offer assistance, a mentor characteristic mentioned in many program descriptions is confidence in offering assistance to the beginning teacher. Being self-directed was seen as a positive characteristic allowing the mentor to respond to the beginner's needs without direction. The ability to be flexible as well as secure as an individual was seen as a positive characteristic. Bahr's research indicated that a quality respected was astuteness. The mentor should have a sense of timing about whether to intervene or step back (Alleman, Cochran, et al., 1986; Bahr, 1985; Fields, 1988; Gray & Gray, 1985; Guyton, et al., 1989; Haensly & Edlind, 1986; Newberry, 1978; Ohio, 1990).

Is warm and sensitive to others. A mentor characteristic used in mentor selection in several programs was warmth, caring, and sensitivity to others. The mentor is expected to genuinely respect his or her colleague. The characteristic of being altruistic within this context suggests that the mentor cares enough
about the welfare of the beginning teacher to put his or her wishes and needs ahead of the mentor's own wishes when appropriate. Providing psychological support for the beginner was valued (Alleman, Cochran, et al., 1986; Bey & Hightower, 1990; Eagan, 1986; Gray & Gray, 1985; Guyton, et al., 1989; Lowney, 1986; Pajak & Carr, 1993).

Is professional and ethical. Several programs encouraged the selection of a mentor who maintains a positive, professional attitude. A mentor who is supportive of the educational program of the school and system causes less friction. Modeling ethical behavior was a valued characteristic of the mentor (Bower & Yarger, 1989; Guyton, et al., 1989; Jones & Walters, 1994; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Roseberry, 1991).

Maintains a sense of humor. The role of the beginning teacher can be very stressful. A mentor with a good, positive sense of humor can ease stressful situations. Enthusiasm can be contagious. A sense of humor brings balance and creates enthusiasm in situations and was sought after as a part of mentor selection in several programs (Haensly & Edlind, 1986; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Pennell, 1992).

Is willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor. The mentor is expected to play a number of roles in order to assist the beginning teacher through both pleasant and difficult experiences. Some of these roles, such as confidante, advocate, and critic, can be difficult. The mentor has to be willing to perform the various roles expected, however. Mentors not only provide moral support, they also provide guidance and feedback to the beginning teacher. The mentor should be willing to be a continual learner and extend the skills and responsibilities necessary to work with a new member of the teaching profession (Bey & Hightower, 1990; Gray & Gray, 1985; Odell, 1989; TEA and AEL, 1988; Varah, et al., 1986; Wagner, 1985).
Professional Characteristics

A second group of mentor selection characteristics prevalent in the literature can be classified as professional. These characteristics describe an ideal mentor's pedagogical effectiveness. Each of the items selected has been identified as desirable by a number of mentoring programs or studies.

**Is an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager.** The greatest need frequently identified for beginning teachers was discipline and classroom management. Therefore, being an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager is a characteristic valued in a mentor to serve as a role model for the struggling beginner. The effective classroom manager who is knowledgeable about classroom management techniques and is skilled in maintaining discipline and managing classroom conflict can effectively impact on the beginning teacher's need to manage his or her own classroom (Gordon, 1991; Guyton, et al., 1989; Odell, 1990; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Steuteville-Brodinsky, et al., 1989).

**Demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods.** The ability to demonstrate effective teaching strategies and methods was seen as a valuable characteristic in several programs nationally. Mentors are expected to demonstrate mastery of a range of teaching strategies and use of a variety of effective instructional skills and techniques. Programs often cited the characteristics of being knowledgeable of instructional methods and demonstrating expertise in instruction (Bahr, 1985; Benningfield, et al., 1984; Bower & Yarger, 1989; Freiberg et al., 1994; Gordon, 1991; Lowney, 1986; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Pennell, 1992; Newberry, 1978; TEA & AEL, 1988).

**Demonstrates expertise in subject matter.** Authors writing on mentor characteristics have cited knowledge of subject matter as an important professional characteristic of a mentor. Some programs described this
knowledge as expertise; others as commitment to the subject matter; others as possessing knowledge, skills, and expertise in a particular domain; whereas others used the description of conveying enthusiasm for the subject to students (Bahr, 1985; Bower & Yarger, 1989; Haensly & Edlind, 1986; Jones & Walters, 1994; Lowney, 1986).

Plans effective lessons and units of instruction. Many programs selected mentors based upon their ability to plan and organize for instruction and their knowledge of effective lesson design. Some authors defined this ability to include demonstrating leadership skills in the planning and organizing of lessons and units. Others used the terminology of taking initiative in organizing projects (Bower & Yarger, 1989; Enz & Cook, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Gordon, 1991; Guyton, et al., 1989; Jones & Walters, 1994; Lowney, 1986; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Thomas & Kiley, 1994; Veenman, 1984).

Is knowledgeable of curriculum, resources, learning theory, and research. This characteristic set was described in a variety of ways: willingness to stay current with the latest research on teaching and learning; having the courage to share ideas and initiate change; having a thorough understanding of the school, the curriculum, learning theories, growth and development, principles of learning, and evaluation procedures; and staying current on the professional literature with a commitment to instructional improvement (Fullan, 1993; Lowney, 1986; Ohio, 1990; Pajak & Carr, 1993; TEA & AEL, 1988; Varah et al., 1986).

Is respected by colleagues. Programs variously described this characteristic as having the respect of his or her colleagues or having evidence of professional stature. This characteristic implies that the prospective mentor is a skillful teacher recognized by peers as highly competent and serves as a role model for others (Gray & Gray, 1985; Guyton, et al., 1989; Heller & Sindelar,
Holds high expectations for students. Program descriptions noted that prospective mentors should convey enthusiasm for learning to both teachers and students; believe that all children can learn and succeed; foster the maximum intellectual and social development of each student; and hold high expectations for students. Mentors should be successful in fostering excellent student performance in order to help the beginning teacher with that goal. They should be willing to give special attention to students requiring help, believe in the student's ability to succeed, be competent to teach various student ability levels, have a thorough understanding of child growth and development; and use appropriate grading standards (Jones & Walters, 1994; Lowney, 1986; Ohio, 1990; Pennell, 1992; Varah, et al., 1986).

Understands and follows school policies and procedures. Since knowledge of school policies and procedures was noted to be an important perceived need by beginning teachers, several state and district programs listed an understanding of school policies and procedures among the characteristics recommended for use in the selection of mentors. A parallel cited characteristic is knowledge of school district and system level policies as well as knowledge of the larger community (Fagan & Walter, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Freiberg, et al., 1994; Ganser, 1991; Gordon, 1991; Ohio, 1990).

Demonstrates effective conferencing skills. Authors described this characteristic in a variety of ways. The importance of observation skills was stressed along with the ability to translate systematically gathered data to the beginning teacher. Competence in being reflective about teaching combined with skill in effectively communicating those reflections was seen as an important mentor characteristic. Mentors need to be willing to share information
and be able to provide guidance and counseling through well developed 
conferencing skills (Clawson, 1980; Godley, Wilson, & Klug, 1989; Gordon,

**Demonstrates leadership skills.** Some authors noted that beyond the 
knowledge of curriculum, resources, learning theory, effective teaching 
strategies, and subject knowledge they sought a mentor who was a change 
agent having the ability to initiate change and provide leadership in such 
endeavors. They noted that a successful mentor shares power and expertise 
with his or her beginning teacher, takes a personal interest in the beginner’s 
career, and encourages the beginner to initiate ideas and be a risk-taker. 
Mentors are willing to exert leadership with their paired beginners. Mentors 
who are leaders see the relationship as a developmental one (Enz & Cook,
1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Fields, 1988; Fullan, 1993; Gordon,
1991; Gray & Gray, 1985; Kozisek, 1988; Pajak & Carr, 1993; Varah, et al.,
1986).

A prerequisite criterion for becoming a mentor in Georgia is having three 
years of teaching experience. Many programs also subscribe to that criterion. 
In fact other districts and states specifically require that that experience be at the 
site and district in which the mentor will be operating. The veteran teacher in a 
school has the advantage of being familiar with the layout of the building, the 
personnel, the curriculum, the expectations of the administration, and the 
policies and procedures of the district and school. This site and district 
experience will serve the mentor well when dealing with the beginning 
teacher’s need to become familiar with the facility and personnel as well as the 
policies and procedures under which he or she is expected to operate (Kozisek,
1988; Ohio, 1990; Shulman & Bernhardt, 1990; Steuteville-Brodinsky, et al.,
Selection Process

In the literature review, several variations for the mentor selection process were noted. Some programs nationally require that the potential mentor submit an application which requests data pertinent for successfully serving in a mentor role. A test is part of the selection process in some sites. Particularly in states where a career ladder program is in place, the entrance exam helps to prioritize candidates. Sometimes interested teachers are allowed to nominate themselves, as in the Oregon program. However, self-nomination is typically the first step in a multi-step process. Based upon the research which suggests that the mentor should be respected by his or her peers, many programs include peer nomination in the selection process.

An interview may be a part of the selection process. In California the interview is used in conjunction with the application to explore curriculum and teaching experience. The members of a selection panel may choose to conduct classroom observations as a part of the selection process. An alternative to this approach is for the candidate to prepare a videotape of a classroom lesson.

Similar to the principal's recommendation in the Georgia process, the recommendation of the administrator (principal, assistant principal, and/or central office administrator) is required as a part of the selection process in many sites. Committee input allows the mentors to be selected by a panel of peers. Committees are sometimes formed specifically as induction committees. Career ladder committees and professional development committees may serve in this selection capacity as well. The processes described are applied in various combinations depending upon the program or author (Gordon, 1991; Little, 1990; Lowney, 1986; Murphy, 1992; NCSI, 1989; Ohio, 1990; Pennell, 1992; Rauth & Bowers, 1986; Shulman & Bernhardt, 1990).
Assignment of Mentors

Beginning teachers who participated in the beginning teacher program studied by Huffman and Leak (1986) provided suggestions for improving the mentor's role. They suggested having a mentor who teaches the same grade level or subject as the beginning teacher. They also recommended that the mentor and the beginning teacher should have the same planning period.

Ganser (1991) delineated the need for the mentor who supports the beginning teacher to be familiar with the grade or content area of the beginner. A working knowledge of the expectations of a particular grade assignment or content area can make the mentor more effective. Ganser further noted his study's effectiveness factor of accessibility of mentors and beginning teachers in terms of time and physical proximity.

Huling-Austin (1988) found in her study that the greater the congruence between mentor and beginning teacher in terms of subject matter, grade level, room location, and compatible classroom ideologies, the more success the pair will enjoy. Finding a suitable match between a mentor and beginning teacher is a great factor in the success of a mentoring relationship (Huling-Austin et al., 1985).

Gender differences were found to cause friction and create problems within a mentor/beginning teacher team. Female beginning teachers with male mentors tended to deal with more overprotection, social distance, and discomfort than female beginning teachers with female mentors (Kram, 1983). Further, Hunt and Michael (1983) found the male-female mentor/beginning teacher relationship to be strained by public scrutiny and sexual tensions. In her 1992 study, Pennell found that age, race, and gender were unimportant. However, Clemson (1987) noted that age, race, gender, and some personality characteristics might all be worth consideration when selecting mentors from a pool of mentor candidates.
Alleman, Klein, and Newman (1984) found no significant differences related to gender in mentoring relationships. Alleman (1987) found the relationship was not affected by differences in race. Alleman's only significant finding regarding race was that minorities tend to benefit from a formal, specifically planned mentoring relationship and speculated that this was because minorities were less likely to find mentors in an informal setting.

Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) conducted a review of the literature and found that mentors and beginning teachers not only need to be paired in the same discipline, but should have one or more common preparations. Tennessee teachers recommended that having the mentor and beginning teacher teaching the same grade level/subject area added to the probability of success of a mentoring program. Odell (1990) noted that an assignment at the same grade level or academic area allowed the beginning teacher to get help with specific questions about curriculum and subject matter. Galvez-Hjornevik concluded in her review of the literature that mentors and beginning teachers should be easily accessible to each other. Mentors should be given written expectations and should frequently observe and provide feedback to the beginner.

Seifert (1986) agreed with Galvez-Hjornevik when he noted that the success of the mentor/beginning teacher relationship would be enhanced by matching teachers teaching the same discipline with one or more common preparations, and having classrooms in close proximity to each other. He also stressed the importance of having common planning periods and pairing teachers with compatible personalities and professional ideologies together.

Information regarding mentor/beginning teacher assignment which can be gleaned from the literature yields the following recommendations:

1) Select classrooms located in close proximity to one another (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Ganser, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1988; Kozisek, 1988; Seifert, 1986).


6) Consider the race/ethnicity of the mentor/beginning teacher pair (Alleman, 1987; Clemson, 1987; Cohen, 1995).

7) Consider the age relationship between the mentor/beginning teacher pair (Clemson, 1987; Kozisek, 1988; Levinson, 1978).


Though it is not always possible to employ all of these criteria when making mentor/beginning teacher assignments, these factors can positively facilitate the success of the arrangement (Huling-Austin, 1987). Generally the
mentor/beginning teacher pairing is conducted by the principal. Martin-Newman (1988) noted that timing is important since the opening days and weeks of a new school year are the most stressful times for beginning teachers. The assignment, therefore, should be made as quickly as feasible. Odell (1990) recommended that a match between the mentor and the beginning teacher should be voluntary. However, when this is not possible, the option of reassignment should remain open if the match is not successful.

Georgia: Beginning Teacher Programs

Georgia Beginning Teacher Program

After nearly a decade of development, a statewide program for beginning teachers was in place in Georgia in 1979 (McDonald, 1980). Georgia was the first state in the nation to develop and implement a teacher induction program. This initial Georgia program was a combination of assessment, improvement, and certification processes.

In order to certify educational personnel on the basis of demonstrated competency, state guidelines were established through Senate Bill 872. Seventeen Regional Assessment Centers were established throughout the state funded by approximately 3.5 million dollars budgeted annually from state funds. Teachers eligible for or possessing a non-renewable professional certificate or non-renewable provisional certificate and specified vocational teachers were targeted to receive the induction program (Defino & Hoffman, 1984).

Trained data collectors ascertained required levels of proficiency on an assessment device, the Teacher Performance Assessment Instrument (TPAI). The team consisted of a peer teacher data collector; an external Regional Assessment Center data collector; and an administrator data collector, one of whom had to possess a current, valid certificate in the same field as the beginning teacher. The beginning teachers were given an orientation to the
process and instrument prior to being interviewed and observed. The observation focused on teacher plans and materials, classroom procedures, and interpersonal skills. The beginners prepared a short 7-10 day unit and a portfolio for the team. The Regional Assessment Center data collector delivered the profiles of the assessment results and interpreted the assessment outcomes in a private conference (Defino & Hoffman, 1984).

The three evaluators had to agree on the level of competence achieved by the beginning teacher. If competence was not achieved, possible remedies were identified. These remedies might include staff development activities or work with a master teacher on the school staff. In 1980, the state of Georgia supported the assessment project by funding approximately 2.6 million dollars to support the regional centers, the training activities, and release time for the master teachers who were to work with the beginning teachers. Successful beginners received a renewable teaching certificate which indicated that they had achieved the competencies assessed (Defino & Hoffman, 1984).

Georgia terminated its performance-based certification process for beginning teachers in 1990. The dismantlement of the Georgia Beginning Teacher Program for performance-based certification and the establishment of the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program providing mentor support changed the role of peer teachers. This new focus on support rather than evaluation reflected the belief that the beginning teachers needed emotional and instructional support from mentors rather than evaluation leading to certification (Murphy, 1992).

**Georgia Mentor Teacher Program**

The roots of the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program are found in T.E.A.M.: Teacher Education and Mentoring Program which began in DeKalb County, Georgia, in 1988-1989. In this program, critical area (science, mathematics, and foreign language) teachers were provided support. These teachers were
employed as provisionally certified teachers and had not completed a professional education sequence, including student teaching (Bey & Hightower, 1990). The support teachers in T.E.A.M. were trained as mentors. From this beginning, the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) Program was designed, and training of trainers took place in June of 1990.

These trainers began their work in the summer of 1990 by providing staff development for potential mentors. Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs), large school systems, and colleges and universities with approved programs began the mentor training in many of Georgia's 183 school systems during the 1990-1991 school year (Murphy, 1992).

The Georgia Teacher Support Specialist Program lists six basic requirements for teacher consideration in order to serve as a Teacher Support Specialist (TSS), the title given to the mentor. The TSS candidate must:

1. Possess a valid renewable teaching certificate.
2. Show evidence of at least three years satisfactory teaching experience in the (P)K-12 levels.
3. Show evidence of excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated professional competencies.
4. Be willing to commit the additional time necessary for supervisory and support responsibilities, such as observation and conferencing, with the teacher being supported.
5. Have a commitment to the philosophy of teacher support.
6. Have at least two positive recommendations, one of which should be from the applicant's principal (Georgia Department of Education, 1990, p. 12).

In order to receive the endorsement on the professional teaching or service certificate in the state of Georgia as a Teacher Support Specialist, the school system must verify the first two criteria cited above: the TSS candidate must possess a valid renewable teaching certificate, and the TSS candidate must have a minimum of three years satisfactory teaching experience in the (P)K-12 levels. The other characteristics identified by Georgia's Beginning
Teacher Induction Program are provided as recommendations to the school and school system as they develop their own beginning teacher induction programs and mentoring components (Georgia Department of Education, 1990).

There is a wide range of procedures for operating the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. Some schools or school systems have developed a formal program while other schools and systems have not done so. In an unpublished position paper prepared for the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Initiative in Mathematics and Science, Padilla (1994) reviewed the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program in the form of the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) Program and data retrieved from meetings held across Georgia from 1992 to 1994 and provided a set of recommendations. The four recommendations which related to administrative procedures included a recommendation pertinent to this study. That recommendation was to encourage school systems to tighten their procedures regarding the operation of the TSS program and specifically mentioned the selection of mentors. Using the minimal criteria provided in the Beginning Teacher Induction Program Handbook, Padilla recommended that administrative elements should include "strict nomination requirements for selection of TSS candidates, with consideration of peer validation as a component of the selection criteria" (p. 15). This has not taken place in Georgia as a whole, though individual school systems may have formalized their approach to mentor selection and assignment. This research is designed to provide a description of the characteristics and concerns Georgia school principals and beginning teachers perceive as important for the selection and assignment of the ideal mentor.

Teachers who are selected to become Teacher Support Specialists in Georgia are required to complete a 100 clock-hour training sequence which is divided into a 50 clock-hour instructional course and a 50 clock-hour internship.
The candidate receives either 10 college credits or 10 staff development unit (SDU) credits depending upon whether the candidate takes the 100 clock-hour course sequence through a college or through a school system or RESA. Only programs approved by the Professional Standards Commission may offer credit which is used to apply for the required Teacher Support Specialist endorsement which is added to the teaching or service certificate (PSC, 1996). The Professional Standards Commission rule 505-2-.124 states field-specific content standards must be in place for an approved program to offer the credit necessary to receive the TSS endorsement. One of the four standards addresses the interpersonal and professional characteristics which the accrediting agency attests to in order to maintain an approved program. This standard, Standard I, expects accrediting agencies (colleges, school systems, RESAs) to assure that an approved process for the selection of prospective mentors taking the coursework is in place and that the prospective mentors have "demonstrated competence in the skills and attitudes necessary for the supervision and support of . . . beginning teachers."

Program Stipend Support for Teacher Support Specialists

Stipends are awarded to TSS endorsed mentors who have provided one, two, and/or three quarters of support to a beginning teacher during the school year. In order for the mentor to be eligible to receive support, the beginning teacher to whom the mentor is assigned must have less than three years of experience since graduating from college. The local school system staff development coordinator and superintendent or his or her respective designee(s) must sign the request form to verify that the mentor teacher is appropriately qualified to receive the stipend and that the beginning teacher has had less than three years of classroom experience. That verification is subject to review by the Georgia Department of Education staff.
The amount of the stipend is subject to the state funding of the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program and varies from year to year. FY 94-95 and FY 95-96 were funded in the amount of $1.25 million per year for all mentors in the state (Linda Schrenko; personal communication; May 2, 1995). School systems submit the names of the mentors, certification type and field, and school name as well as the name and certification type and field of the beginning teacher. The number of quarters that each mentor teacher provided support to a beginning teacher is totaled for each school system. Individual stipends are based on computations of the statewide total of mentor quarters divided into the available funding. The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program is handled through the Georgia Leadership Academy.

Summary

In the past decade, largely due to the renewed interest in the well-documented problems faced by beginning teachers, induction programs have developed in school systems across the country (Mager, 1992). School system personnel have begun to focus on providing a systematic program between preservice and in-service education to assist beginning teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective in their occupational role (Huling-Austin et al., 1989). Beginning teachers must make a dramatic transition from student to teacher. Historically, beginning teachers have been given the same duties as twenty-five year veterans and have been left on their own to survive the transition unlike other professional groups which provide the beginner with a mediated entry into the profession (Reinhartz, 1989).

Of the various induction practices which have produced positive effects, one of the most consistently reported recommendations is to assign a mentor to support the beginner (Loucks, 1993; Kozisek, 1988; Stupiansky & Wolfe, 1992; Torgerson, 1987). Though mentoring is a fairly new concept in education, mentoring relationships have been a part of the training of other professionals
including psychologists, sociologists, nurses, administrators, scientists, business executives, and law enforcement personnel for many years (Alleman, 1989; Fagan, 1988, 1989; Gray & Gray, 1985). Mentoring refers to an empowering process in education wherein an experienced teacher provides planned technical assistance and psychological support to assist a beginning teacher to develop the skills and attitudes to be effective.

Beginning teachers do not want to appear to be incompetent so they frequently will not request help (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1985). However, research on beginning teacher needs has cited a great number of diverse areas of concern identified for beginning teachers including assistance with classroom discipline, student motivation, recordkeeping, knowledge of policies and procedures, friendship and encouragement, organization of classwork, and working within the culture of the school (Enz & Cook, 1992; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992; Freiberg, Zbikowski, & Ganser, 1994; Gordon, 1991; Veenman, 1984). The support of a mentor, specifically assigned to respond to the needs of the beginner, can ease the difficulties of the beginning teacher’s induction period.

The principal, as the key individual in all school endeavors, may positively impact the success of the beginning teacher through his or her instructional leadership and instructional supervision roles. It is in the roles defined by the beginning teacher induction literature, however, that the principal’s participation and support become most evident (Edelfelt & Ishler, 1989). The principal’s role includes assuring that the induction efforts focus directly on the individual beginning teacher’s needs and assisting with transmitting the culture of the organization (Weise & Holland, 1994). The principal should define the beginning teacher’s responsibilities so carefully as to potentially avoid assignments in which the beginner’s inexperience might result in failure (Johnson, Ratsoy, Holdaway, & Friesen, 1993). The principal is
charged with planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the induction efforts of the beginning teacher and paired mentor (Sergiovanni, 1987). Research studies have pointed to the need for the principal to be a visible source of support for the beginning teacher (Brooks, 1986; Hoffman, et al., 1985).

The principal’s most important role for beginning teacher induction, however, is to select and assign the mentor who is given the responsibility of supporting the beginning teacher (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986; Little, 1990). The principal is most often the individual who is charged with the selection and assignment of mentors (Weise & Holland, 1994). In addition, the principal is responsible for monitoring the beginning teacher/mentor partnership to discern if plans are carried out and if the beginner is progressing through the mentoring process. However, this charge has been difficult to fulfill since research on mentoring, particularly on the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed by mentors, has received little research attention. Kestner (1994) noted that “much of the literature consists of recommendations based more on personal experience and informal observation than on carefully designed, empirical research” (p. 44). Careful selection of a person who is qualified to carry out the role of mentor is crucial (Varah et al., 1989).

Based upon the literature, ten interpersonal and ten professional characteristics were identified which are frequently used in the selection of mentors. In addition, processes, such as interviews, classroom observations, applications, recommendations, and examinations, which have been used in the selection process were identified. Ten assignment concerns which are frequently recommended in the literature were delineated. This data provides the foundation upon which this research study is based.

The Georgia program for beginning teachers changed in 1990. Prior to 1990, the Georgia Beginning Teacher Program provided a combination of assessment, improvement, and certification. This program included a peer
teacher who assisted in the evaluation of the beginning teacher (Defino & Hoffman, 1984). In 1990, Georgia’s performance-based certification process was dismantled and replaced with the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program which included a peer teacher as a mentor who provided instructional and emotional support for the beginning teacher.

The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program provided six recommended criteria as a description of the potential Teacher Support Specialist (mentor). The TSS candidate was required to participate in 100 clock hours of training to complete the endorsement which was added to the professional teaching or service certificate. In addition, three years of teaching experience and the possession of a valid, renewable teaching certificate were mandated. Padilla (1994) in a review of the TSS program recommended that school systems tighten their procedures for operating the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program and specifically recommended that careful attention be paid to the selection of mentors.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The mentoring of beginning teachers has become a common practice of induction programs across the nation. The beginning teacher induction program in the public schools in the state of Georgia has evolved from one of evaluation to a program of support which is provided by a trained, endorsed mentor. All public schools in Georgia are eligible to participate in providing mentor support for beginning teachers through the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. This study was designed to investigate what principals and beginning teachers in participating schools perceive to be the most important characteristics and processes for use in the selection and assignment of the ideal mentor to support a beginning teacher as a part of a larger beginning teacher induction program.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the research questions answered by this study, to describe the participants and research design, to explain the instrument and data collection procedures, and to provide a description of the procedures used in data analysis. This description will encompass the research methodology.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Are there differences in perceptions between Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on the interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?
2. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

3. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

4. What processes do Georgia school principals use in the identification of experienced teachers for potential selection as mentors?

5. Are there differences in perceptions of Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on concerns which are to be considered in the assignment of mentors?

6. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals when assigning mentors?

7. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers for the assignment of mentors to support them?

Research Methodology

Participants

Two populations were the focus of the study. The first population consisted of all the principals in the state of Georgia who requested mentor stipend funds for mentor teachers during the 1995-96 school year. Information indicating each school in which principals had assigned mentor teachers to support induction level teachers (beginning teachers in their first three years of experience) was received from the Georgia Leadership Academy, the Georgia agency which coordinates the distribution of monies earmarked for paying stipends to mentors who support beginning teachers. From this population, an equal stratified random sample of high school, middle school, and elementary school principals was identified. One hundred sixty-four (164) high school
principals, 176 middle school principals, and 535 elementary school principals requested mentor stipend funds for the 1995-96 school year indicating that these principals had assigned mentors to beginning teachers. One hundred (100) high school principals, 100 middle school principals, and 100 elementary school principals were randomly selected.

The second population for the study was beginning teachers who were paired with an assigned mentor who received stipend monies during the 1995-96 school year. This data, also made available through the Georgia Leadership Academy, identified 470 high school beginning teachers, 613 middle school beginning teachers, and 1492 elementary school beginning teachers who had been supported by a paid mentor. Of this population, 150 high school, 150 middle school, and 150 elementary school beginning teachers were randomly selected.

**Design**

The research design is descriptive in nature. A questionnaire was devised to gather data on the perceptions of principals and beginning teachers as to their prioritized order of mentor selection characteristics for both interpersonal and professional characteristics. Respondents also were asked to designate their prioritized rankings of mentor assignment concerns. Finally, principals were asked to identify which of a list of processes for mentor selection were used in their school/system. All respondents were asked to provide demographic data.

In late November 1996, prior to beginning the study, a study proposal, data collection instruments, and informed consent letters were submitted to the Georgia Southern University Institutional Review Board for consideration. Certification to proceed with the study was received on December 16, 1996 (Appendix A).
Instrument

Literature pertinent to the study was reviewed and experts in the field (Appendix B) were consulted in the process of devising questionnaires appropriate for data collection regarding the characteristics for selection of mentors, the mentor selection processes used, and concerns for the assignment of mentors. Items in the questionnaires were based upon current practices in mentor selection in states and districts across the United States, the Georgia suggested criteria for mentor selection, and the characteristics of mentors and assignment concerns identified in the literature. Separate questionnaires were developed for principals (Appendix C) and beginning teachers (Appendix D). The two questionnaires were identical except for specific items administered to principals identifying the mentor selection process and the specific demographic questions appropriate to principals and to beginning teachers.

Three specific areas were addressed by the questionnaires. First, both the principals and beginning teachers were asked to rank order ten interpersonal characteristics and ten professional/pedagogical characteristics as to their perceived order of importance for the selection of the ideal mentor. In addition, principals were given a list of steps frequently used in the mentor selection process and were asked to check all items which were used by their school/system in the identification and selection of mentors. This list included items such as an application process; an entrance exam; nomination by peer(s); an interview; a classroom observation; selection by a committee; and/or recommendation by central office personnel, assistant principal, or principal.

Second, both the principals and beginning teachers were asked to rank order concerns according to their perceived importance in the process of assigning a mentor to a beginning teacher. These concerns addressed interpersonal, professional, logistical, and personal characteristics.
Third, both principals and beginning teachers were asked to identify demographic information which aided in describing the population from which the sample was drawn. Principals were asked to identify the number of years in the principalship (excluding the current year); their age; their race/ethnicity; their sex; and their educational level.

Beginning teachers were asked to identify the grade level(s) taught during the 1995-96 school year while being mentored; their sex; their age; their race/ethnicity; and the year of teaching experience represented by the 1995-96 school year (zero year's experience, less than one year, one full year, two years, or other).

During the third week of December 1996, the questionnaires were submitted for review and feedback from experts in the field of beginning teacher induction and teacher mentoring to establish content validity. Georgia Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) trainers, former Georgia TSS program supervisors, system level program supervisors, researchers, and published authors on teacher mentoring were asked to study the instruments for content validity (Appendix B). Commendations and recommendations were received from all individuals by the first week of January 1997, and the instrument was revised to reflect appropriate feedback. Reliability was not established since the item types would not lend themselves to a measure of internal consistency.

Procedures

The revised questionnaires were piloted to determine the adequacy of wording of items, clarity of directions, and other concerns which might impact on the validity and reliability of the results obtained from the study. The pertinent questionnaires were sent to twelve principals (four high school, four middle school, and four elementary school) and to twelve beginning teachers (four high school, four middle school, and four elementary school). These principals and beginning teachers were selected from schools in Georgia which were not part
of the random sample. Principals who had been involved in the selection and assignment of mentors were targeted to assure that the instrument would represent the process currently being used in Georgia. Identifying respondents from separate school systems allowed for the diversity of approaches for the selection and assignment of mentors currently in use in the state of Georgia. In addition to the principals, beginning teachers from these schools were asked to respond to a separate questionnaire. In order to test the process, these questionnaires were mailed separately to the respondents with attached cover letters (Appendices E and F) and addressed, stamped envelopes. In addition to responding to the items, the principals and beginning teachers were asked to critique the items and directions for sources of confusion. The pilot study was conducted during the last three weeks of January 1997.

Following the pilot study, the questionnaires and cover letters were revised to reflect the criticisms and concerns received from the pilot participants. Permission to distribute the questionnaires was requested and received from the Cobb County School System.

Names of beginning teachers who were supported by a mentor during the 1995-96 school year and their school assignment were provided to the researcher through the Georgia Leadership Academy. From this population of beginning teachers, a random sample of beginning teachers, stratified by elementary school level, middle school level, and high school level, was selected using a table of random numbers. The principals from the schools where beginning teachers were provided mentor support constituted the population from which a stratified random sample of high school, middle school, and elementary school principals was drawn to create the second group of study participants. The stratifications for both the beginning teachers and the principals were equalized.
The questionnaires and cover letters were professionally printed. The questionnaires were color coded for principals (high school - ecru, middle school - tan, and elementary school - blue) and for beginning teachers (high school - green, middle school - yellow, and elementary school - violet) to allow for ease of sorting and handling as they were returned. The questionnaires were coded in the back lower left corner using consecutive numbers to the sample total of 750 to allow for the identification of nonrespondents for a follow-up mailout.

A packet of materials to be distributed to principals and to beginning teachers was constructed in preparation for the first mailing. The packets included a cover letter, the appropriate questionnaire, and a postage paid/self-addressed envelope. In addition, a letter of support from Mr. Don Splinter of the Georgia Leadership Academy, the agency which administers the funding of stipends for mentors, and Ms. Tana Page, Georgia Department of Education program coordinator, was included in the packet (Appendix G). Cover letters for the principals and beginning teachers encouraged their participation in the study. Participants were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and that the data retrieved would be reported in aggregate form only. Respondents were given an opportunity to direct any questions concerning their rights as a participant to the Georgia Southern University Institutional Review Board. Participants were given an opportunity to request a copy of the results of the study by returning a card indicating their name and address for mailing purposes.

The questionnaires, cover letters, and return envelopes were individually mailed to the identified equal stratified random samples during the first week of February, 1997. Participants were asked to return the questionnaire by February 21, 1997. Bulk mailing was used and found to be unsatisfactory because of the slowness in distributing the research packet to the identified
respondents. Many participants in the study noted on their questionnaires that they had received the first mailing after the designated date for return. A second mailing was distributed the second week of March to the 515 of 750 individuals who had not responded by the end of the first week in March 1997. In order to increase the response rate, the researcher sent letters or made phone calls to system-level administrators requesting assistance with contacting nonrespondents. Superintendents or system-level administrators sent letters of support on behalf of the research study to principals and beginning teachers who had been identified as part of the random sample. Several questionnaires mailed to beginning teachers were returned to the sender marked undeliverable with no forwarding address.

Analysis of the Data

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data from this study and to describe patterns of responses (Leary, 1995) beginning in the first week of April 1997. For three of the data sets, results were compared item by item. The interpersonal characteristics for selecting mentors and the professional characteristics for selecting mentors were studied by individual characteristic. Means, standard deviations, and modes were calculated using the Data Analysis with Student SYSTAT program. Results are reported for principals as a group and for beginning teachers as a group for both interpersonal characteristics and for professional characteristics. The results by characteristic were reported to show any differences identified between the perceptions of principals and beginning teachers. Results were further reported for each characteristic comparing the rank ordered mean response of the principals by school level of configuration (elementary school, middle school, and high school). Similarly, results were compared by characteristic for each level of beginning teachers (elementary school, middle school, and high school) using rank ordered mean responses.
The third data set studied item by item contained the responses to the concerns for assignment of mentors. The assignment criteria were studied by individual criterion calculating the mean ranking, the standard deviation, and the mode ranking for principals and for beginning teachers using the Data Analysis with Student SYSTAT program. The results by criterion were reported to show any differences identified between the perceptions of principals and beginning teachers. Results were further reported for each criterion comparing the rank ordered mean responses of the principals by school level of configuration (elementary school, middle school, and high school). Similarly, rank ordered mean responses were compared by criterion for each level of beginning teachers (elementary school, middle school, and high school).

Two measures of central tendency were used for the described results. The mean provided an arithmetic average for the perception scores as given by the principals and beginning teachers and the mode indicated the most frequent perception score identified by the principals and beginning teachers. The measure of variability, the standard deviation, was used to depict the spread of variability of the set of data. Tables as well as verbal descriptions are used to present the data for ease of interpretation.

Data retrieved from principals regarding the steps in the mentor selection process are depicted through frequency counts and percentages for each variable and presented in table form. The nominal demographic data, such as age, highest educational level of principals, and number of full years of experience in the principalship for the principals, are presented as frequency counts and as percents in table format. Nominal demographic data retrieved from beginning teachers are similarly presented using frequency counts and percents in table format for ease of interpretation. Nominal data for beginning teachers include experience, educational level, and age. Tables were generated to aid in the interpretation of the data.
Summary

The populations of principals and beginning teachers were identified through the Georgia Leadership Academy records of schools where mentors had been assigned and awarded stipends during the 1995-96 school year. Equal stratified random samples of principals and beginning teachers were identified from high school, middle school, and elementary level schools. The instruments were designed by the researcher to identify selection and assignment criteria used for mentors for beginning teachers in the state of Georgia. Content validity was established using an expert panel. All preliminary pilot study and critical analysis of the instrument were completed.

Results generated from the ordinal and nominal data were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the research are presented in Chapter IV. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER IV
REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers assigned to characteristics to be used in selecting experienced teachers to serve as mentors for beginning teachers and to identify the process used by principals for potential mentor teacher selection. In addition, this study examined the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers provided for concerns used in assigning mentors to beginning teachers. The study was framed by the following research questions:

1. Are there differences in perceptions between Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on the interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

2. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

3. What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

4. What processes do Georgia school principals use in the identification of experienced teachers for potential selection as mentors?

5. Are there differences in perceptions of Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on concerns which are to be considered in the assignment of mentors?
6. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals when assigning mentors?

7. What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers for the assignment of mentors to support them?

Questionnaire Response Rate of Sample

The data used for this study were collected from a stratified random sample representing the population of principals and a stratified random sample representing the population of beginning teachers who were directly involved in the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program during the 1995-96 school year. Monies available annually from the Georgia Department of Education provide stipends to mentor teachers who support beginning teachers. System level reports identify the names of mentors who were selected and assigned by their principals to support specifically named beginning teachers. All principals and beginning teachers involved in the mentor support process during the 1995-96 school year were the populations which were sampled for this study. Responses were received from 465 of 750 possible respondents resulting in an overall study return ratio of 62%.

The first population for the study was principals who had requested mentor stipend funds for the 1995-96 school year through their school system. Georgia Leadership Academy records revealed that 164 high school principals, 176 middle school principals, and 535 elementary school principals requested mentor stipend funds indicating that these principals had assigned mentors to beginning teachers. One hundred (100) high school principals, 100 middle school principals, and 100 elementary school principals were randomly selected from the population and sent questionnaires. Of these, 72 high school principals (72%), 75 middle school principals (75%), and 70 elementary school
principals (70%) responded to the questionnaire resulting in 217 of 300 possible responses or 72%.

The second population identified for the study was beginning teachers who were paired with an assigned mentor who received stipend monies during the 1995-96 school year. Georgia Leadership Academy records revealed that 470 high school beginning teachers, 613 middle school beginning teachers, and 1,492 elementary school beginning teachers had been supported by a paid mentor. Of this population, 150 high school, 150 middle school, and 150 elementary school beginning teachers were randomly selected to constitute the sample to be studied. Seventy-six (76) high school beginning teachers (51%), 79 middle school beginning teachers (53%), and 93 elementary school beginning teachers (62%) responded to the questionnaire resulting in 248 of 450 responses or a 55% return ratio. The lower return ratio from beginning teachers can be accounted for in part by the fact that the sample was based upon Georgia Leadership Academy records indicating school addresses for the 1995-96 funding year, and the questionnaire to beginning teachers was mailed in the spring of the 1996-97 school year.

Demographic Data

Principals

This section describes the demographic data provided by the 217 principals who responded to the principal questionnaire (Appendix C). Participants were asked to respond to questions concerning their sex, their race/ethnicity, their age, their highest educational level, and the number of full years in the principalship excluding the current year. The number of respondents varies for some questions due to non-response for some items. The following description indicates principal responses to each demographic questionnaire item.
**Sex.** The respondents were asked to indicate their sex. Of the respondents, 124 (57.41%) of the principals in this study were male. Additionally 92 (42.59%) were female.

**Race/Ethnicity.** The principals were asked to indicate their racial/ethnic background. The respondents reported that 167 (77.32%) were White. Likewise, 45 (20.83%) respondents stated they were Black. One respondent was Hispanic (0.46%), one was Asian (0.46%) and two respondents (0.93%) indicated that they were Native Americans.

**Age.** Table 1 depicts the ages of the respondents. The largest number of principals (100) described themselves as in the age range of 43 - 49 (46.73%). Sixty-five principals (30.37%) indicated an age range of 50 - 56. The other age ranges were similarly distributed with the exception of ages 22 - 28 with no principal selecting that age range.

**Highest Educational Level of Principals.** The largest number of respondents, 158 (73.15%), stated that their highest educational level achieved was the Education Specialist Degree. Of the remaining respondents, 36 (16.66%) possessed the Doctorate Degree and 22 (10.19%) possessed the Masters Degree as their highest educational level.

**Number of Full Years Experience in the Principalship.** Table 1 also presents the data on the experience in the principalship possessed by the principal respondents. The largest number of respondents, 52 (24.30%), noted that they had 16 or more years of experience prior to the 1996-97 school year. The next highest number, 51 (23.83%), indicated that they were nearly in the opposite extreme having served in the principalship for only 1 - 3 years. Of the remaining respondents, the principals were fairly evenly distributed from 4 to 15 years of experience. There was a final group of 15 respondents (7.01%) who noted that they were first-year principals with zero years of experience in the principalship prior to the 1996-97 school year.
Table 1

Biographic/Demographic Information for Principal Respondents

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<th>Frequency</th>
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**Beginning Teachers**

The demographic data provided by the 248 teachers who responded to the beginning teacher questionnaire (Appendix D) are described in this section. Participants were asked to respond to questions regarding their sex, race/ethnicity, age, highest educational level, and the number of years of public
school teaching experience at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year. The following description indicates their responses to each demographic questionnaire item.

**Sex.** Beginning teachers in this study were asked to indicate their sex. Two hundred six (83.06%) of the respondents indicated they were females, whereas 42 (16.94%) of the respondents indicated they were males.

**Race/Ethnicity.** The beginning teachers responding to the questionnaire were asked to indicate their racial/ethnic background. Two hundred sixteen respondents (87.10%) indicated that they were White. Twenty-eight respondents (11.29%) indicated that they were Black. There were two Hispanic respondents (0.81%), one Asian respondent (0.40%), and one Native American respondent (0.40%).

**Age of Beginning Teachers.** Table 2 depicts the ages of the beginning teachers who responded to the study. Of the respondents, the largest group, 112 (45.16%), indicated that their age fell in the range of 20 - 25. Forty-five respondents (18.14%) represented the second largest group noting that their age was between 26 - 30. The remaining respondents were fairly evenly distributed over the remaining age groups of 31 and over. Interestingly, eighteen beginning teachers selected the age range of 46 or older.

**Educational Level of the Beginning Teachers.** The largest number of beginning teacher respondents, 200 (80.65%), indicated that their highest educational level was the Bachelors Degree. Of those beginning teachers who stated that they had achieved graduate degrees, 45 (18.14%) respondents indicated that they possessed a Masters Degree and the remaining three respondents (1.21%) noted that they had completed the Education Specialist Degree.

**Teaching Experience of Beginning Teachers.** Table 2 also presents the teaching experience of the beginning teachers who responded to the
Table 2

Biographic/Demographic Information for Beginning Teacher Respondents

(n = 248)

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 or older</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Experience of Beginning Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero Years Experience</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>43.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Than One Year</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Full Year</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

questionnaire. The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program is currently designed to provide mentor assistance to teachers in their first three years of experience. The largest group of beginning teachers, 107 (43.14%), stated that they began teaching at the onset of the 1995-96 school year with zero years of experience. Of the remaining beginning teachers, a total of 113 claimed that they either had less than one year of experience, one full year of experience, or two years of
experience, all levels eligible to receive the assistance of a paid mentor. Twenty-eight "beginning teachers" (11.29%) selected the "other" category relating to their experience. Of these twenty-eight beginning teachers, three had approximately one and one-half years of experience and another two indicated that they had two and one-half years of experience, both of which are appropriate for the Georgia program. The remaining teachers noted that they had experience ranging from 3 to 25 years and several noted that they had apparently been placed with a mentor based upon the fact that they were new teachers in the school, system, or the state of Georgia. The majority of these teachers had from 3 to 6 years of experience. However, these teachers were inappropriately placed with a mentor for the purpose of receiving stipend funds according to current state guidelines. Several teachers who were appropriately placed with mentors noted that they entered their first year of teaching with some experience as a paraprofessional or as a long-term substitute teacher.

Responses to Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire used in this study was specifically designed to ascertain the mentor selection characteristics and assignment concerns of principals and beginning teachers in Georgia. The principals and beginning teachers were asked to respond to questions in three sections dealing with the selection of mentors, the assignment of mentors, and demographic data on the individual respondent. In addition, principals were asked to respond to a fourth section dealing with the mentor selection process.

Initially, both principals and beginning teachers were asked to rank interpersonal characteristics and professional characteristics according to their perceived importance for an ideal mentor. Both questionnaires contained an identical list of ten interpersonal and ten professional characteristics which reflect the characteristics generally in use according to the literature. The
information gathered through this section of the survey was designed to answer research questions one, two, and three on the selection of mentors.

A second section of the questionnaire was presented to principals only. The principals were asked to identify the criteria used by their school or school system in the identification of experienced teachers for potential mentor selection. The principals were given a list of ten commonly used criteria for identifying potential mentors and two other opportunities to write in their own criteria. The information gathered from this section was designed to answer research question number four.

In the next section, both groups of respondents were given identical lists of ten assignment concerns prevalent in the literature to be rank ordered. Respondents were asked to rank order the ten concerns according to their importance in assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. The information gathered from this section of the two questionnaires was designed to provide answers to research questions five, six, and seven dealing with the assignment of mentors. The last section on each questionnaire requested demographic data.

Research Question 1: Are there differences in perceptions between Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on the interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

This research question examined the differences in perceptions between principals and beginning teachers concerning the importance of various interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentors. The data were analyzed using mean rankings, standard deviations, and modes.

Though most principals and beginning teachers ranked the characteristics as requested on the questionnaire, a small percentage of respondents either were unable or unwilling to rank order the characteristics thereby resulting in a lower number of responses reported for the various
categories of data than the total number of respondents who in fact returned the questionnaires. Their unsolicited comments were often written directly on the questionnaire, and those comments validated the inclusion of the characteristics. Among those who ranked the interpersonal and professional characteristics, principals noted: "I have ranked these but I feel strongly that all of these qualities are very important; that if a mentor did not possess even one of these, they would not be very effective as a mentor;" "All of these characteristics are of utmost importance. Ranking them was a difficult task;" "These were very difficult. All of these are important." A male high school principal with 13 - 15 years of experience noted that ranking the characteristics was a "tough call." Similarly beginning teachers noted: "all of these are important;" "all are very important;" "all important!" One beginning teacher who did not rank order the characteristics said "I cannot rate as all of these equally apply."

**Ranking of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Principals.** Table 3 contains an overview of the principals' mean ranking, standard deviation, and most frequently selected ranking (mode) for each interpersonal characteristic used for mentor selection and is organized in order by mean rankings. The interpersonal characteristic ranked as most important by principals as represented by mean rankings was that the mentor "is willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor" closely followed by the second highest mean ranked characteristic, that the mentor "is willing to devote the time needed." These two characteristics held the top two positions in terms of the frequency with which each received a number one or two ranking as well. The third and fourth highest mean and mode ranked interpersonal characteristics according to the principal respondents were that the mentor be an effective communicator and that he or she be a professional, ethical individual. The
lowest ranked interpersonal characteristic, maintains a sense of humor, received a low mean ranking and the lowest possible mode ranking.

Table 3
Ranking of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Principals, (n = 206)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is Willing to Perform the Roles Expected of a Mentor</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Willing to Devote the Time Needed</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Professional and Ethical</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality and Trust</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Team-Oriented and Collaborative</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Warm and Sensitive to Others</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Self-Directed</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains a Sense of Humor</td>
<td>8.72</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

Ranking of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Beginning Teachers. Table 4 contains an overview of the beginning teachers' mean rankings, standard deviations, and the mode for each interpersonal characteristic for mentor selection. The beginning teachers who responded to the questionnaire selected "is willing to devote the time needed" as their top ranked item and "is willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor" as their second highest ranked interpersonal characteristic. The mode rank order
maintained these two top positions, though in reverse order. Beginning
teachers indicated that they perceived effective communication, confidentiality,
and professional behavior as being more important than they perceived a warm
relationship with another adult. The least important mean ranking among the
beginning teachers was the characteristic "is self-directed" which, along with
"maintains a sense of humor," also received the lowest possible mode ranking.

Table 4

Ranking of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Beginning
Teachers, n = 240

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is Willing to Devote the Time Needed</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Willing to Perform the Roles Expected of a Mentor</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality and Trust</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Professional and Ethical</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Warm and Sensitive to Others</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Team-Oriented and Collaborative</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains a Sense of Humor</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Self-Directed</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection
Organized by Mean Rankings. Table 5 presents the mean rank order for the
principals and beginning teachers on ten interpersonal characteristics for
mentor selection. The data depicted in the table show general agreement on the rank order of interpersonal characteristics. Both groups of respondents placed a high priority on the mentor having the willingness to devote time to the mentoring process as well as being willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor.

Table 5

| Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection Organized by Mean Rankings |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Type</th>
<th>Beginning Teachers</th>
<th>Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>(n = 240)</td>
<td>(n = 206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Willing to Devote Time</td>
<td>Willing to Perform Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Willing to Perform Roles</td>
<td>Willing to Devote Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality/Trust</td>
<td>Is Professional/Ethical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Is Professional/Ethical</td>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality/Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Warm and Sensitive</td>
<td>Team-Oriented/Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Team-Oriented/Collaborative</td>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
<td>Warm and Sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Sense of Humor</td>
<td>Is Self-Directed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Is Self-Directed</td>
<td>Sense of Humor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of first represents the most important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of tenth represents the least important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor.
Neither group ranked the characteristics of being self-directed or possessing a sense of humor as more important than other interpersonal characteristics. Beginning teachers perceived that the mentor being warm and sensitive was more important than did the principals. The principals placed a slightly higher ranking of importance on the mentor working collaboratively with other adults than did the beginning teachers. Otherwise, the rankings of interpersonal characteristics for mentor selection for the principals and the beginning teachers were within a range of one rank when compared with each other.

**Ranking of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Principals.** Table 6 presents the principals' ranking of professional characteristics for mentor selection in order by mean ranking. The principals who responded to the questionnaire selected "demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods" as the most important mean ranked professional characteristic for mentor selection by a large margin. The principals' second and third ranked characteristics were very close: second, "is an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager," and third, "plans effective lessons and units of instruction." "Demonstrates expertise in subject matter" was assigned the rank of three most frequently though its mean ranking placed it as fifth most important as a professional characteristic. The lowest mean ranked professional characteristic by the principals, "demonstrates effective conferencing skills," also was most frequently ranked as tenth along with "demonstrates leadership skills."

**Ranking of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Beginning Teachers.** Table 7 presents the beginning teachers' ranking of professional characteristics for mentor selection. The beginning teacher respondents ranked "demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods" as the most important professional characteristic for mentor selection. The
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Effective Teaching Strategies/Methods</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is an Effective Classroom Disciplinarian/Manager</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans Effective Lessons and Units of Instruction</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holds High Expectations for Students</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Knowledgeable of Resources/Theory/Research</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Leadership Skills</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Respected by Colleagues</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands and Follows Policies/Procedures</td>
<td>6.76</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Effective Conferencing Skills</td>
<td>7.68</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

The second highest ranking of professional characteristics was that the mentor "is an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager." These also were ranked as the top two professional characteristics in the frequency count though they were assigned the opposite rank order. There was considerable distance between the top two ranked characteristics and the remaining characteristics. The third through eighth rankings which described planning, expectations, policies/procedures, leadership, resource knowledge, and subject matter expertise were fairly mid-range from a mean of 4.96 to 5.97. The ninth ranked professional characteristic from beginning teachers' perceptions was that the
mentor "is respected by colleagues." The lowest ranked professional characteristic for mentor selection by beginning teachers was that the mentor "demonstrates effective conferencing skills." Both characteristics received a mode ranking of 10.

Table 7

Ranking of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Beginning Teachers, (n = 239)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Effective Teaching Strategies/Methods</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is an Effective Classroom Disciplinarian/Manager</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans Effective Lessons and Units of Instruction</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holds High Expectations for Students</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands and Follows Policies/Procedures</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>5,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Leadership Skills</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Knowledgeable of Resources/Theory/Research</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Respected by Colleagues</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates Effective Conferencing Skills</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection

Organized by Mean Rankings. Table 8 presents the mean rank order for the principals and beginning teachers on ten professional characteristics for mentor selection. Both the principals and beginning teachers stated that the mentor
"demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods" was the top ranked professional characteristic for mentor selection with the top four characteristics maintaining the same mean rank order. However, the beginning teachers ranked that the mentor "understands and follows policies and procedures" as Table 8

### Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Beginning Teachers</th>
<th>Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Effective Teaching Strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Teaching Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Effective Disciplinarian/Mgr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Disciplinarian/Mgr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Plans Effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plans Effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Student Expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Policies and Procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum Resources/Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Curriculum Resources/Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Respected by Colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Respected by Colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td>Policies and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Conferencing Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conferencing Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** A ranking of first represents the most important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of tenth represents the least important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor.
their fifth highest ranked professional characteristic whereas the principals ranked it as ninth most important. The principals who responded placed a higher mean ranking on "demonstrates expertise in subject matter" with a rank of fifth than did the beginning teachers who ranked it as eighth. All other mean rankings of professional characteristics for mentor selection by the principals and the beginning teachers were within a range of one rank when compared with each other.

Research Question 2: What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

This research question examined the differences in perceptions among principals at three different stratifications of the importance of various interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentors. The data were ordered using mean rankings.

Rank Order of Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Principal Organized by Mean Rankings. Table 9 presents the prioritized ranking of the three stratifications of principals on the importance of interpersonal characteristics for mentor teacher selection. The principals from elementary school, middle school, and high school levels expressed general agreement with the rank order importance of interpersonal characteristics. The greatest differences appear to be in the higher perceived need from the high school principals for the mentor to characterize teamwork and collaboration than from the elementary school and middle school principals, and the higher perceived need for working effectively with adults from the elementary school principals than from the high school principals.

Rank Order of Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Principal Organized by Mean Rankings. Table 10 presents the prioritized ranking of the three stratifications of principals on the
importance of professional characteristics for mentor teacher selection. The principals from elementary school, middle school, and high school levels expressed general agreement with the rank ordered importance of using effective teaching strategies and employing effective planning and discipline.

### Table 9

#### Rank Order of Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Principal Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Characteristic</th>
<th>Respondent Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to Devote Time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to Perform Roles</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Professional/Ethical</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality/Trust</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-Oriented/Collaborative</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm and Sensitive</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Self Directed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Humor</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of 1 represents the most important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of 10 represents the least important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor.
methods. One difference appeared to be in the more highly perceived need among middle school principals for leadership skills in a mentor. A second difference in perception is suggested by the higher value placed on curricular Table 10

**Rank Order of Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Principal Organized by Mean Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Characteristic</th>
<th>Elementary (n = 68)</th>
<th>Middle School (n = 71)</th>
<th>High School (n = 67)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans Effectively</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Disciplinarian/Mgr</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expectations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Resources/Theory</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected by Colleagues</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies/Procedures</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferencing Skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** A ranking of 1 represents the most important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of 10 represents the least important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor.
resources and theory from the elementary principals than from the middle school principals.

**Research Question 3:** What priority do Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers assign to interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentor teachers?

This research question examined the differences in perceptions among beginning teachers at three different stratifications of the importance of various interpersonal and professional characteristics used to select mentors. The data were ordered using mean rankings.

**Rank Order of Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Beginning Teacher Organized by Mean Rankings.** Table 11 presents the prioritized ranking of the three stratifications of beginning teachers on the importance of interpersonal characteristics for mentor teacher selection. The beginning teachers from elementary school, middle school, and high school levels expressed general agreement with the highest ranked characteristics of a willingness to devote the time needed to be a mentor and of a willingness to perform the roles necessary to be a mentor. The elementary beginning teachers ranked that the mentor maintains confidentiality and trust higher than the middle school and high school teachers whereas the middle school and high school teachers ranked maintaining professional and ethical behavior higher than did the elementary beginning teachers.

**Rank Order of Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Beginning Teacher Organized by Mean Rankings.** Table 12 presents the prioritized ranking of the three stratifications of beginning teachers on the importance of professional characteristics for mentor teacher selection. The beginning teachers from elementary school, middle school, and high school levels expressed general agreement about the importance of the mentor being able to demonstrate effective teaching strategies, effective
Table 11

Rank Order of Importance of Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection by Level of Beginning Teacher Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Characteristic</th>
<th>Elementary (n = 89)</th>
<th>Middle School (n = 76)</th>
<th>High School (n = 75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing to Devote Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to Perform Roles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains Confidentiality/Trust</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates Effectively</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm and Sensitive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Professional/Ethical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-Oriented/Collaborative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Effectively with Adults</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Humor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Self Directed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of 1 represents the most important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of 10 represents the least important interpersonal characteristic of the ideal mentor.

discipline techniques, and effective planning methods. However, high school teachers placed a much higher ranking on expertise in subject matter than did either the elementary teachers or middle school teachers. The middle school and high school teachers were more concerned with the mentor possessing
Table 12

Rank Order of Importance of Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection
by Level of Beginning Teacher Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Characteristic</th>
<th>Elementary (n = 89)</th>
<th>Middle School (n = 75)</th>
<th>High School (n = 75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Disciplinarian/Mgr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans Effectively</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies/Procedures</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Resources/Theory</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expectations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise in Subject Matter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected by Colleagues</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferencing Skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of 1 represents the most important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor and a ranking of 10 represents the least important professional characteristic of the ideal mentor.

High student expectations than were the elementary teachers. The elementary and middle school teachers were more concerned with the mentor having knowledge of curriculum resources and theory than were the high school teachers. The elementary teachers placed a higher importance on an
understanding of policies and procedures than did either the middle school or high school teachers.

Research Question 4: What processes do Georgia school principals use in the identification of experienced teachers for potential selection as mentors?

This research question examined the processes used by principals in Georgia to identify experienced teachers for potential selection as mentors. Principals were asked to place a check mark beside each of the processes used in their school or school system in the identification of experienced teachers for potential mentor selection. Ten processes identified in the literature were listed, and the principals had an opportunity to list other processes used which were not on the list.

Use of Criteria in the Identification Process for Potential Mentor Selection. Table 13 presents the processes used by principal respondents listed in the rank order of their frequency. Of the respondents, 212 of 217 (97.70%) stated that they included the recommendation by the principal as all or part of the identification process for potential mentor selection. Among the principals, 61.29% noted that they used classroom observation as a part of the potential mentor selection process with 50.69% utilizing the recommendation by the assistant principal for mentor selection as part of the selection process. Application by the mentor and self nomination were noted as methods for identifying potential mentors by 47.47% and 41.47% of the respondents respectively. Eleven principals (5.07%) noted that mentor selection included selection by committee as part of the process. Only two principals (0.92%) claimed that their school or school system required an entrance exam or test for potential selection as a mentor.

Twenty principals (9.21%) noted that other processes were included in addition to those presented on the questionnaire. These additional processes were grouped for reporting purposes. Among those processes noted by
principals were: (1) observation of interactions with colleagues, (2) identification of the teacher's willingness to be a mentor, (3) leadership skills, (4) recommendation by instructional lead teacher, (5) identification of subject/grade level needs (referred to by one respondent as recruiting), (6) observation of leadership in other roles, and (7) recommendation by other Teacher Support Specialists (TSS) in the building. One respondent

Table 13

Use of Criteria in the Identification Process for Potential Mentor Selection.

\( (n = 217) \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation by Principal</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>97.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Observation</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>61.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation by Assistant Principal</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>50.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application by the Potential Mentor</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>47.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Nomination</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>41.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation by Central Office</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>26.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomination by Peer(s)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection by Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Entrance Exam or Test</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Principals were asked to check all responses that applied. The frequency and percent represents the number and percent of all responding principals using each criterion.
commented that, "school level leaders select master teachers who can be positive role models for beginning teachers."

Two additional identification processes, which were noted by principals, were intentionally omitted by the researcher since these concerns are basic requirements of the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program: (1) that the potential mentor have three or more years of teaching experience, and (2) that the potential mentor complete the coursework leading to the addition of the TSS endorsement.

Research Question 5: Are there differences in perceptions of Georgia school principals and beginning teachers on concerns which are to be considered in the assignment of mentors?

This research question examined the differences in perceptions between principals and beginning teachers concerning the considerations which principals should use when assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. The data are reported using means, standard deviations, and modes.

Unsolicited comments provide insight into the thinking of the respondents. Five beginning teachers added comments in this section regarding assignment concerns. One beginning teacher highlighted the concerns of same grade level, same content area(s), and common planning time noting that "I feel these are most important. I, as a new teacher, was not concerned with personality or age, etc; I wanted help and experience!" The same beginning teacher further pointed to items regarding the commonality of extra-curricular interests and the compatibility of professional ideologies and asked "with a new teacher, how will the staff know these things?" Regarding the compatibility of personalities, the beginner said that this "may be helpful, but how will you determine this?"

Pointing to the concern for the age of the mentor, one beginning teacher said, "the more experience the better; not necessarily age but experience."
Beside the concerns relating to gender, race/ethnicity, and age, one beginning teacher said, "it doesn't matter at all." Another beginning teacher stated, "please make sure (mentor) teacher is in the same school."

Three principals provided unsolicited comments relating to mentor assignment. One elementary principal noted that in elementary schools "same grade level" and "same content area(s)" are often the same. Another elementary principal pointed to close proximity of classrooms and noted, "I've found this to be crucial!" A middle school principal pointed to items 5 through 10 relating to gender, race/ethnicity, age, and commonality of interests, ideologies, and personalities and noted, "we use a group method of one new teacher to a group of three mentors so we don't have as many problems with the assignments."

Ranking of Concerns for Mentor Assignment by Principals. Table 14 presents the ranking of concerns for mentor assignment by principals. The top ranked concern of principals for mentor assignment was for the mentor and beginning teacher to teach the "same content area(s)." "Compatibility of professional ideologies" received a lower mean ranking but an equivalent mode ranking to "same content areas" as an assignment concern for principals. The third highest mean ranked mentor assignment concern, having the mentor and beginning teacher in the "same grade level," received a number two mode ranking. Sharing a "common planning time" and having classrooms in close proximity to each other were highly ranked in terms of frequency, but having compatible personalities claimed a higher mean ranking than classroom location.

The final four concerns regarding mentor assignment were fairly consistently ranked lower than the first six concerns. Of least importance to the principals in the study were the assignment concerns of commonality of extra-curricular interests, age of the beginning teacher/mentor, gender of the
beginning teacher/mentor, with the least important rank assigned to the race/ethnicity of the beginning teacher/mentor pair.

Table 14

Ranking of Concerns for Mentor Assignment by Principals (n = 208)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Concern</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Content Area(s)</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Professional Ideologies</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality of Extra-Curricular Interests</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

Ranking of Concerns for Mentor Assignment by Beginning Teachers.

Table 15 presents the rank order of mentor assignment concerns by beginning teachers. The highest ranked concerns noted the need for the mentor/beginning teacher pair to share the same content area(s), have compatible personalities, and be assigned to the same grade level -- all having a mode ranking of one. The second triad of concerns shared very close mean rankings: common planning time, compatibility of professional ideologies, and close proximity of classrooms. The seventh through tenth ranked concerns
ranked considerably lower than the first six concerns. The lowest ranking concerns addressed the age, common interests, gender, and race/ethnicity of the beginning teacher and the mentor.

Table 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Concern</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Content Area(s)</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Professional Ideologies</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality of Extra-Curricular Interests</td>
<td>7.48</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Beginning Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A lower mean/mode value indicates a higher degree of importance.

Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns Organized by Mean Rankings. Table 16 presents the comparison of beginning teachers' and principals' rankings of the importance of mentor assignment concerns. When the principals' and beginning teachers' rankings are compared, the rank order of the assignment concerns are fairly consistent between the two groups. On average, the principals place a higher ranking on the "compatibility of ideologies" between the beginning teacher and mentor than do the beginning
teachers. The beginning teachers place a higher ranking on the “compatibility of personalities” than do the principals.

Table 16

Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Type</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Beginning Teachers</th>
<th>Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 241)</td>
<td>(n = 208)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Same Content Area</td>
<td>Same Content Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td>Compatibility of Ideologies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Compatibility of Ideologies</td>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Age of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>Commonality of Interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Commonality of Interests</td>
<td>Age of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Gender of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>Gender of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of first represents the most important concern in the assignment of mentors and a ranking of tenth represents the least important concern in the assignment of mentors.
Research Question 6: What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school principals when assigning mentors?

This research question examined the differences in perceptions among elementary school, middle school, and high school principals on the considerations which principals should make when assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. The data are organized according to mean ranking.

Rank Order of Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns by Level of Principal. Table 17 presents the rank order of the mentor assignment concerns by the level of the principal. There was general disagreement among the three stratifications of principals over the rank order assigned to the first five assignment concerns. Middle school and high school principals were more concerned about the commonality of content areas than were the elementary principals where teachers are often self-contained and teach many content areas. Elementary principals placed a higher ranking on having the mentor and beginning teachers at the same grade level than middle school or high school principals where teachers teach in the same content area to different grade levels throughout the school day. Common planning time was a greater concern to high school and middle school principals than to elementary school principals. There was disagreement among the three groups of principals as to the value of the mentor and beginning teacher having compatible personalities with the elementary school principals giving it a number one ranking.

All three school levels of principals placed close proximity of classrooms as a rank six concern. There was general agreement as to the lower ranking of the age, common interests, gender, and race/ethnicity of the beginning teacher/mentor pair. Elementary principals placed a higher priority on age than did the high school principals.
Table 17

Rank Order of Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns by Level of Principal
Organized by Mean Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Assignment Concern</th>
<th>Respondent Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary (n = 67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Content Areas</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Ideologies</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality of Interests</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A ranking of 1 represents the most important mentor assignment concern and a ranking of 10 represents the least important mentor assignment concern.

Research Question 7: What concerns are given priority by Georgia elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers for the assignment of mentors to support them?
This research question examined the differences in perceptions among elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers on the considerations which principals should make when assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. The data are organized according to mean ranking.

**Rank Order of Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns by Level of Beginning Teacher.** Table 18 presents the rank order of mentor assignment concerns by level of beginning teacher. The beginning teachers in the study varied considerably among the highest ranked concerns for mentor assignment. Elementary beginning teachers ranked having a mentor at the same grade level to be their number one concern. However, middle school beginning teachers were much more concerned with the commonality of planning time. The high school teachers wanted a mentor who taught in the same content area. Elementary school and high school beginning teachers were more concerned with compatibility of personalities than were their middle school counterparts, and elementary school beginning teachers ranked having close proximity of classrooms higher than did either the middle or high school teachers. The middle school teachers expressed less concern with having compatible personalities than either the elementary or high school teachers and were more concerned with being at the same grade level than the high school teachers. Elementary beginning teachers placed a higher premium on matching the age of the beginning teacher and mentor than did the middle school or high school beginning teachers. The high school beginning teachers emphasized matching the beginning teacher/mentor gender over elementary and middle school beginning teachers. None of the three groups was particularly concerned about the commonality of race/ethnicity of the beginning teacher and mentor pair.
### Table 18

**Rank Order of Importance of Mentor Assignment Concerns by Level of Beginning Teacher Organized by Mean Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Assignment Concern</th>
<th>Elementary (n = 88)</th>
<th>Middle School (n = 78)</th>
<th>High School (n = 75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same Grade Level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Personalities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Content Areas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Proximity of Classrooms</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility of Ideologies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Planning Time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality of Interests</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity of Teacher/Mentor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** A ranking of 1 represents the most important mentor assignment concern and a ranking of 10 represents the least important mentor assignment concern.

**Summary**

The data indicated that there exists general agreement between beginning teachers and principals on the characteristics to be used for the selection of mentors to support beginning teachers. Both groups agree on the
interpersonal characteristics necessary for the ideal mentor to possess stressing the need for that individual to be willing to devote the time necessary and to be willing to perform the duties necessary to work effectively as a mentor. Beginning teachers are somewhat more concerned about having a warm and sensitive mentor than are principals.

There was also general agreement between beginning teachers and principals on the professional characteristics for mentor teacher selection with both groups emphasizing the importance of a mentor with effective teaching strategies, effective discipline techniques, and effective planning methods. The greatest difference was the higher ranking given to understanding policies and procedures by the beginning teachers and the higher ranking given by the principals to expertise in subject matter.

Within the principals there was considerable agreement among the three school levels. Disagreements about the rank order of the characteristics were only marginal. Beginning teachers exhibited a little more disagreement among the three school level groups, particularly with the professional characteristics. Elementary teachers placed a higher ranking on the mentor's understanding of policies and procedures, the middle school teachers placed a higher ranking on the mentor having high student expectations, and the high school teachers placed a higher ranking on the mentor possessing expertise in subject matter than did their counterparts at the other grade levels. The most notable characteristic of the data retrieved on characteristics, however, is the striking consistency between principals and beginning teachers in their rank ordering of interpersonal and professional characteristics.

When identifying teachers to potentially be selected as mentors, the principals used a variety of criteria. The most frequently used criterion is the principal's recommendation. Other frequently used criteria included classroom observations, recommendations by assistant principals, and applications
prepared by the potential mentor. An infrequently used criteria for potential mentor selection was the use of an entrance exam or test.

The assignment concerns showed considerable agreement between the concerns ranked high by beginning teachers and those ranked high by principals. The greatest difference was the higher ranking given by the beginning teachers to the mentor and beginning teacher having compatible personalities and the higher ranking given by the principals to the mentor and beginning teacher having compatible ideologies. However, the within group rankings were considerably more different from each other than were the differences between beginning teachers and principals.

The elementary principals placed a higher ranking on having compatible personalities than did middle or high school principals whereas middle and high school principals were more concerned with having the mentor and beginning teacher sharing the same content areas than were the elementary principals. The greatest assignment differences were expressed by the beginning teachers themselves. Elementary beginning teachers expressed a much greater need than did their counterparts in middle and high schools for having a mentor assigned from their own grade level. Having a common planning time with their mentors was ranked first by the middle school beginning teacher respondents, third by the high school respondents, and sixth by the elementary teacher respondents. The high school beginning teachers' greatest concern was for their mentors to be assigned from the same content areas. Age, gender, and commonality of interests were consistently ranked lowest by both groups of respondents at all three stratifications. Race/ethnicity of the mentor and beginning teacher pair was ranked last in every group and subgroup.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The Georgia Mentor Teacher Program is designed to facilitate the induction of beginning teachers through support provided by mentor teachers. The success and retention of beginning teachers in Georgia's schools may be positively impacted by principals who are able to successfully identify and select veteran teachers who will be effective in the role of mentor and then thoughtfully assign those mentors to beginning teachers. This study examined the following question: As part of a beginning teacher induction program, what characteristics and concerns do principals and beginning teachers perceive as important for the selection and assignment of mentors to serve as Teacher Support Specialists (TSS) for beginning teachers in their schools?

The data for the study were gathered through questionnaire responses elicited from principals and beginning teachers. The principals in this investigation were asked to prioritize in rank order ten interpersonal and ten professional characteristics to be used in the selection of the ideal mentor. Principals were also asked to check each process used in the identification of experienced teachers for potential mentor selection. Principals were given ten assignment concerns which they were asked to prioritize in rank order. Finally, demographic information was solicited from the responding principals.

Beginning teachers were given a list identical to that of the principals and asked to rank order ten interpersonal and ten professional characteristics for mentor teacher selection. The beginning teachers were also asked to rank the
ten assignment concerns for mentor/beginning teacher pairing. Demographic information was also retrieved from the beginning teachers.

The first questionnaire was sent to an equal stratified random sample representing the population of elementary school, middle school, and high school principals who had requested stipend funds for mentor teachers who had supported beginning teachers during the 1995-96 school year. One hundred principals from each of the three stratifications were surveyed. Responses among the principals resulted in 217 of 300 principals returning the questionnaire. Both male (57.41%) and female (42.59%) principals responded to the questionnaire. Ethnic background of the respondents included White (77.32%), Black (20.83%), Native American (0.93%), Hispanic (0.46%), and Asian (0.46%). Nearly half of the principals (46.73%) stated their age range as 43 - 49 with the second largest age grouping represented by those in the 50 - 56 (30.37%) age range. The principals described themselves as possessing advanced educational degrees including Masters (10.19%), Education Specialist (73.15%), or Doctorate (16.66%) degrees. The largest group of principals claimed 16 or more years of experience (24.30%) followed closely by principals having one to three years of experience (23.83%).

The second questionnaire was sent to an equal stratified random sample of beginning teachers representing the population of elementary school, middle school, and high school beginning teachers who were provided with mentor support during the 1995-96 school year. One hundred fifty beginning teachers from each of the three stratifications were surveyed. Responses among the beginning teachers resulted in 248 of 450 teachers returning the questionnaire. The beginning teachers who responded to the questionnaire represented both males (16.94%) and females (83.06%). The majority of the beginning teachers indicated that they were White (87.10%), while the other respondents noted that
they were Black (11.29%), Hispanic (0.81%), Asian (0.40%), or Native American (0.40%).

Nearly half of the respondents (45.16%) were young beginning teachers stating an age range of 20 - 25. The second largest age range was 26 - 30 (18.14%) with the other beginning teachers representing ages from 31 years to 46 or older. This latter group indicates that these individuals entered the teaching profession at a later stage of their lives, many perhaps as a mid-life career choice. Most of the teachers indicated that they had completed the Bachelors degree (80.65%), though some of the beginning teachers claimed that they had completed a Masters (18.14%) or an Education Specialist (1.21%) degree. Nearly half (43.14%) of the beginning teachers claimed zero years of experience at the onset of the 1995-96 school year. Less than one year of experience to less than three years of experience was claimed by most of the other half of the respondents (47.58%). Some of the "beginning teachers" who had received mentor support during the 1995-96 school year were inappropriately placed with a mentor since they noted that they had three or more years of teaching experience.

The results of the study identified relationships between principals and beginning teachers on mentor selection characteristics and assignment concerns. The study results also identified relationships among the three school levels of both principals and beginning teachers on mentor selection characteristics and assignment concerns. Analysis of the data indicated areas of agreement and disagreement regarding the selection and assignment of mentors.

Some notable observations can be made from the study's results. The principals and beginning teachers were in general agreement regarding the rank order of interpersonal characteristics for the ideal mentor. Both groups of respondents stressed the importance of the mentor dedicating the time required
to provide the support the beginning teacher needs, much of which must be
given beyond the school day. In addition, the results indicated the need for the
mentor to be willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor which includes
not only support but willingness to be an advocate, a confidante, and a critic.
Effective communication was also given a high ranking by both principals and
beginning teachers as an important interpersonal characteristic for the mentor.

Principals and beginning teachers in this study also noted general
agreement as to the most important considerations when identifying
professional characteristics for the ideal mentor. Both groups stressed the
importance of selecting a mentor who exhibits effective teaching strategies and
methods as well as one who exemplifies effective classroom management and
discipline. Other highly ranked professional characteristics were that the
mentor plans effective lessons and units of instruction as well as that the mentor
holds high expectations for students.

The principals in this study provided insight into the identification
processes used most frequently. The identification process for potential mentor
selection which was most frequently used by Georgia principals was
recommendation by the principal. The second and third most frequently used
processes were both selected by over 50% of the respondents: classroom
observation and recommendation by the assistant principal. All of the other
processes were selected by fewer than 50% of the respondents.

Though there was general agreement between the principals and
beginning teachers regarding the top assignment concerns, the differences
were somewhat more pronounced between the principals and beginning
teachers and among the principals regarding other assignment concerns. Two
of the highest ranked assignment concerns of all respondents were matching
the content area and matching the grade level of the mentor/beginning teacher
pair. Another highly ranked concern was having a common planning time for
the beginning teacher and the mentor. Differences existed over other high ranked concerns such as the compatibility of professional ideologies and compatibility of personalities. The greatest assignment differences noted were among the three school levels of beginning teachers over the concerns for pairing a beginning teacher with a mentor.

Discussion of Research Findings

This study investigated the priority Georgia principals and beginning teachers assigned to characteristics to be used in selecting mentor teachers and the concerns to be addressed in the assignment of mentors to beginning teachers. In addition, the study identified the criteria used in the identification of potential mentors. In this section, the research findings from this study are examined in relation to the existing professional literature.

Interpersonal Characteristics for Mentor Selection

Principals and beginning teachers agreed when prioritizing the interpersonal characteristics for mentor selection. The top two mean and mode ranked characteristics of this study found a mentor’s willingness to devote the time needed and a mentor’s willingness to perform the roles expected of a mentor to be most important. There is overwhelming agreement in the literature with the importance of the mentor’s willingness to devote the time needed. Schmidt and Wolfe (1980) noted that the most important mentor characteristic was the commitment to provide the personal time and attention needed by the beginning teacher. Huffman and Leak (1986) found that sufficient time for discussion and reflection was a necessary part of the mentor/beginning teacher relationship. Mentors frequently have to give up their own planning time as well as to devote countless hours after school to assist the beginning teacher. Pennell (1992) identified the lack of time to be the worst impediment to effective mentoring. She further found that the recruitment and retention of mentors was
difficult because many experienced teachers do not want to take on the added duty, noting that the best teachers are often the busiest.

Both the beginning teachers and the principals gave a high ranking to the mentor’s willingness to perform the roles expected of a mentor. This finding is supported by the literature which generally describes the mentor’s role as confidante, advocate, and critic (TEA & AEL, 1988). The mentor is not only a source of moral support, but also provides the constructive criticism necessary for the beginning teacher to continue to learn and grow as a professional. Varah, Theune, and Parker (1986) stated that the mentor must want to be a mentor and be willing to put forth the extra commitment. Wagner (1985) and Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) noted that the mentor who wants to be a part of a mentoring relationship often results in a more effective mentor. It is encouraging that the beginning teachers consider this role nearly as valuable as the principals consider it to be.

Effective communication was highly ranked by both the beginning teachers and the principals. The various researchers and programs throughout the country place value on both oral and written communication (Lowney, 1986; Pajak & Carr, 1993). Particularly necessary is for the mentor to exhibit clear, precise language and good listening skills. Eagan (1986) and Wagner (1985) noted the necessity for the mentor to demonstrate effective communication skills, and Pennell (1992) found that effective communication was one of the highest ranked mentor abilities in her study. Haensly and Edlind (1986) found an increased probability of a successful mentoring relationship when the mentor is an effective communicator. They further found that the mentor needs to communicate sensitively about the beginning teachers development and progress. Interestingly, in this study the beginning teachers, who were mostly female, ranked being warm and sensitive higher than did the principals, who were predominantly male.
Being team-oriented and collaborative was seen as more important by principals than it was by beginning teachers. This was particularly true with high school principals. Interestingly, this was among the lowest three rankings by the middle school principals which contradicts the middle school concept currently in use in nearly all Georgia middle schools. The idea of being team-oriented and collaborative reflects the mentor’s willingness to work in a collegial relationship, to serve as a team player, and to honor and value the beginning teacher’s efforts to improve and grow professionally. Gray and Gray (1985) noted the need for the mentor to work as a team member to facilitate the growth of the beginning teacher. They stressed the need for the mentor to share power and expertise with the beginning teacher. Heller and Sindelar (1991) stated the mentor should be a team player who demonstrates a positive attitude and supports the system.

Both the principals and the beginning teachers noted the importance of maintaining confidentiality and trust and of being professional and ethical. Elementary beginning teachers stressed maintaining confidentiality and trust whereas middle and high school beginning teachers stressed being professional and ethical. Pajak and Carr (1993) noted the importance of the mentor modeling ethical behavior. Gordon’s (1991) work emphasized the importance of being trustworthy and maintaining confidences.

The two lowest ranked items for both the principals and the beginning teachers were that the mentor be self directed and that the mentor maintain a sense of humor. These characteristics were evident in the literature; however, this study ranked them as lowest among the top ten characteristics considered in this study. The principals in the study, both within the group and among the three school levels of principals, placed a slightly higher ranking on being self directed. Gray and Gray (1985) noted the need for the mentor to be flexible and secure in working with a beginning teacher. The description suggests that the
mentor should know when to intervene and when to step back and allow the
beginner to make some of his or her own mistakes. Maintaining a sense of
humor was stressed by Haensly and Edlind (1986) who suggested that it was
one of the criteria which increased the probability of a successful mentoring
experience.

Professional Characteristics for Mentor Selection

There was general agreement among the principals and beginning
teachers as to the top two ranked professional characteristics for the ideal
mentor to possess. Both groups noted the importance of the mentor exhibiting
effective teaching strategies and methods as the top mean ranked choice
followed by the mentor being an effective classroom disciplinarian and
manager. In closely studying the research results, however, it is interesting to
note that the principals placed a much higher mean ranking on the mentor
demonstrating effective teaching strategies and methods than they did on
having the mentor serve as a role model of effective classroom discipline. In the
group of elementary principals, discipline slipped to third place. This seems to
reflect the principals' need for the beginning teacher to be accountable for
effective instruction.

It would appear that the beginning teachers, who also ranked effective
teaching strategies and methods as most important, place considerable
emphasis on having a mentor who can demonstrate and articulate effective
classroom discipline and management strategies. In spite of the mean ranking,
the beginning teachers more frequently selected classroom discipline as their
number one concern, and middle school teachers placed a higher mean
ranking on discipline than on effective teaching strategies. This finding
coincides with Veenman's (1984) review of 83 research studies which found
classroom discipline to be the most frequently perceived problem of beginning
teachers. Wey (1951) in the early 1950s identified classroom discipline as a
number one concern as more recently did Gordon (1991) in his review of the literature on beginning teachers' needs.

The beginning teachers as a group placed a much higher mean ranking on the mentor understanding and following policies and procedures than did the principals, though the frequency ranking was similar. Freiberg, Zibkowski, and Ganser (1994) found that being informed on district and building policies and procedures was the highest ranked need of beginning teachers. Studies by Ganser (1991), Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992), and Gordon (1991) also reflected the high ranking for the beginning teacher to be informed on policies and procedures.

Principals ranked expertise in subject matter as the fifth highest mean ranked characteristic for the ideal mentor and placed it third in the frequency of response ranking. Among the three school levels, high school principals and high school teachers ranked expertise in subject matter higher than the other two school levels. Researchers interpret expertise in subject matter in a variety of ways. Though most describe this expertise in terms of possessing knowledge, skills, and strategies within the subject matter (Lowney, 1986; Wagner, 1985), others have noted the need for the mentor to convey enthusiasm for the subject matter (Jones & Walters, 1994).

Two of the three lowest ranked characteristics for the ideal mentor to possess, according to both the principals and the beginning teachers and all school level subgroups, were that the mentor is respected by colleagues and that the mentor possess effective conferencing skills. These are both interesting findings. A great many programs have noted the need to select a mentor who is respected by that individual's colleagues. Jones & Walters (1994) stated that the mentor should be recognized by those in the same profession and be held in respect by colleagues. Kozisek (1988) and Lowney (1986) stressed the need for the mentor to be respected by colleagues. Varah, et al. (1986) found
that having the respect of fellow faculty members to be equally important with other mentor qualifications. This implies that the mentor is a skillful teacher who is recognized by his or her peers as highly competent and can serve as a role model for a beginning teacher. This would seem to be a critical element for a mentor to possess. However, the principals and beginning teachers in this study did not place a high priority on this characteristic in relation to the other characteristics which were ranked for importance.

The consistently lowest mean and mode ranked professional characteristic for the mentor across all groups was that he or she demonstrate effective conferencing skills. This involves not only observation skills, but also being able to be reflective about the beginner’s work and to translate systematically gathered data into meaningful use through guidance and counseling. This is an important aspect of communicating needs and appropriate responses to the beginning teacher. Galvez-Hjornevik (1985) concluded that conferencing skills are so important to mentor success that they should be stressed in mentor training courses. Pajak and Carr (1993) stressed the importance of observation and conferencing as mentors’ skills. The finding of this study contradicts the literature which suggests the importance of mentors possessing conferencing skills.

Identification Process for Potential Mentor Selection

The most frequently used criterion (nearly 98%) for potential mentor selection in this study was recommendation by the principal. This not only indicates a sign of the principal’s ownership in the selection process, but also reflects favorably upon the required recommendation of the principal as a part of the Georgia selection process. Pennell’s (1992) study determined that the individual who has the best information about whether a teacher has the qualifications and potential to become a good mentor was the principal. Some respondents within the Pennell study noted that the principal may also rely
upon peer or department/grade level recommendation to identify potential mentors. As noted by Pennell, the principal respondents in this study frequently relied upon the recommendations of others in making mentor selection. One of the findings of this study was that the assistant principal's recommendation was used more than 50% of the time. Among the additional responses added to the questionnaire, principals noted their use of recommendations by the instructional lead teacher or recommendations by other working mentors in the building.

Over 60% of the principals reported in this study that they use classroom observation as an identification criteria for the mentor selection process. Since principals frequently observe teachers, both in and out of the classroom environment, this appears to be a more frequently used criterion in this study than in the studies reviewed in the literature. Gilligan (1986) reported that a California program relied upon classroom observation by a selection panel. Classroom observation by the administrator or by other classroom teachers was also a part of the work of Lowney (1986). Application by the potential mentor and self-nomination were used by less than half of the responding principals in this study. The principals in Pennell's (1992) study believed that self-selection was the least preferable option. However, Rauth (Rauth & Bowers, 1986) noted that it was fortunate that mentors voluntarily apply and submit to a screening procedure to be selected as mentors since he believed the principal's judgment to be quite unreliable. Lowney (1986) found that mentors were encouraged to nominate themselves within the parameters of meeting specific criteria. Varah, Theune, and Parker (1986), among others, stressed the value of the teacher choosing to be a part of a mentoring relationship since this act of self-nomination indicated a willingness to perform the roles expected of a mentor and a willingness to devote time to the relationship, the two most valued criteria within the scope of interpersonal characteristics in this study.
This research study did not address two aspects of potential mentor selection noted in the literature since neither of these is optional in the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. However, unsolicited comments from this study’s respondents makes it appropriate to briefly address these two issues. The first issue relates to the importance of training to become a mentor. Georgia requires that the potential mentor complete a training program which subsequently adds the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) endorsement to the potential mentor’s teaching or service certificate. Numerous research studies stress the need for mentor training (Bey & Holmes, 1990; Bowers & Eberhart, 1988; Brooks, 1987; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1985; George, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1989a; Kent, 1985; Odell, 1990; Thies-Sprinthall, 1986; Stroble & Cooper, 1988; Wagner, 1985). Secondly, in order to successfully complete the mentor endorsement in Georgia, the potential mentor must complete an internship in which that potential mentor is assigned a beginning teacher or a student teacher with whom to work while being supported by the course instructor. Interestingly, Pennell (1992) found that in some cases, as with self selection or nomination, the principals actually practice selection with the actual assignment of mentors since the self nominated individual cannot successfully complete the internship training requirements without the principal’s assignment.

Concerns for Mentor Assignment

There was considerable agreement between principals and beginning teachers as to the general rank order of assignment concerns for mentor/beginning teacher pairing though both principals and beginning teachers varied among themselves when compared by school level. Two of the top three mean ranked assignment concerns were having the mentor and the beginning teacher in the same content area and at the same grade level. Several studies or programs addressed in the literature also recommended these considerations in assignment.
Ganser's (1991) study, for instance, delineated the need for the mentor to have a working knowledge of the grade level or subject taught by the beginning teacher. Huling-Austin (1988) found that the greater the congruence between the mentor and beginning teacher in terms of subject matter and grade level, the more success the pair would enjoy. Odell (1990) noted that an assignment in the same academic area or at the same grade level allowed the beginning teacher to get help with specific questions about curriculum and subject matter and provided more credibility and expertise than a mentor in another content area. The respondents in Pennell's (1992) study most frequently chose having the mentor and beginning teacher in the same content area as the most important assignment criterion except the middle school mentors and beginning teachers who chose having a common grade level as the most important assignment criterion. Huffman and Leak (1986) noted that 93% of the beginning teachers in their study believed that mentors should teach the same grade or subject matter as the beginning teachers with whom they are paired. However, the beginning teachers preferred a more competent mentor at a different subject or grade level than a less competent mentor at the same subject or grade level. The findings of this study support these previous findings from the literature.

The greatest difference between the two groups of respondents was the relatively higher rank order of compatibility of professional ideologies as given by the principals and the higher rank order of compatibility of personalities as given by the beginning teachers. Seifert (1986) found both of these qualities to be important in enhancing the developing relationship. Huling-Austin (1988) noted that the greater the congruence between the mentor and beginning teacher in having compatible classroom ideologies, the more success the pair would enjoy. Kozisek (1988) and Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) both stressed the importance of compatible ideologies, but Pennell (1992) found that all groups of respondents consistently ranked compatible personalities over compatible
philosophies. This study found that the order of ranking varied by grade level. Elementary principals, elementary teachers, and high school teachers were more concerned with the mentor and beginning teacher having compatible personalities.

Having a common planning time was considered to be a more important consideration for the high school principals than either of the elementary or middle school principals whereas the middle school teachers considered a common planning time to be of much greater concern than did the elementary teachers. The middle school teachers who gave this concern such a high rank, tend to be in an environment where common planning time is part of the middle school concept and is often considered a critical component. Common planning time is considered an important assignment concern by many programs. Heller and Sindelar (1991), for example, found that common preparation periods and lunch periods facilitated communication between the mentor and the beginning teacher.

The logistical concern for having classrooms in close proximity to each other was ranked sixth by every group and subgroup except elementary beginning teachers who gave it a ranking of fourth. One elementary principal noted on her questionnaire that she had found the close proximity of the mentor and beginning teacher to be critical. Ganser’s (1991) effectiveness factor of accessibility stressed the importance of the physical proximity of the mentor/beginning teacher pair. Huling-Austin (1988) found that physical proximity added to the success of the match between the beginning teacher and the mentor. Odell (1989) stated that close physical proximity of classrooms was especially important if the mentor was assigned to teaching full time while mentoring. The lack of physical proximity in Odell’s study resulted in infrequent visits and insufficient support.
Four assignment concerns which consistently ranked as lowest both between and within groups were: commonality of interests, age, gender, and race/ethnicity, with this latter concern consistently appearing as the lowest concern of both principals and beginning teachers alike. Some research studies found greater importance for these considerations than did this study. Kram (1983) found gender differences to cause friction and create problems within a mentor/beginning teacher team. Hunt and Michael (1983) further noted the strain caused by public scrutiny and sexual tensions between male-female mentor/beginning teacher pairings. Ganser (1996) recommended 8 to 15 years as the most ideal age spread between an older mentor and a younger beginning teacher noting that fewer years of age and experience allowed the beginner to question the expertise and more years made the beginning teacher feel that the mentor had forgotten what it is like to be a beginning teacher. Pennell (1987) found that age, race, and gender were unimportant concerns. Alleman, Klein, and Newman (1984) found no significant differences related to gender in mentoring relationships. However, Clemson (1987) determined that age, race, gender, and some personality characteristics would be worth considering when creating mentor/beginning teacher pairings.

Conclusions

In reviewing the data and findings based upon the research questions of this study, one can conclude that there is considerable agreement between what Georgia principals as a group and Georgia beginning teachers as a group perceive as important for the interpersonal and professional characteristics for selection and for concerns for the assignment of the ideal mentor. The homogeneity of the responses between the two groups of educators was striking. However, it is notable that the principals across the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels demonstrated internal disagreement
among themselves as to the priority order of interpersonal and professional characteristics for selection as well as the priority order of assignment concerns for the ideal mentor. Similarly the beginning teachers disagreed among themselves across the three school levels.

The study results demonstrated that there is no consistent process for mentor identification in Georgia with the exception of the recommendation of the candidate's principal. The use of the principal's recommendation is affirming, however, since it is required as a part of the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) program considerations for selecting mentor teachers.

Another conclusion evident from this study is that social issues play a less important role than do issues of direct support in determining the mentor/beginning teacher pairing. Neither the beginning teachers nor the principals were particularly concerned with the relationship between the age, gender, race/ethnicity, or personal interests of the mentor and the beginning teacher. Both groups of respondents were much more concerned with issues such as grade level, content area, or close proximity of the pair which would impact the level of support which the mentor could provide to the beginning teacher. If two equally qualified mentors are available, social issues could be considered; however, neither the principals nor beginning teachers placed a premium on social issues as major assignment concerns.

One final conclusion which can be drawn from this study is that some administrators are not following the Georgia guidelines for appropriately pairing TSS endorsed mentors with beginning teachers. The Georgia Leadership Academy currently specifies that only beginning teachers in their first three years of employment are eligible to receive the support of a paid mentor through state stipend funds. Teachers who had taught for more than three years were randomly selected from those who had received mentor support through the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program indicating that both improved
monitoring and more clearly defined communication between Georgia Department of Education personnel and Georgia school system personnel regarding the program guidelines are needed.

Implications

Based upon the findings of this study, several implications are noted for using the study results:

Georgia Department of Education. The findings of this study will be given to the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Leadership Academy for use in the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. Findings from this study could be used as a basis for recommending mentor selection and assignment processes and procedures. Based upon the results of this study, Georgia Department of Education personnel should adopt the following revised criteria (see original criteria page 67) for mentor selection:

The TSS candidate must:

1. Possess a valid renewable teaching certificate.

2. Show evidence of at least three years satisfactory teaching experience in the (P)K-12 levels.

3. Show evidence of excellent interpersonal skills including effective communication skills, professionalism, and the maintenance of confidentiality and trust.

4. Show evidence of demonstrated professional competencies including effective teaching strategies, effective discipline and management, effective planning, expertise in subject matter, understanding of policies and procedures, and maintenance of high student expectations.

5. Be willing to commit the additional time necessary for supervisory and support responsibilities, such as observation and conferencing, with the teacher being supported.
6. Be willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor.
7. Have at least two positive recommendations, one of which should be from the applicant's principal.

In addition, Georgia Department of Education personnel should recommend that consideration be given to the following concerns in making mentor assignments:

1. Same content area
2. Same grade level
3. Common planning time
4. Compatibility of personalities
5. Compatibility of ideologies
6. Close proximity of classrooms

In addition to providing the specific selection and assignment criteria, the Georgia Department of Education should prepare a more in-depth description of beginning teacher eligibility for being assigned a mentor and distribute this description to the appropriate personnel in all school systems in Georgia. Georgia Department of Education personnel should also communicate eligibility requirements for receiving mentor stipend funding to appropriate school system personnel.

**Principals.** Georgia principals should be proactive in the selection of effective mentors as defined by the recommended Georgia Department of Education criteria. Experienced teachers who meet the aforementioned characteristics for mentor selection, such as a willingness to devote the time and conduct the duties of the mentor and an ability to manage the classroom and plan and teach effectively, should be nominated to participate in the coursework required to complete the Teacher Support Specialist endorsement. This would create a pool of mentors from which the principal could assign mentor candidates. Having a pool of candidates would allow the principal to be
deliberate in matching the mentor and the beginning teacher for the best possible pairing.

The assignment of mentors to beginning teachers should be conducted deliberately with care and wisdom. The principal should assign the mentor to the beginning teacher prior to preplanning whenever possible but maintain the flexibility to reassign the mentor/beginning teacher pair if the assignment is unsatisfactory. When assigning the mentor/beginning teacher pair, the principal should schedule common planning time and additional release time for the mentor in order to allow the mentor to have sufficient time to provide for the needs of the beginning teacher and for the pair to observe one another.

Principals have an additional duty to the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program and to the beginning teachers who are the direct recipients of the support. Principals must accept the responsibility to assure that the mentor and beginning teacher work together effectively. The principal must take an active role in the beginning teacher's induction into the school and in supporting the mentor and beginning teacher in their work.

**Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) and Large School Systems.** Large school system and RESA personnel who provide the coursework leading to the TSS endorsement should carefully study the curriculum to assure that potential mentors are provided the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective in the mentor role. TSS coursework should minimally address: roles and responsibilities of mentors, needs of beginning teachers, precepts of adult learning, ethics and confidentiality, effective communication skills, effective conferencing skills, working with various learning styles, elements of effective instruction, and the creation of an action plan. Also, personnel from RESAs should work with school system personnel to establish a procedure to assure that veteran teachers who register for TSS coursework have met the selection criteria.
Colleges and Universities. Since students self-select into the coursework leading to the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) endorsement, college and university personnel who teach the TSS mentor courses should become aware of the characteristics identified as necessary for the ideal mentor and establish TSS mentor course prerequisites which address these interpersonal and professional characteristics. College and university personnel might also consider requiring the principal's recommendation to pursue the coursework leading to the TSS endorsement.

In addition, college and university personnel who teach leadership and administration courses should include instruction in the needs of beginning teachers and the role of the mentor in supporting the beginner. Class sessions should stress the importance of a quality teacher induction program and of the important role the principal can play in assuring that the beginning teacher is provided with adequate support in order to be successful. The principal's role in thoughtfully selecting and assigning a mentor to the beginning teacher and then in adequately supporting the relationship and the tasks which are involved in such an endeavor would strengthen the principal's role in assuring the success of the beginning teachers in their charge.

School System Personnel. The school system staff development coordinator or personnel director who is in charge of the mentor program at the system level should use the selection and assignment criteria and recommendations for selection processes to assure that qualified veteran teachers are selected for the mentor role and that assignments are made in a thoughtful manner. Attention should be given to the mentor/beginning teacher pairing to assure that only teachers in the first three years of employment are assigned to a mentor who will be supported by stipend funds. School system personnel could earmark staff development funds to pay stipends to mentors who provide support to experienced teachers who are new to the system or to
Georgia schools and who are not currently eligible to receive the support of a state paid mentor. Georgia school system personnel should be encouraged to place the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program in the context of a broader beginning teacher induction program.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon the findings of this study, several recommendations are made for further research:

1. A parallel questionnaire should be administered to an equal stratified random sample of the mentors who were providing the support during the 1995-96 school year to determine the amount of agreement with the results from the principals and beginning teachers.

2. This study should be conducted with respondents from a variety of states throughout the United States where strong mentoring programs are in place.

3. A comparison could be made between the responses from principals regarding the interpersonal and professional characteristics important for a mentor to support beginning teachers with collected responses from principals regarding the interpersonal and professional characteristics important for a mentor to support beginning principals.

4. A broader study of the total induction process currently in use in Georgia schools and the role mentoring plays in that program should be conducted. Is there any consistently used process for beginning teacher induction across Georgia that is similar to the mentoring program?

5. This study should be replicated in five years.

6. A qualitative study of the relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher could be conducted which delves further into selection and assignment issues and their impact upon the effectiveness of both the mentor and the beginning teacher.
7. Cost effectiveness of the funding spent on mentor stipends could be studied. How successful were mentored beginning teachers versus beginning teachers who were not provided mentor support?

8. A longitudinal study of the beginning teacher respondents could be conducted to ascertain whether the beginning teachers continue to maintain a relationship with the mentor and to determine the retention rate for beginning teachers in this study.
REFERENCES


Appendix
December 16, 1996

Nelda Rose Anvik Bishop
Department of Leadership, Technology,
& Human Development
P.O. Box 8143

Dear Nelda Rose Anvik Bishop:

I have reviewed your proposed study entitled, “Selection And Assignment Of Georgia Teacher Support Specialists (Mentors) As Part Of A Planned Teacher Induction Program: An Analysis Of Perceptions Of Principals And Beginning Teachers.” After reviewing the proposal, the data collection instruments, and informed consent, it appears that only minimal risk exists for the research subjects. I am, therefore, on behalf of the Institutional Review Board able to certify that adequate provisions have been planned to protect the rights of the human research subjects.

If circumstances change or unforeseen events occur, please notify the IRB immediately. Upon completion of your research notify the IRB so that your file may be closed.

I wish you every success with this and future research efforts.

Respectfully,

Jim McMillan, Ed.D., Chair
Institutional Review Board
Georgia Southern University
Appendix B
CONTENT VALIDITY PANEL OF EXPERTS

The following individuals served as a panel of experts to assess the content validity of the questionnaires. Each individual has been directly involved in the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program from its inception. Each has provided professional development and training courses for prospective mentors. Each has been directly involved in the mentor selection and assignment process through their respective positions in Georgia public schools. Mrs. Hightower, Dr. Owen, Dr. Bey, and Dr. Guyton have published research on beginning teacher induction and mentoring. Mrs. Hightower, Dr. Bey, and Dr. Guyton are referenced in the review of the literature. Dr. Scherm and Ms. Connell served as Georgia Department of Education State TSS Program Coordinators.

Dr. Theresa Bey
Professor and Author
University of Georgia

Mrs. Phyllis Payne
Consultant and Trainer
Northwest Georgia RESA

Ms. Elaine Connell
Assistant Superintendent
Dublin City Schools

Mrs. Susan Proctor
Consultant and Trainer
Pioneer RESA

Mrs. Veronica Cowart
Director of Instruction
Jenkins County Schools

Dr. Carolyn Scherm
Professor and First State TSS Director
State University of West Georgia

Dr. Edith Guyton
Professor and Author
Georgia State University

Mrs. Shelly Smith
Consultant and Trainer
First District RESA

Mrs. Anne Hightower
Director of Staff Development
DeKalb County Schools

Dr. Shelby Talley
TSS Revision Coordinator/Trainer
Retired

Dr. Mary Jane Owen
Beginning Teacher Induction Coordinator
Henry County Schools
Appendix C
MENTOR SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: PRINCIPAL

The careful selection and assignment of mentor teachers to beginning teachers is often crucial to the success of the beginning teacher. Your expertise is needed for future decision making for the selection and assignment of Georgia mentors. Please complete both sides of this questionnaire and return it by February 21, 1997. You may use the enclosed postage paid envelope or mail it to: Nelda R. Bishop, Leadership, Technology, & Human Development, P.O. Box 8131, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia 30460. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful response to this questionnaire.

SELECTIOIN OF MENTORS

Please RANK ORDER each of the characteristics in each group below according to its importance for an ideal mentor to possess. Place a 1 beside the characteristic you consider most important, 2 beside the characteristic you consider second most important, . . . through a 10 by the characteristic you consider least important for selecting the ideal mentor. Use all ten numbers. Please force yourself to rank items you consider to be very close. Use each number only one time!

Example: To rank order my color preferences from most preferred (1) to least preferred (5), I might respond in the following way:

1. blue
2. green
3. purple
4. red
5. yellow

Please RANK ALL ITEMS from one (1 = most important) to ten (10 = least important). Please use each number only one time!

Interpersonal Characteristics of an Ideal Mentor

1. Is willing to devote the time needed
2. Is team-oriented and collaborative
3. Communicates effectively
4. Maintains confidentiality and trust
5. Works effectively with adults
6. Is self-directed
7. Is warm and sensitive to others
8. Is professional and ethical
9. Maintains a sense of humor
10. Is willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor

Professional Characteristics of an Ideal Mentor

1. Is an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager
2. Demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods
3. Demonstrates expertise in subject matter
4. Plans effective lessons and units of instruction
5. Is knowledgeable of curriculum resources, learning theory, and research
6. Is respected by colleagues
7. Holds high expectations for students
8. Understands and follows school policies and procedures
9. Demonstrates effective conferencing skills
10. Demonstrates leadership skills

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
MENTOR SELECTION PROCESS

Please PLACE A CHECK MARK (✓) in front of each item you or your school system uses in the identification of potential mentors to participate in the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) Mentor Teacher Program.

1. Application by the potential mentor
2. An entrance exam or test
3. Nomination by peer(s)
4. Interview
5. Classroom observation
6. Self-nomination
7. Recommendation by principal
8. Recommendation by assistant principal
9. Recommendation by central office
10. Selection by committee
11. Other: __________________________
12. Other: __________________________

ASSIGNMENT OF MENTORS

Please RANK ORDER the following concerns according to their importance in assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. Place a 1 beside the concern you consider to be most important, a 2 beside the concern you consider to be second most important, . . . through a 10 by the concern you consider to be least important when assigning mentors to work with beginning teachers. Use all ten numbers. Please force yourself to rank items you consider to be very close. Please use each number only one time.

1. Close proximity of classrooms
2. Same grade level
3. Same content area(s)
4. Common planning time
5. Gender of beginning teacher/mentor
6. Race/ethnicity of beginning teacher/mentor
7. Age of beginning teacher/mentor
8. Commonality of extra-curricular interests
9. Compatibility of professional ideologies
10. Compatibility of personalities

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please CIRCLE the response that best represents YOU. Please answer ALL questions.

• Number of full years in principalship excluding current year:
  0 1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12 13-15 16 or more

• Sex: Male Female

• Age: 22-28 29-35 36-42 43-49 50-56 57-63 64 or older

• Highest Educational Level: Masters Education Specialist Doctorate

• Race/Ethnicity: African American White Hispanic Asian Native American
  Other (please specify): __________________________

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this study!
Appendix D
MENTOR SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONNAIRE:
BEGINNING TEACHER

The careful selection and assignment of mentor teachers to beginning teachers is often crucial to the success of the beginning teacher. Your expertise is needed for future decision making for the selection and assignment of Georgia mentors. Please complete both sides of this questionnaire and return it by February 21, 1997. You may use the enclosed postage paid envelope OR mail it to: Nelda R. Bishop; Leadership, Technology, & Human Development; P.O. Box 8131; Georgia Southern University; Statesboro, Georgia 30460. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful response to this questionnaire.

SELECTION OF MENTORS

Please RANK ORDER each of the characteristics in each group below according to its importance for an ideal mentor to possess. Place a 1 beside the characteristic you consider most important, 2 beside the characteristic you consider second most important, . . . through a 10 by the characteristic you consider least important for selecting the ideal mentor. Use all ten numbers. Please force yourself to rank items you consider to be very close. Use each number only one time!

Example: To rank order my color preferences from most preferred (1) to least preferred (5), I might respond in the following way:

1 1. blue
5 2. green
3 3. purple
2 4. red
4 5. yellow

Please RANK ALL ITEMS from one (1 = most important) to ten (10 = least important). Please use each number only one time!

Interpersonal Characteristics of an Ideal Mentor

1. Is willing to devote the time needed
2. Is team-oriented and collaborative
3. Communicates effectively
4. Maintains confidentiality and trust
5. Works effectively with adults
6. Is self-directed
7. Is warm and sensitive to others
8. Is professional and ethical
9. Maintains a sense of humor
10. Is willing to perform the roles expected of a mentor

Professional Characteristics of an Ideal Mentor

1. Is an effective classroom disciplinarian and manager
2. Demonstrates effective teaching strategies and methods
3. Demonstrates expertise in subject matter
4. Plans effective lessons and units of instruction
5. Is knowledgeable of curriculum resources, learning theory, and research
6. Is respected by colleagues
7. Holds high expectations for students
8. Understands and follows school policies and procedures
9. Demonstrates effective conferencing skills
10. Demonstrates leadership skills

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
ASSIGNMENT OF MENTORS

Please RANK ORDER the following concerns according to their importance in assigning a mentor to support a beginning teacher. Place a 1 beside the concern you consider to be most important, a 2 beside the concern you consider to be second most important, ... through a 10 by the concern you consider to be least important when assigning mentors to work with beginning teachers. Use all ten numbers. Please force yourself to rank items you consider to be very close. Please use each number only one time.

____ 1. Close proximity of classrooms
____ 2. Same grade level
____ 3. Same content area(s)
____ 4. Common planning time
____ 5. Gender of beginning teacher/mentor
____ 6. Race/ethnicity of beginning teacher/mentor
____ 7. Age of beginning teacher/mentor
____ 8. Commonality of extra-curricular interests
____ 9. Compatibility of professional ideologies
____10. Compatibility of personalities

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please CIRCLE the response that best represents YOU. Please answer ALL questions.

• Grade level(s) you taught during the 1995-96 school year while being mentored. Circle all that apply:
  PreK  K  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12
• Sex: Male Female
• Age: 20-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 46+
• Race/Ethnicity: African American White Hispanic Asian Native American Other (please specify) ____________________________________________
• Highest Educational Level: Bachelors Masters Education Specialist
• How many years of public school teaching experience did you have at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year?
  0 less than 1 year 1 full year 2 years Other: ___________

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this study!
Dear Georgia Principal:

Georgia Education Leadership Academy records indicate that stipend monies were awarded to mentor teachers from your school who were selected and assigned to support beginning teachers during the 1995-96 school year. This funding was conducted through the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. As a part of a doctoral research project, I am gathering data from a random sample of principals and beginning teachers across Georgia to determine what characteristics principals and beginning teachers value in a mentor. Specifically, I would like to determine which interpersonal and professional characteristics principals and beginning teachers believe should be considered in order to select the ideal mentor. Secondly, I would like to determine what considerations should be made when the mentor is assigned to work with the beginning teacher. I am also interested in what processes are used by Georgia principals in schools and school systems to determine which teachers should be selected to be trained to receive the Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) endorsement on the teaching or service certificate.

Though I know you are busy and receive many requests for assistance with research, I strongly encourage you to take 5-10 minutes of your day to provide the information needed to strengthen the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program which has provided invaluable assistance to beginning teachers in Georgia. The perceptions of Georgia principals combined with the perceptions of beginning teachers, who are the direct recipients of the mentor support, should provide a foundation for recommending the criteria for the selection and assignment of future Teacher Support Specialists (TSS mentors).

I appreciate your willingness to assist me. There is, of course, no penalty should you decide not to participate. If you agree to participate, please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by February 21, 1997, in the addressed postage paid envelope provided. If you delegate the selection and assignment of mentors to an assistant principal or some other individual, please give him or her the questionnaire to complete. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your permission for the use of your responses in the aggregate data compiled and reported. Please feel assured of the anonymity and absolute confidentiality of your responses. Questionnaires have been coded for the sole purpose of tracking nonrespondents in case a second mailout is needed. However, only aggregate data will be used in the analysis for the study. A copy of the results of the study will be made available to you upon your request.

If you have any questions about this research project, please call me, Nelda Bishop, at (912) 764-6353 any evening. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact Dr. Jim McMillan, Chair of the University Institutional Review Board, at (912) 681-5465.

Thank you again for your support of my research efforts!

Respectfully,

Nelda R. Bishop
Leadership, Technology, and Human Development
Post Office Box 8131
Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
Appendix F
Dear Georgia Beginning Teacher:

Your principal has identified you as a teacher who has taught for three or fewer full years and one who was supported by a Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) endorsed mentor during the 1995-96 school year. As a part of a doctoral research project, I am gathering data from a random sample of principals and beginning teachers across Georgia to determine what characteristics principals and beginning teachers value in a mentor. Specifically, I would like to determine which interpersonal and professional characteristics principals and beginning teachers believe should be considered when selecting the ideal mentor. Secondly, I would like to determine what concerns should be considered when the mentor is assigned to work with the beginning teacher.

Though I know you are busy, I strongly encourage you to take 5-10 minutes of your day to provide the information needed to strengthen the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program which has provided invaluable assistance to beginning teachers in Georgia. The perceptions of Georgia principals combined with the perceptions of beginning teachers, who are the direct recipients of the mentor support, should provide a foundation for recommending the criteria for the selection and assignment of future Teacher Support Specialists (TSS mentors).

I appreciate your willingness to assist me. There is, of course, no penalty should you decide not to participate. If you agree to participate, please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by February 21, 1997, in the addressed postage paid envelope provided. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your permission for the use of your responses in the aggregate data compiled and reported. Please feel assured of the anonymity and absolute confidentiality of your responses. Questionnaires have been coded for the sole purpose of tracking nonrespondents in case a second mailout is needed. However, only aggregate data will be used in the analysis for the study. A copy of the results of the study will be made available to you upon your request.

If you have any questions about this research project, please call me, Nelda Bishop, at (912) 764-6353 any evening. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact Dr. Jim McMillan, Chair of the University Institutional Review Board, at (912) 681-5465.

Thank you again for your support of my research efforts and for helping to secure appropriate mentors for future beginning teachers!

Respectfully,

Nelda R. Bishop
Leadership, Technology, and Human Development
Post Office Box 8131
Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
Appendix G
MEMORANDUM

TO: Selected Georgia Principals
FROM: Don Splinter and Tana Page
RE: Research Support
DATE: January 1997

The Department of Education continually reviews program content and implementation guidelines. We are requesting your assistance in gathering data about the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. This program, developed in 1990, has made funds available to mentors who have provided support services to beginning teachers.

The researcher, Nelda Bishop, will compile aggregate data from the respondents. The identity of respondents will be held in confidence by the researcher. The results of the study provided to the Georgia Department of Education Mentor Teacher Program staff will be used in making program decisions concerning the selection of mentors and the assignment of mentor teachers to beginning teachers.

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to complete and return the questionnaire.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Selected Georgia Beginning Teachers
FROM: Don Splinter and Tana Page
RE: Research Support
DATE: January 1997

The Department of Education continually reviews program content and implementation guidelines. We are requesting your assistance in gathering data about the Georgia Mentor Teacher Program. This program, developed in 1990, has made funds available to mentors who have provided support services to beginning teachers.

The researcher, Nelda Bishop, will compile aggregate data from the respondents. The identity of respondents will be held in confidence by the researcher. The results of the study provided to the Georgia Department of Education Mentor Teacher Program staff will be used in making program decisions concerning the selection of mentors and the assignment of mentor teachers to beginning teachers.

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to complete and return the questionnaire.