

Proposal

Buffalo State College School of Education
Department of Elementary Education and Reading
Mentoring Mentors of Teacher Candidates Task Force
Rosemary Leibowitz, Task force chair

Proposal for Summer Institute: “Mentoring Mentors of Teacher Candidates for Success Summer Institute,” July, 2007.

Rationale:

Retention and development of high quality teachers has always been a concern for school districts. Research has indicated that **mentored teachers** make more effective transitions from teacher preparation to practice, have greater confidence in their teaching skills, focus on student learning sooner, and significantly higher retention rates.

Currently teacher candidates are placed in a school site with a tenured teacher, but there are no formal processes to assure that the teachers have been identified as “mentor quality” teachers. Placements are usually made in collaboration with the principal of the school from a pool of teachers who volunteer or are suggested by the building principal. The cooperating teachers who work with Buffalo State College teacher candidates do not have any formal training in how to work with college interns except information that might be shared by individual BSC faculty with mentor teachers in the PDS.

Goal:

The lack of consistent expectations by mentor teachers of the students placed in their care is a need we hope to address to strengthen our teacher candidates’ internships during junior participation and student teaching by providing professional development for **cooperating teacher mentors** and university **supervisors** similar to that of school district mentor programs designed for mentors of first year teachers.

Staff development plays a pivotal role in mentoring programs (Ganser, Freiberg & Zbkoski, 1994) The best mentoring programs provide specific descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers. (Rowley, 1999)

In the spring of 2007, the Department of EER convened a task force to investigate the potential for developing a teacher mentor development program. That task force recommended that the department should pilot a mentoring institute for cooperating teachers. We suggest the title “Mentoring Mentors of Teacher Candidates for Success Summer Institute” and the tentative dates July 17,18&19, 2007.

In this innovative institute, “Mentoring Mentors of Teacher Candidates for Success Summer Institute,” participants will collaborate to apply the Core Principles of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) a to build a

framework for improving the triad of Teacher Candidate, Mentor Teacher and University Supervisor, the essential team for all field-based placements.

At the end of the institute, participants will make recommendations for future mentor training workshops. We will hold ongoing meetings with the original summer institute participants during the academic year to discuss mentoring strategies, best practices in teaching, action research, and current needs. The pilot group will share our findings at the PDS retreat in the fall of 2007. We are exploring partnerships with the Buffalo Teacher Center and Erie I Boces to secure professional development incentives for teachers involved with the “Mentoring Mentors of teacher Candidates for Success” Institute.

The end result of this pilot workshop will be to develop a mentoring model that will be required of cooperating teachers who wish to mentor BSC teacher candidates .

Implementation Plan: *Mentoring the Mentors of teacher Candidates for Success*

Step I: Spring 2007: Develop Mentor Training Model (review teacher candidates 2006-2007 evaluation data assessment retreat),

Step II: Summer 2007: Summer Institute 2007, *Mentoring Mentors of teacher Candidates for Success*”

Step III: Summer 2007: Review results of institute and make adjustments to the program

Step IV: Fall 2007: Refinement and discussion

Break out session with PDS **principals** at fall, 2007, PDS retreat to discuss principals’ perspectives on necessary characteristics and conditions for selecting high quality teacher mentors for field-based student placements.

- Ongoing interactive sessions with original participants.
- Brown bag sessions with supervisors who attended the 2007 institute and fall 2007 mentor teachers to apply principles suggested by the institute to strengthen mentor teacher coaching of our teacher candidates:

Step V: Review 2007-2008 student assessment data and reconvene task force to suggest directions for Summer 2008 Summer Institute.

Step VI: Summer Institute 2008, “Mentoring the Mentors of teacher Candidates for Success” participants to include mentor teachers who were in the pilot summer institute in 2007 and new teachers mentors.

Content

It is anticipated that the “*Mentoring Mentors of teacher Candidates for Success* will explore the following components of effective mentoring:

1. Defining roles and expectations of the field experience triad, Mentor Teacher/University Supervisor/Teacher Candidate

