

Question 5

- **What can and should I do to support new teachers in my building?**

Introduction

It's beneficial to understand **the phases that new teachers go through** in the course of their first year of teaching. Ellen Moir of the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, CA has created a graph of what first-year teaching often looks like. Click on the picture above to enlarge it.

Please [read this article where Ms. Moir explains the different stages](#) ... I think it will give you great insight into what's happening with your new teachers ... and it will probably bring back some memories from your own early experiences.

Now please take a few minutes to think about where the new teachers in your building are at the present time and what kinds of things you might do to support them in this phase.

YOU ARE VERY IMPORTANT!

The research on mentoring is clear about **the importance of the building administrator in both the success and the satisfaction of a new teacher**. No matter how supportive and helpful the new teacher's mentor is, new teachers still seek and need feedback and approval from their building administrators. Send them the message that "you are valued, we want you to succeed, and we want you to stay".

What You Can Do

[View the Site Orientation Checklist](#) to find a list of topics that new teachers need to know about in your school. This list was put together by a group of principals. It might be helpful for you in preparing to meet with your new teachers at the beginning of the year.

Here is another link, this one to a [calendar of suggestions from North Dakota Department of Education](#) for supporting your new teacher during each month of the school year. It contains suggestions for both building administrators and mentors. We'll be sharing this list with the mentors and your first-year teachers, also.

Finally, [another interesting article about the vital role of the principal in NTI](#). This is a volume of the New Teacher Center's *Reflections* newsletter devoted to *The Vital Role of the Principal in Teacher Induction*. Other articles include *Convergent Coaching*, *A Theory of Action for Coaching-Based Supervision*, *The Principal: A Key to Beginning Teacher Success*, and *A Culture of Collaboration*.

One of the most worthwhile things you can do for your mentor and new teacher is to **provide them with schedules that allow them time to communicate and work together**.

Two kinds of support that new teachers require are psychological and instruction-related (Gold 1996). We all know that good collaboration takes time ... and unless the mentor and new teacher have time to work together, it's unlikely that the relationship will actually be much more than a buddy system ... and we won't see the kinds of improvement in instructional skills that we would like to see. As much as possible, when you are doing planning for a new school year, try to support your first-year teachers by scheduling shared lunch hours or preparation time with their mentors.

Final Steps

The final step for you is to **send me an email** (to schaefjm@mlc-wels.edu) with additional questions you may have. After reviewing this information, you are better able to answer these questions.

Questions

- How closely do you work with the mentor for the new teacher in your building? For you, what are the essential mentor criteria?
- Do you have any concerns about how you will meet the responsibilities of WELS New Teacher Induction?
- Does your building presently have a culture that is supportive of new teachers? If so, what are the characteristics that make it so? If not, what can you as the building leader do to make it a better place for new teachers to work?
- What are your personal plans for how you will support the new teachers in your building?
- What was the most helpful part of this training for you? (And we'll take suggestions on how to make it better, too!)

Thank you for reviewing this information in support of the new teacher(s) in your building. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you have about how we might best support your work.

Professor Jon Schaefer - WELS NTI Coordinator - mobile (507) 766-9674 - Email schaefjm@mlc-wels.edu (Send me a text or give me a call. If it's a little longer question and you can spare a little extra time for a reply send me an Email as I end up being on the road a lot :)

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