

**A STUDY OF HOW ADMINISTRATORS CAN HELP
REDUCE CLASSROOM ANXIETY AND THE ATTRITION RATE
OF NOVICE TEACHERS**

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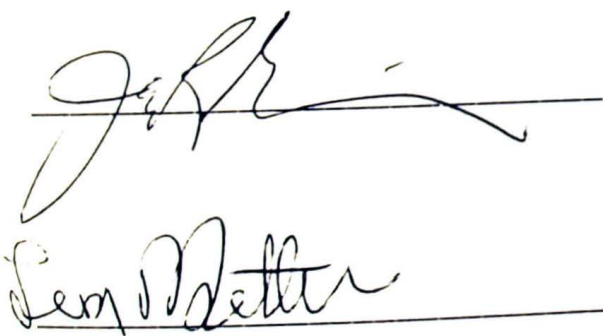
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I am submitting herewith a Field Study written by Fawn T. Ukpolo entitled "A Study of How Administrators can Help Reduce Classroom Anxiety and the Attrition Rate of Novice Teachers." I have examined the final copy of this Field Study for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Education Specialist, with a major in Administration and Supervision.

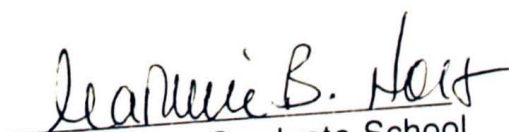


Dr. Al Williams

We have read this Field Study
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A STUDY OF HOW ADMINISTRATORS CAN HELP
REDUCE CLASSROOM ANXIETY AND THE ATTRITION RATE
OF NOVICE TEACHERS

A Field Study
Presented to the
Graduate and Research Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

By
Fawn T. Ukpolo
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ABSTRACT

New teachers are placed in unfamiliar situations and many times are ill-prepared, unadvised and under the impression they know what is required of them. With limited experience, training and guidance, they are expected to enter the classroom and teach like their more experienced colleagues. Unfortunately many fall short of these expectations and are released within their first few years of teaching.

This study identifies obstacles new teachers encounter and provided practical suggestions for administrators and supervisors which can be incorporated into their new teacher orientation programs. Recommendation for a formal guide and a mentoring program are also made.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Apprentice teachers over the years have had a difficult time completing their teaching assignments at the proficiency level required by administrators. First year teachers, right out of college and used to handling situations in theory, sometimes find it difficult to handle similar situations in practice. They often discover that what sounded feasible and worked well on paper does not necessarily transfer well to real life (West, 1995). Many become lost, confused, and frustrated when confronted by twenty to thirty students. Instead of seeking assistance, they often do nothing and hope it will get better. For some it does, but for many it does not. They soon receive poor evaluations from their principals or supervisors and are released (Niebrand, Horn and Holmes, 1992).

In many situations the number of teachers released may have been reduced if the teacher had more guidance or support from their administrator (Harris, 1995). The principal of the new teacher is usually unaware of the hardships and struggles the new employee is encountering and tends to leave them alone. By the time the administrator is aware of the problems the teacher is having, it may be too late. The new teacher never quite gains control of the classroom, gains confidence, or the skills necessary to have a successful first year.

Many new teachers, who have great potential, are lost because of poor evaluations, burn-out, and stress (Bryne, 1992). With the initially overwhelming tasks of lesson planning, classroom management, establishing discipline, and creating grading scales which are fair and accurate, many can

not handle the pressure. They are expected to keep updated bulletin boards, foster parent teacher relationships, establish a working relationship with their colleagues, and perform other tasks efficiently from the first day that they are hired. Without a guide or someone to assist them, many novice teachers are overwhelmed by the responsibilities and are released after their first few years (Gordon, 1991).

This study addresses common problems new teachers experience which, if not resolved, results in resignation or termination. Additionally, practical solutions school districts and principals can implement to help reduce the novice teachers' anxiety levels and their attrition rate are also suggested and described.

Statement of the Problem

Many new teachers are released or resign after their first year of teaching. They are overwhelmed, bewildered and overworked during their first year of teaching. They walk into their new positions totally unaware of the multitude of responsibilities and duties school teachers perform (Niebrand, Horn and Holmes , 1992). Principals and supervisors assume new teachers know their duties and tend to leave them alone to find their way through the maze. The absence of guidance in supervising the new teacher can be professionally dangerous. It can lead to a new teacher performing poorly resulting in poor evaluations and eventually dismissal (Shreeve et el, 1993).

This study attempts to identify problems first year teachers experience and describes suggestions that if implemented, can help first year teachers experience success.

Importance of the Study

The retention of employees in any profession is essential to the growth and survival of the profession. When a school has an experienced staff, the school can literally function with limited guidance from administrators (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). The longer a person works for an organization such as a school system, the more familiar they become with the rules and regulations which results in the teacher spending less time asking questions and more time answering them.

Having a school with experienced teachers also often leads to an improved culture at the school (Young, Crain, McCullough, 1993). As a teacher gains confidence, experience and tenure, they tend to produce a higher quality of work as well as requiring more from their students. This is due to the teacher's years of experimenting with lesson plans, different discipline methods and experience. Over the years the teacher becomes familiar with what can and can not be done which results in them pushing themselves as well as their students harder (West, 1995).

Description of the Study

Based on the literature review and informal interviews with beginning teachers, suggestions to improve new teacher's first year experiences will be provided. Finally, a series of specific recommendations for inclusion in a school district's formal first year teacher's guide will be made.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include the mentoring program and the distribution of a guide has not been field tested.

Definition of Terms

- Apprentice: Teacher with less than 1 year teaching experience
- Attrition: Quitting or firing of teachers
- Evaluation: Formal observation by a principal or supervisor
- Master Teacher: Teacher with three or more years teaching experience and proven effective in the classroom
- Mentor: Master teacher assisting a novice teacher
- Networking: Talking with teachers to assist/provide ideas and solutions to problems which surface
- Novice Teacher: Beginning teacher with less than three years of teaching experience
- Preserves Teacher: A University student completing student teaching
- Probation: Given a year to correct identified deficiencies
- Tenure: Given after successfully completing 3 years of teaching

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

Many novice teachers are confused, overwhelmed and perhaps a little frightened in their first year of teaching. Principals hire them, hand them the teacher edition to their class textbook(s), the keys to their classroom and wish them good luck. With no formal indoctrination, training or a guide to follow, new teachers many times are ready to throw in the towel after their first year. Others are forced to leave the teaching profession due to poor evaluations (Shreeve et al, 1993). With the initially overwhelming tasks of planning lessons, classroom management, grading papers and creating grading scales, many new teachers can not handle the stress. It is a frustrating time of self-doubt (Young, Crain, McCullough, 1993).

A survey conducted by Shreeve, et al (1993) on a number of first year teachers found that 40% of the respondents had been placed on probation their first year of teaching due to not being able to effectively handle the tasks required of all teachers. The survey also revealed 69 percent of the teachers placed on probation were dismissed, retired, or resigned. New teachers were expected to know just as much as master teachers without the advantage of the years of teaching experience. Not only were they expected to perform at the same proficiency level as their experience colleagues, they were often given the poorest academic students, the largest class loads, often floating from one classroom to the next without assistance or guidance from anyone (Stone, 1987; Gordon, 1991 and Wildman, Magliaro, Niles and Niles, 1992). It's a wonder so many new teachers survive.

The question is, why is such a large percentage of new teachers placed

on probation their first year? They successfully completed their student teaching program, handed in wonderful portfolios, completed hours of observations, yet are still placed on probation. Could there be a problem with how colleges and universities prepare pre-service teachers or are administrators neglecting to conduct formal induction programs for the new teacher?

Several authors (Van Zandt and Harlan ,1995 and Reeves, 1995) believe that colleges and universities could do a better job preparing pre-service teachers for their first teaching job. Many of the problems new teachers face are basically from being inexperienced. To eliminate that problem, Van Zandt and Harlan recommends a longer period of field-based experiences for the novice upon completion of their course work. They also recommended a year-long internship under the supervision of master teachers and or a university faculty member be implemented into the teacher education programs as well.

At many universities, the student teaching experience last fifteen weeks (Austin Peay State University). This time frame does not allow the student teacher the opportunity to learn or experience the entire process (West, 1995). Under a year long internship, the new teacher would take control of a classroom from the beginning of the academic year to the end. They would work under the guidance of a fellow colleague who would be reserved specifically for assisting them with their needs. This program is currently in place at a few universities. Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tn., presently has an internship as a component of the graduate education program. Belmont in Nashville, Tn., also has a similar program. Having a support system the first year hopefully will reduce some of the stress

associated with feelings of isolation so many new teachers seem to experience their first year (Phelps, 1993).

Another suggestion colleges and universities could do to help pre-service teachers succeed their first year is to administer the Life Style Approaches Inventory to pre-service teachers. The inventory measures a student's potential for success in the classroom measured by organizational skills (Long, Gaynor, and Erwin, 1992). It suggest potential areas of weakness which could surface while the new teacher is teaching. The University in which the pre-service teacher is attending would review the teacher's overall performance, and help the teacher improved in areas where they show weaknesses. Long, Gaynor, and Erwin, (1992) completed the survey and found it very helpful to pre-service teachers in addressing potential weaknesses in the teachers prior to graduation and sending them out in the schools.

Another trouble spot for new teachers is in the areas of formal evaluations and observations (Carlson, 1993). Principals are required to evaluate teacher's performance periodically throughout the school year by conducting formal as well as informal evaluations. These evaluations can lead to the retention or the removal of the teacher (Stone, 1987).

Currently, in many districts, such as the Clarksville Montgomery County School District in Clarksville, Tn., the evaluation process is as follows: A teacher is handed a standardized form to fill out which ask questions such as:

- a. What is the topic of the lesson?
- b. What are the learning objectives?
- c. How will the objectives be met?

- d. What will the students be doing?
- e. What will the teacher be doing?
- f. How and when will the objectives be measured?

As the principal observes the teacher, they look to see if the teacher followed the lesson as well as if the teacher met the objectives and how the teacher performed during the observation. At the end of the observation period, the principal has a conference with the teacher and discusses the teacher's strengths and weaknesses with regards to that lesson. The problem with this procedure is that it only shows a teacher's behavior on one particular day teaching one particular lesson. It does not show a teachers strengths, weaknesses nor how they problem solve daily. With this in mind, principals and administrators must reevaluate the reasons for conducting evaluations and consider using multiple approaches to evaluating the effectiveness of a teacher.

Agreeing on the purpose for conducting evaluations is a priority with many educators. Some believe the primary purpose of evaluations is to improve instruction or the teaching/learning process (Shreeve, 1993). Another researcher Gordon (1991) believes evaluations are the best way to determine a beginning teacher's instructional needs. Many teachers believe that evaluations are tools administrators used to get rid of ineffective teachers. For what ever reasons why evaluations are conducted, teachers must accept that the process is here to stay. As a result, principals and supervisors must make sure the process is fair and accurate since it can determine one's livelihood.

Currently, educators are advocating changing how teachers are evaluated. They believe administrators and supervisors use multiple tools

to evaluate teacher performance instead of relying on two to three forty-five minute observations.

One new tool being stressed is the use of teacher portfolios to evaluate performance. One writer, Zubizarreta, (1994) believes portfolios are the most effective tool in improving instruction and evaluating teacher performance. For example, a teacher would gather information throughout the year for their portfolio. It would contain data such as evaluations by students, parents, and fellow teachers. Also included would be examples of student's work which was produced throughout the school year as well as special projects and activities. Administrators can use the portfolio to seek a more reliable means of evaluating the teachers performance. Portfolios may also be used to provide outside evaluators with concise, selective, evidence-based information from a wide variety of sources. Zubizarreta (1994) and Long and Stansbury (1994) believe portfolios should contain but are not limited to the following information:

1. A narrative document in which a faculty member concisely organizes details of his or her teaching efforts and accomplishments.
2. Usually 8 to 10 double spaced pages.
3. Selective information about teaching assignments, teaching philosophy, methods, materials, experience, workshops attended as well as teaching goals.
4. Evaluations (some by students, peers and parents).
5. Examples of students' work that correctly demonstrate learning.
6. A three to six week unit which includes lesson plans,

handouts, examples of students work and a weekly log of successes as well as failures.

Principals and supervisors must be warned that no single evaluation process is perfect. With portfolios there may be some biasness on the side of the teacher. For example, the teacher may only revealed successful projects in the portfolio. However, this method combined with others may be the right combination to effectively evaluate the performance of a teacher.

Performance Base Evaluations are also being introduced in many districts as a way to evaluate teachers. Two authorities Long and Stansbury (1994) define Performance Base Evaluations as "Assessment that require the teacher to demonstrate the application of knowledge rather than just the knowledge itself". Teachers are placed in multiple situations and are required to apply hands-on knowledge to solve problems. For example:

1. High Inference Classroom Observation: A trained observer watches the teacher for certain behavior and documents whether the behavior was present or not. The observer must attend a week long course on how to effectively evaluate a teachers performance in this area.
2. Semi-Structured Interview: An interviewer asks the teacher to answer a standardized set of questions and/or to perform specific tasks. Examples of this would be to give the teacher a topic and ask them how they would teach and plan a unit on the topic as well as demonstrate how they would evaluate a student's performance on this unit.
3. Video-tape of teacher performing certain task: A teacher is given certain task to complete and must demonstrate the

- best ways to teach the task, how they would reteach the lesson and how to put the lesson together while being video taped.
4. **Performance-Based Assessment Center Exercises:** A group of teachers are placed together and given certain activities to complete. Each assessment activity requires the teacher to directly demonstrate a different skill or ability.
 5. **Multiple Choice Examinations:** Teachers answer highly focused questions about teaching and/or a subject matter (usually their own) and must evaluate student performance on the subject matter. For example, if a teacher is an English teacher, he or she would be given an example of an English student's work and required to evaluate the work.
 6. **Performance Enhancement Model:** Designed to assist administrators in helping the first year teacher. It provides the first year teacher with a mentor, a coach, networking options, seminars, and help in planning units.

With so many options available for evaluating teacher performance, no one type of evaluation process should be used. A combination of the aforementioned techniques would provide a great overall picture of the effectiveness of a new teacher. These evaluations could also serve as a means of noting disciplinary practices a new teacher may be using. They would allow principals the opportunity to intercept and help the new teacher immediately instead of waiting and risking the chance of placing them on probation or letting them go. Losing teachers to poor evaluations should be reduced by implementing intervention and remediation programs early on in a teacher's career.

Research indicates providing new teachers with a mentor has been effective in helping new teachers adjust (Odell and Ferraro 1992, Littleton, Tally-Foos and Wolaver, 1992 and Harris, 1995). Beginners revealed they were apprehensive about their duties when they did not have someone or something to assist them with their tasks in the first year (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). Research states that about 30% of beginning teachers do not teach beyond 2 years and almost 40% and especially the most academically talented, leave the profession within their first 5 years of teaching (Heyns 1988, Long and Stansbury, 1994). They often felt overwhelmed, overworked and isolated. They lack the guidance and support of a colleague (Phelps, 1993).

A new teacher walks into an empty classroom, unaware of the multitude of tasks required of them prior to any student entering the room and are shocked (West, 1995). With no one to assist them in the planning of tasks and principals expecting them to deliver immediately, it is too difficult for them and, as a result, they quit.

Principals and administrators in many school districts have become aware of the lack of guidance for new teachers and have begun to implement mentoring programs to help (Young, Crain and McCullough, 1993). The programs are designed as either formal or informal induction programs. New teachers are matched with veteran teachers who assist the new teacher by helping him/her get started and organized (Nelson, 1995). Two authorities, (Odell and Ferraro, 1992), provided three goals in which mentoring programs should strive to achieve the following:

1. Provide beginning teachers with guidance and support.
2. Promote professional development of beginning teachers.
3. Retain beginning teachers.

In a survey 46 percent of the new teachers believed a skilled, experienced teacher assigned to them to provide advice and assistance would have helped them to be more effective (Young, Crain, and McCullough, 1993). (Littleton, Tally-Foss, and Wolaver, 1992) researched and discovered 99 percent of mentors felt that mentoring improved instruction and 64 percent of the mentors indicated that mentored teachers did better than their non-mentored colleagues.

When choosing a mentor, it is very important to choose a mentor who is qualified to be a mentor. Programs which choose veteran teachers who possess the following characteristics have had higher success rates with their programs than programs which match any teacher with a novice teacher:

1. Master teachers should possess superior teaching skills and a willingness to share those skills with others (Nelson, 1995).
2. Master teachers should teach the same subject matter and be in close proximity of the new teacher as well have demonstrated effectiveness and ability to work well with others (Littleton, 1992).
3. Veteran teachers must be willing to be a mentor, helpful but not authoritarian, diplomatic and emotionally committed to the beginner (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles, and Niles, 1992).
4. Mentors should be older than the new teacher and have a minimum of 3-5 years of experience and demonstrate expertise in the role (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles and Niles, 1992).
5. Teachers who are organized managers are good mentors (Young, Crain, and McCullough, 1993).

For this program to be successful there are certain activities which

must be completed. For example, mentors and new teachers must sit down formally at the beginning of the school year and develop pre-arranged times to meet and discuss problems as well as upcoming events and major tasks (Harris, 1995). (Nelson, 1995) strongly urge administrators to play a key role in ensuring new teachers have a mentor. Administrators must believe strongly in the program and be willing to compensate the mentor either financially or compensatory (Nelson, 1995). It is also believed that formal training for the mentor be established with the mentor receiving no less than 12 hours of training. Another important factor is for the mentor and the beginning teacher be matched prior to the start of school if possible (Littleton, 1992). Attitude also plays a key role in a successful mentoring program (Nelson, 1995). If the motivation and desire on the part of the mentor is not there, the chance of success declines. Nelson also believe that the support of the principal is crucial to the survival of the program.

A common complaint by many new teachers, who left the field early, is that they never knew what was expected of them (Gordon, 1991; Young, Crain and McCullough, 1993). To take care of this problem, some school districts issue general handbooks to their teachers at the beginning of the school year (Niebrand, Horn, and Holmes, 1992). Each school usually develops their own rules and regulations as well as emergency plans, phone numbers and formal discipline procedures that all teachers must follow. These handbooks are good, but, they are not the type of guide a new teacher needs. Novice teachers need guides which provide them with step by step instructions on how to survive the upcoming school year. They need a reference book which explains what is expected of them, what they need to be doing when it has to be done, as well as an index for trouble shooting

activities. As many teachers know, it is very difficult to ask someone for help (Gordon, 1991). However, having a guide to follow can aid in eliminating some of the apprehension of not knowing what to do or how to do it or the embarrassment of having to ask.

The aforementioned problems can all be alleviated through some advance planning on the parts of administrators, school districts and the teacher him/herself. The following chapters will provide a framework for what could be done to help new teachers succeed their first year.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS

"Many beginners become discouraged, stressed to the point of ill health, and often choose to leave the profession rather than seek help to learn the skills necessary for success" (Niebrand and Horn, 1992). These novice teachers are embarrassed to admit that they are unsure of what they are doing. Instead of reaching out and asking for assistance, they suffer through the school year only to be placed on probation. In a survey conducted by Wildman, Magliaro, Niles and Niles (1992), it was discovered that beginning teachers would not admit they were having problems, ask questions or accept help. In view of this situation, the author suggests that a formal guide be created for new teachers which would be issued to them at the time they are hired. It is also recommended that a mentor be assigned to each new teacher.

Providing all new teachers with a guide would be the most effective tool for assisting in their orientation process. Because many of them are hesitant to ask for assistance, they would be able to find solutions to their problems at their own pace using suggestions found in the guide which have been proven successful in the classroom and recommended by their administrator. A typical guide is broken down into multiple sections. The following list, based on informal teacher interviews and experts in the field (Durost, 1994; Stone, 1987; Phelps, 1993), is recommended as a starting point for districts interested in developing a beginning teacher guide. Sections might include timeframes for completion of major tasks, answers to typical questions asked, strategies for problem solving and troubleshooting techniques (Van Zandt, 1995; Wildman, Magliaro, Niles & Niles, 1995).

Suggestions on room arrangements, bulletin boards, parent-teacher relationships and grading scales would also be included (Nelson, 1995; Niebrand, Horn, & Holmes, 1992). It would also help the new teacher by providing him/her with a list of items which must be completed and the time frame in which they must be completed. Some of the sections or chapters could be:

- * 1st day of school duties;
- * 1st week of school duties;
- * Evaluations expectations;
- * Discipline and management programs;
- * Room arrangement;
- * Grades and Report Cards;
- * Policy on
 - Extra credit;
 - Field trips;
 - Guest Speakers;
 - Handing out books;
 - Collecting money;
 - Class Parties;
 - Requesting substitutes;
 - How to get classroom supplies;
- * Fostering parent-teacher relationships - Conferences;
- * Extra duties (bus, hall, cafeteria);
- * End of the year activities/duties;
- * Media equipment and computers;
- * Working with your mentor;

The guide would also feature sections on how to interact with your colleagues, the community as well as acquiring equipment and funding. Administrators would assist the new teacher in using the guide at the time the teacher is hired. Having a guide to follow instead of having to ask for assistance may help the attrition rate among new teachers.

Principals play a large role in the retention or elimination of new teachers. The stress that an administrator places on a new teacher can be great or minimal depending on the administrators view of their role in helping the new teacher succeed. Below are areas in which an administrator can help alleviate some of the stress they may placed on a new teacher.

1st DAY OF SCHOOL DUTIES

Teachers have a number of responsibilities and duties they must complete on or before the first day of school. Unfortunately, many of the new teachers are unaware of these duties. Principals must meet with the new teacher prior to the first day of school in order to inform her on what she should be doing.

1st WEEK OF SCHOOL DUTIES

The first week of school is important to schools, due to the number of students, determines the amount of funding the school will receive from the Government. Teachers need to be advised on how to complete an accurate head count of students as well as accurate record keeping. This week has a number of responsibilities new teachers need to be aware of.

EVALUATIONS

When evaluating a new teacher on room arrangement or room appearance, allow new teachers flexibility when it comes to bulletin boards. Many principals are very rigid and require teachers to replace bulletin boards every three to six weeks. For a new teacher, the stress of getting organized and establishing their own teaching style is enough, not to mention the added pressure of continuously thinking of new ideas for bulletin boards. Suggest to the teacher that they place seasonal or generic types of boards up in the beginning of the year. The teacher will be able to buy prefabricated materials and would not have to worry about punching out letters, cutting, drawing and the frequent replacement of the boards.

After the first year of teaching, the teacher will be more familiar with his/her responsibilities as well as experience in seeing how other teachers handle their boards which will allow him/her the opportunity to improve the following year. The principal could later add a bulletin board observation the second year after the teacher has gained some experience. Veteran teachers will tell you, successful bulletin boards take hours of planning and once they create a good bulletin board, most likely that same board will appear year after year.

The principal also needs to inform the new teacher what she will be looking for when she evaluates the teacher in the classroom. As far as classroom management techniques, visuals, student participation or lecture presentations. The new teacher must be aware of what the evaluator will be looking for.

MEDIA EQUIPMENT

If possible, provide the teacher with access to a computer software programs to help them get started in the areas of grades and or lesson plans. There are many programs available to assist teachers with administrative duties. Many new teachers are computer literate and could do a much better job with record keeping if this technology is made available to them. If the principal is computer illiterate, refer the new teacher to someone else. Many school districts have technology coordinators who can help new teachers get started (Durost, 1994). They also need to have a meeting with the librarian to learn what the library has to offer.

DISCIPLINE AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Many principals believe it is the teacher's responsibility to set up their own discipline policy. This may be true, however, principals should provide new teachers with added assistance in this area. Most come out of college with the academic skills necessary to teacher, but not classroom management skills. Unfortunately, this is the area in which many new teachers are the weakest in. Without the ability to control the classroom, there is no way the teacher would be able to effectively teach. Principals, should not wait until the teachers classroom is out of control before they intervene. They must make a conscious effort to observed the new teacher early on in the year to make sure the teacher is off to a good start. They must also provide suggestions on classroom management techniques. Many novice would be happy to have some advice on how and what they could do to take control of

their classroom immediately.

EXTRA ASSIGNMENTS

New teachers are usually very excited about their new position and are willing to take on any added responsibilities a principal may assigned them. Principals must be very careful not to overload the teacher because of the teachers enthusiasm. They will have enough to do just teaching and grading. Since it is difficult for new teachers to turn down a request from their principal, it is up to the principal to be careful not to ask to much from the novice.

GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

One area that is difficult for new teachers is grading. Often the novice teacher is astonished by the large amount of class work and homework which must be graded and returned. They are unaware of how difficult it is to establish a grading program and how important it is to develop one which is fair. Providing the new teacher with a guide in the beginning of the year on how you would like that teacher to keep his/her grades, instead of assuming they know is important. Also, new teachers new need assistance with report cards. Students and parents alike will be concerned with this area. Make sure the teacher gets it right.

SMALLER CLASSES

Unfortunately the student population is growing while classroom

space remains the same. As a result, new teachers are placed in situations that even veteran teachers would shy away from. Over crowded classes and lack of individual teacher's room only adds to the stress of being a new teacher (West 1995). Principals should be sensitive to this and not unload the unwanted or difficult students to new teachers. The goal is to retain teachers, not run them off. If, however, a principal has no choice but to present the teacher with a less than desirable class, then follow the teacher closely and provide as much assistance as possible. As indicated earlier, the new teacher will be reluctant to ask for assistance so the principal should take the initiative to provide assistance.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Many new teachers received reprimands for disobeying school rules. Unfortunately, many are not aware of the rules. The principal usually is busy preparing for the opening of school to inform teachers of what the rules are in basic areas. The guide would be able to provide the novice with this information.

MENTORS

The idea of providing new teachers with mentors has been supported by many studies (Young, Crain, and McCullough, 1993; Nelson 1995; and Littleton, Tally-Foos, and Wolaver, 1992). Each of the studies concurred that a teacher must be willing to be a mentor, be knowledgeable of the subject matter, and be a proven successful classroom teacher. It is important that mentors be compensated through incentives such as release time as well and

or monetary amounts to keep their motivation alive (Young, Crain, and McCullough, 1993). The mentor should only be assigned one novice teacher per year because any more than that could be counterproductive. Having too many teachers to oversee can be difficult for mentors.

New teachers should only need assistance for one year (Littleton, Tally-Foss, Wolaver, 1992). The mentor should be advised not to try and change the novice's style but to help them. It is important for the mentor to model, make suggestions and require the mentee to think through their own problems (Wildman, Magliaro, Niles and Niles, 1992). The mentor is a resource, not an authoritarian.

There are many ways in which a program like this can be implemented. Fort Campbell, Kentucky School District has a program in which a new teacher is teamed up with a tenured teacher for a whole academic school year. (The new teacher will not get his/her permanent license until they have been proven effective in the classroom).

Drawbacks to this program include being expensive due to having to compensate the mentors as well as release time for the mentors. The school district must allocate funds for the program in their budget which may mean asking tax payers for more money. Matching mentors with new teachers can also be a problem. Personalities must be compatible and if they discover they are not, a principal must be willing to make a change. Another area which may cause a problem is in allowing duty free time for the mentor to observe and work with the teacher. Scheduling time off from the master schedule can be almost impossible. It is rare for a school to be able to allow a teacher an extra planning period, so scheduling a multiple of teachers free time would be difficult.

FORMAL GUIDES

The creation of a handbook or formal guide is the best way to ensure the success of a new teacher. As a responsible person the teacher would be able to study the guide and learn for him/herself their duties and responsibilities as well as when they should be completed. Many teachers are unsure of what they are supposed to be doing so they tend to neglect important duties (Niebrand, Horn, Holmes, 1992; Phelps, 1993). A guide explaining step by step, week by week or month by month their duties and responsibilities and when them must be completed would be of great assistance to the novice teacher.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

School districts must invest time in the professional development of new teachers. Many districts believe if a teacher is able to complete student teaching and graduate, then the teacher must be qualified to walk into a classroom and begin teaching. What districts fail to realize is that student teachers have an advantage over beginning teachers. A student teacher walks into an environment in which rules have been established, discipline is in place, they are informed by their classroom teacher what they will be teaching and how long they have to teach the unit. They also have a veteran teacher at their beck and call to help them with problems that surface. Unfortunately, novice teachers usually do not have such advantages.

For the retention rate of new teachers to increase, a change in how administrators view their role in helping new teachers succeed must be actively pursued. A partnership between the new teacher and a veteran teacher must be put into place as well as a guide for the teacher to follow.

Although many new teachers feel they know what is required of them, many are unaware of the everyday procedures they must complete. They may have successfully completed their teacher education programs and feel as if they should be able to walk into their new classroom and function at the same level as their colleagues they just do not. With this in mind, after evaluating the research, even if a beginner is provided a mentor, the beginning teacher may not necessary discuss all the problems they are facing to their mentor. Nor would many admit to their administrator they were having problems. The teacher suffers undue mental and physical stress

simply from not asking for assistance. In lieu of the finding of this paper, the author strongly recommends that formal guides be made available to new teachers in school districts. This guides would be cost effective as well as the most feasible way to inform new teachers of the duties and responsibilities.

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