New Teacher Induction Program

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New Teacher Induction Program
Mentor Handbook

Objective

The mentoring program will provide ongoing, positive, and consistent support for new and emerging teachers with emphasis on learning, experimentation, and improvement.

Rationale

New and emerging educators will benefit from enhanced assistance, support, and supervision offered by mentors utilizing the components of this mentoring program. Students and their families will also be recipients of improved instructional and classroom management strategies.

Goals

An effective mentoring program will:

- Enhance the quality of instruction students receive
- Allow teacher growth to be "experientially" based
- Encourage positive professional change
- Increase and encourage communication between teachers
- Recognize teacher improvement in a tangible way through documentation
- Assist with the development of both a professional growth plan and teacher portfolio
- Address any concerns voiced by parents and established teachers
- Train new and emerging teachers to become more effective at self-assessment
- Offer care and support to young and less experienced teachers
- Reinforce experimentation and risk-taking on the part of new and emerging teachers
- Promote team ministry

Support Roles and Responsibilities

A. Mentor:

- **Provide instructional support.** This includes regular observation of and conferencing with the beginning teacher. During this time, mentors will offer support in teaching the learning standards of the school's curriculum framework.
- **Provide professional support.** Beginning teachers need to be informed of school policies and procedures, particularly regarding standards and procedures for teacher assessment. Mentors should be a resource for information on assessment and professional practice.
- **Provide personal support.** Mentors can help relieve the stress on first time teachers by introducing them to other faculty members and helping put problems in perspective with support and encouragement.
- **Maintain a confidential relationship with the beginning teacher.** It is important that the beginning teacher be able to discuss problems openly with the mentor, so that they may be addressed in a timely and informed manner.
- **Ensure a strong start to the year.** Mentors can help beginning teachers launch into a productive year by making sure they know where to obtain all needed materials and maintain adequately constructed lesson plans.
- **Serve as a liaison.** The mentor should have the knowledge and skills to refer the beginning teacher to other teachers and educational resources, so that the beginning teacher is exposed to a variety of perspectives and successful instructional practices.

B. Administration:

- **Establish a school culture** that supports professional collaboration.
- **Ensure reasonable working conditions for the beginning teacher,** which might include schedule modifications.
- **Facilitate the relationship between the mentor and beginning teacher.** The administration should make sure that the mentor and beginning teacher meet regularly and that they are satisfied with each other's participation in the program.
- **Conduct an orientation program** for beginning teachers and mentors.
- **Conduct the summative assessment of the beginning teacher.** The administration should ensure that the beginning teacher is informed early in the year regarding the school's assessment standards and procedures.
- **Oversee the selection and training of mentors.** Administration is responsible for ensuring that the mentor plan process properly challenges and benefits mentor/mentee pairs.

Role and Responsibilities of the Beginning Teacher:

- **Play an active role in the mentoring relationship** by offering critical reflections on his/her own practice and identifying areas in which assistance should be sought.
- **Seek out help.** The beginning teacher must be forthright in seeking support, communicating classroom issues, and remain open to feedback in order to continue developing as a professional.
- **Observe experienced teachers at work.** The beginning teacher should visit at least one exemplary classroom before Thanksgiving.
- **Participate regularly in programs organized for beginning teachers.** These include district events, department workshops, and special faculty seminars designed for new staff members.

The Mentor: Recruitment, Selection, Qualities, Matching, and Peer Support

A. Recruitment and Selection

It takes a special person to be a good mentor. Maturity, self-assurance, patience, and confidence in knowledge and ability are prerequisites for this important undertaking. Excellent veteran teachers will be selected and recruited from all grade levels and subject areas to serve as mentors.

B. Qualities

In determining the type of teacher who would perform well as a mentor, the administration and department leaders will look for candidates who are:

- Excellent Christian role models.
- Outstanding, experienced teachers whose instruction reflects excellent content knowledge and adherence to the school's philosophy of education.
- Aware of the merits of different teaching styles.
- Able to transmit effective teaching strategies.
- Knowledgeable about resources in the school.
- Good listeners.
- Able to communicate openly with a beginning teacher.
- Able to maintain a confidential relationship.
- Energetic and friendly.

Mentor assignments will not be decided until after the beginning teacher is hired and his/her individual needs are considered in the match.

C. Matching

The mentor and the beginning teacher should teach approximately the same grade, but the subject matter match will be the foremost priority. It is also desirable that the beginning teacher and mentor have compatible schedules and classrooms located near one another.

D. Mentor Peer Support

Participating as a mentor is an important part of professional development for experienced teachers. Quarterly meetings with other mentors, department leaders, and administration will enable experienced teachers to revitalize and enhance their own practice.

Beginning Teacher Support Activities (See Teacher Induction Flowchart pp. 8-10)

A. Orientation

Mentors will provide an orientation for all incoming teachers, prior to the start of the school year. Included in the orientation are:

- An introduction to the community (include maps and demographics)
- An introduction to school policies and procedures
- A tour of the school
- Grading procedures
- A walk-through of the school's supply areas and information on how to access educational materials
- Understanding salary and benefits
- Understanding school discipline policies
- Planning classroom instruction
- Technology usage
- An introduction to church/school personnel, members of the PTL and the Day School Committee

Handouts that should be provided to incoming staff include the following:

- National Lutheran School Accreditation
- Teacher Policy Handbook
- Day School Committee Policy Manual
- Parent Handbook
- Staff and student directories
- School schedule and calendar

B.   Establishing an Environment Conducive to Learning

During the August workshop mentors and mentees will schedule weekly meeting times throughout the year to:

- Establish the classroom learning environment.
- Review the school's Christian philosophy of education and mission statement.
- Analyze lesson planning, classroom management, and age group characteristics.
- Begin work on goal setting for self and department.
- Become better acquainted with school and district resources.
- Observe each other's classroom, co-teach, and analyze effective practice.

C. Profile of Practice

Two formative assessments with mentors or department leaders will take place each year. The observation plan will include:

1. Pre-observation Conference (p. 11)
   - Set dates and times for observation and post-conference.
   - Agree upon what is to be observed.
   - Determine where the observer is to sit in the class.
   - Discuss the lesson plan and material to be taught.
   - Specify the observation tools to be used.

2. Observation (p.13)
   - Observe one or more teaching behaviors or strategies.
   - Use the observation record form and format agreed to in the pre-conference.

3. Post Observation Conference (p.12)
   - Set relaxed tone.
   - Discuss objective data as opposed to viewpoints or judgments.
   - Explore strategies, alternatives, causes and effects.
   - Discuss areas of focus for future observations and other activities.

* Mentors must use the assessment forms provided in the plan.
* Summative assessment of teachers is the responsibility of the principal.

D. Individual Professional Growth Plan

Each teacher will prepare an **I**ndividual **P**rofessional **G**rowth **P**lan (See pages 15 – 19). Each plan shall include identification of goals for classroom instruction, personal professional goals, and identification of one new technique or activity that will be tried during the academic year. Each goal will be accompanied by a brief narrative describing how each goal may be attained. Teachers will discuss their plans with their department chair prior to the beginning of the school year, and department chairs will review their

plans with administration. Following the school year, teachers will conduct a self-review of the plan documenting whether or not the goals were achieved. The teachers and administration will discuss the self-review and the IPGP to be developed for the succeeding year. Copies will be shared with the administration and kept on file in the school office.

E. Professional Portfolio

During the first year the mentor will assist the mentee with the development of a provisional portfolio; this will be formalized as part of the professional growth plan in year two. The second year of the plan will include the formal development of a Professional Portfolio and continuation with an Individual Professional Growth Plan. These components are by nature "living documents" which will be reviewed and updated yearly.

Teacher Induction Flowchart

Year One *

Step 1. - Orientation (July / August)
Introduce school/teaching environment including handouts, routines, forms, grading procedures, demographics, community, etc.

Step 2. - Establishing an Environment Conducive to Learning
          (August / September)
Establish the classroom learning environment: Christian philosophy of education; school mission statement; lesson planning; classroom management; age group characteristics; goal setting; resources; visitation and assessment orientation.

Step 3. - Profile of Practice I (October)
First formative evaluation with mentor: pre-conference (instructional plan); observation (specific objective); post-conference (assess effectiveness); analysis of student learning.

Step 4. - Individual Professional Growth Plan (October / November)
Begin development of individual growth plan: focus on goals from formative assessment; establish objectives for second quarter; work the plan; weekly touch base meeting with mentor continue; mentor and mentee visit exemplary classroom (pre - Thanksgiving); analysis of observation; application to homeroom.

Step 5. - Profile of Practice II (November / December)
Second formative assessment with mentor: pre-conference (instructional plan); observation (specific objectives related to applications from visit, growth plan, and classroom developments); post-conference (assess effectiveness); analysis of student learning.

Step 6. - Revision of Individual Professional Growth Plan (January)

Revise individual growth plan to reflect discoveries during off-site visitation and second formative assessment; continue to finalize a personal professional growth plan for the balance of the first and second year.

Step 7. - Analyzing Student Achievement (February - May)
Work the plan; conduct bi-weekly meetings with mentor; revise accordingly; reflect on student learning and behaviors; analyze patterns.

Step 8. - Assessment and Summary of Professional Growth (June)
Summative assessment and recommendation for second year: repeat program or support level only.

* During the first year the mentor will assist the mentee with the development of a provisional portfolio; this will be formalized as part of the professional growth plan in year two. If more than one new teacher is employed, some events may be teamed.

Year Two *

Provisional teachers: repeat first year cycle focusing on recommendations noted related to concerns.

Mentees having successfully completed one year: review goals from the June assessment and discuss plans for the year with their department leader during the August workshop

Step 1. - Portfolio and Individual Professional Growth Plan (First Quarter)
Begin development of professional portfolio and professional growth plan; meet with mentor monthly: discuss classroom and student concerns

Step 2. - Portfolio and Individual Professional Growth Plan (Second Quarter)
Continue development of permanent portfolio and professional growth plan; make one off-site visit to exemplary program (w/o mentor); formative assessment with department leader.

Step 3. - Portfolio and Individual Professional Growth Plan (Third Quarter)
Monthly meetings with mentor; continue development of portfolio and professional growth plan; second formative assessment with department leader.

Step 4. - Portfolio and Individual Professional Growth Plan (Fourth Quarter)
Complete professional growth plan and portfolio (living documents); summative assessment with administration.

* Successful provisional teachers from year one will do year two as year three; year two being successfully completed gives full classroom teacher status to mentees.

Formative Assessment Plan
Pre-conference Meeting

Mentee:_____ Mentor: _____

Grade/Class: _____ Subject: _____

Area of focus for the inquiry: _____

What is my goal(s) for this inquiry? (Observation Record Form and other sources)

What general actions do I plan to take?

How will I know if I achieved my goal? What specific evidence might I gather to support my conclusions?

Post-Observation Conference Form

Mentee:_____ Mentor: _____

Grade/Class: _____ Subject: _____

Date: _____ Length of Time: _____

Observation Number: _____

Objective(s):_____

Commendations:

Recommendations:

Professional Growth: (Ideas, opportunities, articles)

* **Signatures indicate completion of the process but not necessarily agreement.**
* **Mentee may attach remarks.**
* **Attach a copy of the observation record form.**

Mentor: _____ Mentee:_____

Observational Record

Mentee:_____ **Date:**_____

Subject(s) observed:_____

Time: _____

Comments: *** - Appeared a strength of this lesson**
　　　　　　　C - Consistent
　　　　　　　G - Goal for the future
　　　　　　　# - Not observed today
　　　　　　　NA - Not Applicable

Personal Traits
　　_____　Has professional demeanor
　　_____　Is friendly and has a good rapport with students
　　_____　Is enthusiastic
　　_____　Shows respect for students

Preparation of Students for Instruction
　　_____　Establishes a climate for learning
　　_____　Gains students' attention
　　_____　States what is to be learned/accomplished near the beginning of the period

Student Motivation
　　_____　Establishes importance of material
　　_____　Relates new information to prior student experience/knowledge
　　_____　Gives clear concise directions

Delivery Sequence
　　_____　Reviews necessary basic skills
　　_____　Presents concrete before abstract materials
　　_____　Uses manipulatives
　　_____　Uses visual approaches
　　_____　Develops the lesson from simple to complex
　　_____　Checks for student understanding at intervals
　　_____　Makes good use of questioning techniques
　　_____　Reviews where the class has come thus far
　　_____　Confirms what has been learned during this lesson or period
　　_____　Uses guided practice when appropriate
　　_____　Uses aides other than worksheets and workbooks

Review and Reinforcement

_____ Immediate through guided group work
_____ Immediate through independent seat work
_____ Delayed through homework assignments

Student's Involvement

_____ Students respond and contribute freely
_____ Students speak and respond to ideas of peers
_____ Teacher is not the only one speaking during the lesson
_____ There is a balance between close-ended and open-ended questions asked

Classroom Management

_____ There is evidence that rules and expectations have been clearly communicated
_____ Teacher is aware of students and intercepts misbehavior at earliest stage
_____ Teacher is consistent in his/her own behavior

Classroom Environment

_____ The room is bright and attractive
_____ Student work is displayed

General Comments:

Mentee's Signature: _____

Mentor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Establishing Individual Professional Growth Goals

These questions may help you define your professional strengths and needs and aid in establishing your goals for the year. Read each of these questions carefully and consider how these thoughts affect your priorities and how you wish to invest your time and energy necessary to achieve your goals.

- What gifts has God given me that help to make me an effective teacher?

- What are my professional development goals?

- How do my development goals relate to the mission statement of the church and school?

- How will my development goals contribute to improving instruction in my classroom?

- What will I do to achieve my goals?

- Who can help me achieve my goals?

- What resources will I need
     from the congregation/school?
          from my mentor?
          from my department leader?
          from the administration?

- How will I determine attainment of my goals?

Types of Professional Goals

- Organizational goals (These could include the yearly department goals, goals related to NSLA, and goals related to the school mission statement. Identify and focus on no more than one or two.)

- Program / curriculum goals (Identify only one or two as to not overwhelm yourself.)

- Learner outcome goals (What do I want my students to know, do, be like? These goals may be academic or behavioral. Identify and focus on no more than one or two.)

- Teacher development goals (How will I be a different teacher at the end of this year? Identify and focus on one or two.)

Individual Professional Growth Plans Include…

- Clear, measurable, and appropriate goals

- Activities to achieve the goals

- Timeline for achievement of goals

- Assessment strategies (formative / summative)
    -Formative assessment is utilized by department leaders to guide self-improvement efforts by the teachers, and assist administration in the process of improving someone else's teaching.
    -Summative assessment is utilized by administration for the purpose of determining whether someone or something has ultimately succeeded.

- Necessary resources for success

Individual Professional Growth Plan

Name_____ Date _____

1. GOALS FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

2. PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL GOALS

3. NEW LEARNING TECHNIQUE / ACTIVITY IDENTIFICATION

Signed _____ Date_____

Administrator_____ Date_____

Individual Professional Growth Plan Evaluation

Name_____ Date _____

Review the goals on the Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP) and complete Parts I and II. Return the IPGP and Evaluation to your department leader by May 31st.

Part I   **Self-evaluation. In this section, please comment on your goals: Did you achieve them? Provide details where applicable. In retrospect, were your goals attainable? Is there anything you would do differently? How was instruction enhanced by your classroom goals? How did your professional goals make you a better teacher?**

Part II   **Review the curriculum goals for your grade. Were they achieved?
Do any need to be revised? How?**

Part III   **Department Leader Comments:**

Signed _____ Date _____

Department Leader _____ Date_____

Administrator _____ Date _____

APPENDICES

Minimum Competencies for Teachers in
Lutheran Elementary Schools

<u>Personal Competencies</u>

Intrapersonal Elements: Beginning Lutheran elementary school teachers will…

1. Possess a spiritual identity as children of God whose sure hope is in Christ.

2. Recognize their unique calling.

3. Enthusiastically express the Christian faith and exemplify Christ-like living.

4. Understand ministry as servanthood.

5. Use effective communication skills in relating to others.

6. Continuously seek opportunities to grow spiritually.

7. Perceive and seek opportunities to utilize God-given talents and abilities.

8. Constantly seek opportunities to grow professionally.

9. Realize their human physical limitations.

10. Recognize the need to balance personal and professional responsibilities.

11. Demonstrate that the Gospel empowers teachers to recognize and seize opportunities to witness to the redeeming love of Christ.

Interpersonal Elements: Beginning Lutheran elementary school teachers will be Christ-like in relationships with children, parents, coworkers, congregations, and Community. Christ-like teachers strive to…

1. Listen with an open mind and accept diversity in all people.

2. Communicate effectively.

3. Act as team members by being cooperative, likeable, winsome, and patient.

4.   Build friendships by being empathetic, trustworthy and trusting, gentle, joyful and forgiving.

5.   Lead by initiating, developing, and maintaining relationships.

6.   Demonstrate fairness, consistency, and the ability to establish appropriate boundaries.

Professional Competencies

Beliefs: Beginning Lutheran elementary school teachers will…

1.   Respect the dignity of each person as a child of God.

2.   Love, accept, and appreciate people of culturally diverse groups.

3.   Believe that all children can learn.

4.   Express and demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning.

5.   Reflect openness to new ideas.

6.   Encourage creativity.

7.   Seek truth and justice.

8.   Be open to change.

9.   Pursue excellence.

10.   View curriculum as the sum total of the child's school experience.

11.   Integrate faith into all activities.

12.   Mirror the boundaries and forgiveness given by God.

13.   Demonstrate enthusiasm in the commitment to ministry.

Knowledge: Beginning Lutheran elementary school teachers will…

1.   Demonstrate knowledge of the ability to apply the principal stages of child development to classroom teaching strategies.

2. Know, understand, and articulate the development stages of faith of children and incorporate this knowledge into classroom activities.

3. Use methods of instruction that incorporate Biblical and doctrinal principles, subject matter content, and an understanding of curriculum.

4. Demonstrate knowledge in how to plan, organize, structure, and assess activities compatible with the needs, interests and abilities of children.

5. Properly apply Law and Gospel in the management of the classroom.

6. Know and understand how Lutheran congregations function.

7. Understand the role of the Lutheran school teacher in congregational ministry.

8. Understand the ministry of the Lutheran school to the community and to society at large.

Behavior: Beginning Lutheran elementary school teachers will…

1. Model the right division of Law and Gospel.

2. Demonstrate a willingness to extend the knowledge base of the profession.

3. Abide by the legal standards of the profession.

4. Abide by the constitutional standards of due process, due care, and due regard.

5. Interact with other professional colleagues both formally and informally.

6. Display an attitude of service/leadership towards the profession.

7. Utilize skills and resources to solve problems in professional life.

8. Support the Lutheran Education Association (LEA).

9. Exhibit professional demeanor.

Best Practice for Teaching And Learning

Best Practice in Teaching Reading

Increase -
Reading aloud to students
Time for independent reading
Children's choice of their own reading material
Exposing children to a wide and rich range of literature
Teacher modeling and discussing his/her own reading processes
Primary instructional emphasis on comprehension
Teaching reading as a process:
       Use strategies that activate prior knowledge
       Help students make and test predictions
       Structure help during reading
       Provide after reading applications
Social, collaborative activities with much discussion and interaction
Grouping by interest or book choices
Silent reading followed by discussion
Teaching skills in the context of the whole and meaning of literature
Writing before and after reading
Encouraging invented spelling in children's early writing
Use of reading in the content fields (e.g., historical novels in social studies)
Evaluation that focuses on holistic, higher-order thinking processes
Measuring the success of reading program by students' reading habits, attitudes, and comprehension

Decrease -
Exclusive stress on whole class or reading-group activities
Teacher selection of all reading material for individuals and groups
Relying on the selection of all reading materials for individuals and groups
Teacher keeping his/her own reading tastes and habits private
Primary instructional emphasis on reading subskills such as phonics, word analysis, and syllabication
Teaching reading as a single, one-step act
Solitary seatwork
Grouping by reading level
Round-robin oral reading
Teaching isolated skills in phonics workbooks or drills
Little or no chance to write
Punishing pre-conventional spelling in students' early work
Segregating of reading to reading time

Evaluation focused on individual, low level subskills
Measuring the success of a reading program only by test scores

Best Practice in Teaching Writing

Increase -
Student ownership and responsibility by:
    Helping students choose their own topics and goals for improvement
    Using brief teacher-student conferences
    Teaching students to review their own progress
Class time spent on writing whole, original pieces, through:
    Establish real purposes for writing, and students' involvement in the task
    Instruction in, and support for, all stages of the writing process
    Pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing
Teacher modeling writing - drafting, revising, sharing- as a fellow author, and as demonstrator of processes
Learning of grammar and mechanics in context, at the editing stage, and as items are needed
Writing for real audiences, published for the class and for the wider communities
Making the classroom a supportive setting for shared learning, using :
    Active exchange and valuing of students' ideas
    Collaborative small group work
    Conference and peer critiquing that give responsibility for improvement to authors
Writing across the curriculum as a tool for learning
Constructive and efficient evaluation that involves:
    Brief informal oral responses as students work
    Thorough grading of just a few of student-selected, polished pieces
    Focus on a few errors at a time
    Cumulative view of growth and self-evaluation
    Encouragement of risk-taking and honest expression

Decrease -
Teacher control of decision making by:
    Teacher deciding on all writing topics
    Suggestions for improving dictated by teacher
    Learning objectives determined by teacher alone
    Instruction given as a whole class activity
Time spent on isolated drills on "subskills" of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc.
Writing assignments given briefly, with no context or purpose, completed in one step
Teacher talks about writing but never writes or shares own work
Devaluation of students' ideas through:
    Sense of class as competing individuals
    Work with fellow students viewed as cheating, disruptive
Writing taught only during "language arts" period
Evaluation as negative burden for teacher and student by:

Teacher editing paper, and only after completed, rather than student making improvements
Grading seen as punitive, focused on errors, not growth

Best Practices In Teaching Mathematics:

Increase -
Teaching Practices
Use of manipulative materials
Cooperative group work
Discussion of mathematics
Questioning and making conjectures
Justification of thinking
Writing about mathematics
Problem-solving approach to instruction
Content integration
Use of calculators and computers
Being a facilitator of learning
Assessing learning as an integral part of instruction
Mathematics As Problem Solving
Work problems in a variety of structures and solution paths
Everyday problems and solutions
Problem-solving strategies
Open-ended problems and extended problem-solving projects
Investigating and formulating questions from problem situations
Mathematics As Communication
Discussing mathematics
Reading mathematics
Writing mathematics
Listening to mathematical ideas
Mathematics As Reasoning
Drawing logical conclusions
Justifying answers and solution processes
Reasoning inductively and deductively
Mathematical Connections
Connecting mathematics to other subjects and to the real world
Connecting topics within mathematics
Applying mathematics
Numbers/Operations/Computation
Developing number and operation sense
Understanding the meaning of key concepts
Using various estimation strategies
Thinking strategies for basic facts
Using calculators for complex calculation
Geometry/Measurement

Developing spatial sense
Actual measuring and the concepts related to units of measure
Using geometry in problem solving

Statistics/Probability
Collecting and organizing of data
Using statistical methods to describe, analyze, evaluate, and make decisions

Patterns/Functions/Algebra
Recognizing and describing patterns
Identifying and using functional relationships
Developing and using tables, graphs, and rules to describe situations
Using variables to express relationships

Evaluation
Having assessment being an integral part of teaching
Focusing on a broad range of mathematical tasks and taking a holistic view of mathematics
Developing problem situations that require applications of a number of mathematical ideas
Using multiple assessment techniques, including written, oral, and demonstration formats

Decrease -
Teaching Practices
Rote practice
Rote memorization of rules and formulas
Single answers and single methods to find answers
Use of drill worksheets
Repetitive written practice
Teaching by telling
Teaching computation out of context
Stressing memorization
Testing for grades only
Being the dispenser of knowledge

Mathematics as Problem Solving
Use of cue word to determine operation to be used
Practicing routine, one-step problems
Practicing problems categorized by types

Mathematics as Communication
Doing fill-in-blank worksheets
Answering questions that need only yes or no responses
Answering questions that need only numerical responses

Mathematics as Reasoning
Relying on authorities (teacher, answers in the back of the book)

Mathematical Connections
Learning isolated topics
Developing skills out of context

Numbers/Operations/Computation

Early use of symbolic notation
Complex and tedious paper and pencil computations
Memorizing rules and procedures without understanding
Geometry/Measurement
Memorizing facts and relationships
Memorizing equivalencies between units of measure
Memorizing geometric formulas
Statistics/Probability
Memorizing formulas
Patterns/Functions/Algebra
Manipulating symbols
Memorizing procedures and drilling
Evaluation
Having assessment be simply counting correct answers on tests for the sole purpose of assigning grades
Focusing on large numbers of specific and isolated drills
Using exercises or word problems requiring only one or two skills
Using only written tests

Best Practices in Teaching Science

Increase -
Hands-on activities that include:
> Observation activity, often designed by the student, aimed at real discovery, employing a wide range of process skills
> Students hypothesizing to explain details
> Information provided to explain data only after students have engaged in the investigative process
> Students' reflection to realize concepts and processes learned
> Application to real life issues

Focus on underlying concepts about how natural phenomena are explained
Questioning, thinking, and problem solving, especially:
> Willing to modify explanations, open to changing one's opinion
> Using logic, planning inquiry, hypothesizing, inferring

Active application of science learning to contemporary technological issues
In-depth study of a few important thematic topics
Curiosity about nature and positive attitudes toward science for all students
Integration of reading, writing, and math into science units
Collaborative small-group work, with training on how to be efficient
Teacher facilitating students' investigative steps
Evaluation that focuses on scientific concepts and processes

Decrease -
Instruction based mainly on lecture and information-giving

Dependence on textbook and one style of instruction

Cookbook labs in which students follow steps without a purpose of their own

Questions, concepts, and answers provided only by the teacher

Treating students as if they have no prior knowledge or investigative ability

Memorizing detailed vocabulary, definitions, and explanations without a thorough connection to broader ideas

Science approached as a set body of knowledge with all the answers and information already known

Attempts to correct student misconceptions by direct instruction

Superficial coverage of many topics according to an abstract scope-and-sequence

Activity limited to text and lecture

Testing focused only on memorization of details

Best Practices in Teaching Social Studies

Increase -
In-depth study of topics in each social studies field

Emphasis on activities that engage students in inquiry and problem solving about significant human issues

Student decision-making and participation in wider social, political, and economic affairs, so that they share a sense of responsibility for the welfare of God's creation

Participation in interactive and co-operative classroom study processes

Integration of social studies with other areas of the curriculum

Richer content in elementary grades, building on prior knowledge

Students' valuing and sharing a sense of connection with American and global history

Students' inquiry about their own cultural group and others in the world

Use of evaluation that involves further learning and that promotes responsible citizenship and the open expression of ideas

Decrease -
Cursory coverage of curriculum that does not allow time for a deeper understanding of topics

Memorization of isolated facts

Isolation from the actual exercise of responsible citizenship

Lecture classes in which students play a passive role

Activity that includes only text, and lecture

Postponement of significant curriculum until secondary grades

Use of curriculum restricted to only one cultural heritage

Assessments only at the end of a unit that test only factual knowledge or memorization of textbook information

Typical Questions of New Staff Members

The following questions are intended to focus your thinking on typical teacher concerns.

Concerns on How to Deal With Administrators And Manage The Classroom:

How do I address the principal? (Ms., Mrs., Mr., Miss, Dr., first name?)

What do I do if I need to be away from school to attend a meeting or conference?

What should I do if I am ill and cannot come to work?

Whom should I talk to about personal concerns involving myself and other staff members?

What should I do if I am having personal problems with a team or department member?

What should I do with a student that I cannot discipline?

How do I get supplies for my room?

May I bring my own chair or rug to put in the room?

Is there any money to buy supplies that are not in the building?

How can I get things like desks or furniture moved in my room?

Am I required to attend parent organization meetings?

What should I do if my room is too hot or too cold?

Where is the Xerox machine?

Are there restrictions on how much I can Xerox?

What can I ask an instructional or clerical aid to do for me?

What are my responsibilities if I have a special education student in my classroom?

What are my responsibilities if I have a gifted student in my classroom?

Are there funds for workshops outside the district and how do I apply for these funds?

Who will be evaluating me?

How is curriculum reviewed ?

 Do I need to purchase liability insurance?

What should I do if I want to take my students on a field trip?

How do I get a bus for a field trip?

What can I do if I get sick in the middle of the school day?

Do I have to join the LEA?

Do I have to get approval before I buy something for my classroom?

If I spend my own money to purchase something for my classroom, is there some way for me to get reimbursed?

If I want to talk to the principal, should I drop in the office, write a note, or ask for an appointment?

If I feel that a student is wearing inappropriate clothing, what can I do?

Is there a building handbook I should use?

What should I do when I don't know what to do?

If a student in my class is experiencing emotional/academic difficulties, whom in the building, do I contact?

Who in the building can assist me with a "difficult parent"?

If I am experiencing some personal dilemmas, is there a confidential resource within the building that I may talk to?

If I am aware of a tragedy one of my students is experiencing, to whom do I report my suspicions?

If, in my judgment, one of my students could profit from counseling, with whom do I share my concerns?

Curriculum Questions:

Am I expected to get a certain amount done by the end of the school year?

Can I add or subtract things from the curriculum?

Are there any restrictions on whom I invite to be a guest speaker?

May I have animals in my classroom?

What should I do if I don't have enough books or workbooks?

If I don't quite understand what the curriculum guide suggests, whom should I ask?

Is there a standard for grading that I must follow?

Are there rules about make-up work for students who miss?

What can I ask the media specialist to help me with when preparing a lesson?

If I have a substitute teacher, what do I need to do?

How much of what I am teaching do I need to share with others?

What type of help can I get from a curriculum consultant?

What is my role with the specialist in physical education, art, music, etc.?

What should I do when I don't know what to do with a curriculum question?

Building Questions:

How do I know when I am responsible for various building duties?

Do I need to check at the principal's office when I arrive and leave the building?

Where do I make personal telephone calls?

When can I work in the building outside of normal school hours?

 May I have a key to the building?

Should I lock my door at night?

May I take school equipment home to use?

What time do I need to arrive in the building on school days?

Checklist #1

Rules and Procedures:

1. Are your room and materials ready?

2. Have you decided on your class procedures, rules, and associated consequences?

3. Are you familiar with the parts of the school that you or your students may use (cafeteria, office and office phone, halls, lockers, bathroom facilities, resource center, etc.) and any procedures for their use?

4. Do you have a complete class roster?

5. Do you have file information on your students, including information on reading and math achievement levels from previous teachers, test results, and any other information?

6. Do you know if any of your students have handicapping conditions that should be accommodated in your room arrangement or in your instruction?

7. Do you have adequate numbers of text books, desks and class materials?

8. Do you have the teacher's editions of your textbooks?

9. Do you know the procedure for the arrival and departure of students on the first day? For every day after that?

10. Are the children's name tags ready? Do you have some blank ones for unexpected children?

11. Do you have your first day's plan of activities ready?

12. Does your daily schedule accommodate special classes (e.g. physical education, music) or "pull-out" programs?

13. Do you have time-filler activities prepared?

14. Have you included grade specific items on your school supply request list?

15. Do you know when and how you can obtain assistance from school staff members (e.g. teachers, resource center teacher, school nurse, office personnel, custodian)?

Checklist #2

Planning For Instruction

Before each Lesson Ask Yourself:

1. What are the most important concepts or skills to be learned?

2. What kind of learning is your goal (memorization, application)?

3. Are there difficult words or concepts that need extra explanation?

4. How will you help students make connections to previous learning?

5. What activities will you plan to create interest in the lesson?

6. What materials will be needed? Will students need to learn how to use them?

7. What procedures will students need to know to complete the activities?

8. How much time will you allocate for the lesson? For different parts of the lesson?

9. If activities require students to work together, how will groups be formed?

10. How will you encourage productive work in groups?

11. What example and questioning strategies will you use?

12. Prepare a list of examples for explanations and list higher order questions.

13. How will you tell during and after the lesson what students understand?

14. Are there any extra- or special-help students?

15. How will you make sure that all students participate?

16. How will you adjust the lesson if time is too short or long?

17. What presentation alternatives are there if students have trouble with concepts? (Peer explanation, media, etc)

18. What kind of product, if any, will you expect from students at the end of the lesson?

19. What will students do when they finish?

20. How will you evaluate students' work and give them feedback?

21. How will the concepts you present be used by students in future lessons?

Checklist #3

Accountability Procedures:

Communicating Assignments and Work Requirements:

Where and how will you post assignments?

What will be your standards for form and neatness?
      Pencil, color of pen
      Type of paper
      Heading
      Due dates
      Erasures

How will absent students know what assignments to make up?

What will be the consequences of late or incomplete work?

Monitoring Progress and Completion of Assignments :

What procedures will you use to monitor work in progress?

When and how will you monitor projects or longer assignments?

How will you determine whether students are completing assignments

How will you collect completed assignments?

What records of student work will you retain?

Feedback:

What are your school's grading policies and procedures?

What kinds of feedback will you provide and when?

What will you do when a student stops doing assignments?

What procedure will you follow to send materials home to parents?

Where will you display student work?

What records, if any, of their own work will the students maintain?

How will you handle grading disputes?

Lesson Goals:

1. What was the goal of this lesson? Why was this an important goal for student learning of the subject? Why was this goal important for these students at this time?

2. Was this assignment meaningfully connected to other activities, in or out of class?

3. Did this assignment take the individual differences of your students into account? If so, how?

4. What did you do to discover any misconceptions students might have had about the content prior to giving them the assignment?

5. What subject-specific concepts did students need to know in order to be able to complete this assignment successfully?

6. What misconceptions would you predict might appear in student responses to your assignment?

7. In what ways did you intend for this assignment to extend students' thinking about the topic?

8. What did your students do correctly, incorrectly? Why?

9. Did this lesson meet your students' needs? If yes, what evidence could you provide to support this? If no, what needs to change?

10. Did you accomplish your lesson goals? Why or why not?

11. What will you do differently next time?

Analyzing Student Work:

1. What is each student's most essential misunderstanding or difficulty?

2. How does each student's response to this assignment fit into what you already know about this student's understandings and performance? BE SPECIFIC.

3. What did each student learn from this assignment? How do you know this?

4. What does this student need to do next to move his/her understanding of the concepts forward?

5. Was the assignment successful for this student? Why or why not?

6. Would you give the same assignment again? If so, would you prepare students for it differently? If so, how?

7. How might you change this assignment for this student next time?

Questions That Lead To Self-Reflection

General Reflective Questions:

1. What went well today? How do you know? Why do you think this aspect of your day was so successful?

2. What were some problems you encountered during your lesson? Why do you think they occurred?

3. What could you do differently to avoid having those problems again?

4. What is the most difficult part of the school day for you? Why?

5. What have you already done to try to improve this part of the school day? Did any of your ideas work? If so, which ones? Why do you think these things worked?

6. How engaged are your students during your lessons? Are you satisfied with the current level of student engagement? What could you do to increase the amount of student involvement in your lessons?

7. Is there a curricular area that you find to be particularly difficult to teach? What kind of help would you need to improve your teaching in this area? What are some possible sources of this help?

8. Is there a building policy or procedure that is confusing you? What have you done to get this clarified? Where can you get more information?

Lesson Observation Questions:

1. What aspects of this lesson went well? What evidence could you use to prove this?

2. How does this teacher handle classroom discipline? What do you find that was particularly effective or ineffective? What classroom management ideas could you use in your classroom? Why do you think these ideas might work?

3. How involved were the students during the lesson? Why do you think this occurred? Do you think you would do something differently to encourage more student involvement?

4. If the teacher was working on a specific goal during your observation, was that goal accomplished? What is the evidence of that accomplishment? What suggestions for improvement would you offer?

5. What do you think are the main aspects of teaching that this teacher needs to work on? How will you help them to focus on these things? What resources can you use to help this teacher to improve?

CPDU LOG

Date	Topic of Discussion	Mentor/Mentee	Time Spent

Mentor _____ Date _____

Mentee_____ Date _____

CPDU Point Values

3-5 meetings*	6 CPDU's
3-5 meetings and 1 or more observations**	9 CPDU's
6 or more meetings	8 CPDU's
6 or more meetings and 1 or more observations	11 CPDU's

*Meetings refer only to those meetings not connected to observations by the mentoring teacher.
**Observations refer only to those observations conducted by the mentoring teacher.