Section 9

Characteristics of a PDS Mentor

Please reflect on this list quietly, by yourself, for a few minutes.

* + Identify the three most important characteristics.
  + Which of the characteristics listed below do you think you will need to develop in order to be a more effective mentor?
  + Next, pair and share with a fellow mentor.

A PDS Mentor should…

* + be enthusiastic about teaching their subject matter;
  + be willing to reflect on their own practice to better understand their pedagogical content knowledge;
  + be prepared to examine critically their own practice (critically meaning careful, thoughtful analysis with an eye to understanding and improving any weaknesses, deficiencies, or inadequacies), with their interns;
  + be able to articulate their professional knowledge;
  + be open minded with the view that their approach to teaching and learning is not the only one;
  + be willing to develop their own skills in and understandings of

(content area) and learning;

* + be accessible, with a sympathetic and understanding approach to beginning teachers;
  + have a positive supportive, and encouraging attitude;
  + have the ability to be critical and analytical in a constructive
  + manner;
  + be a good communicator and a good listener;
  + be committed to their role as a PDS mentor;
  + be aware of “best practice” and innovation in (content area) education and relate these to their intern;
  + be excellent teachers, able to plan and implement organized and

academically stimulating lessons rich in content, featuring appropriate pedagogy and technology;

* + be available to interact and work with others;
  + be able to listen and define a problem, generate alternative solutions, and suggest a viable course of action;
  + be willing to make suggestions and offer possible solutions without encroaching on the fragile and vulnerable autonomy of the intern with which they are mentoring.

Developed by Sarah Bednarz, Texas A & M University and Fred Walk, Illinois State University, for the National Geographic Society Mentor Institute.

**Top Ten Awareness Issues**

1. Managing the classroom...consistency, transitions, respect, etc.
2. Obtaining instructional resources and materials
3. Planning, organizing, and managing instruction
4. Using effective teaching strategies and best practices
5. Developing assessment tools for assessing and evaluating student progress
6. Encouraging students to do their best via intrinsic motivation
7. Understanding how to work with the varying abilities and needs of students
8. Collaborating with teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals and administrators
9. Communicating with parents on a regular basis
10. Balancing on-going record keeping and paperwork with time management

**Ten Commandments for the PDS Mentor**

1. I shall not assume anything with my intern.
2. I shall not compare my intern to other interns.
3. I shall not compare my intern’s student teaching experience with my own.
4. I shall not expect perfection.
5. I shall listen more than I speak.
6. I shall respect the confidentiality between me and my intern.
7. I shall be generous with affirmation and gentle in criticism.
8. I shall practice the 3 Fs: FAITH, FREEDOM & FEEDBACK.
9. I shall find humor in growth and opportunity.
10. I shall reflect on my own professional growth.