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TEACHER MENTORING: THE NEEDS OF FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

by  
Susan E. Barkowski

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
April 15, 2002

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Professor

Date Approved April 15, 2002

## MINI-ABSTRACT

Susan E. Barkowski

The Needs of First Year Teachers  
2002

Dr. Gerald Lysik  
Supervision and Curriculum Development

The purpose of the study was to determine if the needs of the first year teachers in one public school district changed over the course of the school year. The needs of the first year teachers did change in some areas, while other needs remained basically the same.

## ABSTRACT

Susan E. Barkowski

The Needs of First Year Teachers  
2002

Dr. Gerald Lysik  
Supervision and Curriculum Development

The purpose of the study was to identify the needs of the first year teachers in one public school district for the 2001-2002 school year. The intern distributed two surveys over the course of the study. The first survey was distributed in the beginning of the school year and the second survey at the end of January. The purpose of the surveys was to determine if the needs of the first year teachers changed over the course of the school year.

All of the first year teachers in the intern's school district were identified and sent a survey asking them to participate in the study. The two major research instruments used in the study were surveys and interviews. The purpose of using both instruments was to gather data as accurately as possible in order to identify the needs of the first year teachers. The major findings and conclusions of the study found that there were areas of need that did change and other areas of need that did not change over the course of the school year. Issues related to special education, 504 plans, and classroom management were identified as areas of need for some of the first year teachers.

## Acknowledgments

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Focus of the Study:

The state of New Jersey was going to require that effective September 1, 2001 a two-year teacher mentoring program becomes regulation under N.J.A.C. 6:11-14. School districts were to receive funding from the state to help pay for the two-year mentoring program for teachers. However, during the summer of 2001, the state announced that due to a shortage of state funds, mentoring for second year teachers would not be required for the 2001-2002 school year. The state still encouraged school districts in New Jersey to fund the second year mentoring program on their own -- if they had the resources.

The focus for this study was originally on teacher mentoring for both first and second year teachers with special attention on teacher mentoring for first and second year special education teachers. Do first year special education teachers have unique needs? Are the needs of both regular and special education teachers the same or are there unique differences? Due to the low number of special education teachers hired as first year teachers, the focus was changed to determining what the needs are of all first year teachers. Are there unique issues that all first year teachers have? To summarize, the focus of the study was to determine what the mentoring needs of first year teachers are in the beginning of a school year and to determine if those needs changed over the course of the school year.

### Purpose of the Study:

First, the needs of first year teachers will be addressed. People read and hear that millions of teachers will need to be hired over the next 5-10 years. People also read that the attrition rate for teachers during their first five years of teaching is high. Many school districts in the United States have decided to implement mentoring for beginning teachers as one option to help stop this exit rate out of the profession. New Jersey requires, since the mid-1990's, a year of mentoring for some novice teachers (special education teachers were previously exempted) and a certification recommendation from their building principal before standard certification would be issued. This procedure still remains unchanged. However, New Jersey wanted to require that beginning in the 2001-2002 school year, school districts would be required to develop a two year mentoring program for all beginning teachers. However, due to budget constraints, New Jersey will only help fund the mentoring program for first year teachers. Therefore, it is up to the individual school district to decide if they want to fund a mentoring program for their second year teachers. Due to this prevalent lack of funding, it is highly unlikely that many school districts in New Jersey will be able to fund the second year teacher mentoring program on their own. Therefore, most districts will be only focusing their efforts on mentoring their first year teachers. This research determined what the needs of first year teachers were in one school district and if those needs changed over the course of the school year.



Definitions:

The following definitions are important for the reader to understand.

*Mentoring* - A program for teachers that unites a novice teacher with an experienced teacher.

*Mentor* - The experienced, certified teacher who provides guidance and support to the novice teacher.

*Mentee* - The novice teacher who seeks the support and advice of his or her mentor.

*Novice Teacher* - means any full-time or part-time teacher who has not completed two years of teaching under a standard state teaching certificate.

*Provisional Teaching Year* - In New Jersey, it means the amount of full time teaching under provisional certification required of a first year teacher before he or she can be approved for standard certification.

*Full-time Teaching* - means the equivalent of 900 clock hours of teaching per year.

*Abbott District* - Based on the Abbott v. Burke (1981 filed) in the New Jersey Supreme Court's rulings, it establishes the rights of children in financially needy, urban communities to a "thorough and efficient" education under the NJ State Constitution. There are currently 30 Abbott school districts in the State of New Jersey.

*Special Needs District* - An Abbott district that is one of 30 poor urban districts in New Jersey that are legally designated as "special needs" districts.

*Alternate Route* - In 1985, the New Jersey State Board of Education introduced the nation's first "alternate route" to licensure for qualified liberal arts graduates who have not completed professional education in a traditional teacher training program. Alternate

route candidates attend a program of formal instruction that takes place concurrently with on-the-job support and evaluation.

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* - is a civil rights statute that requires schools, public or private, who receive federal financial assistance for educational purposes, do not discriminate against children with “handicaps” or “disabilities.”

#### Limitation of the Study:

The study was designed to identify the needs of first year teachers and to determine if those needs changed over the course of the school year. First year teachers were surveyed in one school district. The number surveyed was limited to the number of first year teachers hired who required mentoring based on N.J.A.C. 6:11-14. Therefore, the sample size could have been high or low because it depended on the number of first year teachers currently hired and employed in this school district. The number of first year special education teachers hired in this school district for the 2001-2002 school year was too low to use the data in any separate data analysis procedures and make conclusions. This school district did not fund, like many other school districts in the state, a second year mentoring program for its teachers. The study was limited in the time frame in which data could be collected from the sample population. Data was collected in the beginning and towards the middle of the school year to allow enough time to analyze the data and draw conclusions from it. If time allowed, data would have been collected a third time, towards the end of the school year (beginning of May), to determine if and how the needs of the first year teachers changed over the course of the school year.

## Setting of the Study -

The community of the school district in this study is located in southern New Jersey. It contains over 64 square miles. One-third of the township is considered within the State of New Jersey's newest Urban Enterprise Zone, which is helping to strengthen its economic base. The township is known for its successful blueberry farms, as well as its cranberry bogs located in its southern portion.

The township has over 30,000 residents. The population is 68.9% White, 22.7% Black and 7.5% Hispanic. There are approximately 10,051 households with a median family income of \$35,460.

The school district is one of thirty Abbott School Districts in the State of New Jersey. There are over 11 schools in the district serving over 5,700 students from pre-school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The New Jersey Department of Education reported the scores (May 2001) of the various state tests given to students in the fourth, eighth and eleventh grade levels. For students completing the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA), the following scores were reported. In Language Arts Literacy, 24.7% were partially proficient, 72.5% proficient, and 2.8% advanced proficient. In Mathematics, 47.7% were partially proficient, 42.7% proficient, and 9.6% advanced proficient. In Science, 9.6% were partially proficient, 64.5% proficient, and 25.9% advanced proficient (Berstein, 2002a). The school district had the following scores for its eighth grade students who took the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) test. For Language Arts, 25.3% were partially proficient, 72.0% proficient, and 2.6% were advanced proficient. In Mathematics, 56.6% were partially proficient, 35.9% proficient, and 7.6% advanced proficient. In Science, 24.9% were partially proficient, 64.9% proficient, and

10.2% advanced proficient (Bernstein, 2002a). The percentage of students in the district from the class of 2001 who passed all three sections -- math, reading, and writing of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) by April of 2001 was 84.0% (Bernstein, 2002a). For the 2000-2001 school year, the New Jersey Department of Education released the following statistics regarding students taking the SAT. About 66% of the High School students in the district took the test. The average verbal score was 467 and the average math score was 455 (Berstein, 2002b).

The High School offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Mathematics, English, US History, Psychology, Sciences, and Computers. The High School also currently offers other courses via Interactive Television through a consortium of the county schools. A certified Adult Education Program and an alternative program are also offered at the High School. The "School to Career and College Program" provides career opportunities through Business/Vocational Education, Cooperative Education, Cooperative Industrial Education, Marketing Education, and Health Occupation. Approximately 69% of the graduating class of 2000 went on to post-secondary education and 23% entered immediately entered the workforce.

#### Significance of the Study:

The study was important because the U.S. Department of Education reports that schools in the United States will need to hire over 2 million teachers in the next five years to serve a growing number of students and also replace a large group of retiring teachers (Schurr, 2001). However, it has been reported that nationally, 40 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching, with the casualty rate for urban districts being a staggering 50 percent (Wollmer, 2001). Between the years of 1999 and

2000, the State of New Jersey alone, lost a total of 7,310 teachers or 8.1 percent of the total workforce (Wollmer, 2001). The reasons why a teacher leaves the teaching profession vary and include: uncompetitive salaries, lack of administrative support, and poor working conditions. Regardless of the reasons, school districts in the United States need to attract and retain teachers in the profession. One way school districts can provide support for beginning teachers is through teacher mentoring. Teacher mentoring that provides support and meets the needs of its teachers has the possibility of contributing to a higher rate of teacher retention. While the focus of this study was on identifying what the needs are for first year teachers within the confines of one southern New Jersey school district, the results will bring to light issues that other school districts most likely share.

#### Organization of the Study:

Chapter 1 introduced the focus and importance of the research on teacher mentoring for beginning teachers. The purpose of the study was to identify the needs of first year teachers. Chapter 2 reviewed the various concepts in relation to the importance of school districts providing mentoring for new teachers in the profession. Why are teachers leaving the profession and what are some of the ways school districts can stop this exodus? This chapter also discussed what the role of mentoring can do to support new teachers. What are some of the specific needs of new teachers that have already been identified in research? Another concept discussed was the role of the mentor and mentee relationship. What do new teachers really want from their mentor? What is the most important role that the mentor can provide the new teacher? Chapter 3 focused on the design of the study. Surveys were used in the beginning and towards the middle of

the school year to sample and gather data from the first year teachers in one school district. Five new teachers were interviewed and asked more in-depth questions that were not covered in either survey. This chapter also covered in more detail how the data was collected, used, and analyzed. Chapter 4 presented the data collected and analyzed from Chapter 3. Charts and graphs were created to show what information was found during the research process. The data was presented in various charts and graphs to summarize visually what the specific needs are from one group of first year teachers from one urban school district in southern New Jersey. How this information can be interpreted and used for a school district was also answered in this chapter. Finally, in Chapter 5, the conclusions and implications of the needs of the first year teachers were discussed here. Appropriate suggestions for further study were also presented in this final chapter.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

#### Introduction:

The purpose of the study was to identify the needs of first year teachers and determine if and how these needs changed over the course of the school year. This information can help a school district develop and implement a mentoring program to meet the specific needs of the first year teachers in their school district.

There are numerous articles on the exodus of teachers during their first five years of teaching. Why teachers are leaving the profession and how can school districts retain their new teacher recruits are important questions. School districts must prioritize the need to find ways to keep their new teachers in their districts and in the teaching profession for a long time.

One way to keep teachers in the profession that some school districts have implemented for some time in the United States is mentoring for beginning teachers. The relationship between the mentor and the mentee is important for the success of the program. Mentors need to be trained in providing the kind of support that beginning teachers need during their beginning years of teaching. Research shows that only 15% of mentored teachers leave the profession (Fulton, 2001). It takes between 5 to 8 years to “master the art of teaching” (Fulton, 2001). Identifying the needs of beginning teachers is crucial to tailoring the kind of support required. There are numerous mentoring programs out there for school districts to choose from. It is important for school districts to choose the right program and develop it in ways to meet the unique needs of their

beginning teachers, as well as the needs of their school district. Monitoring of the mentoring program can help school districts make sure that their program is meeting the specific needs of their beginning teachers.

#### Teachers Leaving the Profession:

School enrollments in the United States reached a record high of 53.1 million students this past fall (Sack, 2001). According to the U.S. Department of Education, which released its annual report, it is the sixth consecutive record-breaking year (Sack, 2001). More teachers will be needed to serve the growing enrollments. There are 3.3 million teachers currently employed by U.S. school districts (Sack, 2001). In 10 years, that number is expected to grow by about 10%, to 3.65 million (Sack, 2001). The public is aware through media attention that the United States will need millions of new teachers within the next 5-10 years to replace existing teachers who will be retiring. Yet, the challenge still remains of attracting and retaining new teachers entering the profession, especially in urban school districts. There were roughly 190,000 men and women beginning their first teaching assignments this past fall in the United States (Archer, 2001). One career guide rated teaching as a job that is “more stressful than that of a decontamination technician at a nuclear-power plant” (Archer, 2001). Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (RNT), released a report in January, *The Urban Challenge*, which examined the nation’s major urban school districts and found that almost 100% have an urgent need for teachers in at least one high need subject area, such as special education (97.5%), science (97.5%), and math (95%), as well as bilingual education, ESL teachers and educational technology specialists (RNT, “Filed Facts”). In the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year, school districts in New Jersey were searching for teachers in



foreign language, based largely on the state's mandate to teach world languages in its elementary schools. These same districts were also searching for the historically hard to find special education teachers, as well as math and science teachers (Weinstein, 2001). The shortages of teachers in New Jersey are also occurring in other states, such as Virginia and Michigan (Weinstein, 2001). Even the public schools in Hawaii were forecasting teacher shortages of 437 this school year, compared to 164 last year (Weinstein, 2001).

Considering that many school districts are faced with the enormous task of educating children with disabilities, these districts are strained in finding appropriately trained teachers in special education to meet these unique needs (White and Mason, 2001). There are currently over 33,000 special education positions filled by uncertified teachers, and 4,000 positions remain vacant (CEC today, "Where We Are...", 2001). The alarming high attrition rate of special education teachers is contributing to the national shortage of special education teachers, which obviously does not help this situation either (White and Mason, 2001). It is generally known that more special education leave the field than general education teachers. Can mentoring help stop the exodus of special education teachers?

Actually, the teaching exodus for all teachers is nothing new. Research over 40 years ago showed that 40.4% of school board presidents cited teacher turnover as the most serious problem facing their schools (Wollmer, 2001). Even the best and the brightest, according to some estimates, stay in teaching for an average of five years before changing careers (Boles and Troen, 2000). After about the seventh year of teaching, as teachers gain experience, the rate at which they leave the classroom starts to

level off (SREB). In good economic times, teachers are lured to take higher paying jobs in the business world. Another problem is that in the great economic times of expansion and low employment rates, such as during the 1990's, it is very difficult for the teaching profession to hire new employees (Wollmer, 2001). According to *Education Week*, teachers between the ages of 22 and 28 earn nearly \$8,000 less than their college-educated peers do. By the time these teachers are 44 years old, the gap between teachers and others holding a master's degree increases to \$32,511 (Wollmer, 2001). However, according to a recent report, *A Sense of Calling, Who Teaches and Why* released by the nonpartisan think-tank Public Agenda, money is not the main issue why teachers leave the profession. When given a choice between a significantly higher teacher salary and working in a school with administrators who are strongly supportive, 82% of the 914 teachers with five years experience or less who were surveyed, chose strong school leaders who would support them (Allen, 2000). Only 10 percent of teachers who left teaching after five years cited dissatisfaction with salary and benefits as their primary reason for leaving the profession according to national studies (SREB).

There are numerous other reasons why teachers leave the profession. Teaching is considered by some to be a profession that has low status, poor working conditions, offers no promotions, and gives pay raises based almost exclusively on years of service or academic degrees (Boles and Troen, 2000). The teaching profession is thus seen as a profession that rewards the number of years you have taught, not the expertise or contributions you make to the profession (Boles and Troen, 2000). According to various national and state research studies, there are several key factors that can influence a

beginning teacher's decision to leave the profession: inadequate preparation, conditions in the school and classroom, and salaries and benefits (SREB).

In New Jersey, there were 7,310 teachers who left their jobs between 1999 and 2000 and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) wanted to know who was leaving and why they were leaving (Wollmer, 2001). The Research Division of the NJEA identified 4,100 of these "early leavers," those who had 20 or less teaching years and were obviously not likely to retire, and polled a sample of 400 teachers, proportionate to the number of teachers in Abbott and non-Abbott school districts to find out their reasons for leaving (Wollmer, 2001). The study identified some interesting findings. The top reasons why teachers left, excluding family or health reasons, were the need for new challenges, professional growth, more influence, inadequate salaries, unsatisfactory working conditions, and inadequate administrative support (Wollmer, 2001).

Teachers leaving the profession contribute to teacher shortages which ultimately hurt the students who need quality teachers the most. In some school districts, the inexperienced teacher is usually assigned the most challenging classes, while the most experienced teacher is assigned the high-achieving, self-motivated students (Tell, 2000). This practice hurts both the students who are most at-risk and the new teacher whom easily becomes frustrated with the overwhelming demands and is therefore more likely to leave the teaching profession (Tell, 2000). The exodus of teachers, especially new teachers, has to end. However, one resounding question remains: what can be done? The Role of Mentoring for Beginning Teachers:

There have been numerous ideas under discussion regarding how school districts can try to attract and retain their new teachers. Mary Ann Jandoli of the New Jersey

Education Association Research Division says that the message is quite clear from the poll her division conducted. If schools want to stop teachers from leaving the profession, they must provide teachers with higher salaries, smaller class sizes, more say over the factors affecting their professional lives, and professional growth opportunities (Wollmer, 2001). The spread of mentoring on the educational scene has been around since the early 1980's as part of a broad movement aimed at improving education (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Policy-makers and educational leaders had high hopes that mentoring would pave the way in reforming teaching and teacher education (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Since that time period, mentoring has increased rapidly, with over 30 states mandating some form of mentored support for beginning teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Studies have shown that teachers who have less than five years of teaching experience, who have not participated in induction programs, are nearly twice as likely to leave the profession (SREB). There are a variety of ways that researchers suggest that schools and school districts can try to retain new teachers, such as providing school-based training and support, as well as creating opportunities for variation and advancement (Schurr, 2001). Mentoring, peer review, and induction programs are becoming increasingly popular ways for schools to support beginning teachers during their first few years of teaching. However, experts say that the success of a mentoring program also depends on the district and the school leaders "who are willing to allocate or reallocate resources and promote the professional growth of new teachers" (Allen, 2000).

Attracting and retaining special education teachers is another concern for school districts. One way school districts can help build and ensure a quality special education teaching force, according to Robert Yinger of Baylor University, is to reduce the teaching

loads and assignments of special education teachers, as well as to provide a mentor for these teachers during their first two years of teaching (CEC, "Education Partners Learn," 2001). Many schools and school districts are implementing mentoring programs as one way to try to retain their new teaching recruits. Unfortunately, the work load reduction option is not likely with the existing teacher shortages.

New Jersey is one state that wanted to implement a required two-year mentoring program for all beginning teachers starting with the 2001-2002 school year. The state of New Jersey has required for a number of years, teacher mentoring for all teachers (except special education) at the teacher's or district's expense. Then-Governor Christine Todd Whitman in her State-of-the State Address in January 2000, urged the Department of Education to work closely with New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the state's largest teacher's union, in the development of proposed regulations for the State Board's consideration (Crosbie, 2000). The New Jersey Department of Education proposed amendments to N.J.A.C. 6:11 to create a new subchapter 6:11-14. These amendments created a rigorous two-year mentoring program for all novice teachers to provide confidential and ongoing support from experienced teachers (Crosbie, 2000). The New Jersey Department of Education believed that novice teachers would receive the collegial support and guidance they need to develop effective teaching strategies and educational practices through a rigorous two-year mentoring program. Quality mentoring, in turn, will better prepare the novice teacher to handle the challenges of the classroom during the critical first two years of teaching, thereby keeping new teachers who might otherwise leave the profession (Hespe, 2000). During the 2000-2001 school year, a mentoring pilot program was conducted with 15 school districts in the state participating and based

on their current exemplary mentoring programs already in place. This pilot program was funded in a \$2 million appropriation in the FY 2001 state budget that was signed by then-Governor Christine Todd Whitman (Crosbie, 2000). The funding was used to cover the costs associated with mentor training, stipends for teachers serving as mentors, and money for released time so the mentor teachers can spend time with their mentees (Crosbie, 2000). Mentoring of all first year novice teachers, including special education teachers, was scheduled to begin during the 2001-2002 school year. Districts were to receive state funds to help implement the program and pay stipends to the mentor teachers. The novice was not to be charged any mentoring fees. The mentoring requirement applied to all novice teachers employed by a district board of education, charter schools and even nonpublic schools if the teaching position in the nonpublic schools required the possession of an instructional certificate ("Legal Memorandum," 2001).

However, during the summer of 2001, state education officials in New Jersey announced that due to budget restrictions, funding for mentoring second year teachers had been cut. Districts were encouraged to fund the second year of mentoring on their own. It is unlikely that many school districts in the state will have the funding to implement the program on their own without state assistance. Districts had to complete a "waiver" application requesting that they be exempted from the second year of mentoring under N.J.A.C. 6:11-14 (Gagliardi, 2001). The New Jersey Commissioner of Education at this time was Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. (2001) and he had this view on the importance of school districts providing a second year of mentoring for teachers:

The two-year mentoring program is an excellent effort to improve the quality of teachers in New Jersey, as well as to improve the retention rate of novice teachers.

I strongly support the regulations and will work to restore full funding to the program. I am hopeful that we will be able to implement this program fully with state resources in the future. I encourage districts to consider implementing the second year of teacher mentoring if local resources are available.

The New Jersey State Department of Education believes that by improving the quality of its teaching force, it will have a direct impact on student achievement. By having skilled, committed and experienced mentor teachers supporting the novice teacher, it will prepare the novice teacher to provide instruction to students that will help them meet the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards, as well as pass the state's rigorous assessments. The New Jersey Department of Education believes that "Quality mentoring can yield higher student achievement through the development of excellence in teaching" (Hespe, 2000). The state of New Jersey believes that mentoring is one way to keep their beginning teaching recruits from leaving the profession.

The Needs of the New Teacher:

What are the needs of new teachers? What are the specific areas that new teachers think and feel that they are more or less confident in? At a recent first-year teacher conference sponsored by the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) new teachers were asked how their teacher's union could help them. One Connecticut teacher's response was that the union could give her support and guidance on important issues, as well as help her with her needs as a teacher (NEA, "A Better Beginning,").

Yet, the question still remains. What are new teachers really concerned about? There

were 11 concerns of new teachers identified from "*Beginning Now: Resources for Organizers of Beginning Teachers, 1999*" (NEA, "A Better Beginning,"). These needs were: a.) Getting information about the Association; b.) Instructional issues; c.) Preparation time; d.) Unmotivated students; e.) Their own evaluations; f.) Classroom control, management and discipline; g.) Students with special learning challenges; h.) Finding resources; i.) Involving parents; j.) Time Management; and k.) Dealing with physical and emotional stress (NEA, "A Better Beginning,").

The purpose of teacher mentoring programs is for the mentor to address the concerns of his or her mentee. Once these needs are identified, the mentor can begin to help the new teacher with his or her specific needs. Sandra J. Odell and her colleagues have conducted research on the characteristics of beginning teachers in relation to their first year teaching needs as they went through an induction program. This research (Odell 1986b) was conducted by observing the functioning of an elementary induction support program, recording the questions of the first year elementary teachers to induction support personnel (Odell, Loughlin, and Ferraro 1987), and by identifying the developmental level of teaching for new teachers using a *Stages of Concerns* (Odell 1987) questionnaire (studies cited in Odell, 1989). This type of research method was used to characterize the changes of the new teacher and tentatively to "define the types of support needed in the induction of developing teachers" (Odell, 1989). Another method of research, as reported by Sandra J. Odell, used the interview method to describe further the characteristics of new elementary teachers in an induction program. The research was designed to identify 4 areas: a.) to reveal new teacher motivations, attitudes, and expectations; b.) to identify the concerns of beginning teachers and the support personnel



most helpful to beginning teachers; c.) to assess the impact of the teaching context on the first year of teaching; and d.) to reveal what changes in teacher practice new teachers would like to make in a new year (Odell, 1989). The data collected for this research (1986) came from a large-scale elementary school induction program that was a collaborative effort between a college of education and a major school district (Odell, 1989). The characteristics of the subjects in this study were 18 teachers, 16 females and 2 males, that were drawn randomly from 180 first-year elementary teachers receiving weekly induction support from 9 clinical support teachers (Odell, 1989). These 18 beginning teachers randomly chosen in the study were all recent graduates holding baccalaureate degrees in elementary education. The clinical support teachers were veteran classroom teachers who were released from classroom duties in order to work full time helping the 180 beginning teachers (Odell, 1989). Over the course of the school year, the clinical support teachers administered an interview (lasting approximately 30 minutes) three times to the 18 beginning teachers: during the first two weeks of the school, after the mid-year holiday break, and in the last month of the school year (Odell, 1989). The actual interview consisted of seven open-ended questions that were read to the beginning teachers by the clinical support teacher. Four of the seven questions were the same for all three interviews and the last three questions changed across the interviews (Odell, 1989). Each of the seven interview questions addressed one of the seven characteristics: teacher motivation, teacher attitude, new teacher expectations, new teacher needs, sources of new teacher support, the impact of the teaching context, or teaching practice (Odell, 1989). These interviews were tape recorded for later transcription and analysis. The actual teacher responses tape recorded were then tallied

word-by-word in order to create a description of new teachers in an induction context (Odell, 1989).

The results for the needs of new teachers were determined through two questions in each of the three interviews. The responses from the new teachers regarding their biggest challenges and concerns were subdivided into seven categories: 1.) Instruction; 2.) System; 3.) Resource; 4.) Emotional; 5.) Managerial; 6.) Parental; and 7.) Discipline (Odell, 1989). Instruction meant giving information to new teachers about teaching strategies. System was giving information to new teachers related to procedures and guidelines of the school district. The resource category was the collecting, disseminating, or locating resources for use by new teachers. Emotional meant offering new teachers personal support through empathic listening and by sharing experiences. Managerial was helping new teachers manage and organize the school day. Parental was giving new teachers help with ideas related to conferencing with parents. The last support need, discipline, meant giving new teachers ideas related to managing children (Odell, 1989).

Some of the results of the three interviews indicated some interesting facts. Instructional needs were identified most frequently during all three interviews. The percentages for instructional needs were: Interview I (36.4%), Interview II (56.8%) and Interview III (45.8%). The resource, emotional, and parental categories received less focus with all percentages falling below 7 percent (Odell, 1989). Management needs of new teachers were identified often during the first interview (23.3%). However, managerial needs declined over the second interview (13.4%) and third interview (8.3%) as presumably teachers became more effective in organizing their school day (Odell,

1989). Finally, discipline remained fairly stable during the first interview (17.1%) and second interview (18.7%), but declined somewhat by the third interview (12.5%).

This research identified two needs that were cited most frequently by new teachers: instructional and managing students (Odell, 1989). This data was consistent with Odell's and her colleagues' previous research involving the use of clinical support teachers. These clinical support teachers recorded the questions that the new teachers asked of them across their first year of teaching (Odell, 1989). Both of these approaches revealed data that was consistent with the three interviews research method that was conducted. The instructional process is the most critical aspect of a teacher induction program (Odell, 1989).

As far as discipline was concerned, the data presented in prior research indicated that discipline was not a major concern of new teachers (Odell, 1989). However, prior data obtained (Veenman 1984), by using an interview procedure and the data obtained during the three interviews (Odell), showed that discipline was a major concern of new teachers (Odell, 1989). The discrepancy between the various research methods indicated that assessing the needs of beginning teachers in an induction program touched different dimensions of teacher needs (Odell, 1989).

In another research study, two cohorts of beginning teachers (N=160), four years after their initial, mentored teaching year, were surveyed to determine whether they had remained in teaching and their retrospective attitudes about mentoring (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). Approximately 96% of those located were still teaching (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). The seven categories that the respondents were asked to rate according to the mentoring support they received during their first year of teaching were: emotional,

instructional, resources, discipline, parental, management, and system (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). The survey revealed that these teachers most valued the emotional support they received from their mentors (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). These teachers next valued the support they received in instructional strategies and obtaining resources for the classroom (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). These teachers placed less value on the support they received for discipline and working with parents (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). Managing the school day and functioning within the school district were the two categories that these teachers placed the least value during their first year of mentoring (Odell and Ferraro, 1992).

As mentioned before, attracting and retaining special education teachers is a major concern for many school districts in the United States. Beginning special education teachers may have unique needs and want assistance from their mentors in various areas. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is currently conducting the Mentoring Induction Project (MIP) to help identify these needs. During the first year, the *Mentoring Induction Principles and Guidelines* were established. These principles are being implemented during the second year of the project at four pilot sites: Baldwin County, Alabama; Akron, Ohio; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Salt Lake City, Utah. After data is collected from these four sites, the guidelines will be refined and 5 additional pilot sites will be selected for this project (White and Mason, 2001).

Preliminary data collected from 150 new teachers and mentors revealed that the new teachers want the most assistance with individualized education programs (IEPs), curriculum and teaching, behavior management, special education forms and paperwork, and problems with specific students (White and Mason, 2001). Data was collected from the new teachers and mentors in the pilot sites by using monthly contact logs, self-

assessment surveys, and surveys and interviews concerning needs of first-year teachers and mentors, mentor-teacher effectiveness, and mentoring program effectiveness (White and Mason, 2001). Monthly contact logs kept by the new teachers and mentors at four national sites, enabled the MIP to determine the concerns of new teachers and the assistance provided by their mentors (White and Mason, 2001). Data collected from September through December 2000 showed that once mentors established initial contact and provided emotional support to new teachers, IEP-related concerns rise to the top of the list of topics covered during mentor and new teacher meetings (White and Mason, 2001). During the second and third year of the project, the data collected will make a significant contribution to the profession by addressing a variety of areas, including the needs and concerns of first-year teachers (White and Mason, 2001).

#### The Role of Mentoring:

In conclusion, mentoring is one way that school districts can address the needs of its new teachers. While many beginning teachers arrive in the classroom knowing what they want to achieve, some soon begin to self-doubt their abilities to teach. Supportive mentor teachers can help intervene and try to stop any type of disillusionment and abandonment of teaching careers (Clark, 2001). It seems that the “quality of the first teaching experience seems to be more positively related to teacher retention (Chapman, 1984) than is the beginning teachers’ prior academic performance or the adequacy of their prior academic experience” (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). Mentoring can have many purposes ranging from “orientation, to induction, to instructional improvement, to an intent to change the culture of the school to a more collaborative learning environment” (Sweeny, 1994). Schools need to view new teachers as learners (Montgomery Halford,

1998). New teachers, as Fuller's classic research suggests, often "progress through predictable, developmental stages of concern, gradually shifting from a primary focus of survival to a primary focus on student learning" (Montgomery Halford, 1998). That is the focus that all teachers want to attain.

However, no one wants to overload new teachers with too much information. Roselva Ungar, a mentor teacher in Los Angeles, outlined three stages of working with a new teacher. The first stage focuses on the practical skills and information, such as where to order supplies, how to organize a classroom, where to find instructional resources, etc. The second stage is where the mentors and mentees can concentrate more on the art and science of teaching, as well as polishing up on any classroom management skills. Finally, during the third stage, the focus shifts to a deeper understanding of instructional strategies and ongoing professional development that is based on the assessed needs of the students (NFIE, The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1999). Of course, all teachers are different and their teaching situations can vary widely. Where a teacher enters and how long he or she lasts in any of the stages varies according to the individual teacher's level of experience and the knowledge and skills the new teacher brings to the job (NFIE, 1999).

Mentoring can have a positive impact on the beginning teacher. Evertson and Smithey (Vanderbilt University) completed a study in which the classroom practices of novice teachers assisted by mentors who had participated in a formal mentoring program were compared with new teachers mentored by experienced teachers who had not completed any formal mentoring training (Evertson and Smithey, 2000). There were 46 new teacher-mentor pairs (23 treatment; 23 comparison) who participated in this study,

which was conducted in 2 large school districts in a mid-western state. Data was collected through ratings and narrative records from classroom observations, weekly summaries of mentoring activities, and ratings of students' classroom behavior. The results of this study indicated that new teachers of mentors that participated in the mentoring program could more effectively organize and manage instruction at the beginning of the year and establish more workable classroom routines (Evertson and Smithey, 2000). This study also found that their students had better behavior and engagement (Evertson and Smithey, 2000). The study found that mentoring programs have a positive effect on the classroom practices of new teachers, which can potentially improve their teaching confidence and satisfaction.

A report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) reported that the lack of guided induction into teaching and isolation causes many beginning teachers to develop undesirable coping mechanisms, which may hurt their effectiveness and limit learning (NEA, "A Better Beginning,"). The needs of new teachers have to be identified in order for a mentoring program to be successful. Once the mentor knows what he or she needs to focus on with their mentee, the better the mentoring program will accomplish its established goals and objectives.

*Education Week* tracked five new teachers at a Maryland middle school from September 2000 through June 2001. The school district is located a few minutes south of Annapolis -- Maryland's capital, and about four miles inland from the Chesapeake Bay's western shore, Edgewater. The surrounding community is a mix of blue-collar workers and professionals, where few are super rich or extremely poor (Archer, 2001). The principal, Fred Jenkins of Central Middle School which serves students from grades 6-8,

said that teachers deal with a lot more variables than a rocket scientist and that putting a man on the moon was a “much more controlled situation than being a teacher” (Archer, 2001). Central had five new teachers on its staff for the 2000-2001 school year out of its total teaching staff of 60. In recent years, the turnover rate at Central was very high according to the principal. Jenkins believes what is happening is that the baby boom generation is starting to retire and the younger replacements seem quicker to change jobs or careers if a better opportunity is available (Archer, 2001). Jenkins believes that teaching is a lot tougher than when he entered the profession about 30 years ago. Back then, Jenkins said that schools did not have to prove their worth on state tests. The art of teaching was according to Jenkins “a matter of presenting information and giving students time to practice their work” (Archer, 2001). Today that concept of presenting information may seem like simpler times. Teachers are expected to assess the progress of their students continually throughout the school year and are held more accountable (Archer, 2001).

The new teachers at Central did not have a mentor. The district’s budget had no money to pay for an official mentor for each novice. Therefore, the new teachers had to rely on their colleagues for any help or support during their first year of teaching. One new teacher said, “At the beginning I just wanted to get through my first year of teaching. And I’ve changed my perspective from the kind of survival mode to now where I want to focus on refining everything” (Archer, 2001).

However, by the end of the school year, Jenkins lost 2 out of his 5 new teachers. One teacher decided to accept an offer to teach in a school district outside Philadelphia, which was closer to his hometown. Another teacher who decided to leave the teaching



profession said that teaching was not for him and that the paperwork and all the after-school work never seemed to end. The support he received from his colleagues did make the job “bearable” for him. However, it did not change his mind to leave the teaching profession. If this teacher had a mentor during his first year of teaching, would the outcome be different? A solid teacher-mentoring program could have made a difference in providing the support this teacher needed to stay in the classroom. Quality teacher mentoring programs may ensure that the new teachers who enter the profession are here to stay -- for a long time.

## Chapter 3

### Design of the Study

#### Introduction:

#### General Description of the Research Design:

The needs of first year teachers were collected through a survey given at the beginning of the school year (survey #1) and towards the middle/end of the school year (survey #2). There were 24 selected-response questions included on page one of the survey. Request for background data, such as grade level taught and whether the teacher was a special education or regular education teacher was included on both surveys. Four open-ended questions were only included on the second survey given to the first year teachers.

This longitudinal study had two data collections taken place during the school year; once at the end of September and beginning of October and the second towards the middle or end of January. Time limitations did not allow a third collection during May or June. Interviews with five first-year teachers were completed during the months of January and February. Teachers were asked 7 open-ended questions and their responses were recorded on paper. The interview allowed the opportunity to probe various responses received and analyzed from the first survey given out in the beginning of the school year. Using surveys and interviews in the data collection process allowed the intern to have two methods to analyze and determine any commonalties or differences. The interview process also provided additional data to analyze and draw conclusions.

### Development and Design of the Research Instrumentation:

The first survey was given to the first year teachers at the beginning of the school year and included 24 selected-response or forced-choice items with four different options to choose from on the first page. The four options or choices available (ordinal data) dealt with the confidence level of respondents to a variety of teaching areas.

Respondents also had to answer 3 selected-response or forced-choice response items with 2 to 4 choices available for each question on the second page dealing with background data. The second page also had respondents choose answers based on their experience in teaching, grade level taught, and whether he or she is a special education or regular education teacher.

The second survey that was given to the first year teachers during the month of January included both the 24 forced-choice items and the three background data items from the first survey. In addition, the second survey included four open-ended questions.

A cover letter was included on both surveys given out to the first year teachers in the district. The respondents were asked to send back their completed surveys to the school where the intern worked as a teacher. Mints were attached to both surveys as a token of appreciation for the time and effort that the first year teachers took to complete and return them.

### Description of the Sampling and Sampling Techniques:

The intern used comprehensive sampling to collect the data. The first year teacher surveys were given non-randomly to teachers in one school district that met a certain criteria. Teachers who were in their first year and had a mentor during the 2001-2002 school year were included in the sample population. The survey was given out to

all first year teachers (cohort study) in the school district where the intern worked as a teacher. The total number of first year teachers identified for the first survey was 27. All 27 teachers were sent a survey to complete and return within a 2-week period -- see Appendix A. The total number of first year teachers identified and given a second survey was 29. These teachers were given or sent a survey during the middle of January. These teachers also had two weeks to return the survey. After a week, a letter was sent to the second year teachers to remind them to complete and return the survey -- see Appendix B. Five first year teachers were also interviewed. Teachers were asked randomly in person or by letter if they would like to participate in an interview. The interview consisted of teachers from the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

#### Description of the Data Collection Approach:

The data was collected using surveys designed specifically for the first year teachers who had mentors during the 2001-2002 school year in one school district. Data was collected using a survey given to all first year teachers identified by a list obtained at the beginning of the year and updated throughout the school year. There was always the possibility that first year teachers could be hired over the course of the school year. The measurement scale for the survey was ordinal. A semantic differential instrument was used to measure the first year teachers' attitudes towards their needs as a beginning teacher. The first survey was given to the first year teachers during the last week of September. A second survey was given to the first year teachers towards the middle or end of January. Two data collections were used in order to analyze the data and see if the needs of the first year teachers changed over time. Follow-up memos were sent to remind the first year teachers to complete and return the survey. Five interviews with

first year teachers were conducted in January to probe their responses to the surveys.

Both quantitative and qualitative data was used in the data collection process.

Description of the Data Analysis Plan:

Both quantitative data and qualitative data were used for the data analysis plan.

The forced-choice items from the survey allowed the intern to analyze quantitative data using descriptive analysis. The survey data was displayed in a computer spreadsheet.

The open-ended questions on the second survey given during January allowed additional quantitative data for the intern to analyze, as well as to see if any of these responses were consistent with the previous quantitative data collected from the first survey. The planned data analysis used descriptive statistics to analyze the data obtained from both surveys. The quantitative ordinal data from the surveys was non-parametric and analyzed using frequency tables and percentages. The frequency and distribution of the scores from the survey were put into a computer spreadsheet and various charts and graphs were developed from it. Qualitative data was provided for analysis from the five interviews completed in January and February. The data gathered from both surveys and the interviews was important for determining the current needs of the first year teachers, as well as for developing future programs to address these needs as they become second year teachers. The data also played an important part in the development of future programs designed to meet the needs of all first year teachers in the school district.

## Chapter 4

### Presentation of Research Findings

#### Introduction:

Teacher mentoring is one way school districts across the country are trying to retain new teachers in the profession. It is important for school districts to know the particular needs of their first year teachers so that they can implement a teacher mentoring program that will address these areas. The purpose of the intern's research was to determine the needs of the first year teachers in the intern's school district and to determine if these needs changed over the course of the school year. Two surveys were given during the school year to the first year teachers in one school district in order to identify their specific areas of need.

The first survey was given at the beginning of the school year during the last week of September. Sixteen first year teachers out of 27 (59%) completed and returned the first survey. The number of respondents from the pre-school and elementary levels (K-6) for the first survey was 9, while there were 7 respondents from the middle and high school levels (7-12). Fourteen teachers identified themselves as regular education teachers and two teachers identified themselves as special education teachers. Information and data regarding the first survey can be found in Appendix A.

The second survey was given out towards the middle of the school year during the month of January. Eighteen first year teachers out of 29 (62%) completed and returned the second survey. The respondents were evenly split between the elementary and secondary levels. Nine respondents were from the pre-school and elementary levels (K-

6) and nine respondents were from the middle and high school levels (7-12). All eighteen first year teachers identified themselves as regular education teachers. It should be noted that there was no guarantee that the first year teachers who completed and returned the first survey also completed and returned the second survey. However, it is likely that since the return rate for both the first and second survey were almost the same, the first year teachers who completed the first survey were more likely to complete and return the second survey. In addition, five interviews with first year teachers were also completed in January and February and became part of the analysis. Information and data regarding the second survey can be found in Appendix B.

#### Grand Tour Question #1:

At the beginning of the school year, what areas were the first year teachers confident in, and what areas did these new teachers think they could use help and support in?

The analysis of the first survey reported the following results. The number in parenthesis was the number of first year teachers out of sixteen that reported a need in that area. Please see Appendix A. The new teachers felt *very confident* in their relationships with other teachers (9), relationships with administrators (7), listening skills (7), and their need for emotional support (7). The one area that teachers felt the least confident in was addressing the different levels of abilities in the classroom (0). Areas that the first year teachers felt that they needed to *increase their knowledge slightly* included: obtaining resources (11), developing lesson plans (10), and evaluating student progress (10), parent-teacher conferences (9), becoming a better listener (9), classroom management (8), motivating students (8), addressing the various levels of abilities in the classroom (8), and understanding their legal rights as a teacher in New Jersey (8). The

results showed that first year teachers *need to work on*: addressing students with special needs in their classroom (9), addressing the different levels of abilities of students in their classrooms (7), understanding an individualized educational plan -- IEP (7), classroom management (6), and understanding their legal rights as a teacher in New Jersey (6).

Areas that the first year teachers reported *no knowledge* included: participating in an IEP meeting (7) and understanding an IEP (6). Most of the data obtained from the first survey was skewed or centered on the areas of *increase slightly* or *need to work on* sections of the survey. Not one teacher reported that he or she *needed to work on* or had *no knowledge* in becoming a better listener. Also, not one first year teacher reported *feeling confident* in addressing the different levels of abilities in their classroom (0).

#### Grand Tour Question #2:

What were some of the needs of the first year teachers that remained the same or changed over the course of the school year?

The data from the second survey given to the first year teachers in January yielded some interesting results. The number in parenthesis was the number of teachers out of eighteen (except for one area of need) who responded how they felt in that area. Only 17 responses were obtained for the need of administering standardized tests because one teacher put NA as his or her response for this area of need. Please see Appendix B.

Over the course of the school year, the first year teachers *felt confident* in their relationships to administrators (9) and relationships with other teachers (8). Areas that first year teachers felt they needed to *increase slightly* included: organizing their classrooms (13), motivating students (11), and becoming a better listener (11). Teachers felt that they *needed to work on* a variety of areas: classroom management (12), knowing



and understanding district policies (11), and addressing the various abilities in the classroom (9), and knowing their legal rights as a teacher in New Jersey (9). Finally, areas that reported high numbers in *no knowledge* in a particular area included: administrating standardized tests (7 out of 17), attending child study team (CST) meetings (7), and participating in the development of an IEP (7). Not one first year teacher *felt completely confident* in addressing the various abilities in the classroom (0) which was the same response as the last survey, and in understanding their legal rights as a teacher in New Jersey (0). Two areas that had a sharp change from the first survey were: knowing the school district's policies and understanding the school district's teacher evaluation process. For example, the first year teachers' interest in learning more about the school district's policies as an area to work on had an increase of almost 20% from the first survey. The data was mostly skewed or centered, just like the first survey, around the areas of *increase slightly* or *need to work on* sections.

#### Subquestion #1:

After approximately five months of teaching, what were the biggest challenge or challenges the first year teachers felt they encountered so far in this school year?

One of the open-ended questions on the second survey asked the first year teachers to identify their biggest challenge so far in this school year. Classroom management was identified as the area that received the most responses (4). Other areas that received responses (2) included: obtaining resources; time management; and keeping the students motivated. Please see Appendix B.

Subquestion #2:

What areas did the new teachers think their mentors helped them so far this school year?

The new teachers felt, with three responses each, that their mentor helped them the most by: providing feedback, giving lesson plans ideas, and providing guidance with everyday problems and/or concerns. Other areas the new teachers received help from their mentors, which had two responses each were: answering questions, supporting choices, and preparing for formal observations. The mentor also helped their mentee by providing emotional support, learning school procedures, observations, and being genuine and realistic. Please see Appendix B.

Grand Tour Question #3:

How prepared did first year teachers feel in a variety of issues that included dealing with classroom and/or behavior management, special education, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, working with parents, and obtaining professional development hours?

Subquestion #1:

How well-prepared did these teachers feel their teacher educational programs prepared them for the realities of teaching?

Five first year teachers were interviewed to answer these specific questions.

New Teacher  
Interview Questions:

- 1.) Tell me about your experience with classroom and /or behavior management. Did you have any educational classes on behavior management? Were you ever taught any specific behavior management programs during your teacher training? Which ones?
- 2.) Tell me about your background and experiences in special education. Did any of your educational classes discuss inclusion, team-teaching, IEP's, etc.?
- 3.) Tell me about your comfort level in reading an IEP and/or attending a Child Study Team (CST) meeting. What do you think would make you feel more comfortable in this area?
- 4.) Tell me about your comfort level with Section 504. Did any of your educational classes discuss Section 504? What would make you feel more comfortable in this area?
- 5.) After four-and-half months of teaching, are there any areas that you wished your teaching preparation program would have addressed more? Which areas?
- 6.) At the beginning of the school year, how comfortable did you feel attending Parent-Teacher Conferences or contacting parents on your own? After four-and-a half months of teaching, do you feel the same or more comfortable? What has brought about this change?
- 7.) How comfortable do you feel about your knowledge of obtaining professional development hours (100-hour requirement)? What areas of professional development would you like to know more about?

## Interviews:

Five first year teachers were interviewed. One of the new teachers interviewed became a teacher through a graduate program (M.S.T.) for students who have a undergraduate degree and who now want to become a teacher by obtaining a Master's degree. Another interviewed teacher went back to college to become certified (post-baccalaureate) and completed undergraduate classes in education. One teacher is currently going through the alternate route program to become a teacher in New Jersey. Two of the teachers completed their teacher educational programs at the undergraduate level at colleges outside New Jersey.

Four of the interviewed teachers said that they were not taught any specific behavior management techniques in any of their classes. Most said that the classes they completed on classroom management were very general in nature. One of the undergraduate education majors said that she had two classes on classroom management. This teacher said that in one of her management classes, one of the course requirements was to teach a class at a local school and video tape it. After completing both classes, she felt very prepared in classroom management.

As far as the requirement of taking at least one special education class, neither the graduate nor post-baccalaureate teachers said it was required in their programs. However, the teacher in the Master's program said she took voluntarily one special education graduate class that was very comprehensive. She thought that educational majors should be required to take at least 9 credits of special education classes before becoming a teacher. The post-baccalaureate teacher said that discussions about inclusion, IEP's, IDEA, and other issues were discussed in her classroom management class. This

teacher said that during her student teaching she had the opportunity to team-teach in an inclusion class and that she has one inclusion class during her first year of teaching. The other three teachers said that they had one general special education class that discussed various types of disabilities, laws, IDEA, etc. One of the teachers who completed her undergraduate educational degree outside New Jersey, as part of the class requirement, had to log hours each week attending various special education classes at a local school.

The teacher from the Master's program said that based on a field experience she completed in college, she felt confident attending Child Study Team (CST) meetings. The post-baccalaureate teacher said that she would like to attend her first CST meeting without parents to make her feel more comfortable. She would also like to attend more workshops on IEP's and the functions of the CST. The other three teachers said that they feel confident attending Child Study Team meetings and reading individualized education plans (IEP's). However, one of the teachers from one of the undergraduate education programs thought that her college should have done more. She did not see her first IEP until student teaching.

One teacher said that Section 504 was discussed at a minimal level during her educational classes. Most of the teachers interviewed were not comfortable with 504 plans and one teacher said that she would like to attend workshops on this subject. Only one teacher who completed an undergraduate educational program said that her undergraduate program did a great job on preparing her on special education issues and reading and understanding 504 plans.

Areas that these first year teachers said they wished their teaching preparation classes had better prepared them included: setting up a grade-book; classroom

management; special education classes; obtaining resources (sometimes from scratch); how to set up a classroom; how to prepare for your first day and year of teaching; how to deal with all the paperwork and record-keeping; and working with parents.

As far as parent-teacher conferences are concerned, all of the teachers felt comfortable participating based on their prior experiences, which included student teaching. In the beginning of the school year, one teacher said she introduced herself to all of the parents of her students by sending a letter to them in August. Finally, in regards to the professional development hours requirement for teachers in New Jersey, all of these first year teachers have attended various workshops during their first year of teaching, even though these hours did not count for them. Most of the teachers thought that obtaining professional development hours should start during their first year of teaching. These first year teachers also believed that an overview on the various professional development activities available, inside and outside the district, would be highly beneficial to them.

#### Subquestion #2:

What areas do the first year teachers want to focus on during their second year of teaching? What do first year teachers think their biggest challenge will be during their second year of teaching?

First year teachers answered two open-ended questions on the second survey that dealt with the needs and challenges they think they will encounter during their second year of teaching. Areas these teachers identified to focus on during their second year of teaching included a variety of topics. Classroom management received the most responses (5), followed by increasing student time-on-task (4) and individualized

instruction (4). The biggest challenge the first year teachers thought they would encounter during their second year of teaching was also varied in scope and included: keeping myself flexible (2), balancing it all, improving management skills, and obtaining more materials -- see Appendix B.

#### Conclusion:

The analysis of the data reported some interesting results. The analysis showed how the first year teachers over the course of the school year felt more or less confident in different areas. For example, the data obtained from both the first and second surveys reported that the first year teachers felt very confident in their relationships with other teachers and administrators. Overall, the confidence level (*feel confident*) in the 24 areas from the first survey to the second survey decreased from 22.66% to 16.01%. The *need to work on section* of the survey for the 24 areas of need increased from the first survey from 24.74% to 32.48 %. In comparison, the percentages obtained from the other two sections of the survey, *increase slightly* and *no knowledge*, remained fairly constant. However, the percentage results for both of these sections of the survey increased slightly for the second survey. In conclusion, chapter 5, which is the final chapter, discusses the conclusions, implications, and further study of the data results obtained from chapter 4. Each grand tour question and its sub-question(s) are referenced in this final chapter.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions, Implications and Further Study

#### Introduction:

The purpose of the research study was to determine if the needs of first year teachers changed over the course of the school year. Surveys were given to the first year teachers to identify their needs at the beginning of the school year and in the middle of the school year. All of the first year teachers surveyed or interviewed had a mentor for the 2001-2002 school year. If a school district knows the specific needs of its first year teachers, it can target these areas as they develop or change over the course of the school year. For example, programs and services could be developed and implemented over the course of the school year to meet these specific areas of need. The conclusions and implications of these needs of the first year teachers are discussed in this final chapter.

#### Grand Tour Question #1:

At the beginning of the school year, what areas did the first year teachers feel confident in and what areas did these new teachers think they could use help and support in?

Based on the results obtained from the first survey, first year teachers felt very confident in their relationships with other teachers and administrators. These teachers felt very confident emotionally and in their listening skills. As far as behavior management, half of the first year teachers felt that behavior management was an area that only needed *slight* improvement. In the beginning of the school year, first year teachers felt that they needed to work on addressing the different levels of abilities of their students, working with special education students, and understanding an IEP.



Areas that the first year teachers felt less confident in their skills and abilities included participating in the development of an IEP and attending CST meetings. Obtaining resources was an area that first year teachers felt they needed to increase *slightly*. Other areas of concern included attending Parent-Teacher Conferences and learning the different ways of obtaining professional development hours.

One way school districts could address these areas of concern is by making the mentors of the first year teachers aware of these issues. School districts could have in the beginning of the school year a meeting with the first year teachers and mentors to address these particular areas of concern. For example, a representative from the CST could be at this meeting to provide information about the IEP and the responsibilities of all teachers (regular education and special education) who work with special needs students. First year teachers should be informed when and why they should be taking part in CST meetings. The mentors can play an important part in helping the first year teacher in their quest to obtain resources in the beginning of the school year. As far as classroom management was concerned, teachers felt more confident in this area in the beginning of the school year. However, as the school year progressed, the confidence level of some teachers dropped. Therefore, the teacher mentoring program should certainly make the first year teacher aware of the importance of classroom management and how it begins on the first day of school and should continue throughout the school year.

Grand Tour Question #2 and subquestions:

What were some of the needs of the first year teachers that remained the same or changed over the course of the school year? What were some of the biggest challenges that first

year teachers encountered so far during the school year? What areas did the first year teachers think their mentors helped them the most so far in this school year?

By the middle of the school year, the first year teachers had some areas of need that changed from the first survey. For example, the confidence level in classroom management changed for some first year teachers. Two-thirds of the first year teachers from the second survey felt that they needed to work on classroom management. The need to learn more about understanding and participating in IEP development, attending CST meetings, working with special education students, and addressing the various abilities in the classroom remained about the same as the first survey. Many first year teachers still felt confident in their relationships with other teachers and administrators. Over the course of the school year obtaining resources became less of an issue for first year teachers. This concern was more of a concern in the beginning of the school year as the first year teachers were preparing their classrooms. Understanding their legal rights as a teacher in New Jersey shifted dramatically from the first survey to the second survey. Almost three-quarters of the first year teachers from the second survey thought this was an area to work on or an area they had very limited knowledge. Other areas of concern for the first year teachers revealed in the second survey included obtaining professional development hours and administering standardized tests.

Teacher mentoring programs should determine how to best address these areas of concerns over the course of school year. Issues that are of major concern for first year teachers may change or shift over the course of the school year. The implications of the results from the second survey showed that classroom management became an important area of concern for some first year teachers. From the second survey's open-ended

questions section, classroom management was listed as the biggest challenge that some first year teachers faced during their first five months of teaching. Issues related to working with special education students and addressing the various abilities in the classroom still remained a concern for some first year teachers. The second survey only reinforced the need of providing help and support for the first year teachers in reading and understanding an IEP, the development of an IEP, and attending CST meetings.

As the school year progressed, administering standardized tests became an obvious concern for some first year teachers. New Jersey has three state tests that are given to students in the fourth (ESPA), eighth (GEPA), and eleventh (HSPA) grade levels. Other standardized tests are given to students in the other grade levels, too. Therefore, administering standardized tests for the first time is a legitimate concern for first year teachers. Addressing the various standardized tests given in the district could be addressed at a minimal level in the beginning of the school year. However, the various schools within the district usually address this issue by providing all of its teachers specialized training for the standardized test to be given. Mentors of the first year teachers could help them feel more confident by answering individual questions and concerns about the standardized test, even after training.

New Jersey requires that all of its full-time teachers who hold a standard or permanent certificate to obtain 100 professional development hours within five years. There are a variety of ways a teacher can accumulate these hours. As mentioned before, first year teachers are exempt from accumulating professional development hours during their first year of teaching. However, the second survey showed that obtaining professional development hours was a concern for some first year teachers. The teacher

mentoring program could address this area of concern by providing a short overview at the end of the school year on when and how the first year teachers could accumulate professional development hours inside and outside the school district.

Grand Tour Question #3 and subquestions:

How prepared did first year teachers feel when dealing with a variety of issues such as classroom management, special education, Section 504, and working with parents? How prepared did the first year teachers think their teacher educational programs prepared them for the realities of teaching? As the first year teachers look ahead to their second year of teaching, what areas do they want to focus on and what did they think would be their biggest challenge?

Five first year teachers were interviewed from one school district and they provided some interesting information in regards to how well prepared they felt entering their first year of teaching. Classroom management was an area of concern for most of these teachers. In regards to classroom management, most of the teachers interviewed just had one or two courses on this subject. Only one teacher had real experiences and practice in classroom management. This teacher had to videotape herself teaching students from a local school near her college. Responses from the open-ended section questions from the second survey also listed classroom management as one of the areas the first year teachers would like to focus on during their second year of teaching.

The first year teachers also discussed some concerns about special education. Most of them felt that they did not get a lot of practical “hands on” experience dealing with various special education issues, such as IEP development. Most of these first year teachers said they only received a general overview on special education issues. Reading

and understanding 504 plans was another area that some of these teachers did not feel comfortable with. The one teacher that participated in actual experiences in the classroom with special education, also felt comfortable with reading and understanding 504 plans. Other areas of concern that these first year teachers wished their teacher education programs had prepared them included: setting up a grade-book, record-keeping, obtaining resources, setting up a classroom, and working with parents. Mentioning parents, all the teachers felt very confident with their dealing with parents during conferences. Most attributed this confidence from their student-teaching experiences.

What does it all mean? First of all, it seems that there was a prevailing theme that actual experiences in educational programs seems to make teachers feel more confident. Issues involving special education, 504 plans, and classroom management should receive high level of emphasis and importance in teacher educational preparation programs. One teacher said that she did not receive any real classroom experiences with school-age children until she was in student teaching, while another teacher said she had actual practice working with all ages of students very early in her teacher preparation program. After all, the more prepared the graduates of teacher preparation programs are in meeting the needs of students today, the more prepared the first year teacher will be in facing the realities of teaching.

Therefore, the teacher mentoring program of a school district should address various areas of need and incorporate them into their program. Some issues would be addressed from the beginning of the school year and updated periodically throughout the school year to meet the changing needs of the first year teachers. Mentors would also be

informed of the important areas of concerns of first year teachers so that they can address them with their mentee throughout the school year. Once the specific needs are known, a school district can start to take steps to address them.

#### Implications of Study on Leadership Skills:

The research provided the intern many opportunities for leadership development. The intern was fortunate to work under the guidance of a variety of administrators who provided opportunities for leadership growth. The opportunity to contribute ideas and make recommendations was a very rewarding learning experience. Working with a variety of administrators throughout the school district provided opportunities to learn how to handle different situations that arise and confront a leader.

A good leader leads by example. Providing opportunities for participation and decision making by his or her subordinates is what a good leader is all about. A good leader is not afraid to take risks and do the right thing if it benefits everyone under his or her command. A successful leader cannot accomplish everything alone. A good leader is willing to work with others and listen intently to what people have to say. Successful leaders are willing to go above and beyond to get the job done right the first time. Leaders are human, too. Good leaders have the confidence to admit mistakes and to rectify them as soon as possible. A good leader puts others ahead of himself or herself. He or she is willing to help others in their pursuit of excellence.

### Implications of Study on Organizational Change:

The state of New Jersey requires first year teachers in a school district to have a mentor to guide them during their first year of teaching. This was the first year that the district had a formal mentoring program for all of its teachers -- regular education and special education. The district worked very hard to provide guidance and support to the first year teachers and their mentors. Various times during the school year meetings were held for the first year teachers, the mentors, or both in order to see how the district's Teacher Mentoring Program was meeting the various needs of all who were involved in it.

The school district would like the first year teachers to come up with an area of need to focus on during their second year of teaching. The first year teacher will then come up with an action research plan to implement for the 2002-2003 school year. The action research plan will help the second year teacher focus on an area of professional development. As mentioned before, New Jersey requires 100 hours of professional development within a five year time period for full-time, permanent certified teachers. This is a great way for second year teachers to improve their teaching and gain professional development hours at the same time.

The school district also started a Beginning Teacher Induction Program for the 2001-2002 school year and the first year teachers were invited to participate in it. The program was held after school and it was scheduled to meet ten times during the school year -- September to June. Each month a different topic was highlighted and discussed during the session. Sample topics included classroom management, parent conferencing, and the supervision/teacher evaluation process.

#### Further Study:

The needs and areas of concern discussed in this research were from the first year school teachers in one school district during the 2001-2002 school year. It would be interesting to conduct the same study during the 2002-2003 school year to see if the needs of next year's group of first year teachers in the school district have the same needs and areas of concern as this year's group of first year teachers. Are there any unique areas of need from this new group of first year teachers?

It might also be interesting to conduct the same research next year to determine what the needs are of second year teachers and to determine if and how their needs changed from their first year of teaching. What areas do second year teachers have that are unique or different from first year teachers? School districts in New Jersey hope they will be receiving funding to implement a Teacher Mentoring program for their second year teachers during the 2002-2003 school year.

Another topic of interest involving first year teachers is to determine if the needs of special education teachers and regular education teachers are the same or different. Another study could determine if the needs of the graduates from the various teacher education programs available to become certified to teach in New Jersey are the same or different. Are the needs of a 22-year-old graduating from an undergraduate teacher education program the same as a 35-year-old who is entering the teaching profession through the alternate route program? Answers to any of these research questions may provide valuable data and help school districts keep new teachers in the profession for a very long time.



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Appendix A  
Survey I and Results

Teacher Mentoring 2001-2002  
SURVEY #1

September 25, 2001

Dear Colleagues:

*I am a Special Education teacher at H. A. F. Middle School. I have to complete four projects and a thesis to obtain a Master's Degree in Supervision and Curriculum Development from Rowan University. This survey will be used to obtain data for my thesis. I tried to make the survey short and it should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. Your participation will increase the success of obtaining useful data by finding out what your specific needs are as a first or second year teacher. Dr. S. and Dr. A. have read and approved the distribution of the survey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at my school. I currently do not have voice mail, please leave a message. This survey should be completed and returned to me by October 12, 2001.*

*Since there is no way to identify individual respondents, I will be unable to thank you individually for your cooperation. Please accept this token of my appreciation for your time and effort.*

*Sincerely,*

*Susan E. Barkowski  
H. A. F. Middle School*

*Encl.*

## Needs Assessment for New Teachers Survey

*Please rate the following questions based on your own needs at the beginning of the school year.*

- 4. - I feel confident and do not need help or assistance in this area.
- 3. - I would like to increase my knowledge base slightly in this area.
- 2. - I would prioritize this area as a need to work on.
- 1. - I have no knowledge and want to gain as much as possible in this area.

- 1.) Classroom Management \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) Motivating Students \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Developing and maintaining relationships with parents \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Developing and maintaining relationships with other teachers \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) Developing and maintaining relationships with administrators \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.) Parent-Teacher Conferences \_\_\_\_\_
- 7.) Developing daily lesson plans \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.) Becoming a better listener \_\_\_\_\_
- 9.) Organizing my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 10.) Developing and maintaining a grade book \_\_\_\_\_
- 11.) Time management \_\_\_\_\_
- 12.) Obtaining resources and materials for my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 13.) Obtaining Profession Development hours \_\_\_\_\_
- 14.) Addressing the varying levels of student abilities in my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 15.) Attending a Child Study Team meeting \_\_\_\_\_
- 16.) Reading and understanding an IEP \_\_\_\_\_
- 17.) Participating in the development of an IEP \_\_\_\_\_
- 18.) Gaining knowledge of my school district's policies and procedures \_\_\_\_\_
- 19.) Understanding my school district's teacher evaluation procedures \_\_\_\_\_
- 20.) Administering standardized achievement tests (GEPA/Stanford 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 21.) Emotional Support \_\_\_\_\_
- 22.) Evaluating student progress \_\_\_\_\_
- 23.) Working with and assisting students with special needs \_\_\_\_\_
- 24.) Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities as a teacher in New Jersey \_\_\_\_\_

25.) *Are there any other needs you feel that you need support in this upcoming school year that were not addressed above?* \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes (Please write below)

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Background Data:

1.) What is your experience in teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Brand new to teaching, never taught before, and currently have a mentor assigned to me. *Please go to question #2.*

\_\_\_\_\_ New to the School District only. I have taught before in other school districts and do not have a mentor assigned to me. *Please see question below and then continue with question #2.*

\* *How many years have you been teaching?* \_\_\_\_\_

2.) What grade level do you teach? (*Check one box*)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-school
- \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary (K-6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Middle (7-8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ High School (9-12)

3.) You are a \_\_\_\_\_ teacher. (*Check one box*)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Special Education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Regular Education

.....  
Thanks for taking the time to answer this survey.

Please return to:  
Susan E. Barkowski  
H. A. F. Middle School



October 23, 2001

First Year Teachers Survey I

Dear Colleagues:

If you have already completed this survey, thanks for taking the time to complete and return it. If you have not received or completed the survey, let me introduce myself. I am a teacher at the H.A.F. Middle School and working on completing my Master's degree in Supervision and Curriculum Development. Dr. A. and I are working on the district's Teacher Mentoring Program.

The survey should take you less than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation will provide useful data for our district's Teacher Mentoring Program. You can send your completed survey to my school.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the Middle School or Dr. A. at the Curriculum Office located in the High School. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Barkowski  
H.A.F. Middle School

Dr. A.  
Supervisor -- Curriculum Office

Encl.

## Survey I

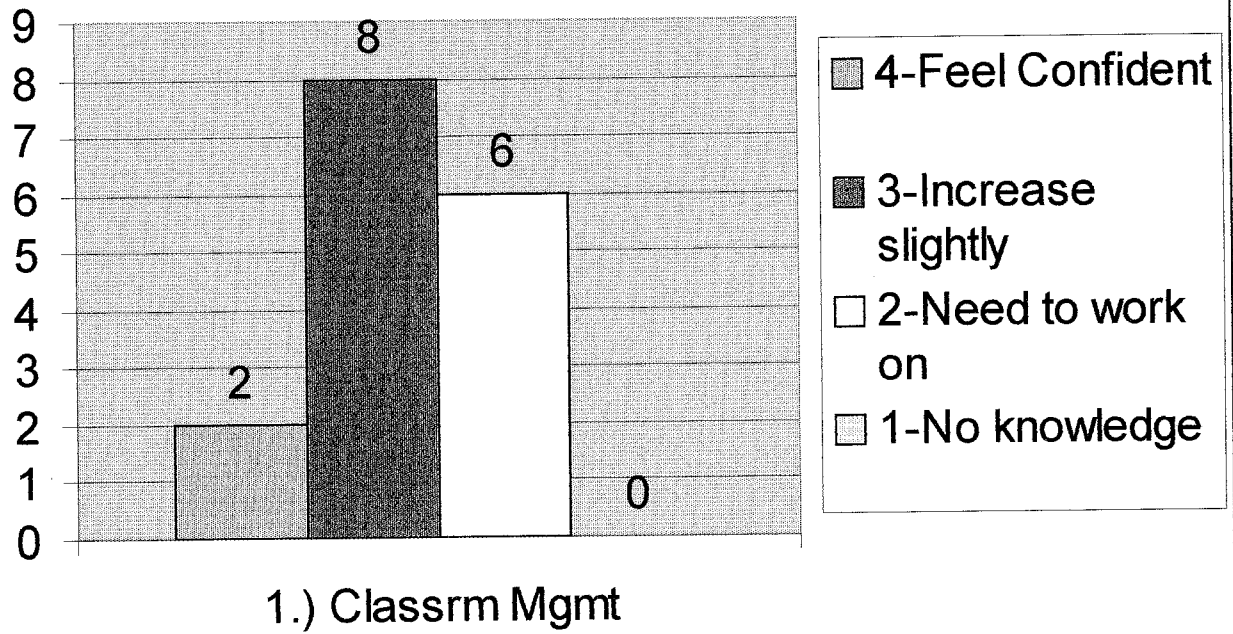
<b>Needs:</b>	<b>4-Feel Confident</b>	<b>3-Increase slightly</b>	<b>2-Need to work on</b>	<b>1-No knowledge</b>	<b><u>Totals:</u></b>
1.) Classrm Mgmt	2	8	6	0	16
2.) Motivating Students	5	8	3	0	16
3.) Relationships Parents	4	7	5	0	16
4.) Relationships Teachers	9	5	2	0	16
5.) Relationships Admin.	7	6	3	0	16
6.) Parent-Tchr. Confer.	1	9	2	4	16
7.) Devel. Lesson Plans	4	10	1	1	16
8.) Better Listener	7	9	0	0	16
9.) Organizing Classrm.	6	7	3	0	16
10.) Developing grade book	6	5	4	1	16
11.) Time Management	6	5	5	0	16
12.) Obtaining Resources	2	11	1	2	16
13.) Obt. Prof. Devel. Hours	3	5	4	4	16
14.) Dif. Levels of Abilities	0	8	7	1	16
15.) Attending CST meetings	1	4	5	6	16
16.) Understanding IEP	2	4	7	3	16
17.) Participating IEP Dev.	1	3	5	7	16
18.) Know. District Policies	4	7	2	3	16
19.) Districts Tchr. Eval.	3	6	4	3	16
20.) Admin. Standard Tests	4	5	4	3	16
21.) Emotional Support	7	6	2	1	16
22.) Evaluating Stud. Progr.	1	10	5	0	16
23.) Students W/ Sp. Needs	1	6	9	0	16
24.) Legal rights in NJ	1	8	6	1	16
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>384</b>

### 25.) Other Needs

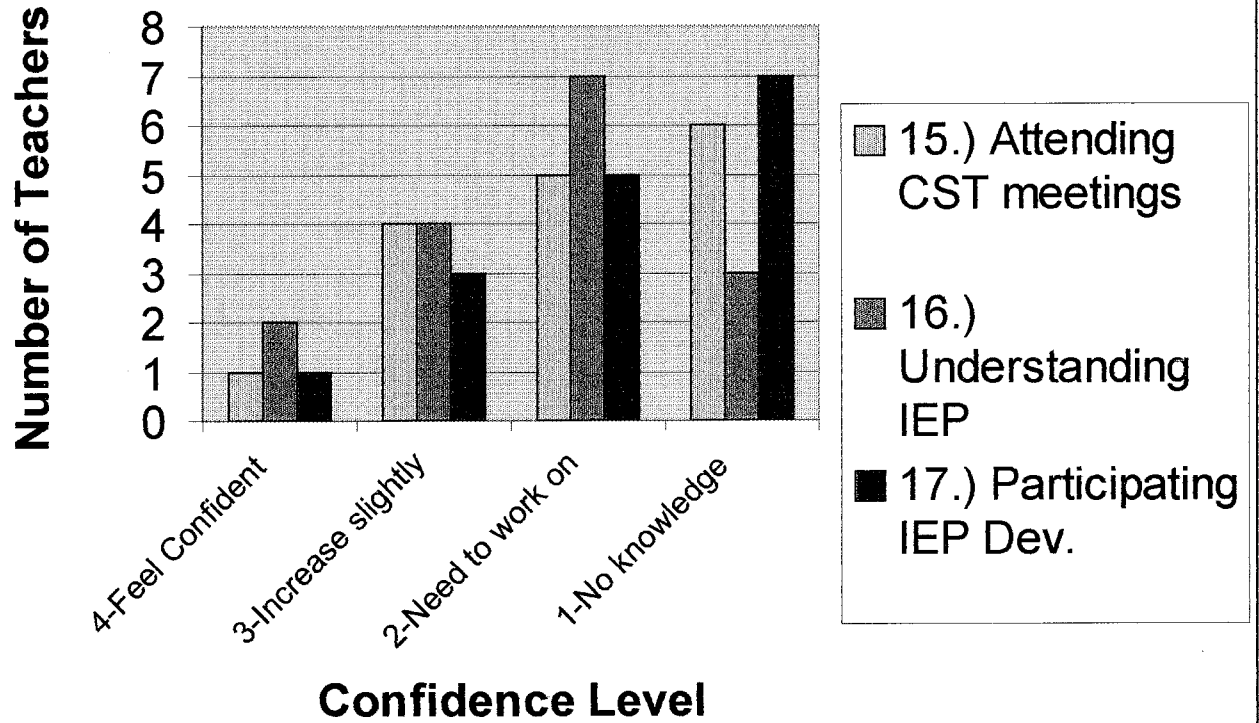
Controlling Paperwork

<b>Grade Level:</b>	<u>Pre-School</u>	<u>Elementary (K-6)</u>	<u>Middle School(7-8)</u>	<u>High School(9-12)</u>
	2	7	4	3
<b>Type of Teacher:</b>	<u>Regular Education</u>		<u>Special Education</u>	
	14		2	

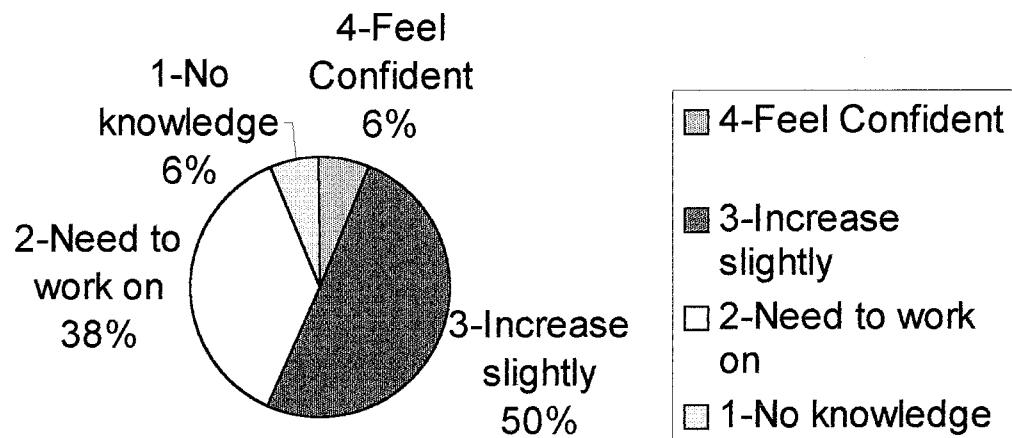
## Classroom Management Survey I



## Special Education Survey I



## SURVEY I -- Teacher Legal Rights in NJ



## Survey I Results

<b>Needs:</b>	<b>4-Feel Confident</b>	<b>3-Increase slightly</b>	<b>2-Need to work on</b>	<b>1-No knowledge</b>	<b>Totals:</b>
1.) Classrm Mgmt	12.50%	50.00%	37.50%	0.00%	100.00%
2.) Motivating Students	31.25%	50.00%	18.75%	0.00%	100.00%
3.) Relationships Parents	25.00%	43.75%	31.25%	0.00%	100.00%
4.) Relationships Teachers	56.25%	31.25%	12.50%	0.00%	100.00%
5.) Relationships Admin.	43.75%	37.50%	18.75%	0.00%	100.00%
6.) Parent-Tchr. Confer.	6.25%	56.25%	12.50%	25.00%	100.00%
7.) Devel. Lesson Plans	25.00%	62.50%	6.25%	6.25%	100.00%
8.) Better Listener	43.75%	56.25%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
9.) Organizing Classrm.	37.50%	43.75%	18.75%	0.00%	100.00%
10.) Developing grade book	37.50%	31.25%	25.00%	6.25%	100.00%
11.) Time Management	37.50%	31.25%	31.25%	0.00%	100.00%
12.) Obtaining Resources	12.50%	68.75%	6.25%	12.50%	100.00%
13.) Obt. Prof. Devel. Hours	18.75%	31.25%	25.00%	25.00%	100.00%
14.) Dif. Levels of Abilities	0.00%	50.00%	43.75%	6.25%	100.00%
15.) Attending CST meetings	6.25%	25.00%	31.25%	37.50%	100.00%
16.) Understanding IEP	12.50%	25.00%	43.75%	18.75%	100.00%
17.) Participating IEP Dev.	6.25%	18.75%	31.25%	43.75%	100.00%
18.) Know. District Policies	25.00%	43.75%	12.50%	18.75%	100.00%
19.) Districts Tchr. Eval.	18.75%	37.50%	25.00%	18.75%	100.00%
20.) Admin. Standard Tests	25.00%	31.25%	25.00%	18.75%	100.00%
21.) Emotional Support	43.75%	37.50%	12.50%	6.25%	100.00%
22.) Evaluating Stud. Progr.	6.25%	62.50%	31.25%	0.00%	100.00%
23.) Students W/ Sp. Needs	6.25%	37.50%	56.25%	0.00%	100.00%
24.) Legal rights in NJ	6.25%	50.00%	37.50%	6.25%	100.00%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>22.66%</b>	<b>42.19%</b>	<b>24.74%</b>	<b>10.42%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Appendix B

Survey II and Results

Teacher Mentoring 2001-2002  
SURVEY II

January 15, 2002

Dear Colleagues:

I am a Special Education teacher at H.A.F. Middle School. I have to complete four projects and a thesis to obtain a Master's Degree in Supervision and Curriculum Development from Rowan University. This survey will be used to obtain data for my thesis, as well as for our district's Teacher Mentoring Program. I tried to make the survey short and it should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. Your participation will increase the success of obtaining useful data by finding out what your specific needs are as a first year teacher. Dr. A. has read and approved the distribution of the survey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at my school. The survey should be completed and returned to me by January 29, 2002.

Since there is no way to identify individual respondents, I will be unable to thank you individually for your cooperation. Please accept this token of my appreciation for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Barkowski  
H.A.F. Middle School  
Encl.



## Needs Assessment for New Teachers Survey II

*Please rate the following questions based on your own needs at the beginning of the school year.*

4. - I feel confident and do not need help or assistance in this area.
3. - I would like to increase my knowledge base slightly in this area.
2. - I would prioritize this area as a need to work on.
1. - I have no knowledge and want to gain as much as possible in this area.

- 1.) Classroom Management \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) Motivating Students \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Developing and maintaining relationships with parents \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Developing and maintaining relationships with other teachers \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) Developing and maintaining relationships with administrators \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.) Parent-Teacher Conferences \_\_\_\_\_
- 7.) Developing daily lesson plans \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.) Becoming a better listener \_\_\_\_\_
- 9.) Organizing my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 10.) Developing and maintaining a grade book \_\_\_\_\_
- 11.) Time management \_\_\_\_\_
- 12.) Obtaining resources and materials for my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 13.) Obtaining Profession Development hours \_\_\_\_\_
- 14.) Addressing the varying levels of student abilities in my classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- 15.) Attending a Child Study Team meeting \_\_\_\_\_
- 16.) Reading and understanding an IEP \_\_\_\_\_
- 17.) Participating in the development of an IEP \_\_\_\_\_
- 18.) Gaining knowledge of my school district's policies and procedures \_\_\_\_\_
- 19.) Understanding my school district's teacher evaluation procedures \_\_\_\_\_
- 20.) Administering standardized achievement tests (GEPA/Stanford 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 21.) Emotional Support \_\_\_\_\_
- 22.) Evaluating student progress \_\_\_\_\_
- 23.) Working with and assisting students with special needs \_\_\_\_\_
- 24.) Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities as a teacher in New Jersey \_\_\_\_\_

25.) *Are there any other needs you feel that you need support in this upcoming school year that were not addressed above?*    \_\_\_\_\_ No    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes (Please write below)

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Open-Ended Questions:

1.) The biggest challenge I faced so far this school year was...

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2.) My mentor has helped me the most this school year by...

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3.) If I could choose **one** area to focus on during my second year of teaching, it would be... (Ex. classroom management, individualized instruction, increasing student time-on-task, etc.)

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4.) I think the biggest challenge I will face during my second year of teaching will be...

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\*\*\* Please continue completing the last page -- #3 \*\*\*

Background Data:

1.) What is your experience in teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ Brand new to teaching, never taught before, and currently have a mentor assigned to me. *Please go to question #2.*

\_\_\_\_\_ New to the Pemberton School District only. I have taught before in other school districts and do not have a mentor assigned to me. *Please see question below and then continue with question #2.*

*\* How many years have you been teaching?* \_\_\_\_\_

2.) What grade level do you teach? (*Check one box*)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-school
- \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary (K-6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Middle (7-8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ High School (9-12)

3.) You are a \_\_\_\_\_ teacher. (*Check one box*)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Special Education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Regular Education

.....  
Thanks for taking the time to answer this survey.

Please return to:  
Susan E. Barkowski  
H.A.F. Middle School

January 28, 2002

Teacher Mentoring  
Survey II

Dear Colleagues:

If you have not turned in your survey, please return it by February 1, 2002. Dr. A. and I will be using the data obtained from the survey for our district's Teacher Mentoring Program. The responses you provide are anonymous. Your participation will increase the success of obtaining useful data as we find out what your specific needs are as a new teacher. This survey will be also used as part of my thesis for Rowan University, where I am currently a graduate student.

The survey is short and should take you less than 10 minutes to complete it. Please return the survey to my school via inter-office mail. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Barkowski  
H.A.F. Middle School

Dr. A.  
Supervisor -- Curriculum Office

Encl.

## SURVEY II

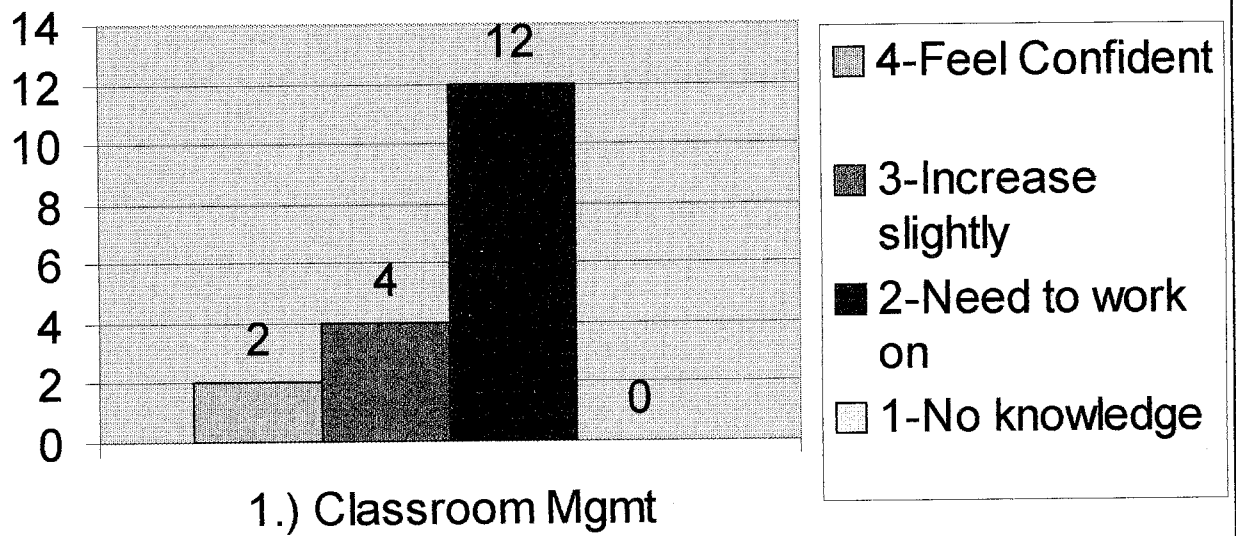
Needs:	4-Feel Confident	3-Increase slightly	2-Need to work on	1-No knowledge	Totals:
1.) Classroom Mgmt	2	4	12	0	18
2.) Motivating Students	5	11	2	0	18
3.) Relationships Parents	4	9	5	0	18
4.) Relationships Teachers	8	9	1	0	18
5.) Relationships Admin.	9	4	5	0	18
6.) Parent-Tchr. Confer.	2	9	6	1	18
7.) Devel. Lesson Plans	6	7	4	1	18
8.) Better Listener	6	11	1	0	18
9.) Organizing Classroom.	3	13	2	0	18
10.) Developing grade book	2	9	4	3	18
11.) Time Management	3	9	5	1	18
12.) Obtaining Resources	3	4	8	3	18
13.) Obt. Prof. Devel. Hours	3	4	8	3	18
14.) Dif. Levels of Abilities	0	9	9	0	18
15.) Attending CST meetings	1	5	5	7	18
16.) Understanding IEP	1	6	6	5	18
17.) Participating IEP Dev.	1	6	4	7	18
18.) Know. District Policies	1	2	11	4	18
19.) Districts Tchr. Eval.	1	5	8	4	18
20.) Admin. Standard. Tests	1	1	7	8	17
21.) Emotional Support	4	10	3	1	18
22.) Evaluating Stud. Progr.	2	9	7	0	18
23.) Students W/ Sp. Needs	1	8	8	1	18
24.) Legal rights in NJ	0	5	9	4	18
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>431</b>

### 25.) Other Needs:

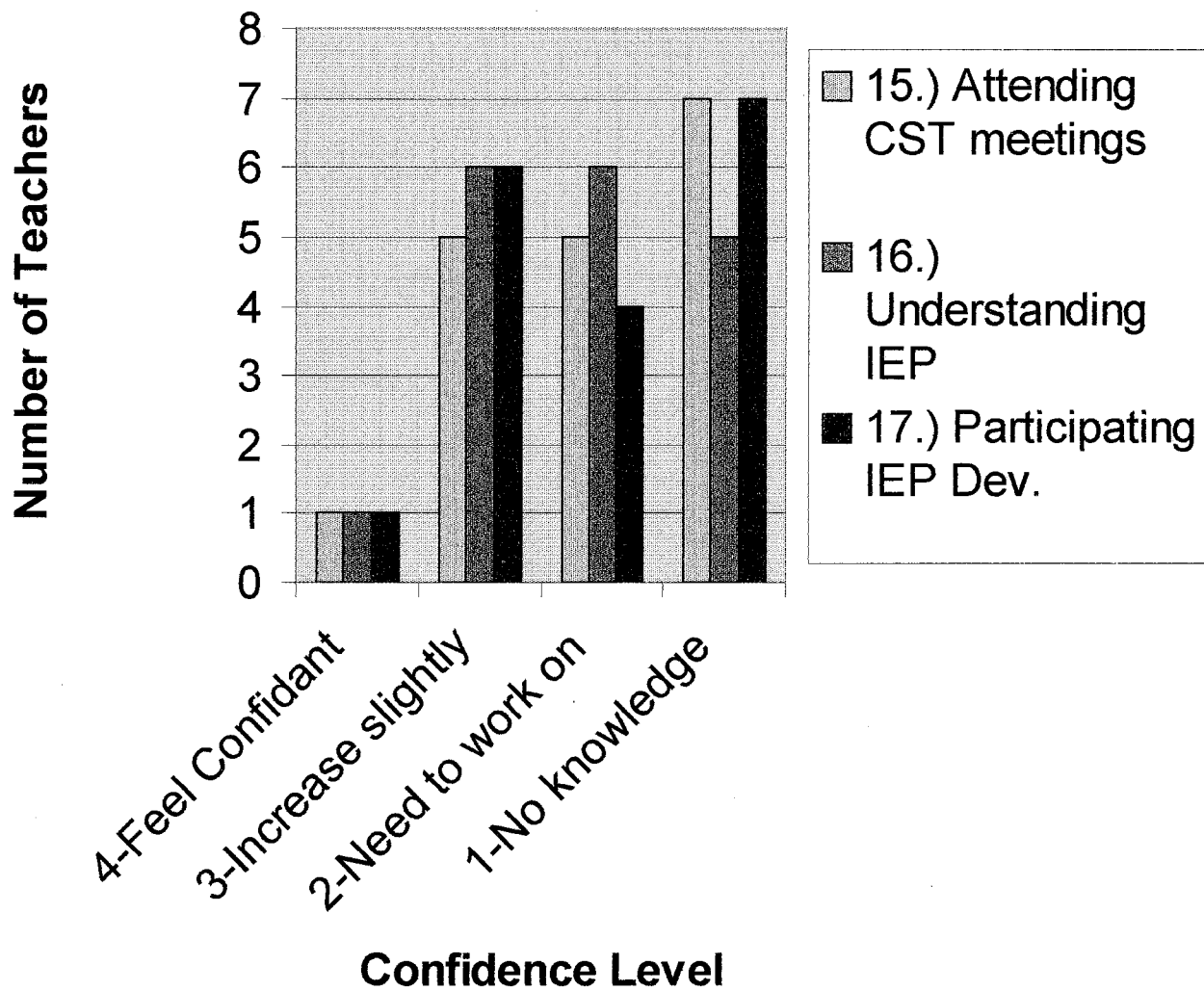
working/communicating w/colleagues

Grade Level:	Pre-School	Elementary (K-6)	Middle School(7-8)	High School(9-12)
	4	5	3	6
Type of Teacher:	Regular Education		Special Education	
	18		0	

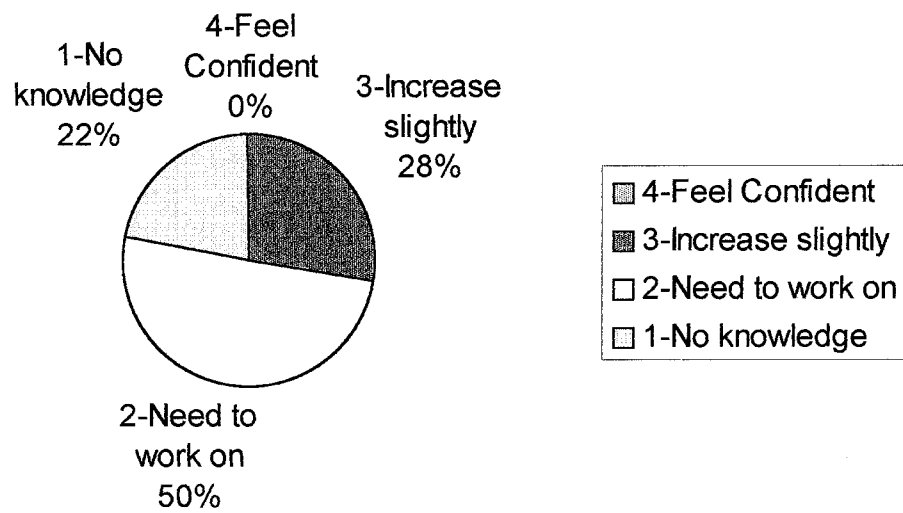
## Classroom Management Survey II



## Special Education Survey II



## Survey II -- Teacher Legal Rights in NJ





## SURVEY II -- Open-Ended Questions:

### Biggest Challenge this Yr.

obtaining resources	2	knowing my rights as a T. - Discipline	1
developing lessons	1	coming back after being sick	1
helping St. become more sociable	1	keeping the students motivated	2
classroom management	4	grade change	1
arranging my classroom	1		
taking on a class mid-year	1		
dealing with parents	1		
personality Diff. Between T/S and S/S	1		
time management	2		
learning school policies esp. beginning of yr.	1		
transferring from one grade to another	1		

### My mentor helped me most:

answering questions	2	preparing for observations	2
observing me	1	learning school procedures	1
providing feedback	3	talking about past experiences	1
giving me lesson plan ideas	3	emotional support	1
supporting my choices	2		
guidance w/everyday problems	3		
helps me read between the lines	1		
great insight on a variety of topics	1		
being genuine and realistic	1		

### Focus on one area 2nd Yr.

increase st. time-on-task	4	knowing my rights as a Teacher	1
developing more activities	2	knowing the rights/obj. of classified S.	1
individualized instruction	4	being more organized	1
assessment issues	1	varying my instructional methods	1
classroom management	5	flowing from one activity to another	1
more interesting ideas for various topics	1		
developing more interesting ideas for learning various topics (lesson plans)	2		
improve the flow of paperwork	1		

### Biggest Challenge my 2nd Yr.

balancing it all	1	finding time for Prof. Dev. Hours	1
keeping myself flexible	2	not becoming too comfortable	1
getting more materials to use	1	cleaning out materials left in a classroom	1
individualized instruction	1	keeping up my standards	1
learning beginning yr. Procedures	1	meeting the indiv. Needs- Sp. Ed. Students	1
continue to meet my teaching goals	1	working with unmotivated students	
improving management skills	1	not sure	2
ordering and categorizing equipment	1		

## Survey II

<b>Needs:</b>	<b>4-Feel Confidant</b>	<b>3-Increase slightly</b>	<b>2-Need to work on</b>	<b>1-No knowledge</b>	<b>Totals:</b>
1.) Classroom Mgmt	11.11%	22.22%	66.67%	0.00%	100.00%
2.) Motivating Students	27.78%	61.11%	11.11%	0.00%	100.00%
3.) Relationships Parents	22.22%	50.00%	27.78%	0.00%	100.00%
4.) Relationships Teachers	44.44%	50.00%	5.56%	0.00%	100.00%
5.) Relationships Admin.	50.00%	22.22%	27.78%	0.00%	100.00%
6.) Parent-Tchr. Confer.	11.11%	50.00%	33.33%	5.56%	100.00%
7.) Devel. Lesson Plans	33.33%	38.89%	22.22%	5.56%	100.00%
8.) Better Listener	33.33%	61.11%	5.56%	0.00%	100.00%
9.) Organizing Classroom.	16.67%	72.22%	11.11%	0.00%	100.00%
10.) Developing grade book	11.11%	50.00%	22.22%	16.67%	100.00%
11.) Time Management	16.67%	50.00%	27.78%	5.56%	100.00%
12.) Obtaining Resources	16.67%	22.22%	44.44%	16.67%	100.00%
13.) Obt. Prof. Devel. Hours	16.67%	22.22%	44.44%	16.67%	100.00%
14.) Dif. Levels of Abilities	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	100.00%
15.) Attending CST meetings	5.56%	27.78%	27.78%	38.89%	100.00%
16.) Understanding IEP	5.56%	33.33%	33.33%	27.78%	100.00%
17.) Participating IEP Dev.	5.56%	33.33%	22.22%	38.89%	100.00%
18.) Know. District Policies	5.56%	11.11%	61.11%	22.22%	100.00%
19.) Districts Tchr. Eval.	5.56%	27.78%	44.44%	22.22%	100.00%
20.) Admin. Standard. Tests	5.88%	5.88%	41.18%	47.06%	100.00%
21.) Emotional Support	22.22%	55.56%	16.67%	5.56%	100.00%
22.) Evaluating Stud. Progr.	11.11%	50.00%	38.89%	0.00%	100.00%
23.) Students W/ Sp. Needs	5.56%	44.44%	44.44%	5.56%	100.00%
24.) Legal rights in NJ	0.00%	27.78%	50.00%	22.22%	100.00%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>16.01%</b>	<b>39.21%</b>	<b>32.48%</b>	<b>12.30%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Biographical Data

Name	Susan E. Barkowski
Undergraduate	Bachelor of Science School of Business Rutgers University Camden, NJ  Rowan College Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification Glassboro, NJ
Graduate	Master of Arts Supervision and Curriculum Development Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
Present Occupation	Special Education Teacher