

MENTORING MOMENTS: AUTHENTIC LEARNING FOR NTIP TEACHERS & MENTORS

Making NTIP Authentic

What does authentic learning look like for a beginning teacher (or any teacher)?

Through our ongoing research and board visits with beginning teachers, mentors, principals and board teams a key emerging theme is that opportunities for new teachers to personalize their learning is a critical component of a successful NTIP. As the chart below summarizes, authentic learning can help a beginning teacher view NTIP as something they can collaboratively construct as opposed to something that is “done” to them.

Traditional Professional Learning	Authentic Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Outside-In Reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inside-Out Transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Top Down Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collegial Involvement in Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ System Centred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Student Centred
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Goals for learning determined by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teachers determine their own learning goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge Consumption by individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge Construction by collaborative teams

Meeting Diverse Learning Needs via a Menu of Learning Designs

One of the changes since the inception of NTIP in 2006 is the increasing numbers of beginning teachers experiencing a “blended entry” into the profession including multiple years of occasional and long term occasional teaching prior to becoming a permanent hire.

Looking at NTIP through the lens of authentic learning means the program might not look the same for every beginning teacher. For example a “new” 1st year permanent hire who has 7 years of daily and long term occasional teaching experience may not have the same NTIP learning goals or needs regarding classroom management as a recent faculty graduate entering their first year of long term occasional teaching.

Offering a menu of professional learning through NTIP allows for voice, choice and personalized construction of learning based on authentic learning opportunities directly connected to the “real world” classroom experiences and learning goals of each individual new teacher. On page 2 you will see some “illustrative examples” of what a menu of learning designs could like for both NTIP teachers and their mentors.

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Learning Goal of NTIP Teacher

- *Improve my ability to provide meaningful feedback to students about their learning*

Guiding Ideas

- *Through NTIP, flexible use of a number of joint release days is provided to support learning and collaboration between beginning teachers and mentors*
- *While all of the learning designs on the menu have a collaborative component, individual NTIP teachers select the “offerings” and “portions” on the menu that best meet their authentic learning needs*

Possible NTIP Learning Menu

SELECTION #1 **Classroom Observation & Debriefing**

- Beginning teachers observe the classroom of their mentors and/or mentors observe beginning teachers in action in their own classroom
- Observation is followed by collaborative debriefing and action planning

SELECTION #2 **Demonstration Classroom Learning**

- New teacher observes mentor(s) teach OR new teacher and mentor observe another classroom together, followed by a debriefing conversation

SELECTION #3 **Co-planning / Co-teaching**

- Beginning teachers and mentors collaboratively plan and teach a lesson (or a series of lessons) together followed by debriefing, reflection and a continued cycle of collaboration

SELECTION #4 **Collaboratively Assessing Student Work**

- Beginning teachers and mentors assess student work together in order to help develop consistent understanding of the standards of achievement and inform their instructional practices

SELECTION #5 **Networked learning within or beyond the school site**

- Beginning teachers and mentors form ongoing communities of practice with colleagues (both new and experienced) who have a similar grade or subject assignment and/or similar learning goals
- Networked learning environment may be face to face or online or a blended model of both

SELECTION #6 **Choice from a variety of professional learning sessions**

- Beginning teachers and mentors participate together in a professional learning session related to their learning goals, followed by debriefing and action planning

Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) – An Example of Authentic Learning in Action

Perhaps the ultimate example of authentic learning is the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program. Each year the Ministry provides TLLP funding for proposals from teacher led teams seeking to examine, learn and share the evidence-based instructional practices they are engaging in with their students. This year over 100 TLLP teams are deepening their professional learning and sharing with colleagues in their schools, across their districts and even beyond Ontario. We invite you to visit the [TLLP section](#) of the Mentoring Moments Ning to learn more about their projects. Applications for the 2014 – 15 school year are due to boards November 15th and are available at: <http://mentoringmoments.ning.com/group/tllp-palpe/page/tllplaunch>.

