

MENTORING MOMENTS: NTIP BOARD VISITS – SHARING LEARNING

An Opportunity for Learning

The Teaching Policy and Standards Branch (TPSB) in collaboration with Regional Education Officers were privileged to conduct 15 NTIP Board visits from March to May 2012 as part of the 5 year visit cycle.

The goal of these board visits is to provide direct and timely input regarding the implementation of NTIP to both TPSB and Board teams.

How could NTIP be even more effectively implemented?

Each visit consisted of the following core elements:

- Focus Groups of current NTIP Teachers, NTIP “Graduates” (3rd or 4th year teachers), and Mentors
- Focus Groups of Principals
- Learning focussed conversations with Board NTIP Coordinators and NTIP Superintendents

The emerging themes below reflect a summary of our learning from these visits and are intended to be a starting point for conversations amongst board teams as they plan their NTIP for 2012 – 2013.

What We Learned

Multiple Models of Mentorship

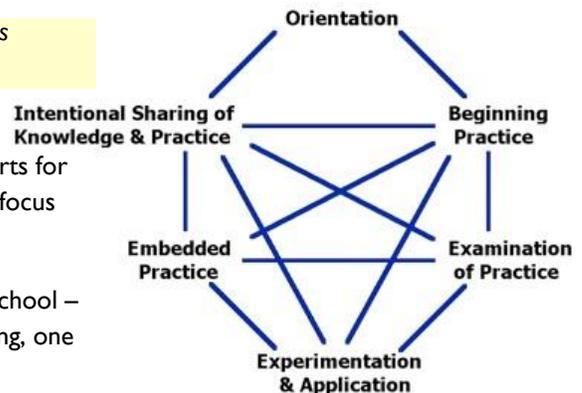
Imagine a school (or board) where you ask the question who mentors beginning teachers and the answer is everyone.

A one to one mentor match is powerful for many beginning teachers. That said, building a web of multiple mentoring supports for every beginning teacher was the strongest theme of our board focus groups.

Components of this mentoring web could include a variety of school – based mentoring supports (e.g., broker mentor, group mentoring, one to one match, in addition to informal mentors).

Multiple mentors outside of school could include Demonstration Classroom teachers and networked communities of practice (e.g., a number of new kindergarten teachers meet in the classroom of an experienced kindergarten teacher or Grade 9 applied English teachers visit each others with their school-based mentor and then continue to collaborate via online conferencing).

Multiple models of mentorship allow each beginning teacher to build a strong web of support that is personal to their learning needs and goals.



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Classroom Observation & Debriefing (e.g., Demonstration Classrooms) Networked Communities of Practice

Directly connected with multiple models of mentorship, the opportunity for beginning teachers (and mentors) to observe colleagues with a similar assignment teach students and then to be able to debrief and action plan with the demonstration teacher was a powerful model of learning cited in almost every focus group.

Multiple Models of Mentorship

**Classroom Observation & Debriefing / Demonstration Classrooms
Networked Communities of Practice (Face to Face and Online)**



In addition, many beginning teachers expressed a desire to form ongoing communities of practice (both face to face and online) with colleagues (both new and experienced) who have a similar grade or subject assignment.

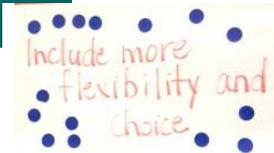
Differentiated Professional Learning (Choice and Voice) Multiple Long Term Occasional Assignments

Many beginning teachers at our focus groups expressed a desire for choice from a menu of professional learning opportunities.

(e.g., “joint release days” to learn collaboratively with mentors, classroom observation, ability to use release days with more than one mentor etc.)

Differentiated Professional Learning (choice / voice)

Multiple, multiple LTO prior to NTIP status



In addition, large numbers of beginning teachers are experiencing a “blended entry” into the profession including multiple years of occasional and long term occasional teaching. Their diverse learning needs may not be met at a “one size fits all” workshop (e.g., the teacher who has done 7 years of LTO teaching may not have the same learning needs about classroom management as a brand new faculty graduate).

Choice in both learning method and content was a strong theme. Providing choice and voice in learning can help a beginning teacher view NTIP as something they can collaboratively construct rather than something that is “done” to them.

Mentoring for Mentors

Who mentors the mentors?

Mentorship consistently emerges as the most valued aspect of NTIP by beginning teachers. Opportunities beyond “basic sessions” for mentors to collaborate with each other and explore and refine their craft were consistently mentioned in our focus groups.

In this spirit of mentorship, please visit our Mentoring Moments NING at <http://mentoringmoments.ning.com> Check out our growing number of mentoring modules and share your ideas about how this tool can best be used for supporting and connecting NTIP board teams on an ongoing basis. We look forward to continuing our learning!