

ILLINOIS NEW PRINCIPAL MENTORING PROGRAM



END-YEAR SURVEY REPORT

AUGUST 2009



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I. INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2008, the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program (NPMP) partnered with ECRA Group, Inc., a leader in educational research, to conduct NPMP surveys in the spirit of continuous quality improvement. An initial survey took place in October which included only new principals. The fall survey was followed by a New Principal / Mentor / Provider Survey at mid-year. The final survey was administered in the spring of 2009. This report contains the results of the final survey. The purpose of each survey was as follows:

New Principal Survey:

- To assess the quality and effectiveness of the NPMP
- To identify the areas in which new principals focused their leadership time
- To determine the major aspects of school leadership which received the most focus when working with mentors
- To determine the amount of time new principals spent with mentors discussing/learning/or supporting specific professional learning areas
- To allow new principals an opportunity to comment and reflect on the NPMP

Mentor Survey:

- To assess the quality and effectiveness of the NPMP
- To identify the areas in which new principals focused their leadership time
- To determine the major aspects of school leadership which received the most focus when working with principals
- To determine the amount of time new principals spent with mentors discussing/learning/or supporting specific professional learning areas
- To allow mentors an opportunity to comment and reflect on the NPMP

Superintendent Survey:

- To assess the quality and effectiveness of the NPMP
- To determine the areas of leadership development where the NPMP contributed significantly to the growth of new principals and where they may benefit from additional mentoring
- To allow superintendents an opportunity to comment and reflect on the NPMP

Provider Survey:

- To assess the quality and effectiveness of the NPMP
- To determine the level and quality of preparation and training for mentors
- To determine the level and quality of support provided by the NPMP Providers and Program manager
- To allow providers an opportunity to reflect and comment on the NPMP

Sample Demographics: New Principals

Approximately 200 new principals participated in the survey. Demographics of the sample are tabled below.

Gender

Percent Male	Percent Female
45	55

School Setting

Setting	Percent of Principals
Rural	40
Suburban	45
Urban	15

Student Population

Number of Students	Percent of Principals
Under 100	4
100-500	58
500-1000	28
1000-2000	3
More than 2000	6

Type of School

Grade Levels	Percent of Principals
Early Childhood	3
Elementary	48
Middle	15
Junior High	5
Secondary	17
K-12	1
Other	12

Race/Ethnicity

	Percent of Principals
White	84
Black	11
Hispanic	3
Other	2

Sample Demographics: Mentors

Approximately 200 mentors participated in the survey. Demographics of the sample are tabled below.

Gender

Percent Male	Percent Female
51	49

Current Position

Setting	Percent of Mentors
Principal	31
Retired Principal	52
Other	17

Level of School(s) Served

Grade Levels	Percent of Mentors*
Early Childhood	24
Elementary	67
Middle	34
Junior High	27
Secondary	30
K-12	22
Other	8

Race/Ethnicity

	Percent of Mentors
White	96
Black	3
Hispanic	0
Other	1

**Percentages do not add to 100 because mentors were allowed multiple responses*

Sample Demographics: Providers

It should be noted that specific *identification* information was collected from providers, but the provider as an entity – not an individual – did not suit itself to collecting demographic information similar to that of the new principals and mentors. The following information is available in list form upon request from the NPMP: Provider Name / Provider Contact / # of Mentors Recruited 2008-9 / # of Mentors Available to Provide Services / # of New Principals Placed 2008-2009.

II. FINDINGS

1.

The New Principal Mentoring Program was generally well received by all participants and is a high quality program. Across all the surveys, remarks were positive about the major aspects of the programs and participants, including the mentors, principals, superintendents and providers all had highly complimentary things to say about each other.

2.

New principals began the year intending to focus on several areas of leadership with their mentors and in their professional learning plans. Their predictions at the beginning of the year regarding the areas of leadership with which mentorship would be helpful were in many cases correct. For example, new principals were aware that budget management, time management, data-driven decision making, and dealing with specific laws and regulations such as No Child Left Behind or implementing Response to Intervention (“RTI”) plans would be challenging. Mentors assisted greatly in these areas, and in others which were a greater challenge than many had anticipated. For example, few principals truly understood how difficult it would be to implement change in an environment which may have had the same leadership – and same culture – for a long period of time. Mentors were helpful in leading principals through these types of situations as well as those that were predicted to be challenging and included in professional learning plans.

3.

New principals focused their leadership efforts primarily on inter-personal relationships and communication. They worked on establishing open lines of communication with and among teachers, staff and students, as well as creating a sense of teamwork and community in the schools. Many came to learn how important it is to understand and work within an existing school culture before taking steps to establish a new culture. They took steps to create school-wide goals and kept these goals prominent in the work of the school.

4.

Mentors assisted principals in several areas, but the most time was spent in relationship-building and communication. Mentors did assist new principals with specific school operation issues, such as budgeting and time and resource management, but their advice was most sought in building and maintaining positive relationships and collaborating with teachers and staff, shaping a common vision of teaching and learning, understanding an existing culture and building a new culture to support the school’s mission, vision and core beliefs.

5.

Participants were generally satisfied with the quality of mentorship provided under the NPMP. They felt that mentors were well-trained and offered pertinent and thoughtful advice. Mentees, in turn, were receptive and thankful for the guidance of their mentors. The most frequent suggestion for improvement in the program was to allow for flexibility and tailoring of the program to meet the individual needs of the new principals, both in terms of scheduling and content. Many participants had difficulty in meeting the 50 hour requirement. Others were not in need of as much mentoring because of prior positions held at an administrative level. Several participants felt that a further year of mentoring, in a less-formal structure, would be beneficial.

III. EVIDENCE

Part 1: Focus of Leadership Efforts

New principals and mentors were asked to report on the areas of leadership in which the new principals focused the greatest amounts of their time to improve teaching and learning over their first year. Their responses are depicted in the following table:

New Principals' Areas of Focus During their First Year

Area of Focus	Percent who Chose this Area as an Area of Focus
Establishing open lines of communication with and among teachers, staff and students.	18
Becoming aware of the operational details and social undercurrents in the running of the school and using this information to address current and potential problems.	17
Establishing clear school wide goals and keeping those goals prominent in the work of the school.	14
Fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	13
Being involved directly in the design, alignment and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	12
Showing that I care and am aware of the personal lives of teachers, staff and students.	8
Minimizing issues and influences that would detract from teaching time or teachers' focus on student learning.	7
Adapting my leadership behavior to situational needs and being open to dissenting opinions.	7
Communication and operating from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	3
Recognizing and celebrating accomplishments and acknowledging failures.	2

Mentors were then asked to report on what were the areas of focus for their principal-mentees in ways to improve teaching and learning over the past year. Their responses are depicted in the following table:

New Principals' Areas of Focus During their First Year as Reported by Mentors

Area of Focus	Percent who Chose this Area as an Area of Focus
Becoming aware of the operational details and social undercurrents in the running of the school and using this information to address current and potential problems.	53
Establishing open lines of communication with and among teachers, staff and students.	43
Establishing clear school wide goals and keeping those goals prominent in the work of the school.	41
Fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	35
Being involved directly in the design, alignment and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	31
Adapting leadership behavior to situational needs and being open to dissenting opinions.	28
Minimizing issues and influences that would detract from teaching time or teachers' focus on student learning.	27
Communicating and operating from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	23
Showing that they care and are aware of the personal lives of teachers, staff and students.	10
Recognizing and celebrating accomplishments and acknowledging failures.	9

Providers and Mentors were further asked to assess the areas in which each believed the mentors were best suited to provide advice to a new principal. Their responses are depicted in the following tables:

Mentors' Self-Assessment of Personal Leadership Strengths

Area of Focus	Percent who felt they were best suited to mentor in this area
Developing and sustaining a positive school culture and instructional program.	82
Developing and sustaining a collaborative professional learning community.	63
Making data-driven decisions that focus on the improvement of student performance.	53
Facilitating a vision of learning within a learning community.	49
Effectively managing the operations, resources and safety of a school.	34
Positively influencing the greater political, social, economic, legal and cultural context of learning communities to effectively advocate for students.	20

*Percents total greater than 100 because of multiple responses.

Providers' Assessment of Leadership Strengths of Mentors

Area of Focus	Percent who felt they were best suited to mentor in this area
Effectively managing the operations, resources and safety of a school.	29
Developing and sustaining a collaborative professional learning community.	28
Making data-driven decisions that focus on the improvement of student performance.	12
Facilitating a vision of learning within a learning community.	12
Developing and sustaining a positive school culture and instructional program	12
Positively influencing the greater political, social, economic, legal and cultural context of learning communities to effectively advocate for students.	8

Mentors brought to the table numerous strengths and experiences. Providers took steps to provide mentors with the strategies and training necessary to effectively use their strengths and experience to guide principals through their first year. Providers felt they were most successful in training of mentors in evaluation tactics and providing networking opportunities. Relationships, between mentors and principals and relationships being built by new principals in their own schools was also an area of focus in training of which the providers were very satisfied.

To improve training for mentors, providers suggested that training should reflect the specific needs of the principals and the mentors. Common themes in training that the providers would like to implement to a greater extent include time management, data-driven decision making, curriculum issues, legal issues and teacher evaluations. Providers would also like to provide more opportunities for principals to network with each other.

Part 2: Mentorship Focus

Mentors and Principals were asked to reflect on the areas in which the mentors spent the most time working with new principals to improve their abilities to be effective school leaders.

Principal / Mentor Focus as Reported by Mentors

Area of Focus	Most Time Spent, % Who Chose Item	Least Time Spent, % Who Chose Item
Maintaining a collegial and collaborative relationship with teachers and staff conducive to participatory/distributive decision-making.	62	9
Building a school culture to support the school's vision, mission and core beliefs.	55	6
Managing school operations to support the school's mission, vision, core beliefs and improvement priorities. (This includes operations such as budgeting and resource management, staffing, scheduling).	47	20
Shaping a common vision of teaching and learning.	28	17
Developing and implementing a school improvement plan that sets a strategic direction and expected results for improving teaching and learning.	26	20
Aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with rigorous student performance standards at each grade level and for each content area.	18	38
Creating a school mission, vision and set of core beliefs that support continuous learning for both students and adults.	17	29
Communicating regularly with all parents about positive and negative classroom and individual student learning issues.	13	41
Using disaggregated data to identify student learning needs that require changes in teaching practices.	13	46
Aligning school policies and procedures with the school's mission, vision and core beliefs.	13	24
Using disaggregated data in analyzing and reporting student learning progress.	8	49

Principal / Mentor Focus as Reported by Principals

Area of Focus	Most Time Spent, % Who Chose Item	Least Time Spent, % Who Chose Item
Maintaining a collegial and collaborative relationship with teachers and staff conducive to participatory/distributive decision-making.	58	8
Managing school operations to support the school's mission, vision, core beliefs and improvement priorities. (This includes operations such as budgeting and resource management, staffing, scheduling).	43	12
Building a school culture to support the school's vision, mission and core beliefs.	41	12
Developing and implementing a school improvement plan that sets a strategic direction and expected results for improving teaching and learning.	23	19
Shaping a common vision of teaching and learning.	17	11
Aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with rigorous student performance standards at each grade level and for each content area.	15	36
Using disaggregated data in analyzing and reporting student learning progress.	12	41
Communicating regularly with all parents about positive and negative classroom and individual student learning issues.	12	28
Creating a school mission, vision and set of core beliefs that support continuous learning for both students and adults.	12	30
Using disaggregated data to identify student learning needs that require changes in teaching practices.	10	34
Aligning school policies and procedures with the school's mission, vision and core beliefs.	9	20

In matching principals and mentors, providers felt that the most important factors included: location of the mentors and principals; mentor strengths and experiences in comparison with the specific needs of the new principals; and the personality and temperament of each. Second-rated factors included: Openness on the part of the principal to accept mentorship along with willingness on the part of the mentor to assist the new principals with their individual needs; personality and compatibility of each; proximity and flexibility in schedules.

As providers were unable to observe the majority of interactions between principals and mentors, they provided relationship-building strategies to the mentors and principals. Providers described strategies such as cognitive coaching, reflective questioning and a focus on problem solving. Others required reflective statements throughout the year. Several mentioned opportunities to discuss progress at meetings and ongoing communication.

Providers instituted different methods for assuring that the appropriate topics were addressed by mentors. Quarterly meetings with mentors were held by some providers, at which time they identified ways they could share experiences with new principals and encourage the new principals to develop and implement their own strategies to make data driven decisions. Others identified “hot topics” or came up with lists of common initiatives that were addressed in collaboration with new principals. Others still provided professional development opportunities to train principals in several areas. A few mentioned that they encouraged mentors and principals to attend such training together. Other providers focused on their own communication with mentors as opportunities to assure that mentors were effectively supporting the new principals.

Providers used meetings with mentors as opportunities to discuss methods by which mentors can assist principals in becoming instructional leaders. Others provided professional development programs, both for mentors and for principals, specifically in this area.

Providers discussed with mentors ways to encourage new principals to use their staff, community and students to develop and influence their decision making processes and increase collaboration in the schools. Others provided professional development in collaborative techniques for new principals and, as with other training opportunities, encouraged mentors to attend with new principals. Others focused on encouraging the mentors to model collaboration in their own work.

Part 3: Professional Learning

Mentors and Principals were asked to indicate how often they engaged together in discussion/learning/support in professional learning areas. Their responses are as follows:

Scale of Ratings 0,1,2,3

Professional Learning Area	Level of Engagement in area as rated by New Principal	Level of Engagement in area as rated by Mentor
Completing a standards-based assessment of the principal’s leadership performance.	1.40	2.55
Using the standards-based assessment to develop a professional learning plan.	1.30	2.59
Supporting and monitoring the principal’s professional learning.	2.22	3.49
Identifying professional development resources that were relevant to the principal’s professional learning needs.	2.11	3.46
Creating a network of colleagues who could support the principal in his or her professional learning.	1.90	3.24

- Areas of greater levels of engagement / opportunities (3.00 and above)
- Areas of moderate levels of engagement / opportunities (2.00 to 2.99)
- Areas of lower levels of engagement opportunities (below 2.00)

Mentors indicated a greater amount of time spent on all of the professional learning areas than did new principals.

Professional Learning Plans:

Principals reported that they addressed several important issues in their professional learning plans. Mentors assisted principals in personal relationship-based endeavors, such as creating effective communication across stakeholder groups, effective leadership, encouraging staff in their day-to-day work as well as professional development. Principals are committed to understanding the culture of the school and the district in which they worked and being key contributors to improving the quality of education.

To further their effectiveness as leaders, principals elicited help from mentors in learning effective time management skills. They sought ideas for ways to collaborate with staff and create a team atmosphere. Mentors assisted new principals in developing conflict resolution strategies as well as learning to work with faculty and staff to create positive learning environments. They helped principals use data to make decisions, align curriculum standards with the school and district's vision and mission, promote research based instructional practices, and lay groundwork for successful RTI implementation. Mentors assisted principals with various other situations and obstacles in their leadership roles as well.

Mentors reported similar issues to those listed by principals as areas of focus in professional learning plans. Mentors reported that one of the most common areas addressed in the professional learning plans was communication, including communication with students, parents and staff as well as other district administrators and understanding and building upon current school cultures.

Providers discussed with mentors ways to support new principals in their efforts to develop their professional learning plans and how to best challenge the new principals to reach beyond their comfort zones and develop a vision for their own improvement and professional growth. Mentors also worked with principals to develop agendas so that specific areas of concern were addressed. Providers then also provided professional development in the most common areas of need for principals.

Areas in which new principals learned the most:

A large portion of the principals interviewed mentioned communication and leadership strategies as areas in which they learned the most this year. Several realized that collaboration between themselves and teachers in developing curriculum, changes in policies, and culture of the schools lead to greater enthusiasm and involvement from all stakeholders. Several recognized that it was the sense of ownership which develops in collaborative planning that allows teachers to not only be content with change but excited about implementing new procedures or methods, and allows the principal to be viewed as a true leader.

Many of the principals entered into turbulent working atmospheres at the start of the year in their new positions. Some had to make difficult decisions, often involving firing of staff or changes in policies or curriculum. Some realized that it was necessary to become accustomed to the current culture of the school before instituting changes, but that open communication and direct, confident leadership made implementation of necessary changes more productive.

Mentors reported that the strides principals made generally had to do with their individual challenges, whether in terms of their own areas for professional growth or resulting from their new job environments. An example is an individual who filled the position of a well-liked principal, creating immediate resentment among some teachers and staff. This principal had to win over the school with honest and consistent leadership, which he or she was able to do, in part with help from the mentor.

Many of the mentors focused on the new principals' developing abilities to handle difficult situations, whether in teacher evaluations, disputes within the schools or disputes or other intense situations with parents or students. Many new principals needed assistance from mentors the first time dealing with confrontations or crises. Summoning the leadership skills necessary in these times seems to be an area in which mentors are able to provide support.

Principals also made strides in developing relationships with teachers and implementing positive change, over time, in school culture. Principals picked up on organizational strategies from the mentors. Implementing change in a change-resistant environment was a challenge that many of the principals faced and were able to overcome as well.

The most praised improvements in new principal performance by mentors were in their leadership abilities. Mentors highlighted the growth of principals from one-sided and "shotgun" leadership to collaborative problem solving, creating a perception of ownership by teachers and staff alike, and leading the schools toward a positive educational vision.

Providers indicated that the strength of the relationships developed between principals and mentors has contributed significantly to the new principals' growth. Decision making, time management, evaluations, budgeting and personnel issues were all other areas mentioned by providers as areas in which new principals grew in the program. Providers also discussed ways in which new principals grew in their professional relationships.

Evidence of such growth was found in surveys, reflective responses and discussions with new principals and mentors. Providers also listed as evidence of their success in the program in that new principals were often retained for the upcoming year.

Part 4: Reflections of the Mentoring Experience

New principals and mentors were asked to reflect and report on the interactions they had with their mentors or mentees, respectively, over the year. The respondents were asked to list the three most true and least true statements. Results are tabled below:

New Principals' Experience and Interactions with Mentors

Means of Interaction	Most True %	Least True %
My mentor was always there for me when I needed support.	21	2
My mentor helped me to understand the big picture of what a principal needs to know and be able to do.	14	6
The time spent with my mentor added value to my work as a school leader.	14	2
My mentor shared many useful tips what shortened my learning curve.	14	4
My mentor was flexible in meeting my schedule.	10	2
My mentor coached me through some difficult times.	10	7
My mentor helped me to think differently about how to approach issues.	9	7
I called on my mentor regularly for support.	7	22
Now a week went by without some contact with my mentor.	2	25
I wish my mentor could have spent more time at my school.	2	23

Mentors' Experience and Interactions with New Principals

Means of Interaction	Most True %	Least True %
I helped this new principal to understand the big picture of what a school leader needs to know and be able to do.	47	19
I was always there for the new principal when he/she needed my support.	40	8
The time I spent with this new principal added value to his or her work as a school leader.	40	3
I helped this new principal to think differently about how to approach issues.	39	19
I shared many useful tips that shortened this new principal's learning curve.	34	34
I was flexible in meeting this new principal's schedule.	31	8
I coached this new principal through some difficult times.	30	32
This new principal called on me regularly for support.	18	58
I wish I could have spent more time at this new principal's school.	12	59
Not a week went by without some contact with this new principal.	10	65

New Principals' Further Reflections

Question	Yes	No	I Don't Know
Do you wish you could have a mentor next year?	39%	45%	16%
Has your mentoring experience made it more likely that you will continue to serve as a principal for the next five years or longer?	74%	11%	15%

Monitoring of Mentoring Program

Providers held periodic formal meetings with mentors as well as informal discussions. Providers requested feedback from mentors on a routine basis as well, often through email correspondence. Some providers sent surveys and/or evaluations to principals to document and assess their progress with the mentors. Still others held meetings with both mentors and principals to discuss several areas of the mentoring program, and collected reflective data from or had informal conversations with principals during these meetings.

Providers attempted to create positive relationships with district leaders or superintendents to further monitor the mentor program and make it as effective as possible. Many made personal visits to superintendents, and continued to build relationships through phone calls and emails. Mentors were encouraged to meet with superintendents as well. Communication with district leadership was emphasized by nearly all provider recipients, either as a current practice or as an area to be improved upon.

Second Year of Mentoring:

Those principals that favored the idea of having a mentor the second year viewed the mentor/mentee relationship as collaborative. While they did not necessarily feel that there should be a required minimum time commitment, having the guidance of an experienced principal as an advisor is beneficial to many. Some feel it helpful to have someone outside of their school or district to bounce ideas off of.

Those that did not wish to have a mentor during their second year as principal felt that they had gotten what they could out of the program. They felt confident in their ability lead their schools and did not believe the mentor relationship was necessary or would be beneficial. Many of these individuals had support networks in their own colleagues, whether formal or informal. Others felt that a formal mentorship program is not necessary as they have already developed rapport with their mentors and could easily call upon them if necessary.

Continuing as Principal:

Many mentees said they will continue to work as a principal but it was not necessarily because of the mentoring experience. Many commented that the mentoring experience was very beneficial but it is mainly other factors that weigh in on their career decisions. No one said that the mentorship relationship dissuaded them from continuing on in their positions. If the experience affected their decisions, it was in a positive manner.

Many new principals did comment on how the mentoring experience helped them through some of the adversity and difficult situations they faced as first year principals. It also helped them to acquire effective leadership strategies and to have a positive learning experience. Others mentioned that their mentors truly helped them develop the confidence they needed to get through their first years.

Areas in which New Principals Would Benefit from Additional Mentoring:

The largest areas in which principals would like to receive additional mentoring support are data analysis strategies and how data can be effectively used to make improvements to the curriculum. They would like further assistance in issues involving curriculum development and curriculum alignment as well.

Principals also indicated they would like further guidance in budgeting issues, education and special education law, and guidance in finding methods to create positive relationships with various members of the learning community. Principals asked mentors for advice in methods to encourage parent and community involvement, creating techniques in conflict resolution, and dealing with hiring/firing and other often difficult personnel decisions.

Many of the mentors mentioned data-driven decision making and planning as areas in which the principals could benefit from additional support. Mentors also frequently listed time management, budgeting, and increasing collaboration and shared vision among teachers and staff as areas where principals may still need guidance. Some felt that the principals were already well on their way to being exemplary leaders and were not in need of further structured mentoring.

Superintendents listed budget planning, staff and faculty evaluations, and discipline as areas in which principals may benefit from additional mentoring support. Effective leadership and communication techniques were also mentioned by superintendents. They suggested further mentorship in subjects dealing with curriculum evaluation and development.

Providers listed several areas, including management, leadership strategies, being able to work within a school's culture, budgeting and school planning as areas in which principals would benefit from additional mentoring in the future.

What is Missing from the Mentoring Experience?

Most principals were happy with the mentorship they received in the program. While there were some suggestions for improvement, many felt the mentors to be helpful in their first years as principals, providing effective and useful guidance. Some suggested that the program be more individualized. For example, some of the new principals are not new to administration and therefore may not need the same amount or level of mentoring as those that are coming from other areas within the education profession. Others suggested a commitment on the part of mentoring organizations to provide continually updated information on relevant laws in education, including special education, and make the information available to mentors and mentees.

Time management is an important issue to nearly all new principals. Any method which helps new principals to streamline and make the most of their time spent in the mentoring relationship is beneficial. Principals suggested reducing the required hours for those new principals who were formerly assistant principals or in other administrative positions, creating organized and effective scheduling on specific issues that have been decided on ahead of time and using web-based meetings as ways to make the most out of the mentoring experience without compromising other responsibilities.

Principals also suggested instituting a more formalized structure or guide for first year principals. Suggestions were made for an actual guideline booklet with advice for first-year principals, basic leadership and organizational tips in a written form or a formalized working plan for the year. While principals will each have their own unique circumstances and issues that will arise, there are many typical situations that can be addressed with advice from veteran principals.

In addition, while the majority of principals had positive relationships with their mentors, some mentioned that they would have liked an opportunity to get to know their mentors better. Some of the principals never had an opportunity to meet their mentors face-to-face. While scheduling can be difficult on both sides, many felt it was important to take some time to meet in person. Principals would also like a “roundtable” or other chance to talk with other new principals. Several suggested that the organizations attempt to match principals and mentors that are in nearby locations.

Many of the mentors felt that the program was not in need of improvement. Of those that offered suggestions, many felt that the mentoring process could be more tailored to the needs of the individual mentees and allow more flexibility in subject matter as well as time commitments. Some felt that they needed more time with their mentees. Other mentors who worked with principals coming from other administrative positions quickly learned that their mentees already had many of the strategies and skills they needed to be proficient in their jobs and were not in need of as much time in a mentoring relationship.

Another suggestion by mentees was adding more structure in terms of planning guides and written advice to be used by principals. Several suggestions were made for meetings to be held for principals to meet with other first year principals to share their experiences and collaborate. A few of the mentors did suggest a second year of the mentoring program for new principals as well.

The mentors also indicated that they did not believe the principals had a strong understanding of the mentor program at the beginning of the year and, consequently, had negative views of it. The mentors understood that principals started off considering the mentor program one more time commitment to deal with. Mentors believed that principals' attitudes changed over the year. The suggestion was made by many to begin the year with a workshop or meeting to fully explain the mentorship process to allow principals to recognize the benefit in it from the beginning.

Providers listed few items as missing from the mentoring program, however those that responded indicated they need improvement in cash flow to the entities, development of resources and references and time to meet with program developers to discuss program improvement opportunities as they arise.

What Needs to be Modified in the Current Mentoring Program?

A large portion of the principals suggested allowing modifications to be made to the number of hours required based upon individual circumstances. Another suggestion made by principals is to find a method for principals to address their specific concerns in group meetings. Some principals also stressed how beneficial it would be if their mentors were from the same district, or at least nearby while others appreciated having someone with which to discuss topics that he or she would not wish to discuss with an in-district mentor.

Mentors had some difficulty with the 50 hour requirement as well. While many felt the time was worthwhile, with busy schedules many felt the requirement was too stringent. Others suggested beginning the program in the summer before the school year to address initial concerns and help the principals prepare. Several suggestions did appear in this area for an additional year of mentorship but without the 50 hour requirement.

Providers indicated that the 50 hour requirement is too stringent for busy new principals. Others suggested that while they would like the hourly requirement to be reduced, they would like to increase the amount of "face-to-face" time new principals spend with their mentors. Again, providers would like more professional development opportunities for their mentors and principals and the opportunity to more personally tailor the program to meet the needs of individual principals.

Superintendents were asked to report as to whether the principals whom they supervised received the quality of mentoring services that were expected. Their results are as follows:

Superintendents' Report on Quality of Mentoring

Means of Interaction	% Yes	% No
Did your new principal(s) receive the quality of mentoring services you expected?	84%	16%

While the majority of superintendents felt that the new principal(s) in their district received the quality of mentoring services they expected, some felt there was room for improvement. Some noticed miss-matches in principals and mentors in terms of grade level and dissimilarities in the districts in which both worked. Others felt that not enough time was being spent in the mentoring relationship. In all though, few of the superintendents left negative comments.

Areas of Leadership Development in which INPMP Contributed Significantly to New Principals' Growth:

Superintendents saw growth in areas such as leadership, communication skills, and understanding of curriculum at different levels. Others mentioned that they saw confidence grow in the principals in the mentoring program. Superintendents saw increases in collaboration between the principals and teachers, PTO and community.

Mentors helped principals with very specific issues as well. Depending on the circumstances of the individual schools and background of both principals, mentors assisted new principals in areas such as budget planning, professional development, teacher evaluations, effective partnering with the community and parents, and other case-by-case scenarios in which the mentors had experience and advice to give to the new principals.

Principals Who Did Not Complete the Mentoring Program

As Reported By:	% Who Failed to Complete Program
Mentors	3%
Providers	5% of providers indicated one or more principals in their organization failed to complete the program.

Reasons Principals Did Not Complete the Program:

Few of the mentors indicated that new principals failed to complete the mentoring program. Of those that did indicate principals that were not on track to complete the program, the reason was nearly always that the individuals did not have the time to complete the required hours. One mentor indicated that since his schedule was part of the reason the principal/mentee was not completing the required hours only retired principals should be allowed to mentor more than one mentee. The mentor in this case had taken on two mentees and was also still working full-time. Others started late or had mentees be reassigned or move to other positions. No one indicated that they believed the principals were not meeting the requirements because of any willful conduct; scheduling was nearly always the problem.

Support for Providers by IPA

The IPA has provided high quality support for providers in communicating about the mentoring program, being always available to answer questions, keeping providers current with all new programs and providing high quality professional development. Providers also felt the website was very good and everyone likes Rashonda.

Providers indicated they would like more webinars and expanded professional development opportunities for new principals. Several suggested conducting meetings remotely whenever possible. Others asked that the IPA continue to keep providers updated with current mentor training curriculum changes.

Providers indicated they need more timely allocation of funds and an increase in the stipend. Many requested more professional development on relevant, necessary topics (“hot topics”). A few indicated that no changes were necessary.

Further Reflections from Principals:

Many of the principals commented about the individual mentors that they worked with. The majority of the comments were very positive. The mentors as a group appeared to be allies to the new principals and the relationships created truly benefited the first-year principals. Many others noted that the program was a worthwhile experience, and while there is always room for improvement, were grateful for the assistance provided by mentors. The principals as a group would like to see the program continue.

Further Reflections from Mentors:

Mentors were very impressed with the regional support organizations as well as with the mentees. While there is always room for some improvement, many felt that this program was exceptional and wish it had been in place when they were starting principals.

Mentors would also like the stipend increased. They feel that it does not cover their expenses or time and believe the program may lose some good mentors because of the lack of compensation.

Further Reflections from Superintendents:

Comments left by superintendents were overall very positive. Most felt appreciative for the mentoring and support provided by members of the program. Some felt that there should be more structure and training for mentors, but in general most felt the program was a success.

Further Reflections from Providers:

Providers were very impressed with the INPM. Very few had any negative comment whatsoever. They hope that new principals can be more open to the program in the future and have trust in the benefits available through it. They suggest continuing to strive for improvement but commend the IPA on this year's program.
