

ILLINOIS NEW PRINCIPAL MENTORING PROGRAM



END-YEAR SURVEY REPORT

AUGUST 2010



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I. INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2009, the Illinois New Principal Mentoring Program (NPMP) again partnered with ECRA Group, Inc. to conduct NPMP surveys in the spirit of continuous quality improvement. The initial survey for the 2009-2010 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 2010. 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 147 new principals participated in the survey. Demographics of the sample are tabled below.

Gender

Percent Male	Percent Female
47	53

School Setting

Setting	Percent of Principals
Rural	47
Suburban	44
Urban	9

Student Population

Number of Students	Percent of Principals
Under 100	5
100-500	66
500-1000	21
1000-2000	4
More than 2000	3

Type of School

Grade Levels	Percent of Principals
Early Childhood	5
Elementary	49
Middle	10
Junior High	7
Secondary	16
K-12	1
Other	12

Race/Ethnicity

	Percent of Principals
White	89
Black	7
Hispanic	3
Other	1

Sample Demographics: Mentors

Approximately 195 mentors participated in the survey. Demographics of the sample are tabled below.

Gender

Percent Male	Percent Female
46	54

Current Position

Setting	Percent of Mentors
Principal	24
Retired Principal	64
Other	12

Level of School(s) Served

Grade Levels	Percent of Mentors*
Early Childhood	27
Elementary	74
Middle	44
Junior High	37
Secondary	32
K-12	18
Other	6

Race/Ethnicity

	Percent of Mentors
White	91
Black	7
Hispanic	0
Other	2

**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 2009-2010.

II. FINDINGS

1.

The New Principal Mentoring Program was highly regarded across all survey groups as it was in the prior year. Several noticed improvements had been made since the 2008-2009 school year and appreciated the dedication of the mentors, providers, IPA, and new principals to making the program successful.

2.

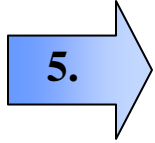
As in 2009, much of the focus of new principals in their professional learning plans and in working with mentors surrounded interpersonal issues related to leadership. New principals often entered the school year with plans for change that were slowed down or cut back because of the necessity to understand and work within the schools' current culture and environment. Mentors assisted principals with acclimating to their new environment and their leadership roles, often working through difficult challenges, before implementing any major changes. The additional perspective provided by mentors to school environments, which can often be politically charged, helped ease the transition for all school stakeholders along with the new principals, themselves.

3.

New principals again focused their leadership efforts primarily on inter-personal relationships and communication. They worked to understand current culture, but also to promote positive learning environments and collaborative instructional strategies with faculty. Much of the focus in the 2009-2010 school year surrounded faculty and staff evaluations and data-driven decision making to plan and develop effective instructional programs to improve student achievement. Principals found these tasks to be less overwhelming with the guidance of mentors.

4.

Principals were very satisfied with the quality of mentoring services provided. Some indicated that they would benefit from a second year of formal mentoring, however many indicated that they do not believe this should be a requirement and that they have developed strong relationships with their mentors that can continue into future. Mentors generally agreed with the principals regarding the necessity of a second year, indicating that it would likely be beneficial but that any formal requirement of hours should be much less stringent if at all required. Mentors generally indicated that they would be supportive of a program providing a second year of mentoring and would likely provide their guidance, as time permitted.



As in 2009, participants were generally satisfied with the quality of mentorship provided under the NPMP. Principals were entirely grateful and appreciative of the quality of guidance and dedication of their mentors to helping them through their first year. Principals gave no indication that mentors were anything less than highly qualified. Mentors and providers both indicated that the services provided were having a positive effect on the new principals and their schools. Superintendents, while at times indicating that they were not as well informed as desired, believe that the program is a benefit to the new principals and improves the quality of leadership the new principals are able to provide. All survey groups believe the NPMP is of high quality and should be continued into the future.

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

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>Percent who Chose this Area as an Area of Focus (2010)</i>	<i>2009 Percent</i>
Establishing open lines of communication with and among teachers, staff and students.	56	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.	52	17
Fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	38	13
Establishing clear, school wide goals and keeping those goals prominent in the work of the school.	32	14
Being involved directly in the design, alignment and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	30	12
Minimizing issues and influences that would detract from teaching time or teachers' focus on student learning.	26	7
Showing that I care and am aware of the personal lives of teachers, staff and students.	24	8
Adapting my leadership behavior to situational needs and being open to dissenting opinions.	19	7
Recognizing and celebrating accomplishments and acknowledging failures.	13	2
Communication and operating from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	9	3

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

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>Percent who Chose this Area as an Area of Focus (2010)</i>	<i>2009 Percent</i>
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.	52	53
Establishing open lines of communication with and among teachers, staff and students.	51	43
Establishing clear school wide goals and keeping those goals prominent in the work of the school.	41	41
Being involved directly in the design, alignment and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	32	31
Fostering shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	31	35
Adapting leadership behavior to situational needs and being open to dissenting opinions.	31	28
Minimizing issues and influences that would detract from teaching time or teachers' focus on student learning.	20	27
Communicating and operating from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	19	23
Showing that they care and are aware of the personal lives of teachers, staff and students.	16	10
Recognizing and celebrating accomplishments and acknowledging failures.	8	9

New principals generally focused on the same areas as indicated on the 2009 survey. During their first year, inter-personal relationships within the schools and communication were stressed as areas of focus.

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

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>Percent who felt they were best suited to mentor in this area (2010)</i>	<i>2009 Percent</i>
Developing and sustaining a positive school culture and instructional program.	78	82
Making data-driven decisions that focus on the improvement of student performance.	55	53
Developing and sustaining a collaborative professional learning community.	54	63
Facilitating a vision of learning within a learning community.	46	49
Effectively managing the operations, resources and safety of a school.	44	34
Positively influencing the greater political, social, economic, legal and cultural context of learning communities to effectively advocate for students.	22	20

*Percents total greater than 100 because of multiple responses.

Effectively using data to drive decisions has moved up in terms of leadership strengths of mentors since 2009, though overall, the leadership strengths identified by mentors has not changed dramatically. Most mentors consider their abilities to develop and sustain a positive school culture and instructional program as their greatest strength among the options provided.

Providers' Assessment of Leadership Strengths of Mentors

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>Percent who felt they were best suited to mentor in this area (2010)*</i>	<i>2009 Percent</i>
Developing and sustaining a positive school culture and instructional program	82	12
Effectively managing the operations, resources and safety of a school.	74	29
Facilitating a vision of learning within a learning community.	48	12
Developing and sustaining a collaborative professional learning community.	44	28
Making data-driven decisions that focus on the improvement of student performance.	41	12
Positively influencing the greater political, social, economic, legal and cultural context of learning communities to effectively advocate for students.	11	8

*Respondents were allowed to choose three responses on the 2010 survey.

Providers identified mentors' strengths in developing positive school culture and instructional programs, managing operations and resources, and facilitating a vision of learning as the most frequent among mentors. The 2010 results show a slight shift from 2009, in that mentors' ability to guide new principals in developing and sustaining collaborative professional learning communities dropped in ranking of strengths and mentor's expertise in developing positive school cultures moved up significantly. This may indicate a shift in focus of mentors related to local circumstances or school needs.

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

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>2010 Most Time Spent, % Who Chose Item</i>	<i>2009 %</i>	<i>2010 Least Time Spent, % Who Chose Item</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
Maintaining a collegial and collaborative relationship with teachers and staff conducive to participatory/distributive decision-making.	65	62	8	9
Building a school culture to support the school's vision, mission and core beliefs.	46	55	11	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).	51	47	17	20
Shaping a common vision of teaching and learning.	28	28	22	17
Developing and implementing a school improvement plan that sets a strategic direction and expected results for improving teaching and learning.	26	26	20	20
Aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with rigorous student performance standards at each grade level and for each content area.	16	18	39	38
Creating a school mission, vision and set of core beliefs that support continuous learning for both students and adults.	13	17	37	29
Communicating regularly with all parents about positive and negative classroom and individual student learning issues.	17	13	44	41
Using disaggregated data to identify student learning needs that require changes in teaching practices.	14	13	36	46
Aligning school policies and procedures with the school's mission, vision and core beliefs.	12	13	28	24
Using disaggregated data in analyzing and reporting student learning progress.	12	8	37	49

Principal / Mentor Focus as Reported by Principals

<i>Area of Focus</i>	<i>2010 Most Time Spent, % Who Chose Item</i>	<i>2009 %</i>	<i>2010 Least Time Spent, % Who Chose Item</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
Maintaining a collegial and collaborative relationship with teachers and staff conducive to participatory/distributive decision-making.	63	58	6	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).	56	43	11	12
Building a school culture to support the school's vision, mission and core beliefs.	48	41	13	12
Developing and implementing a school improvement plan that sets a strategic direction and expected results for improving teaching and learning.	23	23	30	19
Shaping a common vision of teaching and learning.	23	17	19	11
Aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with rigorous student performance standards at each grade level and for each content area.	15	15	45	36
Using disaggregated data in analyzing and reporting student learning progress.	11	12	43	41
Communicating regularly with all parents about positive and negative classroom and individual student learning issues.	19	12	26	28
Creating a school mission, vision and set of core beliefs that support continuous learning for both students and adults.	13	12	36	30
Using disaggregated data to identify student learning needs that require changes in teaching practices.	19	10	42	34
Aligning school policies and procedures with the school's mission, vision and core beliefs.	12	9	28	20

Mentors and principals both indicated that maintaining a collegial and collaborative relationship with teachers and staff, building a positive school culture, and managing school operations all received the greatest portion of their focus during the principals' first years on the job.

Matching Mentors and New Principals

In matching principals and mentors, providers felt that the most important factors included: the background experience of the mentor, proximity between the mentor and mentee, experience with similar districts, and experience with similar grade levels. Providers also indicated that factors such as temperament, schedules, and career goals should ideally be compatible when matching mentors and new principals.

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 2010	2009	Level of Engagement in area as rated by Mentor 2010	2009
Completing a standards-based assessment of the principal's leadership performance.	2.74	1.40	2.57	2.55
Using the standards-based assessment to develop a professional learning plan.	2.69	1.30	2.62	2.59
Supporting and monitoring the principal's professional learning.	3.59	2.22	3.39	3.49
Identifying professional development resources that were relevant to the principal's professional learning needs.	3.50	2.11	3.48	3.46
Creating a network of colleagues who could support the principal in his or her professional learning.	3.26	1.90	3.17	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)

New principals indicated greater focus and amount of time spent on learning areas as a whole than in 2009. Unlike 2009, principals indicated even higher levels of engagement than as rated by mentors on the same items. The most time was spent in supporting and monitoring the principals' professional learning and identifying professional development resources that were relevant to the principal's learning needs.

Professional Learning Plans:

New principals sought assistance from their mentors with similar issues as those presented in prior years. As in the prior year, principals addressed several important issues in their professional learning plans, depending on their individual prior experience and skill sets, and the needs of the school. The most frequently cited area of leadership performance included in new principals' professional development plans was implementing effective communication with all stakeholder groups. Principals also focused on improving their organization, with special emphasis on time management, and working to understand and build positive school cultures.

Other areas in which new principals focused on improvement in their professional learning plans included:

- Being the instructional leader in the school
- Building and improving relationships with staff
- Using data to effectively drive achievement
- Conducting staff evaluations
- Understanding the curriculum
- Developing and implementing interventions to improve student achievement
- Implementing a school improvement plan.

Mentors reported similar issues to those listed by principals as areas of focus in professional learning plans. In 2009, mentors stressed the importance of communication across stakeholder groups as the primary area of focus for professional learning plans. While communication is still one of the top priorities of both mentors and new principals, in 2010, mentors identified understanding and improving school culture and using data to effectively improve student achievement as the areas which need the most focus for development by new principals.

Professional growth plans were discussed and collaborative leadership was stressed between mentors and new principals to ensure that new principals grow in their abilities to become collaborative leaders. Some providers required more formal methods to evaluate the implementation of professional growth plans, through surveys or evaluations, and informally through conversations and emails.

Areas in which new principals learned the most:

New principals faced many of the same challenges that new principals in the 2009 faced. Dealing with difficult staff relationship problems, including evaluations, hiring and firing staff, and adapting to the culture of the school were areas in which new principals faced obstacles. New principals learned by working through challenges that presented themselves throughout the school year. Many cited particular situations in which their mentors helped lead them through a very difficult leadership-related situation. Upon reflection, new principals recognized that working through the trying situations allowed them to grow most influentially as school leaders.

Learning and understanding the individual school cultures was another area in which new principals tended to learn the most and the steps they took to work within the existing culture had some of the most important effects on the schools. Some recognized that implementing change within the context of the current culture is more effective than trying to alter the culture during the first year in a principal position. New principals recognized that by working within the current culture, a foundation can be laid upon which to build in the coming years. Principals also discussed areas such as budgeting, understanding district and school procedures, developing a school improvement plan, time management, and building relationships as areas which they learned the most throughout the year. Principals that focused on collaborative decision making recognized that working to forge positive relationships with faculty and staff had a positive effect on the school within the first year. Principals also identified student assessment and effective use of data as an area of learning.

Mentors recognized several areas of improvement by new principals. As in 2009, many of the most significant strides were made by principals overcoming personal challenges as they took on such major leadership roles for the first time. Mentors frequently indicated that the greatest improvements were made when the new principals were able to assertively work through difficult situations with staff members, often involving terminations or disciplinary action. Bearing negative news, such as financial cutbacks, was a common challenge new principals had to deal with during the 2009-2010 school year, and mentors recognized that while difficult, learning how to handle such situations proved to be a valuable opportunity to gain leadership skills for many of the new principals.

As indicated by results of prior surveys, mentors identified other common areas where principals were able to acquire skills over their first year. Several mentioned working with new principals on adopting RTI initiatives, working through budgeting challenges, and using assessment data to design and implement effective programs to improve student achievement. Often times the mentors worked with new principals to devise plans to deal with particular situations or challenges, and acted as a sounding board on ways to encourage staff to accept changes. Often times instituting change is a matter of understanding and working within a school's culture, which was another area of learning for many new principals. Most significantly, mentors indicated they helped new principals build a foundation upon which to improve the school over time.

Providers believe that mentoring services contributed significantly to new principals' growth in building collaborative working relationships, networking, professional development, and providing perspective and a sounding board for new principals as they worked their way through common first-year obstacles. Providers believe that the resources they are able to offer coupled with mentors' experience and insight provides valuable guidance for new principals.

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

<i>Means of Interaction</i>	<i>Most True % 2010</i>	<i>2009 %</i>	<i>Least True % 2010</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
My mentor was always there for me when I needed support.	59	21	1	2
My mentor shared many useful tips what shortened my learning curve.	44	14	15	4
The time spent with my mentor added value to my work as a school leader.	43	14	4	2
My mentor helped me to understand the big picture of what a principal needs to know and be able to do.	35	14	23	6
My mentor coached me through some difficult times.	34	10	8	7
My mentor was flexible in meeting my schedule.	32	10	2	2
My mentor helped me to think differently about how to approach issues.	28	9	22	7
I called on my mentor regularly for support.	12	7	61	22
Not a week went by without some contact with my mentor.	11	2	53	25
I wish my mentor could have spent more time at my school.	2	2	71	23

Mentors' Experience and Interactions with New Principals

<i>Means of Interaction</i>	<i>Most True % 2010</i>	<i>2009 %</i>	<i>Least True % 2010</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
I helped this new principal to understand the big picture of what a school leader needs to know and be able to do.	50	47	18	19
I helped this new principal to think differently about how to approach issues.	50	39	19	19
The time I spent with this new principal added value to his or her work as a school leader.	41	40	3	3
I was always there for the new principal when he/she needed my support.	36	40	6	8
I shared many useful tips that shortened this new principal's learning curve.	35	34	18	34
I was flexible in meeting this new principal's schedule.	28	31	4	8
I coached this new principal through some difficult times.	25	30	36	32
Not a week went by without some contact with this new principal.	15	10	64	65
This new principal called on me regularly for support.	12	18	65	58
I wish I could have spent more time at this new principal's school.	7	12	61	59

Mentors apparently gave the impression to their mentees that they were available whenever needed, though did not recognize this same availability to the same extent upon reflection. Both principals and mentors believed that the guidance provided by the mentors added value to the principals' work as a school leader. Principals valued the tips and guidance provided by the mentors to an even greater extent that mentors recognized.

New Principals' Further Reflections

<i>Question</i>	<i>2010 % Yes</i>	<i>2009 % "Yes"</i>	<i>2010 % No</i>	<i>2010 % I Don't Know</i>
Do you wish you could have a mentor next year?	37%	39%	38%	26%
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%	74%	12%	14%

Monitoring of Mentoring Program

To monitor effectiveness, many of the providers required reflective responses to be written and submitted on a regular basis, either after meetings or during a defined period (i.e. monthly). Providers identified certain techniques, such as modeling in workshop settings, diaries, and having mentors ask key questions during meetings with new principals. Informally, providers simply discussed the level to which new principals were making advances in their endeavors with mentors.

To ensure that mentors effectively supported their new principals in becoming instructional leaders, providers encouraged their mentors to work with principals to develop techniques on becoming collaborative leaders, offered workshops related to important instructional leadership topics, and provided roundtables to help support collaboration among the new principals. Mentors also focused on discussing roles and responsibilities with new principals and exchanged ideas on best practices.

Providers gauged effectiveness of the program through surveys and evaluations by mentors and principals. Some providers used feedback from superintendents to improve mentoring services. They contacted superintendents directly to gauge the impact of the NPMP on new principals and encouraged principals to meet with superintendents to discuss their growth plans.

Second Year of Mentoring:

Those that would like to have a mentor for another year felt that such a relationship would help new principals develop leadership skills to a deeper level. Many felt encouraged by the mentor-mentee relationship and that the additional year of guidance would help to build upon initial practices instituted during the first year. Some felt that the first year taught new principals what questions to ask, and that a second year would allow them to follow through with initiatives they began in the first year. Some also indicated that while they believe their mentors would always be willing to give advice and guidance if they were to request it, they would be hesitant to contact someone who was not in a formal mentorship capacity as they do not wish to burden other busy administrators with their own problems. A few also indicated they would be happy to continue with their own mentor, but do not wish to have a new mentor assigned.

Many new principals hope or plan to continue their relationship with their mentor, even outside of a formal program.

Those that do not wish to have a mentor next year often felt that they already had a solid network of individuals to turn to in case of need. Many also indicated that while the mentorship relationship is valuable, they do not believe it needs to exist in the context of a formal, structured program. Others indicated that they do not feel that they need a formal “mentor” any longer, but would not be averse to calling their mentor to ask for advice, as this opportunity has been left open to them by the individual with whom they were working in the program.

Continuing as Principal:

Those that felt the mentoring experience has made it more likely that they will continue to serve as a principal for the next five years or longer indicated that the mentoring relationship has provided them with the confidence they need to do their jobs effectively, and to enjoy the position. They indicated that the mentors helped bring perspective to their positions and recognize the true importance of what they are doing at their jobs. Some also indicated that the stress level is very high, and may have been overwhelming had it not been for the help of their mentors.

Those that felt the mentoring experience will not make them likely to continue to serve as principal often indicated that the experience was positive, but does not directly affect their plans to continue to serve as principal or move into another role. A few indicated that they will continue to serve as principal unless or until they move to a superintendent or other administrative role.

Areas in which New Principals Would Benefit from Additional Mentoring:

The largest portion of principals indicated they would benefit with support in the areas of curriculum development and understanding, and with data analysis. Several others indicated they would benefit from further guidance in learning time management techniques, managing the school’s budget, and working through RtI implementation.

Other areas of focus include:

- Developing and implementing school improvement plans
- Methods to implement change effectively
- Building a positive school culture
- Working to build relationships with “difficult” staff and faculty
- Understanding school law
- Promoting and providing staff development

Mentors focused on data driven decision making as one of the key areas in which new principals could benefit from additional mentoring. There seems to be an even greater stress on the importance of relying upon data in making decisions than indicated by 2009 results. Mentors also identified forging strong relationships with staff and other administrators, site-based fiscal management, RtI implementation, and building professional learning communities as areas in which new principals might benefit from further mentoring. Mentors and principals both also stressed the importance of time management and balancing the high demands of their jobs with the other circumstances in their lives.

Superintendents suggested conflict resolution, development of evaluation plans, legal issues, and budget planning as areas in which the new principals could benefit from additional mentoring. Many of the issues identified by superintendents are similar to those identified in 2009.

Providers indicated new principals could benefit from additional mentoring in management and leadership skill development, collaboration and instructional leadership, teacher evaluation, and effective methods for data analysis and application.

What is Missing from the Mentoring Experience?

As in 2009, most principals were happy with the mentorship they received in the program. Many of the new principals felt that the mentor program is currently ideal and would not make any major changes. Suggestions provided for improvement to the program focused around time to be spent with mentors and particular issues new principals felt it would be important to address. Several new principals feel that extra focus on inter-personal relationship issues that new principals routinely face would benefit mentees in the program. A few individuals also suggested having regular meetings between mentors and new principals, attempting to better match new principals with mentors with similar backgrounds, and providing more local training sessions. A few new principals also suggested developing a handbook for new principals in which mentors all provide their best pieces of advice for how to get through common challenges during a new principal's first year.

Unlike in 2009, new principals did not indicate that they lacked the opportunity to get to know their mentors. Principals indicated throughout open-ended responses to the survey that they appreciated the guidance and support of mentors and gave the impression that the mentors became trusted confidants over the year. Many indicated that mentors offered continued support even after the ending of the formal mentor-mentee relationship.

Mentors suggested more direct instruction to new principals on what is expected out of them in regards to the mentoring program. Several indicated that mentors appear to have a much better understanding of the program at the beginning of the year than did their mentees. This observation was indicated in 2009 as well, and may still be an area for improvement.

Like new principals, mentors also indicated that the new principals would likely benefit from additional time to network with each other. They indicated that they recognized the mentoring relationship is valuable, but so is the opportunity to meet and brainstorm with other new principals on common issues. A few of the mentors also suggested requiring a second year of the program, but at a reduced hourly-commitment.

As in 2009, providers listed few items as missing from the mentoring program. They do suggest improving the payment schedule, updating best practices for administrator mentoring and improving program evaluation resources. Some indicated that noticeable improvements have been made over the past year already.

What Needs to be Modified in the Current Mentoring Program?

As in 2009, new principals suggested allowing more time for new principals to interact with each other, and with their mentors. Most do not suggest adding more sessions, but rather making better use of the development and interaction opportunities that currently exist. Others felt the number of contact hours should be more flexible depending on the new principal's needs and to avoid requiring new principals to spend any more time out of their buildings as absolutely necessary. New principals also suggest reducing the amount of paper work required as part of the mentoring program.

As in 2009, mentors continue to have trouble meeting the 50 hour requirement, and many indicated that they felt it is too stringent for both themselves and for new principals. Mentors also suggested providing workshops/meetings at the beginning and end of the year and providing somewhat more structure from a higher level. A few suggested starting the program in July before school starts.

Providers indicated that the program is growing and improving every year. Very few suggested any modifications. A couple suggestions were made to look into new procedures for reporting and a couple suggested including a second year, however voiced concerns about having sufficient human resources to support two-year programs. Overall, they believe the program to be incredibly successful.

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

<i>Means of Interaction</i>	<i>2010 % Yes</i>	<i>2009 %</i>	<i>2010 % No</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
Did your new principal(s) receive the quality of mentoring services you expected?	89%	84%	11%	16%

The majority of superintendents indicated that new principals were receiving the quality of mentoring services that should be expected. Confidence in the program has increased even since 2009. Very few superintendents provided responses to describe ways in which the mentoring program was lacking, except that a couple indicated that communication was poor.

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

Superintendents identified areas such as guidance with developing organizational and management skills, learning how to navigate and implement programs related to special education and RtI, and developing interpersonal relationships as ways in which the mentors helped new principals learn and adapt to their first year on the job. Several of the superintendents, however, mentioned that they were not provided with much information or feedback about the mentoring program at all, and while they generally believe the program to be beneficial, did not have specific evidence one way or the other as to its true impact. As the mentoring program grows, it may be beneficial to both mentors and mentees to introduce the superintendents to the program and to update them as to its impact for the new principal.

Principals Who Did Not Complete the Mentoring Program

<i>As Reported By:</i>	<i>2010 % Who Failed to Complete Program</i>	<i>2009 %</i>
Mentors	1%	3%
Providers	0%	5% of providers indicated one or more principals in their organization failed to complete the program.

Reasons Principals Did Not Complete the Program:

The providers indicated that no principals failed to complete the program this year. No reasons were provided by the small number of mentors who indicated principals failed to complete the program.

Support for Providers by IPA

Providers indicated that the IPA provided high quality and ample support for providers regarding the mentoring program. They provided high quality support through timely communications, excellent resources, such as the website, and clear-cut expectations. They also indicated the program is well organized and few surprises arose through the year.

Providers suggested providing time at provider meetings to share successes and continually reviewing the program to look for ways to improve as circumstances require. They also indicated that the IPA could provide additional support in working to improve the payment schedule, continually updating program resources, and more in-depth data analysis.

Overall, the providers appear to be very pleased with the support provided by the IPA and recognize that this is a very high-quality program and efficient organization.

Further Reflections from Principals:

Principals were overall extremely pleased with the mentoring program. Many indicated that although the 50 hour requirement was a bit too stringent, being required to work with the mentor provided new principals the encouragement they needed to ask questions and make use of the guidance and support that mentors were offering. Some suggested trying to better fit mentors to new principals, but the majority did not indicate any problem with the mentors to whom they had been assigned. Principals would like this program to continue.

Further Reflections from Mentors:

Mentors again gave high praise to the regional support organizations and the development of the NPMP since its inception. Mentors stressed the importance of this program and mentioned that they have continued to remain in a mentor or pseudo-mentor role with prior mentees, some going back five years. This type of relationship is valued by both mentors and mentees and mentors hope that others outside of the program recognize the valuable impact it has on the principals, the students, and their school communities as a whole.

Further Reflections from Superintendents:

As in 2009, comments left by superintendents were overall very positive. Most were appreciative of the guidance provided by the mentors. Superintendents would like to be better informed of the program overall, however, and a few suggested that it should not be a required commitment of hours, but rather available to principals only if they wish to take part.
