



Professional Standards for Principal Mentors

NAESP/NSU National Principal Mentoring Certification Program

Educators are well aware of the growing shortage of qualified effective candidates for principal positions and the challenge of retaining highly experienced principals in the field. In addition, federal and state legislative mandates are placing greater burdens of accountability on school principals and directing the introduction and use of mentors for principals. The job of the principal is challenging, as well as highly rewarding, and support systems need to be in place for these school leaders. NAESP and NSU (Nova Southeastern University) are committed to promoting excellence in instructional leadership and management, as evidenced by the National Association of Elementary School Principals' NAESP Leading Learning Communities document and programmatic focus. The profession of principal-to-principal mentoring is evolving in response to these changes.

The goals of the NSU/NAESP National Mentoring Certification project are:

- 1) To create a core of experienced principals with the appropriate skills and tools to promote leadership consistent with *Leading Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* standards.
- 2) To create a model for instructional leadership mentor training which is consistent with professional standards and which addresses the specific needs of school principals and other administrators.

Throughout education the concept of an individual developing under the guidance of a master goes back to the time of Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey*. Ulysses entrusted his son to his wise friend, Mentor, to serve as a teacher, guardian, and guide to the prince during Ulysses' 20 year absence. Corporations have long used mentoring either formally or informally to offer assistance to less experienced employees. Novice teachers have also benefitted from mentoring programs and many states have mandated that this support be provided by school districts. Most administrative certification programs include an internship to provide hands-on experience in day to day operations. However, formal quality mentoring programs in the principalship are critical to the success of new administrators and the development of their leadership skills. The NAESP PALS Leadership Immersion Institute and the National Mentoring Certification project's goals are to create effective, mentoring practices.

National Principal Mentoring Certification Program Standards

The NAESP Mentor will:

1. Recognize the traits and characteristics of an effective mentor including experience, skills in communication (written/oral/technological), the capacity for effective listening, acceptance of multiple solutions to complex problems, and a clear vision.
2. Actively participate in a high quality mentor training program.
3. Demonstrate professional achievement in the Field of Instructional Leadership.
4. Demonstrate a code of ethics including a respect of confidentiality and promotion of integrity in the mentor-protégé relationship.
5. Complete objective self-assessments to determine mentoring skills and to understand personal strengths.
6. Recognize the mentoring characteristics including the strengths and weaknesses of the protégé.
7. Incorporate objective assessments and practices to determine protégé skill levels.
8. Foster a culture which promotes effective formal and informal mentoring relationships.
9. Contribute to on-going assessment and refinement of mentoring programs through action research.

OVERVIEW OF THE

NATIONAL PRINCIPAL MENTOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The three day Leadership Immersion Institute is the opening event of the program. Participants explore the theoretical foundations of adult development, adult learning, and mentoring. Once grounded in these theoretical foundations, the participants learn various practical techniques and strategies of the mentoring relationship under the guidance of the LII training team. Technology training is provided for on-line activities.

Upon completion of the LII, the National Principal Mentor Certification Program (NPMCP) participants transition into the Mentors-In-Training internship component of the program. The internship component is a nine-month process of mentor-protégé engagement. The process begins with the Mentor in Training identifying and selecting a protégé who agrees to participate in the MIT program. Each month the mentor and protégé interact (electronically or in person) for a total of seventy-two contact hours. The 72 hours include your preparation time, phone calls, emails, etc. The mentor reports his or her work to the coach who has been assigned to his or her team of MITs. Electronic on-line chats or conference calls are also held monthly for discussions of the mentoring process, lessons learned, and recommendations. A final project is completed regarding the mentoring experience.

The Certification process is an application of the Leadership Immersion Institute skills and knowledge. (The three day On-site Leadership Immersion Institute must be completed prior to the Certification program.)

National Mentor Certification Criteria Summary:

1. Cohort groups of Mentors-In-Training work with a coach for nine to twelve months as they guide and nurture a protégé.
2. Monthly on-line discussions or conference calls are required
3. 72 Contact hours (include preparation time, emails, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, etc.)
4. Monthly reflections based on the NAESP Principal Standards
5. Devote one month to the online *NAESP Principals' Helpline* offering support to peers.
6. Final project that is the culmination of the Certification work.

Following the awarding of certification, NAESP involves mentors in a reunion at each NAESP Convention. Many certified mentors have developed programs for school districts, been hired as consultants, published articles, used the program in doctoral work, etc.

LEADERSHIP IMMERSION INSTITUTE

Agenda-Day One

Module One: Mentoring New School Leaders: A Journey of Discovery

Research

Current Theory

Mentoring New Leaders

Module Two: *Now, Discover Your Strengths* (Buckingham)

Self Awareness

Leadership Styles

Communications

Day One Debrief

Human Development

Reflection

Evaluation

Agenda Day Two

Module Three: *Changing Lives Through the Principalship* (Quaglia and Quay)

Feedback

Reflective Questioning

Module Four: The Art of Effective Feedback

Mentoring Methodology

Day Two Debrief

Human Development

Reflection

Evaluation

Agenda Day Three

Module Five: The Art and Science of Mentoring

Social Competencies

Body of Knowledge

Module Six: Supporting Effective Mentoring: Leadership Standards at Work

Research on Standards *Leading Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and be Able to Do* (NAESP) 2008

NAESP Standards for School Leadership

Reflections for Your Protégé

Day Three Debrief

Online Technology Overview

Reflection

Evaluation