

THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN DEVELOPING BEGINNING PRINCIPALS'
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Susan G. Gettys

Dr. Barbara N. Martin, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the type of support provided by mentors in helping new principals develop instructional leadership skills. Perceptions were investigated to determine if principals believed participation in mentoring programs (both statewide and district-created) was effective in providing the necessary support during their initial years as administrators to help develop skills needed to address the accountability measures in place for today's schools and to help principals become successful instructional leaders. Quantitative data were obtained through a researcher-created survey completed by forty-five beginning principals. Follow-up, semi-structured interviews with six principals provided qualitative data, along with optional comments from the survey.

The study findings revealed no significant differences between the two types of mentoring programs in the support provided to beginning principals to assist in developing instructional leadership skills. In addition, data indicated both programs were weak in providing the targeted support. Additional methods of developing these skills were also investigated.

Implications for practice were identified to assist in making improvements to both statewide and district-created mentoring programs. In addition, improvements to university preparatory programs and internship opportunities were suggested.