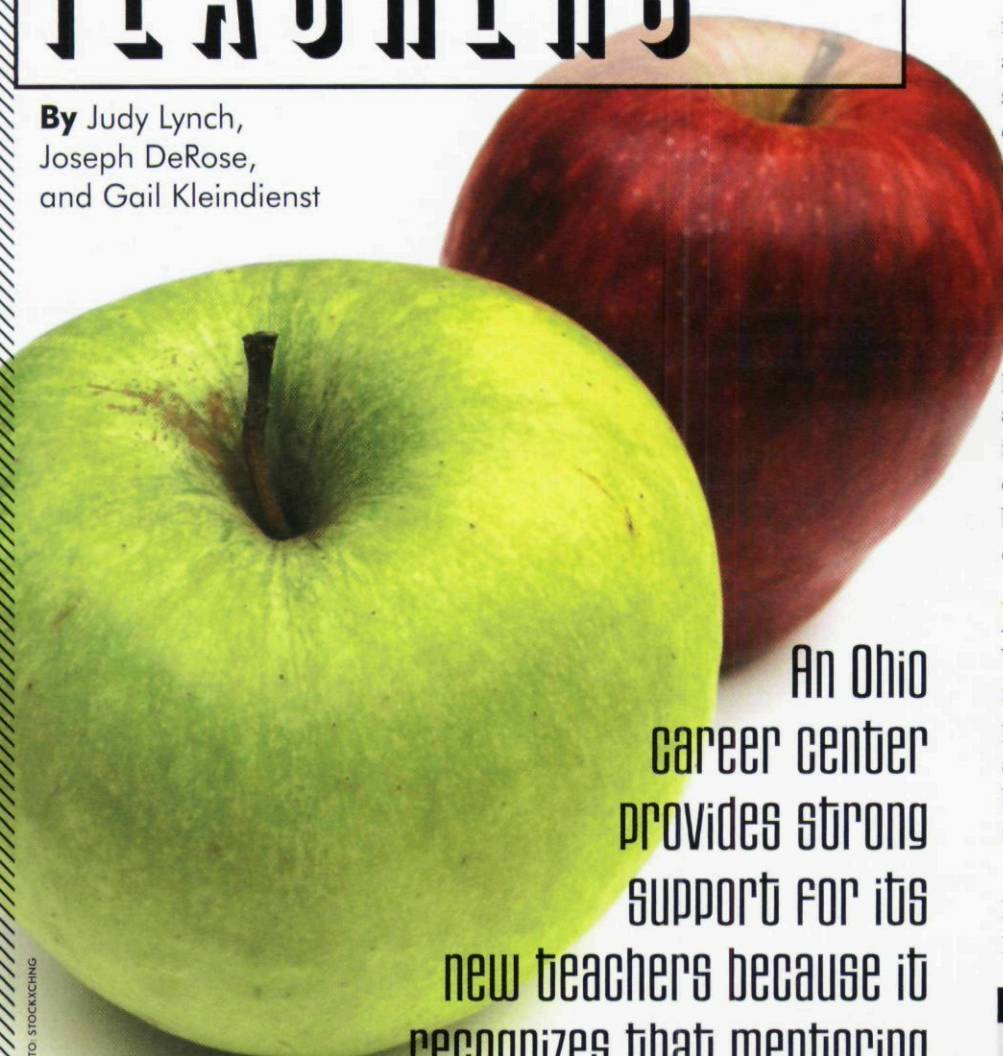


MENTORING

NEW

TEACHERS

By Judy Lynch,
Joseph DeRose,
and Gail Kleindienst

A photograph of two apples, one green and one red, positioned behind the main text block.

**An Ohio
career center
provides strong
support for its
new teachers because it
recognizes that mentoring
can be as important for them
as it is for their students.**

The Erie, Huron, Ottawa Vocational Education (EHOVE) Career Center in Milan, Ohio, was and continues to be at the forefront of creating a strong and effective mentoring program for new teachers. Initiated by Superintendent Joseph DeRose and implemented by lead mentor Gail Kleindienst, the program is a roadmap to success for incoming staff members to train and nurture new teachers with the expectation that they will have a long tenure as EHOVE staff members.

The program of support is provided through various components including, but not limited to, an orientation, a mentoring relationship, a committee support team, opportunities for peer classroom observations, professional development and other interactive activities.

The program's greatest strength lies in the fact that it seeks to provide the mentees with a resource for all contingencies while helping them build a professional career that results in higher achievement for all EHOVE students. It is an ever-changing program that reflects evolution in regard to teacher needs, building on successes and learning from deficiencies.

The Plan

With the green light from the administration to put together a mentor program, Kleindienst quickly assembled a team of teachers and administrators to begin developing a format to train new teachers at EHOVE.

Kleindienst feels "that it is of vital importance that the mentor, as a support person, becomes knowledgeable and

Joseph DeRose and Gail Kleindienst

are now retired from EHOVE Career Center, but DeRose can be contacted at joerderose@yahoo.com.

Judy Lynch

teaches English at EHOVE Career Center, and she can be contacted at jlynch@ehove-jvs.k12.oh.us.

skillful in the observation and conferencing processes.”

The mentoring program is a complex process that involves support, assistance and guidance but not evaluation of the mentee. In order for the program to succeed, the mentors must establish a positive rapport and level of trust with their entry-level teachers. They must practice the skills of an effective teacher and implement appropriate methods of classroom management and discipline. Applications are completed by prospective mentors before being accepted into the mentoring program.

The goals of the mentoring program are simple. EHOVE plans to enhance the performance of all new teachers by facilitating their transfer of knowledge gained from their coursework and inservice training into appropriate teaching practices. Those entering from industry will have their business skills enhanced by learning appropriate teaching techniques. It also intends to increase the opportunity for new teachers to experience success through utilization of the support system.

The program is structured to reflect the philosophy, goals and foundations of a quality educator. Professional development at EHOVE is congruent with performance-based assessment. Kleindienst believes that each mentor should teach at the same grade level/subject area as the mentee whenever possible, and that each mentor has one, and only one, mentee.

A database is maintained with information on possible mentors to build capacity and to assist in the decision-making process of pairing mentor and mentee. The mentors serve for only one year but may be recruited for a second or third year, since those joining the staff directly from industry and taking the vocational track for teacher certification may take three years. Mentor compensation may be stipends determined by the administration and/or other means such as release time, reduced supplemental re-



Before assigning mentors, Gail Kleindienst (second from left) trains mentors on their mentoring responsibilities and prepares orientation materials to be distributed to new mentees.

sponsibilities, same planning period and other creative ways to access time.

Before School Starts

The mentoring process starts before the school year commences, usually in late August. It begins with an invitation from the mentor committee to all new teachers to attend a daylong seminar with staff members and administrators jointly providing background material for the mentees' labs or classrooms. This is done in a creative fashion with a scavenger hunt to get the mentees comfortable with the campus setting at EHOVE.

The day starts with an address from DeRose, which conveys that support for this program and the mentor-mentee relationship starts at the top with the administration. He presents the mentees with an EHOVE canvas bag to be used to gather all of their scavenger items. Name tags are provided for all staff, and the mentees are given a staff book that includes pictures and information about anybody and everybody on the EHOVE payroll, including the cafeteria staff and the warehouse personnel. This becomes a very useful resource in the early weeks of school.



Top: After mentoring assignments have been made, mentor Judy Lynch introduces new teacher mentee Mary Taylor to staff members. Bottom: Later that day, Mary Taylor is introduced to the curriculum by Katy Brouse and Connie Braun.

Mentees are also given time to get familiar with the school's computers. Short, effective lessons regarding grades, e-mail, phone systems, discipline procedures, reward systems, classroom cleaning and EHOVE specific programs are presented by different staff members, administrators, secretaries and custodians. Each presenter gives the mentee "something" from his or her area to hopefully enrich the mentee's year.

The Mentor

A mentor is a teacher who provides professional support to an entry-year teacher, those new to the school, and those who have changed job assignments. Mentors work to refine practice, understand professional roles and responsibilities, and, ultimately, positively affect student achievement. Mentors at EHOVE wear three hats: coach, collaborator and cheerleader.

The job of a mentor hinges upon the mentor's ability to find the strengths of the mentee and through mutual collaboration help guide his or her first year to foster high student achievement. The mentor spends time in the classroom observing the mentee for the purpose of coaching and nurturing. All teachers have classroom moments that they'd like to forget, and a good mentor is a sounding board for the reflections of mentees as they grow professionally.

Sometimes the mentor needs to cheer on a mentee when the classroom isn't as perfect as the mentee would like it to be. Other times the mentor must help the mentee see areas that need improvement and help him realize ways to improve and then implement them. A mentor cannot evaluate, mediate problems regarding teaching practices with the administration, or keep legal or safety issues confidential if deemed harmful to others.

The mentors complete two formal observations of the mentees for guidance purposes only and invite the mentees to view other teachers' classroom practices, including their own.

All new mentees also meet their assigned mentors with whom they will work throughout the year, completing various assigned activities that include a "heads up" list of monthly upcoming school events given the month before they occur. If at all possible, the mentors attend the daylong orientation with their mentees. Lunch is a social interaction with all of the day's presenters available to answer any questions or concerns. Additionally, the cafeteria manager explains the procedures of the lunchroom.

During the First Year

Mentors and mentees set up times to meet either before or after the school day or during conference times. There are predetermined lists for the mentor to review with the mentee for each month. The subjects cover the basics, such as classroom management, curriculum (including course of study and standards), grading policies and safety procedures for labs, as well as fire and tornado drills.

Another great strength of EHOVE's program is that it goes beyond the basics and looks at what resources will make this new teacher a great teacher. The monthly checklists cover myriad items that might be overlooked at other schools. Examples from the August list include how to get materials for the classroom, how to sign in, the attendance and code of conduct at EHOVE, school policies, and a host of other items that were addressed in the orientation seminar but are reviewed to be sure that the mentee has an increased comfort level from day one of school.

HOW TO BUILD A MENTORING PROGRAM

1. Assemble a motivated team.
2. Poll staff to find out what they wish they knew.
3. Build a portfolio that includes:
 - * Who (pictures and info on all staff)
 - * Where (maps of the campus)
 - * What to do when....
 - * How to find....
 - * When to have....
4. Decide how and when to disseminate information.
5. Schedule regular meetings to check progress.

Kleindienst and the current lead mentor, Joyce Leimbach, spend the year making visits to both mentors and mentees individually, as well as planning and chairing several meetings throughout the school year where all mentees and mentors meet to discuss progress and voice concerns. These meetings are generally held after school in the Young Chef Inn, a campus restaurant run by the students in the culinary program. Snacks are provided, and the setting conveys the impression that these mentees are valued staff members and their input is listened to and noted.

At the six-week point, a meeting is held where each mentee completes a "Teacher Needs Assessment." The results of these assessments and needs are noted by mentors and/or administrators as well as the lead mentor and are used to "drive" the meetings for the remainder of the year.

The Future

Both DeRose and Kleindienst envision a mentoring program that "will provide continuous professional development coupled with mentor support to raise student achievement."

Realizing that some of the needs expressed by the mentees were also those of the entire teaching staff, the

STOCKXCHNG



WHAT MENTORING IS:

- **Support**
- **Encouragement**
- **Listening**
- **Facilitation of Self-Reliance**

MENTORING IS NOT:

- **An evaluation**

Mentor Committee partnered with various departments to provide innovative programs for the entire staff. A further outgrowth has been the development of the Mentor Resource Support Cadre, a group of teachers charged with helping other teachers succeed.

The Mentor Resource Support Cadre uses a variety of methods to achieve its goals.

- **Mentoring** permits teachers and administrators new to the career center, and some who are new to the teaching profession, to receive special support from a colleague who has particular expertise to share. This occurs over a year with direct application to classroom activities.
- **Networking** permits cadre members to help connect teachers with common interests and concerns to share insights and seek solutions to problems.
- **Peer Coaching** is used by the cadre to provide school-based support for teachers as they begin to implement skills and strategies learned in training sessions.
- **Professional consultants** work with cadre members to create teacher trainers (Train the Trainer) who serve as resources for others within the career center.
- **Reflective Practice** permits cadre members, new teachers, veteran teachers and administrators the opportunity to contemplate their own teaching as well as the teaching and learning of others.

The spirit of teachers helping teachers,

new and veteran, has enhanced instruction and subsequently improved student performance and achievement. From matching the right mentor with a mentee to utilizing the strengths of all staff members, this program has grown to a schoolwide initiative.

Mentee Taylor's highest praise sums it up well: "After teaching here a full year, I believe I am not only a better teacher, but a better person, largely due to the guidance provided through the mentoring program." **T**



**Learning today ...
Leading tomorrow**
www.agc.org/STP

The AGC Supervisory Training Program (STP) is developed by contractors to specifically meet the needs of the construction industry – the Program is used as a reference library and courses are also taught by AGC Chapters, colleges and individual companies throughout the country.

AGC of America will offer the entire library set of STP Instructor Guides –all 12 titles– for \$1,200! This is a great opportunity to add to or update your training library. Be sure to mention the ACTE magazine ad when you place your order.

Regular Cost for the library of STP manuals:
Retail: **\$1,860**
AGC Member: **\$1,500**

READY TO ORDER?
Call Toll-Free: 1-800-242-1767

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
Go to **www.agc.org/STP** or contact Amy Fields, Director of Supervisory Training Programs, at 703-837-5360 or **fieldsa@agc.org**.



Building Your Quality of Life

CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR
–AN OVERVIEW

HEAVY/HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR
–AN OVERVIEW

UNIT 1:
LEADERSHIP & MOTIVATION

UNIT 2:
ORAL & WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

UNIT 3:
PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

UNIT 4:
CONTRACT DOCUMENTS & CONSTRUCTION LAW

UNIT 5:
PLANNING & SCHEDULING

UNIT 6:
UNDERSTANDING & MANAGING PROJECT COSTS

UNIT 7:
ACCIDENT PREVENTION & LOSS CONTROL

UNIT 8:
MANAGING THE PROJECT: THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

UNIT 9:
PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT

UNIT 10:
GENERAL & SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR DYNAMICS



Copyright of Techniques: Connecting Education & Careers is the property of Association for Career & Technical Education and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.