



## Teacher Mentoring

### SCENARIO 1

Kristina teaches at a suburban school composed of mostly upper-middle class students. Parents are strongly involved in the school, and she has several parent volunteers throughout the week. She has two preparation periods each day and teaches seventh-grade mathematics and one class of Algebra I. The students in Kristina's classes are generally motivated and well behaved.

Before the school year started, Kristina attended a one-week orientation in which she and many other teachers new to the district learned district policies and procedures. One day was devoted to mathematics teaching. District administrators told Kristina the name of her mentor and that she would meet her the following week at her school. As predicted, Beverly Thomas, a reading teacher, approached Kristina on her first day at the school, introduced herself, made small talk, and said to let her know if she needed anything. On the second day of classes, Kristina approached Beverly and said that she could tell already that she was going to have trouble with one of her classes. Beverly advised her to be strict and that it would work out.

### SCENARIO 2

David teaches at an inner-city school where most of the students come from homes of poverty. Parents work multiple jobs and are generally unavailable by phone or for conferences. David has one preparation period and teaches multiple sections of U.S. History. The students in David's classes are generally well behaved, though they lack some basic skills and knowledge needed for success in U.S. History.

David received a call from his mentor, Jana Caldwell, the week before orientation. They met for coffee and had an opportunity to get to know one another before school started. Jana attended district orientation with David. A social studies teacher of many years, Jana shared lesson plans for the first week of school and described the kinds of teaching and learning activities that motivate, engage, and challenge typical students at the school. David Teacher Mentoring used Jana's lesson plans and got off to a good start; however, he found that some students were not able to keep up. When David went to Jana for help, she responded by asking questions about the students and about the strategies David was already using with them. At the end of the conversation, David knew he needed more information about the students who were having difficulty, and he had a plan for finding out the information.

## Activity Directions

*Roles - Each table team will assign the following roles:*

1. Facilitator - keeps the group on topic and ensures that everyone participates
2. Recorder - writes answers on chart paper
3. Time-keeper - monitors the time
4. Reporter - shares with the large group

*Directions:*

1. Each participant will take a few minutes to read Kristina and David's first year teaching experiences.
2. Participants will work in table teams to discuss the three questions.
3. Recorder will write team answers on chart paper.
4. Reporter will share team answers with the large group.

*Questions for discussion:*

1. Which teacher do you predict will continue to teach a second year?
2. How are the beginning teachers' mentoring programs alike or different?
3. What critical elements were put into place for the successful beginning teacher's mentor program?

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