

Mentoring School Leaders in Competency-Based Internship and Induction Experiences

What can you expect to get from this module?

Through reflections on their own experience and literature from the field, principal mentors identify the characteristics and roles of effective mentors. They also identify novice experiences that contribute to the development of school leaders who make a difference in student achievement. Mentors will receive materials that will help them in planning and implementing a competency-based, developmental learning plan. Mentors will have the opportunity to explore a variety of scenarios to determine appropriate mentor strategies (reflection, coaching, listening, etc). They will role play mentor/novice interactions.

What *shouldn't* you expect to get from this module?

This module does not address orientation to a specific internship or induction program. The university and/or district should plan an additional orientation session (preferably prior to this module) that explains the structure of the program and roles of each party.

Who should take this training?

This module is for school leaders who have been selected to serve as mentors in structured internship or induction programs.

Other SREB Leadership Curriculum Modules that support this module:

There are no formal prerequisites for this SREB module. It is assumed that school leaders identified as mentors will have demonstrated the critical success factors for effective school leaders.

What will you have to do to get the most from this module?

Mentors should be selected through a rigorous process. They must commit to attending two initial days of training, completing homework assignments and attending one follow-up day. It is important for participants to have time to reflect and apply what they have learned between the initial training and the follow-up session.

Big Ideas in This Module

- Mentors must use coaching skills, but they are more than coaches. Effective mentors engage in a process of discovery with their novices. They can ask the right questions but are not always able to provide all of the right answers.
- Mentors must devote the time needed to guide novices through experiences that help develop leaders who can improve student achievement.
- Regardless of whether an internship or induction program lasts a month or a year, the quality of the learning experience is key.
- Effective programs are focused on helping novices develop the critical success factors that are the hallmarks of principals who make a difference in student achievement.
- Explicit learning experiences should be developmental — observing, participating, then leading — and focused on student achievement.
- A novice's learning plan should address district/school needs, novice needs and program requirements, and be structured, supported, monitored, and consistent with adult learning principles.
- Mentors, novices, schools, universities and districts all benefit from effective internship and induction programs.
- Obstacles are best overcome by anticipating potential problems and being prepared with strategies to deal with them.
- Mentors should meet frequently and regularly with novices. Meetings should be guided by an agenda focused on competencies.
- A mentor/novice relationship has phases, and each phase requires something different of the mentor.
- Time spent in the early phases on setting expectations and clarifying roles and accountabilities will set the stage for success.
- Coaching and communication skills are critical in the middle phases of the relationship.
- Mentors must develop their skills in coaching, dialogue, providing and receiving feedback, modeling leadership practices, networking and praise.

Module Design. *Mentoring School Leaders in Competency-Based Internship and Induction Experiences* is a three-day workshop (2+1). It also includes prework and homework assignments. Each section is described below.

Prework. Participants read the required prework texts and reflect on the characteristics of an effective internship or induction experience and the role of the mentor in supporting it. They also complete a self-assessment of mentor skills, experiences and characteristics.

Welcome and Introductions (30 minutes). In this introductory section, participants reflect on their prior experiences with mentors and novices and go through an overview of the module.

Qualities of Effective Mentors (four hours, 15 minutes). The section begins with clarification of the terms *mentoring*, *coaching*, *internship* and *induction*. The whole group will complete a true/false quiz that helps clear up any misconceptions. The trainer then leads the participants through a series of reflective activities in which they unearth their motivations for becoming a mentor and the behaviors and qualities of effective mentors. Finally, they review the self-assessment they created as homework and the code of ethics and make a decision about whether they wish to continue as a mentor. If so, they create a personal learning plan.

Qualities of Effective Internship and Induction Experiences (four hours, 50 minutes). Participants identify the qualities of a well-designed internship and induction experience through a card game. They also look at a variety of scenarios in order to identify appropriate learning goals and activities, appropriate mentor roles, how to identify and overcome roadblocks, and a sound learning plan.

Homework between Days One and Two. Participants study one of four chapters in the required reading that relate to the four phases of mentoring — preparing, negotiating, enabling and closing.

The Mentoring Process, Part One: Phases and Roles (two hours, 10 minutes). Participants learn about the qualities of effective novice/mentor meetings and create a sample meeting agenda, based on a scenario. Then participant groups present information and tips on each of the four phases of mentoring.

Homework Between Days Two and Three. Participants refine and work on their personal learning plans. In addition, each pair is assigned a scenario and asked to identify and learn about the interpersonal and coaching skills needed in that situation.

The Mentoring Process, Part Two: Application of Mentoring Strategies (six hours). Participants review their development plans in triads, giving and receiving peer feedback. Then, participants share their scenario homework with another pair and discuss possible approaches. They role play the scenario. Working as a large group, participants discuss each of the strategies by adding tips to flip charts. This work is summarized through a fish bowl role play, using a new scenario.

Summary and Portfolio Assignments (30 minutes). Participants must work to develop, implement and self-assess their mentoring skills. Participants submit a portfolio that contains descriptions of the activities they completed, as well as individual reflections and narratives.