

Using Peer Coaching with Preservice Teachers to Develop Reflective Practice and Collegial Support

By: [Stephanie A. Kurtts](#), and [Barbara B. Levin](#)

Kurtts, S. & Levin, B. (2000). Using peer coaching with preservice teachers to develop reflective practice and peer support. *Teaching Education*, 11(3), 297-310.

Made available courtesy of Taylor and Francis: <http://www.taylorandfrancis.com/>

*****Reprinted with permission. No further reproduction is authorized without written permission from Taylor and Francis. This version of the document is not the version of record. Figures and/or pictures may be missing from this format of the document.*****

Abstract:

This research describes the impact of learning and practicing peer coaching techniques based on McAllister and Neubert's (1995) model. The 27 undergraduate elementary education majors who participated in this study were found to have an increased understanding of (a) the importance of developing a reflective stance and (b) the benefits of developing collegial support. It is hoped that beginning teachers who are equipped with these skills will continue to think about their teaching and understand the value of seeking the support of their peers.

Article:

Teacher educators around the country have serious concerns about the flight of new teachers from their chosen profession after only a few years on the job. While there continues to be a need for research into teacher attrition and retention, a key factor that emerges from recent studies is the importance of providing support for beginning teachers (Billingsley & Cross, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 1984; Gold & Roth, 1993). Without organized support, and specifically without collegial support, it is difficult for beginning teachers to provide students with the kind of effective instruction and classroom management needed to create a positive learning environment (Gold, 1996). With support, beginning teachers are more willing to reflect on their practice, which in turn, enhances their understanding of both their personal and professional needs.

In response to this need for support, school districts and teacher education programs are searching for innovative ways to help beginning teachers make the transition from student to professional. Extended field-based experiences, engagement in Professional Development Schools, peer group discussions, case-based methods courses, reflective journal writing, and peer coaching are some of the most promising ways in which this is being done (Blanton, 1993; McAllister & Neubert, 1995; Zeichner, Liston, Mahlios, & Gomez, 1987). These practices, by providing structured opportunities for reflection, have been shown to enhance preservice teachers' awareness of the problems and complexities that they will encounter in their classrooms and to make connections between their own practices and the roles and responsibilities of new teachers.

McAllister and Neubert (1995) found that structured peer coaching can engender much needed support and feedback for new teachers as they begin their teaching careers, especially if it is learned and practiced as a preservice teacher. In their study, they also found that this process may encourage reflective thinking and alleviate some of the discouragement, isolation, and frustration new teachers experience. Because of these encouraging findings, the peer coaching process used in this study was based on McAllister and Neubert's (1995) model.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of early, structured peer coaching on the development of reflective practices and perceptions of collegial support among preservice teachers in a Professional Development School setting. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Does structured peer coaching aid in the development of reflective practices among preservice teachers?

2. Does structured peer coaching enhance preservice teachers' perceptions of support?

Definition of Terms

Peer Coaching

In general, *peer coaching* is a term used to describe a process in which two or more colleagues work together to improve their teaching skills by observing targeted behaviors of their partners in the classroom and providing constructive feedback. Peer coaching can take many forms and is similar in structure to cognitive coaching and clinical supervision. Preservice teachers who engage in peer coaching are usually taught various ways to observe and record the teaching behavior of their cohorts and to provide feedback in a way that is nonjudgmental and nonthreatening. In this study we use a structured, purposeful form for peer coaching based on the longitudinal work of McAllister and Neubert (1995) with preservice teachers. For us, structured peer coaching included detailed instructional feedback and practice with nondirective coaching techniques, including how to give specific praise and ask clarifying, eliciting, and leading questions during post-observation conferences. We also structured our peer coaching activities so that they included pre and post observation conferences plus written reflections by both the preservice teacher and the coach. In our study, peer coaching partners acted as both coach and teacher twice each semester during their two-year teacher education program. Our assumptions, based on the findings of McAllister and Neubert (1995), were that such nondirective feedback could promote reflection and collegiality in prospective teachers.

Reflective Practice

One of the goals of our teacher education program is to develop a reflective stance in our preservice teachers that we hope they will carry into their professional lives as teachers. Our purpose is to develop thoughtful, critical consideration of one's actions as a habit of mind in prospective teachers. Peer coaching, along with supervision activities of university faculty and on-site teacher educators, journal writing, and case-based discussions, are teacher preparation activities that are purposely designed to encourage reflection on practice for preservice teachers.

In this study, written reflections were structured so that both partners wrote about what they learned from their peer coaching experience based on their role-coach or teacher. The peer coaching reflections augmented the oral reflections during the pre and post observation conferences and other required reflection papers about their teaching experiences written every month by the preservice teachers in this study. Roth's (1989) reflective processes were selected as an analytical tool to help us assess the development of reflection in our preservice teachers at the end of their first semester of peer coaching experiences.

Collegial Support

For the purposes of this paper we define *collegial support* as helpful, constructive, and encouraging feedback provided in a collaborative manner from someone who is in a similar position. This contrasts with potentially negative or disheartening feedback from someone in a position of power and authority. When peers provide support it is understood that they are not experts but that they can offer feedback based on similar experiences, although perhaps offering different perspectives or insights. Nevertheless, the goal is to help prospective teachers learn to give and receive useful feedback to colleagues in ways that are helpful. In doing so we hope that they will be open to supporting and being supported by their colleagues throughout their careers, thus decreasing the isolation that many teachers feel.

Literature Review

Research suggests the use of several strategies to promote reflective growth in preservice teachers including interpersonal interaction with groups or individuals, journal writing, and conducting action research (LaBoskey, 1994). Coaching is one of the interpersonal activities which encourages skills of reflection (Barnett & Bayne, 1992; Joyce & Showers, 1982; McAllister & Neubert, 1995; Neubert & McAllister, 1993; Neubert & Stover, 1994; Nolan & Huber, 1989; Wynn, 1998). Working relationships that provide opportunities for specific feedback on teaching skills, exploration of ideas and alternative approaches, and interpretation and reflection

appear to result in positive experiences for preservice teachers involved in peer coaching (Barnett & Bayne, 1992; Donegan, Stocky & Fowler, 2000; McAllister & Neubert, 1995).

McAllister and Neubert's (1995) longitudinal study of 135 preservice teachers also provides support for peer coaching as a method for encouraging reflective thinking. Preservice teachers were trained in coaching steps that guided them in (a) focusing on specific teaching skills, (b) learning conferencing techniques including non-directive questions designed to help the coaching pair to review, analyze, and reflect on the coached lesson together, and (c) reflecting on the process of coaching and being coached. Based on their analysis of lesson plans, coaching forms, written reflective summaries, and transcripts of debriefing sessions, McAllister and Neubert (1995) determined that all of their participants engaged in reflective thinking during the peer coaching process. In addition, an open-ended questionnaire administered at the end of each semester was used to evaluate ways in which preservice teachers perceived the value of peer coaching. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that the preservice teachers moved from non-reflection to a reflective stance, applied teaching skills from college methods courses, and discovered the advantages of support as they experienced the demands of teaching.

These findings support Neubert and Stover's (1994) earlier work regarding the value of peer coaching in preservice education. However, their research also identified problems associated with this process including increased time demands on supervising university personnel, the development of unhealthy competitiveness, and preservice teachers' lack of confidence in giving constructive feedback.

Peer coaching appears to be a promising practice for helping new teachers (a) to develop as reflective practitioners, (b) to learn to transfer new skills to the classroom, and (c) to encourage peer support and feedback. Furthermore, as preservice teachers analyze their own lessons and those of their coaching partners, the collegiality resulting from interpersonal interactions appears to enhance their sense of professionalism acquired through field-base experiences. As beginning teachers move from concerns of self to concerns regarding the impact of their actions on the educational experiences of students, reflection becomes an agent for the development of teachers who are confident and skilled decision-makers.

The development of reflection in teaching and teacher education has been addressed extensively in the literature (Goodman, 1984; LaBoskey, 1994; Van Mane, 1977; Zeichner, 1981-82; Zeichner, Liston, Mahlios, & Gomez, 1987). Extensive work has been written about the importance of expanding reflection to go beyond personal concerns and technical issues in order to focus on educational principles and practices (La Bosky, 1994; Van Mane, 1977; Zeichner, 1981-82; Zeichner & Liston, 1994).

Reflection as a type of critical thinking is a process that a teacher employs through active cognitive engagement. Educational events are not just executed or observed, but are analyzed to determine what is actually occurring in the classroom (McAllister & Neubert, 1995). McAllister and Neubert's (1995) model for reflective practice was designed to provide preservice teachers with multiple opportunities for reflection by engaging them actively in reflective experiences and providing structures and processes for dialogue in order to explore reflective thoughts.

Two of the main reasons that new teachers leave the field are lack of support and feelings of isolation (Gold, 1996). A number of researchers have found that peer coaching influences factors that might lead to this sense of isolation. Wynn (1998) determined that not only did peer coaching facilitate transfer of instructional skills of preservice teachers to the classroom, but also offered opportunities for preservice teachers to meet together to discuss experiences in field-based settings. Kurtts (1998) identified collegial support as an outcome of peer coaching activities with preservice teachers. Buck, Morsink, Griffin, Hines, and Lenk (1992) also report that peer coaching for preservice teachers offers opportunities to meet together to discuss experiences in the classroom. In these studies preservice teachers were encouraged to reach out to one another for support and feedback via peer coaching activities. Perhaps these experiences as preservice teachers may help beginning

teachers to seek out one another, thus easing the sense of isolation and lack of support that causes novice teachers to leave the field (Gold, 1996).

Methods

Participants

Twenty-four female and three male preservice teacher candidates enrolled in an elementary education program in a regional university in the southeastern United States participated in this study. Four of the preservice teachers were African-American females and the rest were Caucasian. Three of the participants, one female and two males, were second-career teacher candidates approaching age thirty. The remaining preservice teachers were traditional college age students, ages 20-22.

The preservice teachers participating in this study were all undergraduate elementary education majors and members of a cohort group taking methods courses and completing concurrent field experiences across three semesters prior to full-time student teaching. All participants spent 10 hours each week in a Professional Development School (PDS) classroom with an on-site teacher educator (our term for a cooperating teacher or master teacher). The preservice teachers also attended a weekly two-hour seminar. These seminars focused on a different theme each semester.

Procedures

The peer coaching process was broken down into four phases. In phase one, participants were introduced to the concepts related to peer coaching that were the foundation of this study. Phase two was completed when both students met and discussed their goals for the project. In phase three, the preservice teachers practiced what they had learned, and phase four was when they were asked to evaluate the program.

Phase One. Phase One included two introductory seminars. In the initial seminar, the purpose was to assess the students' level of understanding of peer coaching methods and to introduce examples of peer coaching. The second seminar was used to explain Neubert and McAllister's (1993) Praise-Question-Polish (PQP) conferencing style for giving feedback. Participants learned and practiced using four types of feedback:

- Praise Comments used to affirm strengths and give reasons why these strengths were effective;
- Clarifying Questions asked by the coach in order to understand the rationale for a part of the lesson that was unclear;
- Eliciting Questions used to prompt the teacher to explore alternatives and options; and
- Leading Questions that should include the coach's recommendations for improvement presented in question form. For example, a preservice teacher might ask her peer, "Have you considered using shared reading with a buddy to help the children better comprehend the reading assignment?"

Phase Two. In Phase Two, participants met together in pairs to establish an observation focus (skills to be observed) for each teaching session. Both partners would serve twice, two times as the teacher practicing the targeted skills and two times as the observer/coach of their partner.

Phase Three. During this part of the study, both preservice teacher candidates in the pair participated in two cycles of peer coaching activities during the semester in which one taught a lesson and one served in the role of observer/coach. After each session the pair would debrief about the lesson using the PQP model for giving feedback. Following the feedback session, both participants were asked to write a reflective summary. Over the course of the semester, each student wrote two reflective summaries as the teacher delivering the lesson and two summaries as the observer/coach.

Phase Four. Phase Four was completed by asking all preservice teachers to complete an open-ended questionnaire at the end of the semester in order to gain insights about their peer coaching experiences as well as any problems encountered during the peer coaching process. Also, on-site teacher educators answered an open-ended questionnaire designed to elicit their perceptions of the peer coaching activities.

Data Analysis

Data collection. Data for this study were derived from the following sources:

- the PQP forms completed by the coaches following the peer observation;
- the reflective summaries of both coaching and teaching written by both members of the peer coaching dyad (two as coach and two as teacher for each participant in the study);
- the open-ended questionnaires completed by all participants at the end of the semester;
- the open-ended questionnaires completed by the on-site teacher educators on their perceptions of the peer coaching activities; and
- selected audiotaped debriefing conferences between selected pairs of participants.

Table 1. Reflective processes by frequency of behavior noted on participant PQP forms

Behavior	Frequency of Behavior Noted on PQP Forms
Analyzing what works	72
Seeking, identifying, and resolving problems	64
Evaluating	60
Initiating changes	48
Asking for other's ideas	42
Seeking alternatives	38
Putting into practice in varied contexts	36
Functioning within uncertainty	28

Methods of Analysis. First, PQP forms, reflective summaries, and transcripts of the selected audiotaped conferences were examined to determine patterns or themes that emerged from the peer coaching experiences (Patton, 1980). Next, these data were examined again using Roth's (1989) list of processes engaged in during reflection in order to guide us in identifying and labeling the type of reflective comments made by the participants. Third, all responses to the open-ended questionnaires, including both ratings and comments, were tabulated for frequency and analyzed using pattern matching (Patton, 1980). The responses of the on-site teacher educators were also examined for their perceptions of the effectiveness of the preservice teachers' coaching experiences and triangulated with data from the participants in the study.

Findings

Summary of Quantitative Findings

From a total of 54 PQP Teaching Forms (all 27 participants taught two classes) and 54 PQP Coaching Forms (participants acting as coaches for their partners), eight of Roth's (1989) reflective practices were frequently observed (see Table 1).

After every debriefing session using the PQP model, each participant was required to write a Reflective Summary of his or her experience. Again, participants ($n = 27$) turned in four summaries for a total of 108 Reflective Summaries to be reviewed. Because these summaries were more loosely structured than the PQP Forms, there was less over-all consistency in the number of times specific behaviors were noted. However, several behaviors were mentioned with significant frequency (see Table 2).

Table 2. Reflective processes by frequency of behavior noted on participant reflective summaries

Behavior	Frequency of Behavior Noted on Reflective Summaries
Analyzing what works	40
Seeking, identifying, and resolving problems	34
Evaluating	32
Seeking alternatives	28
Asking for other's ideas	28
Initiating changes	27

Development of Reflective Practices

Roth's (1989, p. 32) summary of the process engaged in during reflection was used as a guide to determine if feedback questions during peer coaching encouraged reflection on the part of the participant acting as the teacher. Most of the questions asked by the peer coaches centered around what, why, and how one does things and what, why, and how others do things such as seeking alternatives, and asking "what if?" For example, Gretchen asked a clarifying question of Lynn when she wasn't clear about what the children were expected to learn in her lesson on snails. In offering suggestions for the lesson during the post-observation conference, Gretchen asked questions that allowed Lynn the opportunity to reflect on her lesson:

While the students observed the snails, could you have asked questions about the snails? Or even talked about body parts then? Could you have talked about the body parts before you had them look at the snails?

Analysis of the written reflective summaries completed by each preservice teacher after they experienced coaching and teaching revealed additional reflective thinking used during the peer coaching cycle. Statements made by the preservice teachers acting as coaches indicated that many of the participants were able to share others' ideas and viewpoints. In this way, they learned new skills and strategies; observed how others could adapt and adjust to instability and change; and also learned how to function within uncertainty, complexity, and variety. For example, Jeremy's response to his coaching experience exhibited all three of these reflective processes in his comments:

This observation made me feel good about some of the people I am in the program with. I have learned that I am not the only one who is feeling afraid, unsure, and overwhelmed at the vastness of our career decision. I have also learned, or been reinforced, that we need to stick together and that all assignments and work can be made a little more manageable with the help of a partner or two or three. I also learned that everyone has a different presentation style and that it will be beneficial to see many of them. Most importantly, I learned that we, the team, can learn much from each other.

All participants learned to use the non-directive questioning style of the PQP format by the second round of peer coaching and clearly demonstrated how to use each type of question while serving as a peer coach. For example, Chris asked Susan the following eliciting questions when observing her second grade lesson on volcanoes:

Could you have showed more of the movie? The students loved it! What kinds of hands-on activities could help you meet your objectives? Do you think eliciting questions would arouse interest? What about letting the students ask questions? In what other visual ways could you have made the formation of lava understandable?

Some students were more directive in their feedback during their first coaching experience but by the second peer coaching activity were applying the non-directive PQP format. An example of this progression is drawn from Jen's coaching feedback form. In her first opportunity to serve as a coach she stated:

Maybe next time you could try giving directions to the whole class instead of group by group—It might save a lot of needless questions for those groups you haven't gotten to.

However, her second coaching resulted in her asking the following leading questions: (The preservice teacher she coached was working one-on-one with a student):

Would a place with less distractions help him concentrate? What level are you helping him to read on? Could you help him sound out all words to help him learn to pronounce them on his own? Could reading out loud to him first and then letting him read help him to learn to recognize the words?

When asked about why she moved from directive feedback to applying the non-directive feedback emphasized in the PQP format, Jen explained that her interaction with her peer coach during her first debriefing conference helped her to understand how the PQP questions worked. According to Jen, receiving indirect feedback helped her find alternatives and different ideas. She realized that she had not given that type of feedback when she was the coach. However, because it was so beneficial to her, she wanted to make sure that she applied the PQP format in her second coaching experience. Jen's developing ability to ask eliciting and clarifying questions came out of her own experience and reflection on what she had gained from being peer coached.

Reflective summaries from the preservice teachers about their teaching experiences solicited at the end of the semester also revealed several of the reflective processes delineated by Roth (1989). Problem-solving, thinking through alternatives and consequences, and analysis and evaluation of what made something work, what did and didn't work, and why were evident in our data. Marty, responding to her experience in a kindergarten classroom, indicated that she had clearly analyzed and considered the consequences of her actions:

As a result of this peer coaching experience I learned first of all, that it is very important to present materials to students which are easy to identify by color or shape. I learned that colors and shapes must be definite, or as definite and realistic as possible in order to ensure the greatest understanding of the lesson. I also learned that it is okay if they do not understand how something works or how to do an activity. I learned that it is a great idea to provide alternatives to better understanding, such as getting help from a peer if they are having trouble understanding a particular concept. Finally, I learned that engaging children in a fun, easy-to-learn, hands-on activity works wonderfully when one is attempting to convey a point to children.

In addition, the feedback sessions examined from selected debriefing conferences also demonstrated the value of using the PQP format in the development of reflection. For example, Laurie, who was Jeff's coach for his third grade lesson about the water cycle, sparked an insightful discussion of how effective his use of a discovery method was in presenting his science lesson. The debriefing conference also served as an opportunity for the two preservice teachers to share similar experiences. Both commented that the debriefing conference made them feel not so alone and that it was good to have the support of a peer.

During the second taped debriefing conference between Laurie and Jeff, they discussed one of her students who appeared to be uninvolved in class activities. The dialogue moved from reflection on ways to involve this student in the classroom to speculation about the impact of this type of behavior on the student's future school career. These prospective teachers became intense while discussing how the school system might be overlooking this child and what happens to students who "fall through the cracks". The taped discussion showed that these two preservice teachers were taking a more critically reflective stance. They were assessing the educational consequences of lack of action by the "system" and demonstrating a sense of responsibility and inquiry as they struggled with the challenges of working within the educational system. In this instance, peer coaching was the catalyst for reflection that moved beyond the technical level to thinking about moral, ethical, and political issues that both Zeichner (1981-82) and Van Manen (1977) discuss in their work.

Development of Perceptions of Collegial Support

Analysis of the open-ended questionnaire asking students to rate their peer coaching experience and to explain their rating revealed that 77% of the cohort "liked" or "loved" the coaching experience and 23% thought that it was "OK". No participants disliked the experience. Benefits perceived by the participants from the peer coaching experience were (a) positive feedback, (b) advice, (c) sharing the same experiences, (d) development of self-confidence, and (f) less intimidation during the observation process. One student commented:

Peer coaching gave me an opportunity to come together with my peer coach and share thoughts about teaching. This helped a great deal. I knew I was not alone in some of my feelings when I was overwhelmed. I knew I had support that I could lean on.

Another student stated the activities involved with peer coaching "felt like the beginning of what a support team would be like if I am teaching in my own classroom in a school".

The on-site teacher educators' perceptions of the peer coaching experience also supported the benefits of peer coaching. As observers when peer coaching took place in their classrooms, they noted that preservice teachers benefited from peer feedback without negative connotations and that participants in the study were indicating an awareness of the importance of building collegiality and developing a support system. All on-site teacher educators supported the peer coaching activity and encouraged us to continue it.

Problems Encountered by Participants

The preservice teachers' concerns about peer coaching centered around (a) scheduling, especially when other school activities conflicted with the coached lesson, (b) having less effective partners, (c) their own nervousness, and (d) a perception of their lack of professional knowledge when offering constructive feedback. Their on-site teacher educators echoed these concerns and also addressed the need for better communication between themselves and the preservice teachers in order to facilitate scheduling peer coaching activities. Suggestions from the on-site teacher educators recommended having specific, scheduled times to discuss the peer coaching activities.

Limitations of the Study

Because of the small sample size ($n = 27$), it would be difficult to generalize any of the study findings to other groups. Even if we could control for the differences in our study population and the setting of our study, we cannot yet compare our findings to those of McAllister & Neubert because their study was longitudinal and this article was intended only to describe the intervention phase of our study.

Another significant limitation of this study involves the interpretation of the term "support". While many studies have confirmed that first year teachers feel a lack of support in general, this term could be defined in any number of ways-e.g. institutional support, financial support, emotional support, or collegial support to name a few. Also, many of the studies have tied these perceptions of a lack of support to include feelings of isolation. The assumption that we are making is that when preservice teachers learn the value of collegial support through their experiences with peer coaching, they will seek this kind of support in their early teaching years. We further assume that if they do seek this type of support, it will help to alleviate not only their perceptions of a lack of support but also their feelings of isolation (Thies-Sprinthall & Gerler, 1990; Gold & Roth, 1993; Gold, 1996). At this point in our study, this is only a hypothesis. We hope to learn more about these links as we follow study participants throughout their early teaching years.

Discussion

Examination of the oral and written data regarding peer coaching experiences in this study strongly suggests that preservice teachers can and do develop their reflective practices in an atmosphere of support and collegiality. For the participants in this study, guided opportunities for interpersonal interactions around teaching lessons during the field-based experiences contributed to their reflective development. In addition to getting feedback about academic and management concerns, peer coaching also provided the framework for

establishing collegial dialogue supporting the professional development of participants. The findings of this study suggest that the non-directive conferencing style learned and used by participants provided a constructive method of giving feedback that helped preservice teachers begin to reflectively examine their own teaching practices.

Structured peer coaching appears to encourage reflective practices of preservice teachers by engaging them in interpersonal interactions and self-analysis. Our findings suggest that this method of peer coaching may be a catalyst for the development of a reflective and inquiry-oriented stance in the early stages of a teacher education program. Prior experience with peer coaching may also assist new teachers in dealing with the challenges of the first year, especially if they enter their profession already skilled in giving specific praise, asking for feedback, and knowing how to provide nondirective feedback to others by asking eliciting and clarifying questions. The ability to think reflectively, to move past the day-to-day struggles of the classroom, and to grasp just how significant their role will be in the future of education is crucial in keeping new teachers in the schools.

If teacher education programs are to prepare new teachers for the challenges of this new century, they must search for promising practices that will encourage reflection and inquiry. New teachers who face shifting paradigms in schools will need to bring with them resources to make the successful transition from preservice to inservice teacher. Decision making, and being able to accept, understand, and value different perspectives will assist new teachers as they enter their own school communities for the first time. Such skills are likely outcomes of developing the ability to reflect on one's practices and to seek the support of others. Perhaps early experiences with peer coaching can help teacher candidates to develop and use these skills in a way that will prevent feelings of isolation and a lack of support and thus, decrease the attrition rate that has become an ongoing problem for so many of our school systems. As beginning teachers' psychological needs for support and collegiality and instructional needs are met in an atmosphere of support, school systems may begin to see beginning teachers develop a self-efficacy and meaning to their own style of teaching.

Future Research

Continued research into how peer coaching strategies acquired during preservice education carry over into the experiences of beginning teachers may give insight into how this practice could serve as a significant resource in keeping new teachers in the classroom. Toward these ends, we believe that longitudinal follow-up studies of teachers with prior peer coaching experiences would be invaluable. Assessing what aspects of peer coaching are most meaningful to preservice teachers making the transition into the induction year would also aid teacher educators in refining the peer coaching experiences they can provide to preservice teachers.

The activities associated with peer coaching certainly match the areas of support that Gold (1996) suggests for beginning teachers. Further study of induction year teachers will help us connect the impact of preservice collegial activities such as peer coaching to those major areas of support which Gold (1996) identifies as (1) instructional related support that includes assistance with the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to be successful in the classroom and (2) psychological support which builds sense of self through confidence building, encouraging positive self-esteem, developing feelings of effectiveness, enhancing self-reliance, and learning how to relieve the stress that is part of becoming a teacher.

Continued examination of preservice teachers and new teachers as they find their way to inquiry and reflection on teaching and learning may help teacher educators better understand how to contribute to the development of reflective practitioners. A commitment to such thoughtful action about the education of children may be a most appropriate collaborative goal for preservice teachers, new teachers, and teacher educators.

The peer coaching forms and the preservice teacher/on-site teacher educator questionnaire may be obtained by directly contacting Stephanie Kurts, Nazareth College of Rochester, Education Department, Rochester, NY, 14618-3790.

References

- BARNETT, D.C. & BAYNE, E.L. (1992). *Reflection and collaboration in the practicum: The Mayfair Project*. (Monograph No. 14). Saskatoon, Sask: Saskatchewan University, College of Education.
- BILLINGSLEY, B.W. & CROSS, L.H. (1991). Teachers' decisions to transfer from special to general education. *The Journal of Special Education*, 24(4), 496-511.
- BLANTON, L.P. (1993). Preservice teacher education: Essential knowledge for the effective special education teacher. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 15(2), 87-95.
- BUCK, G., MORSINK, C., GRIFFIN, C., HINES, T. & LENK, L. (1992). Preservice training: The role of the field-based experiences in the preparation of effective special education teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 15(2), 108-123.
- DARLING-HAMMOND, L. (1984). *Beyond the commission reports: The coming crisis in teaching*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.
- DONEGAN, M., OSTROSKY, M. & FOWLER, S. (2000). Peer coaching: Teachers supporting teachers. *Young Exceptional Children*, 3(3), 9-16.
- GOLD, Y. (1996). Beginning teacher support: Attrition, mentoring, and induction. In J. SIKULA, T. BUTTERY, & E. GUYTON (Eds.). *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 548-594). New York: Macmillan.
- GOLD, Y. & ROTH, R.A. (1993). *Teachers managing stress and preventing burnout: The professional health solution*. London: Falmer Press.
- GOODMAN, J. (1984). Reflection and teacher education: A case study and theoretical analysis. *Interchange*, 15(3), 9-26.
- JOYCE, B. & SHOWERS, B. (1982). The coaching of teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 40(1), 4-10.
- KURTTS, S.A. (1998). *Preparing preservice elementary teachers to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of North Carolina, NC: Greensboro.
- LABOSKEY, V.K. (1994). *Development of reflective practice: A study of preservice teachers*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- MCALLISTER, E.A. & NEUBERT, G.A. (1995). *New teachers helping new teachers: Preservice peer coaching*. Bloomington, IN: EDINFO Press.
- NEUBERT, G.A. & MCALLISTER, E.A. (1993). Peer coaching in preservice education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 20(4), 77-84.
- NEUBERT, G.A. & STOVER, L.T. (1994). *Peer coaching in teacher education*. (Fastback #371). Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappan Educational Foundation. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED 378 140).
- NOLAN, J. & HUBER, T. (1989). Nurturing the reflective practitioner through instructional supervision: A review of the literature. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 4(2), 126-145.
- PATTON, M. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- ROTH, R.R. (1989). Preparing the reflective practitioner: Transforming the apprentice through the dialectic. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(2), 31-35.
- THIES-SPRINTHALL, L.M. & GERLER, E.R., JR. (1990). Support groups for novice teachers. *Journal of Staff Development*, 11(4), 18-22.
- VAN MANEN, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 6(6), 205-228.
- WYNN, M.J. (1998, April). *Transfer of training to the classroom by student teachers: Effects of an experimental model*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Hilton Head, SC.
- ZEICHNER, K.M. (1981-82). Reflective teaching and field-based experiences in teacher education. *Interchange*, 12(4), 1-22.
- ZEICHNER, K.M. & LISTON, D.P. (1994). Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 23-48.
- ZEICHNER, K.M., LISTON, D.P., MAHLIOS, M. & GOMEZ, M. (1987, April). *The structure and goals of a student teaching program and the character and quality of supervisory discourse*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC.