

Principal Module: Helping Those New to the Teaching Profession

“Good leaders make people feel that they’re at the very heart of things, not at the periphery. Everyone feels that he or she makes a difference to the success of the organization. When that happens people feel centered and that gives their work meaning.”

– WARREN BENNIS



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the Teaching Profession
2009

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www.cstp-wa.org

■ Grant funding for the New Teacher Alliance
provided by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation.

Summary of Module:

This module is designed to help principals learn how to better assist new teachers in their buildings. While Washington State’s turnover rate is not as high as the national average, losing teachers costs districts time and money. In some schools the rate of new teachers leaving the profession far exceeds the 25% state average, which can make it difficult to create traction for initiatives.

Outcomes:

Provide principals with strategies to address the following needs of new teachers:

- Culture of Support
- Support Systems
- New Teachers and the Law
- Continuum of Support

Importance of the Principal Role in Beginning Teacher Induction:

Research shows that principals matter to new teachers. Following is a brief list of research proving the importance and impact of the principal on the new teacher:

- Building culture and administrative support most impact new teachers’ decisions to stay in their building (TAP survey, 2006).
- The role of the principal in induction is critical in defining the new teacher’s experience and assisting him or her in being successful in the profession. Principals must pay attention to new teachers and their needs because of the rate of turnover among them and the impact on students (Watkins, 2005). Otherwise, principals find themselves in a cycle of continuously hiring new teachers.
- Relationships between new teachers and other people in the schools were a crucial factor in the new teacher’s experience. A supportive principal could negate other problematic issues that new teachers faced (Turner, 1994).
- A limited connection with the principal was the reason one third of the new teachers left. The new teachers had high hopes for the feedback from and relationship with their principal, and all were deeply disappointed with the diminished to non-existent role the principal played in their first year of teaching (Anhorn, 2008).

Module Design:

This module is intended for principals. It is divided into three sequenced sections that presenters can use as a whole or separately. Each section has activities for participants and all necessary handouts are listed and included. In addition, a power point presentation provides directions in the notes sections of the slides and approximate time frames.

Section 1: Culture of Support

Section 2: Support Systems

Section 3: New Teachers and the Law

Extension Activity: Continuum of Support

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“Leadership is a concept we often resist. It seems immodest, even self-aggrandizing, to think of ourselves as leaders. But if it is true that we are made for community, then leadership is everyone’s vocation, and it can be an evasion to insist that it is not. When we live in the close-knit ecosystem called community, everyone follows and everyone leads.”

– PARKER PALMER



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Culture of Support (slides 2-11):

This section describes new teachers in Washington State and their unique needs.

Time: 3 hours

Handouts:

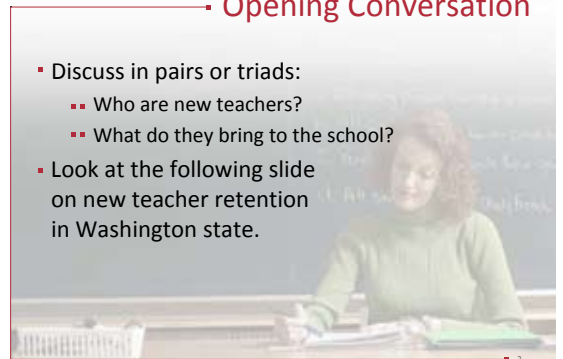
Hazed from Educational Leadership

Additional Resources:

The Profession That Eats Its Young

■ **Opening Conversation**

- Discuss in pairs or triads:
 - Who are new teachers?
 - What do they bring to the school?
- Look at the following slide on new teacher retention in Washington state.



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■ **Data from Washington State**

| Years | Remained as teachers in same school | Moved to another school in same district | Moved to another district in Washington | Left the Washington education system |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 00/01-04/05 | 60% | 13% | 7% | 19% |
| 01/02-05/06 | 60% | 14% | 7% | 20% |
| 02/03-06/07 | 59% | 14% | 7% | 20% |
| 03/04-07/08 | 58% | 14% | 7% | 21% |

- How do you think your school/district compares?

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■ **Setting New Teachers Up for Success**

- How does a principal set new teachers up for success?
- Areas to consider that impact the initial success of new teachers:
 - Culture
 - Climate
 - Hiring
 - Assignment
 - Welcome
 - Orientation

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Say Something Protocol

- Form groups of 2-3.
- Read the first section of the article silently.
- When finished, each of you needs to “say something” about the passage you just read.
- “Something” is: a prediction, a question, a clarification, a comment, a connection.
- Continue this process, section by section, until you have finished the article.

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Building a Culture of Support for New Teachers

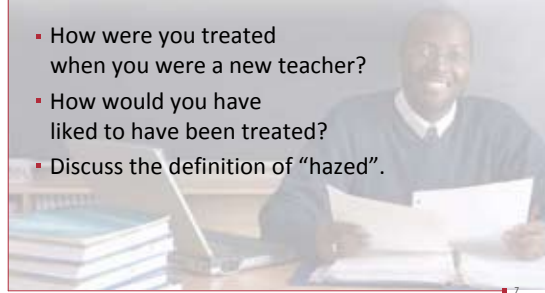
- Read *Hazed* from *Educational Leadership*
- Use the *Say Something Protocol* to discuss the article.



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Building a Culture of Support

- How were you treated when you were a new teacher?
- How would you have liked to have been treated?
- Discuss the definition of “hazed”.



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Building a Culture of Support

- What might you look for to determine if hazing is occurring in the building?
- What are some steps that a principal might take to begin to create a culture of support for new teachers?
- Which of these steps might be least controversial?

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Capitalize on Knowledge of New Teachers

- Go back to the list of contributions that new teachers make:
- Which positive contributions to the school community might you highlight?
- How do principals equitably promote the positive contributions/expertise of new teachers?
- How do principals include new teachers in current activities to promote quality instruction?

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Three Professional Cultures

- Veteran-oriented professional culture
 - Experienced, well-established practice
 - Isolated
 - Undifferentiated roles
- Novice-oriented professional culture
 - Start-up or low-performing school
 - High energy, limited experience
- Integrated professional culture
 - Sustained support/exchange across experience levels
 - New teachers recognized as novices, differentiated

Susan Kardos, Susan Moore Johnson, et al- Harvard Project on the Next Generation of Teachers

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Culture

- Which of the professional cultures best describes the culture that currently exists in your building?
- As a principal, how can you move toward or enhance an integrated professional culture?



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“The great leaders are like the best conductors - they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players.”
 – BLAINE LEE



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Support Systems (slides 12-17):

This section focuses on the systems that building principals can put into place and coordinate their work with district induction systems.

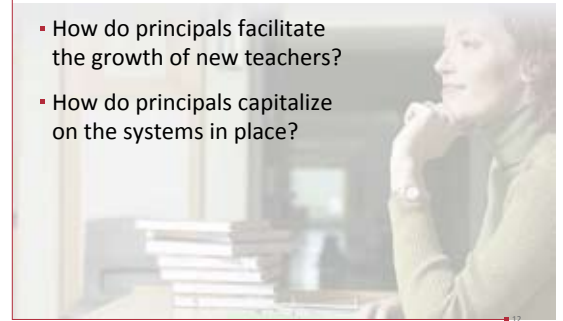
Time: 2 hours

Handouts:

The Orientation and Mentoring Standards from the Effective Support for New Teachers in Washington State: Standards for Beginning Teacher Induction (available to print on line at www.cstp-wa.org)

→ **Support Systems**

- How do principals facilitate the growth of new teachers?
- How do principals capitalize on the systems in place?



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→ **Standards for Teachers:
 What Does “New” Look Like?**

- **Pro Cert Standards**
 - Standard 1c: Classroom Management - what evidence of this criterion would you likely see for a first year teacher versus a fifth year teacher?
 - Choose another criterion from Standard 1 and have the same conversation with a partner.

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→ **Professional Certification
 for Teachers Standards**

- *The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:*
 - (a) Using instructional strategies that make learning meaningful and show positive impact on student learning;
 - (b) Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction;
 - (c) Using appropriate classroom management principles, processes and practices to foster a safe, positive, student-focused learning environment;

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Professional Certification for Teachers Standards, *continued*

- (d) Designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum that is based on the diverse needs of each student;
- (e) Demonstrating cultural sensitivity in teaching and in relationships with students, families, and community members;
- (f) Integrating technology into instruction and assessment; and
- (g) Informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student's educational process, including using information about student achievement and performance.

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Support Systems – Orientation

- Use your current district as your reference point, complete the Orientation diagnostic questions from the *Effective Support for New Teachers in Washington State: Standards for Beginning Teacher Induction* (p.11-12) and talk about it in groups of four.
- Write recommendations that you could give to principals in your district.

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Support Systems – Mentoring

- Discuss how principals might assure that new teachers are getting the high quality mentoring they need without overwhelming them.
- Reference the Mentoring diagnostic questions from the *Effective Support for New Teachers in Washington State: Standards for Beginning Teacher Induction* (p. 14-15).
- Reference the Leadership that Supports Mentoring (p. 18), and Coordinating Support sections (p. 19) from the standards document.

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Section 3: New Teachers and the Law

New Teachers and the Law (slides 18-26):

This section focuses on the firewall of confidentiality between the mentor and principal and the professional code of conduct.

Time: 2 ½ hours

Handouts:

Code of Conduct (print on line),
When Do I Tell?

Additional Resources:

Mentors and the Code power point

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“One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency.”

– OHN GLASSGOW



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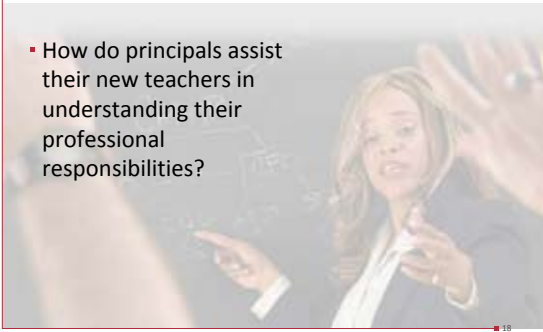
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■ New Teachers and the Law

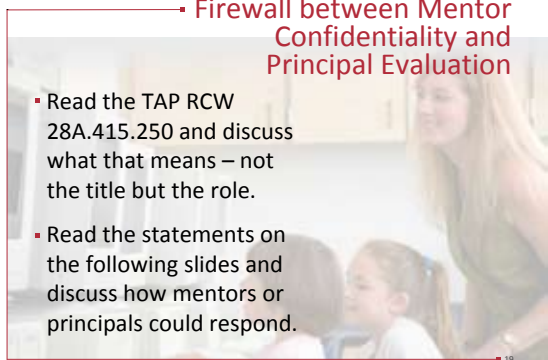
- How do principals assist their new teachers in understanding their professional responsibilities?



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■ Firewall between Mentor Confidentiality and Principal Evaluation

- Read the TAP RCW 28A.415.250 and discuss what that means – not the title but the role.
- Read the statements on the following slides and discuss how mentors or principals could respond.



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■ TAP RCW (RCW 28A.415.250):

- 1. Assistance by mentor teachers who will provide a source of continuing and sustained support to beginning teachers, or experienced teachers who are having difficulties, or both, both in and outside the classroom. A mentor teacher may not be involved in evaluations under RCW 28A.405.100 of a teacher who receives assistance from said mentor teacher under the teacher assistance program established under this section. The mentor teachers shall also periodically inform their principals respecting the contents of training sessions and other program activities...

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■ Mentor Scenarios

- You walk into your mentee's classroom and see students clustered around her desk. They are handing her cash. She is making check marks on a list and putting the cash into an envelope in her purse. One of her students turns to you brightly and announces, "We're going on a field trip!"
- It's August and your new mentee tells you he has been hired to coach fall season. It is for the cross-country team, boys *and* girls, and they have two overnight trips to invitational meets on their schedule.

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■ Mentor Scenarios, continued

- You overhear some of your girls gossiping about the new teacher you are mentoring. They've been looking at his *MySpace* profile, and they think he looks pretty hot in that party photo. What is he holding? It's hard to tell, but one of them thinks it's a pipe.
- You didn't think anything of it when your mentee told you she was going to grab some early dinner with friends before Open House. Now she's back in her classroom, the parents are due in 10 minutes, and you *think* you might smell wine on her breath.

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■ Mentor Scenarios, continued

- Your mentee is possibly the youngest AP Calculus teacher ever to wield a Dry Erase marker. She tells you that one of her male students is concerned about his progress and wants some extra help after school. He suggested that they meet at the nearest Starbucks for his tutoring.
- You go to the staff workroom during your planning time, and there's your mentee running a quick set of copies. "Who's with your class?" you ask. "Oh, they're fine," he replies. "They're working on the entry task."

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■ Actively Administer Code of Professional Conduct: Becoming a Professional

- Read WAC 181-87 Code of Conduct.
- What should a principal make sure that new teachers know?
- Homework: Bring your district's policies regarding professionalism, especially computer policies and code of professional conduct.

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→ Know When to Move from Support to Contractual Needs Improvement Process

- Homework: Read your contract regarding plan of improvement. How do you plan for improvement, suspension and dismissal?
- Read *When Do I Tell?*



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→ Principal Questions: Confidentiality and Formal Evaluation

- Discuss the following questions:
 - What are some ways you might support mentors in their roles?
 - If you know a new teacher is struggling, what are some ways you might work with the mentor to assist him?
 - What are some ways to assist a new teacher who is well intended but not making progress?

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“A leader is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way.”

– AUTHOR UNKNOWN



Extension Activity: Continuum of Support

Continuum of Support: Extension Activity (slide 27):

This extension can be used to have new principals think about a continuum of support and what they would want to provide for their 1st-5th year teachers.

Time: 1-2 hours

Handouts:

Effective Support for New Teachers in Washington State: Standards for Beginning Teacher Induction (available to print on line at www.cstp-wa.org)

Additional Resources:

NTA partner descriptions and induction models

→ Continuum of Support: Extension Activity

Being a principal requires juggling many priorities at the same time. Supporting new teachers will be only one of many tasks on your plate.

- What forms of support for them and for their mentors do you see as most essential and most do-able during this year?
- What are some things you might do to remind yourself to attend to the needs of your new staff?

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